



2013 Free Network Training Webinar Series

Part 3:

Needs Assessment

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The Global Alliance is grateful to the National Endowment of the Arts for its support of this webinar series, which strives to provide affordable resources to individuals and organizations wishing to establish or advance arts and health programming.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

For Arts & Health Programs

Defining or Considering Needs



- Need is relative, but norms are established
- “A condition that limits a person from meeting his potential” (Social Security Act, 1974)

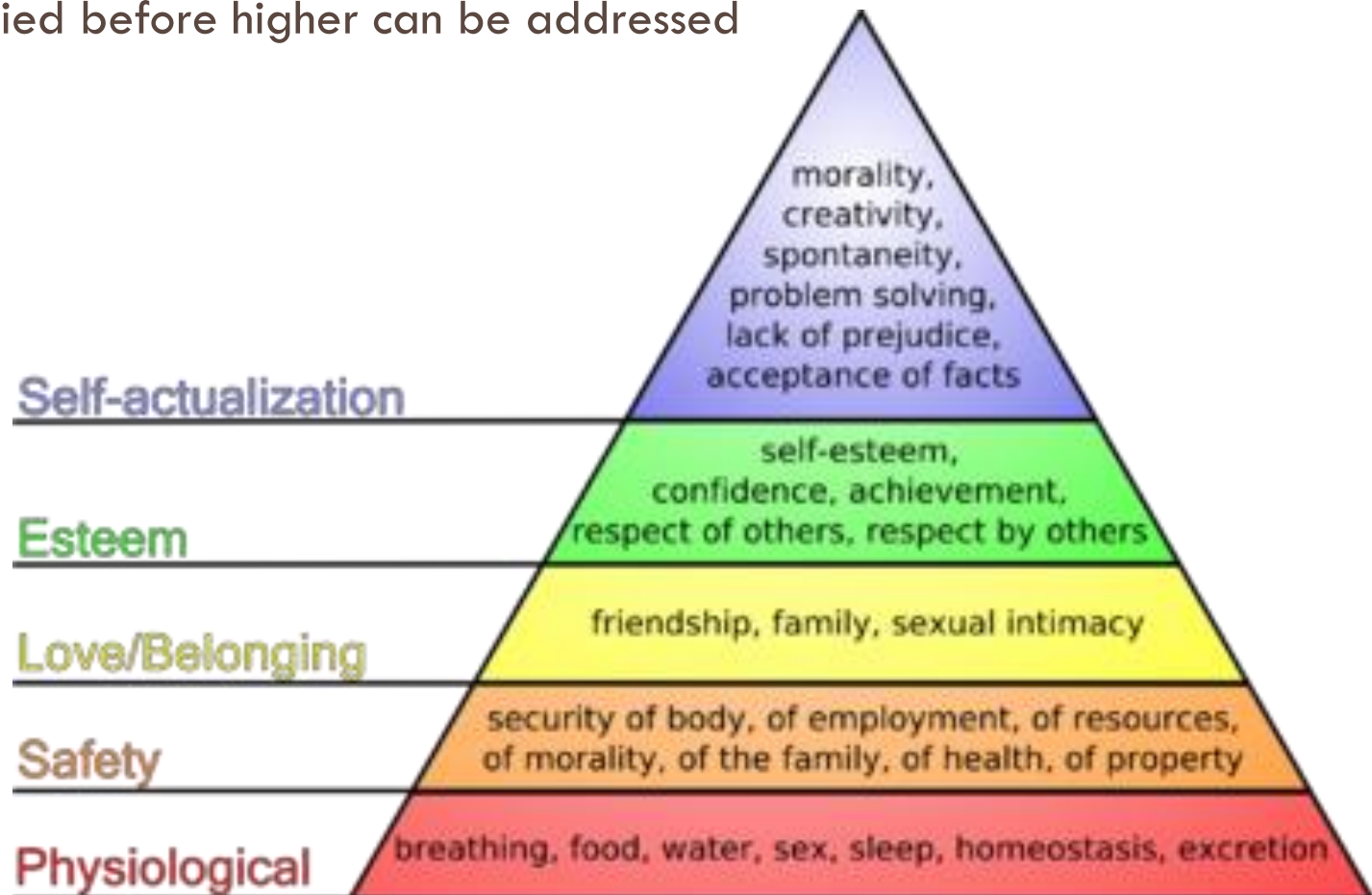
Theoretical Understanding of Need



- Ponsioen (1962) - society's first responsibility is to meet basic survival needs of its members, biological, social, emotional and spiritual
- Ponsioen asserts that every society will identify a level below which no one should fall

Theoretical Understanding of Need

- Maslow (1954) Hierarchy of Needs – lower needs must be satisfied before higher can be addressed



Why Conduct a Needs Assessment?

- To guide *decision-making*
- To provide *justification* for decisions before they are made
- To provide a *systemic perspective* for decision-makers
- To allow for *interdisciplinary solutions* for complex problems
- To offer a *replicable process* that can be used over and over again
- To *focus partners* (or the network) on shared understanding of issues and shared goals

What is a Needs Assessment?



A systematic process of asking questions, comparing answers, and making informed decisions about what to do next to improve human (or organizational) conditions and performance

The process can be very formal and time-consuming, or can be scaled to the project or organizational capacity

Assessing Needs

□ Types of need

- ▣ Normative

- ▣ Perceived

- ▣ Expressed

- ▣ Relative

- Primary challenges: Reliability and availability of data

Perspectives on Need

□ Normative need

- ▣ Existence of standards or criterion established by custom, authority or general consensus against which quantity or quality of a situation or condition is measured
- ▣ Work with **existing data**
- ▣ Generates objective targets
- ▣ Need levels change as knowledge, technology and values change

Perspectives on Need

□ Perceived need

- ▣ Need defined by what people think or feel about their needs
- ▣ Allows for responsive service delivery
- ▣ Interviews, focus groups, town meetings
- ▣ Standard changes with each respondent

Perspectives on Need

- Expressed need
 - ▣ Need defined by the number of people who have actually sought help
 - ▣ Focuses on circumstances in which feeling is translated to action
 - ▣ Major weakness is the assumption that all persons with need seek appropriate help

Perspectives on Need

- Relative need
 - ▣ Gap between level of services existing in one community and those existing in similar communities or geographic areas
 - ▣ Must consider differences in population and social pathology
 - ▣ Concerned with equity

Needs Assessment and Program Planning



Problems are translated to needs, needs are translated to interventions

- Needs assessment starts with problem analysis
- Integrates qualitative and quantitative methods
- Informs solutions and can define the size of the target group
- Needs are translated into measurable objectives, resources, and criteria necessary for program planning and evaluation

Needs Assessment Methodologies



- Extrapolating from existing studies (normative need)
- Using resource inventories (normative and relative need)
- Using service statistics (expressed and relative need)
- Conducting social surveys (perceived need)
- Holding a public forum (perceived need)

Arts & Health Needs Assessment: Sample Questions

~ Survey or Interview

- What are the five most significant health concerns in your community?
- What are the most significant arts or cultural needs of the people in your community?
- What other concerns are significant in your community?
- What is needed to address those concerns?
- What is unique about your community? What are its strengths?
- What services or programs don't exist that should?
- Is there anything that you would like us to know about your community (any questions that should have been asked)?

Approaches to Locating Un/Underserved

- Problems and needs are not distributed equally in geographic space; for example, county statistics may not reflect the needs in some underserved pockets within the county
- Spatial analysis – use of social or health indicators to classify geographical areas into typologies
- Factor analysis – statistical technique that can take large numbers of variables and reduce to a smaller number of constructs or indicators
 - ▣ For example, aggregating social indicators such as: occupation, education, income, fertility rate, women who work, single family dwelling units, and % in Ethnic Groups

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