



Community Needs Assessment

Summer 2012

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Executive Summary

In compliance with the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG), administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and as part of Western Arizona Council of Governments' (WACOG) annual planning process that utilizes data-based decision making to develop an annual Community Action Plan and offer services based on identified needs.

The purpose of this document is to provide current and accurate information to the WACOG Executive Board, Management Committee, Community Action Board, County Advisory Councils, and organizational staff that allows them to make the most informed, strategic decisions possible. This tool is intended to act as a "Road Map" that demonstrates the linkages between community needs, assets, and services in La Paz, Mohave, and Yuma Counties and the programs and services provided by WACOG.

WACOG SERVICE AREA - The Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG) has a tri-county service area (La Paz, Mohave, and Yuma Counties) encompassing the western portion of the State of Arizona. Within this region are ten growing incorporated towns and cities: City of Bullhead, Town of Colorado City, City of Lake Havasu, City of Kingman, Town of Parker, Town of Quartzsite, City of San Luis, City of Somerton, Town of Wellton, and City of Yuma.

The service area encompasses 23,502 square miles (approximately 21% of Arizona) making the region larger than Massachusetts, Maryland, and the District of Columbia combined.

DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION - This area has a large, growing population of which a significant portion are low-income and vulnerable residents that are eligible for WACOG programs and services. In most communities, the demand for WACOG services far outweighs available funding. Additionally, regional service infrastructure that assists eligible residents and families is taxed with minimal to no State funding and must absorb large influxes of seasonal workers and their families.

ELIGIBLE POPULATION – From 2000 to 2010 the WACOG region's population grew 22%, while the number of residents living in poverty rose 55%, from 34,589 to 76,059 people, with a large percentage of children living in poverty: La Paz County- 36.4%; Mohave County – 24.7%, and Yuma County – 30.7% (U.S. – 19.2%; AZ – 21.6%).¹

Nearly 1 in 4 grandparents that are living with their grandchildren in the tri-county area are living in poverty.² Additionally, a significant percent of grandparents living with their grandchildren are responsible for the children: La Paz 54%, Mohave 54%, and Yuma 56% (U.S.-54%; AZ- 57%).³ Approximately 1 out of 2 of these grandparents is living with grandchildren that are under the age of 6.⁴

COMMUNITY ASSETS – Community strengths and assets identified during community input through Key Informant Interviews, the Community Needs Assessment Survey, and Focus Groups centered on local collaborations, education opportunities, major industries, health care, residents, and services for vulnerable populations.

- Collaborations play a vital role in supporting low-income residents throughout the service region and are vital to serving residents with very limited resources.
- Both early childhood and adult education opportunities were highlighted during community input with available Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs being noted as making a significant impact on a child's formal education and adult education offered low-income families a proven method to move out of poverty.
- Existing major industries are prized for providing much needed jobs as well as bringing value to the region.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census (Tables:DP-1and DP-3), 2006-2010 ACS (Tables: DP01 and DP03).

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 - 2010 ACS (Tables B10059).

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (Table: B10002).

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (Tables B10001).

- Noted health care strengths focused on local hospitals and their efforts to improve medical care, collaborations focused on health care issues, and mental health resources.
- Throughout the community input process, local residents' resiliency, family support, sense of neighbor and community support, cultural diversity, and community-wide efforts for a healthier lifestyle were highlighted.
- Services for vulnerable residents that were centered on: senior programs, employment assistance, housing support, nutritional resources, and meeting basic needs were also identified as community assets.

COMMUNITY NEEDS - Under the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) program, Community Action Agencies throughout the nation use funds to provide services and activities that address employment, education, better use of available income, housing, nutrition, emergency services and/or health to combat the central causes of poverty.

Community input during the WACOG CAP Community Needs and Assets Assessment process identified a clear concern about providing the most basic of services to the region's large population base of low-income and vulnerable residents. State and federal funding reductions have recently minimized or eliminated some vital programs in the area.

Additionally, community feedback identified the symbiotic relationships between community needs. For example, economic development and livable wage issues have a strong relationship with housing affordability and homeownership, educational needs have a strong relationship with the affordability and availability of health care to community members and the overall concept of a "Livable Community," and the relationship between community outreach and involvement is tied to improving and maintaining service

Based on 2010 census data and annual program reports, WACOG's limited resources only allow the organization to serve a small portion of eligible residents with services. In State Fiscal Year 2011 (SFY-11), of the 45,484 families (or approximately 133,426 residents) eligible for utility assistance and weatherization, WACOG was only able to serve:

- 12% (5,237) with utility assistance in SFY-11, equaling 18,093 persons of which 8,232 (46%) were children under the age of 18; approximately 11% were disabled residents, and 76% of families that were living below the poverty line.⁵
- 2% (381) of financially eligible families with homelessness prevention in SFY-11, equaling 1,260 residents of which, 604 (48%) were children under the age of 18, 11% were residents with a disability, and 83% of the families that had incomes below the poverty line.⁶
- 1% (523) of financially eligible families were assisted with weatherization in SFY-11 equaling 1,363 persons of which 1,169 (86%) were disabled, 393 (29%) were children, 459 (34%) were seniors and 86% of the families that had incomes below the poverty line.⁷

WACOG Community Needs Assessment Survey: Focused on identifying respondents': (a) Demographic information; (b) Family needs; (c) Barriers to meeting basic needs; (d) Housing conditions; and (e) Use of WACOG services.

Targeted survey respondents were tri-county low-income and vulnerable residents. Surveys were distributed at Senior Centers, the Community Action Board and County Advisory Council meetings, community organizations and at WACOG offices. Survey respondents by geographic area were: La Paz County – 99, Mohave County – 102 and Yuma County – 689.

Throughout the service area, survey respondents indicated family needs are centered on the most basic of necessities: food, housing, healthcare, and employment with the primary barriers to meeting their needs as the: (a) cost of assistance/cannot afford fees; (b) not eligible/did not qualify; (c) health/disability; (d) programs/services are not available in their area; (e) did not know where to go for help; and (f) no transportation to/for assistance.

⁵ SFY-11 Annual Client Characteristic Report, Utility Assistance Program. Run date: April 19, 2012.

⁶ SFY-11 Annual Client Characteristic Report, Rent/Mortgage Assistance Program. Run Date: April 19, 2012.

⁷ SFY-11 Housing Client Characteristic Report, Weatherization Program. Run Date: June 15, 2012.

In La Paz and Mohave Counties the majority, 51% and 67% respectively, of respondents have never used WACOG services. While 62% of the survey responders in Yuma County have previously utilized WACOG services.

Key Informant Interviews: Twelve key community stakeholders provided input and advice to WACOG during this portion of the planning process. Collectively, the Key Informants have over 256 years of experience in serving the needs of the community. WACOG took great effort to ensure geographic, cultural, and expert diversity was incorporated into the key informant selection process.

In relation to community needs, the Key Informants were asked what they considered the most pressing problems and/or social issues impacting resident's ability to be healthy and economically self-sufficient. The 3 most pressing problems and/or social issues identified were: (1) Economy – high unemployment rates and need for economic development with a diverse industry base; (2) Education – low education attainment levels and skills mismatch with available jobs; and (3) Housing – lack of decent and affordable housing, great need for rent/mortgage and utility assistance, and the foreclosure crisis.

Focus Groups - Focus Groups in each of the three counties reviewed service area demographics, Community Needs Assessment Survey results and Key Informant responses and were then asked to: (a) Identify service barriers; and (b) Provide suggestions and strategies to improve service delivery.

Identified service barriers centered on transportation, lack of knowledge of available programs and services, geographic isolation, lack of adequate health care providers, funding silos not addressing the residents' needs, no centralized intake location for all services, lack of funding for programs and services, need for financial literacy training, intensive, extensive and repetitive application processes, and an absence of communication between partnering agencies.

Suggestions and strategies to improve service delivery include streamlining the application processes, increasing community outreach, developing a local community resource directory and community resource and information system, increase collaborations dedicated to better serving residents, more satellite facilities for service delivery, and establishing a low-income community summit and information hubs.

PRIORITY NEEDS - Priority needs were determined through Focus Groups activities and are centered on the economy/economic development, outreach, addressing basic needs, education, health care, and transportation.

- ***Economy/Economic Development*** – Focus group participants felt the bad economy throughout the tri-county service region has led to a significant need for increased community development activities that allow residents to acquire a livable wage job, reduce costs to local businesses, recruit more employers to the region, increase employment opportunities thus decreasing unemployment rates and address local low-paying jobs.
- ***Outreach*** - Communication and outreach efforts to residents and other community service providers is necessary to ensure everyone has accurate information on available programs and services as well as a working knowledge on how to access programs and services efficiently and effectively.
- ***Basic Needs*** - The need for community infrastructure that addresses the basic needs of residents as well as being more user-friendly was noted in each of the counties. Not only do residents need to have the ability to address the most basic of human needs such as food, clothing, and housing but they also need to be able to do so in an efficient and effective manner.

Focus Group participants felt that a strong sense of community caring, increased service funding, more availability of programs and services, a community hotline to find needed services, simplified application processes, and a retiree supplemental income assistance program would assist in making material inroads in addressing the basic needs of residents. Furthermore, continued and increased partnerships/collaborations are seen as being an important variable.

- **Education** – There is a strong need for improved education attainment levels in the region in order to move families out of poverty and ensure a positive impact on the local economy. Also noted were: (a) a gap between available jobs and residents’ skill levels; (b) training programs and businesses need to be committed to sharing in the development of workforce training that addresses private sector needs; and (c) there is a need for basic life and social skills training.
- **Healthcare** - An inadequate number of physicians and dentists, as well as other medical specialists, make not only preventive health care an issue but also specialized medical services a regional priority. Resulting in limited access to physicians, dentists and medical specialists with either residents going without needed healthcare or traveling 3 to 8 hours to receive services in larger metropolitan areas such as: Las Vegas, Phoenix, Tucson or San Diego. Adding to the financial strain on already vulnerable and income challenged residents.
- **Transportation** – Decent transportation is seen as a community priority in all 3 counties. Feedback in La Paz County, where a large population base of geographically isolated limited-income seniors, noted that current transportation resources (both funding and available services providers) are unable to address resident needs. Moreover, restrictions placed on available funding are not meeting the needs of local residents.

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WACOG Description

As the Community Action Agency (CAA) for La Paz, Mohave, and Yuma Counties, Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG; est. 1971) provides a comprehensive array of services to help people achieve their highest level of self-sufficiency. Services and programs reach a diverse population of residents from preschool age children and their families participating in Head Start activities to older adults accessing senior center services.

WACOG has been dedicated to the health and well-being of the area's communities and residents for over 40 years.

WACOG's mission, as the region's CAA, is to alleviate the symptoms and eradicate the causes of poverty by helping people help themselves when they are in economic, social, and/or educational need. WACOG does this by identifying changing community needs, mobilizing resources, administering programs that address ongoing community and individual needs, as well as providing systemic advocacy.

In this capacity, WACOG envisions a future in which it continues to provide important, impactful social and human service programs. WACOG embraces, encourages, and is strengthened by the diversity of its programs, staff, and the residents it serves and is **unique in that it serves people of all ages, from infants to senior citizens.**

WACOG provides coordinated services and directly meets some of the most pressing needs of the area's most vulnerable populations. The ultimate goal is to "change people's lives" through responsive, supportive, progressive, and proactive hands-on case management and support services. WACOG has and will continue to improve its efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery and support other local community-based organizations.

WACOG builds upon its unique strengths and expands its partnerships with local service organizations to ensure the agency continuously works towards achieving and maintaining excellence in social and human services. In many cases, the organization has the **ability to achieve an economy of scale, as a result of its diverse background, in order to bring programs and services to address local needs that would otherwise go unmet.**

WACOG Programs and Services



Senior Services

As the federally designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Western Arizona Council of Governments solicits and contracts with private vendors for services, administers the disbursement of funding, monitors programs for regulatory compliance and maintenance of quality, and generally coordinates operation of services and resources for the elderly. In addition, WACOG serves as an advocate, planner and provider of services for persons 60 years of age and older.

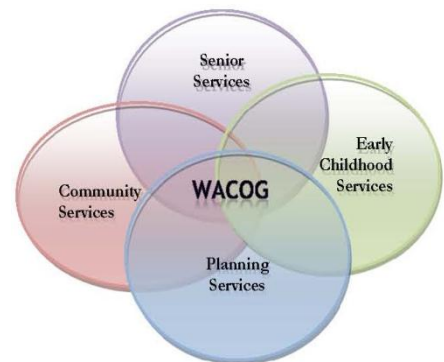


Early Childhood Development Services

The WACOG Head Start program has served western Arizona for over three decades with a comprehensive early childhood education program for preschool age children that have economic and/or disability challenges. The program offers a broad range of individualized services in the areas of education and child development, special education, health services, nutrition, and parent/family development that is responsive as well as appropriate to each family's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL PROGRAMS

Comprehensive Approach





Planning Services

Planning services that are conducted by WACOG encompass a wide variety of activities from planning local social services through the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), community development through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and Transportation and Transit activities in La Paz and Mohave County in coordination with the communities and Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).

SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (SSBG; TITLE XX) PLANNING

Arizona is the only State in the nation that sets aside approximately 24% of the federal allocation of SSBG funding to be allocated at the local level. WACOG is responsible for submitting annual plans that identify local priorities that are utilized at the State level to identify and fund gaps in services. Locally planned SSBG funding is determined by Tripartite County Advisory Councils and the Community Action Board (CAB). Each Council and the CAB is structured so that 1/3 of the seats are designated for public, private/community, and low-income representation.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PLANNING

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds originated with the passage of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The Arizona Department of Housing has been designated by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the small cities funding under the CDBG Program in Arizona.

A regional account system is utilized to ensure the equitable distribution of CDBG funds within Arizona to address local needs while having the local governments play an important role in the grant solicitation process. WACOG's regional Method of Distribution (MOD) recognizes that role by utilizing County allocations as a basis for localizing these decisions.

By working with local governing entities of non-entitlement areas, WACOG coordinates and compiles community development activities into the regional MOD for submittal and approval by the State of Arizona.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT PLANNING

Working in collaboration with ADOT and local governing entities, WACOG supports La Paz and Mohave Counties' transportation needs by playing a leading role in the planning, monitoring, and the implementation of a five-year priority program which identifies and lists local highway construction projects for federal funding. Additionally, WACOG assists the Arizona Department of Transportation with planning transportation projects.

The organization also works with ADOT to assist local governments in requesting, or updating changes, in urban boundaries, functional classification, and federal aid system designation as well as monitoring activities, presenting progress reports, and informing ADOT of any major developmental activities that could influence transportation issues and decisions.

WACOG provides coordinated planning and participation for regional transit studies, tri-state transit studies, highway improvement planning, highway and population data collection, and projections as well as the purchasing and operational funding for transit vehicles.



Community Services

As the federally designated Community Action Program (CAP), the operative word for WACOG Community Service activities is COMMUNITY. Perhaps more than any other arm of WACOG, it is this function - with its plethora of services and programs - that wears the most human - and humane - of faces. Male, female, infant, adult, senior... anyone who needs assistance and who falls under the eligibility and residency guidelines can receive help from WACOG's Community Services.

Leading the way to reduce the ramifications of poverty, Community Services –and specifically WACOG as the service area's CAP – was established to mobilize resources to help families transition out of poverty.

All areas of WACOG utilize regional needs assessments and community input to identify the needs of the area's low-income and vulnerable residents and is instrumental in the development and implementation of a Community Action

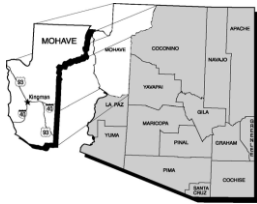
Plan that meets those needs.

WACOG Service Area

The Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG) has a tri-county service area (La Paz, Mohave, and Yuma Counties) encompassing the western portion of the State of Arizona. Within this region are ten growing incorporated towns and cities: City of Bullhead, Town of Colorado City, City of Lake Havasu, City of Kingman, Town of Parker, Town of Quartzsite, City of San Luis, City of Somerton, Town of Wellton, and City of Yuma.

The service area encompasses 23,502 square miles (approximately 21% of Arizona) making the region larger than Massachusetts, Maryland, and the District of Columbia combined. The area is not only physically large, but as a result of the Grand Canyon, in order to reach isolated parts of Mohave County, travel through Las Vegas, Nevada and Utah are necessary. Each of the three counties is bordered on the west by the Colorado River.

Mohave County



La Paz County



Yuma County

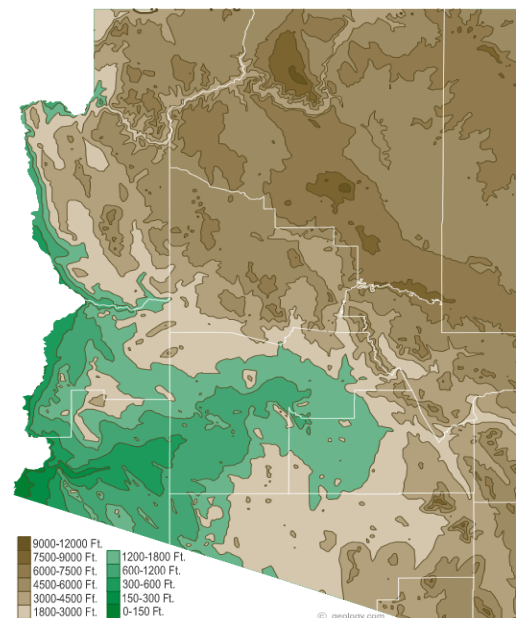


This service region was defined, through Executive Order 70-2, by Arizona Governor Jack Williams in 1970 in response to federal planning requirements that addressed the need for long-range planning and closer coordination of program activities by governments at all levels. The area has not only a diverse population, but also a wide variety of elevations and climates that impact programs and services.

State of Arizona: District Map



State of Arizona: Elevation Map



Description of Population

Population

Population Trends

The WACOG service region has a growing number of year-round residents with a significant number of elderly, children, disabled, and low-income residents. In most communities, the demand for services and programs far outweighs the funding and availability of services.

Additionally, regional infrastructure is strained with large influxes of seasonal and winter visitors. La Paz County receives an estimated 400,000 winter visitors, the majority of which are 60+ years of age, each year; while Yuma County is the winter home to approximately 85,000 winter visitors and 22,300 seasonal crop harvesting workers.^{8, 9, 10}

POPULATION: DISTRIBUTION, GROWTH & PROJECTIONS

	1990	2000	2007	2010	2015	2020
LA PAZ COUNTY	13,844	19,715	20,046	20,549	24,070	25,487
MOHAVE COUNTY	93,497	155,032	190,623	199,177	252,706	281,668
YUMA COUNTY	106,895	160,026	185,658	190,526	246,260	271,361
SERVICE REGION	214,236	334,773	396,327	410,252	523,036	578,516

Source: 1990 and 2000 Census, 2005-2007 ACS, 2006-2010 ACS and Arizona Department of Economic Security, Research Administration, Population Statistics Unit, 12/01/06.

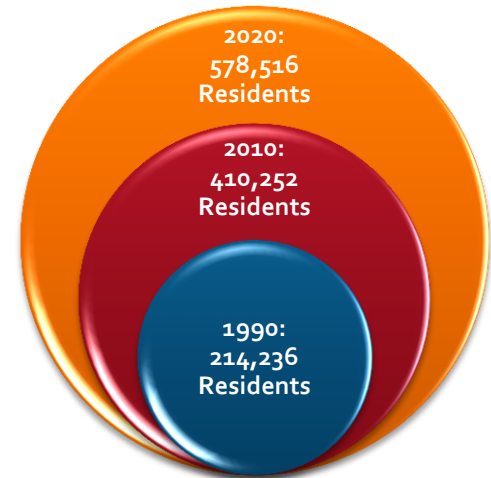
The population in the **WACOG service region surged 92%** from 1990 to 2010 and is projected to see continued growth.

While the United States is projected to have a 23% population growth from 2010 to 2020. The WACOG service area is **expected to have an even more significant 41% increase in its residents, 41%** (AZ- 41%); **78% larger than the U.S. trend.**

The anticipated population surge in WACOG's service area follows a 23% increase in residents from 2000 to 2010 (U.S. – 8%; AZ – 22%) and a 56% increase in population from 1990 to 2000 (U.S. – 13%; AZ 40%).

Specific areas within the tri-county area that are experiencing significant growth are Mohave County and south Yuma County. In Mohave County, from 1990 to 2010, Golden Valley experienced an 86% growth, Kingman 38%, Lake Havasu 25%, and Bullhead City 18%. Areas expected to see significant increases in residents from 2010 to 2020 are: Lake Havasu (64%), Kingman (52%), Mohave Valley (33%), Dolan Springs (30%), Bullhead City (27%), and the very geographically isolated northern portion of Mohave County (38%; includes Colorado City and Kaibab).^{11, 12}

WACOG SERVICE REGION POPULATION GROWTH



Colorado River



⁸ Lobeck, Joyce. Yuma Daily Sun, "Winter visitors leave behind boon to Yuma," April 1, 2011.

⁹ Beard, Betty. Yuma Daily Sun, "New law gives labor-starved Yuma more challenges," December 24, 2007.

¹⁰ Rookhuyzen, David. Cronkite News Service, "Quartzsite gearing up for swap meets," November 30, 2010.

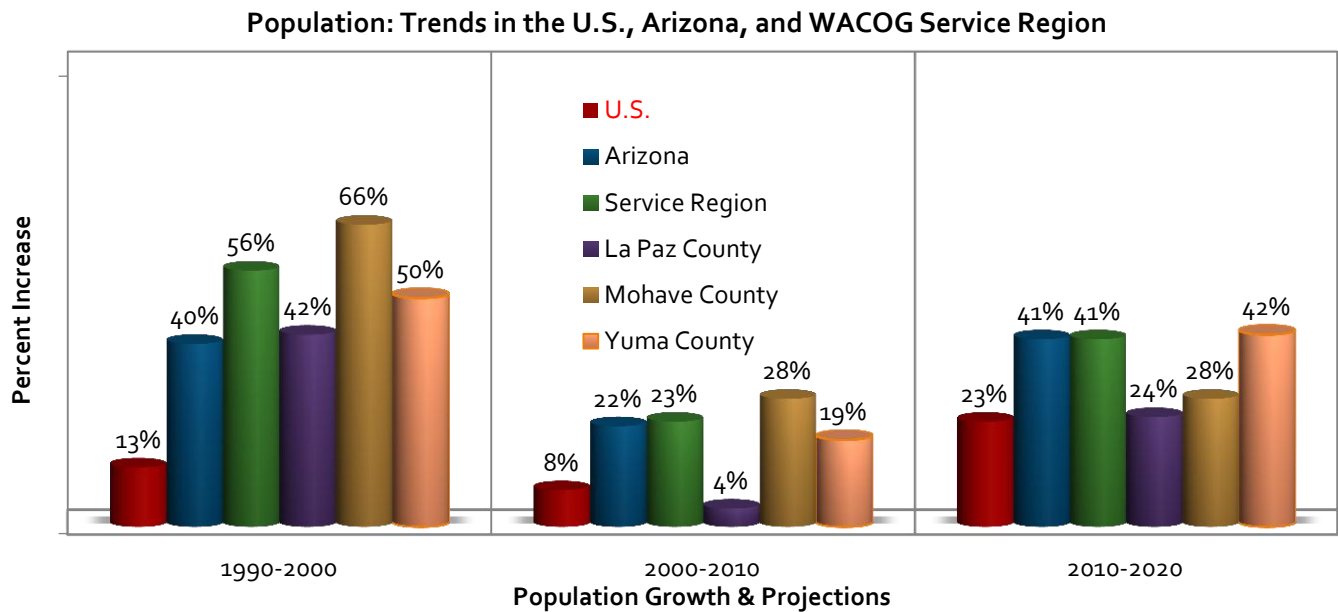
¹¹ Arizona Department of Economic Security, Research Administration, Population Statistics Unit, approved: 12/01/06.

¹² To reach some portions of northern Mohave County, due to the Grand Canyon, you must drive to Las Vegas, Nevada, then back to Arizona, then up into Utah, and then back down into Arizona.

In south Yuma County, the City of San Luis experienced a 466% surge in population from 1990 to 2010 and is projected to have an additional 85% growth in residents from 2010 to 2020. The City of Somerton had a 151% increase in population from 1990 to 2010 and is expecting a 26% growth in population from 2010 to 2020.¹¹

During the 1990-2010 time period, La Paz County saw a 42% increase in residents and is projected to experience an additional 24% increase in population from 2010 to 2020.¹¹

Additional population trends and projections for the region are located in the chart below.



Sources: 1990 and 2000 Census. ACS 2006-2010 data generated April 3, 2012. AZ DES, Research Administration, Population Statistics Unit, Release date: 12/01/06. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division Release Date: 12/16/09.

Race/Ethnic Background

Diversity is a key variable when describing the service area population’s racial/ethnic background. 73.5% of the residents are Hispanic or white. This is a prevalent trend throughout the region with variances ranging dramatically between communities. For example, in the City of San Luis, 93.4% of the residents are Hispanic while in the Town of Quartzsite and Lake Havasu City, 92.7% and 85.9% respectively, of the population is white.

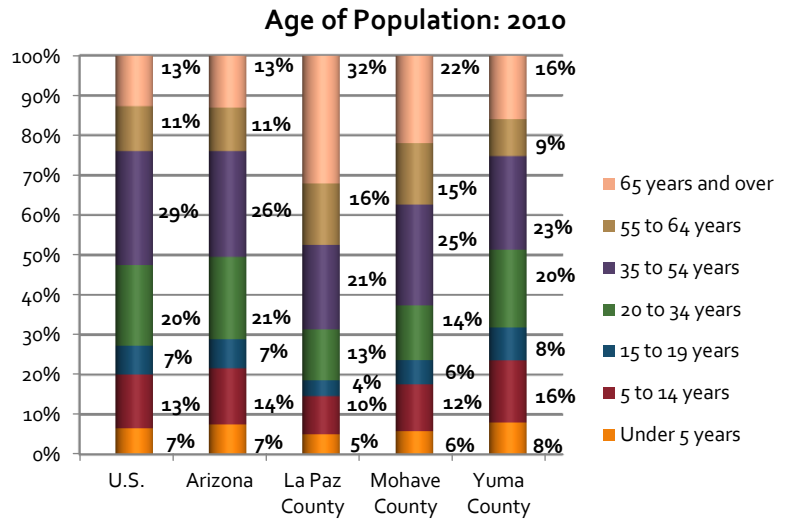
POPULATION: RACE/ETHNIC BACKGROUND: 2010

	U.S.	AZ	WACOG Region	La Paz County	Mohave County	Yuma County
	%	%	%	#	%	#
ALL ETHNICITIES/RACES	-	-	-	20,549	100%	199,177
WHITE	64.7%	58.7%	59.1%	12,933	62.9%	159,512
BLACK OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ALONE	12.2%	3.7%	1.2%	197	1.0%	6,682
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE ALONE	0.7%	4.1%	1.7%	2,356	11.5%	2,797
ASIAN ALONE	4.6%	2.6%	1.0%	164	0.8%	1,914
NATIVE HAWAIIAN/OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER ALONE	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	16	0.1%	261
SOME OTHER RACE ALONE	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	46	0.2%	94
TWO OR MORE RACES	1.8%	1.6%	1.6%	188	0.9%	4,267
HISPANIC OR LATINO	15.7%	29.0%	35.2%	4,649	22.6%	28,650

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (Tables DP05).

Age

WACOG’s service region also has a diverse population in relation to the age of the residents. The Census Bureau has identified La Paz County as having the oldest population in the nation, with communities such as the Town of Quartzsite (largest population base) where 1 out of 2 residents are 65+ years of age (U.S. – 13%; AZ – 13%) and the median age is 66.4. While in other communities, a significant portion of the population is under the age of 20 (Colorado City – 61%, Kaibab – 42%, San Luis – 40% and Somerton - 40%). Comparably, 27% of the U.S. and 29% of Arizona’s population is 20 years of age or younger.¹³



Source: U.S. Census, 2006-2010 ACS (Table: DP05).

MEDIAN AGE

The median ages in the WACOG region are: La Paz County – 52.5, Mohave County –46.3 and Yuma County – 33.2 (U.S. – 36.9; AZ – 35.5).

Income

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

High unemployment and a large number of jobs in retail, agriculture, and other service industries result in incomes throughout the region being significantly less than the national average.

Regionally, La Paz County has the lowest median household income that is only 62% of the national average, while Mohave County is 77% and Yuma County 78% of the nation’s norm.

PER CAPITA INCOME

Personal per capita income in La Paz County is 77% of the U.S. average, Mohave County is 79% and Yuma County is 67%. In one of the most economically stressed areas of the region and nation, **south Yuma County, the U.S. per capita income has not been as low (\$10,324) as this area since 1980; lagging the U.S. average by 30 years. The City of San Luis per capita income (\$7,868) lags the U.S. average by 32 years when the national per capita personal income was \$8,243 in 1978.**^{14, 15}

ECONOMIC INDICATOR: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	U.S.	AZ	La Paz County	Mohave County	Yuma County
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$51,914	\$50,448	\$32,147	\$39,785	\$40,340
% OF U.S. MEDIAN HH INCOME	-	97%	62%	77%	78%

Source: 2006-2010 ACS; Chart: Selected Economic Characteristics.

ECONOMIC INDICATOR: PER CAPITA INCOME

	U.S.	AZ	La Paz County	Mohave County	Yuma County
PER CAPITA INCOME	\$27,334	\$25,680	\$21,165	\$21,523	\$18,418
% OF U.S. PER CAPITA INCOME	-	94%	77%	79%	67%

Source: 2006-2010 ACS; Chart: Selected Economic Characteristics.

¹³ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2010 (Tables: DP05 and B01002).

¹⁴ Source: 2006-2010 ACS; Chart: Selected Economic Characteristics.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

INCOME DIVERSITY

A significant portion of the households in the region have incomes below \$25,000: La Paz – 37.9%, Mohave – 28.3%, and Yuma – 29.8%. Ranging 61% to 20% higher than the national average of 23.5% (AZ – 22.9%).¹⁶

Households with incomes above \$100,000 make up only a small portion of the service area: La Paz – 7%, Mohave – 9%, and Yuma – 10%. Ranging 67% to 52% lower than the national average of 21% (AZ – 19%).

POPULATION: HOUSEHOLD INCOME - 2010

	U.S.	Arizona	La Paz County	Mohave County	Yuma County
LESS THAN \$10,000	7%	7%	10%	7%	8%
\$10,000 TO \$14,999	5%	6%	10%	8%	8%
\$15,000 TO \$24,999	11%	11%	19%	14%	15%
\$25,000 TO \$34,999	11%	11%	17%	15%	14%
\$35,000 TO \$49,999	14%	15%	18%	19%	16%
\$49,999 TO \$74,999	19%	19%	13%	19%	19%
\$75,000 TO \$99,999	12%	12%	7%	9%	10%
\$100,000 TO \$149,999	12%	12%	5%	6%	7%
\$150,000 OR MORE	9%	7%	2%	3%	3%

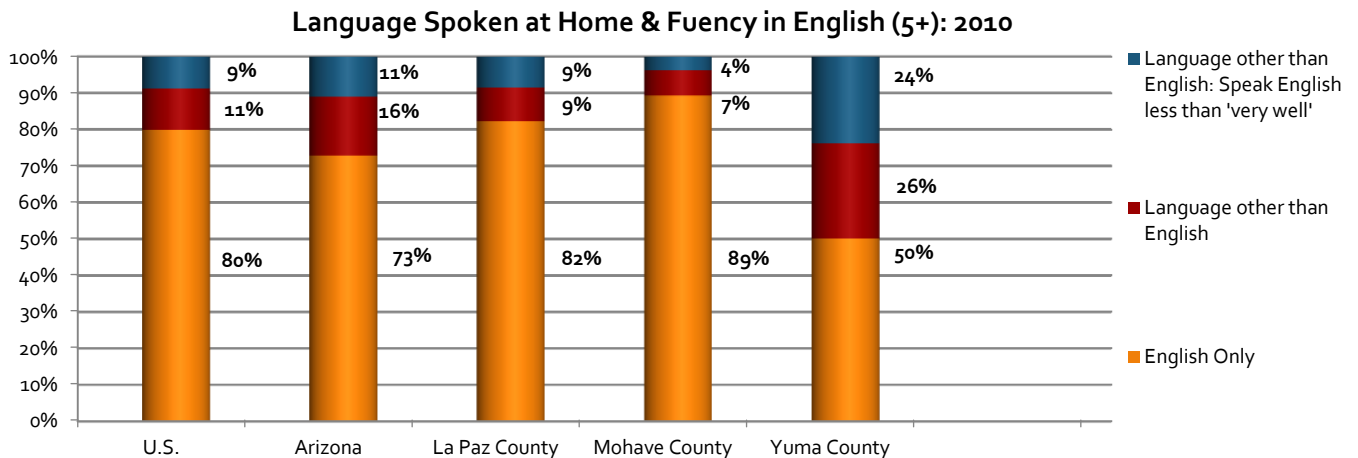
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, 2006-2010 (Table: DP03).

Language

English is the primary language spoken at home in the U.S. (80%), Arizona (73%), La Paz County (82%) and Mohave County (89%). While, in Yuma County, **1 in 2 people speak Spanish primarily at home** and 1 in 4 people speak English less than 'very well'.²⁰

It should also be noted that Yuma County has cities and towns with a significant percentage (34%-88%) of residents utilizing Spanish as their primary language for verbal communication as well as **1 in 2 community members are not fluent in English.**

A breakdown of language usage and fluency for the U.S., Arizona, and the tri-county service area is available in the chart below.



Source: U.S. Census, 2006-2010 ACS (Table: DP02).

Living Situation

The majority of households in the tri-county area are families: La Paz – 64%, Mohave – 67% and Yuma – 77% (U.S. – 67%; AZ- 66%) with single parent households making up: La Paz – 18%, Mohave – 12% and Yuma – 17% (U.S. – 14%; AZ – 15%) of all family households in the service area.¹⁷

Throughout the region, nonfamily households constitute 29% of the homes with 80% composed of people living alone; of

¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2010 (Tables: DP03).

¹⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2010 (Table: DP02).

which 35% are 65 years of age or older.¹⁷

Households with children under 18 years of age make up another large portion of the households: La Paz – 22%, Mohave – 21%, and Yuma – 38% (U.S. – 31%; AZ – 31%).¹⁷

Household Size

The average household size in both La Paz (1.98) and Mohave (2.44) Counties are less than the U.S. (2.59) and Arizona (2.63) averages. Yuma County household size (2.65) is slightly larger than both the national and state norms.¹⁷

Education Levels

President Obama’s 2020 goal for the nation to once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world requires 48%-60% of the population ages 25 to 34 to have some type of postsecondary education.¹⁸

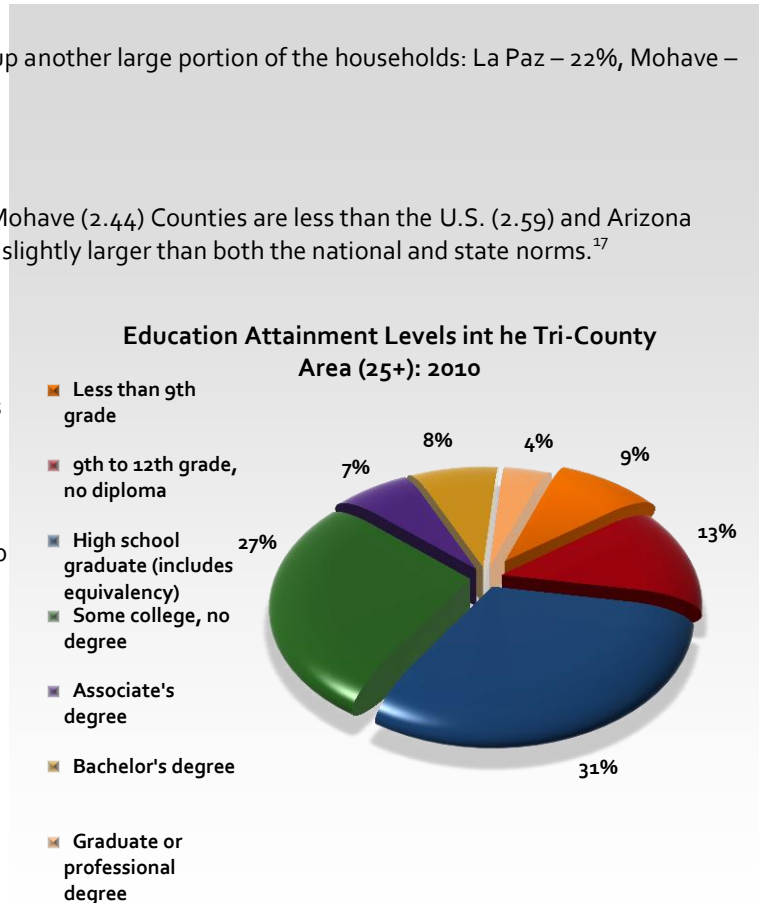
The Arizona Board of Regents has established the 2020 Vision targeting 30% of adults in Arizona to have a Bachelor’s degree.¹⁹

Approximately 1 out of 10 residents in the WACOG service region has a baccalaureate or higher degree. This is 57% of the national, and 54% of the Arizona averages.

Incorporated areas with high levels of adults (25+) that have not achieved a high school degree are:

- La Paz County – Poston (63%) and Wenden (57%);
- Mohave County – Cane Beds (53.2%) and Littlefield (59%); and
- Yuma County – San Luis (55%) and Somerton (48%).

Comparably, the average percent of the residents without a high school diploma, or its equivalency, is 15% in both the nation and Arizona.²⁰



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (Table: DP02).

POPULATION: EDUCATION ATTAINMENT FOR RESIDENTS 25+ YEARS OF AGE - 2010

	U.S.	Arizona	La Paz County	Mohave County	Yuma County
LESS THAN 9TH GRADE	6.2%	6.6%	10.6%	4.4%	9.2%
9TH TO 12TH GRADE, NO DIPLOMA	8.7%	8.4%	12.5%	12.7%	13.0%
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE (INCLUDES EQUIVALENCY)	29.0%	25.1%	34.1%	34.6%	31.4%
SOME COLLEGE, NO DEGREE	20.6%	25.5%	28.6%	29.5%	27.4%
ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	7.5%	8.0%	5.2%	6.9%	6.7%
BACHELOR'S DEGREE	17.6%	16.7%	5.7%	8.0%	8.2%
GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	10.3%	9.69%	3.3%	4.0%	4.2%
PERCENT BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER	27.9%	26.3%	9.0%	12.0%	13.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (Table: DP02).

¹⁸ White House, "Meeting the Nation's 2020 Goal: State Target for Increasing the Number and Percentage of College Graduates with Degrees," 3/8/11.

¹⁹ ABOR, 2020 Vision Overview. <http://azregents.edu>

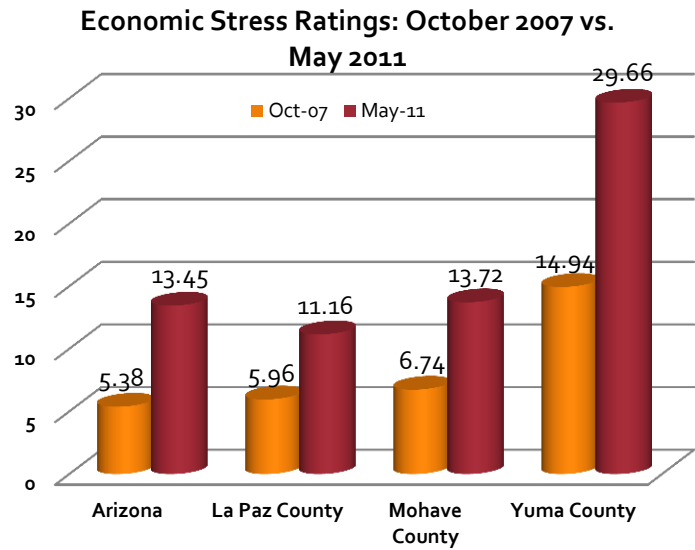
²⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2010 (Table: DP02).

Economic Indicator

ECONOMIC STRESS RATINGS

The WACOG service area has been and continues to be strongly impacted by the "Great Recession." Throughout 2010 and 2011, Yuma County has been repeatedly ranked as one of the most economically stressed counties in the nation, following behind neighboring Imperial County, California. Counties with a stress level over 11 are deemed to have a "stressed" economy. **Yuma County ranked the 2nd most stressed county in the nation**, in May 2011, with a stress level of 29.66 [up slightly from April 2011 and up 14.72 points from October 2007 (14.94)]. La Paz County was indexed at 11.16 up 5.2 points from October 2007 (5.96). Mohave County had a score of 13.72 up 6.98 points from October 2007.^{21, 22}

AP Stress rankings are based on unemployment, foreclosures and bankruptcy rates.

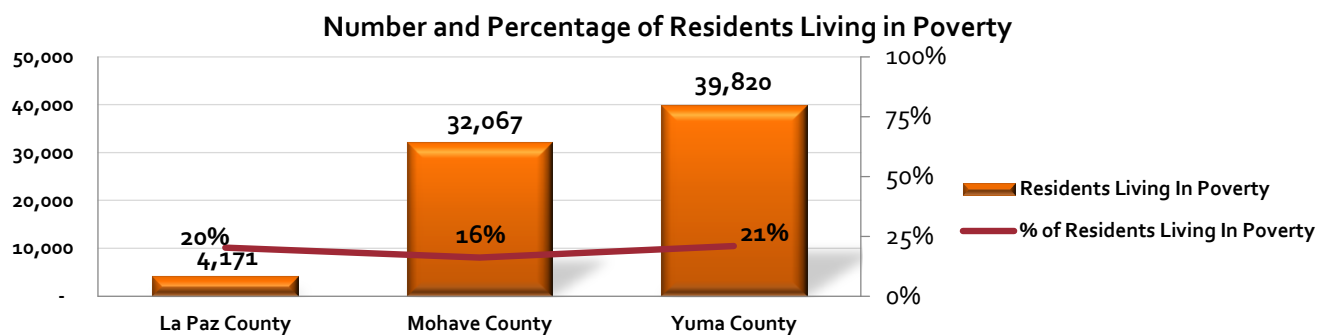


Source: AP Economic Stress Index: Measuring Financial Strain Across the U.S. – May 2011

POVERTY

From 2000 to 2010, the WACOG region's population grew 22%, while the number of residents living in poverty rose 55% from 34,589 to 76,059 people with a large percentage of children living in poverty: La Paz County- 36.4%; Mohave County – 24.7% and Yuma County – 30.7% (U.S. – 19.2%; AZ – 21.6%).²³

Nearly 1 in 4 grandparents that are living with their grandchildren in the tri-county area are living in poverty.² Additionally, a significant percent of grandparents living with their grandchildren are responsible for the children: La Paz 54%, Mohave 54%, and Yuma 56% (U.S.-54%; AZ- 57%).³ Approximately 1 out of 2 of these grandparents are living with grandchildren that are under the age of 6.⁴



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (Table: DP 03).

UNEMPLOYMENT

Historically unemployment has been a severe issue in Yuma County but the recent U.S. economic downturns have brought issues associated with unemployment to the national spotlight. The tri-county service region's unemployment rate

²¹ AP Economic Stress Index: Measuring Financial Strain Across the U.S. – May 2011 (Most current available data).

http://hosted.ap.org/specials/interactives/_national/stress_index/

²² Knaub, Mara. Yuma Daily Sun. *AP Study: Yuma Still Second Most-Stressed County*. July 11, 2011.

²³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census (Tables:DP-1and DP-3), 2006-2010 ACS (Tables: DP01 and DP03).

exceeded the national and state averages in 2011.

- La Paz County unemployment rate outpaced the U.S. average by 16% and the state rate by 1%;
- Mohave County unemployment rate outpaced the U.S. average by 24% and the state rate by 16%; and
- **Yuma County had an annual unemployment rate of 27.1%, 205% larger than the nation's rate and 185% larger than the state average. The highest historical U.S. unemployment rate, 25%, was during the great depression in 1932.**²⁴

ECONOMIC INDICATOR: 2011 UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

	U.S.	AZ	La Paz County	Town of Parker	Town of Quartzsite	Mohave County	Bullhead City	City of Kingman	Lake Havasu City	Yuma County	City of San Luis	City of Somerton	Town of Wellton	City of Yuma
ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	8.9%	9.5%	10.3%	9.6%	8.3%	11.0%	9.6%	11.5%	12.3%	27.1%	63.3%	39.2%	29.6%	18.1%
2011 HIGH	9.1%	10.2%	12.2%	11.3%	9.8%	12.2%	10.2%	13.0%	13.9%	30.9%	70.7%	43.7%	33.6%	20.6%
2011 LOW	8.5%	8.7%	9.1%	8.4%	7.2%	10.1%	9.0%	10.6%	11.0%	21.7%	47.6%	32.5%	23.8%	15.4%

Sources: AZ Workforce Informer, 2011 unemployment rates and labor force statistics (LAUS); run date – June 14, 2012; <http://data.workforce.az.gov>; Special Unemployment Report 2011, AZ Unemployment Statistics Program, prepared in cooperation between U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS and AZ Dept. of Admin., Employment & Population Statistics, CES/LAUS Unit. U.S. Department of Labor, BLS, Economic News Release, 2/29/12; and Labor Force Statistics from the CPS, data extracted on June 18, 2012.

In May 2011, Yuma County had the highest unemployment rate in the nation, edging neighboring Imperial County out of its long-standing No. 1 slot. The Yuma area's unemployment rate was 27.9 % in May 2011 with Imperial County, CA coming in at a close second at 27.7 %.²⁵

The City of San Luis, located in South Yuma County, has a 63.3% annual unemployment rate and **consistently ranks as one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation.**

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²⁴ The Econ Review. U.S. Unemployment Rate Hits 25%. <http://www.econreview.com/events/ur1932b.htm>

²⁵ Lobeck, J. Yuma Sun, "Yuma area now has highest unemployment rate in nation," June 29, 2011.

Community Strengths & Assets

The WACOG service area has a wide range of community strengths and assets ranging from a variety of different cultures to a diverse geographic terrain. This section of the needs assessment provides information on community strengths and assets that were identified from community input during the development of the WACOG CAP Community Needs Assessment.

Community Input

Community input is a vital component in determining community strengths, assets and needs. Three methods were utilized to acquire this type of information: Key Informant Interviews, a Community Needs Assessment Survey, and three Focus Groups.

Key Informant Interviews

Key Informant Interviews are a method of obtaining more in-depth information from key community stakeholders. This methodology was utilized as an effective tool for seeking the input and advice of people who are regularly involved in addressing community challenges.

In relation to community strengths and assets, the key informants were asked about crucial community strengths that help people be healthy and economically self-sufficient. A listing of Key Informants and key informant questions is available in the appendix (pp. 37-38).

Community Needs Assessment Survey

The WACOG Community Needs Assessment Survey is a state-wide survey being conducted by all Arizona Community Action Programs in State Fiscal Year 2012 (SFY-12). The survey is focused on identifying respondents': (a) Family needs; (b) Barriers to meeting basic needs; (c) Housing conditions; (d) Use of WACOG services; and (e) Demographic information.

Targeted survey respondents were tri-county low-income and vulnerable residents. Surveys were distributed at Senior Centers, the Community Action Board and County Advisory Council meetings, community organizations and at WACOG offices. Survey respondents by geographic area: La Paz County – 99, Mohave County – 102 and Yuma County – 68g.

As copy of the survey is available for review in the appendix (pp. 34-40).

Focus Groups

Three Focus Groups, one in each county served, were utilized to confirm the strengths, assets, needs, and gaps in service that had been identified using secondary data sources, key informant interviews, and survey results. In addition, the Focus Groups were able to provide additional information about barriers to accessing services as well as specific suggestions for improving delivery of service and regional priorities.

A listing of Focus Group participants, questions, and the Focus Group presentation are located in the appendix (pp. 40-45).

Identified Community Strengths and Assets

Community strengths and assets identified during Key Informant Interviews, the Community Needs Assessment Survey, and Focus Groups centered on local collaborations, education opportunities, major industries, health care, residents, and

services for vulnerable populations.

Collaborations

Collaborations, coalitions, and partnerships are seen as important community strengths throughout the region. Items that were highlighted are:

- Medical collaborations to meet the needs of local residents are making strides in communities that are Medically Underserved Areas (MUA)/Medically Underserved Populations (MUP);
- The advancement of partnerships between early childhood providers;
- The formation of coalitions in response to the geographic remoteness from metropolitan areas;
- Marine Corp Air Station (MCAS) and Yuma Proving Grounds doing more social outreach in communities; and
- Collaborative efforts allowing agencies to respond to community needs quickly by working together to achieve crisis resolution

Education Opportunities

Early childhood and adult education opportunities were identified as community strengths and assets. Early Childhood Education (ECE) has the ability to have a major impact on a child's formal education, especially during this crucial time period in which the development of mental functions is being established. Studies link ECE to increases in school readiness for primary school and act as an important predictor of early school achievement.²⁶

Low educational achievement is linked with lower incomes, less disposable incomes, reduced consumer purchasing power, fewer qualified workers to fill increasingly complex positions, more families living in poverty, fewer residents with health insurance coverage, greater demands on public services and benefits, lower per-capita tax revenue and a reduced ability to attract quality businesses to area.²⁷ As identified during the community input process, existing and expanding adult basic, workforce training and postsecondary education opportunities are instrumental to residents and communities thriving.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

HEAD START PROGRAMS

The local Head Start programs are the backbone of comprehensive early childhood education in the tri-county area for young children. In Academic Year 2010-2011, the WACOG Head Start program was funded to serve 1,060 3 to 5 year-olds (74% full-time; 36% part-time) or 19% of the 3 to 5 year-olds living in poverty in the service area, with 1 center in La Paz County, 8 in Mohave County, and 10 in Yuma County. Other Head Start providers in the WACOG service area are:

- (a) La Paz County - The Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Head Start program, which serves approximately 180 tribal and non-tribal 3 to 4 year olds;
- (b) Mohave County - The Learning Center for Families, which provides an early Head Start program to 72 pregnant women, infants and toddlers in the geographically isolated portion of northwest Arizona, or 4% of the children under the age of three living in poverty in Mohave County; and
- (c) Yuma County - The Migrant Head Start program administered by Chicanos Por La Causa, which provides the Early Head Start program to 854 children, or 38% of the children under the age of 3 living in poverty in Yuma County.^{28, 29}

²⁶ Rural Education Action Project, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University. <http://reap.stanford.edu>

²⁷ Hart, B. and Eisenbarth Hager, C.J. Arizona State University, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, "Dropped? Latino Education and Arizona's Economic Future," April 2012.

²⁸ The Learning Center for Families, Annual Report 2009-2010

²⁹ Neyoy, Cesar. Bajo El Sol, *Early Head Start reaches out to homebound children*, April 30, 2011.

QUALITY FIRST

Through First Things First, in 2009, Arizona started its first state-wide voluntary improvement and rating system for child care programs serving children ages birth through five. The Quality First program was established to ensure that all Arizona kids have access to the quality early learning opportunities that will help them arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed. A Quality First designed program is a safe, healthy environment with highly educated teachers, classrooms, and materials that stimulate kids at different stages of learning; and low staff to child ratios so that kids get the attention and support they need.

In 2010, the WACOG service area had 38 Quality First Programs; 19 centers and 19 home sites.^{30, 31}

Adult Education

Adult basic education in basic reading, writing and mathematics skills, GED preparation classes, and English Language Acquisition courses are offered by:

- La Paz County – Adult Literacy Plus of Southwestern Arizona and La Paz Career Center;
- Mohave County – Mohave Community College and Yavapai College Adult Education;
- Yuma County - Adult Literacy Plus of Southwestern Arizona and South Yuma County Adult Education Consortium.³²

Training opportunities are available in each of the three service area counties with multiple One-Stop Service Center locations providing free services that include: job placement, skills assessment, job training, career counseling, resume development as well as other forms of assistance to aid residents in acquiring livable wage jobs.

Additionally, local colleges, in collaboration with Arizona’s four-year institutions, are offering expanded pathways for associate, bachelor, and graduate degrees to residents. Allowing the region’s geographically isolated residents the ability to attain higher education levels that would otherwise not be available.

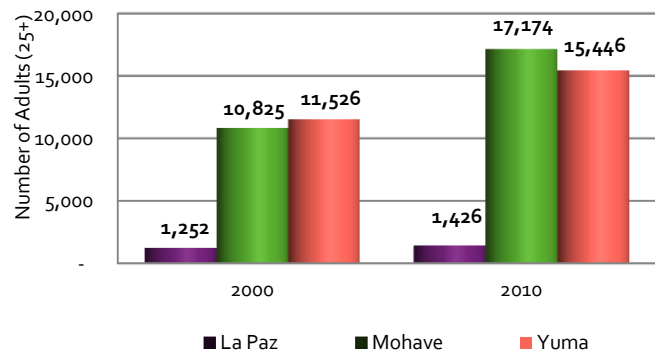
61% of all jobs in Arizona will require some postsecondary training beyond high school by 2018, making education for adults of vital importance in the tri-county area to ensure local economies and residents thrive.³³

Throughout the WACOG region, opportunities for adults to attain a higher level of education are perceived positively. From 2000 to 2010, the percent of the population age 25 and older with a Baccalaureate has risen 1% (2000 – 11%; 2010 – 12%) in the tri-county area (U.S. increase 4% [2000-24%; 2010 – 28%]; AZ increase 2% [2000-24%; 2010 – 26%]). Resulting in 10,443 additional adults with bachelor degrees living in local communities.

Specifically, there was an increase of 174 (14%) adults in La Paz County with Baccalaureates, 6,349 (59%) in Mohave County, and 3,920 (34%) in Yuma County.

As noted during key informant interviews, there has been an important increase in the adult Hispanic population education attainment levels. Rising 2%, from 2000 to 2010, in the WACOG service area. Resulting in a 124% increase in

Adults with Bachelor Degrees: 2000 vs. 2010



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (Table: S1501) and 2000 Census (Table: P148H).

³⁰ First Things First. La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council and Yuma Regional Partnership Council, Needs and Assets Reports 2010.

³¹ First Things First 2010 Needs and Assets Report, Yuma Regional Partnership Council.

³² Arizona Department of Education, Adult Education Classes, May 1, 2012. <http://www.azed.gov/adult-ed-ged/2012/05/01/adult-education-classes/>

³³ Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, *Help wanted: projections of jobs and education requirements through 2018*, June 2010.

the number of Hispanic adults with Baccalaureates (2000 – 2,431; 2010 – 5,449).

Major Industries

Existing major industries are prized for bringing much needed jobs and value to the region's communities.

- 7,381 residents made up the civilian labor force in La Paz County as of March 2012, with major industries centered on public administration, retail trade, educational services, tourism, and agriculture.^{34, 35}
- Mohave County had 84,788 residents comprising its civilian labor force with leading industries consisting of manufacturing, transportation, distribution, logistics, energy, and IT/data storage.^{34,36}
- The civilian labor force in Yuma County was 85,736 residents with agriculture, military, retail trade, and tourism comprising the major industries.^{34, 37}

Health Care

Health care community strengths and assets noted during community input focused on local hospitals and their efforts to improve medical care, collaborations focused on health care issues, and mental health resources.

HOSPITALS

Local hospitals' commitment to bringing experienced doctors to the service region was seen as a community strength and the 7 hospitals (La Paz - 1; Mohave – 5; and Yuma – 1) in the tri-county area are considered community assets.³⁸

Additionally, it should be noted that Kingman Regional Medical Center (KRMC) is Arizona's first rural teaching hospital. Offering osteopathic residents and medical students the resources to successfully achieve their educational goals through KRMC's Graduate Medical Education (GME) program that includes: an Emergency Medicine Residency Program, a Family Medicine Residency Program, and Medical Student Externships.³⁹

COLLABORATIONS

Health care partnerships were identified as key to meeting the needs of local residents and are making strides in communities that are Medically Underserved Areas (MUA) or have Medically Underserved Populations (MUP). Specific collaborations highlighted during the community input process were:

- (a) Coordinated medical efforts between the Regional Center for Border Health, Sunset Clinic, and Yuma County Health Department that are making a tremendous impacts on the health of the community; and
- (b) The BHHS Legacy Foundation's collaborations with local health care providers in Mohave County that are making a positive impact on improving community health through increased access, health education, and workforce preparation.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

The Arizona Department of Health Services/Division of Behavioral Health Services (ADHS/DBHS) contracts with community-based organizations, known as Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHAs), to administer behavioral health services throughout the State. RBHAs function in a fashion similar to a health maintenance organization.

³⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Labor force Data by County, not seasonally adjusted, February 2011-March 2012. <http://www.bls.gov/lau/laucntycur14.txt>

³⁵ La Paz Economic Development Corporation. <http://www.lapazedc.com/#>

³⁶ Mohave County Economic Development, <http://www.mohavedevelopment.org/Mohave-Data-Center-Leading-Industries.aspx>

³⁷ Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation. <http://www.greateryuma.org/yumacounty.html>

³⁸ Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Primary Care Area Program, Arizona Primary Care Area Statistical Profiles. <http://www.azdhs.gov/hsd/profiles/index.htm>

³⁹ Kingman Regional Medical Center, <https://www.azkrmc.com>. Mohave County Economic Development, <http://www.mohavedevelopment.org>.

The two RBHAs serving the tri-county service area are: Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Health Authority (NARBHA) and Cempatico Behavioral Health of Arizona.

NARBHA has multiple outpatient service locations throughout Mohave County: City of Kingman - 3, Bullhead City - 2, Lake Havasu City - 1, and Littlefield - 1.

Cempatico Behavioral Health of Arizona contracts with 14 local providers for behavioral health services in 11 Yuma County and 3 in La Paz County.

Residents

Throughout the community input process, local residents’ resiliency, family support, sense of neighbor and community support, cultural diversity, and community-wide efforts for a healthier lifestyle were highlighted.

For example, in 2009, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) ranked Yuma County 2nd on its list of the 10 fattest cities in America stating that more than 2/3 of the population in Yuma is either overweight or obese, and when polled 29% residents admitted that they had not exercised in the past month. The community response to this designation was the development was a county-wide movement with annual weight loss challenges that resulted in almost 950 residents participating.^{40, 41}

This sense of community spirit and resident support is seen throughout the service region in fundraisers for families that are in hardship, community improvement efforts and multi-generational families working together to raise productive members of society.

Services for Vulnerable Populations

Services for vulnerable residents that were centered on: senior programs, employment assistance, housing support, nutritional resources, and meeting basic needs were noted as community assets.

SENIOR PROGRAMS

26% of the population in the WACOG service area are seniors 60 years of age or older. This is a significantly larger percentage (45%) than the U.S. and Arizona averages. Additionally, regional senior program infrastructure is strained with large influxes of elderly

winter visitors. La Paz County receives an estimated 400,000 annual winter visitors, the majority of which are 60+ years of age; while Yuma County is the winter home to approximately 85,000 annual winter visitors.^{8, 10}

In State Fiscal Year 2011 (SFY-11), WACOG was able to assist 6,905 seniors with a variety of supportive senior services that contributed in ensuring they maintained their independent living situations.⁴²

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) entities were noted as a community asset for their efforts in improving long-term employment outcomes for tri-county residents through: skill assessment, job search and placement assistance, career counseling, adult education, training services, post-secondary vocational education, vocational education activities available to school dropouts, vocational rehabilitation, case management, supportive services, job seeking assistance and preparation to join the work force.

POPULATION: RESIDENTS 60 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER

	U.S.	AZ	Region	La Paz County	Mohave County	Yuma County
NUMBER OF ADULTS 60+ YEARS OF AGE			107,895	8,646	59,394	39,855
% OF TOTAL POPULATION 60+	18%	18%	26%	42%	30%	21%

Source: 2006-2010 ACS (Chart: DP05).

⁴⁰ Fenger, D. Yuma Daily Sun, "945 join weight loss challenge in Yuma," 10/28/09.

⁴¹ Romero, Richard, Yuma Daily Sun, "Yumans challenged to lose the pounds," 2/2/11.

⁴² WACOG CSBG ROMA Report SFY-2011.

WIA programs and services are accessible through the One-Stop Delivery System. There are 3 comprehensive One-Stop Center locations (1 in each county) and 8 affiliate sites (La Paz – 1; Mohave 5; and Yuma – 1) in the region.

HOUSING SUPPORT

Community input indicated that housing supports throughout the WACOG service area are crucial to the community. Specifically noted were: homelessness prevention (rent/mortgage payment assistance), utility assistance, home repair assistance, home weatherization services, and foreclosure counseling.

During SFY 2011, WACOG was able to provide:

- Emergency homelessness prevention assistance to 381 families. This was only 52% of families requesting assistance (381/789).⁴²
- Emergency fuel or utility payments to 5,237 residents.⁵
- Emergency home repair to 238 residents.⁴²
- 523 families received assistance home weatherization.⁷
- Foreclosure counseling to 381 households.

NUTRITION RESOURCES

Available nutritional resources are seen as vital to addressing the most basic of needs of vulnerable residents.

WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

WIC continues to be an important food and nutrition program designed to help pregnant women and families with young children. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides nutrition education, nutritious foods, breastfeeding support and information.

While the exact number of residents served by the WIC program throughout the service region is not available, Yuma County indicates that 8,600 residents are served each month by this program.⁴³

FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCHESES

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is the Federally-assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions that provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act which was signed by President Harry Truman in 1946.

This program continues to provide a significant number of students with needed meals in the tri-county area. As of October 2011, 79% of the students in La Paz County, 63% in Mohave County, and 73% in Yuma County were approved for free or reduced-price lunches (AZ – 57%).

FOOD BANKS

Local food banks are vital to addressing food insecurity of income challenged residents. Food ranked in the top 5 of family needs, in all 3 counties, of survey respondents. Millions of Americans are struggling with hunger many of which are hard-working adults, children, and seniors who simply cannot make ends meet and are forced to go without food for several meals or even days.⁴⁴

There are 21 food providers in the tri-county region (La Paz – 2; Mohave – 12; and 7 – Yuma County) working to address this basic necessity of vulnerable residents.^{45, 46}

⁴³ Yuma County Public Health Services District. <http://www.co.yuma.az.us>

⁴⁴ Feeding America, Hunger Facts. <http://feedingamerica.org>

⁴⁵ Association of Arizona Food Bank (AAFB)s, 2011 Food Provider Directory. <http://www.azfoodbanks.org>

Community Needs

Under the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) program, Community Action Agencies throughout the nation use funds to provide services and activities that address employment, education, better use of available income, housing, nutrition, emergency services and/or health to combat the central causes of poverty.

Community input during the WACOG CAP Community Needs and Assets Assessment process identified a clear concern about providing the most basic of services to the region's large population base of low-income and vulnerable residents. State funding reductions have recently minimized or eliminated some vital programs.

In addition, throughout the community input process the symbiotic relationships between the community needs were clearly defined. For example, the economic development and livable wage issues have a strong relationship with housing affordability and homeownership, educational needs have a strong relationship with the affordability and availability of health care to community members and the overall concept of a 'Livable Community,' and the relationship between community outreach and involvement is tied to improving and maintaining service

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) Funds

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has focused their American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funds in Arizona on making a meaningful down payment on the nation's energy and environmental future. The Recovery Act reflects a broad range of clean energy projects, from energy efficiency and the smart grid to transportation, carbon capture and storage, and geothermal energy. Through these investments, Arizona's businesses, universities, non-profits, and local governments are creating quality jobs today and positioning Arizona to play an important role in the new energy economy of the future.

As a part of this effort, the Arizona Department of Commerce awarded DOE funding to WACOG for the weatherization of low-income residents' homes and through a competitive process (1 out of 3 in Arizona) WACOG was awarded funding to ensure long-term, ongoing energy cost savings by funding hybrid water heaters for low-income homeowners.

CSBG National Goals

CSBG funds must contribute to the achievement of one or more of the six CSBG goals developed by the National CSBG Monitoring and Assessment Task Force. Those six goals are:

- Low-income people become more self-sufficient;
- The conditions in which low-income people live are improved;
- Low-income people own a stake in their community;
- Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved;
- Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results; and
- Low-income people achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

Community Demand for WACOG Programs & Services

Families and Residents Served by WACOG

During the 2010/2011 state fiscal year (SFY-11), Western Arizona Council of Governments' Community Services Programs provided services to over 20,500 residents.⁴²

Of the 45,484 families (or approximately 133,426 residents) eligible for utility assistance and weatherization, WACOG was

⁴⁶ AAFB's Food Provider Directory is the largest database of emergency food options in Arizona. The Directory includes listings for food banks, pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and other facilities that distribute emergency food.

only able to serve:⁴⁷

- 12% (5,237) with utility assistance in SFY-11, equaling 18,093 persons of which; **8,232(46%) were children under the age of 18**; approximately **11% were disabled residents**, and 76% of families that were living in poverty.^{5,48}
- 1% (523) of financially eligible families were assisted with weatherization in SFY-11 equaling 1,363 persons of which 1,169 (86%) were disabled, 393 (29%) were children, and 459 (34%) were seniors.⁷

ELIGIBLE POPULATION: UTILITY ASSISTANCE, HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION & WEATHERIZATION

	La Paz	Mohave	Yuma	Total
FAMILIES ELIGIBLE FOR UTILITY ASSISTANCE	3,215	19,404	22,865	45,484
% OF TOTAL FAMILIES	50%	36%	43%	40%
FAMILIES ELIGIBLE FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION	1,577	9,520	12,579	23,676
% OF TOTAL FAMILIES	24%	18%	24%	21%
FAMILIES ELIGIBLE FOR WEATHERIZATION	3,215	19,404	22,865	45,484
% OF TOTAL FAMILIES	50%	36%	43%	40%

Source: 2006-2010 ACS (Table: DP03; AZ Department of Econ. Security, DAAS-Community Services, State Median Income Guidelines, updated: 9/30/11; AZ Community Action Association, Federal Poverty Level Guidelines, effective: 7/1/11-6/30/12; State of Arizona, HUD Income Guidelines, effective: 5/14/10; and estimates based on average 3 person family size.

Additionally, WACOG was only able to assist 2% (381) of financially eligible families (23,676) with homelessness prevention in SFY-11, equating to 1,260 persons of which, 604 (48%) were children under the age of 18, 11% were residents with a disability, and 83% of the families that had incomes below the poverty level.⁶

Over multiple State Fiscal Years, DOE ARRA funding allowed WACOG to weatherize approximately 1,150 and install 800 hybrid water heaters in low-income community members' homes.

WACOG also served a significant number of tri-county residents and their communities with a diverse array of programs and services in SFY-11.

- Assisted 244 residents with obtaining employment;⁴²
- Assisted 45 people with tax preparation assistance focused on tax credit eligibility determination;⁴²
- 5,555 residents received assistance with enrolling in telephone lifeline and/or energy discount programs;⁴²
- 486 low-income resident homes in the region were preserved or improved through construction, weatherization or rehabilitation;
- positively increased 3 community assets, services and facilities preserved as a result of a change in law, regulations and policies which resulted in improvements in quality of life and assets;⁴²
- 261 community members participated in WACOG's community engagement efforts to improve conditions in the community;⁴²
- 11,906 volunteer hours were donated by community members to WACOG activities, of which 2,082 hours were donated by low-income ;⁴²
- Created 5 jobs and saved 10 jobs as a result of ARRA funding;⁴²
- 33 low-income residents participated in formal WACOG community organizations, boards or councils that provided input to decision-making and policy-setting through Community Action efforts;⁴²
- Worked with 27 community organizations to promote family and community outcomes;⁴²
- Staff spent 593 hours in training that was dedicated to increasing agency capacity to best achieve family and community outcomes;⁴²
- 6,905 seniors received assistance through WACOG to ensure they were able to maintain their independent living situation;⁴²
- 1,207 persons with disability were assisted with service to ensure they were able to maintain their independent living situation;⁴²
- 64 residents received emergency food;⁴²
- 5,237 individuals received emergency utility assistance;⁵
- 381 residents received emergency rent or mortgage assistance;⁶
- 238 people received emergency home repairs;⁴²

⁴⁷ Resident estimate based on county average family size.

⁴⁸ 100% of Federal Poverty Level: elderly person living alone with a gross annual of income of \$10,896 (or \$908/month) and 4 person family with a gross annual income of \$22,356 (or \$1,863/month).

- 8 residents received emergency clothing;⁴²
- 1,210 children obtained immunizations, medical, and dental care;⁴²
- 1,210 children’s health and physical development were improved as a result of adequate nutrition;⁴²
- 1,210 children participated in preschool activities to develop school readiness skills;⁴²
- 751 children who participated in preschool activities were developmentally prepared and ready to enter Kindergarten or 1st grade;⁴²
- 257 parents exhibited improved family parenting skills;⁴² and
- WACOG provided 31,435 rides to residents.⁴²

Community Needs Assessment Survey

The WACOG Community Needs Assessment Survey focused on identifying respondents’: (a) Demographic information; (b) Family needs; (c) Barriers to meeting basic needs; (d) Housing conditions; and (e) Use of WACOG services.

Targeted survey respondents were tri-county low-income and vulnerable residents. Surveys were distributed at Senior Centers, the Community Action Board and County Advisory Council meetings, community organizations and at WACOG offices. Survey respondents by geographic area were: La Paz County – 99, Mohave County – 102 and Yuma County – 689.

The average respondent was a married female Hispanic between the ages of 25-59 with a household income of \$20,000 or less with children in the home and the highest level of education attainment being a high school degree. Specific demographic information of respondents is provided below.

Survey Respondent Demographics

The average respondent to the Community Needs Assessment Survey was a married female Hispanic between the ages of 25-59 with a household income of \$20,000 or less had children in the home with the highest level of education attainment being a high school degree. Specific demographic information of respondents is provided below.

CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLDS

Of the 890 respondents, 701 (79%) had children and of those, 89% had their children currently live in their homes (La Paz – 89%; Mohave - 52%; and Yuma - 95%).

The average number of children in survey respondent homes was: La Paz – 2.69, Mohave – 1.74, and Yuma – 2.89.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN SURVEY RESPONDENTS’ HOMES

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8+		Totals	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
La Paz	19	35%	11	20%	6	11%	8	15%	7	13%	2	4%	1	2%	0	0%	54	100%
Mohave	20	57%	9	26%	5	14%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	35	100%
Yuma	105	19%	147	27%	100	18%	101	19%	49	9%	25	5%	7	1%	9	2%	543	100%

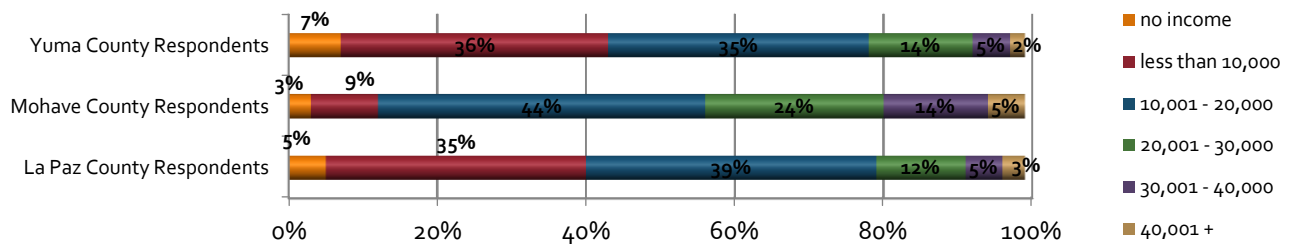
SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

Single parent households constituted 42% of the families surveyed in La Paz County, 22% in Mohave County, and 46% in Yuma County.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Regionally, 75% of survey respondents had a household income below \$20,000 (La Paz – 79%; Mohave – 56%; and Yuma – 78%) while only 3% had a household income above \$40,000 (La Paz – 3%; Mohave – 5%; and Yuma – 2%).

Survey Respondent Demographics: Household Income



EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

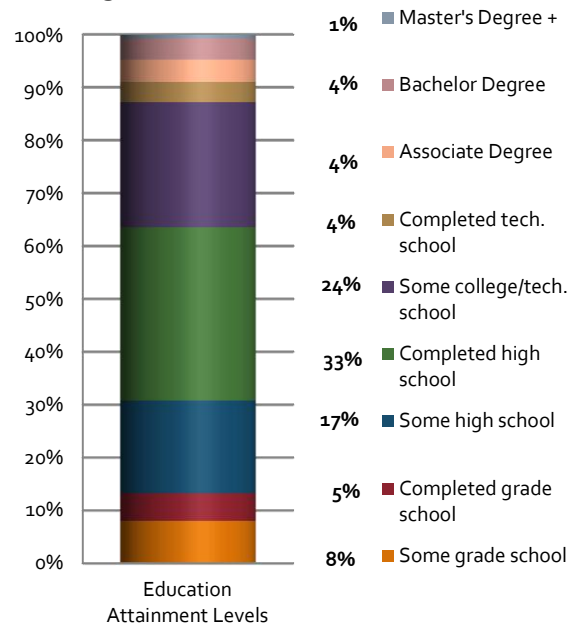
Education attainment is vital to the economic health of the WACOG service region. Low educational achievement is usually linked to low earning power resulting in a serious impediment to the future prosperity of all residents.²⁷

Of the 890 vulnerable tri-county residents surveyed:

- 30% did not have a high school diploma (U.S. – 15%; AZ – 15%; La Paz – 30%; Mohave – 12%; Yuma – 67%).²⁰
- 63% had an education attainment level of high school or less (U.S. – 44%; AZ – 40%; La Paz – 66%; Mohave – 41%; Yuma – 53%).²⁰
- 5% had a Baccalaureate or higher degree (U.S. – 28%; AZ – 26%; La Paz – 9%; Mohave – 9%; Yuma – 3%).²⁰

Lack of 'educational capital' is an important factor throughout the WACOG service region. This directly relates to parents' education level and ability to promote values and behaviors that translate into academic success. Which is different from parents' desire for their children to succeed educationally.²⁷

Survey Respondent Demographics: Highest Level of Education Attainment



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Needs of Local Families

Throughout the service area, survey respondents indicated family needs are centered around the most basic of necessities: food, housing, healthcare, and employment. The chart below identifies the top 5 family needs in each county.

FAMILY NEEDS: TOP 5 NEEDS IN EACH OF THE 3 COUNTIES

Top Family Needs	La Paz County	% of Responses	Mohave County	% of Responses	Yuma County	% of Responses
#1	Utility Assistance	63%	Housing Repairs	57%	Utility Assistance	85%
#2	Dental Healthcare	29%	Dental Healthcare	50%	Employment	21%
#3	Prescriptions	26%	Utility Assistance	36%	Housing & Dental Healthcare	16%
#4	Food & Employment	20%	Food	28%	Food & Clothing	14%
#5	Housing & Housing Repairs	19%	Healthcare & Prescriptions	22%	Medical Healthcare	9%

Barriers to Meeting Basic Needs

Primary barriers that families encountered when seeking assistance that were considered significant problems are:

- La Paz County - Cannot afford fees/cost of assistance (57%), not eligible/did not qualify (41%), health/disability (41%), did not know where to go for help (32%), and programs/services not available in my area (30%).
- Mohave County - Cannot afford fees/cost of assistance (45%), not eligible/did not qualify (29%), did not know where to go for help (24%), health/disability (22%), and programs/services not available in my area (19%).
- Yuma County - Cannot afford fees/cost of assistance (42%), not eligible/did not qualify (19%), did not know where to go for help (14%), health/disability (13%), and no transportation to/for assistance (12%).

FOOD INSECURITY

Food ranked in the top 5 family needs in all 3 counties of survey respondents. Food insecurity, for both the overall and child population, throughout the tri-county area is a serious issue. Food insecurity is USDA's measure identifying a lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food insecure children are those children living in households experiencing food insecurity.

FOOD INSECURITY: OVERALL AND CHILD POPULATIONS

	La Paz County	Mohave County	Yuma County	AZ	U.S.
Food Insecure: Overall Population	19.2%	19.1%	27.9%	17.4%	16.6%
% of Food Insecure residents that are SNAP Eligible	85%	65%	82%	62%	71%
% of Food Insecure residents that are NOT SNAP Eligible	15%	35%	18%	38%	29%
Food Insecure: Children	32.7%	30.8%	44.5%	28.8%	23.2%
% of Food Insecure children that are SNAP Eligible	89%	76%	73%	65%	77%
% of Food Insecure children that are NOT SNAP Eligible	11%	24%	27%	35%	23%
Average cost of a meal	\$2.40	\$2.40	\$2.32	\$2.43	\$2.54

Source: Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap, data retrieval date: 05/04/12.

There are 93,360 (La Paz – 3,840; Mohave – 36,770; and Yuma – 52,750) food insecure residents in the region of which 39,200 (La Paz – 1,230; Mohave – 13,230; and Yuma – 24,740) are children. The additional money required to meet these residents food needs equals: \$36,562,010 (La Paz - \$1,538,300; Mohave - \$14,761,230; Yuma- \$20,262,480).⁴⁹

In the 2011 Head Start Parent Survey, 13% (106/795) respondents indicated that they had gone without food in order to feed their children (Mohave County – 20%; Yuma County – 11%; and La Paz County – not available) with 48% of the respondents utilizing the local food banks and 59% of the families receiving food stamps to feed their families.

CHILD CARE BARRIERS

The primary barrier to child care services was cost (La Paz – 20%; Mohave – 8%; and Yuma – 22%).

Over the past 2 years, Arizona’s child care budget has been reduced \$75 million (37% overall) with a 5% rate reduction, increased co-pays, and wait lists.⁵⁰

The last 8 years (2002 – 2010) have shown significant increases in the cost of child care with less child care assistance. **Depending on the type of child care, the average increase for children under one ranged from 20% - 56%; one and two year olds 18% - 56%; and three, four and five year olds 18% - 56%.**

AVERAGE DAILY COST OF CHILD CARE: FULL-TIME⁽¹⁾

		Licensed Centers	Approved Family Child Care Homes	Certified Group Homes	Unregulated Homes
CHILDREN UNDER ONE:	2002	\$20.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$16.00
	2010	\$26.00	\$20.00	\$23.00	\$25.00
1 & 2 YEAR OLDS:	2002	\$19.00	\$17.00	\$18.00	\$16.00
	2010	\$25.00	\$20.00	\$22.00	\$25.00
3, 4, & 5 YEAR OLDS:	2002	\$17.75	\$17.00	\$18.00	\$16.00
	2010	\$22.00	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$25.00

⁽¹⁾ Median cost for 6 hours or more a day in La Paz, Mohave and Yuma Counties.

Sources: AZ Dept. of Economic Security, DERS, CCA, *Child Care Market Rate Survey 2010*; 1st Things 1st, 2010 Yuma Regional Needs and Assets Report.

HEALTHCARE BARRIERS

More than 1 out of 3 of the survey respondents in Yuma (36%) and La Paz (35%) Counties, and approximately 1 out of 4 respondents in Mohave County (23%) had one or more persons in their household with no health insurance of which the majority in La Paz and Mohave Counties had one person without healthcare insurance and in Yuma County, the majority of families had two or more people with no healthcare insurance.

The chart below details the number of survey respondents that had family members without insurance as well as the percent of families that were without health insurance.

HEALTH INSURANCE NEEDS: NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN SURVEY RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT HEALTHCARE

County	Number of People in Household Without Healthcare														Total # and % Families with no Insurance	Total # of Survey Respondents		
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7				8+	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			#	%
La Paz	22	62%	7	20%	2	6%	1	3%	1	3%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%	35 (35%)	99
Mohave	15	58%	8	31%	2	8%	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	26 (23%)	102
Yuma	94	38%	65	26%	48	19%	21	8%	12	5%	4	2%	2	1%	3	1%	249 (36%)	689

Of the 310 households with family members without healthcare insurance, a significant amount had children under the age of 18 (La Paz – 26%; Mohave - 12%; and Yuma – 83%) and adults over the age of 65 (La Paz – 23%; Mohave - 27%; and Yuma – 17%).

The primary barriers to healthcare were cost (La Paz – 45%; Mohave – 49%; and Yuma – 20%) and not having health

⁴⁹ Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap, data retrieval date: 05/04/12. <http://feedingamerica.org>

⁵⁰ Arizona Child Care Association (ACCA), *Brief Summary of the Status of the DES Child Care Subsidy*, May 14, 2011.

insurance (La Paz – 24%; Mohave – 21%; and Yuma – 25%).

PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER RATIOS

Limited Primary Care Providers (PCP) with extensive patients result in long wait lists and limited abilities to gain access to PCPs for residents' non-scheduled medical needs. Arizona is divided into Primary Care Areas (PCA) that identify where the local residences primarily obtain their healthcare. In the WACOG service region there are 22 designated Primary Care Areas (La Paz – 4; Mohave – 8; and Yuma County – 10).

In Arizona, the population to PCP ratio is 501 residents to every 1 provider (501:1). This ratio rises shockingly in the tri-county area.⁵¹

- In La Paz County, the population to PCP ratio is 891:1, with the 3 non-tribal PCAs having ratios ranging from a low of 1,408:01 to a high of 2,701:1. The Colorado River Indian Tribes' PCA ratio is 416:1.⁵¹
- In Mohave County, the population to PCP ratio is 618:1. 3 of 8 PCAs have ratios more than double the state average: Dolan Springs PCA – 7,410:1; Littlefield PCA – 2,626:1; and Fort Mohave PCA – 1,415:1 as well as 1 PCA having a 0:1 ratio with no Primary Care Providers in the area (Kaibab PCA).⁵¹
- In Yuma County, the population to PCP ratio is 753:1 and 5 of its 10 Primary Care Areas with population to provider ratios double the state average: Yuma North PCA – 6,450:1; Somerton PCA – 2,971:1; Wellton PCA – 2,859:1; Yuma East PCA – 2,385:1; and San Luis PCA – 1,482:1 as well as 4 other PCAs having a 0:1 ratio with no Primary Care Providers in the area (Yuma West, Dateland, Fort Yuma, and Cocopah).⁵¹

MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED AREAS/POPULATIONS

Medically Underserved Areas/Populations (MUA/MUP) are areas or populations designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as having: too few primary care providers, high infant mortality, high poverty, and/or high elderly population.

There are a number of federally designated MUA/Ps throughout the region. In La Paz County, 3 of 4 (75%) Primary Care Areas are designated either a MUA or a low-income MUP. 6 of the 8 (75%) Primary Care Areas in Mohave County and 2 of the 10 (20%) PCAs in Yuma County are designated either a MUA or a low-income MUP.⁵²

ORAL HEALTH

While First Things First is targeting new programs in some parts of the state to address limited access to preventive oral health care for young children, community input has clearly indicated a need for adequate dental care.

In many areas there is an inadequate number of dentists to serve the needs of the population ranging from children to adults. These limited dentists (La Paz – 1; Mohave – 163; and Yuma – 42) have led to high dentist per resident ratios in the WACOG service region. The average dentist rate per 100,000 residents is: La Paz County – 9.9; Mohave County – 20.8; Yuma County – 17.7 (AZ – 37.62).⁵³

70% of Community Needs Assessment Survey respondents did not receive dental care in the last year primarily due to either no insurance (La Paz – 72%; Mohave – 71%; and Yuma – 67%) and/or the cost (La Paz – 57%; Mohave – 65%; and Yuma – 48%)

EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

Unemployment is a significant issue in the tri-county area making the identification of barriers to employment a vital issue.

⁵¹ AZ Department of Health Services, AZ Primary Care Area Program, AZ Primary Care Area Statistical Profiles as of: 05/04/2012.

⁵² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources Services Administration MUA/P by state and county, data retrieval date: 05/04/12.

⁵³ Find the Data, County Health Risk Factors, <http://county-health.findthedata.org>

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

While more than 1 in 4 survey respondents were employed (La Paz – 26%; Mohave – 19%; and Yuma – 33%) either full-time or part-time, only 3% had a job with benefits in Mohave and Yuma Counties and 1% in La Paz County.

It should be noted that a large portion of the respondents were retired (La Paz – 45%; Mohave – 61%; and Yuma – 10%) and unemployed or seasonal/temporarily employed residents (La Paz – 28%; Mohave – 20%; and Yuma – 57%).

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

The 3 primary barriers to employment throughout the tri-county area were: physical disability, pay too low to support family, and no jobs available in field of expertise.

TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS

While the majority of survey responders felt they had reliable transportation (La Paz – 67%, Mohave – 97% and Yuma – 84%), those that did not have reliable transportation identified their top two transportation barriers as the high price of gas and not having or not being able to afford a car.

HOUSING CONDITIONS & BARRIERS

The majority of survey respondents felt that their housing conditions were adequate (La Paz – 78%, Mohave – 97% and Yuma – 87%) with considerable variance homeowner (La Paz – 56%, Mohave – 96% and Yuma – 38%) responders.

Below is a chart with a breakdown identifying the different types of residences of survey responders.

It should be noted that a large portion of the respondent homeowners do not have a mortgage (La Paz – 57%, Mohave – 48% and Yuma – 40%).

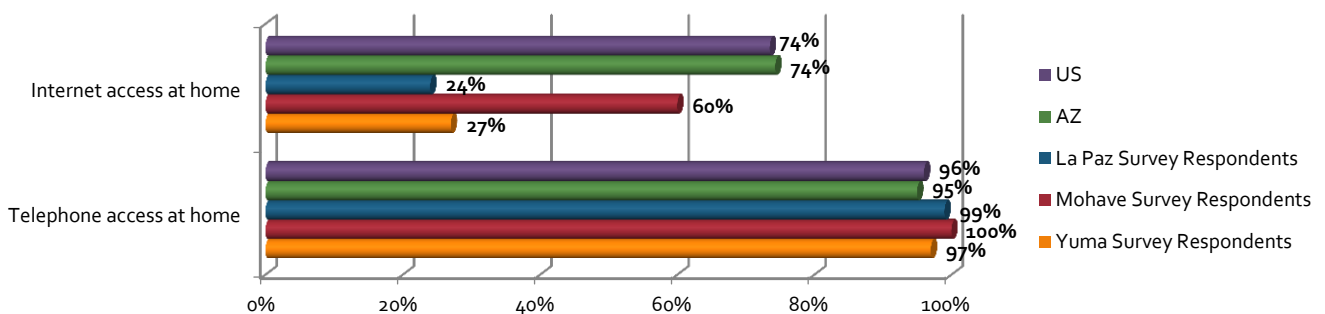
The top 3 major housing concerns in the tri-county area were: utilities are too high, rent is too high, and residents cannot afford house payments.

Most survey respondents’ homes have a telephone, with a smaller portion having computers and internet access. The graph below identifies the percentage of responders’ by county and by level of access to a telephone and/or the internet at home. Showing a significantly smaller percentage of survey respondent homes in the tri-county area having internet access in their homes than the Arizona and U.S. averages.

TYPES OF RESIDENCES OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

	La Paz Respondents	Mohave Respondents	Yuma Respondents
Rental Unit	42.0%	1.1%	56.6%
Own home	32.2%	47.8%	16.4%
Home with mortgage	24.4%	51.1%	24.8%
Lives with family/friends	1.1%	0.0%	2.1%
Homeless	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%

Home Communication/Technology of Survey Respondents



Computer ownership of survey respondents was equally limited (La Paz – 35%; Mohave – 67%; and Yuma 34%). Beginning in 2007, the U.S. Census Bureau no longer asked questions about computer access or ownership but in 2003, 61.8% households in the U.S. had a computer in their homes.⁵⁴

Use of WACOG Services

In La Paz and Mohave Counties the majority, 51% and 67% respectively, of respondents had never used WACOG services. While 62% of the survey responders in Yuma County had previously utilized WACOG services.

Key Informant Interviews

WACOG had twelve (12) key community stakeholders that took the time to provide input and advice to WACOG during this portion of the planning process. Collectively, the 12 Key Informants have over 256 years of experience in serving the needs of the community. WACOG took great effort to ensure geographic, cultural, and expert diversity was incorporated into the key informant selection process.

In relation to community needs, the Key Informants were asked about challenges in the communities related to pressing problems and social issues. Primary areas of concern were centered on the economy, education, and housing.

Most Pressing Problems & Social Issues

The **3 most pressing problems and social issues** identified by Key Informants impacting people's ability to be healthy and economically self-sufficient were: (1) **Economy** – high unemployment rates and need for economic development with a diverse industry base; (2) **Education** – low education attainment levels and skills mismatch with available jobs; and (3) **Housing** – lack of decent and affordable housing, great need for rent/mortgage and utility assistance, and the foreclosure crisis.

Other pressing problems and social issues were:

- a) Healthcare – affordability and access to healthcare, access to preventive care and lack of behavioral healthcare;
- b) Crime/violence/drugs;
- c) Services – decreased funding to already limited resources, lack of providers. increasing need, food insecurity and cost of provider services;
- d) Divisiveness of community;
- e) Lack of cultural appreciation;
- f) Absence of social assets;
- g) Available transportation not meeting needs of community members;
- h) Lack of self-accountability and personal goals; and
- i) Geographic isolation

ECONOMY

The need for economic development was voiced by Key Informants, throughout the tri-county area, to reduce high unemployment rates (La Paz – 8.5%; Mohave – 11.0%; Yuma; 27.1; U.S. – 8.9%; and AZ – 9.5%), attract livable wage jobs and reduce the dependence on low-paying industries which make up a significant portion of the economic base in the region.

⁵⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2003, 2007, 2009, Appendix Table A: Households with a Computer and Internet Use 1984 to 2009.

EDUCATION

Residents' lack of education attainment was noted as one of the most pressing problems and social issues. 22% of the adults (25+) in the region (U.S. – 15%; AZ – 15%; La Paz – 23%; Mohave – 17%; and Yuma -22%) did not have a high school diploma or its equivalency, and 53% of the regions adults (25+) had only the most basic of education levels, a high school diploma/GED (U.S. 44%, AZ – 40%; La Paz – 57%; Mohave – 52%; and Yuma – 54%). Resulting in job skills mismatch with local available living-wage jobs.

Education is primarily a state responsibility with more than 90% of school funding coming from state and local resources.⁵⁵ Arizona ranks last in the nation in expenditures for public K-12 schools per student spending (\$6,170 per pupil in fall 2009-2010). This is \$4,306 (41%) less than the U.S. median of \$10,476.⁵⁶ Additionally, Arizona elementary, secondary, and post-secondary schools have seen significant reduction in funding due to continuing state budget deficits in Academic Years (AY) 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.

By 2018, 61% of all jobs in Arizona will require some training beyond high school. Regionally, 46% of adults twenty-five years of age or older have some type of training beyond high school of which 27% have some college but no degree with only, 7% having an associate degree, 8% a bachelor's degree, and 4% a graduate or professional degree.

According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, over a lifetime, a Bachelor's degree is worth \$2.8 million on average.⁵⁷

HOUSING

Key informants identified: (1) a lack of decent and affordable housing; (2) a great need for rent/mortgage and utility assistance; and (3) a lack of assistance in addressing foreclosures as the most pressing housing issues in their communities.

Throughout the region, low-cost housing does not necessarily mean decent and safe housing with numerous colonias in the area. A 'colonia' is a community within 150 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border that has a lack of a potable water supply, inadequate sewage systems, and a shortage of decent, safe, and sanitary housing.⁵⁸

Additionally, extreme temperatures, seasonal work, and low-incomes lead to a significant need for assistance with rent, mortgage and utility payments as well as foreclosure counseling.

Focus Group Results

Focus Groups in each of the three counties reviewed service area demographics, Community Needs Assessment Survey results and Key Informant responses and where then asked to: (1) Identify service barriers in their county; (2) Provide suggestions and strategies to improve service delivery; (3) Identify regional community priorities; and (4) Identify local (if any) resources to address the priorities.

This section of the needs assessment document identifies Focus Group responses to identifying barriers and suggestions and strategies to improving service delivery. Focus Group identified regional priorities and local resources to address the priorities are located in the next section of this document ('Priority Needs and Possible Solutions').

Barriers to Accessing Services

LA PAZ COUNTY

Service barriers identified by the La Paz County Focus Group were:

- Transportation :

⁵⁵ Epstein, E. Center for American Progress, *Measuring Inequity in School Funding*, August 2011.

⁵⁶ National Education Association Research, Rankings & Estimates, December 2010.

⁵⁷ Carnevale, A., Rose S., and Cheah, B. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, *The College Payoff Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings*, 2011.

⁵⁸ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Community Development Block Grant definition of Colonias.

- Cost of travel is expensive;
- There is a lack of medical transportation and providers have limited capacity that does not meet the residents needs; and
- Transportation services are limited by billing issues versus client needs. For example, ride sharing is not allowed nor are multiple stop options available to riders.
- Residents lack knowledge of available programs in services;
- Geographic isolation of residents results in additional service barriers such as: communicating with residents who need programs and services is challenging, limited access to service providers, and causes service delivery issues with increased costs that are not experienced in more populated areas of the state;
- Expectations for goals targeted at maintaining the independence of seniors are unrealistic. For example, it is not reasonable to expect all elderly to travel to the senior center for services when they live miles from the center; and
- Funding silos do not address residents' need. For example, transportation service providers cannot stop at a grocery store on the way back from a medical appointment

MOHAVE COUNTY

Service barriers identified by the Mohave County Focus Group were:

- No centralized intake location for all services;
- Lack of funding for programs and services;
- Lack of dental care and providers for adults as well as children is seen as a big contributor to health issues and costs;
- There is shortage of personal responsibility from citizens asking for help creating a community of dependency; and
- Lack of financial literacy training:
 - Especially during the pre-home mortgage crisis;
 - Current education and service systems do not support prevention activities; and
 - Financial literacy is not taught in the educational system

YUMA COUNTY

Service barriers identified by the Yuma County Focus Group were:

- Lack of available funding for programs and services;
- Intensive, extensive and repetitive application processes that lead to client frustration;
- Applicants that do not qualify for programs and services perceive bureaucracy as reason;
- Lack of decent transportation;
- Limited capacity of non-profits;
- Residents lack knowledge of available programs and services;
- Absence of communication between partnering agencies;
- Applicant up-front education on eligibility requirements for services is needed; and
- Lack of interconnectivity between service providers needs improvement.

Suggestions & Strategies to Improving Service Delivery

LA PAZ COUNTY

Suggestions and strategies for improving service delivery by the La Paz County Focus Group were:

- Increase inter-departmental coordination so Area Agency on Aging (AAA) case managers can efficiently and effectively refer seniors to community service programs and services;
- Streamline application process;
- Increase community outreach to seniors using:
 - Refrigerator magnets listing important telephone numbers that can be distributed at Senior Centers and other places;
 - Work to overcome stigma associated with receiving assistance by getting resource information out so seniors can make the decision; and

- Utilization of bulk mailers and flyers where people congregate;
- Encourage community patrols;
- Develop grassroots coalition building;
- Increase awareness of programs and services with community partners, e.g. utilizing in-service trainings with Adult Protective Services;
- Develop local community resource directory; and
- Seek feedback from outlying areas(e.g. Focus Groups) as well as provide awareness of what is available.

MOHAVE COUNTY

Suggestions and strategies for improving service delivery by the Mohave County Focus Group were:

- Development of community resource and information system similar to 'Cross Check' in Texas;
- Increase community alliances and collaborations to reduce 'turf wars';
- Seek funding and build partnerships with set responsibilities;
- Encourage non-profit representation on Chamber of Commerce Board, to be rotated annually between non-profits; and
- Increase outreach efforts

YUMA COUNTY

Suggestions and strategies for improving service delivery by the Yuma County Focus Group were:

- Increase satellite facilities in neighborhoods;
- Develop low-income community summit to discuss service needs, barriers and gaps to clearly identify what is working and what is not working;
 - Form a consensus on how the results of the low-income summit result would be disseminated to the community to ensure a clear understanding of expectations of all parties that are working to address the needs of the community
- Designate areas in neighborhoods, that are heavily trafficked by residents, to become information hubs; and
- Development of a community referral hotline for social services

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Priority Needs & Possible Solutions

Priority needs and possible solutions for the tri-county area were determined utilizing a Focus Group in each of three counties in the service area. During the Focus Group, participants were asked to identify: (a) Regional community priorities and (b) Local (if any) resources to address these priorities.

Regional Community Priorities

Regional community priorities, identified by Focus Groups, centered on the economy/economic development, outreach, addressing basic needs, education, health care, and transportation.

ECONOMY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Focus Group members felt that the bad economy throughout the tri-county service region has led to a significant need for increased community development activities that allow residents to acquire a livable wage job, reduces costs to local businesses, recruits more employers to the region, increases employment opportunities thus decreasing unemployment rates and addresses local low-paying jobs was of vital importance.

OUTREACH

Communication and outreach efforts to residents and other community service providers is seen as necessary to ensure everyone has up-to-date information on available programs and services as well as a working knowledge on how to access programs and services efficiently and effectively.

BASIC NEEDS

The need for community infrastructure that addresses the basic needs of residents as well as being more user friendly was noted in each of the counties. Not only do residents need to have the ability to address the most basic of human needs such as food, clothing, and housing but they also need to be able to do so in a user-friendly fashion.

Focus Group participants felt that a strong sense of community caring for one another, increased service funding, more availability of programs and services, a community hotline to find needed services, simplified application processes, and a retiree supplemental income assistance programs would assist in making material inroads in addressing the basic needs of residents. Furthermore, continued and increased partnerships/collaborations are seen as being a key variable.

EDUCATION

Results of Focus Group activities indicated a strong need for increased resident education attainment levels in local communities to ensure a positive impact on the local economy. Specifically, there was a gap between available jobs and residents' skill levels. Current workforce training levels and businesses need to be committed to sharing in the workforce training that addresses private sector needs. Additionally, it was noted that there is a need for basic life and social skills training.

HEALTHCARE

An inadequate number of physicians and dentists, as well as other medical specialists, make not only preventive health care an issue but also specialized medical services a regional priority.

Limited access to physicians, dentists and medical specialists result in residents going without needed healthcare or

traveling 3 to 8 hours to receive services in larger metropolitan areas such as: Las Vegas, Phoenix or Tucson. Increasing the financial strain on already income strained residents.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is seen as a community priority in all 3 counties due to the vast geography of the region. Feedback in La Paz County, where a large population base of geographically isolated limited-income seniors, noted that current transportation resources (both funding and available services providers) are unable to address the demand that has escalated transportation to a top priority. Moreover, restrictions placed on available funding are not meeting the needs of local residents and there is a lack of decent transportation.

Local Resources to Address Priorities

Local resources identified by Focus Groups to address the designated priorities were:

ECONOMY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To address the need for economic development and an improved economy, local resources identified were: city, town, and county governments, regional economic development efforts, economic development corporations, One-Stop Centers, and Workforce Investment Act programs. Additionally, participants indicated a need for a collective community vision that takes advantage and builds on current infrastructure.

OUTREACH

Focus Group attendees suggested that local services providers enhance their outreach and communication efforts with the use of social media, increased interactions with service clubs, and community service outreach that addresses the specific needs of the target population (e.g. refrigerator magnets with important telephone numbers for seniors).

BASIC NEEDS

While limited, local resources that were identified by Focus Groups to address the basic needs of residents included: local government agencies, WACOG, libraries, St. Vincent de Paul, Knights of Columbus, PPEP, Churches, senior centers, and food banks.

EDUCATION

Local educational resources available to address the need for higher education attainment levels were: Arizona Western College, Mohave County Community College, NAU-Yuma, University of Arizona, Arizona State University, University of Phoenix, and small business centers. Additionally, Focus Group participants felt that paid internships for students would provide valuable experience to better address workforce needs.

HEALTH CARE

Health care resources center on local hospitals, dental associations, Sunset Clinic, Center for Border Health, county health departments, and existing physicians, dentists, and medical specialists.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation programs and services mentioned by Focus Groups to address this priority where: La Paz County Transit, WACOG Rider Assistance Program, Quartzsite Transit Services, Bullhead Area Transit System, Kingman Area Regional Transit, City of Lake Havasu Transit System, ALTCS medical transportation, Yuma County Area Transit, and Greater Yuma Dial-a-Ride.

Appendices

Data Gathering Methodology

This community assessment is intended to provide a picture of the community, community assets, and community needs through a process of information gathering and engagement of community stakeholders.

Information from multiple resources was reviewed, key informants were interviewed, community partners were surveyed, and 3 Focus Groups were consulted in order to demonstrate the linkages between community needs, assets, and the services to be provided.

Key Informant Interviews

Key Informant Interviews are a method of obtaining more in-depth information from key community stakeholders. This methodology was utilized because it represents an effective tool for seeking the input and advice of people who are regularly involved in addressing community problems.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWEES

The Key Informants for the tri-county service region's Community Needs and Assets Assessment for the Community Action Program were:

- Gene Apedaile – CEO/President River Cities United Way
- Amanda Aguirre – CEO/President, Regional Center for Border Health, Inc.
- Brian Babiars – Executive Director, WACOG
- Elisa Davis– Director, WACOG Area Agency on Aging
- Diana Gomez – Director, Yuma County Public Health Services
- Judy Gresser – Executive Director, Yuma Community Foundation
- Vivian Hartless– Fiduciary, La Paz County
- Mike Ivers – President/CEO, Yuma Community Food Bank
- Denise Moen-Bishop – Grant Administrator, Lake Havasu City
- John Morales – Executive Director, Yuma Private Industry Council
- Janet Watson – Vice Mayor, City of Kingman
- Roxanne Wells – Director, WACOG Head Start

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The objective of this process is to identify regional priority needs, barriers, community assets, and opportunities. The key interview questions utilized during this process were:

1. Please describe your involvement with the community?
2. How long have you been involved?
3. What crucial strength of this community helps people be healthy and economically self-sufficient?
4. What do you view as the three (3) most pressing problems or social issues impacting the ability of people to be healthy and economically self-sufficient?
5. From most to least important, how would you prioritize those three?
6. Staying with these three items, what do you think can be done to improve the quality or quantity of services available in this community?
7. In your opinion, what do you believe is happening right now that is improving the delivery of employment, medical,

- behavioral health, oral health and social services?
8. What are the current opportunities to leverage more dollars by community action?
 9. What are the current opportunities to increase volunteerism and civic engagement?
 10. What are the emerging trends in this community that you believe will impact the delivery of services?
 11. If this community could do one (1) thing to improve the health and economic self-sufficiency of low income families, what would that be?

Community Needs Assessment Survey

The WACOG Community Needs Assessment Survey is a state-wide survey being conducted by all Arizona Community Action Programs in SFY-12. The survey is focused on identifying respondents: (a) Family needs; (b) Barriers to meeting basic needs; (c) Housing conditions; (d) Use of WACOG services; and (e) Demographic information.

Targeted survey respondents were tri-county low-income and vulnerable residents. Surveys were distributed at Senior Centers, the Community Action Board and County Advisory Council meetings, community organizations, and at WACOG offices. Survey respondents by geographic area: La Paz County – 99, Mohave County – 102, and Yuma County – 689.

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY TOOL

WACOG Community Needs Assessment

1. Check if the following are needs for you or your family.

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Prescriptions | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Loans | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Food | <input type="checkbox"/> Income Tax Preparation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Repairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing | <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utility Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Dental Healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Insert Your Own) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Insert Your Own) |

2. Please list any additional needs you or your family has that were not listed above.

3. Check how much of a problem the following barriers are to you and your family in seeking/gaining assistance with your basic needs.

Barrier	Not A Problem	Somewhat Of A Problem	A Big Problem
Can't Afford Fees/Costs of Assistance			
Not Eligible/Don't Qualify For Assistance			
No Transportation To/For Assistance			
Don't Know Where To Go For Help			
Pride (Don't Want To Ask For Help)			
Programs/Services Not Available in My Area			
No Childcare While Receiving/Obtaining Assistance			
Prior Bad Experience With Service/Program			
Have To Work During Service Hours			
Health/Disability			

4. How many children do you have? _____ Living In Household? _____

5. Are you a single parent? YES NO

6. What are your barriers to childcare services? (Check All That Apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> Children Have Special Needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Enough Childcare Providers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> Location of Childcare Providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Childcare Providers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hours Not Sufficient | <input type="checkbox"/> No Transportation | |

7. How many household members do NOT currently have health insurance? (Including Medicare, AHCCCS, KidsCare, Private Insurance) (Please Circle)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 or more

8. Of those with NO health insurance, how many are: Under 18: _____ Over 65: _____

9. What are your barriers to health care? (Check All That Apply)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> No Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> No Doctor in My Area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> No Transportation to Doctor | <input type="checkbox"/> No Childcare During Appointment |

10. Where you able to receive dental care in the last year? YES NO

11. Why did you not receive dental care in the last year?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> My Choice | <input type="checkbox"/> No Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> Fear | <input type="checkbox"/> No Childcare During Appointment |

12. What is your Employment Status?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed/Not Searching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time with benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time with benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal / Temporary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed/Job Searching | |

13. What are your barriers to employment? (Check All That Apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> Pay Too Low To Support Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Training or Experience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Jobs For My Field | <input type="checkbox"/> No Childcare During Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Disability | |

14. Do you have reliable transportation? YES NO

15. What are your barriers to reliable transportation? (Check All That Apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> Price of Gas | <input type="checkbox"/> No Routes Near Home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Car/Can't Afford Car | <input type="checkbox"/> No Private Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> No Routes Near Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Public Transportation | | |

16. Are your housing conditions adequate? YES NO

17. Do you own your home? YES NO

18. Type of residence?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rental Unit | <input type="checkbox"/> Home With Mortgage | <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home You Own | <input type="checkbox"/> With Family/Friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless |

19. What are your major housing concerns? (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rent too high | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities too high | <input type="checkbox"/> Can't find house in price range |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House needs major repairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Can't afford house payments | <input type="checkbox"/> No Concerns |

20. Check if you HAVE a:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Access |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|

21. Have you ever used one of WACOG's services? YES NO

22. Please circle the appropriate response under each demographic heading.

AGE	MARITAL STATUS	RACE	GENDER	NUMBER IN HOUSEHOLD	HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Under 20	Singe	Black/African American	Male	1	No income
20-24	Married	White/Caucasian	Female	2	Less than 10,000
25-39	Divorced	Asian		3	10,001 – 20,000
40-59	Widowed	Bi-Racial/Multi-Racial		4	20,001 – 30,000
60-64	Separated	American Indian		5	30,001 – 40,000
65-79		Alaska Native		6	40,001 – 50,000
Over 80		White/Hispanic		7	50,001 – 60,000
				8 or more	60,001 – 70,000
					Above 70,000

23. Circle The Highest Level of Education You Have Completed.

Some Grade School	Some Technical School	Completed College/Bachelor Degree
Completed Grade School	Completed Technical School	Master's Degree
Some High School	Some College	Doctorate Degree
Completed High School	Completed College/Associate Degree	

Thank you for your time. Please send your completed survey to:

WACOG
Attention: Carmen Gontes
224 South 3rd Avenue, Yuma, AZ 85364

Focus Groups

Three Focus Groups were utilized, in May 2012, to confirm the needs and gaps in service that had been identified using secondary data sources, key informant interviews, and survey results. The Focus Groups provided additional information regarding barriers to accessing services, specific suggestions for improving delivery of services, regional priorities, and local resources to address the priorities.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Focus Group Participants for the tri-county service region's Community Needs and Assets Assessment for the Community Action Program were:

LA PAZ COUNTY FOCUS GROUP

- Mary Hamilton - La Paz County Advisory Council member (private sector /community representative); and Parker Area Tourism
- Melodee Hamilton - La Paz County Advisory Council member (private sector /community representative); and La Paz County Volunteer
- Vivian Hartless - La Paz County Advisory Council member (Ehrenberg low-income representative), La Paz County Public Fiduciary

- George Nault - La Paz County Advisory Council and Community Action Board member (Bouse private sector /community representative); and Retired County Assessor
- Bruce Swart - La Paz County Advisory Council and Community Action Board member (low-income representative); and Quartzsite Pastor
- Darla Tilley - Darla Tilley – Parker Senior Center

MOHAVE COUNTY FOCUS GROUP

- Gene Apedaile – Mohave County Advisory Council (private sector /community representative); and River Cities United Way employee
- Paulette Dollarhide - Mohave County Advisory Council (low-income representative); Kingman Salvation Army employee
- Gary Watson - Mohave County Advisory Council (public sector representative); WACOG Executive Board member; and Mohave County Supervisor
- Janet Watson - Mohave County Advisory Council and Community Action Board member (public sector representative); WACOG Executive Board member; and Vice-Mayor of the City of Kingman

YUMA COUNTY FOCUS GROUP

- Raul Mendoza - Yuma County Advisory Council member (private sector /community representative); and HACV employee
- Jose Suarez - Yuma County Advisory Council and Community Action Board member (public sector representative); and City of San Luis
- Rosa Velarde - Yuma County Advisory Council member (private sector /community representative); and YRMC employee
- Donna Phipps - Yuma County Advisory Council and Community Action Board member (private sector /community representative); and retired APS employee
- Al Krieger – Yuma County Advisory Council (public sector representative); WACOG Executive Board member; and Mayor of the City of Yuma

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Identify Barriers for Accessing Services - Based on information provided and experience identify barriers for accessing services.
2. Suggestions & Strategies for Improving Service Deliver - Based on information provided, experience and Focus Group activities provide suggestions & strategies for improving service delivery.
3. Identify Regional Community Priorities - Based on information provided, experience and Focus Group activities identify regional community priorities.
4. Identify Resources - Identify local, if any, resources to address priorities

FOCUS GROUP PRESENTATION

Strategic Planning: FOCUS GROUP
Gina Whittington
Thomas Ryan

By WACOG Community Services

ON TARGET

Agenda

- 🎯 Service Area Demographics
- 🎯 Community Needs Assessment Survey Results
- 🎯 Key Informant Interview Results
- 🎯 Focus Group Activity- Identify Barriers for Accessing Services
- 🎯 Focus Group Activity- Suggestions & Strategies for Improving Service Delivery
- 🎯 Focus Group Activity- Identify Regional Community Priorities
- 🎯 Focus Group Activity- Identify Local, if any, Resources to Address Priorities

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Service Area Demographics
(La Paz, Mohave and Yuma Counties)

QUICK FACT
92% population growth in region from 1990-2010 (214,236 to 578,516 residents)
Race/Ethnic Background: 59% White; 1% Black/African American; 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native; 1% Asian; 0.1% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0.1% Some other race; 2% two or more races; and 35% Hispanic
Median Age of Population: La Paz - 52.5; Mohave - 46.3; and Yuma - 33.2 (U.S. - 36.9; AZ - 35.5)
Household Size: La Paz - 1.96; Mohave - 2.44; and Yuma - 2.65 (U.S. - 2.59; AZ - 2.63)
Language Other than English Spoken at Home: La Paz - 18%; Mohave - 11%; and Yuma - 50% (U.S. - 18%; AZ - 27%)

QUICK FACT
Median Income: La Paz - \$32,147; Mohave - \$39,785, and Yuma - \$40,340 (U.S. - \$51,914; AZ - \$50,448)
Per Capita Income : La Paz - \$21,165; Mohave - \$ 21,523; and Yuma - \$18,418 (U.S. - \$27,334; AZ - \$25,680)
Education Level in Service Area: 22% no HS diploma; 31% have a HS diploma; 27% some college; 7% an Associate Degree; & 12% a Bachelor Degree or higher.
Poverty: From 2000 - 2012 the number of residents living in poverty rose 55% from 54,589 to 76,059

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COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS

WACOG

Community Action Agency

Survey Respondents:
La Paz County - 99 residents
Mohave County - 102 residents
Yuma County - 689 residents

Average Survey Respondent
Female between the ages of 25-59, married, Hispanic, household income of \$20,000 or less, has children in the home and the highest level of education attainment being a high school degree

WACOG

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Survey Results
Family Needs
Throughout the service area, survey respondents indicated family needs are centered around the most basic of necessities, e.g. food, housing, healthcare and employment.

Top Family Needs	La Paz County	% of Responses	Mohave County	% of Responses	Yuma County	% of Responses
#1	Utility Assistance	8%	Heating Repair	6%	Utility Assistance	8%
#2	Dental Healthcare	8%	Dental Healthcare	6%	Employment	6%
#3	Prescriptions	6%	Utility Assistance	6%	Heating & Dental Healthcare	6%
#4	Food & Employment	6%	Food	6%	Food & Clothing	6%
#5	Heating & Heating Repair	6%	Healthcare & Prescriptions	6%	Healthcare	6%

WACOG

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Survey Results

Primary Barriers for Families Seeking/Gaining Assistance with Basic Needs That Were SIGNIFICANT Problems:

- #1 - Cannot afford fees/cost of assistance;
- #2 - Not eligible/does not qualify;
- #3 - Health/disability;
- #4 - Did not know where to go for help;
- #5 - No transportation to/for assistance; and
- #6 - Programs/services not available in my area.

Food Insecurity

Food ranked in the top 5 family needs in all 3 counties of survey respondents:

- Food Insecurity for Overall Population:
 - La Paz - 19.2%; Mohave - 19.1%; Yuma - 27.9%; AZ - 17.4% ; U.S. - 16.6%
- Child Food Insecurity:
 - La Paz - 32.7%; Mohave - 30.8%; Yuma - 44.5%; AZ - 28.8%; U.S. - 23.2%

Childcare Barriers

The primary barrier to childcare services was cost (La Paz - 20%; Mohave - 8%; and Yuma - 22%).

Food Insecurity - USDA's measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food Insecure children are those children living in household experience food insecurity.

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Survey Results

Healthcare Barriers

More than 1 out of 3 of the survey respondents in Yuma and La Paz Counties and approximately 1 in 4 respondents in Mohave County have one or more persons in their household with no health insurance. Of these families, the majority in La Paz and Mohave Counties had 1 person without healthcare insurance. While in Yuma County, the majority of families had 2 or more people with no healthcare insurance.

Dental Care:

70% of survey respondents did not receive dental care in the last year primarily due to:

- No insurance (La Paz - 72%; Mohave - 71%; and Yuma - 67%); and
- Cost (La Paz - 57%; Mohave - 65%; and Yuma - 48%).

A significant portion of uninsured from respondent families are children under the age of 18 (La Paz - 26%; Mohave - 12%; and Yuma - 63%) and adults over the age of 65 (La Paz - 23%; Mohave - 27%; and Yuma - 17%).

WACOG

Community Action Agency

Survey Results

Employment Barriers

The 3 primary barriers to employment throughout the tri-county area were:

- Physical disability;
- Pay too low to support family; and
- No jobs available in field.

Employment Status of Respondents:

- While more than 1 in 4 survey respondents are employed (La Paz - 26%; Mohave - 19%; and Yuma - 33%) either full-time or part-time only 3% have a job with benefits in Mohave and Yuma Counties and 1% in La Paz County.
- A large portion of the respondents are retired: La Paz - 45%; Mohave - 61%; and Yuma - 10%.
- Unemployed or seasonal/temporarily employed residents made up La Paz - 28%, Mohave - 20% and Yuma - 57% of the survey responders.

WACOG

ON TARGET

Survey Results

Housing Barriers

The majority of survey respondents felt that their housing conditions were adequate (La Paz - 78%, Mohave - 97% and Yuma - 87%).

Survey responders that are homeowners: La Paz - 56%, Mohave - 96% and Yuma - 38%.

Percent of the homeowners that do not have a mortgage: La Paz - 57%, Mohave - 48% and Yuma - 40%.

Top 3 Major Housing Concerns

- Utilities are too high;
- Rent is too high; and
- Residents can not afford house payments.

Type of Housing	La Paz	Mohave	Yuma
Rental Unit	42.2%	1.1%	56.6%
Own Home	32.2%	47.8%	16.4%
Home with Mortgage	24.5%	51.1%	24.8%
Lives with Family/Friend	1.1%	0.0%	2.1%
Homeless	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
TOTALS	100%	100%	100%

Most of the homes have a telephone (97% - 100%).

Internet access at home is significantly less in service area (La Paz - 24%, Mohave - 60% and Yuma - 27%) than the U.S. (74%) and Arizona (74%) averages.

WACOG

Community Action Agency

Survey Responders' Use of WACOG Services

In La Paz and Mohave Counties the majority, 51% and 67% respectively, of respondents have never used WACOG services. 62% of the survey responders in Yuma County have previously utilized WACOG services.

WACOG

ON TARGET

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW RESULTS

WACOG

Community Action Agency

Key Informants

QUICK FACT
WACOG had twelve (12) key community stakeholders that took the time to provide input and advice to WACOG during this portion of the planning process. WACOG took great effort to ensure geographic, cultural, and expert diversity was incorporated into the key informant selection process. In total, the 12 Key Informants have over 256 years of experience in serving the needs of the community.



- La Paz County**
Elisa Davis- WACOG Director Area Agency on Aging
Vivian Hartless- La Paz County Fiduciary
Mohave County
Denise Moen-Bishop - Lake Havasu City Grants Administrator
Janet Watson - Vice Mayor, City of Kingman
Gene Apedaille - CEO/President River Cities United Way
Roxanne Wells - WACOG Head Start Director
Yuma County
Amanda Aguirre - CEO/President, Regional Center for Border Health, Inc.
Brian Babiarz - Executive Director, WACOG
Diana Gomez - Director, Yuma County Public Health Services
Judy Gresser - Executive Director, Yuma Community Foundation
Mike Ivers - President/CEO, Yuma Community Food Bank
John Morales - Executive Director, Yuma Private Industry Council

WACOG

ON TARGET

Key Informants

Community strengths
Crucial strengths of communities that are helping people be healthy and economically self-sufficient



- Partnerships that respond quickly to resident needs in the medical field
- Core safety net programs for older and low-income residents
- Coalitions developed as a response to geographic isolation from metro areas
- Residents' resiliency, survival skills and commitment to family and neighbors
- Senior Center services
- Career /Workforce Centers
- Tourism creating jobs
- Higher education opportunities
- Industrial sector jobs
- Geographic location
- Rent /mortgage and utility payment assistance
- Advancement of early childhood provider collaborations

WACOG

Community Action Agency

Key Informants

Pressing Problems & Social Issues
The most pressing problems or social issues impacting people's ability to be healthy and economically self-sufficient



- Top 3 Most Pressing Problems or Social Issues**
1. Economy - High unemployment rates and need for economic development with a diverse industry base
 2. Education - Low education attainment levels and skills mismatch with available jobs
 3. Housing - Lack of decent & affordable housing, great need for rent/mortgage and utility assistance and the foreclosure crisis
- Other Pressing Problems or Social Issues**
- Healthcare - affordability and access to healthcare, access to preventive care and lack of behavioral healthcare
 - Crime/violence/drugs
 - Services - lack of providers and resources, increasing need, food insecurity and cost of provider services
 - Divisiveness of community
 - Lack of cultural appreciation
 - Social assets
 - Transportation
 - Self-accountability/goals
 - Geographic isolation

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Key Informant recommendations to improve quality or quantity of services available in communities



- Unemployment**
- More business friendly communities;
 - Diversify employment opportunities; and
 - Capitalize on tech advances.



- Education**
- Emphasize importance of education;
 - Make education a priority; and
 - More training resources.



- Housing**
- Streamline paperwork & eligibility burden;
 - Limit federal bureaucracy; and
 - Community outreach to increase awareness of resources.



Other Recommendations:
Increased outreach and community awareness of available resources, courteous client services, help residents create roots in community so they feel invested in overall community health, increase community partnerships and collaborations, more service providers, increased transportation is key to improving services in La Paz County, development of sustainable income sources, development of central program system and increased grant writing to bring in new resources.

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Key Informant Results

Current Happenings

That are improving the delivery of employment, medical, behavioral, and/or oral health, and social services.

- Coordinated efforts and communication are helping, but more is needed
- Agencies are being forced to identify & obtain more flexible funding to do more with less while keeping quality
- Academic achievement for minority population
- Yuma County #2 on County Health Rankings
- Agencies work together on crisis resolution; and
- Hospital's commitment to bring experienced doctors to community.



Significant Impact Being Made By:

- Crossroads Mission
- GYEDC
- Chamber of Commerce
- Food Bank
- YPIC
- WACOG
- 1st Things 1st
- Healthy Initiatives e.g. Healthy Yuma
- Legacy Foundation.



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Key Informants

Opportunities to Leverage
Current opportunities for Community Action to leverage more dollars



- Target rural funding opportunities
- 1st Things 1st regional programs for capacity building and professional development of Head Start Program
- Recoverable loans
- Identify a clear target and align resources
- More partnerships with designated responsibilities
- Research potential of tobacco tax funding
- Use local shelter outcomes to obtain funding resources
- Creation of more partnerships in untapped areas
- Research elderly & behavioral health programs/issues
- Childcare programs and their funding



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Key Informant Results

Current Opportunities to Increase Volunteerism & Civic Engagement

- Encourage civic learning by targeting college and high school students
- Offer Internships
- Target retirees
- Conduct Town Halls to get people interested
- Ambassadorships to get people more involved & make them truly a part of the organization
- Mentoring by peer families & peers 60+
- Some communities more active in coming together in times of crisis or on an as needed basis
- Museums & hospital always have vacancies
- Use volunteerism to implement 'grow your own' concept that connects volunteers with job skill development
- Hospice always needs volunteers
- Promote summer events for children
- Target city & county department personnel



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Key Informant Results

Emerging Trends in Community That Will Impact Service Delivery

- Cultural sensitivity in relation to business success
- MCAS & YPG doing more social
- Paid Internships are having positive impact on job market
- People are getting more physically active
- Continued need for successful partnerships

- Weak economies
- Unemployment
- Need for Foreclosure Counseling
- High teen pregnancy rate
- Worker need for preparation to re-join workforce
- Continued decreases in funding availability
- Continued loss of availability of services
- Increase demand for services
- More residents living in poverty
- Ever increasing cost of childcare
- Childcare centers closing due to costly requirements

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Key Informant Results

Improving lives of Low-Income Families

The one thing that could improve the health & economic self-sufficiency of low-income families

- Community perspective of government - gov't can not fix everything
- More support from cities and counties- current infrastructure is not meeting the needs of residents
- Unemployment benefits tied to clean drug tests
- Mechanism that provides mentoring to low income
- Individualization of programs that help people
- Ability for everyone to access preventive care
- Creation of more jobs
- Elder abuse needs to be better addressed
- More senior services, e.g. assisted living, in areas with high concentration of elderly
- Increase representation of nonprofits on Chamber of Commerce
- More discussions/collaborations from nonprofits
- Central early child center to incorporate services for children with special needs
- Access to health & dental care



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FOCUS GROUP ACTIVITIES



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Focus Group Activity



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Focus Group Activity

Identify local, if any, resources to address priorities



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