


Foundations of Practice

Community Development
Core Competencies for
Extension Professionals in
the North Central region


Community Situational Analysis



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SLIDE 2


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Anne is an Extension Specialist and is Director of the Laboratory for Community and Economic Development, Department of Human and Community Development at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her work focuses on leadership development, sustainable agriculture, and telecommunication and access in rural areas. Anne chairs the planning committee and hosts the annual Illinois conference for community leadership; and directs funded projects in leadership development, community planning and sustainable agriculture. Anne is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Madison and earned an MBA from the College of Commerce at the University of Illinois. Anne serves as Vice-Chair of Rural Partners, the Illinois Rural Development Council and serves on the Advisory Board for the Peace Corps Fellows Program at Western Illinois University and as Co-Chair of the Communications Committee for the Community Development Society. Anne is a member of various committees and task forces for ACES, University of Illinois Extension, and the State of Illinois.


With thanks to Phil Alexander, Michigan State University Extension!



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Learning Objectives

- Learn ways to conduct a situational analysis.
- Increase your level of understanding on how to link information from the analysis to decisions.
- Explore Extension's role based on current conditions and the community's level of preparedness.



Today's Agenda


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1. Study a process you can use to conduct a situational analysis (and learn of additional resources).

2. Focus on developing an inclusive set of stakeholders to guide your analysis.

3. Based on your analysis, think about your role as an Extension Educator and the programs that you can provide to the community.

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What is situational analysis?

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- Developing a method to collect, analyze, and deliver information about current conditions, issues, problems, opportunities, and challenges facing stakeholders.
- Analyzing an issue or situation from a historical, political, cultural and community context.
- Using the resulting information to develop programs, priorities, and approaches.

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Why does it matter?

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People support what they help to create.

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Why it matters

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"We are, of course, a nation of differences. Those differences don't make us weak. They're the source of our strength."

Jimmy Carter, 1976

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Desired Outcomes

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- Community partners understand the social, economic, and environmental processes affecting the community.
- Stakeholders are involved in decision-making.
- Extension programming is tailored to fit the needs of the community and the resources of Extension and its community partners.

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Seeing a bigger picture

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"Issues such as health, education, social justice, economic development, housing, taxes, transportation, infrastructure, recreation or public safety cannot be dealt with separately from the environment in which they exist."


Practicing Community Development
Don and Doris Littrell, 2006.

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How do we know what we know?

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It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so.

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The process

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- ✓ Define the purpose of the situational analysis.
- ✓ List stakeholders; develop strategies to involve them.
- ✓ Explore existing data and identify information gaps.
- ✓ Decide how to collect and analyze additional information.
- ✓ Collect and analyze additional information.
- ✓ Report and make recommendations.
- ✓ Take action!

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Situational analysis fits into the bigger picture of planning

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- ✓ **Where are we now?**
(conducting situational analysis)
- ✓ **Where do we want to be?**
(developing a vision)
- ✓ **How do we get there?**
(designing an implementation plan)

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Define the purpose

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Big picture view such as a community profile.

or

Focus on a dimension, decision or issue such as:

- Land use
- Economic Development options
- Water Quality
- Health Care
- Attracting Retirees

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Involved in community planning?

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How many of you have been involved in community planning?

- As a participant?
- As a facilitator?
- As a stakeholder of the community plan?
- Plan? What plan?

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Define your role

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- ❖ Convene the group?
- ❖ Provide expert advice?
- ❖ Provide information?
- ❖ Facilitate large groups?
- ❖ Work with planners?
- ❖ Participate?
- ❖ Write the report?

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Define the purpose

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See these sites for planning processes:
www.communitydevelopment.uiuc.edu
 Go to *Community Planning*; click on *Online Strategic Planning*

<http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu>
 Click on *Publications*; click on *Vision to Action*; also check out *Take Charge*.

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Define the purpose

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See this USDA site for a downloadable publication on strategic planning:
<http://www.ezec.gov/About/strategic.pdf>

And from Kansas State University Extension:
<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/>
 Search for *Strategic planning*; click on *Strategic Planning for Community Development*.

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Define the stakeholders

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Stakeholders are:
 Any person, group or organization that can place a claim on an organization or community's attention, resources, or output; or is affected by that group.

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Define the stakeholders

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Activity . . .
Brainstorm list of stakeholders for an Extension program or activity.

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Sources of information

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Secondary data is existing data which has been collected, including U.S. census data, county based economic data, school district data, health department data, etc.

Primary data is information that you collect, including surveys, case studies, focus groups, interviews, pilot tests, observational studies, etc.

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Using secondary data

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If you use secondary data which was collected for a purpose other than your own, ask:

- Who collected the data and for what purpose?
- Does this data target or include our community?
- Did we find the most up-to-date source?
- Does this data match our units of measure, time frame, age groupings, etc.? If we compare this with other data, are we comparing apples with apples?
- Can we explain the numbers if someone asks?

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Using secondary data

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Where are the information gaps?
 What do you need to know to address the issue?
 (as outlined in your first step, "define the purpose of the situational analysis")
 What information is missing?

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Collecting primary data


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Collecting and analyzing information . . . options:

- Survey
- Focus Groups
- Mapping
- Personal interviews
- Group process

Develop a budget and timetable for each option!

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Collecting primary data

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Surveys

- Define objective of survey (what do you need to know, and is a survey the right method?).
- Determine how you will define the population and contact the sample (mail? telephone? intercept?).
- Design questionnaire and sampling procedure (check with your institutional review board!).
- Compile data; analyze data.
- Write report with recommendations.
- Go to www.communitydevelopment.uiuc.edu, then go to the toolbox, then to "community surveys."

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Collecting primary data

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Focus Groups

- Define objective (what do you need to know, and is a focus group the right method?).
- Determine how you will develop the groups (via a partner organization, usually).
- Design questions, identify and train the moderators, and set up the groups (check with your institutional review board!).
- Conduct focus group discussions; compile data; analyze data.
- Write report with recommendations.
- Go to www.extension.iastate.edu and search for the publication, *Focus Group Fundamentals*.

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Collecting primary data

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Mapping and personal interviews.

- Using an asset-based approach to collecting information in a defined geographical area.
- Usually requires extensive volunteer input.
- Building Communities from the Inside Out, by John Kretzmann and John McKnight.
- Go to: <http://www.northwestern.edu>; Search for abcd (Asset Based Community Development)
- And the Southern Rural Development Center, www.srdc.msstate.edu and look under publications for: *Mapping the Assets of Your Community*.

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**An Asset-based Approach
(is different from our usual assessment!)**

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- An asset-based approach to development focuses on positives and strengths, rather than on problems and weaknesses.
- Using an asset-based approach to community assessment will influence the process of assessment, change the way people think about their community, and move control toward an internal, and away from an external, locus.
- Residents can use a system for identifying and developing assets which includes examining the people, institutions, and informal organizations in their community.

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Community Capitals

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Collecting primary data

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Using group process as a framework . . .

- Visioning (see *Vision to Action* again)
- SWOT analysis
- “Do we have it!”/“do we want it” Matrix
- Force field analysis
- Decision-making systems for large groups (future search, open space, etc.!!)

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SWOT Analysis

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An *internal* perspective:
Strengths
Weaknesses

An *external* perspective:
Opportunities
Threats


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SWOT Analysis of Human Capital of Our Group

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<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>

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Have/Want Analysis

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		What we want	
		Yes	No
W h a t w e h a v e	Y	<i>We have it and we want to keep it.</i> Preserve	<i>We have it but we want to get rid of it.</i> Eliminate
	n	<i>We don't have it, but we want it.</i> Acquire	<i>We don't have it, and we don't want it.</i> Prevent

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Goal Analysis

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Goal:	
Forces that help us _____	_____ Forces that hinder us

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Action Plan

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Using the goal information:

- Brainstorm alternative actions,
- Set priorities,
- Allocate resources,
- Outline the action plan (including action, outcome, resources, deadline, and contact person).

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Roles for Extension

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- Convener
- Facilitator
- Resource Person / Information Provider
- Teacher / Educator
- Participant / Collaborator
- Other? (maybe no role)

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Summary

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- Situational analysis is a systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and delivering information about current conditions, issues, problems, opportunities, and challenges facing stakeholders within a community.
- Use the information to develop responsive, effective Extension programming.

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Reflection Questions

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1. How do we understand what's really going on in a community? To whom do we listen? How do we obtain our information? What are our biases? Are we inclusive?
2. How do we determine the "right time" for an Extension program?
3. How do we assess risks? (Risks to ourselves? Extension? The community?)



References

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Using a Multidisciplinary Approach to Conduct a Situational Analysis. USDA NRCS Social Science Institute. www.ssi.nrcs.usda.gov. Look at all the publications listed under the heading, "Social Sciences Team Publications."

www.comdev.org is the website for the Community Development Society, which includes information about community capitals under the headings "Publications" and "CD Practice."



Next Session

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Community Sustainability
October 23 and 24, 2007
1:30 to 3 p.m. CST



Mary Emery

The ability to understand the impact of decisions on the quality of natural resources and the long-term sustainability of the environment is an important component of community development.