

OL 203 Assignment One Workshop Lesson Plan

Online Learning: OL 203 Designing and Funding Non Profit Projects. The Community Focus

Center for Sustainable Development: <https://nonprofit.csd-i.org/ol-203-designing-and-funding-non-profit-programs-3/>

Lesson Plan for a Community Needs and Assets Assessment Workshop

Duration of Workshop: Four hours plus a lunch break. You can also do this workshop in two sessions

Assumed Knowledge. Community members have agreed that a needs and assets assessment will be beneficial.

Purpose: Participants will understand which needs are causing the greatest risk and vulnerability—and what assets exist that could improve conditions .

MATERIALS

- Large sheets of newsprint.
- Colored pens or markers.
- Sticky tape.
- Pens/pencils
- Paper/notebooks
- Handout with instructions for exercises (optional)

BEGINNING OF LESSON:

Introduction: 15 Minutes

Introductions. Ice Breaker.

Statement of Purpose: Tell the participants what they'll be able to do as a result of the lesson. Show them the how-to card so they can see the entire process.

Activity 1. 1 1/2 hours. Community Mapping

Purpose: Participants will discover spatial relationships between different components in the Community. It will also reveal different people's perspectives about a community.

What to do. Consider visiting the community the day before the workshop to tour the area around your program to gain a greater understanding of the scale of the community and to get a better sense of some of the challenges they are facing. You can keep this wide open for discussion to learn more about your community members—or you can use it to focus on an aspect of your proposed project. Or both!

Variation 1: Tour the community with the participants before drawing the map.

Variation 2: Have the participants break up into small groups and each draw a map to compare and see each groups different perspective.

Tape several sheets of newsprint together and place them on a table. A suggestion is to begin with black to draw the basic outline of the community, streets and public areas. Try not to get too detailed. You can then use different colors to embellish the map for special features.

Guided Practice

1. Take 15 minutes and have community members draw a small preliminary map of the community, streets and public areas on a single sheet of newsprint. This will give you two things: you might discover that there is a good illustrator in the group—and you can quickly solve spatial problems by adjusting lines. Ask participants to identify a central place in the community to help orient themselves to the map.
2. Let your group artist transfer this basic outline of the community onto a larger piece of taped together sheets of newsprint.
3. Take colored sheets of paper and cut them out to represent additional features. These could be houses, schools and churches—and stick them to the map with removable tape. Ask each group member to mark his or her place of residence/work/school on the map.
4. Ask participants to continue adding places of importance to them, such as religious centers, schools, community centers, parks, businesses, fields, water sources, government offices, health clinics, police stations, and recreational areas.
5. Have them add places they would like to add to the community in the future.
6. When everyone is satisfied that the map is accurate, introduce the idea of challenges that the community suffers from. These challenges could be related to (for example) transportation, poor access to schools, green areas or grocery stores:
 - Are the challenges concentrated in one area of the community?
 - What negative impacts do the challenges have on community members and their assets?
 - Who in the community is the most at risk from the challenges?
 - Are there safe places in the neighborhood where community members can congregate?
 - Will spatial patterns and challenges impact the success of the proposed project? In my case this could be determining where community members live in helping to locate where the community garden program could go.

What are the community members' current coping strategies for dealing with these challenges?

Capacity building: Which of the difficult events are they having trouble coping with due to a lack of strategies?

Be sure and save the map for a future meeting or workshop.

Break: 10 Minutes

Activity 2. 1 hour. Asset Inventory

Purpose: An asset inventory identifies community assets that members of the community think are important for improving challenged conditions—and reveal why people believe these assets are important.

What to do. Randomly divide participants into groups of four to six people. Ask each group to choose a team leader. The team leader will keep track of time, make sure the group stays on task, and report back to the larger group at the end of the meeting. You can keep this wide open for discussion to learn more about your community members—or you can use it to focus on an aspect of your proposed project. Or both!

Give participants a brief overview of the activity. Explain that they will be walking around the community (or using the community map) to identify items they think are important to the community. If necessary, provide some examples of different community assets. Be sure to explain that each group member must identify at least one item.

Variation 1: Small teams of participants walk around their community observing people, places, and things they think are valuable. Team members then discuss their choices, create a list for the team, and share it with the larger group.

Variation 2: Using the community map from the first exercise, let small groups discuss people, places, and things they think are valuable. Team members then discuss their choices, create a list for the team, and share it with the larger group.

Guided Practice

1. Ask group leaders to take their teams out into the community (or work with the map) to identify community assets.
2. After groups have returned, ask them to discuss their findings. Visit each group during their discussion to monitor their progress and answer questions, if needed.
3. Ask each group to develop a list of the top 5-10 assets they think are most important to the development of their community.
4. Invite group leaders to briefly share their lists and explain choices. Record the lists on sheets of newsprint.
5. Discuss the assets that each group had in common. Why were these items considered important? Did any groups identify different items? If yes, why were these different items chosen?
6. Will access to or lack of access to the assets identified impact the success of the proposed project? In my case this could be the location of restaurants and grocery stores who could make donations to the food pantry.
7. Collect each group's list, and keep them for reference when writing up the project's asset inventory.
 - What are the community members' current coping strategies for dealing with these assets?
 - Capacity building: Which of the assets are they having trouble coping with due to a lack of access or strategies?

BREAK: 10 Minutes

Activity 1. 1 1/2 hours. Seasonal Calendar

Purpose: Identify a community's yearly patterns of labor, household income and expenditure, health and welfare, and recreation. This activity reveals changes in seasonal labor supply and demand, household income patterns, food availability, and demands on public resources, such as schools, mass transit systems, and recreational facilities. These results can be used to determine the best times of the year to begin certain projects and consider how projects will affect different groups of people.

What to do. Draw a matrix on a sheet of newsprint. Along the top axis, write the initials for the 12 months of the year. Along the vertical axis on the left you can begin writing down the events as community members identify them. Then, adjacent to the event make a mark ("X") in the appropriate months that the event occurs. You can keep this wide open for discussion to learn more about your community members—or you can use it to focus on an aspect of your proposed project. Or both!

Variation 1: This can be done with the group as a whole—while the facilitator takes notes on the matrix drawn on newsprint.

Variation 2: The community members are divided into smaller groups based on age, gender, or profession. A facilitator asks each group to identify different tasks they must do at different times of the year (related to paid and unpaid work, social events, educational activities, family health, and environmental changes) and plot them on a timeline that they share with the other groups.

Guided Practice

1. Ask groups to use different colored markers to indicate when different seasons begin. For example, the rainy season might be marked in green, the dry season in yellow, and the storm season in black.
2. Ask the group to imagine and discuss important events that happen during the year in their community. These could include when local schools are in session, major holidays occur, crops are being planted or harvested, the most food is available, or people tend to fall ill. Encourage them to include as many major activities as they can think of.
3. Once the calendar is complete ask the group to look at the patterns and discuss the following questions:
 - Are some times of year busier than others?
 - Are there times of the year when certain people are busier than others?
 - Are there time periods in the year which are the most difficult for community members and their assets?
 - Are there any times of the year when people do not have enough food or water?
 - What are the most important times of the year in the community?
 - Will these patterns impact the success of the proposed project? In my case, this can be to help us better understand the vegetable gardening cycle in order to better plan the community garden program.

If this was done in small groups, have a representative from each group present their calendars to the whole group, and facilitate a discussion of the similarities and differences.

- What are the community members' current coping strategies for dealing with these difficult periods?
- Capacity building: Which of the difficult periods are they having trouble coping with due to a lack of strategies?

LUNCH: 1 Hour