Handout 10: Designing and Implementing a Research Plan

STEP 1: Determine the general aims of the project. Be clear about the purpose of the research how it will be used and who will read it.

STEP 2: Determine the time and money to be spent. To do this consider the time to be used to:

- plan the research and develop information gathering tools such as questionnaires
- undertake the research
- write the draft report
- revise the report
- finalise and distribute the report.

It can be useful at this point to draw up an ACTION PLAN to help determine WHAT must be done, WHO must do this and WHEN the activity must be completed.

STEP 3: Undertake research of secondary sources of information in order to become familiar with the general issues affecting the community you wish to research.

STEP 4: Start talking to people. Talk to community members, colleagues in the tearoom, and management committee members about your ideas, your concerns and what you hope your research will achieve.

STEP 5: Form a working group to help you with your research.

STEP 6: Write clear objectives for the project.

STEP 7: Select suitable methods for the research. Ensure that your methods include a representative cross section of the community. Your research must be seen to be an independent and reliable source of information. Choose methods that consider the culture of the community or groups you are collaborating with.

STEP 8: Plan the research and write the plans as a PROPOSAL. Within these planning documents you must outline your objectives, expected outcomes and proposed methods. Resources needed to conduct the research must be determined and allocated. Estimate the budget for your research and identify the possible ethical, social or political implications of your work. This should be submitted to your management committee for APPROVAL before starting the research.

STEP 9: Conduct the research ie collect all relevant information and record the findings.

STEP 10: Information is organised in a form, which is suitable for the purpose of the research.
STEP 11: Information is analysed. Patterns and explanations are explained to ensure validity and reliability.

STEP 12: Report the findings of the research. The complete and accurate details of the research methodology, information and analysis are presented in a form suitable to different audiences. Opportunities are provided for the respondents to make comments for validation of the research findings.