Why Community-Based Research is Important for Positive Societal Change
Part 2: The International Perspective

Three-part Webinar Series brought to you by
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www.communityresearchcanada.ca  July 3rd, 2018
Presenter

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Understanding knowledge: A changing world

• A broadened understanding of knowledge – towards a knowledge democracy

• Increasing recognition that citizens, social movements, CSOs, public and private sectors are generating useful knowledge for positive social change

• Recognizing and valuing indigenous ways of knowing and the concept of the *decolonization of knowledge* is an important discourse in this space internationally
  • Institutions are being called to action to address reconciliation

• The co-creation of knowledge between community and academia has undergone a dramatic shift in recent years.
Global Trends: HEI & CBR for societal change

• International momentum to change university culture, policies and practices to advance CE in research and learning – the Engaged University

• CUE networks (GUNi, Talloires, AsiaEngage, CLAYSS, Ma’an Arab Network), Academic Journals (Engaged Scholar, Research for All), movement towards open source and citizen science

• Governments, funding agencies/foundations have moved aggressively to promote and fund collaborative partnership research (Hall et al., 2016)

• CBR now strongly accepted as an approach that can solve local challenges with community – locally relevant, context-specific, place-based, participatory and action-oriented and timely

• One way that impact is measured on a global scale is through the attainment of the UN SDGs (upcoming webinar with Dr. Budd Hall) – implementation of the SDG’s through CBR
The UNESCO Chair in CBR-SR

Objective: To work with other global networks to support capacity building in the fields CBR and SR in higher education through South-South and North-South-South partnerships.


The Knowledge for Change (K4C) Consortium

- K4C is a global initiative of the UNESCO Chair, under the joint leadership of UVic and PRIA, and its HEIs and CSOs partners.

- Purpose: 1) to train a new generation of community workers and students in the theory and practice of CBR;
  2) to create an international communication network on knowledge democracy, justice and equity as a contribution to local, national and global challenges such as the UN SDGs.

Creation of local training hubs in India, Indonesia, Italy, South Africa, Colombia and Cuba (2018), and Canada, UK, Brazil and Spain (2019)
1. An institutional impact assessment: University of Victoria

- Strong history of institutional commitment to CBR
- Contingency of CBR scholars (estimated over 150)
- Spectrum and diversity of engagement in research across campus is vast
  - Over 20 typologies identified across the disciplines
- Mapping CBR (international CUE map) – first comprehensive picture of impact of CE activities across the campus
The Community-Engagement Map that displays more than 1,300 records of engagement in 85 countries during 2016/17 (see https://www.uvic.ca/ocue/engagement-map/).
Scope of the project

• Document the outputs and outcomes of institutional structures (OCBR/ISICUE) between 2009-2015;
• Provide a campus-wide assessment of impact aligning to OCUE’s 5 pillars of engagement, UVic’s International Plan and the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**;
• Showcase, through in-depth case studies, **qualitative stories of impact** resulting from exemplar CER, as well as institutional supports, challenges and recommendations (community/academic);
• Develop **an impact rubric to assess Community-engaged Scholarship**; and
• Develop **guidelines to inform criteria for the assessment of community engaged scholarship** in reviewing grant applications, partnership proposals, and faculty tenure, promotion, and merit applications.
Every day, UVic makes a positive impact around the world through community engagement initiatives. In 2017, the Office of Community-University Engagement (OCUE) and the Office of the Vice-President Research (VPR) co-sponsored a research project led by Dr. Crystal Tremblay that examined the breadth and impact of community engagement initiatives such as community-engaged research (CER) and community-engaged learning (CEL) at UVic between 2009 and 2015. Dr. Tremblay considered how community engagement initiatives at UVic intersect with the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals (see these at sustainabledevelopment.un.org), as well as the five guiding pillars of OCUE and the four areas of international impact identified in UVic’s International Plan.

Based on these intersections, Dr. Tremblay identified five key ways that UVic has made an impact in the community. The following is a summary of these five key indicators of impact (to see the full report, contact oruhelp@uvic.ca).

**$21 million in research funding**
From 2009–2015, staff and research affiliates from the former Office of Community-Based Research (OCBR) and the former Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community-University Engagement (ISICUE) secured $21 million in funding for community-engaged research.

Research topics included:
- affordable housing
- homelessness
- health
- Indigenous child welfare
- social innovation
- HIV prevention
- sustainable waste management

**167 instances of community engagement impact**
Dr. Tremblay reviewed data from the Enhanced Planning Tool (2014–2019) to identify the impact of community engagement across all academic units at UVic. She also identified and surveyed 12 case study participants to showcase specific community-engaged research projects from across the university. The result: 167 instances where UVic community engagement initiatives directly aligned with one or more of the five OCUE pillars as well as UN Sustainable Development Goals.

ALIGNMENT OF UVIC INSTANCES OF IMPACT WITH UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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The result: 167 instances where UVic community engagement initiatives directly aligned with one or more of the five OCUE pillars as well as UN Sustainable Development Goals.
Key findings

- Study not exhaustive of all CE activity: different terminology, reporting structure of impact at EPT level – a pilot

- Strong evidence of impact to students (skills, employment and professional development), community partners (systems change, improved services, infrastructure) and quality of research (societal relevance, co-creation of knowledge)

- Wide range and diversity of research outputs as demonstrated from the case studies. Non-refereed publications represent significant output. Non-academic forms of knowledge mobilization have high impact.

- Research supports P&T CER guidelines and impact rubric – a major hurdle to advance CBR around the world
Increasing the effectiveness, safety and income generation of organized waste recycling in the metropolitan region of Sao Paulo, Brazil

- CIDA PSWM 2005-2011
- Introduced participatory approaches into waste management in Brazil
- Connected to national and global waste pickers networks
- SSHRC PDG: Social Innovation in waste governance 2017-2019
  - Canada, Brazil, Nicaragua, Argentina, Kenya, Tanzania

“Many of us, and particularly the waste pickers, have become strongly empowered, helping these individuals to emancipate themselves from oppressive structures. Many waste pickers became leaders in the National Waste Pickers Movement and thus were able to influence policy on a much broader scale” (PSWM catadore)
The analysis highlights how the participants themselves reflect on PV as a vehicle for personal transformation, knowledge co-creation and a shifting sense of their own ‘watered’ subjectivity. We find that the PV process helps to uncover and identify knowledge and process gaps on by enabling individuals and communities—often unheard—to participate in civic and political debates around resource governance.” (Tremblay & Harris, 2018)
Final thoughts

• CBR as a **space for social transformation**, to build agency and research capacity in the community to solve local challenges

• Art engagements can be particularly useful for **legitimizing and valuing multiple ways of knowing** in the world and to bring forth citizens narratives – the way that residents describe the issues, tensions and key points of resonance

• These approaches lead to greater potential for decisions (i.e. water, waste, resources) to be more informed, inclusive and potentially accepted locally.

• **We need long-term continuity** for the capacity of such engagements to have concrete political and social impacts – we need long-term partnerships

• Challenges in affecting **broader power dynamics and top down governance** common for resource management (e.g. *highly contested political space*)

• Building community research capacity to play equitable roles in the research partnerships is critical for a knowledge democracy

• CBR enables critical experiential learning for students – *towards global citizens*
Thank you!

Contact: crystalt@uvic.ca; Website: www.crystaltremblay.com

Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/crystaltremblay

More materials available at: http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/
http://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/5949

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