
NEEDS ASSESSMENT: THE DATA THAT SHOULD BE GATHERED AND WHERE TO FIND IT

The following chart was generated at the Namibia Early Childhood Programming Institute, October, 1997, by leading African ECCD Planners, Practitioners, and Policy-makers.

Child

WHAT INFORMATION DO WE WANT?

About the child

Age, gender, distribution by geographic area
Health status
Diseases/illnesses, immunization
Nutritional status
Developmental status; physical, cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual, aesthetic
Social relationships—with people & the environment
Ethnicity
Access to food (quality and quantity)
Disabilities/special abilities
Language spoken at home

WHERE AND HOW WILL WE GET IT?

Source/Where

National statistics
UNICEF Situational Analyses
Ministry data—health, education, social welfare, women
Census data
Research
Library
Public health clinics (PHC)
Parent/extended family
Church
District offices
Schools
Chiefs, community leaders
NGOs

How

Review of written materials
Interviews
Questionnaires
Observations
Tests
PLA—Participatory Learning & Action

From the child

Sense of self-worth self-concept, self-identity
Enjoyment of school, family, community
Play—where and with what

Source/Where

Interviews
Observations

Family

WHAT INFORMATION DO WE WANT?

Location—urban/rural
Ethnicity
Composition—who lives in household
Type—single parent, nuclear, extended
Educational attainment
Literacy level
Stability—pattern of movement, nomadic/migration of one parent
Pressures that will bring changes
Economic status
Sources of income
Employment profile (formal/non-formal)
Religious/ethnic practices
Child-rearing practices
Access to services (e.g. electricity, water)
Felt needs
Expectations, abilities to participate
History
Language used at home
Food security

WHERE AND HOW WILL WE GET IT?

Source/Where

Census
Church
Ethnographic studies
NGO current work
Literature review

How

PLA
Questionnaires
Focus groups
Household survey
Observation
Interviews

Community

WHAT INFORMATION DO WE WANT?

Size
Composition
Geographic location
Urban/rural
Types of employment
Sources of income
Types of housing
Economic status
Type of leaders
Stability
Cohesiveness of community
Language(s)
Infrastructure; hospital, PHC, schools, roads
Religion—beliefs
Accessibility to resources (e.g. water, electricity, services)
% of men and women in labor force
Existing ECCD programs
History
Cultural practices
Felt needs
Food security
Physical security

WHERE AND HOW WILL WE GET IT?

Source/Where

UNDP
UNICEF reports
NGO reports
Ethnographic data
Library
Local government
District offices

How

PLA
Interviews, (Leaders, those offering services)
Focus groups
Questionnaires
Intelligent observation

Civil Society

WHAT INFORMATION DO WE WANT?

Ethnicity
Class
Gender
Diversity of population
Political forces
Political structure
Influence of politicians
Language/dialect
Access to national resources
History
Literacy
Security
Infrastructure supports
Ability to express opinions/take action

National

WHAT INFORMATION DO WE WANT?

Policies
Treaties
Awareness of ECCD
Status in relation to CRC, EFA; the girl child
Resources/budget allocation
Political stability
Economic stability
Type of government
Kind of government
Links with donor agencies
Quality of national leadership
Expectations
Official language
Inter-ministerial collaboration
Policies on curriculum, credentialing
Nature of work with NGOs
Demographics
Natural disasters
The nature of changes in the country

WHERE AND HOW WILL WE GET IT?

Source/Where

Documentaries
Special commissioned reports
Unions
Media: newspapers, radio, television
Reports from ministries/parliament
Popular literature

How

Reading
Intelligent observation
Interviews
Focus groups
Surveys/polls

WHERE AND HOW WILL WE GET IT?

Sources/Where

National reports
Politicians/policy makers
UNDP
History
Government/parliamentary documents
World Bank reports
NGO Reports
UNICEF
Archives
Census data
Media: newspapers, radio, television

How

Literature review
Interviews
Workshops/seminars

International

WHAT INFORMATION DO WE WANT?

International conventions: CRC, EFA, Salamanca
Other country experiences in ECCD
Scientific developments
Technological developments
Donor policy and priorities
Resources available and how to access them
International awareness of ECCD

WHERE AND HOW WILL WE GET IT?

Sources/Where

Consultations
Exchange visits
Case studies
Reports
Media
Institutes/workshops
External training
Research journals
Internet

How

Regional networks—Early Childhood Development
Network for Africa (ECDNA)
International networks—Association for the Development
of Education in Africa (ADEA)
Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and
Development

Early Childhood Counts: Programming Resources for Early Childhood Care and Development.
CD-ROM. The Consultative Group on ECCD. Washington D.C.: World Bank, 1999.