

Participatory gender-oriented information and learning needs assessment of the youth of Alexandra

**For UNESCO
Developing Open Learning Communities for
Gender Equity with the Support of ICTs**

31 October 2002

**Compiled by
Merridy Wilson**

**LINK Centre
School of Public and Development Management
University of the Witwatersrand
PO Box 601
WITS
2050
Wilson.m@pdm.wits.ac.za**

Contents

<u>TERMS OF REFERENCE</u>	3
<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</u>	4
<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>	5
<u>INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND</u>	7
<u>METHODOLOGY</u>	9
<u>Focus group design</u>	9
<u>Questionnaire design</u>	11
<u>Sample selection</u>	11
<u>Limitations of the study</u>	12
<u>FINDINGS</u>	13
<u>Sample description</u>	13
<u>Focus group findings</u>	16
<u>Questionnaire findings</u>	27
<u>CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD</u>	34
<u>REFERENCES</u>	37
<u>APPENDIX 1: FOCUS GROUP STRUCTURE AND PLANS</u>	38
<u>APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE</u>	41
<u>APPENDIX 3 – PHOTOGRAPHS OF FOCUS GROUPS</u>	45

Terms Of Reference

This report is part of the larger *Developing Open Learning Communities for Gender Equity with the Support of ICTs* project. The project focuses especially on youth and women. The overall objectives of this project are to:

- Assess learning needs and the impact of ICTs for community development and lifelong learning in selected African communities;
- Develop gender sensitive and locally produced ICT applications packages for community development and lifelong learning;
- Share knowledge and experiences about the application development process, which contributes to the creation of open learning communities.

South Africa has been chosen as a pilot country for the project with the focus being on the Alexsan Kopano Resource Centre. The LINK Centre, represented by Merridy Wilson, was contracted to undertake research for Activity 1 of the project by Holly Luton-Nel of the Alexsan Kopano Educational Trust on behalf of UNESCO. Activity 1, of which this report is one part, should provide information on the project environment, baseline data, and an assessment of the information and learning needs of the youth of the community.

The terms of reference for this specific aspect of the project are as follows:

- “conduct a participatory gender-oriented needs assessment survey in view of the learning and information needs of the youth of the township”.

The background report on Alexandra Township and the Alexsan Kopano Resource Centre was submitted to UNESCO in September 2002. To avoid repetition, this needs assessment should be read against the background of the first report, which includes a literature review relevant to the Alexandra Township. Where appropriate, specific mention will be made of the issues highlighted in the original report. This report details the methodology and findings of the learning and information needs assessment specifically.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the 6 focus group facilitators who contributed to this study. Their energy and input was an essential aspect of the research process. Their names are:

- Maryam Abrahams
- Esrom Mabidikama
- Sandra Mawunga
- Fitzgerald Manganyi
- Lerato Moraka
- Itumeleng Shilakwe

Thank you also to Abbey Sechoaro (Youth Desk Coordinator) for all his hard work and effort in selecting facilitators and focus groups participants, and to Sonny Mothopeng (Librarian) for collecting the questionnaire responses. Holly Luton-Nel provided valuable input for the research design and helped with logistical arrangements at the centre, thank you. Finally, thank you to UNESCO for making available the funding for this project.

Executive summary

In this report the results of the participatory gender-sensitive information and learning needs assessment focused on the youth of Alexandra Township is presented. These findings are to feed into the stages to follow in UNESCO's Developing Open Learning Communities for Gender Equity with the Support of ICTs project.

The methodology used was a combination of focus group discussions with three age categories of youth (12 years and under, 13-17 years and 18-30 years) and a questionnaire completed by centre users. The focus groups included within each age category, one female only group, one male only group and one mixed gender group. The aim of this grouping was to assess the differences in information and learning needs expressed by men and women and also to observe the interaction of both sexes in the same groups. Various ranking exercises were included to prioritise the information needs identified. 6 facilitators who come from Alexandra were specifically trained and conducted the focus groups.

Altogether there were 89 participants in the focus groups and 50 questionnaires were administered, but only 48 used in the analysis because two respondents were significantly outside of the age range for the study. The final sample size was thus 137. For both the focus groups and the questionnaires a higher percentage of the participants were female (62% female and 38% male for the focus groups, and 63% female and 37% male for the questionnaires). Approximately half of the participants had used a computer before.

The table below summarises the main information needs found for each age group.

12 years and under		13-17 years		18-30 years	
Focus group discussions (no specific order)	Individual voting (in order of priority)	Focus group discussions (no specific order)	Individual voting (in order of priority)	Focus group discussions (no specific order)	Individual voting (in order of priority)
1. Child rights, rape, abuse 2. School-related (education) 3. Safe sex, HIV/Aids 4. Life skills 5. Computer access/training	1. computer training 2. Life skills 3. Education 4. Abuse	1. Abuse (includes rape) 2. Education 3. Life skills 4. Employment 5. Crime	1. Life skills 2. Abuse 3. Education 4. Crime 5. Computer training	1. Unemployment 2. Crime 3. Education 4. Health, HIV/Aids	1. Employment

The questionnaire sample also showed the importance of education and employment related information.

In summary, a possible overall classification of these needs could be according to the following 5 main themes:

1. **Employment** (includes, career information, job searching, and entrepreneurship)
2. **Life skills** (includes, decision making, how to say No, teenage pregnancy, safe sex, how to keep healthy, how to look after and protect myself, how to be successful, how to be financially sustainable)
3. **Education** (includes: homework issues, school-related information, information for projects, subject choices, access to further and higher education, information about educational opportunities, information about funding for educational opportunities, what education will help me to find a job)
4. **Abuse &/or crime** (includes: child rights, rape, general abuse, punishment of offenders, self protection)
5. **Health** (includes: HIV/Aids, sexually transmitted diseases, general well-being)

Of these, employment related information was the most important need.

Although differences in information needs were found to be greater across the age categories than across gender, the need to address gender issues was also clear from the study. There were gender differences in participation rates in the research itself, with more women than men participating. The need for gender related discussions was also evident, especially in the 13-17 years age group where the girls expressed much anger at men. In addition, there were wide gender disparities with respect to employment status, with 50% of women and 33% of men being unemployed.

In sum, this study found that the project target group should be differentiated by age but include a clear gender focus in the content to be developed, and that the dominant information need (although the above 5 categories are important) is information related to employment.

Introduction and background

This report specifically documents the participatory gender-sensitive information and learning needs assessment conducted as a part of the *Developing Open Learning Communities for Gender Equity with the Support of ICTs* project. The aim of this aspect of the project has been to gain an understanding of the information and learning needs of the youth particularly in order that the following stages of the project can address the specific issues raised. Please see *Alexandra Township and the Alexsan Kopano Resource Centre, Background Report* for more details on both the project itself and also Alexandra Township and the Alexsan Kopano Resource Centre as well as definitions of development, open learning communities and ICTs. For continuity purposes, it is however useful to repeat here the two paragraphs (with some changes) from the first report dealing with the focus on gender and youth.

Why a gender focus? There is a vast literature detailing the problems of gender equity in development projects themselves as well as in society more generally (for example March, Smyth & Mukhopadhyay, 1999; Guijt & Shah, 1999). Gender issues are also particularly important when working in the realm of ICTs as has been shown by Hafkin & Taggart (2001). This project sets out to explicitly address this issue. In the context of an open learning approach the UNESCO Concept Note (2002) states that "Open learning communities intend to provide new spaces for women, men, adolescent girls and boys to engage in meaningful learning activities and knowledge sharing to break the silence around unfair gender relations and promote gender equity through any issues which are relevant to the day-to-day lives of the people concerned" (p.4). Thus for this specific case study of the Alexsan Kopano Resource Centre, we need to develop a clear understanding of what meaningful learning activities would be as well as the types of information available for sharing as well as what is needed. This must be done based firmly on the assumption that these needs will differ across gender and age groups. In the discussion of the Alexandra Township presented in the background report the importance of approaching the township as a complex social system rather than a homogenous group of people was highlighted. Obtaining a detailed understanding of the range of information needs before embarking on the delivery aspect of the project is one way of doing this.

Why a youth focus? In the South African context youth development is particularly important as many of our youth have had disrupted childhoods and adolescence defined by violence and resistance to the apartheid state, and since the change of government have still had to deal with growing up in vastly under-resourced and often violent environments with poor educational provision (Everatt, 2000; Foley, 2000). Furthermore, the youth are our future leaders and as such need us to invest in them now in order that they may be equipped to play their role in society in years to come. In South Africa, the official definition of youth is anyone from the age of 14 to 35 years. This wide definition can complicate the area as needs vary widely over the ages 14 to 35. In this particular project rather than defining a very specific age range within which one must fall to be included as youth, UNESCO defined the objective as a focus on the **target users of the Alexsan Kopano Resource Centre**, making sure to include women and the youth.

As such, in consultation with centre staff and management, the design of this research has included 3 age groups: 7-12 years, 13-17 years, 18-30 years. Although the 7-12 age group is not usually included in the category youth, but rather children, it was deemed important to consider the information needs of this age group because children are important users of the centre and developing a culture of open learning communities from a young age would contribute to the success of the initiative in later years¹.

The Youth Desk at the Alexsan Kopano Centre deals mostly with people between the ages of about 20 and 28. According to the Youth 2000 study, we can expect employment issues to dominate for many of the young people, as well as crime and violence and the issue of HIV/AIDS (Braehmer, Kimmie, Greenstein, Morake & Seutloadi, 2000). The following quotation neatly sums up the importance of youth development in South Africa, as well as the need to ground such projects in careful assessments of the needs and circumstances of the youth themselves. "The need for youth development is clear – unemployment is high and growing, HIV infection is extremely high, educational opportunities have been missed by many, and rape and violence are widespread. But those programmes have to be based on a sound

¹ The workshop to be conducted before the start of the programme design and implementation will need to decide whether it is possible to include this younger group in this particular project, particularly since the methods of encouraging learning for children is quite different from that of adolescents and young adults. It may be necessary to consider just the 13-17 and 18-30 age groups. As will be seen in the findings section however, there is overlap and difference between the information needs identified for all three age groups.

understanding of youth cultures as they are – not as we want them to be or as we think they ought to be” (Everatt, 2000: 37).

Methodology

The purpose of this research was to assess, in a participatory manner, the information and learning needs of the youth of Alexandra. This was done using largely qualitative research techniques, in particular focus groups. In addition to the focus groups, a brief questionnaire, including both closed and open questions was designed to collect information from users of the centre more broadly as part of the baseline study, but also in order to further verify the findings of the focus groups. Finally, throughout the research process the issues arising were informally discussed with the participants, facilitators and centre staff. As such, triangulation through data source was included as a central aspect of the research design (Babbie & Mouton, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This is particularly important when one is using predominantly qualitative methods that allow for subjective perspectives of the participants to be included.

Focus group design

Focus groups were chosen as the main methodology for this research. One of the reasons for this can be expressed as follows, “they are a way of listening to people and learning from them” (Morgan, 1998, cited by Madriz, 2000, p.835). Focus groups provide a forum where participants can share experiences, ideas, attitudes, and together explore a particular topic from several viewpoints. When correctly facilitated such a process encourages learning as participants come to see the same issue from different perspectives (Babbie & Mouton, 1998).

For each of the age categories (7-12 years, 13-17 years, and 18-30 years) three groups were included. There was one female group, one male group and one mixed group. The rationale behind this design was to allow testing for different responses from the specific gender groups, but also to allow for observation of gender interactions within the mixed group. A standard focus group plan/structure was followed (see Appendix 1 for details), but slight changes were made for the 7-12 year

age group as previous research has found that discussion issues of information needs with children can be confusing. As such, a focus on learning needs was used for this group and the guiding questions for the groups were slightly different. Also, fewer ranking exercises were included for the younger group.

Each group had two facilitators, one to facilitate the group and the other to take detailed notes of the discussions. The facilitators were able to conduct the groups in the various languages represented by the participants (see findings section below). The original design was to have two female participants for the female group, two male for the male group and a mixed pair for the mixed group. However, after discussion with the facilitators, all of whom had been involved in group activities with these age groups in Alexandra, it was decided to have a male and a female facilitator for each group as it was felt that this would better fit in with the context that the participants were familiar with. From observations of the group dynamics during the focus groups and based on discussions with the facilitators thereafter it seems that this was an effective method to have used².

Selection and training of fieldworkers

When facilitating a focus group it is essential that the facilitator be skilled in group work. This includes keeping one person from dominating the discussions, encouraging those who are reluctant to participate, ensuring that everyone has a turn to talk within the required time frame, and keeping the group focused on the specific topic at hand (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994). It was thus important to select facilitators carefully to ensure that the groups were effective. For this study, 6 facilitators were needed, 3 male and 3 female. The Youth Desk coordinator did the selection based on the following criteria.

Criteria for facilitators:

1. Age range of 18 years and over
2. Should be confident to talk in a group
3. Should enjoy working with people
4. Should relate well to people
5. Should have at least matric
6. Must be able to take notes in English or translate notes into English

² It would however be useful to test this methodology again using same-sex facilitators only.

7. Preferably someone who has had some experience working with groups before.
8. Should have used a computer before – does not have to be an advanced user, but should understand very basically what a computer is and have some idea of what it can do.

A morning's training session in a group setting was provided for the facilitators. Each was given a Facilitator Training Pack, which included a list of expectations (of the researcher and the facilitators) short introduction to the project, considerations for group work, a focus group plan and the detailed recording sheets designed to guide the focus group discussions, encourage prompting of important issues and facilitate detailed recording of the discussion.

Questionnaire design

In addition to the focus groups, which are the main component of this research design, questionnaires addressing many of the same issues were also administered at the centre. These questionnaires are also to form part of the baseline data collected for the project, but much of the information therein is of relevance for this needs assessment and so is presented here in a different form to that of the baseline report (forthcoming). The questionnaire was designed to provide basic demographic information about centre users, including age, education level, employment status and then to cover information needs and current sources of information, together with prioritising questions. A mix of closed and open questions were included. Please see Appendix 2 for the questionnaire.

Sample selection

For the focus groups, the coordinator and staff of the youth desk of the Alexsan Kopano Resource Centre publicised the upcoming focus groups and names and contact details were recorded of those interested. These people were all contacted again the day prior to the focus groups to confirm attendance. For the younger age groups, the schools in Alexandra were informed about the project, and teachers in each of the schools asked to select learners in the specified age categories to be invited. On each of the 3 days during which the groups were conducted additional

participants who were at the centre at the time were also invited to join in cases where numbers were still low. Finding male participants proved the most difficult as the figures below show.

The centre librarian was responsible for administering the questionnaires. Altogether, 50 questionnaires were completed within the same week as the focus groups were held. Different people to those who took part in the focus groups completed the questionnaires. Centre users were randomly selected as they entered the library, the Internet café, the community radio station, came for computer training and also were using the centre area more generally.

Limitations of the study

As with all studies, there are some limitations of this research that must be considered. Firstly, due to both time and language constraints, it was not possible for the contracted researcher to conduct or play an active part in all of the focus groups. For this reason facilitators were trained to run the groups. This did mean that at times the facilitators did not adequately follow up on particular issues of importance that would have been followed up by the researcher. There were also instances where the notes taken were not as comprehensive as would have been desirable. Further, there was overlap of some of the questions in the focus group discussions. This was a planned part of the research design to ensure that the same issues were approached from different angles to enhance the breadth and depth of the discussions. However, it also made analysis more complex and it may have meant that some of the details of the groups was not captured by the facilitators due to misunderstandings of the role of the questions. Finally, there was an expectation among some of the participants that there would be a component of computer skills included in the focus groups. This expectation had to be carefully mediated by the researcher in order to maintain interest in the groups but to draw attention away from computers only. It will be shown below that many participants noted computer access and training as one of their needs and this may have been due to these expectations. However, it was also evident that there was an understanding of how and why computers can be useful, so we should also take note of computer access and training as an important need for the youth of Alexandra.

These limitations notwithstanding, the facilitators were specifically trained, did generally have a good understanding of the aims of the focus groups, were able to establish rapport with the groups and encourage discussion and engagement. The researcher was present at all the focus group sessions, took notes and made observations, and was also able to ask and answer questions if anything seemed unclear. In addition, the focus group notes and recordings were transcribed each night before the following session so that any unclear issues could be clarified with the facilitators concerned.

With respect to the questionnaires, the major limitation of this particular aspect of the research was that the questionnaires were generally administered in the mornings. This meant that younger centre users were excluded from the sample because they were at school. The 50 questionnaires completed were all completed by youth 18 years and over. This was an unfortunate and unforeseen logistical problem. The questionnaires do however still provide very useful information for the purposes of this report, but the age range may need to be extended for the baseline survey.

Findings

In this section the results of the focus groups and of the questionnaire data collected will be presented. The section will be structured as follows, first we will consider the focus groups where findings will be presented separately for each of the three age groups, taking gender issues into account. Secondly we will look at collated data from the questionnaires. Basic sample statistics are presented at the outset for clarification purposes. It should be noted that the data collected for this study allow for the calculation of descriptive statistics and the use of frequencies to indicate possible trends.

Sample description

As noted above, the focus groups were conducted across 3 age categories and with 3 groups in each age category. The total sample was made up of 89 participants in the groups over the 3 days. 62% of the participants were female and 38% male. Table 1 shows the break down of the sample in terms of gender and age group.

Table 1: Focus group sample by age and gender

Age category	Percentage female per group	Percentage male per group
12 years and under Total: 34 participants	68%	32%
13-17 years Total: 32 participants	62%	38%
18-30 years Total: 23 participants	52%	48%

We see that there is a clear gender difference in terms of focus group participation. Many of the male participants invited did not attend and there was less willingness from male centre users to join in when invited on the day than for female centre users. A similar trend was found with the random questionnaires completed by centre users. This finding was further corroborated by the coordinator of the Youth Desk who remarked that it is always more difficult to get men to attend youth desk and centre functions than women. It should also be noted that the participation for the 18-30 year age group is somewhat less than for the other two groups. Discussion with the youth desk coordinator revealed that this problem is probably due to the fact that this age group has already been invited to so many different meetings, discussions etc. and not seen many results so now they are less likely to join in.

For the focus group participants the age range across all the groups was 7 years to 30 years³. The average age for the 12 years and under group was 10 years, 15 years for the 13-17 year age group, and 24 years for the 18-30 year age group.

Participants were asked to list their home language at the start of the groups. Table 2 below shows the percentage of each language group mentioned.

³ With one participant who was 32, but was allowed to join in since he had especially come to the centre to take part and 32 was not too far above the cut-off nor outside of the official definition of youth as defined by the South African government.

Table 2: Home-language groups of focus group participants

Language (in alphabetical order)	Percentage of focus group participants (n=89)
English	2%
IsiZulu	20%
Northern Sotho (Sepedi)	24%
Sesotho	17%
Setswana	19%
SiSwati	5%
Tshivenda	3%
Xhosa	5%
Xitsonga	5%

We see that the dominant language of the sample is Northern Sotho (Sepedi) (24%), closely followed by IsiZulu (20%) and Setswana (19%). This is fairly similar trend to that in the findings of Isserow & Everatt (1998) which showed that for the Alexandra township IsiZulu accounted for 30%, North Sotho/Pedi for 26%, Tswana for 12%, Xhosa 10%, Tsonga 8%, South Sotho 6%, Venda 5% and Other languages 3%. When participants and the facilitators were informally asked by the researcher what they thought the most common language was in Alex most said Zulu.

Each participant was asked whether they had used a computer a before. In the 12 years and under group we found that 62% had used a computer, in the 13-17 years group 53% and in the 18-30 years group 57%. Thus we can say that just over half (57%) of the focus group sample have used a computer at some time.

50 questionnaires were completed at the Alexsan Centre. For the analysis reported here however, only 48 have been included. Two questionnaires were excluded because the age of the respondent fell outside the cut off for youth of 30 years used for this study and the cut off for youth of 35 specified by the South African government. In one case the respondent was 38 years old and in the other 48 years old. Two respondents were over 30 years (31 and 32) but these questionnaires were kept in the sample for analysis because they were not far above the threshold for this study and they do fall within the official definition of youth. Within the questionnaire

sample, the average age was 25 years with a range from 18 to 32, and the sample was made up of 62.5% women and 36.5% men, thus showing a very similar gender distribution to that of the focus groups.

Altogether the full sample size (focus groups and questionnaires) of this study is thus 137.

Focus group findings

The structure and methods of the focus groups was described above. In this section the main findings will be presented. In particular, the focus of this report will be on the information and learning needs identified with a brief section on perspectives on computers at the beginning. The findings presented here will be disaggregated by gender and age throughout.

As was noted above, just over half of the focus group participants had used a computer before. Questions were asked about the purpose for which computers have been used. Responses varied widely, but some common themes emerged. For the under 12 years age group, most participants had used computers for typing and playing games, as well as for doing homework and finding a broad range of information (often related to school work). Similarly, in the 13-17 years group, typing, printing, games and finding information were common uses. Listening to music was also noted. Again, for the 18-30 age group, typing, information and games were noted. In each of the age categories, only one or two participants mentioned having used computers for communication purposes.

The 12 years and under groups were asked whether they thought boys and girls used computers differently? Some interesting responses emerged from the discussions with examples of how computers are used the same and differently being given. Some gender stereotypes were also evident suggesting that this is a potential issue to be addressed in later stages of the project. There were no major response differences across the 3 groups. Some examples of responses follow:

“yes, we use the computer the same way as the machine is the same” (12 and under, boys group)

“Girls use the computers for typing, boys will use it for business matters” (12 and under, mixed group)

“Boys and girls want different careers so they want to use it for different reasons” (12 and under, mixed group)

“girls will type, boys will use it to play – puzzles and love letters” (12 and under, girls group).

Information and learning needs were assessed through a series of questions discussed in the groups. The idea was to cover the same issue from slightly different angles to ensure that all the important issues and factors were addressed. The questions covered information content needs as well as some discussion of where information is sought at present. In addition, ranking exercises were carried out to assess the importance of the various needs identified and in order to avoid the problem of simply getting a ‘wish list’. For ease of reading, the findings will be presented according to the age group, drawing more general conclusions at the end of the report.

Information and learning needs 12 years and under

There was little difference across the 3 groups (girls, boys and mixed) with respect to where information is currently sought. Responses included family and friends, schools, TV, newspapers, textbooks, librarians, clinics, community centre, neighbours, churches, and police stations. A few mentioned computers and the Internet.

There was an interesting difference between the groups in this age group, with the boys only group listing very different kinds of information needs from both the girls only and the mixed groups. The latter 2 groups included issues of HIV/Aids, safe sex, rape, careers, children’s rights, school information, health and education. The boys only group listed school subjects, computers, sport, information about the world and how to be a pilot. This finding did not repeat across the other age groups and could possibly be explained in various ways, developmental stages of boys and girls, the issues being raised at schools, the specific personalities in each of the groups and also of the facilitators. The information provided by the individual need prioritising exercise does help to clarify this to some extent as will be seen below.

Some examples of responses:

“Aids, I don’t want to get Aids, so I must know to take condoms and don’t sleep with many boys” (12 and under, girls group).

“Careers, to know more about what you want to be, to have role models” (12 and under, girls group)

“information from around the world, learning about countries and their cultures” (12 and under, boys group)

“child abuse, information on how to help friends who are being abused so that we can help them” (12 and under, mixed group)

“the world we live in – to be knowledgeable, to know what is happening around us, to know about other countries and their problems, the problems we are facing in our school and in our country” (12 and under, mixed group).

Although not directly mentioned as a need, the effects of unemployment, or ‘people without work’ on issues such as rape and abuse were noted.

Because ranking is difficult with younger children specific ranking exercises were not done, but from the range of responses and the frequency with which some issues are mentioned compared to others the information needs of this age group could be prioritised as:

- Child rights, rape, abuse
- School related issues (including information for homework and projects, bullying at school, spelling and learning the meaning of words)
- Safe sex, HIV/Aids
- Life skills (including issues of alcohol, drugs, general health care, career information, road signs, general knowledge and the need for role models)
- Computer access and/or training

The groups were then asked if they thought these needs/issues would be different for boys and girls. Both the girls group and the mixed group had some arguing for differences and others against, with a general conclusion that it depends, but they are likely to be the same. However, the boys only group had somewhat different responses, for example:

“they don’t because if they like the same things there is not going to be peace” (12 and under, boys)

“girls stick to what they do best and boys stick to what they know best” (12 and under, boys)

“there will be jealousy if they play with girls” (12 and under, boys)

“boys are rough so they can’t play with girls” (12 and under, boys)

This is an interesting dynamic and one that could be explored further to see if it occurs with different groups of boys within this age group or if it was rather a function of this particular group.

Information and learning needs 13-17 year age group

Within all 3 groups in this age group there was agreement that computers are important and that computers can help with learning. Computers were seen as important for communication, studying, finding information on the Internet, “to know what is happening in the world”, learning basic skills like reading and for entertainment.

The discussion about topics to learn about and issues/problems currently being faced provided a wealth of information and a wide variety of different responses. Since this was expected when designing the research ranking exercises were included in the design of the focus groups so that a prioritised list of information needs could be found.

For the girls only group abuse, lack of punishment at school and crime were ranked the most important issues they were currently facing. In this instance abuse includes rape. The issue of lack of punishment at school refers to problems of discipline at school that are disruptive for those who want to learn.

For the boys only group drugs and weapons, child abuse, unemployment, crime, older guys dating younger women and teenage pregnancy were noted as most important.

For the mixed gender group lack of education, poverty and unemployment, violence (and racism), health facilities, homelessness and teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases were prioritised.

Having identified and ranked current issues/needs each of the groups was asked whether they have the information they think they need with respect to the issues

identified available, and if so where do they get it. There was a general sense in all the groups that quite a lot of information is available. This information comes from various sources, including the media, computers, library, promotional materials, parents, teachers, books, clinic, church, social workers, Life Line and Love Life.

Perhaps most interesting in terms of this report is the discussion around what information is not available that participants feel that they need. Unfortunately both the girls only and boys only groups did not seem to fully understand these questions, so most of the input here comes from the mixed gender group. The girls only group did note a need “to get facts about the problems from experts” and the boys only group noted information about Aids. For the mixed gender group five main issues were prioritised and from the discussions in the other two groups more generally, it seems that these issues do reflect concerns in the other groups too, except that in the girls only group the issue of rape was very important. The main issues for the 13-17 year age group seem to be:

- How to be successful in life (this is a summary category of several other issues that would fall in the category of life skills including the need for career information)
- Self/esteem and confidence
- Being financially secure
- How to stay healthy
- Personal safety and security (including rape).

When asked whether boys and girls would face the same issues there were some differences across the groups and the need to openly address gender issues came through very strongly. With the girls only group in particular there was a lot of anger expressed, largely in response to the high incidence of rape.

For the girls only group it was unlikely that boys and girls would face the same issues. Only one input noted that boys also get raped. Some other responses were:

“No, boys like crime, they like material things” (13-17, girls)

“No, boys won’t like for abuse to be over, because they commit sexual abuse, 90% of them” (13-17, girls)

“No, boys like to hit their girlfriends to prove power” (13-17 girls)

“No, boys won’t like punishment at school because they like to control the teachers” (13-17 girls).

"We are afraid of our fathers, cause they rape us, they should kill the rapist because they destroy us or they should cut off their penises. The next president should be a woman" (13-17 girls).

In general, the boys only group thought that most of the issues were faced by both genders. This included rape, Aids, homelessness, unemployment and pollution. However, specific issues were noted as being especially problematic for women. For example:

"Poverty is mainly faced by women because they have to struggle with their children" (13-17, boys)

"Homelessness affects both, but women face homelessness especially badly" (13-17, boys).

Some issues were noted as more important/relevant for boys, for example:

"Men fight for women" (13-17, boys)

"men urinate in the street" (13-17, boys).

The mixed gender group had an interesting discussion and concluded that the list of needs would probably be the same for both genders. They noted down that *"most problems that affect women also affect men, e.g. teenage pregnancies, poverty, unemployment, Aids, etc."* (13-17, mixed)

However, *"Pregnancy affects women more and only impacts a little on the man since men run away from most of their responsibilities"* (13-17, mixed).

Once this group had completed their focus group questions a heated discussion about gender issues began – partly encouraged by one of the facilitators. From this discussion and particularly the intensity of it, the need to talk about gender issues within this age group was clear. This claim is further supported by the fairly aggressive response towards boys/men from the girls group within this age group.

Information and learning needs 18-30 age group

Once again in this group the importance of computers and the role of computers in learning were noted by all. Reasons for the importance of computers ranged, but all groups mentioned employment related issues (searching for jobs, typing CVs), and for finding information. Other responses included education, for efficiency, to be informed about other countries, online shopping and online banking. Various reasons were given for why computers help with learning, many centred on the provision of information needed to learn. Some other interesting responses included:

“because it opens your mind” (18-30, women)

“they make you think and give you ideas” (18-30, men)

“it gives you a broader picture of your needs” (18-30, mixed).

These three examples provide some evidence of a willingness to engage with a computer. This is important for this project which will depend on the extent to which participants do feel comfortable to engage with a computer.

Once again the discussions around learning needs and other issues/problems faced generated various responses, quite similar to those in the 13-17 age group. The priorities for each group here were as follows. For the women only group, poverty, lack of housing, and illiteracy were noted as most important. For the men’s group, unemployment, crime, education, poverty, and nepotism were seen as most important. For the mixed group several issues were seen to be of high importance. These included HIV/Aids, crime, fear of responsibility, unemployment, abuse, teenage pregnancy, illiteracy, lack of educational facilities.

Considering all of these issues as ranked and the discussions more broadly, it would seem that main issues for this age group are:

- Unemployment (poverty, and job and career information)
- Crime
- Education (and illiteracy)
- Health/HIV/Aids.

When asked whether the same issues are likely to be faced by men and women we again find that the women’s only group have the strongest opinion with respect to gender issues. Responses from this group included:

“women are most affected by unemployment”(18-30, women)

“women have high rates of rape (18-30, women)

“men are more relaxed when they are unemployed” (18-30, women)

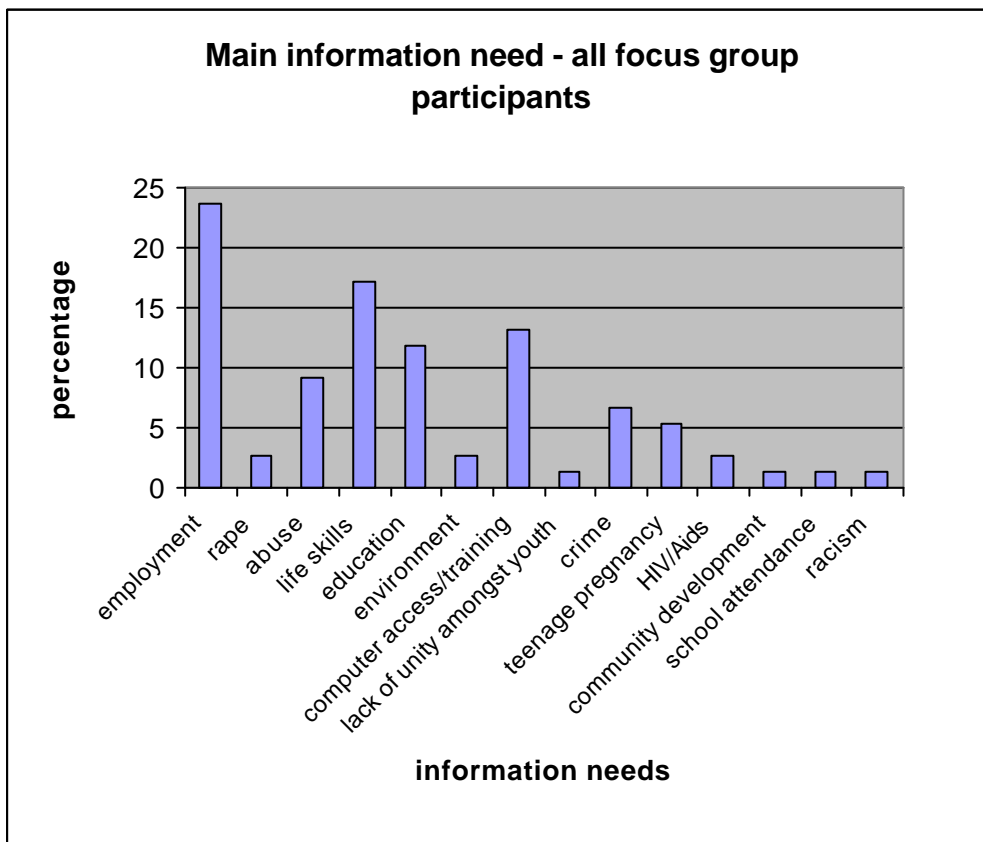
“men are very ignorant” (18-30, women)

Both the men’s only group and the mixed gender group felt that the same issues were faced by men and women.

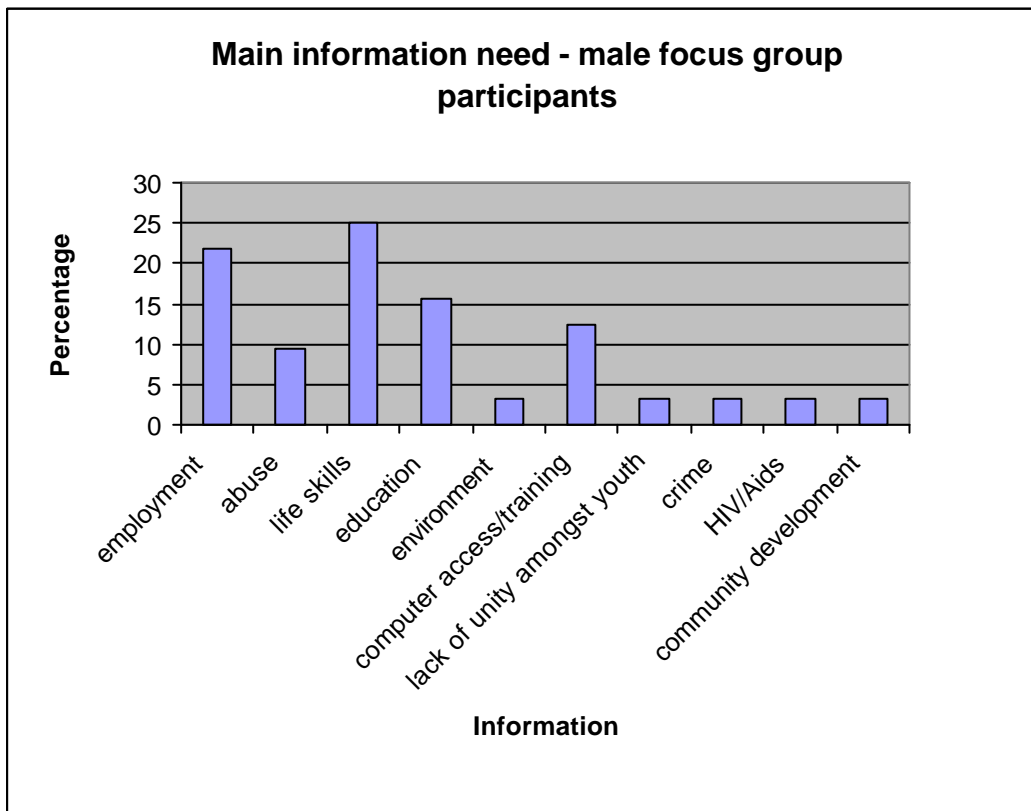
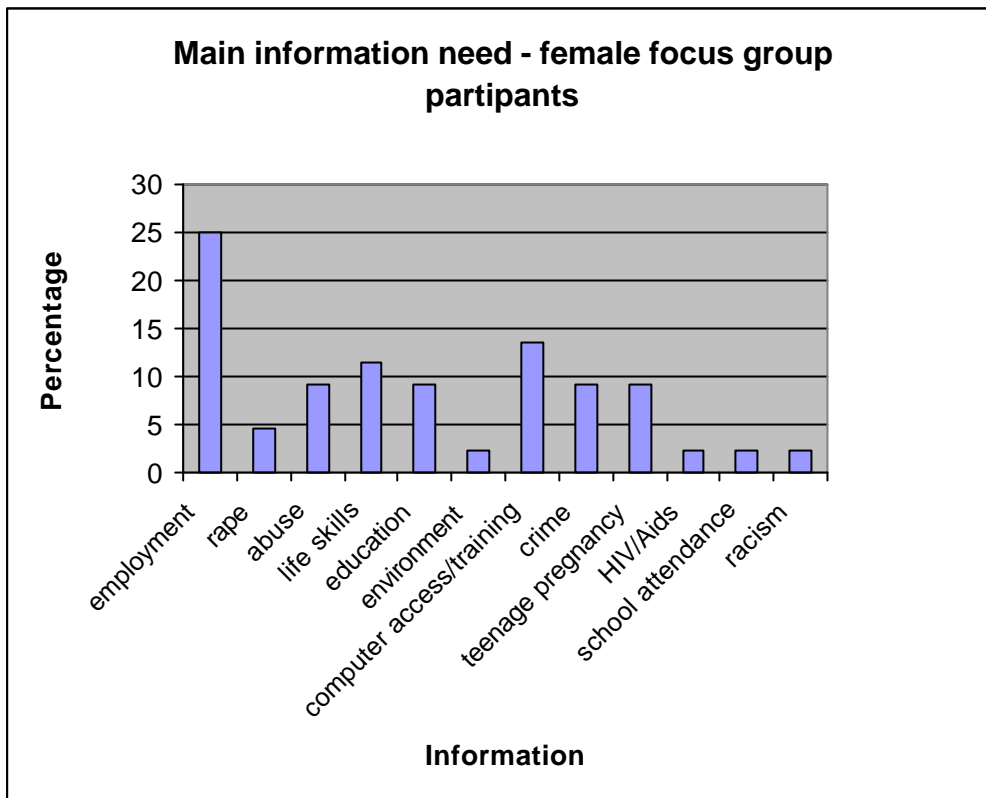
Individual voting exercise

In order to allow for further prioritisation of the information needs, at the end of the focus groups all participants were given a slip of paper and they were asked to anonymously record their personal most important need. The following needs were listed (in order that occurred when inputting data from the slips): employment related, rape, abuse, life skills (includes sex related information but not abuse and rape), education, environment, housing, infrastructure and services, computer access and training, lack of unity among the youth, crime, lack of information generally, teenage pregnancy, HIV/Aids, funding for education, community development, school attendance, racism. Each of the responses was recorded and a simple analysis of the frequency of needs occurring across age group and within different genders was conducted. The graphs below illustrate these information needs, firstly disaggregated by gender, and then by age category.

For the whole focus group sample, the following information needs were noted.

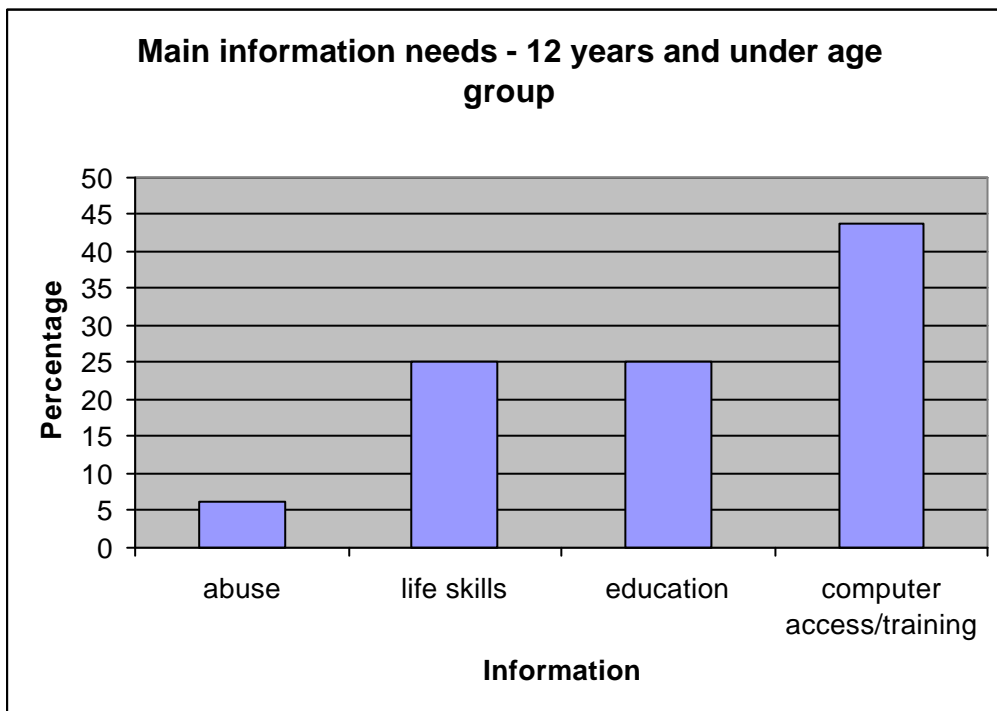


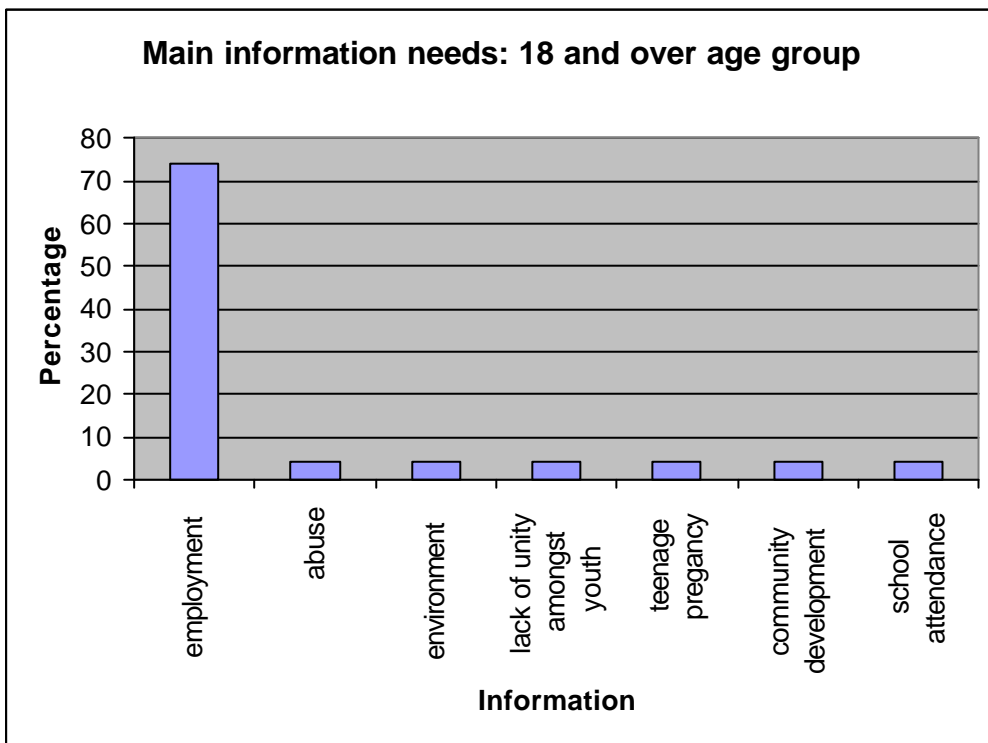
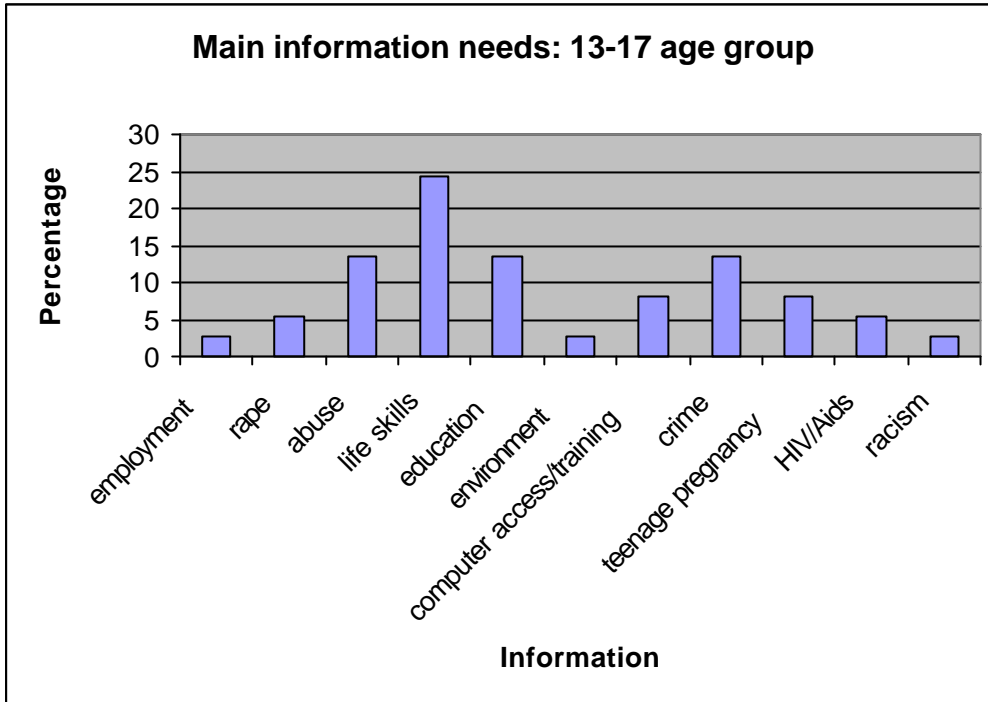
The sample was then split into separate groups for each gender with the resulting information needs being as follows.



We do see some gender differences in personally prioritised information needs. Employment (25%) computer training (13.6%) and life skills (11.4%) were most important for female participants, followed by abuse, education, crime and teenage pregnancy (each 9.1%). For the male participants, life skills were most important (25%), then employment (21.9%), education (15.6%), computer training (12.5%) and abuse (9.4). Although the order of importance varies by gender we see the same main categories emerging and this is supported by the findings for the whole sample which show that needs for employment (23.7%), life skills (17.1), computer training (11.8%), education (13.2%) and abuse (9.2%) make up the 5 most prioritised categories.

When the sample was split into the three age categories we find the following.





We see from the age category graphs that there is certainly evidence of varying information needs across the age categories and this is much more marked than for gender differences. For the 12 years and under group we find that computer

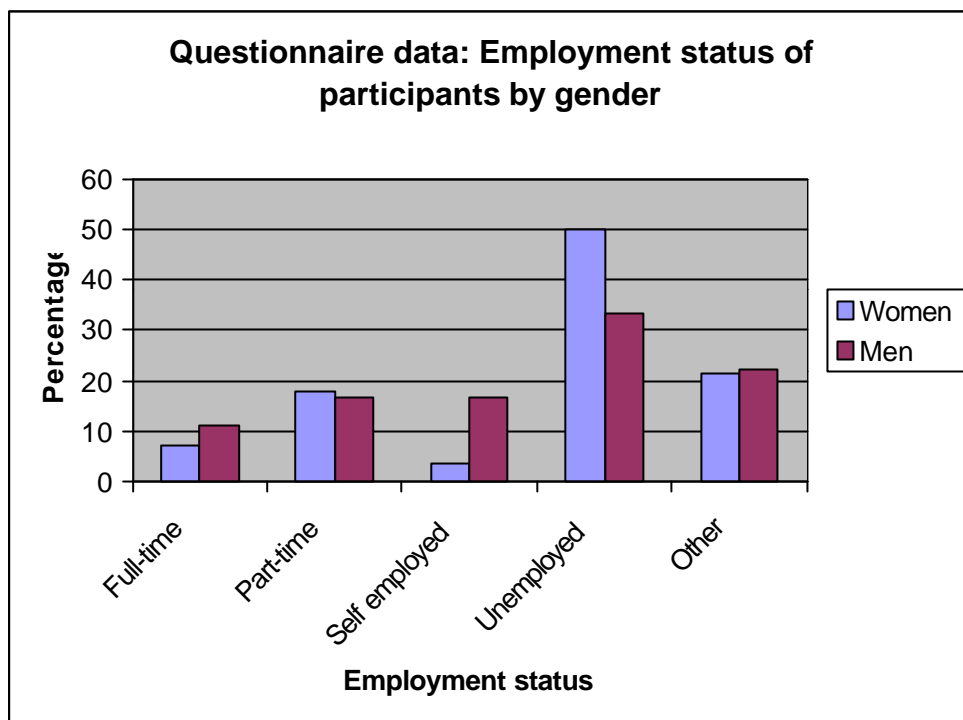
access/training was noted in 43.8% of cases⁴, then followed by education and life skills (25% each) and lastly abuse (6.3%). For the 13-17 years age group the main five needs were life skills (24.3%), abuse, education and crime (all 13.5%) and then computer training (8.1%). Finally, for the 18 years and over group the overwhelmingly prioritised need was information about employment (73.9%). These numbers also support the findings from the broader focus group discussion although a wider range of issues came up in the group discussions.

Questionnaire findings

This section will present the analysis of the questionnaire findings, which it is hoped will add to the understandings gained from the focus groups. All questionnaire respondents fall into the 18-30 age category thus this section can only be used to complement the 18-30 age group findings from the focus groups. The respondents were selected randomly from the centre users usually during the day, so the older age group of these respondents is largely due to the fact that most children are at school during this time and the centre is used more by older youth who are not in school. 37.5% of the respondents have matric (final year of schooling) and 62.5% either have a tertiary qualification or are currently studying. Of the whole sample, 52% are students. 68.8% have used a computer before. These figures remain similar when disaggregated for gender, but men do have a slightly higher percentage in the tertiary education category (66.7%) compared to 60% for women.

For the sample as a whole, 41.7% are unemployed, 8.3% have fulltime employment, 16.7% part-time employment, 8.3% are self employed and 20.8% fell into the 'other' category which included volunteer work and students. Disaggregation of employment level by gender shows clear gender differences as is highlighted by the graph below.

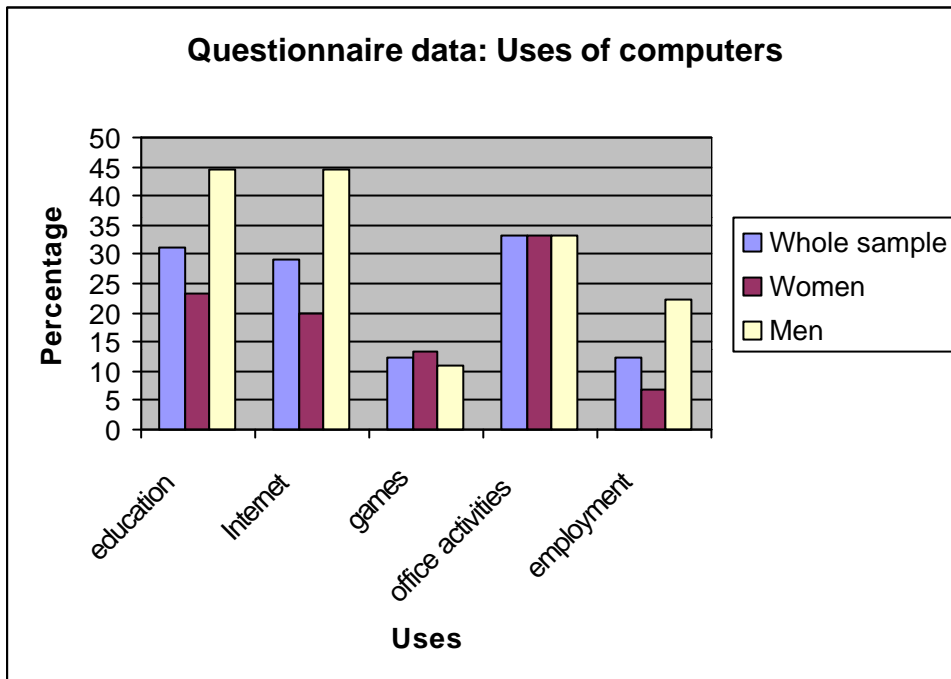
⁴ This may be partly explained as a result of expectations of learning computer skills during the focus groups.



From the above graph we see the percentage of women in the sample who are unemployed is 50% and for the men 33.3%. We would expect to find high levels of unemployment in the sample overall because this is not a random sample of the people of Alexandra, but of centre users during the day, i.e. most likely to be people who do not have work, or perhaps work nearby⁵. However, the gender difference within the sample requires further elaboration. In addition to the higher percentage of unemployed women we also see that fewer women are in full-time employment (7.1%) than men (11.1%) and that fewer women are self-employed (3.6) compared to men (16.7%). However, slightly more women have part-time employment (17.9%) than men (16.7%). These differences will be important to take into consideration if a focus on employment-related information needs is selected for the later stages of the project. It may be necessary to further explore why fewer women are self-employed for example.

⁵ This can be compared to the finding of 49% of men with full time employment and 27% of women with full time employment in the Isserow & Everatt (1998) study that included a random sample of the whole township. The Isserow & Everatt study also found that 40% of women were unemployed and 19% of men were unemployed, which is a lower level of unemployment than found in this study, but does confirm the gender differences found here.

As was noted above, 68.8% of the questionnaire respondents had used a computer before. When disaggregated for gender we find that 63.3% of women and 77.8% of men have used a computer before. The following graph shows the cited reasons for using a computer (note, more than one option could be noted so percentages do not add up to 100).



We see here that once again there are gender differences in the current use of computers, with men using computers more for educational purposes, for the Internet and for employment related activities than women. Office related activities (word processing, typing letters and printing) was an important use for both genders. The use of computers for games was low for the whole sample and both genders. This is likely to be because of limited access to computers and the cost of making use of computers.

Respondents were asked in an open-ended question if they thought computers were important and why. All respondents noted the importance of computers, for various reasons, including: for job searching, information, education, because they enhance efficiency, and for communication. The most commonly noted reason given could be summarised as, 'computers are important for all things'. This is the belief that the world has changed and computers play an integral part in this. Some of the responses that were classified into this category include:

“Because these days everything is technology” (28, female)

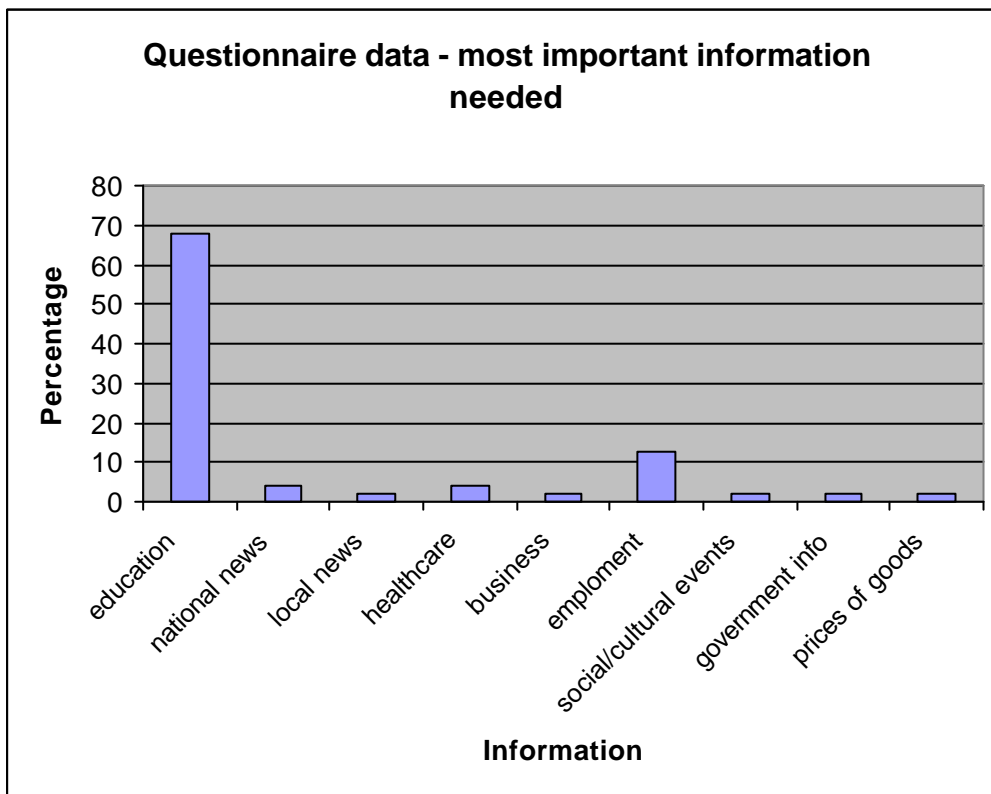
“Most things are computerised” (27, female)

“It is the future, everything is computerised” (27, male)

“These days you have to be up-to-date in order to catch up with the standard of living. At work, school, shopping, or playing games at your leisure, computer literacy is important. After all, you can do a lot of work just sitting there on your computer” (20, male).

In the questionnaire respondents were asked to rank which information from a list given in the previous question (with options for additional categories if needed) was most important, 2nd most important and 3rd most important for them.

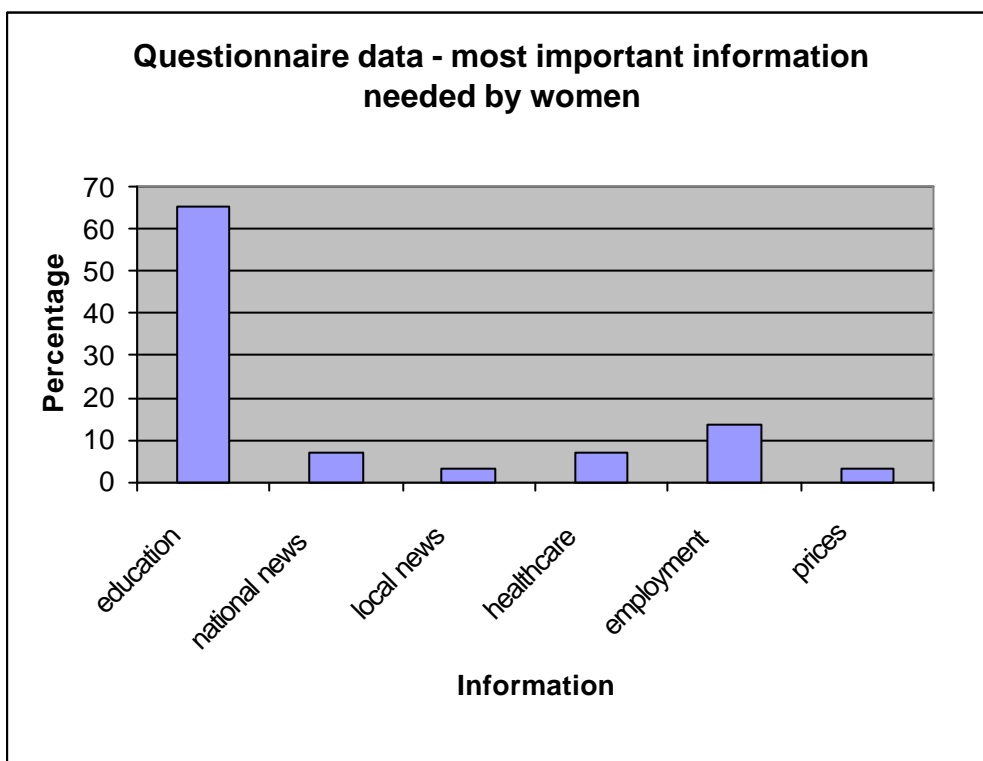
This graph shows the rank of the most important information needed.



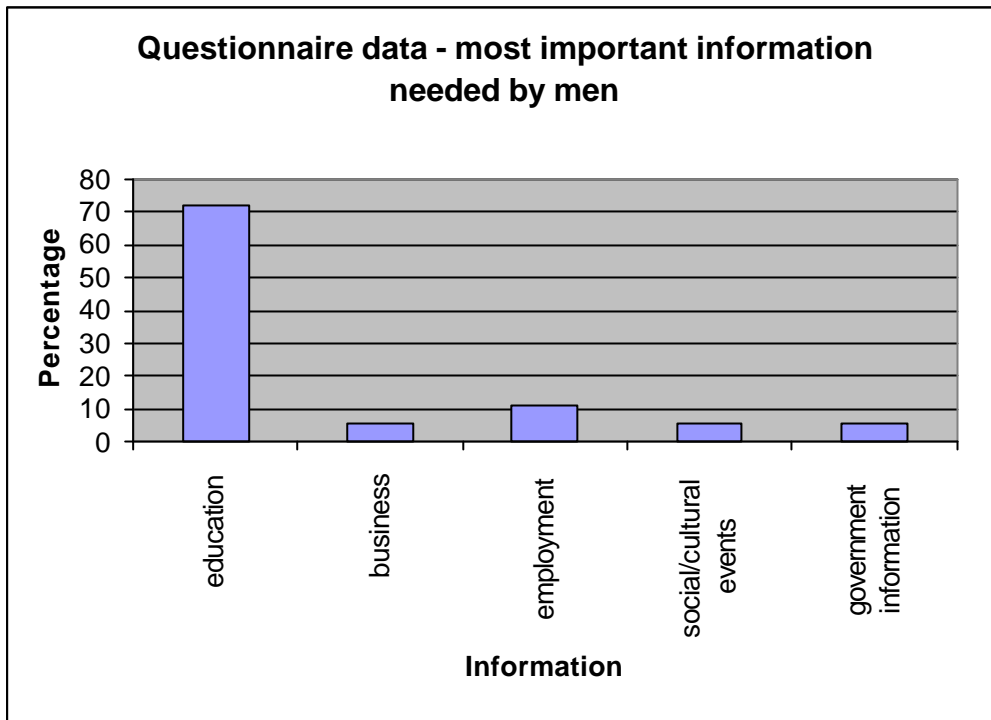
We see here that education (68.1%) is listed as most important in the majority of cases, followed by employment (12.8%). In the listing of the 2nd most important category of information, employment was listed by 37% and healthcare by 21.7%. again for the 3rd most important category of information we find that employment is listed by 19.1%, followed by government information (14.9%) and healthcare

(12.8%). Thus although education is overwhelming the most important information needed, employment is next important⁶. Further, for many respondents it is likely that educational needs are also related to needs for employment, a link that was also commonly made in the focus group discussions. This finding of the importance of education and employment supports the findings of the focus groups, especially for this particular age group.

When broken down by gender we find that the most important information needs for women and men specifically are shown in the 2 graphs below.

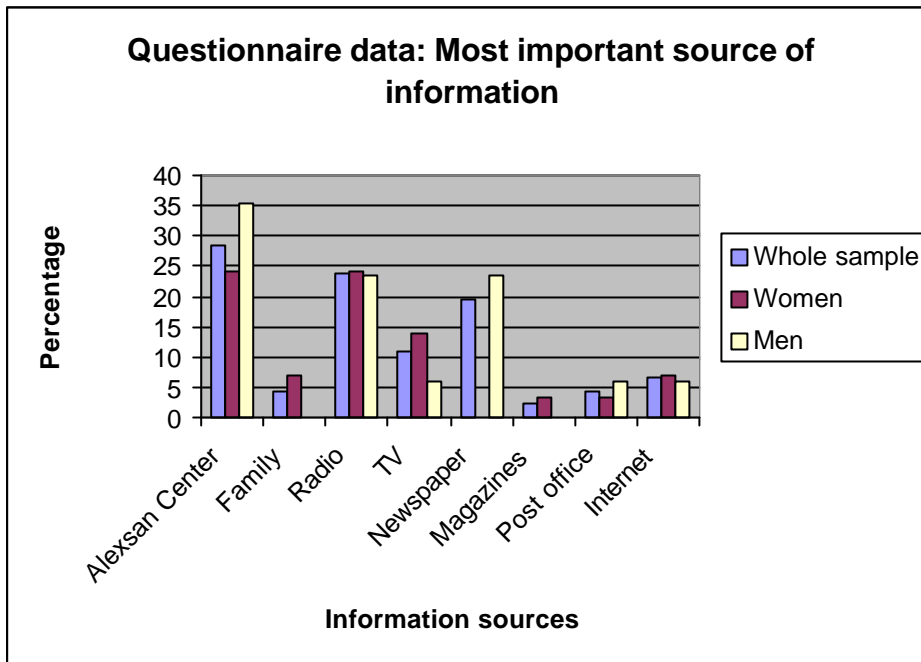


⁶ Since this is questionnaire data further details of what is understood to be included in these categories could not be assessed as was done for the focus groups.



We see from the above graphs that for both women and men, education is the most important category of information needed (65.5% and 72.2% respectively). In both cases employment related information is next in importance (13.8% and 11.1% respectively). It should also be noted that ‘information about running a business better’ was also one of the categories available and noted as an important category in each case. If we take this category of information and combine it with employment related information we will find a greater percentage noting the importance of employment related information more generally.

The final section of the questionnaire dealt with current sources of information. Respondents were asked to list their 3 most important sources of information from a list provided (with the option to list other sources).



The above graph shows the most important information source listed by the whole sample, and for men and women separately. We see the Alexsan centre is an important information source, followed by radio for all participants. There are some differences in most important information source across gender, with more men using the Alexsan Centre, and newspapers in particular than women, and with more women using TV and magazines than men as a first choice information source. The Internet is not currently a particularly well-used information source.

A consideration of the information sources listed as 2nd and 3rd most important reveals the importance of friends for all respondents as a 2nd and 3rd choice, newspapers for women as a 2nd choice. No respondents mention the Internet as a 2nd or 3rd choice. In general, the combined assessment of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd most important information sources for the whole sample highlights the importance of the Alexsan Centre, radio, TV, newspaper and friends (which show high percentages as a 2nd and 3rd choice, although not included as a 1st choice).

These findings show similar trends in information sources used as found by Isserow & Everatt (1998), except for the importance of the Alexsan centre in this sample. It is important to interpret the findings with care since the sample is not random from the whole township as was the Isserow & Everatt study, but rather of centre users, so it would be expected that the centre would be an important source of information. It is however heartening that the Alexsan centre does seem to be a trusted source of

information. This is likely to be linked to the strong sense of community ownership highlighted in the previous report.

Conclusions, Recommendations And Way Forward

Having considered in some detail the different information and learning priorities across both age category and gender we now need to reach a position where we are able to note the most important information categories in order to take this project forward into the next stage in a meaningful way.

The need for computer access and computer training has come through in all of the focus groups. This issue, although not directly related to this specific project, will have to be addressed for the project to be successful. For full use to be made of the content to be developed it is important that people feel comfortable with the technology and have the basic skills to use it. This issue should also be viewed against the fact that just over half of the sample here has used a computer before and the gender differences found with respect to computer use.

Given all of the above results, can we decide on the main information need(s) for the youth of Alexandra? The table below summarises the main information needs found for each age group during the focus groups.

Table 3: Summary of main information needs

12 years and under		13-17 years		18-30 years	
Focus group discussions (no specific order)	Individual voting (in order of priority)	Focus group discussions (no specific order)	Individual voting (in order of priority)	Focus group discussions (no specific order)	Individual voting (in order of priority)
1. Child rights, rape, abuse 2. School-related (education) 3. Safe sex, HIV/Aids 4. Life skills 5. Computer access/training	1. computer training 2. Life skills 3. Education 4. Abuse	1. Abuse (includes rape) 2. Education 3. Life skills 4. Employment 5. Crime	1. Life skills 2. Abuse 3. Education 4. Crime 5. Computer training	1. Unemployment 2. Crime 3. Education 4. Health, HIV/Aids	1. Employment

The questionnaire sample, which included only the 18-30 year age group, also showed the importance of education and employment related information.

Several issues are repeated across the age groups, for example, life skills, education, employment (not specifically, but indirectly in the 12 years and under) and abuse &/or crime. Although not always prioritised highly, health issues (in particular, HIV/Aids and sexually transmitted diseases) were also important and were part of many focus group discussions.

In summary, a possible overall classification of these needs could be according to the following 5 main themes:

1. **Employment** (includes, career information, job searching, and entrepreneurship)
2. **Life skills** (includes, decision making, how to say No, teenage pregnancy, safe sex, how to keep healthy, how to look after and protect myself, how to be successful, how to be financially sustainable)
3. **Education** (includes: homework issues, school-related information, information for projects, subject choices, access to further and higher education, information about educational opportunities, information about funding for educational opportunities, what education will help me to find a job)
4. **Abuse &/or crime** (includes: child rights, rape, general abuse, punishment of offenders, self protection)
5. **Health** (includes: HIV/Aids, sexually transmitted diseases, general well-being)

If it were only possible to work with one theme, I would recommend employment issues be chosen as this was a central issue running through most discussions for both sexes and all 3 age groups. Consultations with the fieldworkers after the focus groups also identified this as the major issue. For the 12 years and younger age group this topic would need to be presented carefully, perhaps drawing in life skills as this would have an important role to play in later efforts to become employed.

The details of these issues differ across age groups, both in terms of specific aspects of the themes to be covered and also the way the information is presented. These differences would need to be taken into account in the final product development process. One way would be to conduct further participatory research focusing on the specific needs identified as a focus. An alternative is to draw on the expertise of

content developers in the specified area who are likely to have an understanding of the best ways of presenting information to different target groups. Finally, several of the graphs included did indicate somewhat different information needs for women and men, however, it was also shown that these differences were greater across the different age groups than the gender groups. For this reason, this study finds that the project target group should be differentiated by age group but include a clear gender focus.

One of the main gender differences found seems to be in participation rates of males and females in this research. This is reflected in both the participation in focus groups and the random completion of questionnaires. For both methods of data collection we find that higher percentages of females than males are taking part in the research activities and making use of the centre. This has also been identified as a common difficulty faced by the youth desk when organising youth activities at the centre. It is thus important for the following stage of the project to take this into account and to build in mechanisms to include men such that dialogue and sharing between the genders will be encouraged.

The need for gender related discussions was also evident, particularly in the 13-17 year age group where especially the girls expressed strong feelings and a lot of anger towards men. Gender differences were also found with respect to employment status, with women showing much higher levels of unemployment than men. Given the need for initiatives to address employment issues identified here this gender difference will need to be considered in the following stages of the project.

It is hoped that this information needs assessment will assist UNESCO in its quest to develop open learning communities for gender equity with the support of ICTs, in a manner that reflects the specific context of the Alexandra Township and meets the needs of the young women and men who live there.

References

- Babbie, E and Mouton, J (2001). *The practice of social research. South African Edition*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press South Africa.
- Braehmer, S; Kimmie, Z; Greenstein, R; Morake R & Seutloadi, K (2000). *Youth 2000: A study of Youth in South Africa*. CASE: Johannesburg.
- Denzin, NK & Lincoln, YS (eds). *Handbook of Qualitative Methods*. 2nd Edition. London: Sage Publications.
- Everatt, D (2000). Keynote article: From urban warriors to market segment? Youth in South Africa 1990-2000. *Development Update*, 3 (2): 1-39. Special Issue: The Dead Decade? Youth in the Post-Apartheid South Africa.
- Foley, P (2000). Exploring the Opaque: Working with young people: The Joint Enrichment Project 1986-2000. *Development Update*, 3 (2): 116-130. Special Issue: The Dead Decade? Youth in the Post-Apartheid South Africa.
- Guijt, I & Shah, M.K. (1999) (eds). *The Myth of Community. Gender issues in participatory development*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.
- Hafkin, N & Taggart, N (2001). *Gender, Information Technology, and Developing Countries: An Analytic Study*. For the Office of Women in Development Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research, USAID.
- Isserow, M & Everatt, D (with Yanta, M & Schneider, M) (1998). *'Determining our own Development'. A Community-based Socio-Economic Profile of Alexandra*. CASE: Johannesburg.
- Madriz, E (2000). Focus Groups in Feminist Research. In, NK Denzin & YS Lincoln (eds). *Handbook of Qualitative Methods* (835-850). 2nd Edition. London: Sage Publications.
- March, C; Smyth, I & Mukhopadhyay, M (1999). *A Guide to Gender-Analysis Frameworks*. Oxford: Oxfam.
- Miles, MB & Huberman, AM (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis. An expanded sourcebook*. 2nd Edition. London: Sage Publications.
- UNESCO (July 2002). Developing Open Learning Communities for Gender Equity with the Support of ICTs. Concept Note. UNESCO Cross-cutting Project: V1.2.1.2.

Appendix 1: FOCUS GROUP STRUCTURE AND PLANS

Groups : 12 years and under (2 hours, 2.30pm-4.30pm)
13-17 years (2-3hours, 2.30pm-5.30pm)
18 years and up (2-3 hours, 9.30am-12.30pm)

GROUPS: 13-17 years and 18 years and up

AT THE START MERRIDY WILL BRIEFLY INTRODUCE EVERYONE, EXPLAIN WHAT WE ARE DOING AND THANK EVERYONE FOR COMING

INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKERS

(For introduction – name, age, educational level, language spoken at home, something fun – to be decided by the facilitators)

Part 1: (45 mins)

1. Who here has used a computer before? COUNT
2. What do you use computers for? NOTE ALL THE REASONS ON THE FLIP CHART
3. Do you think computers are important and why? DISCUSSION AND NOTES
4. Do you think girls/boys men/women use computers in the same way? DISCUSSION AND NOTES
5. Do you think computers can help you to learn? Why? DISCUSSION AND NOTES
6. What kinds of things would you like to learn? MAKE A LIST ON FLIP CHART
7. Rank this list NOTE ON THE FLIP CHART

15 minute refreshment break here

Part 2: (60 mins)

1. What problems do you or someone you know face in your life now? MAKE A LIST OF THESE ON FLIP CHARTS (MAYBE ASK EACH PERSON TO LIST 3 PROBLEMS)
2. Rank the list of problems from most important to least important DO THIS ON THE FLIP CHART
3. Do you think this list would be the same for (men/women?) Why? DISCUSSION TAKE NOTES

THEN WORK WITH THE MAIN PROBLEM IDENTIFIED

4. What do you think you need to solve this problem? NOTE ON FLIP CHART
5. Do you have information available now to help you solve this problem?
DISCUSSION AND NOTES
6. Where do you get it from? NOTE ON FLIP CHART
7. What information do you think you need (that is not available) to help you solve this problem? DISCUSSION, TAKE NOTES, END WITH A LIST OF INFORMATION NEEDED ON FLIP CHART
8. Prioritise these information needed (ON FLIP CHART)

Part 3: Joint-groups together: (max 30 mins) (MERRIDY TO DO THIS PART WITH TRANSLATION IF NEEDED)

1. Put up lists of problems/needs (TAKE NOTES OF ANY COMMENTS PEOPLE HAVE)
2. Give everyone a piece of paper and ask them to write on it which problem they think is the one they especially need information about (no names) and put it in a box as they leave.

12 and under age group

INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKERS

(name, age, standard/grade, language spoken at home, something fun to be decided by the facilitators)

Part 1: (45 mins)

1. How many have used a computer? COUNT AND NOTE ON FLIPCHART
2. What do you use a computer for? NOTE ALL RESPONSES ON FLIPCHART
3. Do you like using computers? Why? DISCUSSION AND NOTES
4. Do you think boys and girls use computers in the same ways? DISCUSSION AND NOTES

15 mins Refreshment break

Part 2: (45mins)

1. When you need to find something out, what do you do/who do you ask etc? NOTE ALL RESPONSES ON FLIPCHART
2. What kind of things do you think it is important to learn about? Why? NOTE ON FLIP CHART/DISCUSSION OF WHY AND TAKE NOTES
3. What kind of things do you **like** to learn about? Why? NOTE ON FLIPCHART/DISCUSSION OF WHY AND TAKE NOTES
4. How do you learn about these things now? DISCUSSION AND NOTES
5. Do you think boys and girls like to learn about the same things? DISCUSSION AND NOTES

(During the discussions Merridy will make a list of all the learning needs and put this up somewhere)

All come together very briefly at the end.

Merridy to thank everyone and ask them to note what they most want to learn about from the list on their little piece of paper and put it in the box as they leave.

6. Each person is given a piece of paper and asked to write what they most want to learn about from the list we have – NO NAMES, PUT IN BOX AS THEY LEAVE.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

ALEXSAN KOPANO EDUCATIONAL TRUST MULTIPURPOSE COMMUNITY CENTRE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CENTRE USERS

This questionnaire is part of a research project to find out what kinds of information people using the Alexsan Centre need and use, and also what people think of computers. It should take about 10 minutes of your time to complete.

Please note that there are NO right or wrong answers, we want to find out what YOU think. You will not be asked to put your name anywhere on the questionnaire, so your answers will be totally anonymous.

Date.....

Age.....

Sex.....

Education level (tick as appropriate)

- Never attended school
- Attended school (note Highest school grade/standard achieved).....
- Tertiary education (please note qualification).....
- Other (please specify).....

At what age did you leave full-time education?.....

Employment status (tick as appropriate)

- Working full-time.....
- Working part-time.....
- Self-employed.....
- Unemployed.....
- Retired.....
- Student.....
- Other (please specify).....

Have you used a computer before?

YES / NO

If yes, what did you use it for?.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Do you think is important for people to know how to use a computer?

YES / NO

Why?.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Which of the following kinds of information do you need in your life? (tick all relevant categories)

- Education.....
• National news.....
• Local news.....
• International news.....
• Health care.....
• How to run a business better.....
• Employment.....
• Social and cultural events.....
• Weather.....
• Government information.....
• Sports.....
• Culture.....
• Religion.....
• Current prices for my product/services.....
• Market opportunities for my product/services.....
• Other (please specify).....

.....
.....
.....

Please list the 3 most important forms of information for you from the above list:

- 1= most important.....
2=2nd most important.....
3=3rd most important.....

Where do you go when you need to find information now?

- Alexsan Centre.....
 - Friends.....
 - Family.....
 - Listen to the radio.....
 - Watch TV.....
 - The newspaper.....
 - Magazines.....
 - Local school.....
 - Church.....
 - Post office.....
 - Other (please specify).....
-
-
-

Please list the 3 most frequently used sources of information for you from the above list:

- 1= most important.....
- 2=2nd most important.....
- 3=3rd most important.....

Is there anything that we have not asked you that you think is important?.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix 3 – Photographs of focus groups



Facilitator training (from Left to Right: Itumeleng Shilakwe, Esrom Mabidkama, Mayram Abrahams, Lerato Moraka, Merridy Wilson, Fitzgerald Mangayi and Sandra Mawunga).



Focus group, boys 12 years and under.



Focus groups, girls 12 years and under



Focus groups, mixed group, 13-17 years.



Focus groups 12 years and under showing room setting.