

# **The Statement of Need**

The Statement of Need presents evidence that support the need for the project and establishes that you understand the problems and can reasonably address them. As you marshal your arguments, consider the following points.

- **First, decide which facts or statistics best support the project.** Be sure the data you present are accurate. There are few things more embarrassing than to have the funder tell you that your information is out of date or incorrect. Information that is too generic or broad will not help you develop a winning argument for your project.
- **Second, give the reader hope.** The picture you paint should not be so grim that the solution appears hopeless. The funder will wonder whether an investment in your solution would be worthwhile.
- **Third, decide if you want to put your project forward as a model.** This approach could expand the base of potential funders. But serving as a model works only for certain types of projects. Don't try to make this argument if it doesn't really fit. If the decision about a model is affirmative, you should document how the problem you are addressing occurs in other communities.
- **Fourth, determine whether it is reasonable to portray the need as acute.** You are asking the funder to pay more attention to your proposal because either the problem you address is worse than others or the solution you propose are better than others.
- **Fifth, avoid circular reasoning.** In circular reasoning, you present the absence of your solution as the actual problem. Then your solution is offered as the way to solve the problem.

The statement of need does not have to be long and involved. Short, concise information captures the reader's attention.

## **An Effective Need Statement.....**

- Describes the target populations to be served
- Defines the problem to be addressed
- Is related to the purposes and goals of your organization
- Includes documentation and supporting information
- Does not make any unsupported assumptions
- Describes the situation in terms that are both factual and of human interest