



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS
STRENGTHENING PROJECT**

FROM STRIVING TO THRIVING

Armenia Social Services Assessment Guidebook

Yerevan, 2008

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**From Striving to Thriving:
Armenia Social Services Assessment Guidebook**
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Introduction

This guidebook was developed for the USAID Armenia Social Protection Systems Strengthening (SPSS) Project. SPSS was launched in 2007 to improve the lives of Armenian citizens by helping to develop a more affordable and just social protection system. The four components of the project support social insurance reform, advance labor-market reforms, promote international safety standards at the workplace, and empower vulnerable citizens, including the elderly and persons with disabilities, to become more self-reliant.

Creating synergy through partnerships is a key strategy of the SPSS Project. To secure optimal impact, SPSS collaborates with diverse partners, including the Government of Armenia, international donor agencies, as well as local and international NGOs.

The goal of the community social services assessment initiative is to demonstrate good practices for community social needs assessment, planning and outsourcing of social services to non-governmental organizations.

The objectives of this initiative were:

- To develop useful tools for community social needs assessment, planning and outsourcing activities through selection of the community working group and delivery of training.
- To match local support that demonstrates the outsourcing of sustainable cost-effective community social services to non-governmental organizations through matching grants.

The Armenian Social Services Assessment Project was designed to help communities provide social services to their vulnerable populations and promote social and economic inclusion. Thus the project, The Armenian Social Services Assessment, Striving to Thriving, aims to:

- Foster optimal collaboration and consensus-building between citizens, community councils, local government, business, NGOs and donors.
- Empower communities to establish priorities and manage resources.
- Ensure that desired services fit local needs.
- Improve and decentralize the provision of social services by promoting efficient use of scarce resources to assist those who need it the most.
- Support the government and NGOs to collaboratively provide community-based social services through social contracting.
- Institute monitoring mechanisms to assess results, ensure international norms and best practices are applied and maintain financial accountability.

2008 Pilot Communities and Testing the Model:

In 2008, SPSS piloted the model focused on a community-based social-service delivery within the framework of grassroots decision-making and consensus-building. The pilot used the community-mobilization process for local citizens, community councils, local-government bodies, businesses, and NGOs to identify a given community's social-service assets, strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, needs and the local resources to match the needs and accordingly build the capacity of the community to deliver social services through a mechanism of outsourcing to NGOs.

Thirty communities in five regions were nominated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Issues and invited to participate in the pilot. The communities were selected based on the following criteria: 1) ability to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders, 2) ability to match assistance through locally-raised funds and in-kind contributions, and 3) adequate NGO base to assure capacity for implementation.

All three criteria are essential ingredients for sustainability.

The 2008 pilot communities of Alaverdi, Artik, Nor Norq and Nubarashen tested the process/model.

The approach proved to be sustainable due to the mobilization and collaborative involvement of communities. Through the series of community trainings and meetings initiated by government bodies, the pilot communities identified their specific priorities and accordingly formulated plans for social-service delivery, the implementation of which was outsourced to qualified NGOs.

The process was designed and delivered jointly with local-government representatives and also became a capacity-building exercise for community leaderships. The communities contributed to the outsourced projects, with a commitment to fund future projects as well. One of the pilot's most noteworthy outcomes is the partnership between local governments and NGOs. Local governments also enhanced their capacity to monitor the outsourced projects. The next step will be for local governments to find ways to provide ongoing funding for the services. As the selected services have been chosen by a broad base of stakeholders, there is political incentive to secure the funds.

The following are examples of the pilot community-based social services developed through the assessment process:

In **Alaverdi**, which is home to some 2,500 older pensioners, 958 disabled pensioners, 203 orphan children, and 25 pensioners who are war veterans with disabilities, a community center will be established to provide various forms of counseling to these socially vulnerable and impoverished citizens, in order to facilitate and/or enhance their integration into society.

In **Nubarashen**, where the community's only kindergarten can accommodate only 160 of the 200 kindergarten-age children, a community center will be established to offer a variety of services. In addition to providing basic education to children deprived of schooling, the center will provide homeless teenagers and young people with vocational training and help them obtain jobs.

In the large Yerevan community of **Nor Norq**, which is home to over 23,000 pensioners (including 729 seniors living alone, 7,227 disabled individuals, and 273 war veterans with

disabilities), a community center will be established to improve social services provided to these vulnerable citizens.

In **Artik**, the second largest city of Shirak Marz and home to 3,350 pensioners (1,250 registered as having various disabilities), a community center will provide social services to people with disabilities as well as senior citizens.

Thus the model met all objectives as each pilot community was successful in developing an action plan based on their assessment. Each community successfully identified NGOs as partners and successfully completed the RFP grant process. Each pilot community offered new services to the most vulnerable in their community by fall of 2008 and on into 2009.

International Community Development Specialist Barbara Andreozzi worked with SPSS staff Kristine Grigoryan who assisted with implementation of the pilot project during 2008. The consultant worked side by side with Kristine and the pilot communities in developing a model specifically for Armenia. Kristine's constant involvement offered the needed cultural input in developing a process that would be successful in Armenia. Kristine coordinated all applications, corespondance with communities and assisted the consultant in all training sessions. This guidebook represents the combined efforts of the consultant Barbara Andreozzi, SPSS staff Kristine Grigoryan and the pilot communities of Alaverdi, Artik, Nubarashen and Nor Norq as they truely *proofed* all methods to ensure a focused process with successful outcomes.

Preparing for Community Social Services Assessments

What is a Community Social Services Assessment?

A community social services assessment is a systematic process of gathering, analyzing and reporting information about the needs of your community's social services along with the assets, capacities and strengths that are currently available in your community to meet those needs.

A community social services assessment begins by convening or mobilizing a group of citizens that can represent the community, know the social service programs and needs in the community. We call these individuals the social services stakeholders who will analyze the current state of their social services; their assets, opportunities, threats, needs, establish a vision and prioritizing the issues that require change.

This collaborative effort between local citizens provides a foundation for a community assessment that includes professionals who have expertise on issues and others who are likely to be affected by the changes (such as the disabled, low income families, the unemployed, local government, potential NGOs, etc.) The process also develops a social services vision that provides a focus for the community assessment — a clear picture of where the community wants to be in the future. The stakeholders prioritize their potential actions based on an assessment and realistic appraisal of current services, assets, needs, the current environment plus forces working for and against them to implement their specific projects. The focus is on change that can be sustained to create a better future for those most vulnerable in their communities.

Why should Communities Conduct a Community Social Services Assessment?

The outcomes from a well-designed social services community assessment that gathers information using sound research methods can be generalized to the entire set of residents in the community. A well-designed social services community assessment will allow community officials to feel a sense of confidence when they use this information as the basis for decision-making. Community assessments can also be used to assess and generate awareness of the issues being studied and to promote citizen interest in creating change. For the most vulnerable in your communities, a social services assessment can help focus efforts on what is needed now, using current assets to create a better future for your citizens. Foundations and other funding institutions that provide resources for implementing action plans will often require a formal assessment of needs and resources.

As community-planning groups begin to think about actions necessary to create change, members often realize that they do not have sufficient knowledge to make decisions about action plans or how to select a project that will meet the needs in their communities, especially for the most vulnerable. Members may be basing their judgments on selected “stories” or anecdotes they have heard from other community residents rather than research or local data.

Involving local stakeholders in a research based assessment process is pro-active as they discover ways to help shape and create their future. Focusing efforts on the highest priority activities while utilizing identified assets also yields a higher success rate for the new partnerships that will be formed via this process, especially between the community and NGO who will implement the final selected project.

The methods used during this assessment focus on the strengths and assets of the community and their current social services. While we identify needs, we also focus on the community's current assets thus involve the skills of local residents, NGOs, local government along with businesses and other public and private institutions.

Using the Guidebook for Your Social Services Assessment

This guidebook was designed for the trainer/facilitator to be easy to follow, provide all materials needed to conduct a local social services assessment in Armenia at this time, while also focusing on what assets communities have to help them achieve their goals. All assessment materials are translated, on the SPSS server, and are ready for the next round of assessments. The step by step process is delineated in four community assessment meetings. The first meeting is with your local steering committee, called Core-Team Leaders. The second and third meetings are with 30 – 35 local social services stakeholders, including your Core Team Leaders, who will conduct the assessment. Your final session is with your steering committee/Core Team Leaders and NGO selected to implement their top project.

Participant handouts are distributed at each session. A participants booklet is not recommended as the tasks may appear to be to daunting before the training to understand the step by step method. During the pilot round participants preferred to hear the training and do the work step by step with the trainer. This enabled each community, no matter what the size, to be successful at completing each task immediately following the necessary training. All handouts are already translated into Armenian and are on the SPSS server.

The first meeting is planned for your team leaders from the community who will be called the Steering Committee or Core Team Leaders. The five to seven people should include representation from local government who will be coordinating local efforts, plus social services representatives from the local and regional governments, local leaders in the social services, a local business leader concerned about the most vulnerable in the community and individuals who have struggled in the past and understand the barriers and needs of their communities vulnerable populations.

Each session is designed to build the capacities of community leaders and stakeholders while also conducting the assessment. Team building is a part of each session as it builds the capacity for long term sustainability and coordination. In the end, it is the local community that must coordinate efforts with their NGOs to provide needed services to their citizens.

An overview of the process is represented in the project flow chart. The timelines can change slightly but should ensure the community can complete homework between each session.

Armenia Social Services Assessment “Striving to Thriving Project” Flow Chart:

Step 1: Inviting local communities to participate:

Application sent to communities, Proposals evaluated/scored, Letter of Congratulations & Invitation to Bidders Conference and first training session for 5-7 Team Leaders

4 weeks
later...

Step 2: Bidders Conference and Training of Local Team Leaders:

Forming Community Core Leadership Team, Training on identifying & recruiting 30 - 35 local Stakeholders, Asset-Based Assessment, Timelines, Assessment Process, Local Ownership, Leadership homework/tasks

4 weeks
later

Step 3: Community Stakeholder Phase I Social Services Assessment:

Stakeholders Team Building & Group Process Training, Assessment Process: Asset – Opportunity - Threats - Needs - Assessment, Develop Vision, Identification of Best Practices, Analysis homework/tasks

4 weeks
later

Step 4: Community Stakeholder Phase II Social Services Assessment:

Finalize Vision Statement, Bridge to Desired Future, Best Practices 2nd training, Goal identification, Force Field Analysis, Criteria Review, Prioritization of Goals / Actions, RFP Overview, Leadership homework/tasks

4 - 6
weeks

Step 5: Developing the Partnership and Sustainability Plan:

Training on: Community Partnerships, Program Logic Model, Action Plan Development, Evaluation, Indicators, Monitoring, Outcomes, and Results Communication, Partnership homework/tasks

Monitor

Step 6: Sustainability, Program Reporting, Monitoring, Evaluation:

First Year Quarterly Program Reporting & Evaluation, Monitoring of: Indicators, Outcomes, and Results Annually Reporting Outcomes/Results

Involving Local Communities

Setting the Stage for Success

The first steps have been designed to yield success for your social services assessment project. It begins with inviting local communities to apply to be a part of the assessment process. You should plan to be as inclusive as possible as you publicize your application process ensuring local communities receive the application and have enough time to apply. Plan a process that can assure the letter does get into the hands of the local community government.

During the pilot round, SPSS staff Kristine Grigoryan work with the Ministry of Labor and Social Issues to select potential communities for the first pilot round of assessments. Thirty communities in five regions were nominated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Issues and invited to participate in the pilot. The communities were selected based on the following criteria:

- 1) Ability to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders
- 2) Ability to match assistance through locally-raised funds and in-kind contributions
- 3) Adequate NGO base to assure capacity for implementation.

All three criteria are essential and critical elements for sustainability and should be considered for the future replication of this program .

Inviting Local Communities to Apply

An invitation letter was sent during the pilot round and detailed the information communities needed to know to apply for the pilot project.

Your letter should offer information about the program, deadlines, information needed for the application, including any match required for the project. You may only rate/score the information you request in your application thus plan carefully what needs to be included in your letter of interest.

Notice the information offered in the Letter of Interest and the proposal scoring sheet. Be careful to ensure all information you need from the communities is requested in your letter of interest.

Review the pilot round “Letter of Interest” and plan your letter with all needed information to ensure you can correctly rate the communities who do respond.

Letter of Interest

RA Ministry of Labor and Social Issues and the USAID Social Protection Systems Strengthening (SPSS) Project invite local self government entities, social service representatives and community representatives to collaborate in developing community social service needs assessment, social planning and social contracting activities.

The goal of the initiative is to demonstrate good practices for community social needs assessment, planning and outsourcing of social services to nongovernmental organizations.

The objectives of this initiative are:

- To develop useful tools for community social needs assessment, planning and outsourcing activities through selection of the community working group and delivery of training provided by an international expert.
- To match local support that demonstrates the outsourcing of sustainable cost-effective community social services to nongovernmental organizations through matching grants.

If you wish to participate in the initiative, please respond to this letter by March 5, 2008. Your response must include:

- A description of social services currently provided in your community
- The nongovernmental organizations existing in your community
- Community interest in this project
- Ability to contribute 10 – 20% match for the project grant

For additional information please contact Kristine Grigoryan: by E-mail: kgrig@spss.am or by phone: (374 10) 54-26-11.

A. Petrosyan
Deputy Minister of RA Ministry of Labor and Social Issues

Amy Ramm
Chief of Party
USAID Social Protection System Strengthening Project

Rating the Applications

The rating process should be as transparent as possible, with documentation of the process you utilized for your project. You may only rate the information provided in response to your application / Letter of Interest. Thus your application/ Letter of Interest will form the base of all rating questions you can score. Several individuals should rate the applications to ensure a transparent process. All those who rate the projects should also use the same proposal evaluation scoring sheet and understand how to score each community on their individual merits.

During the pilot round, both SPSS staff and Ministry of Labor and Social Issues staff rated the pilot applications using the same form. The staff then combined scores and talked about which communities were ready now to conduct the full community social services assessment program.

Review the proposal evaluation score sheet used during the pilot round. Note how the proposal evaluation score sheet directly links the rating questions back to the application letter.

During the pilot round a mix of communities across Armenia was needed to proof the process thus the location and population were important for rating. Communities with the capacity to partner with NGOs were also important during the pilot round. Note how the community match is also rated as the communities must make a commitment of funds and in-kind donations to have ownership in the process and final project selected.

The score sheet thus rates all critical information about the communities' commitment, capacity to implement the project, community partnerships with local NGOs, outsourcing experience and ability to match with funds and in-kind donations, all important coordination elements that will help ensure a productive partnership in the future.

Carefully consider all the elements you hope to achieve with your project and build a proposal evaluation scoring sheet that reflects the information you requested in your Letter of Interest. Again, you may only rate what you ask for in your application or in your Letter of Interest. Thus carefully plan these steps to ensure a transparent process where all communities have the opportunity to offer you the same information that you will then use to rate their proposals.

Review the pilot round proposal evaluation scoring sheet for examples you may wish to include.

Proposal Evaluation Score Sheet

Applicant Community and Status _____

Region _____ **Community size** _____

Description of social services available in the community _____

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Capacity to implement the project _____

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Community partnership with local NGOs _____

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Community outsourcing experience _____

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Ability to match from community funds (at least 10%) _____

Comments on proposal and budget _____

Total score _____

Recommendations

- Recommended for selection
- Not recommended for funding

_____ Date Signature _____

Applicant Response Letter:

All applicants deserve a response letter and should be thanked for applying. If they were not selected, simply add a request that they apply again during the next round and let them know their rating sheet is available for their review. This provides a learning experience for the communities in applying for future projects and funds.

Below is an example of the letter sent to the successful applicants during the pilot round. It contains the request for a letter of commitment approved by the Mayor, noting the contribution the community is willing to match. It also provides the information about the first training session for the local Team Leaders.

March 10, 2008

Mr./Ms. (Name of Applicant's contact person)
(Name of Applicant Organization)
(Address of Applicant Organization)

Dear Mr. _____:

We would like to congratulate you and inform that the Letter of Interest for the upcoming Striving to Thriving, Social Services Assessment program has been accepted as it does meet Project objectives.

Social Protection System Strengthening Project will be holding a bidders conference next week on _____ from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm at our office located in Yerevan, 18 Baghramyan Street (entrance from Zarubyan Street).

You will need to have 5 to 7 individuals attend the training who agree to be the lead team for your community. Your lead team should include members from your community Social Services Council, a representative from the Mayor's office who will handle correspondence and other individuals concerned about the Social Services in your community. At least four members need to work directly with Social Services in your community.

You are hereby requested to submit a letter of commitment approved by the Mayor or taghapet and mention the amount that community will be able to contribute to the project. We expect at least a 10% contribution from the community for grant outsourcing activities in your community (for example, if community contribution to project is \$1,500, than SPSS project will contribute \$8,500 to outsource the project with total budget of \$10,000). The actual size of a grant will also depend on what will be sustainable long-term in your community.

Please also mention that you will commit to complete the training and assessment process for this program and meet all project objectives.

Thank you for your interest in our local community social services development initiative.

Amy Ramm
Chief of Party
USAID Social Protection System Strengthening Project

Mayor's Response Letter:

The Mayor of each successful applicant community should also receive a letter congratulating and outlining what is expected from the local government. The Mayor needs to be informed that a lead team needs to attend the first training as they should be a part of deciding who will attend along with their designated staff. The Letter of Commitment must come directly from the Mayor thus he/she must receive their own letter.

Below is an example letter sent during the pilot round:

March 10, 2008

Mr./Ms. *(Name of Applicant/ Community Mayor)*
(Name of Applicant Organization/Local Government)
(Address of Applicant Organization/Local Government)

Dear Mr. _____:

This letter is in response to the Letter of Interest you submitted to the Ministry of Labor and Social Issues and SPSS Project on March 6, 2008.

We would like to congratulate you and inform that the Letter of Interest has been accepted and it does meet Project objectives.

Social Protection System Strengthening Project will be holding a training session next week on _____ from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm at our office located in Yerevan, 18 Baghramyan Street (entrance from Zarubyan Street).

You will need to have 5 to 7 individuals attend the training who agree to be the lead team for your community. Your lead team should include members from your community Social Services Council, a representative from the Mayor's office who will handle correspondence and other individuals concerned about the Social Services in your community. At least four members need to work directly with Social Services in your community.

You are hereby requested to submit a letter of commitment approved by the Mayor or taghapet and mention the amount that community will be able to contribute to the project. We expect 10% contribution from the community for grant outsourcing activities in your community. Please also mention that you will commit to complete the training and assessment process for this program and meet all project objectives.

Thank you for your interest in our local community social services development initiative.

Amy Ramm
Chief of Party
USAID Social Protection System Strengthening Project

Bidder Conference and First Training

Your first session with a small community team of 5 – 7 leaders will focus on building a local Steering Committee or the Core Team Leaders for their community assessment through implementation of their top projects. The Core Team Leaders need to understand and commit to the full assessment process. The Core-Team Leaders should represent the community thus during the pilot round we recommended a representative from the local government, who will organize all local communications, be one of the 7 leaders. We also asked for leaders who understand the local issues especially the social services issues and the needs of the most vulnerable in their community, including business leadership.

The objectives for the first meeting with your Community Core-Team Leaders needs to set the stage for their commitment and excitement about the project and the process. Thus you will need to be prepared for the session to flow easily and give your full attention to answering all potential questions about the process. You will also be building the Team you want them to be through several team building exercises and training about their role.

Note the objectives for this first meeting of your local leaders. All materials offered for this session reinforce the objectives therefore are considered critical elements for success of the project.

Objectives for Bidder Conference/Core Leaders Training:

1. Build Team Leadership
2. Increase understanding / importance of stakeholder involvement
3. Increase understanding of inclusive participatory process
4. Increase understanding of current state of social services in the community
5. Increase understanding of social services assessment process
6. Increase understanding of Asset Based assessment
7. Increase understanding of Team Leaders Roles and timeline for project
8. Team Leaders identify key Stakeholders and recruit them for next session

Your first focus is on Welcoming them and begin to build the team they must become to be successful.

Do not assume they really know each other. Always conduct a team-building exercise or getting-to-know-each-other exercise at the start of each session.

The Power Point slides detail the team-building exercises used during the pilot round. You may add to those or choose slightly different exercises with the same objectives as noted for this training.

The notes on the power point slides are for the presenter and should never be shared with attendees. Attendees should receive a handout of the slides three to six per page

with an area for taking their own notes. Slides showing the answers to the exercises should never be part of the handout.

As presenter, you should always enjoy the session and provide an environment where all participants can also enjoy the session. During the pilot round we provided beverages, snacks, lunch and a room conducive to working as a team. All equipment was tested before attendees

arrived and materials were handed out as they signed in for the first session. The following materials detail the session held for the pilot communities in 2008.

Stakeholder Training of Core-Team Leaders

The agenda for the first session was designed to cover all training plus allow for team building time during the breaks and over lunch. Core Team members need time to discuss how they will work together as they discover their role and the details about the assessment process.

Their first assignment following this session, to recruit their 30 to 35 local stakeholders, requires a team approach. Thus the focus during this first session is on team building as you conduct the training. You'll notice the agenda allows for participants to chat during breaks and during lunch. The agenda also offers a pace that will be enjoyable by participants that will not rush you as the facilitator-presenter.

The agenda corresponds directly to the power point presentation and handouts for this session. Thus you will need to have the power point projector tested and ready to run your presentation before attendees arrive. We also recommend you have a flip chart at the front of all sessions to note questions, clarify concepts and for some of the group activities.

Facilitator/Trainer Needs for Session:

- ❖ Flip Chart stand and paper
- ❖ Colored markers
- ❖ Power Point projector
- ❖ Power Point Presentation: Involving Stakeholders
- ❖ Handouts for session:
 1. Agenda: Stakeholder Training for Social Services Development and Bidders Conference
 2. Power Point slides handout: 3 slides per page with area for their notes beside each slide
 3. Assets/Opportunities/Threats/Needs group work handout
 4. Selecting Your Community Stakeholders handout
- ❖ Resources for Facilitator: Thinking Outside the Box exercise instructions

All materials and power point slides have been translated into Armenian and are on the SPSS server ready for your first session. The training session has been designed for a five hour workshop including lunch. Review the agenda carefully to ensure a comfortable, enjoyable pace for all participants.

Involving Stakeholders Power Point Presentation:

The power point presentation contains notes for the presenter. These are suggestions for you as the presenter. The 'notes' indicate what worked during the pilot round to reach the objectives for the session.

The handout for participants is a copy of the slides, three per page with an area by each slide for participants to take their own notes. We found during the pilots that it was best to let your

participants take notes during the presentations to allow for different learning styles. This allowed the notes pages to be an excellent area for the trainer notes. Never share the notes pages with attendees. Remember, the power point notes pages are for you as the presenter - trainer.

Always prepare for the session by reviewing the entire power point presentation, adding your own language and style to your notes while keeping the basic training message. The 14 slides that make up the Involving Stakeholders first training workshop will form the base of your foundation of information to build on for the entire project.

Handouts for Stakeholders training:

Agenda Involving Stakeholders Training and Bidders Conference

Assets/Opportunities/Threats/Needs Worksheets

Selecting Your Community Stakeholders

Resources for Trainer/Facilitator:

Thinking Outside the Box

First Community Social Services Assessment Meeting

Planning Your First Stakeholders Session

The first meeting with the community stakeholders must be both fun and accomplish the objectives needed for success. You want all attendees to learn, share, work as team members and understand they can create change for their community.

You will notice that some of the objectives from the first session with your Core Team Leaders are also repeated slightly differently during this session with the entire Stakeholder group. It is equally important that the community stakeholders understand their role and how important they are to the process. They also must learn how to work together as a team to ensure a successful process.

You will need to bring the entire group to a basic understanding of the process, asset based assessment, and what group behaviors you are asking that they adopt. Building the Team is woven into all activities during this session along with conducting the first assessment.

Objectives for First Community Social Services

Assessment meeting:

1. Increase understanding of their importance as a local stakeholder.
2. Increase understanding of being a Team member
3. Increase understanding of community Social Services Assessment process
4. Increase understanding of Asset Based assessment
5. Increase understanding and application of Team-member behaviors = development of ground rules, brainstorming techniques, role of facilitators, reporters, group process, team builders and blockers, consensus decision making process, social contracting,

Be prepared to ensure the session runs smoothly with time for all activities and space to break-out into four working groups for the break-out activities.

The agenda again offers a pace to ensure all activities can be conducted at an enjoyable pace. The power point presentation covers all training required for this session along with support materials.

Review the power point presentation and all materials to ensure a session participants can enjoy, acquire the team skills needed for the success of the project while also conducting the first assessment exercises. By the end of the session, participants should be developing as a team, therefore successful in completing the needed homework for the next

session.

During the pilot round, we offered a one-hour pre-session for the Core-Team Leaders. We then asked that they assist in facilitating the breakout group work and report-backs. The pre-session

allowed for greater team building with the individuals who will be asked to be part of the community partnership and help with the success of implementing their projects.

Facilitator/Trainer Needs for Session:

- ❖ Flip Chart stand and paper
- ❖ Colored markers
- ❖ Power Point projector and slides
- ❖ Handouts for session:
 1. Agendas, Pre-session Core-Team-Leaders and Stakeholders Assessment I
 2. Power Point slides 3 per page with area for notes beside each slide
 3. Pre-Session Facilitator training handout
 4. Guidelines for Ground Rules
 5. Guidelines for Brainstorming
 6. Guidelines for Consensus Decision-Making
 7. Assets/Opportunities/Threats/Needs group work handout
- ❖ Resources for the Presenter-Trainer: Examples for Creating your Vision, Samples of Outcomes from pilot communities first assessment

All materials and power point slides have been translated into Armenian and are on the SPSS server ready for your second session, your first Stakeholders Assessment. This session has been designed with two sessions. The first one hour pre-session is for your Core-Team-Leaders. The second session is for all stakeholders including your Core Team Leaders, for a 6 hour training workshop including lunch.

Pre-Session training for Local Core-Team Leaders

The pre-session training for your Core Team Leaders begins to train community leaders for their future role in implementing the results from this assessment. Thus during the first two stakeholder sessions you will be asking the Core Team Leaders to assist you during the group working session and breakout group sessions.

The one hour pre-session covers:

- Your role as a Break-out Group Facilitator
- The role of Break-out Group Recorders
- Understanding Group Process including: Gathering, Groping / Forming, Griping / Storming, Grasping / Norming, Grouping / Performing
- What builds or blocks group / team development,
- How to enhance participation
- Guidelines for Brainstorming Sessions

All materials are prepared, translated into Armenian and are on the SPSS server. Review all your pre materials carefully and be prepared for a very fast-pace one hour pre-training session.

Full-Session: Stakeholders Assessment First Session Materials

This first community stakeholders' session sets the pace for your assessment work. This may be the first time many participants have been involved in an activity that requires they act as a team member. Therefore the 6 hour session is designed to train them in the basics of group process and being a team member.

The training will cover Guidelines for Ground Rules; Standards of Conduct for Working as a Community Group, Guidelines for Brainstorming, Guidelines for Consensus Decision-Making in addition to the assessment work and building their Vision for the future.

The Power Point presentation offers you training notes for all handouts and materials covered in this session. Review all materials carefully and be prepared for a fun, hard-working session.

First Assessment Training Power Point Presentation

Your first session with the Community Stakeholders starts the full community social services assessment. You will share with the stakeholders the beginning assessment of assets to needs completed by the Core Team Leaders and ask them to add to this assessment. The power point presentation contains all your presenter notes thus prepare for your own presentation covering all the materials for this session.

The 29 slides in the Your Community Assessment of Vulnerable Population Services will take local participants through team building, understanding how we all think differently, gaining they understanding of how groups and teams work, an overview of the process and their first assessments including developing four potential vision statements for development into one statement.

You will be breaking out the Stakeholders into working groups twice during this session as detailed in the power point slides. Review the agenda and slides to time the session carefully, making sure participants have the needed time to complete their work and preparations for the report-backs to the entire group.

Review all slides and presenter notes carefully and be prepared to conduct your first Community Stakeholder assessment of the state of social services in their community and their needs along with assets, strengths and opportunities to address those needs.

Presenter Materials for First Assessment

For the Presenter / Trainer: You may want to review the following list before the first Stakeholder session and explain to participants that various terms are used when we talk about Vulnerable Populations. The following terms will bring your entire group up to a comfortable level of terminology they will need during this session and their second session.

Various definitions of vulnerable populations:

EU/European Union:

- People with disabilities
- Migrants / ethnic minorities
- Homeless people
- Ex-prisoners
- People with drug and alcohol problems
- Isolated older people
- Children

Armenian terms use:

- Disabled / handicapped
- Elderly living alone
- Families needing family benefits
- Internally displaced persons / refugees
- Large families with multiple children
- Orphans, children without parents
- Families of deceased soldiers, widowed families

Terms used by Armenia pilot communities:

- Disabled and disabled elderly
- Parentless children
- Pensioners / elderly
- Single mothers / mothers raising children alone
- Families with many children
- Families and individuals needing urgent assistance
- Families needing family benefits

Second Community Assessment

Completing Your Community Social Services Assessment

The final session with you full Stakeholder group will finalize the assessment process and lead to prioritization of potential projects to utilize the community strengths while answering their identified needs. You will continue to build the team as members of the stakeholder group may wish to join the Core Team Leaders to implement the top projects after this session.

During the pilot round we found team members wanted to work through lunch as they were fully engaged in the process and did not want to break for an hour. Thus lunch should be delivered to the groups as they work which will take extra planning on your part to ensure they can eat and work at the same time.

Review carefully the exercises in this session as they will take the analysis from the last session to the next level.

You will also be starting the session with the homework reports, finalizing the asset to needs assessment and hearing the four groups' vision statement combined into one community social services vision statement. You will need to be flexible following the presentation as all

Objectives for Second Community Social Services Assessment meeting:

1. Increase understanding of their role as a local stakeholder/team member
2. Develop Skills in data analysis and bridging assets to needs
3. Increase understanding of community Social Services Assessment best practices
4. Increase understanding and application of force field analysis
5. Increase understanding and application of consensus decision making process, social contracting, and prioritizing of projects to attain vision, answer needs and build action plan

stakeholders need to agree on the vision statement and may wish to offer a few word changes the entire group will need to approve.

The agenda allows for the needed time to complete all exercises with the pilots showing us they wanted more discussion time thus asked to have a working lunch. This occurred in all four pilot communities as they enjoyed the opportunity to work together as teams and wanted to maximize the time they had together.

You will note that this session ends with final prioritization of their top two or three projects thus you will need time at the end to form new members of the Core Team to continue to develop the action plans and be ready to answer the RFP for their top one or two projects. Each project can have a Core-Team thus new leadership should step forward to continue the needed homework

before the Project Team/s next session. As you learn more about the Stakeholders, you will be able to judge how long the group may need to form the teams at the end of the session. During

the pilot round, most communities only needed 10 – 15 minutes to agree to serve on the top project teams in the future. One community needed almost 30 minutes to discuss how some projects fell off the top list after the second round of voting and wanted to spend a few minutes discussing again the merits of all first round projects. Your flexibility as a facilitator will allow the community to reach consensus if a few members are just not ready to let a project move to an in-the-future list. Remind participants of their resources and the force field analysis you will be doing during this session as that is often the reason a project must wait for another time to be implemented.

Facilitator/Trainer Needs for Session:

- ❖ Flip Chart stand and paper
- ❖ Colored markers
- ❖ Power Point projector and slides
- ❖ Handouts for session:
 1. Agendas
 2. Power Point slides 3 per page with area for notes beside each slide
 3. Presenter/Facilitator list of Vision Statements to read
 4. Community-based Continuum of Care handout
 5. Vulnerable groups handout
 6. Force Field Analysis handout for group work
 7. Top Ideas score sheet handout
 8. Optional: Jamaica NGOs Providing Social Services handout

All materials and power point slides have been translated into Armenian and are on the SPSS server ready for your third session, your second Stakeholders Assessment. This session has been designed for a 6 ½ hour training workshop including lunch. Three break-out sessions are part of this training which will result in prioritization of the communities top potential projects.

Power Point for Second Session: Community Assessment II

The power point for this session, Your Community Social Services Assessment Phase II, will complete the community stakeholders' assessment, analysis and selection of their top potential projects. The 36 slides and presenter notes will take you through each of the steps for this final assessment and help the stakeholders analyze the projects with the greatest potential to meet their needs at this time.

You will need to prepare for three group work sessions during this meeting. Thus pacing the presentations and training the stakeholders for the work before them will require your careful preparation.

Presenter notes are provided in detail with each power point slide, as in all sessions. Review these carefully and be prepared to present all the information in your own style. Carefully watch the pace and time during this session to ensure a comfortable, successful training meeting all the objectives for this session.

You will finish the session with two to three top potential projects that you will be asking the stakeholders to volunteer to develop into an RFP with their community coordinator. Thus the work at the end of the session on the final slides should not be rushed and cannot be shortened.

You will start with the Vision Team report-back. Make sure and thank the team for their work as you proceed with the power point slide presentation.

Save time at the end of the session to review work you would like them to complete before September. Stress how all work will relate back to their Vision Statement and their goals.

Support Materials for Second Session

Vision Reports from 2008 Pilot Communities

Vision Reports from the 2008 Community Pilots of Alaverdi, Artik, Nor Norq and Nubarahen which can be read to participants as examples in addition to the examples from around the world. These should not be handed out to participants as we do not want them to copy any community's vision, but develop a unique Vision for their unique community.

Community-Based Continuum of Care Handout

The Community-based continuum of care handout is an important training lesson for all attendees. You need to carefully review the handout to enable all stakeholders to understand the basics of social services needed at the community level.

They will also need to understand the terminology if they plan to seek funds from social service donors. Thus the terms "Preventative, Ameliorative and Restorative" are also important. Your stakeholders need to understand the services that are needed at the various stages of life which will enable them to think about their local needs and current services to meet those needs.

Be prepared to cover this chart in detail with all participants at your training and ask that they review this again when they begin to focus on their current needs, assets and what programs they would like to expand to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in their community.

Vulnerable Groups and Programs Handout

The Vulnerable Groups and Social Service Programs handout is a simple list of current vulnerable groups in Armenia and examples of current programs to meet their needs. We provide this list to reinforce to participants that best practices are happening in Armenia in communities like theirs.

Force Field Analysis Group Work Handout

Force field analysis is an important step in assessing programs that are ready to launch or may need to wait due to helping or hindering forces. Review your power point presenter-trainer notes and the handouts to be prepared to lead the group through this analysis of their top voted projects. An example analysis is offered in the handout in addition to the worksheets. After the groups have developed their force field analysis for their top projects, they will note current forces working in their favor to develop the project and those forces hindering them from implementing the project. They need to do a force field analysis chart for each of their top projects they are considering. Ask them to write the name of the project on the top of the chart

and discuss as a group what forces are hindering or helping. The report-backs from this exercise will help the group understand which project is ready for implementation now.

Scoring Top Ideas Handout

Top Ideas for Meeting the Needs of Your Vulnerable Populations: This handout will be used after the groups have conducted their force field analysis. This tool will help each individual understand which project(s) is ready now and which project(s) must wait. All projects should answer the needs of their vulnerable populations and be ready to implement in the next year. After scoring all projects, participants are ready to vote with dots on their top projects. Follow the instructions offered in your power point slides and be ready to use this handout as a tool to help local stakeholders prioritize their potential projects.

Other optional resources to use during this session, already prepared:

NGOs from Jamaica: A chart of examples of the types of NGOs performing social services in Jamaica. This chart would be an excellent resource to share if the community notes they do not have the resources to form partnerships with NGOs or that they do not have any NGOs working on social services in their community. Jamaica began to focus on partnering with NGOs when they had very limited funds, limited development of NGOs and yet they were successful at implementing many programs to reach those most in need in their communities.

If you are working with a community that has developed NGOs and has not identified working with an NGO or developing NGOs as an issue, you may not want to use this chart as your community has not identified barriers this chart will help illustrate. Thus this chart and others like it on the web are optional and a resource if your community feels they cannot develop NGO partnerships to implement programs.

Developing the Partnership, Session Four

Your final training session with the Core Team Leaders and “Partnership” for implementing the community’s top selected project(s) will set the foundation for building successful, sustainable new services. You will want to build this final training session to be flexible, prepare the partnership for their first steps together and ensure they build a realistic plan with measurable results.

Public and donor funds are part of their project thus they must be fully accountable and understand the need for monitoring and evaluation as part of their action plan.

This session introduces the basic elements of a partnership to prepare the new team for their roles during the next phase of their project.

Objectives for 4th Session: Developing the Partnership

1. Enhance Team Building with Community Partner Core-Team
2. Enhance knowledge of Working in Community Partnerships
3. Increase knowledge and application of Logic Model for development of project
4. Develop indicators, first outputs and outcomes for project
5. Develop year long monitor process for success
6. Build capacity to successfully implement project
7. Review proposal selection process

It also introduces the Logic Model, a successful tool to develop a program from implementation to evaluation. The model will provide a tool to also assist with monitoring and evaluation of their project and enable the Partnership to easily communicate their success and value to the public.

The four hour training provides a focused time for deepening their understanding of how their new Partnership will work and provide tools to assist in successfully developing their project together. All materials that you need for the session are provided in two power point presentations and handouts.

Remember to build teamwork at the beginning of the session.

Facilitator/Trainer Needs for Session:

- ❖ Flip Chart stand and paper
- ❖ Colored markers
- ❖ Power Point projector and slides
- ❖ Power Point Presentations: Building the Community Partnership and The Logic Model
- ❖ Handouts for session:
 1. Agenda: Developing the Partnership, Community Assessment Final Session
 2. Power Point slides 3 per page with area for notes beside each slide
 3. Logic Model handout and work sheets
 4. Gantt Chart handout and work sheets
 5. Monitoring and Evaluation handout

All materials and power point slides have been translated into Armenian and are on the SPSS server ready for your fourth session, Developing the Partnership . This final assessment session is designed to be completed in a 4 hour session including lunch.

Partnership and Logic Model Power Point

You will have two power point presentations during this ‘Developing the Partnership’ session. The first power point presentation “Working in Community Partnerships” is designed to have an inter-active discussion with team members thus is only eight slides long. You will need to prepare for any potential questions during this session, stressing the social contracting and community partnerships are already happening in Armenia.

Stress that the RFP and granting process is a form of social contacting and an excellent model for them to begin to think about what other formal or informal agreements they wish to work out between the partners. Examples of Formal and Informal partnerships are offered in the power point and you can build on these with your own examples. The more formal contacts will ask for deadlines and certain information that must be reported on annually. Informal examples can be as simple as agreeing to have lunch once a month for a program update.

The power points for this session are designed to help the partnership form in a successful manner, being aware of the benefits and challenges they will face together.

The second power point “The Logic Model” will give them the skills to develop their project from planning, to implementation to evaluation with success. This best practice model will allow them to easily report the necessary indicators to the funders along with successful outputs and outcomes/results. The 30 slides will guide them through to successful application of the model. Plan for the time needed for the Partnership to apply the model with the practice sheets handout provided for this session. In addition, you will be briefly presenting the Gantt chart for their timeline development at the end of the session. Thus save at least 10 minutes to review this briefly with them and allow them to use the practice sheets provided.

Review you presenter notes carefully as they contain all the information needed to teach what some think is a complicated model, in a very easy step by step method. Remember you are building the skills to allow participants to be successful through their entire project and partnership.

Handouts for Session Four:

Logic Model

The logic model handouts for the session will give participants the practice they need to apply the knowledge you covered during the power point presentation. Encourage the partners to review the charts, then begin to develop their top project, selecting one of the goals they hope to achieve in offering a new service in their community. Work with the group as they begin to use the logic model to develop their project. The power point presentation explains how to use the model step by step; this is simply time for application of their knowledge to their top project. The logic model on the SPSS server is also in landscape formate to give participants more room on the logic model chart.

Gantt Chart

The Gantt Chart is an excellent tool to graphically illustrate the project's timeline. Because it graphically shows the sequence of tasks, it can provide feedback to the project team to avoid unrealistic timetables and tasks. It is important that every project is designed realistically and the Gantt Chart is one tool to help the Partnership be successful in their implementation. Review the handout guidelines and introduce this tool after the participants have finished their logic model. They can then apply the identified tasks to this model.

Project Monitoring Mechanisms

Project monitoring is important during implementation of any project. As the partnership with non-governmental organizations continues to develop and expand, the ministry, local government or other donors must plan mechanisms to track and evaluate the programmatic and financial success of its project activities. Comprehensible monitoring mechanisms can assist the ministry/local government/donor as well as the NGOs in their mission to provide higher quality social services.

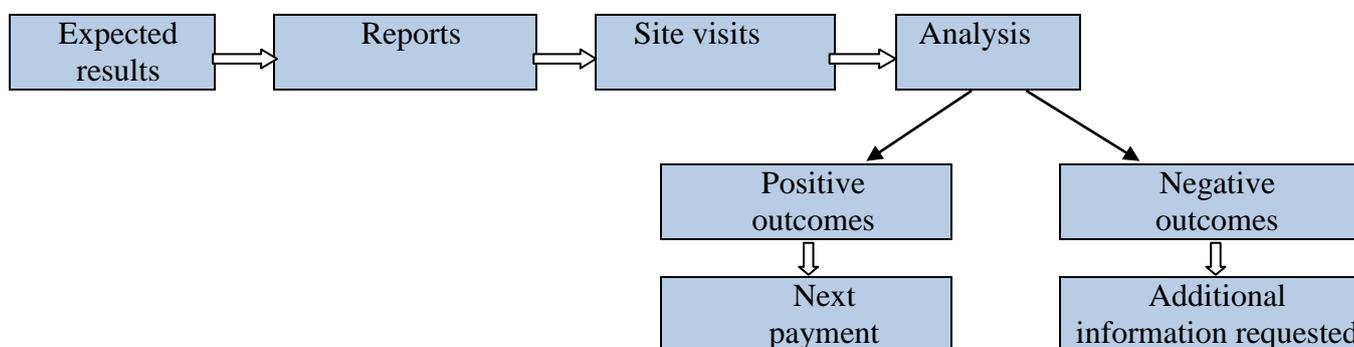
Monitoring means data collection which allows ministry/local government/donors complete information on implemented projects. It's important to collect this information periodically in a planned and organized manner. Based on the information collected during monitoring the ministry/donors will be able to evaluate implementation of its projects and use this information in its reports.

Usually the process of monitoring involves the division or the department, which the project is implemented for, and the Monitoring and Oversight Department. Project monitoring is comprised of the following components:

- analytical or project reporting (evaluation report),
- financial reporting (auditing report),
- monitoring visit(s).

The monitoring components are effective in combination. The following model of project monitoring will be used by staff during the implementation of the grant cycle:

Monitoring Process Model



Reports

Project monitoring is implemented based on regular reporting by the project implementing organization, in this case NGO. Regular review of *program or analytical reports* and *financial reports* can provide useful information about project implementation.

Programmatic Reports

Each project has a developed list of expected outcomes and their assessment indicators, as well as Project Implementation Schedule (usually attached to the main contract). Project oversight is carried out based on the schedule and indicators and submitted reports. The Project Analytical Report reflects the details of all the activities performed and financial resources spent for the given period. Information on project activities and financial resources spent for project purposes is to be logically and coherently framed in the report. Moreover, all the documents substantiating implementation of any project activity (i.e. training implementation documents, consultancy recording journals, video materials' copies, etc.) are to be attached to the report. Any notes or materials developed within the scope of a project are to be submitted along with analytical reports.

Programmatic and Financial Reports are to be supervised and verified by appropriate project and monitoring bodies as per a previously designed schedule. Programmatic and Financial Reports are to be reviewed simultaneously to perceive their coherence. Report review forms may be designed for staff to take notes if special attention is required to and considerations subject to further adjustment during the next visit or when checking the next report.

When reviewing Project Implementation Reports special attention is to be paid to the following items:

- Are grantee's/contractor's activities in line with project goals?
- Is there considerable progress in achieving expected outcomes of the project set forth previously?
- Do reported costs concur with reported project activities?
- Are the reports submitted according to the schedule included in the contract?
- Do periods of costs and reported activities concur?
- Consider proposals timeline changes, budget revisions or project alterations.

Financial Reports

Financial Reports are also of importance in the course of project implementation. They include:

- Financial Report forms signed and stamped by Project Director and Accountant;
- Detailed costs reports and financial documentation substantiating those costs.

If Programmatic and Financial progress reports are accepted, they are approved and the next payment is made. If a report does not correspond to the expected outcomes, additional information or documents may be required. In case of an incomplete report the payment may be postponed unless the required documents and information are provided. If the submitted report does not reflect the identified project issues and ensure appropriate documents project termination issue is considered.

Based on the project holder performance during the first reporting period and other significant factors such as risk level, staff should make a determination regarding the requirement for the future field visit or reporting schedule.

Monitoring Visit

Visit Preparation

- Review project documents, attachments, defined indicators and expected outcomes;
- Read previous reports, evaluation documents;
- Prepare questions on programmatic and financial activity.

During the Visit

- Be consistent with the results of previous visits, audits and monitoring;
- Start the interview with general project implementation outline and go on with the visit questionnaire;
- If there are issues from previous reports demanding clarification review the original documents on the ground.

After the Visit

- Produce a visit report and attach to project documents;
- Prepare recommendations based on main considerations and provide to project implementer.