

# PD&E Tips – Situation and Stakeholders

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*“Statistics: The only science that enables different experts using the same figures to draw different conclusions.”*

*Evan Esar, Esar’s Comic Dictionary*

*Do you have an idea for a “Tip”? Email to: [Lisa Townson](#)*

## **Important Planning & Reporting Dates:**

**October 1, 2006**  
*Individual POW submitted via on-line system*

*TERS updated (Oct 1, 2005 – Sept 30, 2006)*

[Planning Guide Worksheet for Days Allocated](#) to Program Leader

**November 1, 2006**  
*Annual Accomplishment Report – FY ‘06 Due*


*Key Theme Reporting Data due to Lead Staff*

## **Situation Statement, Stakeholder Input, Assumptions and External Factors**

### **New On-line Planning & Reporting System**



Situation statement, stakeholder input, assumptions, and external factors text for all program area and interdisciplinary team logic models has already been entered into the on-line system so that you can select and include it without retyping a lot of text. Once pulled into your individual plan, you should edit it to fit the local and specific work you are planning to do.

In the Plan Information section, click on “Choose/edit situation from parent plans” and either select the whole statement by checking the white box and clicking “close and submit” **OR** cut and paste sections of the statement by highlighting text and right clicking on it (click “copy”) and then pasting into the text box using the “Paste as plain text” button. 

### **Importance of Situation Statements**

The **situation** is the foundation for logic model development. The problem or issue that the program is to address sits within a setting or situation--a complex of sociopolitical, environmental, and economic conditions. If you incorrectly understand the situation and misdiagnose the problem, everything that follows is likely to be wrong.

Take time to understand the situation and carefully define the problem. This may be the **most** important step. As you do so, consider the following questions:

What is the problem/issue? Why is this a problem? (What causes the problem?)

For whom (individual, household, group, community, society in general) does this problem exist? Who has a stake in the problem? (Who cares whether it is resolved or not?)

What do we know about the problem/issue/people that are involved? What research, experience do we have? What do existing research and experience say?

Create a succinct but thorough statement that answers the above questions. This statement is the foundation of your logic model. It is important to localize the data so your stakeholders will be able to see why this is important to them.

*(From UW-Ext – Enhancing Program Performance through Logic Models).*



### **Sources of Demographic Data:**

*The Carsey Institute at UNH has a Northern NE Indicators web site with excellent demographic data broken down by county and state.*

[www.nneindicators.unh.edu/](http://www.nneindicators.unh.edu/)

*The NH Almanac is a state-supported site for various NH demographic data:*

[www.state.nh.us/nhi/nfo/index.html](http://www.state.nh.us/nhi/nfo/index.html)

*The U.S. Census Bureau has state and national statistics available:*

[www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/)

**\*\*Note – to follow links in this (and other pdf documents), click on the hypertext and if you are asked to enter a username and password, it is our CES Intranet login (cesuser, coopext)**

## **Stakeholder Input**

It is important in your plan to articulate how you include stakeholders in the decisions made about programming. Reference to the state needs assessment and GAP analysis is included in most program area plans and interdisciplinary team stakeholder input statements, however it's important to localize this statement to reflect how your county advisory council, local legislators, coalitions, volunteers, and others have provided input to program planning.

If you have data from a local survey with growers, agency personnel or others you work with, include reference to it here. Reference to meetings with County 4-H advisory committees or state-wide curriculum committees can also be included in this section of your plan.

## **External Factors & Assumptions**

The environment in which the program exists includes a variety of **external factors** that can influence the program's success. External factors include the cultural milieu, climate, economic structure, housing patterns, demographic patterns, political environment, background and experiences of program participants, media influence, changing policies and priorities. These external factors may have a major influence on the achievement of outcomes and we typically have little control over them, but we can't ignore them! They may affect a variety of things including the following:

- Program implementation
- Participants and recipients
- The speed and degree to which change occurs
- Staffing patterns and resources available

These factors interact with the program. They not only influence the initiative but are influenced by the initiative. A program does not sit in isolation - somehow "outside" or "apart" from its surrounding environment. A program is affected by and affects these external factors.

**Assumptions** are the beliefs we have about the program and the people involved and the way we think the program will work. This is the "theory" we are talking about: the underlying beliefs in how it will work. These are validated with research and experience. Assumptions underlie and influence the program decisions we make. Assumptions are principles, beliefs, ideas about:

The problem or situation, resources and staff. the way the program will operate, what we expect to achieve through the program, the external and internal environments, the participants: how they learn, their behavior, motivations, etc.

Clarifying assumptions demands knowledge of the research or "best practice" in the substantive area, as well as "common sense."

*(From UW-Ext – Enhancing Program Performance through Logic Models).*

**Next PD&E Tip --- Reports & Submitting Your Plan – Sept 25**