Community Needs Assessment and Asset Map

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Community Needs Assessment and Asset Map

Community needs Assessment and the Asset Maps are the guides for policymakers to identify the resources, and create opportunities, identify the needs of the community and community groups within the geographical regions. Community needs Assessment are planned for bringing the required changes in the communities, while the asset map is the map that provides complete information about the areas in which the communities are living.

# Community needs assessment and asset map for community change

## Community

Community is defined as a place where a group of people live with the same beliefs, value systems, institutions, and their interests and they share the same patterns. These groups are not organized formally and they are the social entities having their own identity in the society. The community can also be defined as a population, which has its geographical characteristics, and the community is living there to develop their own identity and to create corporate purposes. Aristotle defined the community as a collection of parts performing their parts for a common interest in the area they are living in (Miller, 1998). Every member of the community has his/her role to perform and members are assigned with some specific roles and tasks, which they have to perform. The concept of community is used to help and guide, for policymaking, planning of services, and supports to build inclusive communities (Cobigo, Martin, & Mcheimech, 2016). Communities are those compositions who are not paid for being part of these community networks, community members perform their tasks and duties without being paid. However, communities can help and guide the policymakers to identify the needs of the communities and identify the resources available in a geographical region or a territory where these communities are living.

## Community organization

Community organizations are the ones, which are made with the mutual consent of the members living in the communities for developmental purposes, to solve conflicts, and to express their views. Community organizations are important because they are the instruments through which every member of the community expresses their views, relocate and mobilize their resources, to present their demands on national grounds (Korten, 1980). Community organizations enable every member to participate in the communal activities, whether it is resource allocation or infrastructural development.

### Group: Identified group for which we are going to work is a community organization named as “HOPE”. This organization is ten years old and it is working for the community in a way that this organization has introduced new trends and patterns for the development of the community and its members.

# The Community needs Assessment and asset map for the community change and anticipated change

## Community needs Assessment

Community Needs Assessment is an approach in development, which helps to understand that the strategies, which are planned and formulated, will be efficient for the audience. The needs assessment is an important tool for community development, which identifies the needs and demands of the people and members of the community and ensures to support policymaking and encourage public participation in the policy-making processes. The community needs assessment is a process and a method at the same time (Israel & Ilvento, 1995). Building the leadership skills, group unity, and cohesion, the sense of public participation in the community is the process of the Community Needs Assessment. While, helping communities in the strategic planning and implementation ensures the control over crimes, support the expansions in business and youth support programs is the method of the needs assessment.

Public participation improves and enhances the efficiency of strategies, plans, or programs because people involved in the process of implementing the strategies have more and special knowledge about the requirements, and this improves the quality. Participation also creates a feeling of hope and responsibilities which increases the number of public participation for the developmental initiatives.

## Asset map

Asset Mapping is the documentation of the tangible and intangible resources in a community and helps to understand the importance of the place and the assets, which have to be preserved, and they should be boosted for the use of communities. Asset mapping involves the capacity building of the community members, making linkages and relationships, development of a vision and utilization of resources, whether they are external or internal (Kerka, 2003).

# Community Needs Assessment

The methodology of community needs assessment is divided into four stages, the first stage of Community Needs Assessment is the planning and organizing, the second stage is data collection, the third stage is summary of the survey results and the last one is the result sharing through the public and community platforms for facilitating the action planning. Our group has developed a Community Needs Assessment and Asset Map for the community change. The community change was that there was no school building for the kids, their classes were taken under the blue sky, they had no educational facilities and there was no infrastructure so that they could go there and study there.

# Planning and organizing

Before starting Community Needs Assessment, it is important to develop linkages and relations with the locals and the community organization. The organization with which we are going to work and help to anticipate the change is, ‘HOPE’ organization and this is a community organization that is working for the education of poor people in the community. So, our group has made links with this organization but still, there is a need to identify the local community member who would help us in conducting the survey. Local participation is important because it will help you to reach the maximum number of community members. As we are going to work on the education sector where the children of the community lack education facilities, so the locals have more information and knowledge about the needs of children and the required resources for the building of a school.

Information about the existing resources in the community, whether they are tangible or non-tangible can be helpful in planning because there are enough resources for the implementation of strategies but they are not identified and they are not utilized efficiently. Involving the existing organizations in the Community Needs Assessments is important to gain the trust of community members, and to ensure that the new project is for their advantage, and to ensure the quality services, their involvement is important before implementing any strategy in the community.

However, the goals and objectives must be clear because they can help in achieving a milestone. So, our objective is to help the community in the construction of the school building because many children are not getting an education because they lack educational facilities. Our objective is to involve the locals and the community organizations in the formulation of strategies.

# The needs assessment methodology

While conducting a survey, it is important to define the scope, because if participants are not yet known, then the survey will not go in a proper direction. For this survey, the targeted population is the children and those who have an educational degree because they are more aware of the importance of education and why it is important to construct a new building. The participants who are educated would help us in assessing the needs of the community education and they will convince the other community members.

The needs assessment survey is important and it should be developed before going for community interaction. The needs assessment survey will help in the identification of needs that have to be fulfilled and it will help in identifying the resources which are available in the community. The needs assessment survey will help in developing an Asset Map and this will be used until the last of the Community Needs Assessment.

The methodology for the needs assessment would be focus groups because the participation of targeted groups is important in conducting the surveys and identification of needs and requirements which need to be planned and implemented.

The focus group will be sharing the same ideas and similar backgrounds like locals who are educated and the children who are not facilitated with the education facilities. The focus group will share the ideas, differences, and solutions for the existing issues. After having focus group discussions, the data and the notes should be compiled so that the perceptions and understanding of the local community can be understood and to plan strategies according to the needs identified by the focus groups and what suggestions, and solutions they are giving for the development of strategies for the educational facilities.

# Data Collection

The focus group discussions help in the formulation of the surveys and there are several ways of collecting the data. Data can be collected by the door to door surveys, and data can be collected by providing the survey form to the targeted participants. For this needs assessment, the targeted population will be provided with the survey form which includes close-ended questions and open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are included because it is important to know about the opinions of maximum locals (educated ones and children).

While conducting the survey, community participation plays a vital role in forming and planning the strategies, as they provide many reasons and ideas for strategic planning and formulation. However, incentivizing the targeted audience and volunteers will be encouraging because they will be attracted, and they will be honest with the surveys. The refreshments provided to the volunteers will give them energy, so they can work with enthusiasm and with full energy.

Collecting the data will need a proper kit and proper instructions, so managing a kit and instructions is important before the data collection. Data collection dates and timing should be fixed so that the participants would be available for the data collection. After completing the surveys, the participants would encourage their participation for the next time. While data collection, the open-ended should not be paraphrased they should be presented in the same way as they were given while survey conduction. The data should be presented in the same way as it was collected, the opinions of people matter in the decision making and the data should not be changed because the data would not be reliable anymore if changes are made.

# Summary and dissemination of the survey results

The data which has been collected regarding the new construction of the school building, its needs and requirements, and the availability of the resources is then compiled to a final report. A final report will be presented to the local community and the community organization so that they will start working on the construction for which our organization will support them. Data summary has to be according to the survey and focus group discussion.

The local communities are interconnected and they have linkages so that, it will be easier to present the data summary on a forum where every member will be available and they will be engaged in the discussion. The policies and strategies have to be formulated according to the discussions.

Community needs platforms for education for children, they shall be provided with the education facilities because it is their right and they will be contributing to the development of their communities after getting a quality education. issues of the locals need to be addressed on time especially educational problems that the whole community lacks. It is important to meet the needs and demands as there are enough resources in the community which can be utilized to benefit the community members.

The community organizations have to use the resources to improve the lives of the community members, and they have to include them in decision-making processes, and they have to make them part of the strategic planning. Participation of each community member and community organization will lead to the development. Encouraging the community participation will lead to efficiency in the work and members would become responsible. However, the identification of the resources in the community is important because there are chances of resource exploitation by external forces. The resources like land, educated people and old buildings can be used for educational purposes.

The elements of information necessary for identification are the language, culture if the community and community organization and their openness towards providing information about them during the data collection. The facilitators were selected from the local people because they were familiar with the language, culture and with mindset of community members. For Community Needs Assessments volunteers were selected based on their language, their culture and their understanding with the other community members. Of the volunteer were selected out of the community than there were fewer chances of an honest data collection because people are biased naturally and they do not show openness to everyone very easily.

The HOPE” community organization has to focus on the include the educated members in making policies for the educational initiatives and the participation of senior community members is important because their decisions are followed by the rest of community members and their decisions influence the community members. They will play a vital role in initiating educational forums in the community targeting the children who will be taught by the ones having their educational degrees. They can serve their communities because they have the skills and they are more informative as compared to the rest of the community members.

The community organization can be a bridge between the community members and the government. The government implements the strategies but on the community level as there can be decision making based on local levels so community organizations have to encourage the community gatherings and their participation in planning the policies and strategies. The community members, when encouraged for the participants regarding the decision making, help in the planning of the strategies according to the public demand and needs. Their demands and needs will be met if they participate in community events.

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