

8. Community Resources Data

One goal of this assessment is to identify those organizations that provide (or could provide) services to gang members or youth at high risk of gang involvement. Many of these services are formal and delivered through established organizations. Others are informal or offered through community or grassroots groups to neighborhood residents. There also may be opportunities to identify additional organizations while conducting interviews with community leaders or hosting focus groups. Interviews should be conducted with the agency or organization director or other key personnel in each identified agency with knowledge about the agency’s gang-related programs, as well as the agency’s governance and funding structure. Once organizations are identified, information can be gathered through phone or personal interviews. The assessment should also examine historic responses to gangs, including programs and/or strategies that have been implemented to deal with gangs, and the results of these programs.

Table 1 identifies the questions to be answered about the community’s resources to assist gang-involved youth, their families, and high-risk youth; the information needed to answer the questions; and the sources of that information.

Table 1—Current Activities and Resources			
Questions to Be Answered	Information Needed to Answer	Sources of Information	How to Obtain
1. How has the community historically responded to gang activity?	Previous studies and reports	Law enforcement, university, and task force reports	Review of reports, key informant interviews
2. What services are being provided (or could be provided) to gang members?	Organization profile—purpose, target population, service area, funding source, anti-gang focus	Organizations, neighborhood groups, faith-based groups	Community resource inventory, key informant interviews
3. What law enforcement strategies are in place to prevent, intervene, and suppress gang activity?	Program and strategy profiles, focus (prevention, intervention, suppression), resources, collaborative efforts	Law enforcement agencies, probation, corrections, and prosecution personnel	Key informant interviews
4. Do courts, detention centers, and correction departments conduct risk assessments that include gang membership?	Program profiles, resources, policy and procedures	Court, detention center, corrections personnel	Key informant interviews

Answers to the following questions should also be addressed:

1. What services are being provided to gang members?
2. Are these services sufficient to meet the needs of this population? If not, what services would be needed to meet the needs identified through this assessment?
3. What services are in place that could be extended to gang members? What, if anything, would be needed to do so?

Historic Responses to Gangs

A good starting point for a discussion of community resources is to describe the community's historic responses to gangs and the outcomes/results of these responses. These responses should be categorized by whether they focused on prevention, intervention, suppression, community mobilization, or other strategies. Discussion of this topic should include a listing of the agencies that participated in these strategies and whether these strategies are ongoing or have been curtailed. If these responses were stopped, the Assessment Work Group should document the reasons for this change in approach.

This information can be summarized from prior reports and surveys on gangs and related problems that may be available from schools, police, and local and state governmental agencies, or it may be collected through personal interviews with key informants in the community.

Community Resource Inventory

The inventory of local resources should:

- Document programs, services, and community organizations that can be incorporated into your efforts to address identified gang-related risk factors and behaviors.
- Identify types of resources and services that are missing in the community to address gang-related risk factors and behaviors.
- Identify gaps in the number of youth programs can serve or are currently serving.
- Consider the level of training and experience in serving gang members in existing programs.
- Identify potential community partners that can provide financial, human, and infrastructure to your efforts.

Data collected about community resources will assist in analyzing and identifying gaps in services available to gang members or youth at risk of gang membership. The analysis of the data should compare available resources to risk factors in the community, as identified in the student survey and community demographic data, and related service needs of gang members collected during the assessment process. The analysis can provide information to use in developing new or expanding/improving existing programs.

At a minimum, any public or private organization that provides the following services should be surveyed:

- Counseling
- Drug treatment
- Job training
- Education and vocational training
- Mentoring
- Recreation
- Youth development

Additional community resources should be inventoried that could support efforts to provide services to gang members and youth at risk of gang membership. Because these resources are often nontraditional or do not provide direct services, they are often overlooked. They include those organizations or businesses that may provide mentors, financial assistance to the project, material donations, or public and private infrastructure (such as meeting or office space in targeted areas of the community), or that meet medical needs and assistance with food or housing. Examples of organizations to inventory include:

- Private businesses
- Faith-based organizations
- Community-service organizations
- Neighborhood associations

After these data are organized, a summary of programs should be provided in the Assessment Report.

Exhibit 8.1 is provided for collecting information on existing resources from community agencies and organizations.

A Web-based Community Resource Inventory database is available on the OJJDP Strategic Planning Tool at www.iir.com/nygc/tool. Once surveys (Exhibit 8.1) have been completed, communities can enter these data into this online database. This inventory allows the user to record information about community organizations, programs, services, and activities that could be incorporated into a comprehensive approach to gangs. Templates are provided to guide the collection and manual recording of this information. The information can subsequently be entered into a searchable database. Once the database is populated, the user can produce a matrix that answers the questions, “What does our community have in place?” and “What do we need that is missing?”

Justice System Programs

In the course of gathering information about gang-related programs or services, information should be collected about any special justice system programs and strategies—particularly those in *police*, *probation*, or *corrections agencies*—that are currently in place to deal with gangs. Additionally, information regarding gaps in these services and programs that may be contributing to the gang problem should be addressed.

Answers to the following questions should be discussed in the report.

1. What law enforcement strategies are in place to prevent, intervene with, and suppress gang activity?
2. What other justice system programs, services, or activities are provided to gang members?
3. When were these programs started? How have these programs changed over time? What success have they had?
4. Do juvenile justice agencies conduct individual risk assessments that include gang membership?
5. How has the community historically responded to gang activity? Has this worked? Why has the problem not gone away?

Exhibit 8.1
Community Resource Inventory

1. Agency Name:

2. Program Name (if any):

3. Program Purpose:

4. Service(s) Provided:

5. Dosage of Services:

6. Target Population/Eligibility Criteria:

7. Program Capacity:

8. Is the program currently full? If so, how long is the wait for services?

Yes

No

9. Geographic Service Area:

10. Does the program focus on gang members?

Yes

No

11. Is program staff experienced at serving gang members?

Yes

No

12. If risk assessments are conducted, do they include gang membership?

Yes

No

13. Funding Sources:
