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Asset Mapping Steps

Posted by [Ron Dwyer-Voss](#) on February 13, 2015 at 7:52am

The post title is intriguing, isn't it? Step by step instructions to follow and, *whallah!*, you have an asset map.

OK, that's a little, no, a lot, oversimplified.

For years I have been asked for 'the steps to creating an asset map.' I resisted. One of the great values of ABCD is that it starts and ends with the local context. A neighborhood. A town, A group of people joined by their shared experience with the labels they share, or their faith, or their employment in the same organization. So it seems a little disrespectful to the local contexts to presume I, or anyone, knows what steps are best in that context.

That said, I have noticed over the years that there *are* some common steps that work for most groups. Mike Green and Henry Moore provided some ideas and direction in their amazing book, [When People Care Enough to Act](#) and on [Mike's website](#). [Americorps](#) in the USA, [Sustainable Communities Northeast Initiative \(SCNEI\)](#) in England, and other large networks that have to train lots of people on ABCD have attempted to simplify the asset mapping process into steps. They have done a great job of capturing the essential steps to creating and using an asset map.

Habitat for Humanity International recently asked me to create a 1-2 page document of "steps" for their National Affiliate Conference. I tried to take the best from a variety of resources and created [One Way to Create an Asset Map in Your Community](#).

It's not fancy and certainly proves my simplistic graphics skills. But, it is a start on steps.

The key to using this or any other asset mapping tool is to remember that the map is a means, not an end. In ABCD it is a community organizing guide, not resource directory.

Asset maps should be used to create relationships and connect assets so a community can strengthen itself and realize its potential.

Asset maps should be done by a group or team, not an individual. The act of creating the asset map as a group will create a stronger team and reveal unforeseen opportunities.

Asset maps should be fun to create. If you are not having fun creating your asset map, you are doing it wrong.

Finally, remember, an asset map can be the first step to creating social change. Prepare to be amazed.