

# COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Module 3: Step-by-Step Roadmap | Stage 2 – What is my community telling me?



## Mapping personal resources and turning them into a realistic next step

### Activity Focus and Goals:

- Distinguish an unmet community need from a personal preference or assumption
- Practise gathering information without surveys, software or a budget
- Combine three sources - communities, public information and direct observation - into one picture
- Identify where existing solutions are missing, too expensive or hard to access
- Build confidence in defining “my community” through places, groups or networks already present in the participant's life

### Materials Needed:

- Finding the Gap worksheet (page 2 of this Lesson Plan)
- Notes from the Five Conversations exercise, if already completed
- Access to at least one community group, public information point or place to observe
- Pen and paper, or a notes app

### Learning Objectives:

- Define “my community” using places, groups or networks already accessible
- Gather information from at least two different sources
- Identify one repeated struggle, inaccessible solution or unmet need
- Explain in one sentence why the finding is a gap rather than a guess
- Record findings in a form that feeds directly into the Roadmap Canvas

### Structure and timing of the activity: In groups (3 – 54people) or individually:

**Step 1 (10–15 min, in session):** Participants define their own “community”. It may be a physical place, an online group, a diaspora network or people they already interact with regularly. It does not need to be large or formal.

**Step 2 (10 min, in session):** Introduce three information sources: Communities, Public Information and Observation. Participants choose at least two sources that are realistic for them to use this week.

**Step 3 (1 week, outside session):** Participants gather information through a conversation, a visit or public data. They note where people struggle repeatedly, existing solutions are expensive or hard to access, and needs remain unmet.

**Step 4 (15–20 min, follow-up session or self-review):** Participants complete the Finding the Gap worksheet: “People struggle with... / Because...”. In groups, they share one finding and distinguish genuine gaps from personal assumptions; in self-learning mode, they check the finding against the four prompts independently.

### (Self) assessment:

- Have I used at least two different information sources?
- Can I describe the gap in one sentence without using “I think” or “probably”?
- Does my finding match at least one of the four “Look For Places Where...” prompts?

### Resources and useful materials:

- Finding the Gap worksheet (page 2 of this Lesson Plan)
- Module 3 slide: “Market research without barriers”
- Module 3 slide: “Finding the Gap”

### Notes, comments, recommendations for users (trainers/ learners):

- If “community” feels abstract, ask the participant to name one place she already visits regularly - a shop, clinic or group chat - and begin there.
- Watch for personal preferences presented as findings. Ask: “Who told you this, or what did you see?” If the answer is no one or nothing yet, gather more information first.

- Do not require statistics or formal sources. A conversation or a walk through the neighbourhood counts as valid research.

## FINDING THE GAP – WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet after gathering information from at least two sources. Fill in each prompt in one or two sentences.

| Prompt                                           | My notes |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|
| People struggle repeatedly with...               |          |
| Existing solutions are too expensive because...  |          |
| Existing solutions are hard to access because... |          |
| A need that remains unmet is...                  |          |
| My conclusion - this counts as a gap because...  |          |