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Information Need Assessment and Service Types for e-Community Centers

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“Rural development is the participation of people in a mutual learning experience involving themselves, their local resources, external change agents, and outside resources. People cannot be developed. They can only develop themselves by participating in activities which affect their well-being. People are not being developed when they are herded like animals into new ventures.”

Julius Nyerere, 1968

Contents

- **Part-1: About Community & INA**
- **Part-II: ICT Growth & Potential**
- **Part-III: INA Planning and Model**
- **Part-IV: Community Service Types**

Community

**“A group of people in
a given geographical
location and sharing
something in
common”**

Community Center Objectives

- **Meet, mix and work together**
- **Provide a base for various educational, welfare and social activities**
- **Encourage and provide social contacts**
- **Develop groups with educational purposes**
- **Coordinate and extend local services**

Characteristics of Rural Communities

- **Marginalized from the mainstream**
- **Poor standard of living**
- **Low Literacy**
- **Strong feeling of voicelessness and powerlessness**
- **Strong local imprints**
- **Conservative society**
- **Closer to the mother nature**
- **Traditional ways of learning**

Community INA

An exercise by which a collaborative partnership gathers information on the current strengths, concerns, and conditions of children, families, and the community.

Community Need Assessment Focus

- **Clearly understand the context in which families live and the issues families want to address;**
- **Locate hidden strengths or underutilized resources that could be developed;**
- **Determine which resources could contribute to comprehensive strategies, and in what way;**
- **Design effective, collaborative strategies that engage children and families because they respond to real and important conditions; and**
- **Empower families and community members by giving them a role in designing and implementing the strategies.**

Two Golden Principles

- **Have a good understanding of the particular community.**
- **Participation & ownership of the community in the e-community development program**

Part-I Ends (Recap)

- **Community**
- **Community Center Objectives**
- **Characteristics of rural communities**
- **Community INA**
- **Community INA Focus**
- **Golden Principles**

Internet Growth

Time taken by the inventions to reach 50 million users

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. RADIO | 38 YEARS |
| 2. PC | 16 YEARS |
| 3. TELEVISION | 13 YEARS |
| 4. INTERNET | 04 YEARS |

Source: US Department of Commerce

Internet High Speed Capabilities

Applications/ Features	Dial up connection 24 to 56 kbps	High Speed connection 524 kbps to 10 mbps
Always on	No	Yes
Email	Yes	Yes
Time to download (10 mb file)	1 hour	10 sec to 3 min
Web surfing	Slow	Fast
Streaming Video	No	Yes
Video Conferencing	No	Yes
Immediate News	No	Yes
On-line gaming	No	Yes
Online interaction	No	Yes

Potential of Broadband Connectivity for e-Communities

- **Broadband connectivity greatly reduces the barriers of distance and time, allowing communities to participate 24/7 in the global, connected economy**
- **Broadband connectivity allows market expansion of a customer base to the world**

Continued.....

- **Broadband connectivity allows communities to create an online community of interest – a virtual community**
- **Broadband connectivity allows collaboration with suppliers, customers and partners from all over the world to attract more customers, take on larger projects, and create new product and services**

Continued.....

- **Broadband connectivity allows communities to create an interactive web page in which customer come for information, education, business, or entertainment**
- **Broadband connectivity allows communities to identify and track the interests of individual customers, responding individually to their interests.**

Continued.....

- **Information technologies (Geographic Information system and global positioning systems) allow communities to track and allocate scarce resources in physical space with high degree of precision.**
- **Broadband connectivity allows communities to build areas that need improvement with up-to-date technology, outsource some functions, and increase (insource) other functions**

INTERNET FUTURE

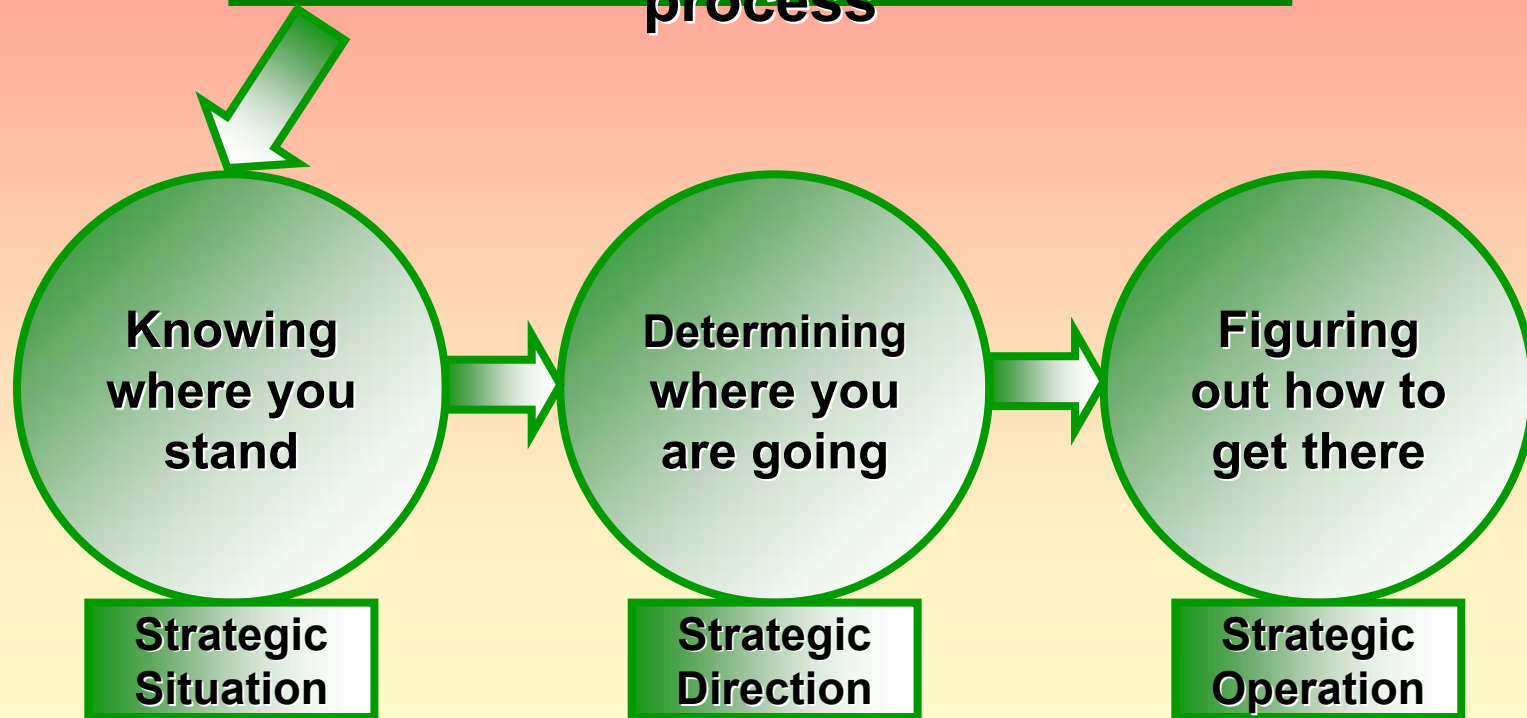
- **Availability of abundance of material and information on the internet for research**
- **Availability of increased bandwidth and internet speed**
- **Increase in the computer games for educational purposes**
- **Increase in use of wireless technology**
- **E-Learning will move significantly across national boundaries**
- **The price of hardware will continue to decrease**

Part-II Ends (Recap)

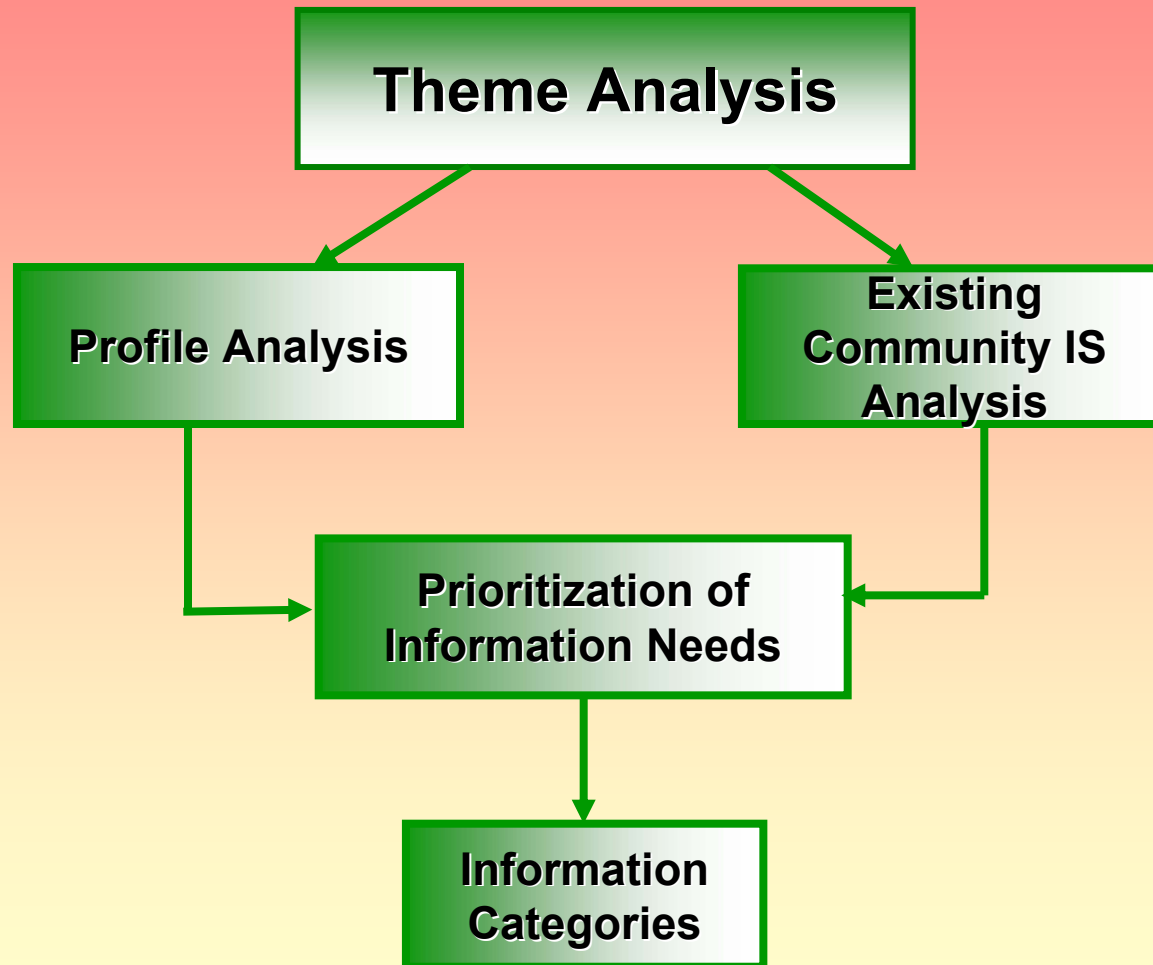
- **Internet Growth**
- **Internet High Speed Capabilities**
- **Potentials of broadband connectivity for e-communities**
- **Internet Future**

Need Assessment and Strategic Planning

Need assessment is the first phase in a strategic planning process



Information Need Assessment Model (INAM) in India



Community Information Clearing House



Techniques for Conducting Information Need Assessment

- **Community Forums or Focus Groups**
- **Interviews and Surveys**
- **Individual families and connections**
- **Government Data**
- **NGOs surveys and reports**
- **Conferences**

Information Need Assessment (Step by step)

Step 1: Planning the Need Assessment:

- **Clarify the purpose of the need assessment:**
- **Plan and coordinate the study creatively and innovatively with participation of the local respective community people.**

Continued.....

- **Why are we carrying out the need assessment study?**
- **What do we know about the community?**
- **What we want to know more?**
- **How we will collect the additional information**
- **How the information will be analyzed?**
- **How the information will be reported?**
- **Who will use the information?**
- **What financial and physical resources would be needed?**
- **What will be the duration of the study?**
- **What agencies would be involved?**

Continued.....

Step 2: Implementing the Need Assessment:

- **Who will conduct the INA study?**
- **What will be the techniques of collection of information?**
- **How will information collected be analyzed?**
- **How will information analyzed be reported or integrated?**
- **How the Info gathered will be utilized by other agencies?**
- **How the participation of the local community will be ensured?**

Continued.....

Step 3: Utilization of the Need Assessment results:

- **How the information collected and analyzed will be prioritized to understand the possible services of e-community centers?**
- **How profile analysis will be designed for its utilization for the target community?**

Part-III Ends (Recap)

- **Need Assessment & Strategic Planning**
- **INA Model**
- **Community Information Clearing House**
- **Techniques for conducting INA**
- **INA Step by Step**

E-Community Services Types



Visionary Collaborative Leadership

- **They see the big picture**
- **They understand what their community contributes to the world**
- **They nurture the full development of their community and all of its citizens in the networked world**
- **They think and act strategically**
- **They identify and enable collaborative opportunities that cross boundaries in and out of the community**
- **They exemplify servant leadership**
- **They make things happen**

Applications

- **Distance education, including on-line and off-line training, virtual schools/ universities**
- **E-commerce**
- **E-Government and e-governance**
- **General Information about weather, crops, modern techniques of cultivations/ farming.**
- **Information on Markets and Market Prices**
- **Labor Market Information System**
- **Video Conferencing**
- **Donor agencies and other sources of funds/ Loans for small scale business**
- **Interactive e-communities**

Support Services

- **Sales and Services of necessary equipment, machinery, hardware and software**
- **Free or low cost computers for limited resource families**
- **Consultation Services**
- **Services for the local agencies and companies to promote their business online**
- **Telemedicine services**
- **Entertainment services**

Education and Training

- **Basic computer and software training**
- **How to use the internet**
- **Potential and impact of IT and the internet**
- **Information on educational institutions and virtual institutions**
- **Entrepreneurial skills development**
- **E-commerce and e-Business planning**
- **Small Business development**
- **Use of e-government**

Technology Driven Economic Development Strategies

- **E-Community Training Centers as the business incubators (virtual and physical)**
- **Connect local business with scientific and technological resources**
- **Entrepreneurship development**
- **Develop consortium of businesses, communities, agencies etc.**
- **Develop a recognition program in the community for individuals, businesses and organizations**
- **Local agriculture development information and program**

Part-IV Ends (Recap)

- **Community Services Types**
 - **Visionary Collaborative Leadership**
 - **Applications**
 - **Support Services**
 - **Education & Training**
 - **Technology Driven Economic Development Strategies**

Conclusion (I)

- ✓ **Illiteracy, poverty, inertia, mutual conflict, gender discrimination and resilient communities may impede the progress and success of e-community centers**
- ✓ **Careful planning by starting the Information need assessment is the essential step to ensure provision of required services**
- ✓ **E-Community center site selection is very important for proper management, accessibility and security**
- ✓ **Proper coordination among all agencies & stake holders involved is important**
- ✓ **The e-community centers should be the shared responsibility of the Govt. & the community**

Conclusion (II)

- ☞ **The history repeatedly tells us that powerful technology is always irresistible and internet technology has already been termed as Explosive, unprecedented, amazing and disruptive.**