

## **MODULE 1 FUNDAMENTALS OF TELECENTRES**

### **UNIT 2 TELECENTRES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

#### ***Structure of the Topic***

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#### **2.0 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

##### **By the end of this unit you should be able to:**

- Explain the concept of community development
- Identify the underprivileged and disadvantaged in the community
- Explain the importance of partnerships in community development
- Be able to do a community needs assessment

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to Unit 2 – Telecentres and Community Development.

In the last Unit you were introduced to telecentres – their definition, the telecentre movement - in India and globally; various kinds of telecentres and the link between governance and telecentres.

In this Unit you will be introduced to the idea of community development. What is community development?

A community is a group of people living in a common location and interacting with each other. So, in your case what is your community? We could say it is your

- immediate family (your parents, brothers and sisters)
- extended family (grandparents, cousins, your sisters and brothers in law, nieces and nephews)

- your friends
- your neighbours and
- families in your village or town

This is your community.

Sometimes the word ‘**community**’ is also used to define people and groups that share common beliefs (like religion), interests (like cricket), needs and goals.

Communities can be local, [national](#) (Indians) or global (world citizens). Since the introduction of the [Internet](#) the concept of community has gone beyond physical boundaries. People can now virtually gather in an online community to interact around common interests no matter their physical location. These are called ‘**virtual communities**’.

In India, and especially in rural and remote areas, community is very important. So much so that development plans (from the local Panchayat level to the Five Year Plans for the country) speaks of community development.

You may recall that in Unit 1 we spoke about development. Now, we look at community development.

## 2.2 DEFINING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Community development** is a broad concept. What are the different aspects of this concept?

1. Community development is about *developing the community* – and all resources in the community. This would include
  - Human resources (men, women and children)
  - Services and infrastructure (schools, training facilities, agriculture, industry, banking, health facilities, water, power, roads and communications)
2. Community development is about *empowering individuals and groups of people* by giving them with skills to make change in their own communities.

For example, in your community giving education will help to empower you and other people in the community. Yes?

3. Community development is about *creating skills* - to help people come together in large social groups working for a common agenda.

For example, if there shortage of drinking water, people can come together to install a pump for such water. Or they can work to make sure that the institutions that are in charge of making drinking water available (for example, the Panchayat) actually do this.

4. Community development is *facilitated by community workers* to ensure participation of people in this process. They enable connections to be made between communities and link these with the development of wider policies and programmes. In Unit 1, you were also introduced to the idea of policies, policy making and policy makers.

For example, you may notice there are people in your community who take the lead. They could be religious leaders, **Panchayat members**, teachers, doctors. They may not have a formal function, but they care about the community and sometimes take the role of acting as a community worker.

5. Community development is the *concern of many people* - the government, NGOs, universities, the private sector – to improve the well-being of local, regional and, sometimes, national communities.
6. Community development is *the process of developing active and sustainable communities* based on [social justice](#) and mutual respect.
7. Community development is about *influencing power structures* to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives.
8. Community development *expresses values of fairness, equality, accountability, opportunity, choice, participation, mutuality, reciprocity and continuous learning*.
9. **The core of community development is awareness, education, enablement (creating an environment in which something can happen – for example, making sure that schools are close to villages and have separate toilets for girls so they can come to school) and empowerment.**

### 2.2.1 Community development practice

How do communities develop?

How does community development happen?

Where do those involved in community development start?

The first step (as experience has shown) is by getting to know the needs of people in the community. This is called '**community needs assessment**'.

An assessment is a measurement. Simply, this means getting to know what resources are available in the community (people, money, goods, and services) and what the community wants – its dreams, hopes and fears.

*How do you do an assessment? There are many ways to do an assessment.*

You can do this by:

- Face to face interaction with all members of the community

- Through group meetings

In both face to face interaction and group meetings you start by asking people about:

- the issues they are facing
- their assets (possessions, property, what they value)

Then your task as a person doing the assessment is to:

- locate resources (human, financial, material, infrastructure)
- analyse local power structures (how does power flow)
- assess human needs (who needs what)
- other concerns that make up the community's character

When you do this you will a community or social [activist](#). You will work with people in the community to get the economic and political power and control that a community uses to meet their needs.

Often, you will find that the social resources within your community will be adequate to meet these needs if people work together through [cooperation](#) and [volunteerism](#).

When you are doing community development and community needs assessment you will find useful [community-based participatory research \(CBPR\)](#) - a form of research which engages a community fully in the process of problem definition/issue selection, research design, conducting research, and interpreting results. *It is a process that brings together research, reflection, and action in a cyclical process.*

### Check Your Progress 1

Note:

- a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer
- b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. List five aspects of community development

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. \_\_\_\_\_
- v. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Define community needs assessment (in 25 words or less)

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3. Define community-based participatory research (CBPR) in 25 words or less

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## 2.3 ASSESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

The success of your telecentre will depend on the services and products you provide and the needs of the community you serve.

Communities come in many different forms (as we discussed in the section on community above). And, all these forms will have different ways of approaching their goals. Once you have gone through the process of identifying and understanding your community and [its assets and resources](#), you will then need to decide how you can best serve its needs.

You may think you know what your community needs. You may even be right. But, you must still consult the community first to find out what it wants - and you must do this genuinely, with a mind open to change.

There is a difference between what the community wants and what it needs. And, sometimes the two will not be the same. Your job may be to persuade the community that it has needs it has not thought about. And, if there are large differences between wants and needs you need to know about that, too.

You may decide to change your direction, or you may decide to spend more on community education. But you must establish a clear link between your goals and the goals of the people you want to involve.

Finding out what your community says it needs is very important because unless there are common goals, you may not be able to attract motivated volunteers, workers, clients, and not get support from funders and stakeholders.

What are the different ways to find out about your community needs other than talking to them?

You can consider:

- questionnaires and surveys (see the attached example at the end of this Unit)
- focus groups and open-ended investigations
- A forum made up of your clients and stakeholders where you can think things through productively as a community.

Here are some ways that you can follow up on:

**Interviews and background research:** You can start by speaking to a few of the influential people who know about the area - the heads of community groups, local personalities and officials. Ask them to identify:

- The important issues for the community and what they think is needed.

- Who else should be consulted and where the information you want is held.

You can also speak with others, as leaders aren't always in close touch with the situation on the ground. Even when they are up-to-date, they may have their own interests to serve so their views on needs may not be the same as the full community's.

You may want to check what other research has already been done, with this community or in other similar communities in India. You can do this by:

- Checking what agencies have information and data on needs
- Check government records
- Searching on the Internet
- Looking through local newspapers

**Surveys:** If there isn't any existing research done about your area, you may want to carry out a survey of your own. A survey can give you an idea of how people feel about the issues that concern you.

**Focus groups:** This is done with a group of people from the community. Start with a list of issues, and have a facilitator guide the discussion. Some questions could include:

- What are your main concerns?
- What groups in particular have these problems?
- Do you know where to find any previous information on these issues in this area?

Focus groups help in finding out about perceptions (how people see things, based on their experiences) but are not so good at collecting facts. Pay attention to the opinions expressed by the group, but do check their statements before taking action.

**Community forums:** If you want support from your community it's important that the community 'owns' the process. This means they feel that they are partners in the process you are creating. If you can get the various people and organisations (now called stakeholders – which means they have a stake or a claim in your business). For this you can get the stakeholders and your partners together to discuss thoroughly out what's needed, who should do it and how you should work together. The experience and expertise that you can accumulate in a room full of stakeholders is very effective in identifying needs and remedies.

**Partnerships:** Building community and understanding what the community needs and wants is **hard work**. It's a good idea to look for partners - people with a common interest in what you are trying to do.

**Review:** Once you have collected the information, you can put it together and then decide on what you will do first, or the priorities. Some questions you can ask when determining what you will do:

1. **Popularity:** is the need which was expressed by the community widespread?
2. **Severity:** is the need serious or only a minor inconvenience?

3. *Selectivity*: is it expressed most by a particular segment of the community?
4. *Possible interventions*: Some needs are going to be very real but out of your reach; you will have to pick out the needs that your organisation is capable of addressing.

You can now bring together the common factors and the results of your research. Does it match with your previous assumptions of what your particular community needs? Think about what new partners have emerged in the course of the consultation process, and how you might be able to work with them.

At the end of this process you should have a picture of the agreed needs you can address to best serve your community, and a story about how you will go about dealing with them. This will be a story that you can use to convince, motivate and inspire your people associated with the telecentre – those who will finance you, work with and for you.

Then, you can translate this story into a set of new goals and strategies within your strategic and business plans. Plans that you can now be more confident of producing results that your community actually needs and wants.

### **Sample Community Needs Survey**

Here are some questions you can ask when you are trying to find out what communities need:

1. Where would you like to see the community in the next five years?
2. What are some programmes and services that are not being met at the moment?
3. Are there any changes taking place in your community that concern you? What are they? What might be done about those changes?
4. What programmes do you know of that people are trying in other places that we should try in our community?

***Auditing your community assets:*** Your telecentre wants to survive, to grow, and to serve.

In order to do these things you need to be able to accurately describe who you are and be aware of your community's resources.

Most of the time, we focus on what is wrong with our community, what it doesn't have. Yet it's also possible to focus on our assets and strengths -- discovering what our community has.

Why? Because those assets and strengths can be used to meet those same community needs; they can improve community life. For this auditing the assets is a good idea. What is an audit?

An audit is a review or check. For an audit, you first have to find out what those assets are.

So in this help sheet, we will learn how to identify community assets and resources.

**Community resources, or community assets, are people, places, or organisations that can be used to help achieve your and community goals.**

The benefit of going through this process of assessing all of your community assets is to provide a better framework or a structure within which you and the telecentre can operate.

Besides identifying areas of strength it will also point out the areas where you need to do more work or can move towards.

Your audit will bring together a database or a file of information that is useful for you and perhaps other agencies, in which case you can use it to strengthen your alliances.

The most important thing in a resources assessment is to be flexible and open to new suggestions. You are looking for people who can help you, and one of the ways in which they can help you is to lead you in new directions towards things you hadn't thought of. Listen to what people are saying, respond to their input, and be prepared to change.

The best outcome for a resources audit is that new possibilities and new projects are taken up, and in that case it is the new activities that are the true record of the search project.

**Community assets register:** Next, you can begin the community assets register, in which you keep a record of the research you have done. This can be used for purposes as diverse as:

- member recruitment
- strategic planning
- fund-raising
- building partnerships
- media briefings
- proposal writing

The register will also be a physical record of what you have done. When other people come to work in the telecentre or if you wish to share this information to build on the telecentre, you will find it very useful.

You can put the community assets register into the computer.

### ***What is your community?***

The first step in developing a community assets register is to accurately describe your community's role and support. You will also need to know what organisations, groups and general trends share your space, overlap with it, or border on to it. Knowing your community can stop you wasting your time by pushing programmes that don't fit with what the community wants or needs.

### ***What sort of community are you?***

You will first need to decide how far your reach extends at this stage of your organisations' development. Are you:

- Area-based: covering a suburb, a town, a city, a state?
- Group-based: serving people in an interest group, wherever they live?
- Activity-based or issue-based: relying on the support of people who are interested in the same things you're interested in?

### ***Who do you serve?***

You can start by writing a detailed description of how you see your community. Your headings might be something like:

1. What are the physical (geographic) boundaries of the community?
2. How long has the community been in existence?
3. What is the history of the community? How have priorities changed over time?
4. Who are the key people and leaders in the community?
5. What is the makeup of the community: ethnic makeup, male/female ratio, age, economic standing, and education levels?
6. What issues are of most concern to the community?
7. What is the morale and involvement level of the community?

Also note people's opinions, hunches, prejudices, unspoken assumptions, and allegiances.

### ***Who or what else is of importance to your community?***

1. Who are the stakeholders - people who are not actually a part of your community but think they have rights in the area?
2. Who are your allies, the people you work closely with?
3. Who is your competition, if any?
4. Who, if anybody, regulates the area?
5. Who are the community leaders?
6. Who are the gatekeepers - the people who can encourage or discourage new developments?
7. Who else has lists? Can you copy them? If you can't copy other people's lists, can you use them - send out a flyer to another organisations' membership; put an advertisement in its newsletter?
8. Who are the leaders?
9. Who are the people who are respected and followed? Politicians, religious leaders and ministers (*pujaris, pandits, mualvis*, spiritual leaders and gurus. etc) doctors, school principals, spokespeople for self-help groups, heads of clubs or societies, business leaders, social workers & each name you get will give you a couple more.
10. Will they help you?
11. What do you have to offer them in return?

**Every contact can direct you to a range of new possibilities. You can use the following headings to list your community assets and potential obstacles:**

## **1. Government**

- a) What layers of government - national, state, regional or local government - are working in your area?
- b) How good are your links with them?
- c) How good are their information services?
- d) Do they have databases you can access?
- e) Are there governments grants for which you can apply?
- f) Are there other government resources you can use or borrow?

## **2. NGOs**

You want to identify the organisations that can help you and those you have to deal with. You will need to consult information that may be available (as we discussed above). You will probably need to look around on your own account for the pieces that have been missed.

In general, local government is one place for information on who and what is working in the region. Record all the organisations that have been working in your area and then list those that may not have been active up to now but might become involved in the future if you approach them.

## **3. Private sector**

Make contacts with local business and industry and individual businesses in your area. Private business can provide assistance, sponsorship, or allies. Get to know the sector.

## **4. Media**

Keep a contact list of all the media sources in your area - the local newspaper, radio and TV station and reporters for these media.

## ***Future trends***

As well as knowing what is available now, you will also need to know what opportunities and constraints may be placed upon you by the circumstances of the community - the economic cycle, the rate of violence, how much people trust each other and want to get involved, and how all these things are developing over time.

The best way to get this information is by asking people. As you develop your listings of community resources, use it to bring people together to discuss the situation. Use their conclusions to guide your work and organisation.

## ***Maintaining files***

You will need to keep abreast of what is happening in your community, and you will need to

have that information in a form that can be passed on from one office-bearer to another and will not simply be lost when somebody leaves. The initial community overview needs to be updated and modified as circumstances change, and as you change the circumstances through your initiatives.

### **Check Your Progress 2**

Note:

- a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer
- b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. List three ways to check what the community needs

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_

2. List 3 things that a community assets register can be used for

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_

3. List 3 questions important in a focus group

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_

4. List four headings you can use to list your community assets and potential obstacles

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Define a stakeholder (in 25 words or less)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **2.4 ATTENDING TO THE UNDERPRIVILEGED AND DISADVANTAGED IN THE COMMUNITY**

India is a country of great diversity. This means there are many kinds of people and communities – defined by religion, caste, class, age, education, experience and ability.

It is also a country marked by great differences and probably the greatest difference is in terms of wealth.

Many people live below the poverty line (BPL as it is called). These people do not have regular work or income, which makes life for them very difficult. They often don't have enough food. If they are sick they cannot get proper treatment, as they cannot pay for it. When they are desperate they seek private care, and may have to borrow money. This often leads to debt and exploitation.

There are additional issues of lack of literacy, which further makes them vulnerable, as they are not aware of their rights. These are the underprivileged and disadvantaged in communities and are often marginalised in their communities. One of the major goals of development is to bring all the marginalised people into the mainstream of development. This is called '**inclusive growth**' or '**inclusive development**'.

There are some who are called 'differently abled' which means that they suffer from disabilities which prevent them from participating fully in the community.

Some could be physically handicapped – such as the blind, deaf, dumb, those missing limbs due to illness or accidents, old age. Then, there are those who are mentally handicapped – slow learners or those who may suffer brain damage.

In other cases there will be people who are discriminated against because of sex, caste, age or religion.

All these people with different needs and experiences require attention to make sure that they are included in the development of communities.

### Check Your Progress 3

Note:

- a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer
- b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. Define marginalisation (in 25 words or less)

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2. List three levels of marginalisation

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

2. List three examples of marginalised communities in India.

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Define inclusive growth (in 25 words or less).

\_\_\_\_\_

## 2.5 PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In India, community development has been supported by:

- the government
- schools
- hospitals
- the Panchayat Raj system
- nongovernmental organisations (NGOs),
- civil society organisations (CSOs)
- community based organisations (CBOs)
- the private sector

You will learn in detail about each of these in other Modules. Here you will be introduced to these partners and stakeholders.

### Government

The central and state governments have many schemes to address the needs of disadvantaged and underprivileged people.

Many of these are listed on the government websites – such as [www.india.gov.in](http://www.india.gov.in). This site is the central website with information related to government structures, programmes, etc. Depending on what state you are working in, there will be government websites that you can access as well. The private sector and NGOs also are involved in community developed work. They are looking for partners and you may consider getting to know about their work and consider collaborating with them.

Over the last decade of telecentre work in India, it has been noted that the greatest need of people in communities is **to access information about government schemes or 'entitlements'** as they are sometimes called. These are services you can give information

about at your telecentre, without being asked by the community.

A major player in community development is **Panchayats**. Since Panchayats were created under the Constitution of India in 1950, they have changed, reflecting the realities of India's growth, needs and development.

### NGOs and CSOs

Side by side, NGOs, CSOs and CBOs have also played a very important role in community development. Some of these are religious or secular. The religious NGOs are based on the belief that it is important part of their outreach work to feed and clothe the poor. They often offer assistance by way of education, food and healthcare.

Development NGOs and CSOs have been popular since the 1960s. Most see their role as supplementing the services that the government cannot provide. They are active in the fields of education, health, income generation, training and empowerment.

### Private sector

The private sector is become increasingly involved in community development. Under the banner of '**corporate social responsibility or CSR**', they too have projects in the important and basic sectors of health, education, income generation and empowerment. You will learn more about this in the next unit.

#### Check Your Progress 4

Note:

- a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer
- b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. List 5 sectors involved in community development in India.

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. \_\_\_\_\_
- v. \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2.6 SUMMING UP

In this unit you have been introduced to the concept of community development – what it is; its link to telecentres; how to carry out a community needs assessment; and the needs of marginalised and underprivileged sections of the community. You have also learned about the

major partners and stakeholders involved in community development – the government, NGOs and the private sector.

The main points are:

- Telecentres are places to do community development
- Communities have assets and resources
- Understanding the needs of the community is important for a successful telecentre
- A community needs assessment is essential for planning a successful telecentre
- The underprivileged and marginalised sections of the community need special attention
- Community development involves partnerships

## 2.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: MODEL ANSWERS

### CYP 1

1. List four aspects of community development

- i. A process of developing active and sustainable communities based on [social justice](#) and mutual respect.
- ii. Community development is about influencing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives.
- iii. Community development expresses values of fairness, equality, accountability, opportunity, choice, participation, mutuality, reciprocity and continuous learning.
- iv. Educating, enabling and empowering are at the core of community development.

2. Define community needs assessment (in 30 words or less)

Community needs assessment means to get to know what resources are available in the community (people, money, goods, and services) and its dreams, hopes and fears.

3. Define community-based participatory research (CBPR) in 30 words or less

CBPR is a form of research which involves and engages a community fully in the process of problem definition/issue selection, research design, conducting research, and interpreting the results.

### CYP 2

1. List 3 ways to check what the community needs.

- i. Interviews
- ii. Focus group discussions
- iii. Surveys and questionnaires

2. List 3 things that a community assets register can be used for.

- i. strategic planning
- ii. fund-raising
- iii. building partnerships

3. List 3 questions important in a focus group.

- i. What are your main concerns?
- ii. What groups in particular have these problems?
- iii. Do you know where to find any previous information on these issues in this area?

4. List four headings you can use to list your community assets and potential obstacles.

- i. Government
- ii. NGOs
- iii. Private sector
- iv. Media

5. Define a stakeholder (in 25 words or less)

A stakeholder is a person, group, organisation, or system who affects or can be affected by organisations' actions. In telecentre work, stakeholders are the local community, government, NGOs and the corporate sector.

### **CYP 3**

1. Define marginalisation (in 45 words or less).

Marginalisation is the social process of becoming or being made marginal (to be put in a lower social standing or outer limit or edge). It involves people being denied power and access. It has the potential to result in severe material deprivation, and in its most extreme form can exterminate groups.

2. List three levels of marginalisation.

- i. Individual
- ii. community
- iii. global-structural policies

3. List three examples of marginalised communities in India.

- i. Tribals

- ii. Lower class and caste groups
- iii. People with different sexual preferences such as homosexuals and *hijras*.

3. Define inclusive growth (in 25 words or less).

Inclusive growth is bringing into the development process people who have been marginalised due to social, political and economic reasons.

#### **CYP 4**

1. List 5 sectors involved in community development in India.

- the government,
- nongovernmental organisations (NGOs)
- civil society organisations (CSOs)
- community based organisations (CBOs)
- the private sector

## **2.8 DEFINITIONS**

### **1. Assessment/assess**

Assessment is the process of documenting, - usually in measurable terms - knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs in any situation being studied. To assess a situation is to understand it.

### **2. Activism/activists**

Activism, in a general sense, is an act to bring about social or political change. It can be in support of or against something. People who are involved in activism are called activists.

Activism can be take many forms - writing letters to newspapers or politicians, political campaigning, economic activism (such as boycotts or preferentially patronizing preferred businesses), rallies, blogging and street marches, strikes, both work stoppages and hunger strikes, or even guerrilla tactics.

### **3. Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR)**

CBPR is a form of research which involves and engages a community fully in the process of problem definition/issue selection, research design, conducting research, and interpreting the results.

### **4. Marginalised/marginalisation**

Marginalisation is the social process of becoming or being made marginal (to be put in a lower social standing or outer limit or edge). It involves people being denied power and

access. It has the potential to result in severe material deprivation, and in its most extreme form can exterminate groups.

Material deprivation is the most common result of marginalisation when looking at how unfairly material resources (such as food and shelter) are dispersed in society. Along with material deprivation, marginalised individuals are also excluded from services, programmes, and policies.

Marginalisation can be at least levels: individual, community, and global-structural and policies. And they influence each other. In India it could be the tribals, lower class and caste groups, the disabled, people with different sexual preferences such as homosexuals and hijras.

## 5. Stakeholders

A stakeholder is a person, group, organisation, or system who affects or can be affected by organisations' actions. In this case, stakeholders are those who are part of and affected by the telecentre services and activities. These would include the local community, government, NGOs and the corporate sector.

## 2.9 ASSIGNMENT

### Choose two of the four assignments:

1. Conduct a small focus group discussion and present the results.
2. Interview 3 people in your community (for example: a teacher, a Panchayat member, an NGO worker, the postman) and ask them what four issues are most important to them in terms of community development.
3. Interview a marginalised person in your community and report the results.
4. Develop a Community Needs Assessment Plan keeping in mind all what you have learnt in this unit (you can take help from the outline in Annexe 1).

*The presentation could be:*

1. A 5-7 minute cassette or CD audio recording
2. A video tape (5 minutes)
3. A written essay (1000 words)
4. A drawing
5. A poem
6. A photo essay (with about 10 photos and text)

## 2.10 GLOSSARY AND REFERENCES

[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com): Definitions and background information

[www.infed.org/guides/community](http://www.infed.org/guides/community): Theory and practice of community development

Roger Harris. *A Framework for Designing Telecentres*. Roger Harris Associates, Hong Kong, March 2007.

## 2.11 Annexe 1

### COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT PLAN

A **community needs assessment** (CNA) is simply getting to know the needs of the people in your community. This information will help you to decide services you can offer in your telecentre. It means:

- Knowing what **resources/assets** are available (people, money, goods, services, property etc)
- Knowing what the **needs** are (food, shelter, schooling, healthcare, work, entertainment, etc)
- Knowing what the **dreams** are (anything can come under the category - all you have to do is ask 'what is your dream for the community?')

Follow the format at the end of this outline (make sure you have a good balance of age and sex). You can carry out this task by:

- Face to face interaction - with one person at a time like a conversation or meeting
- In groups (of not more than 5) – where there is a facilitator to guide the discussion

*The people and groups could be:*

1. A local governance representative (in India, a Panchayat member)
2. A school teacher
3. A local business person
4. A college student
5. A differently abled person (with a physical or mental handicap)
6. A village elder
7. A school student

See format below for collecting information for a CNA. You can add other questions as you think appropriate.

### FORMAT

*Information about the respondents (ask each person in the group to fill out the following. If they are not literate you or a volunteer can fill the form for them)*

<b>1</b>	Name of person	
<b>2</b>	Age	
<b>3</b>	Occupation	
<b>4</b>	Address	
<b>5</b>	Number of years in the community	
<b>6</b>	Level of education	
<b>7</b>	Monthly income	
<b>8</b>	Personal assets (home, land, etc)	
<b>9</b>	Size of family (who else shares their home)	
<b>10</b>	Do you have the following:	

**Asset**

**Yes No**

**Comments**

i.	Cycle, bike, car, tractor			
ii.	TV			
iii.	Radio			
iv.	Running water/access to water			
v.	Electricity			
vi.	Paved road to your home			
vii.	<i>Pucca</i> (permanent) or <i>kuccha</i> (temporary) house			
viii.	A computer			
ix.	An Internet connection			
x.	A cell phone			
xi.	A bank account			
xii.	An insurance policy			
xiii.	Are you a beneficiary of any government programme? If yes, which ones? If not, why not?			
xiv.	Do you have a ration card?			
xv.	How far is the closest school from your house?			
xvi.	How far is the closest health centre from your house?			
xvii.	Did you vote in the last elections?			
xviii.	Any other significant details you want to note and ask them to share			

1. What do you think are the **three most important problems** in the community?

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which members of the community **suffer most** from this problem?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Name **three needs of** the community you think are not being met right now.

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Name **two changes** in the community that concern you. Suggest **two solutions** to these.

*Changes*

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

*Solutions*

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Name **3 things you are most ashamed of**. Suggest **3 ways in which they can be corrected**.

*Most ashamed of*

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

*Corrections*

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Who is **the most powerful person** in the community?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What **group is the most powerful** in the community?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Which individual or group **does the most** for the community?

*Individual* \_\_\_\_\_ *Group* \_\_\_\_\_

9. Name **3 things that you are most proud of** in the community.

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Name **three things** you would like to see in the community in the next five years (in terms of development)?

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

11. When you close your eyes what is the picture you see of the ideal community?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

a. Is this possible in your lifetime?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. What is needed to make this dream come true?

\_\_\_\_\_

c. What would be your role in making the dream come true?

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Other questions you may wish to ask or information they may wish to share?