

# Creating Effective University- Community Research Partnerships

Linda Silka  
University of Massachusetts Lowell



# *Research Partnership Examples*

- Southeast Asian Environmental Justice Partnership and New Ventures Environmental Justice Partnerships (*NIEHS-funded*)
- Community Problem-Solving Partnership (*EPA-funded*)
- Community Outreach Partnership Center and Healthy Homes Research (*HUD-funded*)
- Project Splash and Science of Small Things (*NSF-funded*)
- Cambodian Community Health 2010 (*CDC-funded*)



# *Research Partnerships*

- Characteristics
  - Multiyear
  - Multicultural
  - Multidisciplinary
  - Research and Action
  - Lack of agreement of goals and tasks
  - Great opportunities and great challenges

## Mission:

The Cambodian Community Health 2010 project is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This project was established in 1999 to address the health care needs of the Cambodian population as well as to help eliminate health care disparities in the areas of Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes. A coalition of Lowell health agencies are implementing actions to modify risk behaviors and educate health care providers regarding the health disparities in the Cambodian community. These agencies have a commitment to providing educational and outreach activities in preventing and managing Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease.

### GOALS OF CCH2010 PROGRAM:

- To identify and implement effective and sustainable ways to improve the health status of Cambodians in Lowell.
- To increase access to the health care delivery system for Cambodians.
- To increase awareness among health providers about Cambodian health care beliefs, practices, and needs relating to Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes.
- To decrease risk factors and behaviors and enhance protective factors associated with Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes.
- To increase the capacity of public health researchers to conduct community based research regarding the Cambodian community. This will increase data available regarding Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes.



## Cambodian Community Health 2010



The CAMBODIAN COMMUNITY HEALTH 2010 project is funded through grant number U55/CCU 102151 from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is part of a federal initiative entitled, Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health 2010 (REACH 2010). By tailoring community mobilization and resources, REACH 2010 encompasses a goal under Healthy People 2010: to eliminate disparities in health status experienced by racial and ethnic populations.

LOWELL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER  
with LCHC is the central coordinating agency.

## A Multi-Faceted Community Approach to Health

### Resources

#### FOR THE CAMBODIAN COMMUNITY:

- Case Management services for Cambodians with Diabetes and/or Cardiovascular Disease
- Newsletters in Khmer
- Tours for community residents of health and human service providers in Lowell (Such as the police department, Trinity Ambulance, Lowell General Hospital)
- Peer support groups for Cambodians with Diabetes and/or Cardiovascular Disease
- Tai Chi classes
- Walking Meditation Programs
- Khmer Radio, Khmer TV, Khmer newspaper outreach efforts
- Educational workshops: (linguistically and literacy appropriate) Covering: Heart Disease, Hypertension, Diabetes, High Cholesterol, Stroke
- Audio tapes in Khmer about Diabetes, Stroke and Hypertension
- Community screenings for blood pressure and blood sugar throughout the year
- Home visits for special concerns

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SERVICES CONTACT:

Cambodian Community Health 2010  
Sidney Liang  
Lowell Community Health Center  
978-746-7829  
sidneyli@lchealth.org



#### FOR PROVIDERS & COMMUNITY AGENCIES:

##### STAFF & PROVIDER EDUCATION

- Medical interpreter training program
- User friendly guide to *Cambodian Health Care Beliefs, Practices and Culture*
- Presentations about Cambodian health beliefs, practices and culture
- Khmer Medical Terminology Reference Booklet

##### PATIENT EDUCATION & INTERVENTION

- Fact sheets in Khmer about Diabetes, medications and foot care
- Fact sheets in Khmer about Heart Disease
- A Diabetes screening tool in English and Khmer
- Curriculum guide for community education and health promotion about Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease for Cambodians
- Audio tapes in Khmer about Diabetes, Stroke and Hypertension
- American Heart Association's *Six Steps to a Healthier Heart* in Khmer
- Practical Guide to Outreach in the Cambodian Community*

##### Research

- Results from a behavior risk factor survey studying adult Cambodians in Lowell
- Summary data report summarizing available quantifiable data regarding Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease among Cambodians
- Community Conversations* publication addresses health care needs of the Cambodian community

## Cambodian Community Health 2010

### SELECTED HEALTH INDICATORS - LOWELL, MA

- It is estimated that over 25,000 residents of Lowell are of Southeast Asian descent, out of a total population of 105,000 residents.
- At least 72% of Cambodians were born in circumstances such as refugee camps.
- 60% of the adult Cambodian population have no formal U.S. education.
- Close to 87% of Cambodians identify as Buddhists.
- 78% of adults prefer their native Khmer language to English.
- 75% of adults practice traditional medicine and the use of herbs as treatment for illness.
- 45% of the adult Cambodian male population has never had their cholesterol checked in comparison to only 4% of the adult MA male population who have not had their cholesterol checked.
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both Cambodian and all MA adults.
- Among adult Cambodians in Lowell, a disproportionate share of adult deaths 45 and older are attributable to stroke, 15.99%, and diabetes, 13.4%, when compared with all MA residents, 6.5% and 2.5% respectively.

\*Bureau of Health Statistics, MA DPH & Cambodian BOP'S



# *Research Partnerships*

- Goals included:
  1. Addressing challenging research questions
  2. Producing publications (for academic audiences and community/stakeholder audiences)
  3. Creating policy change (local, regional, national, international)
  4. Strengthening graduate education
  5. Strengthening cross-disciplinary communication
  6. Changing ways university works with stakeholders
  7. Overcoming knowledge to action obstacles



# *Research Partnerships*

Some of what I've heard you say about your *Knowledge to Action* partnership challenges

- Some partnerships already well underway; others just starting
- Some of you very experienced working with stakeholders; for others this is a relatively new experience
- Some partnerships have shifting stakeholders
- Different CSS parts have overlapping stakeholders
- For some parts of partnership not clear who stakeholders are
- Agreement among stakeholders can't be assumed
- Stakeholder comments suggest that they may want more than can be delivered
- Some stakeholders are essentially "roles" rather than "people"



# *Research Partnerships*

- Three “thought models” for identifying and addressing research partnerships challenges
  - Jones’s Bus Metaphor
  - Partnership Research Cycles
  - Paradoxes of Partnership
- Let’s look at and try applying each to your situation



# *Framing Partnership Problems*

Using Jones's Bus Metaphor to reflect on your *Knowledge to Action* partnership issues

- How did Jones use this metaphor at researcher-community conference?
- How did community members and researchers respond?
- Which parts of your challenge does this illuminate?
- What will you do about the ideas it suggests?



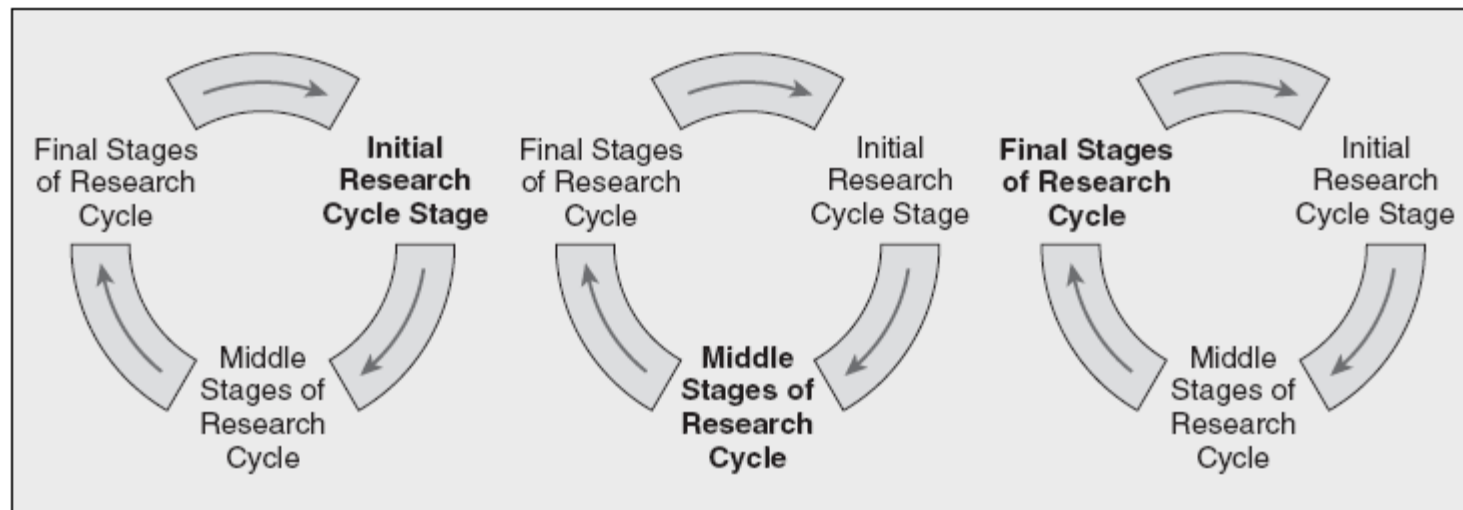
# *Framing Partnership Problems*

Using the Research Cycle Approach to analyze  
*Knowledge to Action* issues such as:

- Who decides on the research agenda and research questions?
- Is it more important to solve a problem or to understand the problem at a basic level?
- When is enough known?
- Who owns the data?

# Framing Partnership Problems

Figure 22.1 Research Cycle Partnership: What Issues Emerge at Each Stage?





# *Framing Partnership Problems*

Using the Paradoxes of Partnership Analysis to reflect on your *Knowledge to Action* issues

- Partnerships raise “productive paradoxes”
- People make contradictory, but important, claims for partnership
- Partnerships reflect contradictions about faculty roles, about institutional commitments, about traditions in higher education
- Partnerships can be one means of integrating the contradictory aims of higher education



# *Partnership Paradoxes*

- Partnerships should be choreographed, planned relationships/Partnerships should be allowed to be evolving, emerging relationships
- Partnerships are collaborations between organizations/Partnerships are relationships between individuals
- Partnerships need faculty as experts/Partnerships need faculty as generalists
- Partnerships are vehicles for local application and improvement/Partnerships are opportunities for faculty innovation and advancement



# *Partnership Paradoxes*

- Which parts of your challenge might the *Paradox Analysis* illuminate?
- What will you do about the ideas it suggests?
- Which parts of your challenge does this analysis leave out?



# *Research Partnerships*

- Putting these different models together, let's think about CSS
  - How are you going to identify the emerging problems in your partnerships?
  - How are you going to track the ways you are getting better at partnerships?
  - How are you going to learn from each other in the process?
- Tell me the titles of some articles that you hope you can write about your *Knowledge to Action* partnerships



# *Research Partnerships*

- *Problem to Solve*: Getting started with partners
- *Problem to Solve*: Involving stakeholders (Enough, Not Too Much, At the Right Time, Over Time)
- *Problem to Solve*: Communicating with each other and not have it take too much time
- *Problem to Solve*: Devising *Knowledge to Action* outreach “vehicles”



**EPA's Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)** is a competitive grant program that offers an innovative way for a community to organize and take action to reduce toxic pollution in its local environment. Through CARE, a community creates a partnership that implements solutions to reduce releases of toxic pollutants and minimize people's exposure to them. By providing financial and technical assistance, EPA helps CARE communities get on the path to a renewed environment.

**Explore the CARE Program:**

[Basic Information](#) - An overview of the CARE program including its goals and strategies.

[Where You Live](#) - See if there is a CARE project underway in your area.

[Cooperative Agreements](#) - Information on funding available through the CARE program.

[Community Profiles](#) - Descriptions of community projects undertaken through CARE.

[Resource Guide](#) - The CARE Resource Guide is a tool to help you find information related to community-based environmental protection.

[Publications](#) - A listing of documents that provide information about, and are relevant to the CARE program.

[CDC/ATSDR Collaboration](#) - Information on EPA's and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's joint effort to support community environmental and health goals.



# *Research Partnerships*

Some examples to keep in mind:

- **Paiute Partnership:** Lessons of the failure to include vectors of contamination in model
- **Healthy Home Partnership:** Lessons of the mattress pads
- **TURI Partnerships:** Lessons of attending to business uses of chemicals before starting research
- **Housing Affordability Partnership:** Assumptions about tools and resources available to each partner
- **Smart Growth Partnership:** Lessons of individual communities making independent job creation decisions
- **Partnerships on EPA Fish Advisories:** The lesson of assumptions



# *Framing Partnership Problems*

- A few useful websites
  - [Ccph.info](http://Ccph.info)
  - [Researchethics.org](http://Researchethics.org)
  - [Loka.org](http://Loka.org)
  - [OUP.org](http://OUP.org)
  - [Aucea.net.au](http://Aucea.net.au)
  - [Epa.gov/care/](http://Epa.gov/care/)
- A few useful publications