

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Key messages

- Needs assessment is done to identify the various needs of a community.
- It requires various tools including surveys, interviews, standards, analysis of statistics/ records, suggestion boxes or meetings, reports and newsletters.
- Surveys are done in form of a questionnaire.
- Interviews can either be formal or informal.
- Informal interviews, one makes prior arrangements and visits the community to talk to them about their water and sanitation needs.
- Informal interviews are where one interviews any community member without any prior arrangement.
- Water and sanitation standards are provided by professional associations and accrediting bodies.
- Analysis of available records on water, sanitation and hygiene can tell about the needs of the community.

What you should do in a community

- Work together with the elders, leaders and community members.
- Assist the community to perform a “gap” analysis to identify the current water and sanitation status.
- Together with the community identify the community’s priorities and importance of possible water, sanitation and hygiene activities.
- Help the community to identify available skills and knowledge and work towards building them up.
- Assist the community to identify the causes of the performance problems and/or opportunities.
- Assist the community to identify possible solutions and growth opportunities.
- Compare the consequences if the water, sanitation and hygiene program is or is not implemented.
- Inform the whole community about recommendations for intervention.

What would be useful to include is how you conduct a focus group discussion as one of the survey tools used.