

# Assessing Needs and Developing a Theory of Change

Venture Development Lunch and Learn Workshop

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## Exercise 1: Demonstrating Need

Using the following definitions of need what evidence do you have to demonstrate need for your venture idea?

- **Normative:** Need identified according to a norm (or standard), usually set by Professionals, experts, or government officials
- **Felt:** Need from the perspective of the people who have it
- **Expressed:** Need which people express or through demand for service
- **Comparative:** Need based on comparison to and equity with others

	Data Source
<b>Normative</b>	
<b>Felt</b>	
<b>Expressed</b>	
<b>Comparative</b>	

## **Exercise 2: Theory of Change**

Is an “if-then” statement that reflects what you expect to happen to program participants if they go through the entirety of your program. It is the proposed relationship between program or service and some desired outcome.

Example: If children attend the Zoom-In summer program, and if they are able to develop a support system, then we should see an increase in the bonds of attachment that will effectively discourage youth in joining early gang activities.

Develop an “if-then” statement for your program below.

If we provide

\_\_\_\_\_ ,then \_\_\_\_\_

will happen.

### **Exercise 3: Logic Model**

**STEP 1 –ASSUMPTIONS:** What principles (facts, conditions...) are understood to be guiding your proposal/idea?

What are your perceptions of the needs and problems for the target population? What evidence do you have to support these perceptions?

**STEP 2 – LONG-TERM GOALS:** What is our broad vision for the future?

What conditions do you want to see for your target population in 2 to 3 years?

**STEP 3 – SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUTS:** What can we accomplish in the length of the program/one year?

These are tied to specific programs. Short-term objectives must be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic and Timed.

**STEP 4- ACTIVITIES:** What do we have to do to be sure we meet our objectives?

This will relate to both resources and goals. This includes workshops, meetings, trainings, events and all the things that need to be done to make them happen.

**STEP 5- RESOURCES:** What are the basic resources need to accomplish our objectives?

What are the needs for staff, materials, volunteers, community support and transportation, etc.?

## **CHECKLIST FOR PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

### **DO's**

1. Identify results or conditions to be achieved, rather than activities to be performed.
2. Specific: Be designed to cover a single end result.
3. Measurable: Be written in quantifiable terms that are easily measured (things that can be counted or observed).
4. Action-Oriented: Be stated in terms of what is to be done rather than what is to be avoided.
5. Realistic: Feasible objectives – things you can accomplish and are appropriate for the target population.
6. Timed: Be limited in time so that they can be measured and will provide an indication of achievement.

### **DON'Ts**

1. Avoid using words like maximize, minimize. Words like increase, decrease, improve and reduce should only be used when you can indicate how much or to what degree.
2. Avoid too many or too few; the rule of thumb is to have 3 – 5 objectives for each higher objective or goal.
3. Avoid writing objectives with too much or too little strength.