

Stakeholder & Client Discussion guide

This guide is the primary instrument for assessing the relationship of clients or prospective clients to the telecenter and to information in general. This guide can be used to interview one client or to conduct a focus-group session with up to six clients or other stakeholders.

Generally, focus groups should be made up of people with similar relationships to the school and the telecenter. Teachers, for example, might be grouped together. Students' family members (parents, guardians, grandparents, etc.) might comprise a group, as well.

Overall information objectives

- Profile current information and communications practices, perceptions, needs and barriers
- Profile relationship to school and to school telecenter or computer lab
- Identify high-priority issues and problems related to development or the community

Sequence

- Introduction
- Information and communication
 - Respondents' information needs
 - What kinds of information are (or would be) most valuable to them?
 - Their information practices
 - How needs are currently met
 - Barriers to information
 - Obstacles to information access
- Relationship to school
 - Relationship to school (e.g., parent, teacher, student)
 - Relationship to school telecenter
 - Have they visited the telecenter? Have they used it? What are their opinions of the telecenter and of the importance of computers in general?
- Issues and problems
 - Challenges facing the community
 - An additional section addresses problems targeted by ERT initiatives.
- Summary
 - Verification, correction, validation
 - Possibly done by assistant facilitator
- Thanks

Scripts and questions

Introduction

I would like to start by thanking you for coming to this meeting. We are hoping to improve our understanding of your community, the way that people acquire news and information, and the role that the school plays in the community. By answering a few questions, you will enable us to design projects or other efforts to benefit people as much as possible. The whole process should take about one half hour.

Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves.

[Introduce yourself, and your organization. Be sure that your associates and assistants also introduce themselves.]

[Continue introductions around the room. If appropriate, ask people about their occupations or sources of livelihood. Be sure that introductions are brief.]

Information and communication

I'd like to start by talking about the kinds of information that you use, perhaps every day, perhaps every month, and the ways that you communicate with others here in the community and outside.

- How do you find out about what's happening in your community?
- How do you find out about what's happening in the region around you?
- What kinds of information are you most interested in?
[examples: news about family, relatives, and friends; politics; news about diseases or health; economics, commerce and employment; sports, recreation, and the arts]
- What kinds of information do you need in order to be successful in your daily activities or your job?
How do you receive this information?
- Which of these sources of information are most important to you: other people; television; newspaper; radio; computers and the Internet?
If there is another source of information that you use frequently, please describe it.
- When you need to communicate with someone in another town or city, do you usually: write a letter? Make a telephone call? Go and see them? Send a fax?
If you use another means to communicate, please describe them.
- When you receive information or news, who do you pass it on to? How do you pass it on?
- Are there times when you can't get information that you want or that you need?
Please describe these times. Can you describe the reasons why you couldn't get the information?
- Is there a particular type of information that you frequently can't receive?
Why is it difficult to receive this information?

- How familiar are you with computers and the Internet?

Not familiar	(don't really understand what they do)
Somewhat familiar	(understand what they do, but haven't used them)
Familiar	(have used them a few times)
Very familiar	(Use computers and the Internet often)

Relationship to the school

- Please describe your relationship to the school.
Family member? Former student (or school-leaver)? Board member of parents' association?
Teacher or school head? Student?
- The school now has a computer lab or community telecenter. Please describe your experiences with regard to this facility.
Not aware of the telecenter (or lab)
Aware of the telecenter
Have visited the telecenter once or twice
Have used computers there or rec'd training
Use the telecenter frequently
Help staff or maintain the telecenter
Regularly use the telecenter for teaching or learning
- In your opinion, how important is it for the school to have computers?
Not important somewhat important important very important don't know

Please elaborate on the reasons for your opinion.
- According to your observation and knowledge, how heavily used is the telecenter?
Not used much (less than 3 hours per week)
Used occasionally (3 to 10 hours per week)
Used regularly (11 to 20 hours per week)
Used heavily (more than 20 hours per week)
- Who uses the telecenter most?
Teachers? Students in the Computer Club? Students in classes? Members of the community?

What do they use the lab for?
Games and recreation? Class projects? Personal communication and activities? Business activities?
- In your opinion, how important is it for students in your community to use computers?

Not important Somewhat important Important Extremely important

Please explain why you have this opinion.

- In your opinion, how important is it for *you* to use computers?
Why?
- In your opinion, how well run is the telecenter?
:Poorly run
Somewhat well run
Well run
Very well run
- If you were going to make a change in the way the telecenter is set up or operated, what would it be?

Issues and problems

Be sure to introduce this shift in the focus of the discussion: "Let's shift away from computers and information for a moment, and talk about broader issues in the community. That information will also be important to our efforts."

- What do you think is the most important challenge that your community faces?
Describe this challenge in greater detail, please.

Examples: HIV/AIDS, lack of clean drinking water, lack of jobs, limited of market for crops, disputes between groups in the community, disputes with groups outside the community

How does this challenge affect your life? Or the life of your family?

How has this challenge affected the lives of other people whom you know?
- What efforts are being made to address this challenge?
Are there local organizations or groups working on it?
Are there international organizations or groups working on this challenge?
- In your opinion, do most people in the community agree with you that this is an important challenge?
Do you think they would identify other challenges as more important? Which ones? Why?

Summary

Announce that that was the last question. State that you (or an associate who is recording responses) will provide a summary, and that participants will have a chance to be sure that it is accurate.

Summarize each section of the discussion, mentioning key points that were made by the participants. Invite participants' comments frequently, and note changes that will be made in response to their comments.

Thanks

Thank the participants for their patience, enthusiasm and cooperation. Be sure to tell them that their responses were valuable, and will help the project as it moves forward.

Focus Group Notes

Group: _____

Date: _____

Facilitator: _____

Recorder: _____

Information & communication	
Notes	Quotes
<p>Ways of finding out information in community?</p> <p>In region?</p>	
<p>Information of greatest interest</p>	
<p>Information needed in daily life or job:</p> <p>How this information is received:</p>	

Relationship to school and telecenter	
Description of relationship to school:	
Experience with telecenter (mark number of responses in each category) Not aware of the telecenter Aware of the telecenter Have visited the telecenter once or twice Have used computers there or rec'd training Use the telecenter frequently Help staff or maintain the telecenter Regularly use the telecenter for teaching or learning	
Importance of computers for the school: Not important Somewhat important Important Very important Don't know / no opinion	
Use of telecenter: Not used much Used occasionally Used regularly Used heavily	

<p>Who uses the telecenter most:</p> <p>What they use it for:</p>	
<p>How important is it for students to use computers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Not importantSomewhat importantImportantExtremely important	
<p>How important for respondent to use computers:</p>	
<p>How well run is the telecenter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Poorly runSomewhat well runWell runVery well run	

Suggestions for changes to the telecenter:

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Issues and problems	
Most important challenge for community: How challenges affects respondent's life:	
Current efforts to address challenge: Organizations addressing challenge:	
Degree of community consensus about challenge: Other challenges community would identify as important:	

Discussion Analysis

Use this short list of questions to analyze the focus group discussions, extract useful points and modify your approach (if necessary) for the next interviews.

- What were your greatest surprises? What didn't you expect?
- What was said that you expected?
- What were the areas of consensus among the group?
- What quotes best illustrate the consensus viewpoint?
- What do the areas of consensus mean in terms of Telecenter service priorities or operations?
- What were the major areas of difference of opinion?
- What quotes best demonstrate those differences?
- How can the differences be explained?
- What do these differences mean in terms of TC service priorities or operations?
- What do we know now that we didn't know before?
- What areas do you wish were discussed in greater detail?
- What areas that were not discussed would have been helpful?
- Were the participants well chosen?
- Did everyone participate? What could be done differently to improve participation?