

Writing the Community Assessment: Organizing Your Report

Organizational Standards Center of Excellence
March 14, 2019



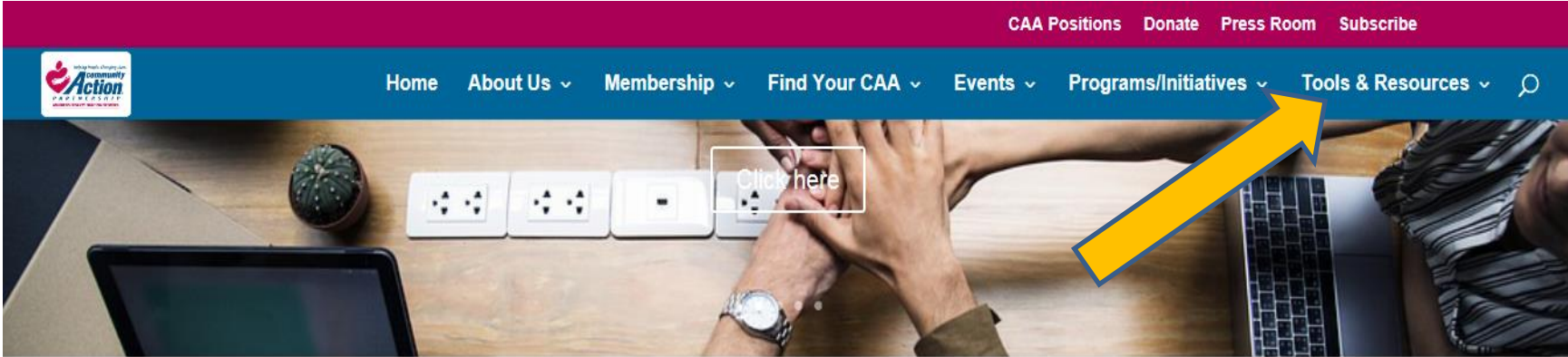
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Director of TTA, NCAP



Objectives

- Know where to find key resources
- Learn how to structuring the Community Assessment Report
- Understand how to clearly present the data

CAP Resources



Fighting Poverty

The US Census Bureau estimates that 16% of the population lives in poverty. We work to end poverty across the country.



Community Action Network

We have over a thousand agencies in local communities, as well as state associations and national partners.

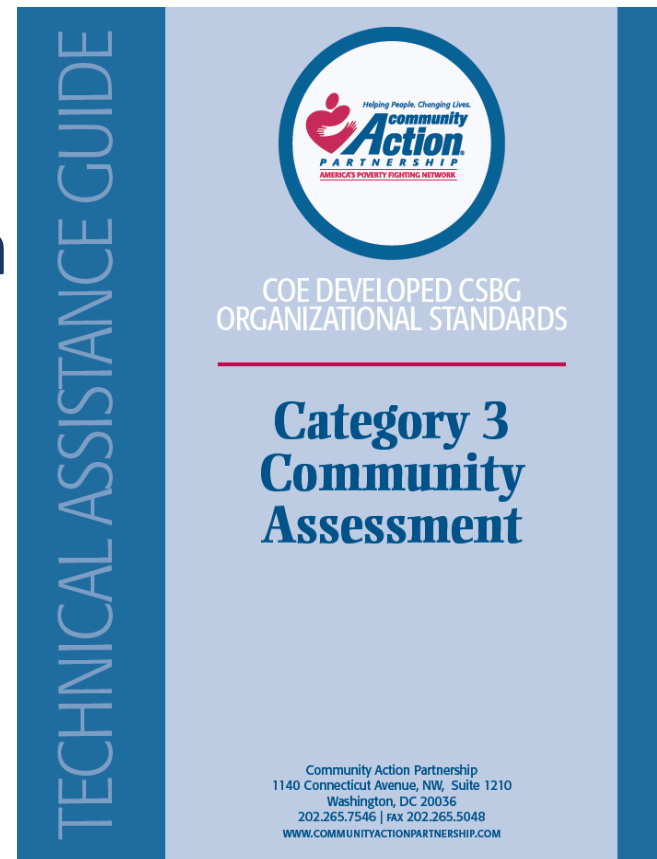


Tools and Resources

Find all of our Training and Technical Assistance webinars, toolkits, useful information and other resources.

Technical Assistance Guide

- Guidance on definition and intent
- Guidance on interpretation and documentation
- Resources to benchmark performance and improve



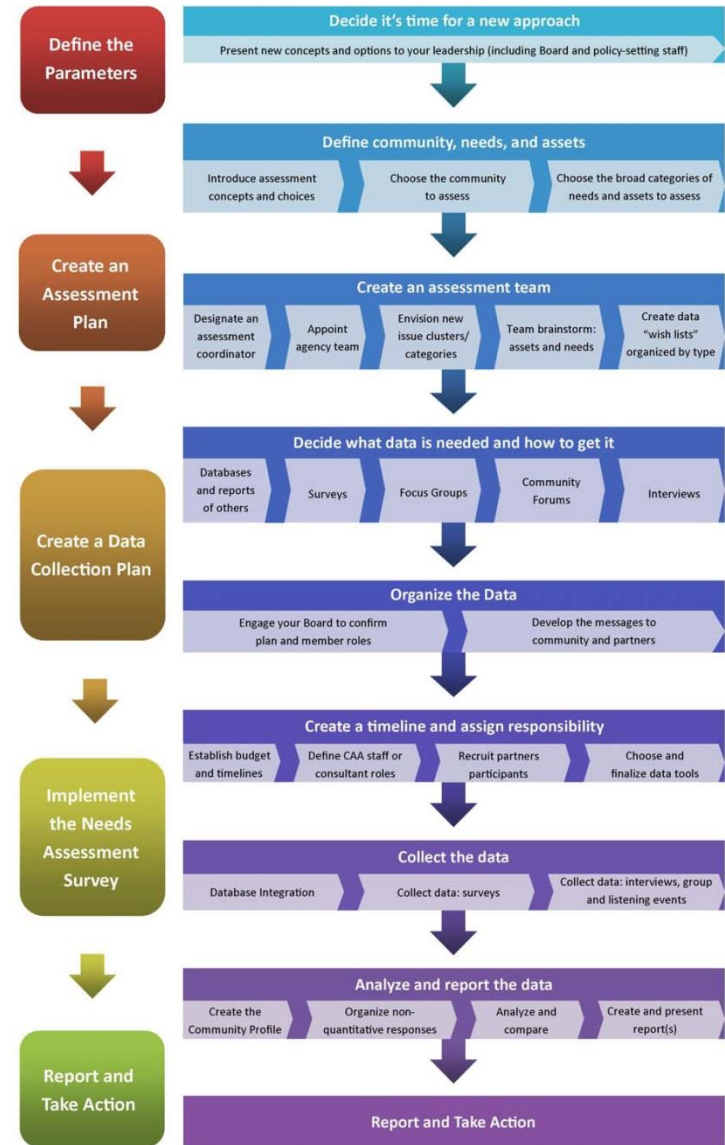
NASCSP Tools



National Association for State
Community Services
Programs

*A Community Action Guide
to Comprehensive
Community Needs Assessments*

www.nascsp.org



ROMA Next Generation Training Series



www.communityactionpartnership.com

> Tools/Resources > ROMA

CAP Resources



Webinars

Click here to access all Community Action Partnership facilitated webinars across our various training & technical assistance focus areas.



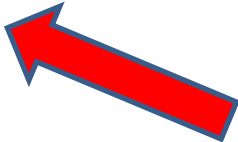
Publications and Toolkits

Click here to access all Community Action Partnership developed publications, toolkits, and resources across our various training & technical assistance focus areas.



Online Tools

Click here to access our collection of web-based tools, trainings, and resources related to Community Action Partnership's various training & technical assistance focus areas.



Resources By Topic

Click Here to search through Community Action Partnership's full resource catalog from a complete list of each of our training & technical assistance focus areas.



External Resources

Click here to access resources from our national partners and other recognized experts in Community Action Partnership's training & technical assistance focus areas.



View All

Click here to access our complete resource library, featuring our most recent resources first. Customize your search to your specific training need using the side menu.

CARES Community Needs Assessment

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Community Needs Assessment Tool

by Community Action Partnership | Jul 12, 2018 | Community Needs Assessment, Management & Operations |



[Click Here to Access](#)

This Hub acts as your entry into an online tool with multiple features that allow for the efficient use of data and mapping as part of a larger Community Needs Assessment process. Here, you can measure and visually represent the fundamental drivers of poverty in your community through an array of census data sets, a report

https://cap.engagementnetwork.org/

Search



[CREATE A NEW ASSESSMENT](#) [MAP MY COMMUNITY](#) [SUPPORT](#)



Username or E-mail

Password

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Register

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Welcome to the Community Action Partnership's Data Hub.

This Hub acts as your entry into an online tool with multiple features that allow for the efficient use of data and mapping as part of a larger Community Needs Assessment process. Here, you can measure and visually represent the fundamental drivers of poverty in your community through an array of census data sets, a report generator, and a mapping tool. The Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment tool allows you to:

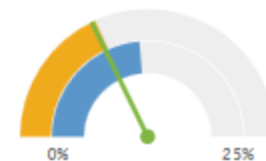
- Select state(s) and county(ies) to be included in your report (i.e. Indiana, Porter County; New York, Albany County, Rensselaer County, Schenectady County);
- Select specific data elements (Demographics, Employment, Education, Housing, Income, Nutrition, and Health Care);
- Preview a draft report;
- Download a draft report onto your desktop in a Microsoft Word document that is fully editable. From there you can add text, tables, maps, etc., delete unwanted sections, and modify it any way you need.
- Advanced uses include mapping specific poverty indicators to extended geographies such as census tract and congressional district.

If you are not yet a member of the Community Action Partnership Data Hub, please register for an account.



Report Area	Total Population	Population in Poverty	Percent Population in Poverty
Salt Lake County, UT	1,078,703	122,608	11.37%
Utah	2,901,465	338,808	11.68%
United States	310,629,645	46,932,225	15.11%

Percent Population in Poverty



- Salt Lake County, UT (11.37%)
- Utah (11.68%)
- United States (15.11%)

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012-16. Source geography: Tract → [Show more details](#)



Population Below the Poverty Level, Percent by Tract, ACS 2012-16

- Over 20.0%
- 15.1 - 20.0%
- 10.1 - 15.0%
- Under 10.1%
- No Data or Data Suppressed
- Salt Lake County, UT

[View larger map](#)

Population in Poverty by Gender

Report Area	Total Male	Total Female	Percent Male	Percent Female
Salt Lake County, UT	56,805	65,803	10.52%	12.21%
Utah	157,382	181,426	10.82%	12.54%
United States	21,012,839	25,919,386	13.82%	16.34%

Understanding Your Audience

Remember that you are always writing for multiple audiences that include:

- Internal stakeholders
 - Board and staff
- External stakeholders
 - Key partners
 - Other services providers and community organizations
 - Elected and appointed officials
 - Local press

A Community Assessment Report Template

- Introduction (1-2 pages)
- Community Profile (2-3 pages)
- Key Findings and Recommendations (4-5 pages)
- Methodology (2-3 pages)
- Domains (6-8 Domains at 8-10 pages each)
- Appendixes (additional reference data organized by Domain)

Introduction (1-2 pages, connected to 3.1, 3.5)

- Cover page with the date of board acceptance
- Short background on your agency and the community assessment process with a brief description of:
 - Agency mission and purpose of the community assessment
 - Service area
 - Programs and services
 - Board composition
 - The Community Action network
- Acknowledge and thank key partners

Community Profile (2-3 pages, connected to 3.2)

- “Travel guide” narrative description of your service area
- General and poverty-related demographics
 - Total population, age, gender, race (total numbers and numbers for individuals and families with low incomes)
 - Notable demographic characteristics/trends
- Description of local economy
 - Unemployment rate and economic trends
 - Industries and major employers
- Other notable features

Key Findings and Recommendations (4-5 pages, connected to 3.4)

- Top 5 community needs
 - Quantitative data (one paragraph and key chart or graph)
 - Assessment of the need's cause (one paragraph)
- Policy/systems/advocacy recommendations
 - Ideally these will reflect input and consensus of key partners and community stakeholders
 - Recommendations should represent or support the agency's broader policy agenda

Tips on Ranking Needs

Considerations the CNA working group can use to rank needs include:

- Total number of individuals with the need
- Impact of bad outcomes associated with the need
- Survey, focus group, and interview data
- Trends (past increase/decreases and future projections)

Methodology (2-3 pages, connected to 3.1, 3.2, 3.3)

- Detail quantitative and qualitative methods used
 - Databases, key reports, surveys, focus groups, interviews, community meetings
- Brief summary of process used to analyze the data
 - Suggested practice of using focus groups and interviews to analyze quantitative data
- Description of how the data will be disseminated

Suggested Sequence of Data Collection Methods

Quantitative

- Focus on conditions
- Include key demographic information

Surveys

- Use for general data
- Include quantitative data to provide context

Focus Groups

- At least one per domain
- Organize by stakeholders
- Use for analysis of causes

Interviews

- Target experts
- Use for causes and conditions analysis

Forums

- Use to raise community awareness
- Consider organizing by stakeholders or sectors

Domains (8-10 pages, connected to 3.2, 3.3, 3.4)

- Suggested number of domains is 6-8
- Organize domains around existing types of data
 - Data on “housing” and “health” is easy to find
 - Data on “family self-sufficiency” cuts across too many areas
 - Use the CARES Engagement Network site to see what data is available within a potential domain
- Consider breaking out larger domains into sub-categories
 - Education would include early childhood (0-5), school aged (K-12), and adult learners (18+)

Domains (8-10 pages)

- Key Findings
 - Highlight 3-4 key findings
- Conditions (Quantitative data)
 - Include demographic data (age, gender, race) if available
 - Use maps from CARES Engagement Network (if available) to show geography of the need
 - Include trended data over time (past 3 years) if available
- Causes (Qualitative data)
 - Analyze the cause and level of need (individual/family, community, agency) based on studies, surveys, focus groups, and interviews
 - Include any systems/policy issues
 - List key resources
- Conclude with “considerations for the agency”
 - What should the agency potentially do or consider

Demographic Data

Data

- Age
- Gender
- Race/ethnicity
- Income
- Employment
- Family status

Analysis

- Who is the customer?
- What types of programs and services are needed?
- What programs and services will be needed in the future?

Geographic Data

Data

- Census tract/zip code
- County
- Service area
- Region
- State
- Nation

Analysis

- Where are the customers and needs located?
- Where are the geographic intersections of needs?
- Are there issues with access to services?
- How does the need compare to the region/state/nation?

Trended Data Over Time

Data

- Comparison with last year
- Comparison with last three years
- Future projections

Analysis

- Increases and decreases in trends
- Changes in priority of needs
- Potential changes in future needs

Systems/Program Data

Data

- Number served per program
- Number on waiting lists and/or unserved
- Gaps in services
- Current/future program funding
- Eligibility requirements/barriers
- Cost per unit of service

Analysis

- Underserved populations
- Priority of need
- Potential future needs
- Cost to increase services
- Challenges to service integration
- Systems/policy agenda issues

Community Assets

Data

- Employers/industries
- Education (K-12, community colleges, four year colleges)
- Healthcare (hospital systems, mental health)
- Service providers (public, nonprofit, private)
- Community based organizations
- Philanthropy

Analysis

- Workforce development opportunities
- Adult education
- Referral networks
- Project partners
- Funders
- Community engagement opportunities

Appendixes

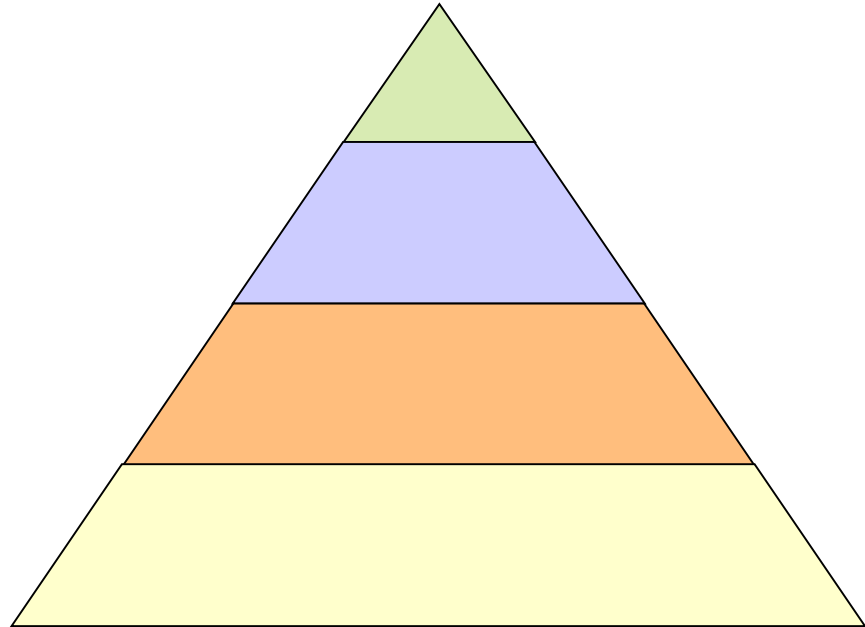
- Start with an Organizational Standards checklist with all five Standards and a short paragraph on how you meet them
- Include a statement of board acceptance
- Organize by Domain
- Use to reference data not included in main body of the report

Why Share the CNA?

- **Raise Awareness of Poverty in the Community**
 - Numbers and stories help keep poverty-related issues “on the radar screen”
- **Raise Awareness of the Agency**
 - Use communication opportunities with different stakeholders to explain the agency’s mission and publicize services
- **Build an Anti-Poverty Agenda**
 - Bring other sectors together around the CNA to build consensus on a broader anti-poverty agenda
- **Fundraise**
 - Convene funders to discuss the CNA results to lay the groundwork for long-term support

What Form Should You Use to Present the Information

- One-pager
- Press release
- Key Findings
- Recommendations
- Slide deck/webinar
- Infographic
- Full report



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