

Topic 2 - Needs Assessment

Introduction

Welcome to Topic 2 of the module *Community Profiles and Needs Assessment*. This topic is called Needs Assessment. In this topic you will be looking at how to assess or work out the need for services in a community. This will involve:

- * understanding the difference between needs and wants
- * being able to list basic needs
- * looking at the changing ways people experience needs
- * identifying needs
- * looking at how to meet those needs.

Your assessment for this topic will involve developing a needs assessment questionnaire, conducting a survey using a small group of people, and writing a short report on what your needs assessment showed.

Needs assessments identify what services will benefit the community and make it a better place to live. Some communities find it very difficult to know what programmes they should be operating because they are unsure of what the community members' needs are. It is very easy to confuse needs and wants. A needs assessment is a good way to clearly identify the needs which exist in the community. Once you understand what the needs are you can think about programmes which might meet those needs.

This topic ties in with other modules, including:

- * Programme Planning
- * Programme Coordination
- * Submission Writing.

It is also related to the Community Profile and Needs Assessment Project.

What is a needs assessment?

Before you go any further you need to have a clear understanding of what a needs assessment is.

A needs assessment is a community development tool, which usually takes the form of a survey using a questionnaire to ask people about their needs.

Communities conduct needs assessment so that they can work out:

- * what their needs are
- * what needs are currently being met by service providers
- * what needs are not being met by service providers
- * what new services are needed.

By conducting or carrying out a needs assessment you can help the community to identify their real needs. Sometimes community members know they have needs, but they have trouble identifying them. At other times, community members confuse needs with wants - often needs are confused with material possessions such as cars, equipment, tools, furniture and so on.

When you conduct a needs assessment you:

- * look at what is currently happening in the community - this involves looking at the community profile to find out what programmes are currently operating, what services are available, who the people are and so on
- * reaching decisions about what the needs of the community are
- * prioritising the needs (working out which needs are most important and which are least important).



Self testing activity 2.1

In your own words, explain what a needs assessment is.

Who are service providers?

Service providers are those people working in the community to provide a service. Service providers may include:

- the teachers providing education
- the health workers that provide health care
- organisations which provide child care or nursery schools,
- government departments or companies which take care of the community's essential services, such as:
 - ⇒ the electricity supply
 - ⇒ the telephone system
 - ⇒ the water supply

- individuals or organisations who provide:
 - ⇒ dental care
 - ⇒ student hostels
 - ⇒ orphanages
 - ⇒ youth workers
 - ⇒ special care for the disabled.



Self testing activity 2.2

List at least three service providers working in your community.

Needs and wants

If you ask someone what they need, usually they will immediately start thinking of things they want. We all think we **need** certain things in life, but often what we are talking about is things we **want**.

What is the difference between needs and wants?

Needs are things we must have to ensure our personal wellbeing. Wellbeing relates to how we are getting on in life. Personal wellbeing includes our:

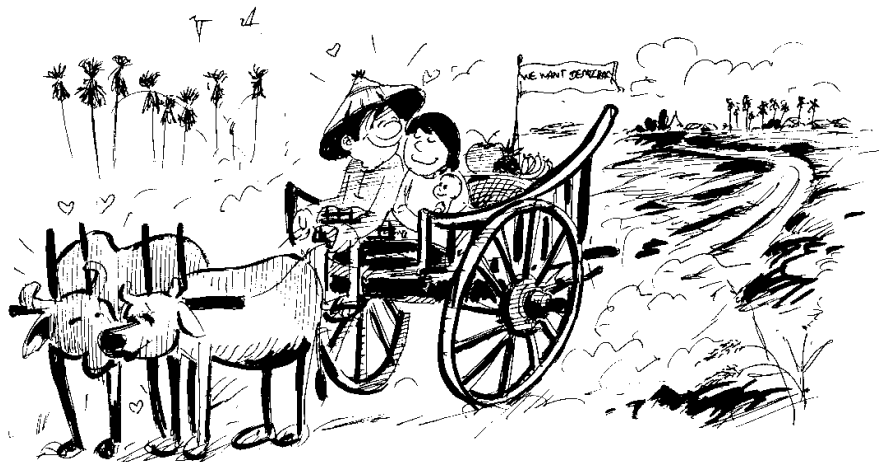
- * physical health - body
- * emotional state - feelings
- * social health - getting on with others
- * economic health - money, employment.

To look after our personal wellbeing we must take care of ourselves. To take care of ourselves we **need** certain things, such as:

- * water
- * air
- * food
- * shelter and clothing
- * love, companionship and friendship
- * interaction with other people

- * money
- * purpose in life
- * some access to transport
- * access to education
- * legal rights
- * safety.

Without these things we either cannot live or we live a life which is full of hardship.



Wants, on the other hand, are things which we do not really need for our wellbeing but which we think will make our lives more enjoyable, such as:

- * beautiful clothes
- * a nice house with furniture
- * lots of money
- * cigarettes and alcohol
- * the latest model car
- * mobile phone



Self testing activity 2.3

In your own words, explain the difference between needs and wants.

Needs

Remember, needs are things we must have to ensure our personal wellbeing. Needs are things we must have to survive and lead a reasonable life.

Different types of needs

People, as individuals, have a whole variety of needs which they must meet for their personal wellbeing. We all have:

- * physical needs - food, water, air, warmth, shelter, clothing etc
- * emotional needs - love, friendship, a sense of belonging to a group or community, a purpose in life etc.
- * social needs - interacting with other people, spending time with others
- * spiritual needs - religion, a way of understanding and making sense of our lives
- * economic needs - money, a source of income.



Self testing activity 2.4

In your own words, explain what personal wellbeing is.

Families also have needs. Families need:

- * respect
- * love
- * cooperation
- * support from and for one another
- * time with one another and interest in one another.



Self testing activity 2.5

List 2 other needs of families. Think about your own family

Communities also have needs. Communities have different needs because they are a large group of people living together. Therefore, the needs relate to the people as a group, not as individuals. Community needs relate to what is best for the whole community.

Community needs include:

- * structure - ways of operating so that everyone in the community is treated fairly
- * resources - staff, money, equipment, buildings etc
- * a sense of belonging to one another
- * programmes and organisations - to help meet the individual and group needs of individual community members and groups in the community
- * ways of communicating - getting information to and from community members, organisations, funding agencies etc.



Self testing activity 2.6

List 3 other community needs. Think of your own community.

Meeting needs - past and present

In the past, life was much simpler than it is today. The focus was on:

- * surviving - gathering or growing food
- * establishing family groups
- * trade

People had the same individual and community needs we looked at previously, such as:

- * physical needs - food, water, air, warmth, shelter, clothing etc.
- * emotional needs - love, friendship, a sense of belonging to a group or community, a purpose in life etc.

- * social needs - interacting with other people, spending time with others
- * spiritual needs - religion, a way of understanding and making sense of life

The difference between the past and the present lies in how those needs were/are met. In the past many communities were totally self sufficient - that is, they relied on themselves for everything they needed to survive. They:

- * hunted, gathered and grew their own food
- * made their own clothes and shelter
- * developed their family groupings
- * lived by their own laws and rules.

If they needed something that was not in their area, they traded or bartered (swapping one thing for another, not using money).

These days, however, many people's needs are met by:

- * earning money to buy food, clothes, housing etc
- * the government - which provides money, housing, services and so on
- * service providers, such as schools, hospitals etc.



Self testing activity 2.7

In your own words, explain how ways of meeting needs has changed between traditional times and the present day in your community.

Meeting needs - whose responsibility is it?

When we look at individual, family and community needs together, there are a lot of needs to be considered. Whose job is it to meet these needs? Well, sometimes it is your responsibility as an individual, sometimes it is the responsibility of the government and sometimes it is the responsibility of service providers.

The following chart outlines various needs and who is likely to be responsible, nowadays, for meeting those needs:

People in different communities and different countries might fill in the chart very differently, depending on their situation.

For example – in a country with a strongly developed market economy and a social welfare system provided by the government, the result might be like this:

Needs	Individual	Government	Service provider
Food	✓	✓	
Water	✓	✓	
Shelter	✓	✓	
Clothing	✓	✓	
Transport	✓	✓	
Housing	✓	✓	
Education	✓	✓	
Health care	✓	✓	
Money	✓	✓	
Love, friendship	✓		
Belonging	✓		
Welfare		✓	✓
Training programmes		✓	✓
Youth programmes		✓	✓
Nutrition information		✓	✓
Spiritual needs	✓		✓
Aged care		✓	✓
Special care		✓	✓
Community needs	✓	✓	✓

Whereas in a community in which most people live by farming with not many services provided by government, but with some assistance from NGOs the chart might look like this:

Needs	Individual	Government	Service provider
Food	✓		
Water	✓		✓
Shelter	✓		
Clothing	✓		
Transport	✓	✓	
Housing	✓		
Education	✓	✓	
Health care	✓		
Money	✓	✓	
Love, friendship	✓		
Belonging	✓		
Welfare			✓
Training programmes		✓	✓
Youth programmes			
Nutrition information		✓	✓
Spiritual needs	✓		✓
Aged care	✓		
Special care			
Community needs	✓		

In summary, individual needs are your responsibility. Most community needs are the responsibility of some mixture of individuals, the government and service providers. In regards to your individual needs:

- * your physical needs must be met by you and possibly the government and/or a service provider
- * your emotional needs are your responsibility
- * your social needs are also your responsibility, although some service providers do offer courses, sports programmes etc. which give you the chance to interact with other people
- * your spiritual needs are your responsibility, however the government has a role to play because they can guarantee your freedom to practice your religion; Religious organisations also meet many people's spiritual needs

- * your economic needs are your responsibility, however the government and/or a service provider may assist you
- * transport- if you believe you need your own individual transport, you must provide it.

In regards to community needs:

- * the government is responsible for providing transport for the community as a whole - bus, train, tram service
- * education and health care are usually the responsibility of the government and service providers
- * training programmes are often paid for by the government but may be provided by service providers
- * welfare in some communities is provided by the government, in some cases by service providers
- * care programmes for elderly people are sometimes provided by individual families, sometimes by the government sometimes by service providers.

Some community needs have to be met by the community members themselves and this varies from community to community.

For example:

- * the need for resources such as buildings, equipment and furniture for schools and hospitals – sometimes has to be met by community members – with government providing skilled staff such as teachers, doctors etc.
- * the need for communication among community members- organising meetings, newsletters etc. is the responsibility of all community members
- * the need for structure - how the community is organised is the responsibility of all community members (although in some countries the government may insist that it is done in a particular way).



Self testing activity 2.8

List two other community needs which are the responsibility of the community members - think about your own community.

How to assess needs

So far we have looked at what a needs assessment is, the difference between needs and wants and the responsibility for meeting needs. Now we are going to shift direction and look at how to actually assess needs. There are a number of ways to do this.

Consultation

One of the most effective ways to collect information, whether it is for the community profile or needs assessment, is by talking with people - consultation.

As we said in the last topic, consultation is not just chatting in the street, it is meeting with someone who has information you need. In regards to conducting a needs assessment, you would meet with that person and talk with them about the needs of the community and its members.

When conducting a needs assessment you would consult people who because of their training, employment with organisations or time spent in the community know a lot about the community and what the needs are likely to be.

Key people would usually include:

- * community managers
- * health care workers
- * service providers
- * teachers
- * administrators
- * committee members
- * older community members
- * leaders of community organisations.

If you are going to use consultation during a needs assessment you should follow these steps:

- * identify the people you think must be consulted - they should be key people in the community
- * develop a set of questions you want to ask these people, or a questionnaire you want them to complete
- * gather the information
- * analyse the information to work out what it is really telling you about the needs of the community.

Eg: you may talk with six people in your community about

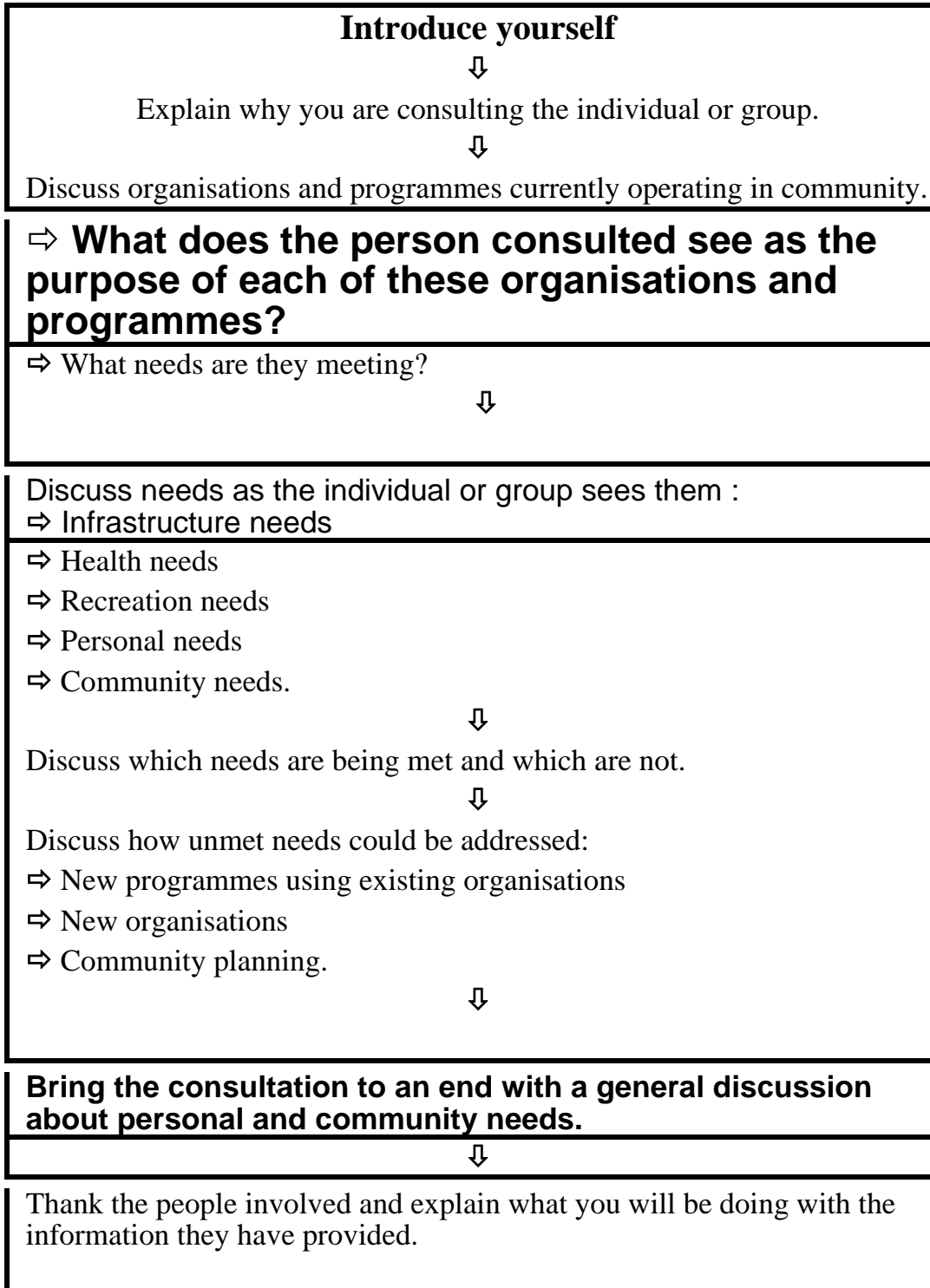
needs. All six people talk with you about how women do not play

a big role in the community - this may indicate the need

for a Women's Centre.

- * develop a list of needs and present them to the community for discussion and feedback.

Here is a chart showing how to consult with community members when conducting a needs assessment.



Records

As stated in Topic 1, community and government offices can be a good source of written information if you are able to access them, in particular statistics. Quite often community offices will hold records relating to:

- * resources
- * population
- * health issues
- * employment
- * education
- * housing etc.

You may be able to use these statistics to work out what the community already has, what resources are currently involved in meeting needs, and what resources are going to waste.

E. g: if you look at the community health centre statistics and they show that 62% of people in the community suffered malaria in the previous 12 months, this may indicate the need for a health awareness programme.

E. g: if the community profile shows that most of the houses in the community are overcrowded, this may indicate the need for additional housing.

E. g: if community records show that the majority of people aged 17 -25 are leaving the community at different times to attend higher education classes this may indicate the need for opportunities to study in the community.

All of these examples highlight needs which are apparently not being met.

If needs assessments have been conducted in the past, the reports will also give you a guideline to work from if you are conducting another assessment.



Self testing activity 2.9

Read through the following pieces of information and explain what each is indicating.

- a) Community health records show that Hepatitis B is becoming a crisis in X community.

- b) Local community records show that, on average, the community donates 10,000 Kyat and 5,000 hours voluntary labour to maintain school buildings each year.

- c) Health Centre records show that the majority of adults in your local community do not have regular check ups.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of questions which are put together for the purpose of collecting specific information from a group of people. By using a questionnaire as the basis for interviews you can collect information which relates solely to community needs. This is a good way of getting information from most people in the community.

Writing questions

If you are going to develop a questionnaire, remember the following points:

- * keep the questions short and simple

E. g: Please tick the age group which applies to you.

0 - 20 years

21 - 30 years

31 - 40 years

41 - 50 years

over 51 years

- * make sure that you only ask questions which relate to community needs and do not ask irrelevant questions

E. g: What do you think of the Prime Minister?

This question has nothing to do with needs - you can't just throw questions in to find out interesting information, they must relate to needs.

- * keep the questionnaire short

A simple questionnaire would range between 15 and 30 questions.

- * don't ask questions to back-up your personal opinions

E. g: Don't you think we need a child care service?

This question seems to mean that you want a child care service and you are looking for support for your own idea

- * avoid double questions - these are sentences which ask two questions at once

E. g: Do you visit the community clinic when you are sick and if so how often do you go?

This question should be broken into two separate questions.

- * don't use confusing and indirect questions

E. g: Don't ask: "Do you think the community committee has been using good strategic management practices to use its resources in the interests of the community?" If what you mean is: "Is the community committee providing services which meet your needs?"

Yes

No

- * don't ask questions which the community members can't answer

E. g: Do you think that the strategic management plan is meeting its aims?

Most community members won't even know what is in the strategic plan. This is a question for community managers, not community members.

- * make sure that all of your questions can be answered by everyone being surveyed

E. g: If you ask, "which school do your children go to?"

What if the person completing the questionnaire doesn't have school-age children?

Always provide a 'Don't Know' or 'Not Applicable' choice, so that the questions can be answered by everyone.

Eg:

Yes

No

Don't know

Not applicable

- * be specific - make sure your questions ask for specific information

E. g: If you ask "Do you use the recreational facilities provided in the community?" some people may use some facilities, but not others and will be confused by this question. It would be better to put the question like this:

Tick the recreational facilities you use in the community.

volleyball court

basketball court

- football ground
- children's play area
- cinema
- * test the questions on someone else before you use them for your needs assessment - to make sure the questions make sense
- * work out how you are going to use the information you collect from your questionnaire, before starting (so that you do not waste time collecting unnecessary information).

Designing your questionnaire

When you have decided what questions you will be including in your questionnaire you need to think about the layout of your questionnaire.

Remember the following points:

- * always make the first question important but easy to answer

E. g: How long have you lived in the community?

- Under one year
- Between one and five years
- Longer than five years.

- * leave plenty of room for people to answer if you ask them to provide written information

E. g: Please explain why you attend community meetings.

- * if there are different pathways through the questions, make sure that you provide instructions which make clear the different pathways.

E. g: Please start by answering questions 1 - 5.

If you have answered 'yes' to question 6, then please go straight to question 12.

If you answered 'no' to question 6, then please go straight on with question 7.

- * if you ask questions which relate to sensitive information, make sure you place these later on in the questionnaire.

E. g: Please indicate how you feel about the local police officers:

- completely reliable and friendly
 - friendly but not reliable
 - unfriendly and unreliable

* Always allow people to give you feedback on your questionnaire.

E. g: Please make any suggestions for improving this questionnaire in future.



The following pages provide an example of a community needs assessment questionnaire.

Green Valley Community Community Needs Assessment

Interviewer:
Date:
Time started:
Time finished:

Instructions:

1. Please answer all of the questions in this questionnaire.
2. The questionnaire should take about 30 minutes to complete.
3. All information you provide will remain confidential.

Section 1: Personal details

1. What is your age group? (Please tick the age group you fall into.)
 - Under 14 years
 - 15 – 19 years
 - 20 – 24 years
 - 25 – 29 years
 - 30 – 34 years
 - 35 – 39 years
 - 40 – 44 years
 - 45 – 49 years
 - 50 – 54 years
 - over 55 years
2. How much money do you have coming in over a year? (Please tick the correct amount.)
 - Under 50,000 Kyat
 - 50,000 – 100,000 Kyat
 - 100,000 – 150,000 Kyat
 - 150,000 – 200,000 Kyat
 - More than 200,000 Kyat

Section 2: Housing

1. Do you : (Please tick one answer)
 - Live in own family's house → go to question 4
 - Live in another family's house → go to question 2
2. Would you prefer to live in your own family's house? (Please tick one answer)
 - Yes → go to question 3
 - No → go to question 4
3. What is stopping you and your family living in the family's own house? (Please tick main cause)
 - Not enough money/materials to build one
 - Not permitted to do so
 - Other:
 - _____
4. What condition is your house in? (Please tick one answer)
 - Satisfactory → go to section 3
 - Unsatisfactory → go to question 5
5. What are the major problems? (Please tick all problems with your house.)
 - Too small
 - In bad condition
 - In a bad location (e.g. flooding)

Other:

6. What is stopping you from improving your housing? (Please tick one answer.)

I can't afford it

No available materials

No available land

I don't have the time to arrange it

I don't have permission → go to question 7

Other:

7. What permission is required?

Section 3: Health

1. Were you sick, injured or feeling unwell any time in the last two weeks?

Yes

No → go to question 5

If yes, go to the next question.

2. What was the problem? (Tick any of the answers below.)

Malaria

Cold, flu, sore throat

Headache

Injury

Stomach problems

Other: _____

3. Did you seek medical treatment for this health problem

Yes → go to question 4

No → go to question 5

4. Who did you go to?

Community health worker

Visiting nurse or doctor

Town hospital

Other: _____

→ go to question 6

5. Why didn't you get medical treatment? (Tick one answer)

- No medical workers in the community
- Don't feel confident with the community medical worker
- Couldn't afford treatment
- Suitable medical treatment too far away
- Couldn't leave children
- Other: _____

6. Which of the following prevents you meeting your health needs? (Tick one of the answers below)

- No medical treatment available in local community
- No transport available to health clinic
- Other: _____

Section 4: Education

1. Do you have children attending primary school? (Please tick one answer)

- Yes → go to question 2
- No → go to question 5

2. Where are they attending school? (Please tick one answer)

- In the community → go to question 5
- In a nearby community or town → go to question 3
- In another country → go to question 3

3. Would you like your children to attend school in the local community? (Please tick one answer)

- Yes
- No

4. Why are your children not attending primary school in the local community?

- No schooling available
 - Poor quality education
 - Other: _____
-

5. What educational needs do your primary school children have that is not being met? (Tick any of the answers)

- Not enough teachers
 - School or classrooms too small
 - Not enough sports equipment
 - Not enough learning resources (books, pens, maps etc.)
 - No instruction in preferred language
 - Other: _____
-

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Obviously your needs assessment may include more or different questions than the example provided. Your questionnaire might include questions on:

- * employment
- * recreation
- * secondary and higher education. etc.

It all depends on the situation in your community.



Self testing activity 2.10

List at least another three problem areas that a needs assessment of your community could include in a questionnaire.

Using the information

Once you have prepared your needs assessment questionnaire and completed your consultations and looking at records and any other relevant information you are ready to analyse the results. When you analyse information you are working out what it means. For your needs assessment, you will be looking at the information you have collected to:

- * identify needs which exist in the community
- * needs which are being met and by whom and especially
- * needs which are not being met.

Consultation

During your consultation with community members, staff members and service providers you will have written notes about needs which these people have identified. You'll have collected the following information:

- * community members - personal needs and community needs
- * service providers - which needs their programmes are meeting.

Once you have this information you can cross check it with the information you have collected in your community needs assessment questionnaire.

E. g: Let's say you talk to a health service provider. This person tells you that their health programme is providing treatment for people in the community for all but a small number of unusual health problems.

However, when you look at the needs assessment you find that most people say that there is little opportunity for health care in the community.

The service provider is not meeting certain community needs or the community members are not using the service provided - either way there is a problem, which must be addressed.



Self testing activity 2.11

Read through the following scenario and explain how you can use the information.

You have spoken to about half a dozen community members in your local community about possible community needs. Each of these people has spoken about a number of different issues. However, they have all said they worry about the maternal health care centre in the community. They feel it is not meeting the community needs. The needs assessment survey shows that only a few mothers and pregnant women in the community are using the centre.

Records

The records that you access from the community office and service providers may provide information on:

- * population
- * resource
- * the organisations and programmes operating in the community.

Again, you can use that information for cross checking against the information you collect in your questionnaire.

Eg: Let's say you go to your local community office and find that the community lists 4 primary schools for a total of 728 students and 27 teachers.

The questionnaire shows that most people with school age children say that schooling is unsatisfactory in the community because of lack of teachers.

Together, these two pieces of information would show that the community need for teachers is not being met by the community.



Self testing activity 2.12

Imagine that you look at the statistics relating to your community and see that only 10% of adults in your community are literate. The results from your questionnaire also show that 63% of all adults would like be able to read and write in at least one language. What does this indicate?

Questionnaire

Statistics are the numbers you have collected in your questionnaire. Once you have collected them you have to analyse them - in other words work out what they mean. There are a few steps you can follow to help you to do this.

1. Put your numbers in a logical order
 - * how many people with school age children send their children to school in the community:
 - * how many people with school age children send their children to school in another community.

2. Build your statistics into a table

Eg: If you are collating (putting together) information on health facilities you could draw up a table like the one below and then fill in the numbers as you go through the questionnaires.

Health facility	Number of people using	%
Community health worker	52	74
Visiting nurse or doctor	6	9
Community member	3	4
Town hospital	8	12
Other	1	1
Total	70	100

This will help you to clearly layout your information.

3. Where possible convert your numbers to percentages.

Eg: The table above shows that 52 people visited the community health worker when ill. There were 70 people in the community who had been ill in the previous 2 weeks. So, to work out the percentage (%) you divide 52 by 70 and times it by 100. This will give you 74 %.

$$\left(\frac{52}{70} \times \frac{100}{1} \right)$$

Once you have worked out your percentages and filled them into your table you can also show your percentages in simple column charts (or pie charts if you have a computer!)

The following column chart represents the table above.

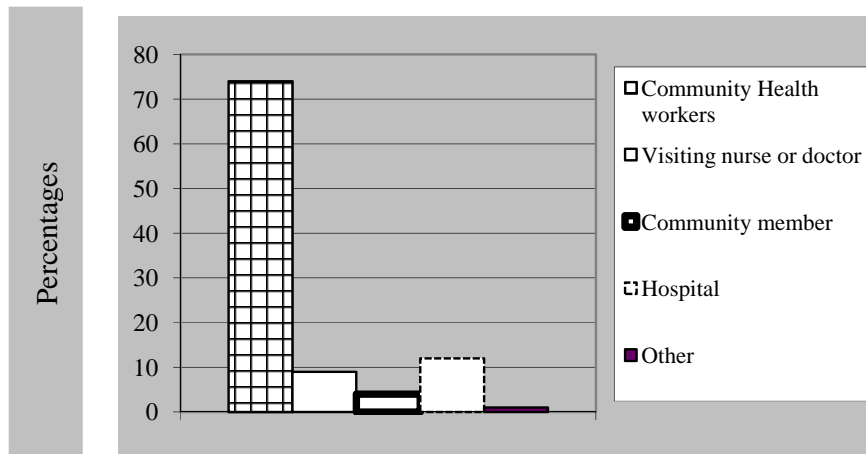
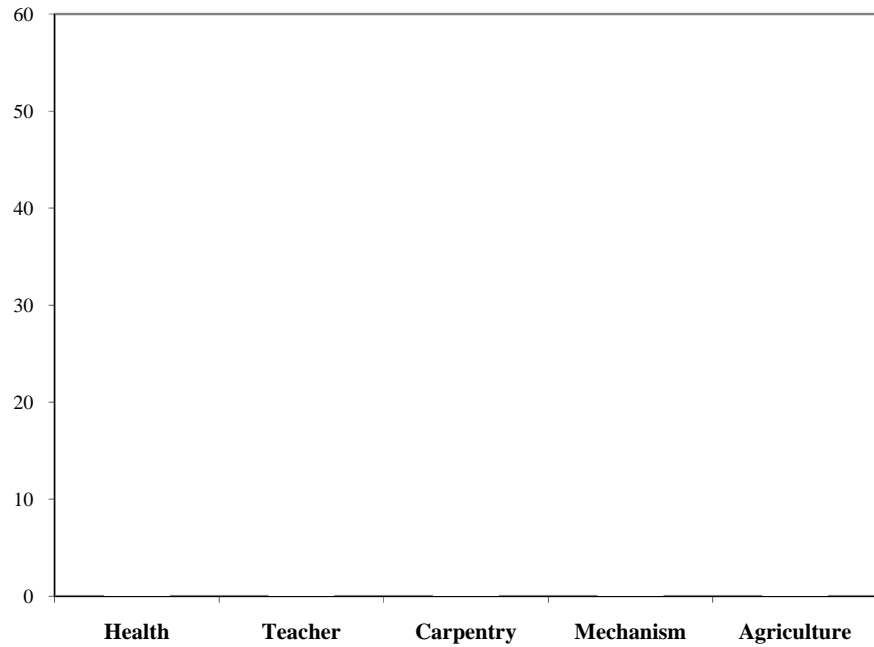


Self testing activity 2.13

Use the following table to work out percentages and fill in the chart, on the following page showing the percentage involved in different forms of employment.

Type of training provided	Number of people	%
Health	5	e. g $\frac{5}{70} \times 100 = 7\%$
Teacher	12	
Carpentry	10	
Mechanics	4	
Agriculture	39	
Total	70	100

Type of employment



Draw conclusions from your tables and charts. Look back at your health service table and chart again. What does this table and chart show you? They show you that most people are using the community health service, when possible.

This would indicate that the community health service is meeting the health needs of the community.



Self testing activity 2.14

Explain what the information in the block chart (2.14) indicates. What does this say about needs?

Once you have put all of your information in order, you simply put the various parts of the community profile and needs assessment together to present to the community and funding agencies. You can follow the example included in your learning materials and test it out on your own community, or make your own profile and needs assessment.

Using needs assessments to get services and funding

The whole point behind conducting a needs assessment is to work out what the community's needs are, what needs are being met and what needs are not being met.

- ✓ Why do you want to know this? So that you can work towards meeting those needs, which are currently not being met.
- ✓ How can you meet these needs? You can meet these needs by getting new programmes.
- ✓ How do you get new programmes? By preparing budget proposals and securing funding for them.
- ✓ How do you secure funding? By convincing the funding bodies that a real need exists.
- ✓ How do you convince the funding bodies that a real need exists? By using the needs assessment and its results to back up what you say in your funding submission.

Needs assessment are used to identify needs in the community. If needs do exist and they are not being met, the community should think about applying for funding for additional programmes.

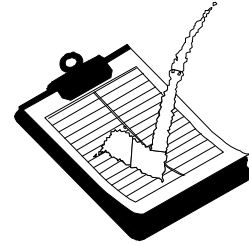


Self testing activity 2.15

In your own words, explain how you could use the information from a needs assessment to apply for funding.

Needs assessment development checklist

This list of tasks should be used as a guide in conducting a needs assessment.



Planning:



inform the community members/students



that you want to conduct a needs assessment and why and get their permission



decide how you will collect your information



Needs assessment questionnaire:



develop a needs assessment questionnaire



to collect information about community and personal needs



keep the questionnaire short



make sure that your questions are short and



simple



make sure you only ask one question at a



time



make sure your questions only relate to needs













make sure that your questions are specific





make sure that your questions are clear







-  make sure your question do not simply back-up your personal opinions
-  make sure all questions can be answered by community members
-  test your questions on someone to make sure they make sense
-  make sure that your first question is simple but important
-  make sure that you leave enough space when asking people to provide written information
-  make sure that you give people the chance to give you feedback about your questionnaire
-  make sure that you put your sensitive questions later in the questionnaire
-  interview people using the questionnaire
-  organise the numbers you collect from your questionnaire into tables or charts
-  analyse your information








Consultation:

-  decide who you are going to consult
-  develop a set of questions related to needs to use as a base for your consultation with these people

Records:

-  decide what records you are going to access
-  work out how these records are going to help you with your needs assessment
-  get permission to access the records
-  record the relevant information

Report:

-  write up your needs assessment
-  include instructions
-  include an introduction
-  include an outline of how you conducted the needs assessment
-  acknowledge and thank everyone who helped you



include a conclusion



check your report for mistakes and



correct all mistakes.

Summary

In this topic we have looked at needs assessments - how to conduct them, what is involved and how to use the information you collect.

A needs assessment is a very important community development tool. A need assessment can help you to identify needs and then work towards meeting needs. By conducting a needs assessment you can help the community to work together and you can provide benefits for the whole community.

Self-testing Activities Answers

Topic 1

Self testing activity 1.1

This flow chart shows us the process of community development. It lays out the steps that can follow from developing a community profile.

Self testing activity 1.2

Your community may have:

- * buildings
- * staff members
- * workers
- * land
- * money
- * vehicles
- * boats
- * furniture
- * office equipment
- * generators etc.

Self testing activity 1.3

The organisations providing services will vary from one community to another. The organisations listed will be those providing e.g:

- * a visiting health service
- * relief supply distribution
- * education or a school system
- * a youth centre
- * hospital or clinic
- * electricity supply
- * water supply

- * road maintenance
- * transport service

Self testing activity 1.4

Ethnic groups, language groups and religious groups should be included. Cultural background could describe:

- * where the main cultural groups are located
- * which groups use which languages
- * something about the roles of men and women in the different cultural groups
- * cultural practices relating to the land and natural environment
- * loss of culture
- * harmony or tension between different cultural groups.

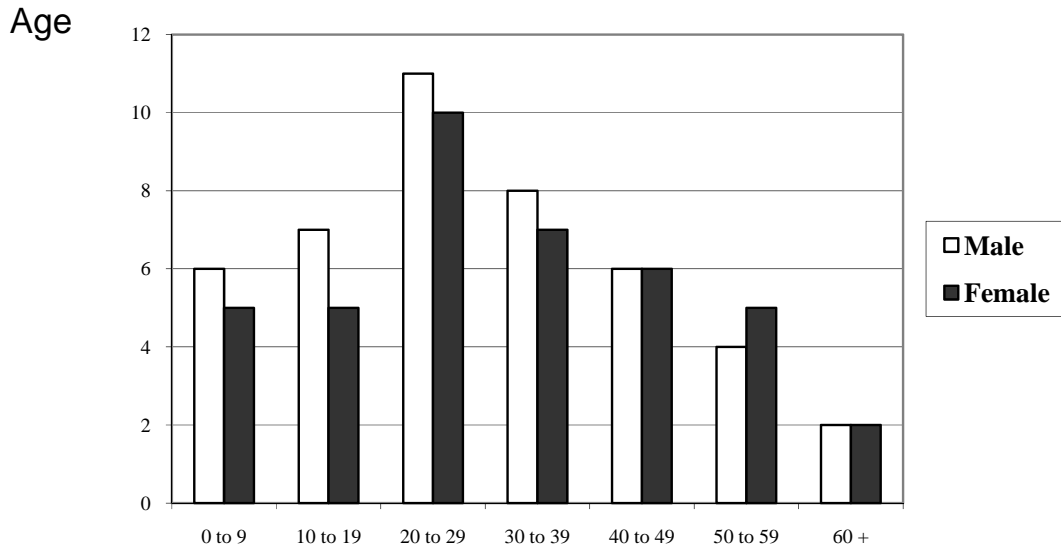
Self testing activity 1.5

- a) It is important to keep questionnaire questions simple so that community members do not have trouble understanding them. If people have to struggle to understand a questionnaire they are more likely to throw it away, rather than complete it.
- b) Four ways of collecting information include:
 - * consulting people
 - * looking at written records
 - * using a questionnaire
 - * observation.

Self testing activity 1.6

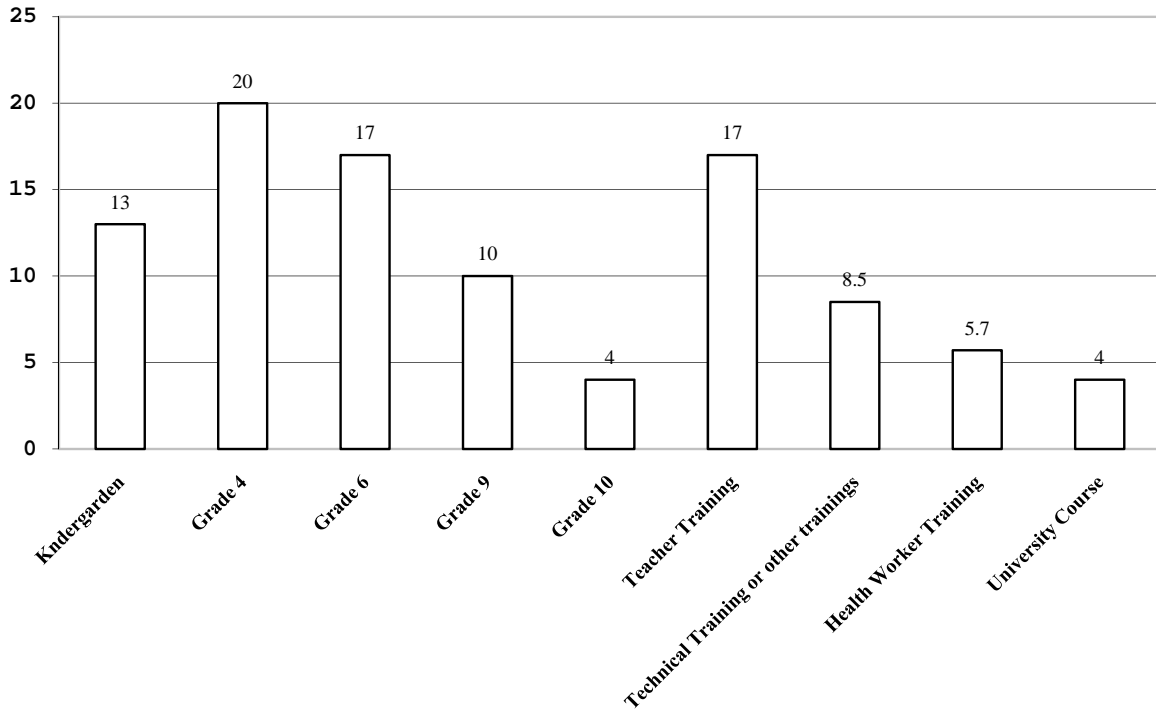
Background information is usually a collection of facts - statements which are true - which can be backed up with evidence proving that the statement is true. A statistic is a number based on information which has been collected. Statistics are often used to backup facts.

Self testing activity 1.7



Self testing activity 1.8

Educational Background of Community Members



Self testing activity 1.9

Using the block chart showing the educational background of community members, you could conclude that:

- * many community members have very little formal education - which may indicate a need for more educational programmes or better educational programmes so that people send their children to school and the children do not drop out.
- * many community members have completed teacher training courses which indicates a continuing need for these courses
- * very few community members have attended university, probably because very few people in the community are able to complete their schooling and pass the university entrance requirements.

Topic 2 - Needs Assessment

Self Testing Answers

Self testing activity 2.1

A needs assessment is a community development tool which helps a community to identify its most important needs, develop suitable programmes and apply for necessary funding.

Self testing activity 2.2

Service providers which may work with your community could include:

- * a health care organisation
- * a school system, a school or a teacher
- * a traditional healer or a doctor
- * a relief supplies distributor
- * an electric supply system
- * a transport service

Self testing activity 2.3

Needs are those things which we must have to lead a reasonable life. Wants are things which we think would make life more pleasant.

Self testing activity 2.4

Personal well being is how we are getting on in life. It has to do with our physical, emotional, social, spiritual and economic needs. If you are looking after your personal wellbeing you are making sure your physical, emotional, social, spiritual and economic needs are being met.

Self testing activity 2.5

Examples of other possible family needs are:

- * authority - parents disciplining children
- * food security - knowing where the food is coming from
- * safety - knowing they will not be attacked.

Self testing activity 2.6

Example of other possible community needs is:

- * security - to protect community members
- * essential services - water supply etc, energy for cooking e.g. fire wood, electricity etc.
- * government - a council or committee
- * fair and just laws - to make sure everyone is treated fairly.

Self testing activity 2.7

In the past, many communities were self-sufficient, meeting all of their own needs and usually relying on the land. In modern times, many communities rely on earning money to buy their needs including services.

Self testing activity 2.8

Community members may be responsible for:

- * ensuring that everyone is treated fairly e.g. distribution of relief supplies.
- * ensuring that the housing area is kept clean and healthy by not throwing rubbish everywhere and keeping washing areas and latrines clean.
- * being part of the community decision-making by taking part in general meetings, expressing their opinion etc.
- * providing opportunities for themselves and their children by establishing or supporting community schools and other projects within the community.

Self testing activity 2.9

- a) This indicates that the community needs a health awareness programme for protection against Hepatitis B.
- b) This indicates that the community school needs a lot money and time to be spent by the community for maintenance. It may indicate that new buildings are required.
- c) This indicates that many people in the community do not understand the need for health check ups or are not interested.

Self testing activity 2.10

Answers will vary.

Self testing activity 2.11

You could use the information in this scenario to identify a need for change in the management of the maternal health care centre, perhaps a review of the health care service it provides, its opening hours etc.

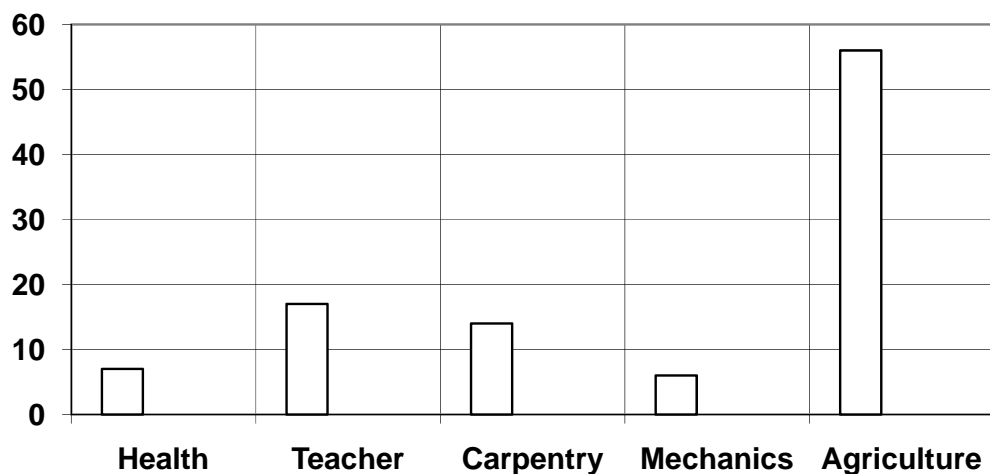
Self testing activity 2.12

The statistic shows a need for a questions or questions related to literacy for the needs assessment questionnaire. A 10% literacy rate would indicate that literacy is very low. If the results of the questionnaire then show that 63% of adults would like to be literate, clearly there is a need for literacy training opportunities.

Self testing activity 2.13

Type of training desired	Number of people	%
Health	5	7
Teacher	12	17
Carpentry	10	14
Mechanics	4	6
Agriculture	39	56
Total	70	100

Type of Employment



Self testing activity 2.14

This information indicates that there is a very clear need for agriculture training especially, with need also for teacher and carpentry training and also for health worker and mechanics training.

Self testing activity 2.15

You can use information from a needs assessment to prove to funding agencies that real needs exist in your community, when you are applying for funds. Funding agencies will not provide funding if you cannot back up what you say in your funding submission with facts and figures. You have these facts and figures as a result of your needs assessment.