



**Curriculum for Rapid, Participatory Research & Evaluation
Designed for use in community studies of STDs and HIV/AIDS**

**Section 2
Pre-researching the Target Population**

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Contributing writers:

Curriculum made
possible by a grant
from the SBIR

Section 2: Pre-researching the target community

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Section 2: Pre-researching the target community

Intended learning outcomes

This section is designed to acquaint an implementation team with pre-assessment research. The intended learning outcomes follow.

Upon completion of this section, the implementation team will be able to:

1. Implement strategies for pre-researching the target communities to speed up the process of moving into the research design and methods.
2. Access an inventory of information on the target communities to speed up the process of moving into the research design and methods.

Chapter 1 provides readers with some advantages of pre-assessment research for the Rapid Ethnographic Assessment (REA).

Section 2, Chapter 1: Pre-researching the target communities for the Rapid Ethnographic Assessment

2.1.1 Pre-researching the target communities for the Rapid Ethnographic Assessment

Hopson et al (2000) argue that researchers need to know the terms used and the ways that people with (or at-risk of) sexually transmitted diseases conceptualize STD-related issues in order to begin developing measurement tools to study affected communities. This section will help the implementation team (and any interested others) learn more general information on the target communities. At this point the implementation team has at least skimmed the curriculum for valuable information to set the assessment in motion. A lot of wasted effort can be avoided by checking out sources of information before implementing the study. For example, an implementation team may spend some time with a target community they intended to assess and learn that certain assumptions about this group's needs were incorrect. The team might skim the literature reviews offered in the section and learn that a particular kind of study has been repeated with the same general findings so many times that another one would be a waste of effort. Or the team may seek some general information about these communities through the web sites offered in this section and decide that a new target community needs to be added to the REA.

There is no first step in pre-researching the target communities, but one step that should not be missed is the following.

Go meet the target community

With the help of the collaborating stakeholders, the team should arrange to meet the members of the target community. This might involve spending a day following a mobile STD testing program, or going to coalition meetings of those that serve an STD-affected community, or visiting a homeless shelter or soup kitchen, or sitting in on a series of support groups for parents of children living with HIV, or spending a night in a hospital or nursing home following nurses that serve people dying of AIDS.

By visiting the target community the implementation team can learn the following information:

1. Does a target community use “insider” terms? For example, injection drug users live within a unique cultural context. Would the implementation team know what “works” and a “shooting gallery” are? Can the team distinguish T-cell counts from viral loads? These are not only terms that are important to understand while studying a particular community, but these may also be terms that will be used in questionnaires.
2. Do structures within a resource network really offer the services or other resources they appear to offer? Service organizations are often very fluid, as funding sources are fluid. At Jill Florence Lackey & Associates we have had many experiences attempting to locate providers of particular services for needs assessments. Often the name of the particular service is in the organization’s name, but for various reasons the organization no longer offers that service. By attending meetings of resource networks, the team should be able to learn what organizations and programs offer what services.
3. Are there members of these communities who are gatekeepers? The team might need to go through some popular member, clan elder, or political leader that the collaborating stakeholders did not identify in order to access the community.
4. Is there an initial list of informants the team can gather through a meeting with the target community?
5. Are there sites where the community can be accessed in mass—sites not known by the collaborating stakeholders?
6. Are there certain rules the team needs to know about that community? Should one pay particular respect to the community’s elders? Does the team need to receive flu or pneumonia shots before approaching members of this group?
7. Will there be unexpected subpopulations of that community? Has the ethnic make-up of the community recently changed? Will this necessitate a bi-lingual interviewer or observer?
8. Are there special issues of confidentiality that need to be addressed? Are there children living with HIV who are unaware of their status? Will the team need access to undocumented immigrants?

Section 2, Chapter 1: Pre-researching the target communities for the Rapid Ethnographic Assessment

2.1.2. Resources

Chapter references

Hopson, R.K., Lucas, K.J., & Peterson, J.A. (2000). HIV/AIDS talk: Implications for prevention intervention and evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 86, 29-42.

Section 2, Chapter 2: Reviewing the literature

2.2.1 Reviewing the literature

One of the critiques of the rapid assessment process is that it does not allow enough time to conduct a literature review of the topics selected to study (Ervin, 1997). This chapter will present summaries of a wide range of published articles and books on the subject of STDs and STD communities. The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. First it provides the implementation team with up-to-date research and general information on these topics. Second it saves the team time. Team members do not have to go to the library and read each source that pertains to their research questions. They can skim through the literature summaries offered here and get needed information—at least enough to start.

The literature summaries provided in this chapter are almost all within the past seven years. A few have been included that are older because they tend to address topics not widely covered elsewhere. The literature summaries are organized in two ways. The first group is organized according to type of infection: (a) HIV/AIDS, and (b) STDs generally and non-HIV/AIDS. The second group of summaries is organized by affected communities/groups: men/women, age cohorts, gays/bisexuals, ethnic/racial groups, special populations, and policymakers/programmers. Some summaries appear twice because they fit into two categories.

Most of the reviews discuss specifically U.S. issues. A few have been included where the research or commentaries involved areas other than the United States, when the topics seemed to have universal relevance.

Section 2, Chapter 2: Reviewing the literature

2.2.2 Resources

Chapter references

Ervin, A.M. (1997). Trying the impossible: Relatively “rapid” methods in a city-wide needs assessment. *Human Organization*, 56(4), 379-387.

Section 2, Chapter 2: Reviewing the literature

Literature reviews are not contained in this section. They are provided in a supplemental section that will be added to continually. Below is a list of topics covered by the literature reviews.

- **2.2.3 Types of Infections**

- HIV/AIDS
- STDs generally and specific STDS (not necessarily HIV/AIDS)

- **2.2.4 Affected Communities**

- Males
- Females
- Youth
- LGBT
- African American
- Latinos
- Policy makers/programmers
- Special populations

- **2.2.5 Special Topics**

- Prevention
- Illegal drugs, alcohol abuse
- Research
- Epidemiology
- Prostitution
- Ethics
- Transmission of disease
- Socioeconomics and environmental

Section 2, Chapter 2: Reviewing the literature

2.2.6 Internet sites on important issues on STDs and HIV/AIDS

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/>

Center of Disease Controls Division of Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Focuses on STD prevention and resources.

<http://www.aidsinfo.nih.gov/>

The U.S Department of Health and Human Services. Offers information on ethical guidelines, drugs, vaccines, and clinical trial information. Real time online assistance and HIV glossary are also available. Research Center has brochures, fact sheets and resources for patients/general public, health care providers, researchers, news releases, and other government resources.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/home/home.shtml>

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's STD site. Provides links to recent publications, STD fact sheet, HIV/AIDS information and access to a woman's health line.

<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/pp2/portal/medicalinfo/sti/>

Planned Parenthood. Offers information for sexually active individuals including safer sex methods, pregnancy and STI information as well as a link for their clinic locations.

<http://familydoctor.org/275.xml>

American Academy of Family Physicians. Informs the public on the transmission and prevention of STDs/AIDS. Included are descriptions of various STDs, link for hotline, and link to Teen's page.

<http://www.hopkins-aids.edu/>

Johns Hopkins University AIDS service. Offers links to expert Q & A, publications, medical education, resources, managed care, epidemiology, prevention and guidelines.

<http://www.intelihealth.com/IH/ihtIH/WSIHW000/331/331.html>

From this website, you can click on alphabetical listing of diseases and conditions. Information on Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDs) and Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Faculty of Harvard Medical School explains AIDS/STDs by definitions, symptoms, diagnosis, expected duration, prevention, treatment, when to contact a professional, and prognosis. Site is property of IntelliHealth.

<http://www.niaid.nih.gov/publications/>

NIH. Provides an introduction to Sexually Transmitted Infections from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Fact sheet with descriptions of STDs. Information on transmission and which populations are most affected. Although written in July 1999, this site has been updated recently.

<http://www.cdcnpin.org/scripts/index.asp>

CDC National Prevention Information Network. Multidimensional website, available in Spanish. Main page has links to various articles and topics: HIV/AIDS/STDs/TB. STD page has links for recent activities, news, publications, current state of STD infections in the US, and prevention goals. Informs public on how STDs are connected with HIV. Guidelines and recommendations for detection, treatment, and care, counseling, surveillance, and data management. Education and Outreach information is available as well as FAQ's. Can locate organizations, materials, news, conferences, funding, HIV test sites, statistics, campaigns and initiatives.

<http://www.city.milwaukee.gov/display/router.asp?docid=444>

City of Milwaukee's Health Department; Keenan Health Center.

Gives information, definitions, fact sheets, frequently asked questions, safer sex techniques regarding sexually transmitted diseases. Also included is information on clinic services and locations.

<http://www.ashastd.org/>

American Social Health Association, "America's authority for sexually transmitted disease information." Offers facts, support and resources, referrals, and HELP groups. STD facts and Patient Bill of Rights are included.

<http://www.iwannaknow.org/>

ASHA's website for teenagers. Links to STD basics, FAQs, Sex on the Brain, Puberty, Glossary, Prevention, and Parent's Guide.

<http://www.fhi.org/en/index.htm>

Family Health International. Website offered in English, Spanish, French, Russian, and Arabic. Provides information on research, prevention, statistics, education, and family services in more than 70 countries.

<http://www.avert.org/>

Avert, an international HIV and AIDS charity. Offers statistics, information for young people, prevention care, and stories of those living with HIV. Provides links to AIDS and sex education, STD transmission and treatment. Also is information for the gay and lesbian community.

<http://www.hivcorrections.org/>

Infectious Diseases in Corrections Report sponsored by the Brown Medical School Office of Continuing Education. Geared towards correctional administrators, HIV/AIDS care providers.

<http://www.thebody.com/treat/first.html>

The Body, an AIDS and HIV information resource. Focuses on the medical treatment of HIV/AIDS including various links for articles on education, treatment basics, HIV monitoring tests, when to begin treatment, HIV medications, treatment guidelines, personal accounts, drug resistance, interactions, and side effects. Also , provides link to communicate with physicians and links for safe sex, understanding your labs, workplace issues, mixed status couples, and AIDS related cancers.

<http://www.usfcenter.org/>

University of South Florida. Provides HIV education, consultation, and resource materials to health care professionals. Also offers CareLink newsletter and various links to publications.

<http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/InSite.jsp?page=li-01-02>

University of California-San Francisco's Center for HIV information. Informs public on legal issues involving HIV care, prevention, and treatment. Provides information for researchers and community planners. Included is link for Bill of Rights for those affected by HIV/AIDS.

http://www.wwc.org/hiv_aids_services/legal_services.html

Whitman-Walker Clinic. Provides client services including counseling, advocacy and representation. Information regarding legal resources available to those with HIV/AIDS.

<http://www.dph.sf.ca.us/sfcityclinic/stdbasics/>

San Francisco City Clinic. Educates on STD basics. Provides links to each STD including photos. section to ask Dr. questions on HIV/AIDS, men's sexual health, oral sex, STD symptoms and treatment. Syphilis testing information available.

<http://www.cair.mcw.edu/>

Medical College of Wisconsin. Provides links to articles on their HIV research and intervention resources.

<http://medlib.med.utah.edu/WebPath/TUTORIAL/AIDS/AIDS.html>

Florida State University College of Medicine. Explains the pathology of HIV/AIDS with the textbook of AIDS Pathology. Provides information on HIV/AIDS, pneumocystis, carinii, cytomegalovirus, myobacteria, fungal infections, toxoplasmosis, herpes simplex, gastrointestinal protozoal infections, malignant neoplasms, and miscellaneous. Photos included.