

Data Collection Methods for Needs Assessment

Analyze Existing Information

Key documents

- Examine needs assessments, strategic plans, and trend reports produced by other organizations in your community
- Consider national reports such as the National Citizen Survey
- Check with local planning department, health agencies, schools, and nonprofits

Public datasets

- Demographics, public health, labor, housing, education, child wellbeing, poverty, diversity, and more
- Find data sources at www.imls.gov/research/data_analysis_tools.aspx
- Contact local planning department for additional resources
- Learn more in breakout session today at 1:00

Market segmentation

- Combines demographic and residential information with data on buying habits, leisure activities and other consumer topics
- Library products include Community Connect (CIVICTechnologies) and Analytics on Demand (Gale)
- More info coming up and in breakout session today at 1:00

Library records

- Study collection, programming, computer use and library card statistics
- Consider collection distribution and use patterns by location

Collect New Information

Surveys

- Collect information from all members of your community or from specific groups of interest
- Can be administered online, by mail, by phone or in person
- Learn more in general session tomorrow at 8:30

Key informant interviews

- Structured conversations with community leaders, experts, key library staff, and others with unique knowledge
- Can provide a bridge to groups the library doesn't yet serve
- Learn more in breakout session today at 1:00