

Community Engagement

Needs Analysis and Community Profiling

When and Why?

- ▶ A Needs Assessment takes place **before** the activity is designed.
- ▶ The purpose of a Needs Assessment is to make decisions regarding priorities for a particular programme.

Needs Assessments are about *Evidence*

- ▶ Can you answer:
 - ▶ “what evidence do we have that our audience needs this education?”
 - ▶ “what evidence do we have that our solution will yield positive results?”
 - ▶ “what is the reason that we are offering education in this format?”

Depends...

- ▶ Some definitions:
 - ▶ Gap
 - ▶ Need
 - ▶ Want
 - ▶ Assessment
 - ▶ Needs Assessment



Definitions...in detail

Gaps

- The space between what currently exists and what should exist.
- **Needs** are contributing factors
 - What *needs* to be resolved to help close a gap.
 - Needs often relate to *barriers*
- **Wants** are possible solutions
 - A proposed means to filling the gap.
- **Assessment** is the evaluation of needs, barriers and resources.



Needs Assessment is the process of identifying and *measuring* areas for improvement in a target audience, and determining the methods to achieve improvement.

Needs Assessments differ from community profiles in that often a needs assessment is undertaken by a statutory agency without the involvement of the community itself.



What is community profiling?

- ▶ *'A comprehensive description of the needs of a population that is defined, or defines itself, as a community, and the resources that exist within that community, carried out with the active involvement of the community itself, for the purpose of developing an action plan or other means of improving the quality of life of the community.'*

Hawtin & Percy-Smith 2007, p. 5

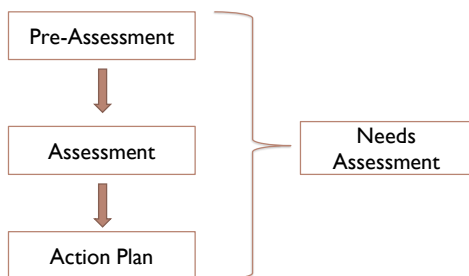


What is in a Needs Assessment?

- ▶ Relevant data
- ▶ Evaluations
- ▶ Objectives
- ▶ Opinion
- ▶ Timelines
- ▶ Barriers
- ▶ Resources



So... what is a Needs Assessment? The key stages



The Phases of Needs Assessment

- ▶ Pre-Assessment
 - ▶ Data collection. "What do we know?"
 - ▶ This is the foundation of Gap Analysis
 - What is the current state?
 - Where should we be?
 - How does our region compare to others?
 - What's new?
 - What's important?



Gathering Data

- ▶ Search for objective measures:
 - ▶ Scope
 - ▶ Severity: What are the consequences?
 - ▶ Are there national standards to measure against?

...how can we do it better?



It's not what you know, it's how you know it.

- ▶ Needs (gaps) are identified in 4 ways:
 - ▶ Types of Need
 - ▶ Normative
 - ▶ Relative
 - ▶ Expressed
 - ▶ Perceived



Types of Need

▸ Normative

- Defined as falling below a standard criterion established by custom, authority, or general consensus.

▸ Strength:

- Allows planners to use objective targets

▸ Weakness:

- Need levels change with time and must be re-evaluated



▸ Relative

- Measured by the gap between the level of service between similar communities

▸ Strength:

- Can lead to a priority for distribution of limited resources

▸ Weakness:

- Limits resource allocation to under-performing areas



▸ Expressed

- Defined in terms of the number of people who actually have sought help

▸ Strength:

- Focuses on situations where people have taken action
- Helps to determine barriers

▸ Weakness:

- Not all people with Needs seek help
- Loss of the bigger picture
- Misses latent Needs



- ▶ Perceived
 - ▶ Defined in terms of what people think their needs are or feel their needs to be
- ▶ Strength:
 - ▶ Easy to come by
- ▶ Weakness:
 - ▶ Subjective
 - ▶ Subject to the Dunning-Kruger effect



Poster Child of the Dunning-Kruger Effect

Problems must be translated into Needs

- ▶ Should strive to answer all 4 types of Need.
 - ▶ Each type of need paints a different picture of the gap.

In summary

- ▶ Wanting and Needing are not synonymous.
- ▶ A Needs Assessment is conducted before the activity is planned.
- ▶ Pre-Assessment is not enough.
- ▶ The more types of need you consider, the richer the planning process and the more effective the education.

"What gets measured gets managed" – Peter Drucker.

Some useful websites

- ▶ www.ons.gov.uk
- ▶ <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/?lang=en>
- ▶ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>
- ▶ <https://gov.wales/welsh-index-multiple-deprivation-full-index-update-ranks-2019>

Task

- ▶ Identify a sector of the community that you feel would benefit from a positive intervention. Outline a brief needs assessment for that group.
- ▶ Be prepared to present and feedback on this to the rest of the class.