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Assessing Health Needs

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Section A

What Are Assessments?

Purpose of Assessments

- ◆ To identify what people's needs are
- ◆ To define baseline status for future comparison
- ◆ To determine what changes have occurred as a result of the program
- ◆ To identify program weaknesses or gaps

Rapid Assessments

- ◆ Similar to planning other health activities
- ◆ Pace is accelerated in the emergency
- ◆ Needs are often more urgent
 - May differ from those before flight

Rapid Assessments

- ◆ Selecting priorities may be difficult
 - Consider consequences of inaction
- ◆ Identify critical needs, then repeat assessment week later for less urgent needs

Assessment Checklists

- ◆ Many checklists exist
 - For example, OFDA's *Field Officer's Guide* (FOG) download at www.info.usaid.gov
- ◆ Need to understand how they are used
- ◆ Are not a substitute for understanding the environment

Possible Assessment Questions

- ◆ **Why have things happened?**
 - How did things get the way they are now?
- ◆ **What is likely to happen next?**
 - Are people ready to go home?
 - Are more people coming?
 - Is cholera likely to break out?
 - Are there any possible outbreaks of hostility?

Possible Assessment Questions

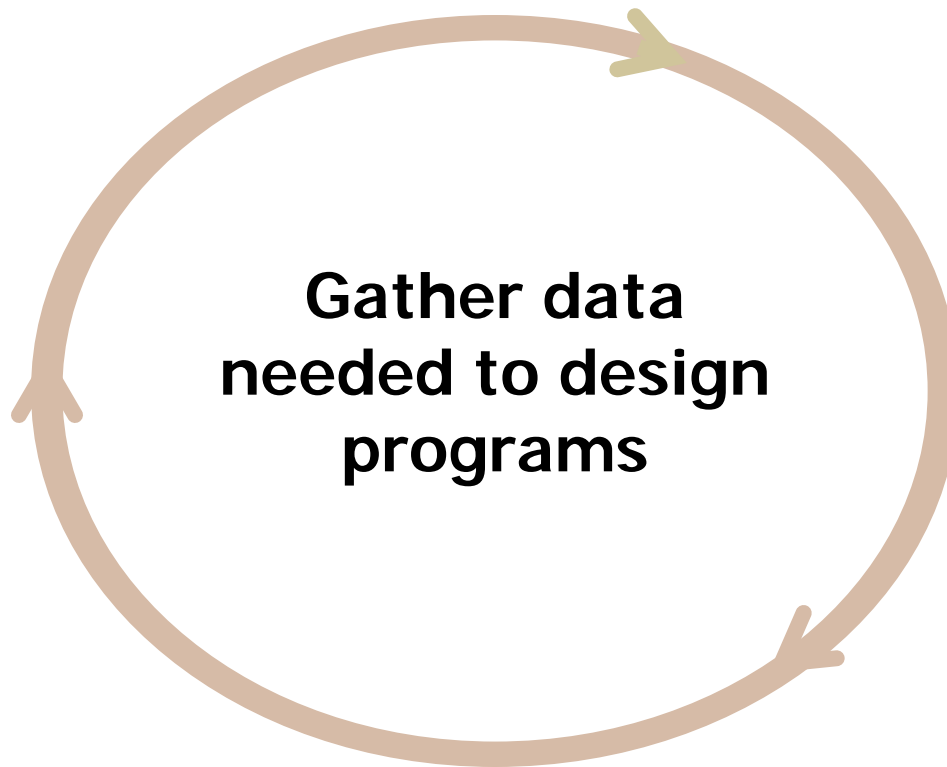
- ◆ **What is the situation in the host country?**
 - What are the common local diseases?
 - What kind of support is available?
 - Is the host population compatible?
 - How will things develop?

Basic Planning Cycle

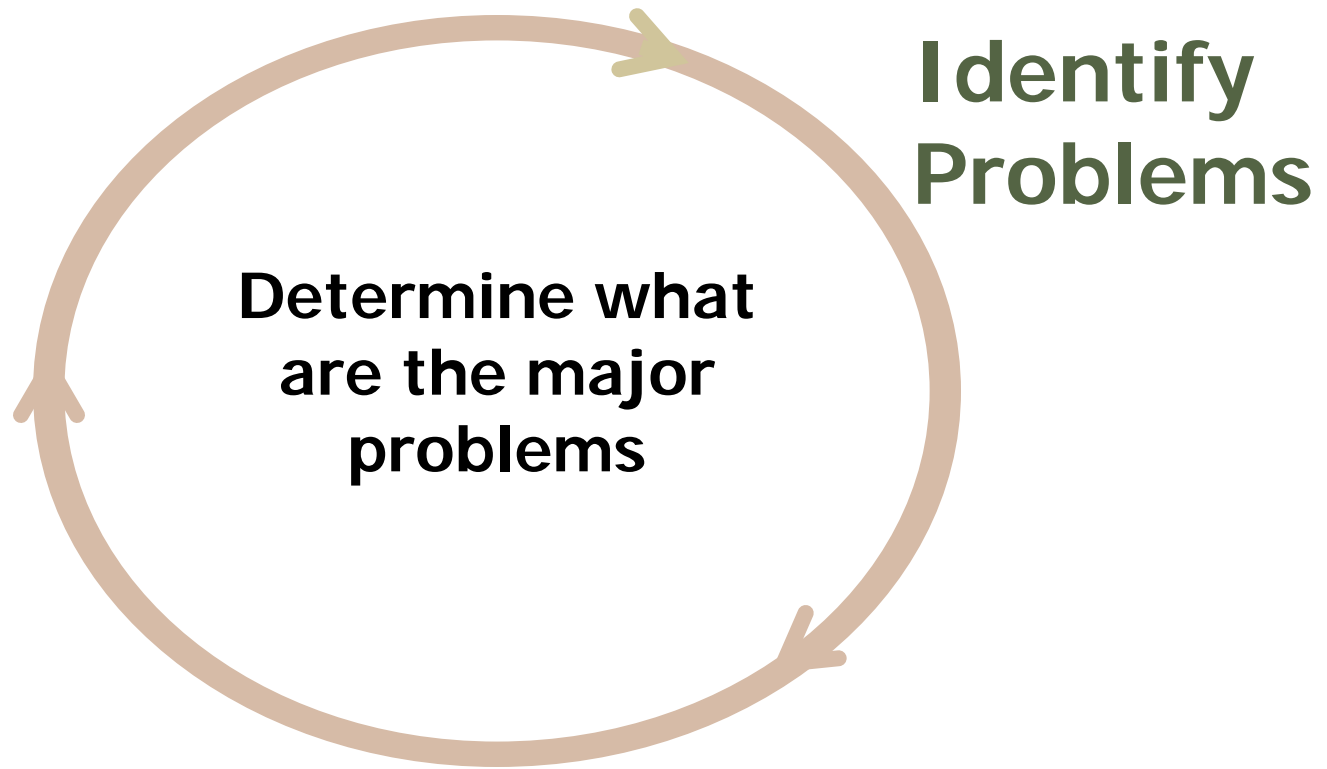
- ◆ Not unique to refugee situations
- ◆ Provides a basic approach to address needs that have been identified

Basic Planning Cycle: Step 1

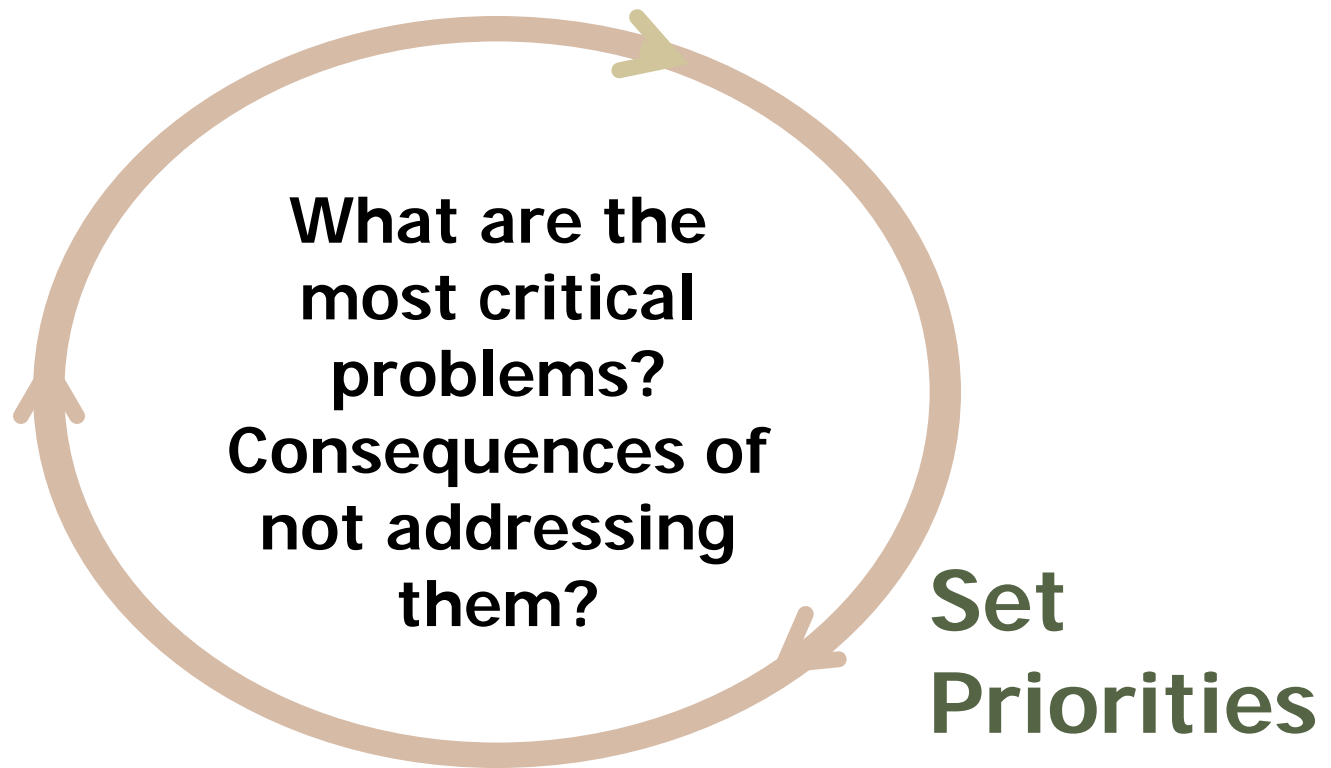
Assessment



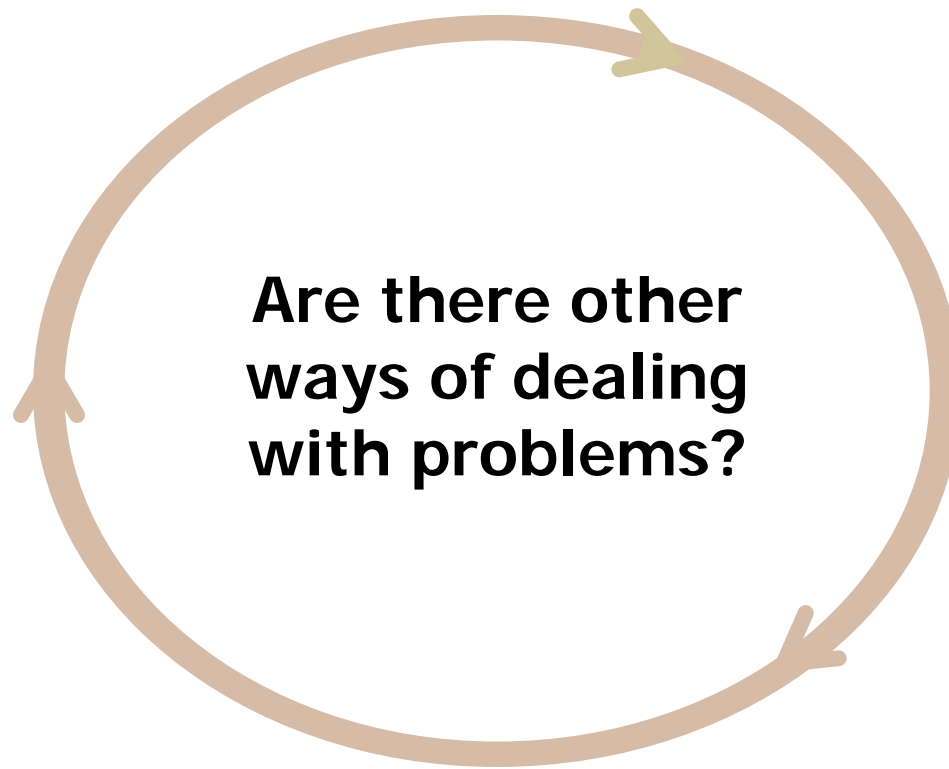
Basic Planning Cycle: Step 2



Basic Planning Cycle: Step 3

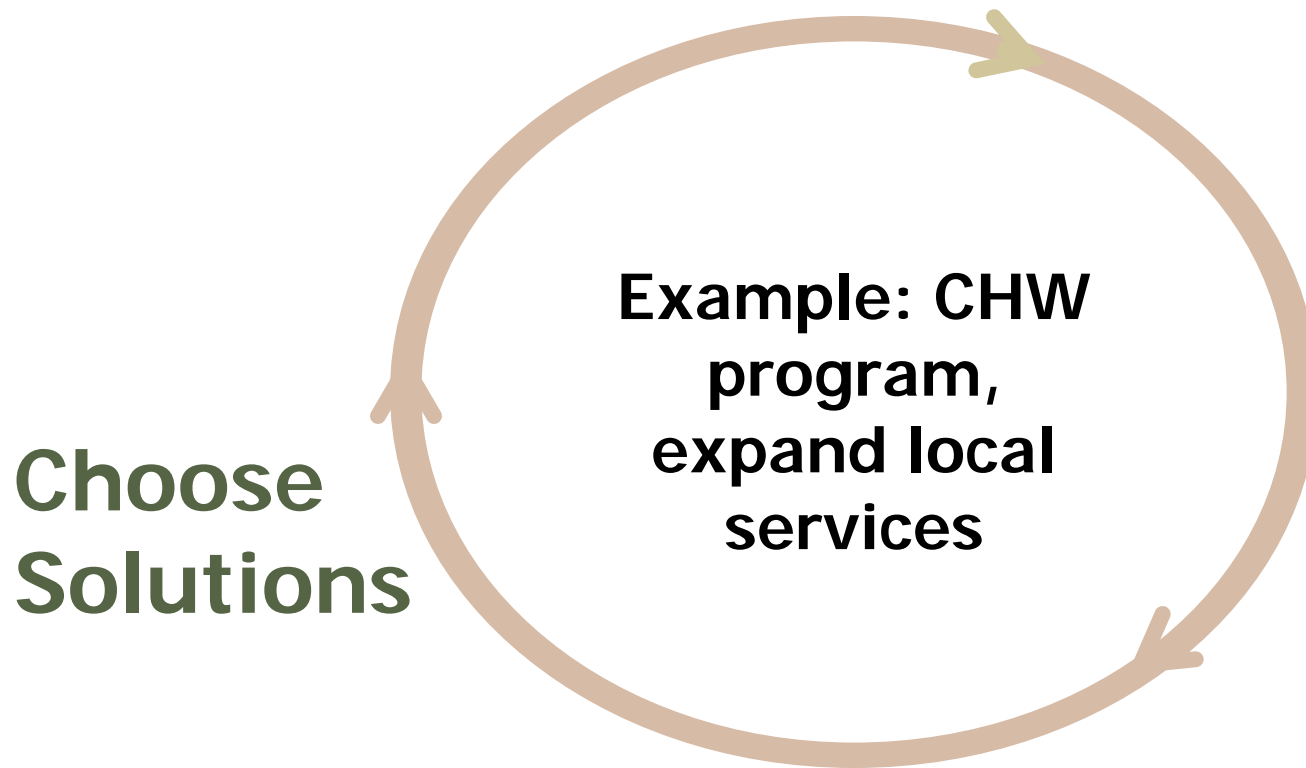


Basic Planning Cycle: Step 4

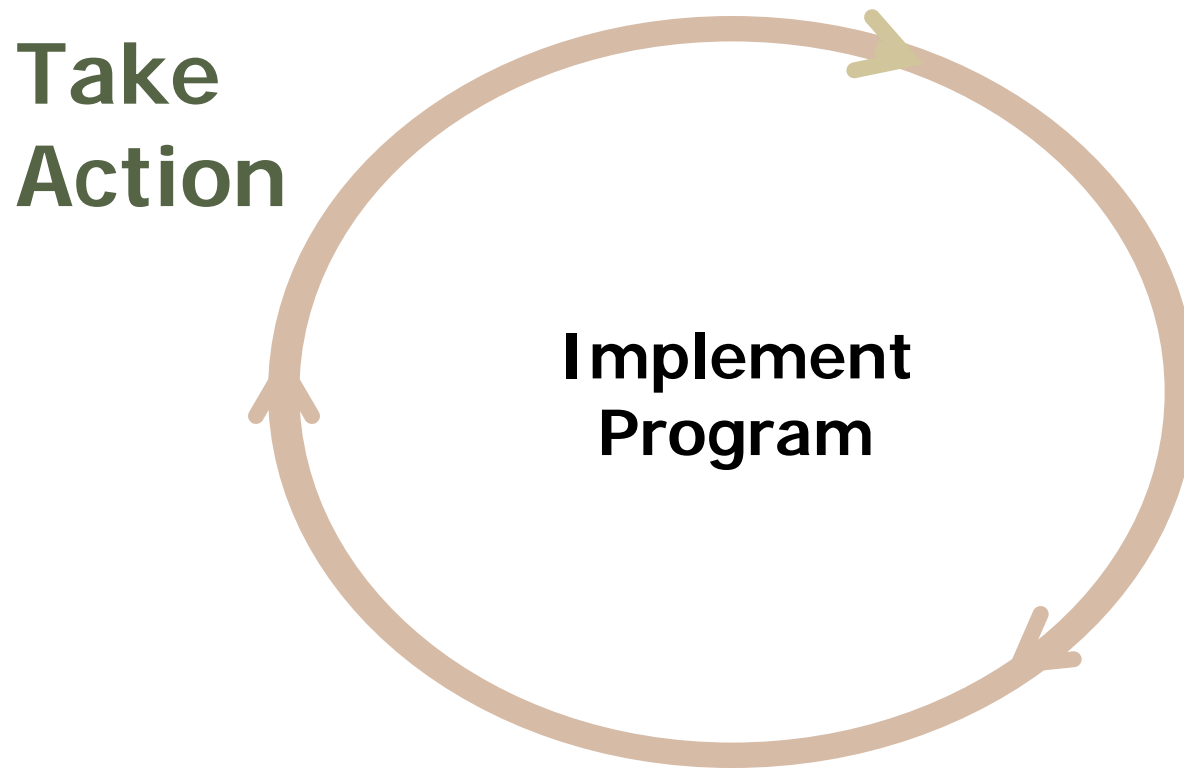


**Consider
Alternatives**

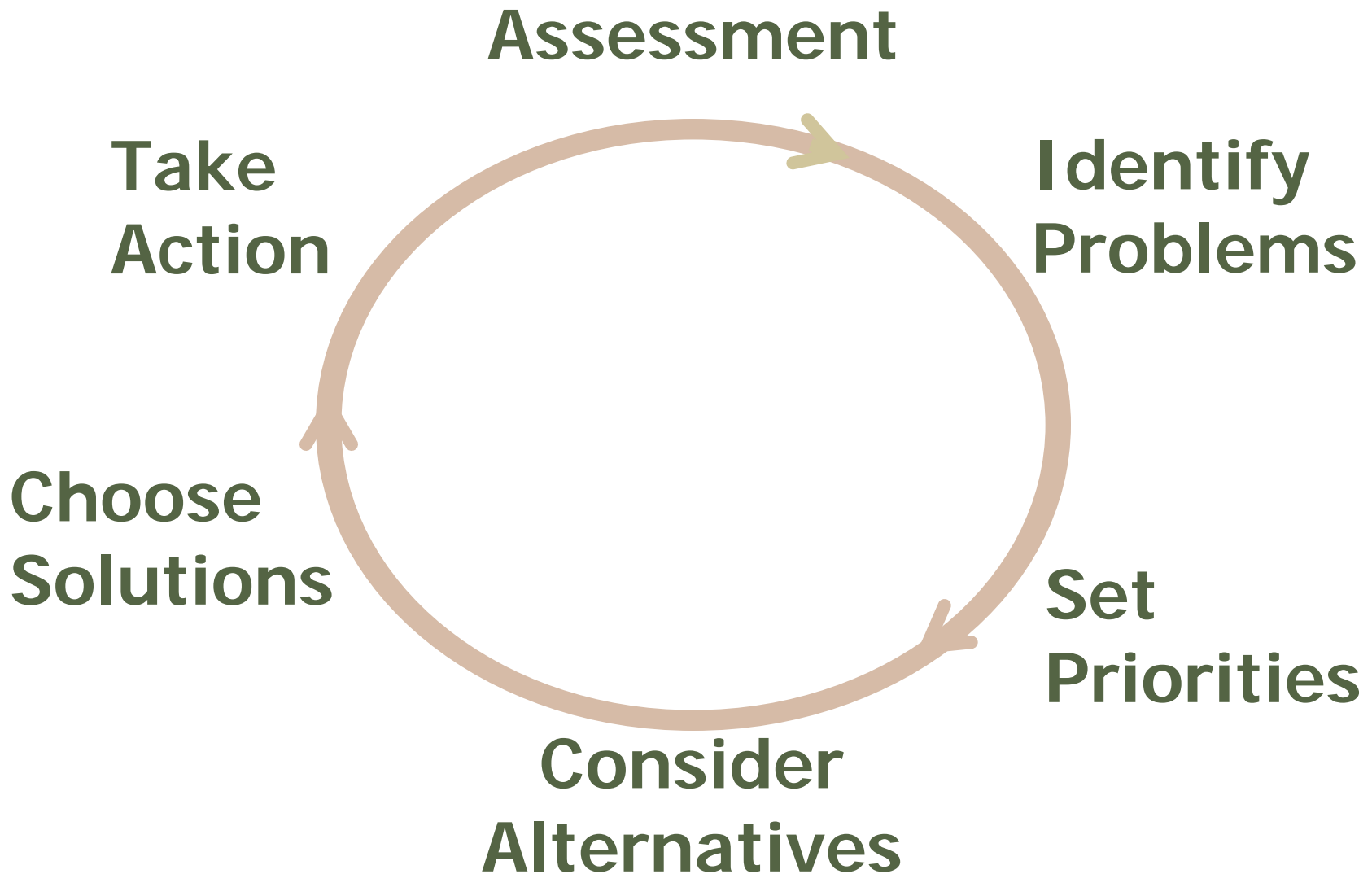
Basic Planning Cycle: Step 5



Basic Planning Cycle: Step 6



Basic Planning Cycle





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Section B

Conducting Assessments

Conducting the Assessment

- ◆ **Assessment is the basis for program development**
 - Poor assessments lead to weak programs

Conducting the Assessment

- ◆ **Basic principle is to determine the following:**
 - What are the needs now?
 - What are the likely future needs?
 - What resources are available now?
 - What resources will be needed?

Thinking in a Systematic Way

- ◆ **What has happened?**
 - What is the impact on the community?
 - What is the impact on the household?
 - What is the impact on the vulnerable individuals/groups?
- ◆ How is the situation likely to change?
- ◆ What is the political environment?

Assess Specific Problems

- ◆ Are there problems with shelter and clothing?
- ◆ Are there problems with water for cooking, washing, bathing?
- ◆ Are there problems with food and fuel?
- ◆ Are there problems with disease threats?
- ◆ How is the community coping with illness?

Assess Ways of Assisting Target Groups

- ◆ Are vulnerable populations in danger?
 - How can protection be organized?
- ◆ What must be done immediately to ensure survival?

Assess Ways of Assisting Target Groups

- ◆ What must be done immediately to ensure survival?
 - How can this assistance be delivered?
 - What are the target groups?

Assess Local Resources

- ◆ How can displaced people help themselves?
 - What are people doing now?
- ◆ How can displaced people help themselves?
 - What unmet needs are there?

Assess Local Resources

- ◆ How much assistance can the host government provide?
 - What are the government policies that will affect assistance?

Assess the Host Population

- ◆ How have the refugees affected the local population?
- ◆ How will assistance programs affect the host populations?
- ◆ Is there poaching of health workers by high salaries?

Assess the Host Population

Set Priorities and Objectives

- ◆ Are local services and drug supplies overwhelmed?
- ◆ What are the needs of the host population?

Assess the Host Population

- ◆ Does the host have common unmet needs that can be addressed?

Developing an Assistance Program

- ◆ Setting of mission
 - Why are we here?
- ◆ Identification of needs
 - Should be specific and quantified wherever possible
 - Needs will serve as basis for monitoring program impact

Set Priorities and Objectives

- ◆ Selecting priorities
 - What can we do?
 - What do we want to do?
- ◆ Clear objective as basis of strong programs
 - Objectives must be measurable
 - Indicators for each must be easily assessed
- ◆ Have alternatives to program design

Define Strategies and Alternatives

- ◆ Strategies to implement objectives
 - How are we going to do it?
 - Clear series of tasks set out
 - Identify required resources
- ◆ Consider alternatives in program design

Program Monitoring and Evaluation

- ◆ Monitoring system needed to assess progress towards objectives
- ◆ Evaluation based on objectives
 - Are the objectives the correct ones?
 - Have they been reached?
 - Is there clear evidence of impact?

Program Monitoring and Evaluation

- ◆ How will the program be altered based on this information?
- ◆ Establish evaluation criteria right from the beginning of the program
- ◆ Determine the feedback mechanisms for informing the health workers and community who participated in evaluation process