

Focus Groups

What is a Focus Group?

A focus group is a targeted group made up of individuals mainly residents set up to carry in-depth discussions on certain topics, obtain information concerning people's opinions and concerns and recommend appropriate interventions. They form a fast driven qualitative survey and are a means for collecting information and points of view quickly and effectively.

Steering groups rely on focus groups to obtain feedback on opinions and suggestions.

Use of Focus Groups: These groups are useful in:

- Understanding how residents view an idea /concept.
- Understanding how residents in a particular category think.
- Providing input on publicity.
- Generating ideas on how to solve a problem
- They involve stakeholders with different points of views and eases the expressions and explanations of discrepancies.
- They are able to concentrate and give their attention to the topic at stake with little chance of digressing.
- They ensure all aspects of a project/plan have been adequately researched and examined independently.
- They are able to identify specific target groups or beneficiaries.
- They are able explain the concept and reasoning for the project or plan.
- They collect information and carry out in-dept examinations on their topics.

Advantages of using a Focus Group are listed below:

- They provide feedback on ideas, design concepts etc
- They may suggest changes to an idea or proposal
- They may help the steering group target or identify potential stakeholders.
- They may express their likes and dislikes regarding a project or proposal.
- They may say if a proposal or policy is likely to be popular.
- They are likely to suggest best methods of publicising the plan.