

A Practical Guide to Education

- CHAPTER 1 -

Assessment of Needs, Resources, and Available Facilities

One of the most important elements in developing educational programs is surveying and assessing local educational conditions, needs, priorities, and resources. Whoever makes a needs assessment and how the assessment is made can considerably influence the selection of priority topics and the setting of educational goals. In order to be responsive to the local needs, and to the needs of the disempowered and marginalized in particular, it is important to ensure that those who actually do the teaching (teachers) and the learning (pupils), those who directly or indirectly finance the schooling (parents and government), and those who will benefit more generally from education (community) are involved in the process of educational diagnoses (Shaeffer, 1994). Encouraging participation of different community members in the process of educational needs assessment will help you, the teacher, to better understand the population's own perceptions, priorities, and capacities regarding educational activities. Particularly, it will enable you:

I to make a more accurate needs assessment

I to identify relevant educational goals and objectives

I to increase the motivation of the learners, parents, and the community to participate in educational programs

This section discusses several issues that are important to take into consideration when gathering information necessary for starting educational programs in emergency situations. It will help you:

I to identify the main effects of emergencies on education

I to assess available human resources

I to assess existing education facilities and services

Teachers can play a special role in educational needs assessment, but they cannot do it alone. In addition to providing personal suggestions for program development and implementation, teachers may be particularly able to encourage parent and community participation in assessment of educational needs, resources, and available facilities. This can be facilitated in the following ways:

1. Seeking parent and community opinion. Special emphasis could be placed on collecting the opinions of parents and other community members concerned about education - both in general and on more specific issues, such as the location of new

schools or the kinds of skills children should obtain in school. In-depth individual and group interviews can help in this regard.

2. Forum for the synthesis of data and the setting of educational priorities. School/parent/community associations become especially important as a mechanism or forum for the analysis of the data collected and the identification of priorities among these needs.

Section I: EFFECTS OF THE EMERGENCY SITUATION ON EDUCATION

Please check the appropriate:

Community members do not demand education ___

Community members are not organized to support education ___

Parents are not interested in education ___

Children do not attend school because of other duties (work, etc.) ___

If you checked most of the above statements, it means that one of the causes for the prevailing situation is a lack of community and parent motivation to support education. Please review Chapter 2: How to work in conditions of change and instability. This chapter will provide some suggestions on how to promote community involvement and participation in education.

Lack of teachers ___

Lack of educated adults to replace teachers ___

Lack of financial support for teachers ___

Lack of institutional support for teachers ___

If you checked most of the above statements, please complete section II of the questionnaire (**ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABLE HUMAN RESOURCES**) and then proceed to Chapter 2: What to do when there are not enough teachers. This chapter will help you to think about different ways of increasing teacher motivation and using parents and community members as teaching aids.

School facilities have been damaged/are unusable ___

Water on school premises is unsafe/not available ___

Instructional materials are not available ___

Lack of funds for equipment/materials ___

Lack of funds for teacher remuneration ___

If you checked most of the above statements, please complete section III of the questionnaire (**ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATION**) and then continue with Chapter 3: How to deal with a lack of resources. This chapter will provide practical suggestions on how to utilize the available environment for teaching and learning, obtain information about potential funding sources, and generate income.

Children in need of primary education represent:

different age groups _____

different race & ethnic backgrounds _____

different gender composition _____

different education levels _____

If most of the above statements are marked, please review Chapter 4: How children learn and Chapter 5: How to teach in a variety of situations. These chapters provide information regarding different teaching techniques and methods, which can be used for teaching children of different age, race, ethnicity, and gender.

Section II. ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABLE HUMAN RESOURCES

Who is available to teach children?

Trained teachers

Professionals from other fields (e.g., medical)

Older children

Community members

NGO members

Volunteers

Other (specify)

Who is available to support teachers?

Professionals from other field (e.g. medical)

Older children

Community members

NGO members

Volunteers

Other (specify)

Functioning institutions and organizations that can provide financial support. Please indicate a few names:

Community committees

Education ministry

Religious groups

Domestic NGOs active in education

Teacher training institutes

International NGOs active in education

UN agencies

Other (specify)

Section III. ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATION

Are some schools still functioning? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please indicate:

Location(s)

Number of children attending

What locations can be used for classes?

Number of children that can be accommodated:

School/ Classrooms

Rehabilitation Center

Shelter

Outdoors

House

Religious buildings

Clinics, health centers

Other (specify)

Are the following facilities easily accessible? (specify)

Water Source

Lavatories
Showers
Toilets
Medical facilities
Facilities for the disabled
Electricity

How far would children have to travel to attend classes?

[Go to the Next Chapter](#)