

Feasibility Assessment Worksheet

Six Steps to Conduct a Feasibility Assessment - Establish that your...

- 1) community has a need for asset building.
- 2) organization’s client base wants to save for asset ownership.
- 3) organization’s clients have the capacity for long term saving.
- 4) organization has the capacity to sponsor an IDA program.
- 5) community will support an IDA program
- 6) organization can obtain sufficient funding for an IDA program.

Step One: What *need* does your community have for asset building?

Although it can be difficult to assess your community’s need for asset building, finding answers to several concrete questions can help. (The US Census Bureau web site - www.factfinder.census.gov - is a great tool to answer these questions). Be sure to:

4 Community Need Checklist

- review the rate of homeownership in your community versus other local communities, your county, or state or national averages
- establish if your community is home to locally owned small businesses
- determine what portion of the workforce is self-employed
- assess the level of education or job training that is typical in your community
- find out if residents have the skills they need to find jobs that pay well

	in your community:	nationally:	in your state:	in your county:	in a nearby community	Is your community lower?
Homeownership rate...						
Self-employment rate						
Average level of educational						

Step Two: Does the population your organization serves *want* to be asset owners?

The best way to assess the desire of community members for asset ownership is to ask them. Be sure to:

- hold focus groups with community members to gauge their appetite for asset ownership.
- include asset related questions on any organization needs assessment surveys.
- initiate informal conversations about asset development with your organization’s current clients and other community members.

Step Three: Do your organization's *clients* have the *capacity* to save for the long term?

Combining two different approaches can help organizations develop a clearer sense of potential participants' savings capacity. Be sure to:

- hold focus groups with potential IDA participants to determine whether they believe they could afford to save money each month
- Create a model budget to see if it seems feasible, theoretically, for the population your organization would target to both save and meet basic living expenses.

Step Four: Does your *organization* have the *capacity* to offer an IDA program?

Just as prospective participants must have the capacity to handle an IDA program, so too must your organization. Be sure to:

- obtain a commitment from your organization's Executive Director or senior program officer to devote his or her time and organizational resources to an IDA program.
- consider whether your organization -- its board or trustees, management and staff -- has a deep desire to offer IDAs and demand a highly motivated program staff.
- take stock of your organization's other asset-building resources (e.g., microenterprise or homeownership training programs) and experience.
- assess the level of trust that exists between your organization's staff and members of the community you serve.

Step Five: Will your *community* support an IDA initiative?

No organization can hope to sponsor a successful IDA program without community support. Be sure to:

- check what other organizations are already offering asset-building programs in your community -- you won't want to offer redundant or unneeded services
- take stock of the qualified community organizations with which your program can partner on recruiting, participant training and counseling, and policy advocacy issues.
- consider if your organization has relationships with banks, thrifts or credit unions that could serve as financial institution partners for your IDA program.

Step Six: Can your organization obtain sufficient *funding* for an IDA program?

IDA programs require funding, both for operating expenses and participant savings matches. Be sure to:

- check that your organization knows of foundations, local employers, government agencies or wealthy individuals that may support an asset-building program.
- consider which populations and asset-building options funders would be most interested in supporting.