

Unit 7: Social Work: Clientele, Settings, Tools, and Processes**Lesson 7.1****Characteristics and Needs of Clientele and Audiences****Contents**

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Lesson 7.1

Characteristics and Needs of Clientele and Audiences



Introduction

When you think of a social worker, what image comes to mind? Do you think of a person who visits houses in communities? People usually think of social work as some type of field visit in communities. It may be difficult for some to imagine social workers providing counseling to families or working with different institutions to formulate policies. The clients of social workers are also as varied as the settings in which they do their work. Social workers not only serve whole communities, but they also help individuals and groups.

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In this lesson, you will learn about the different clientele of social workers such as individuals, groups or organizations, and communities. You will also learn about how social workers help people who are in need such as orphaned children, homeless elderly, and people with disabilities.

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe the characteristics of clientele in social work.
- Explain the needs of different types of clientele in social work.

DepEd Learning Competencies

At the end of this lesson, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe the clientele and audiences of counseling (HUMSS_DIASS 12-Id-11).
- Describe the clientele and audiences of social work (HUMSS_DIASS 12-Ig-24).
- Distinguish the needs of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities (HUMSS_DIASS 12-Ig-25).
- Describe the clientele and audiences of communication (HUMSS_DIASS 12-IIa-37).
- Distinguish the needs of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities (HUMSS_DIASS 12-IIa-38).

Explore

Clients of Social Workers

 10 minutes

Instructions

1. Write down a list of people whom you think need the services of social workers.
2. Find a partner who you can compare your list with.
3. Take note of similarities and differences.
4. Ask your partner why he or she thinks the people on the list need the help of social workers.

Unit 7: Social Work: Clientele, Settings, Tools, and Processes**Clients of Social Workers****Guide Questions**

1. Why do you think the people on your list need the help of social workers?

2. Who else might require the services of social workers?

3. How do social workers help these people with their needs?

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 **Discover**

Some people experience disadvantages in life in which they cannot meet their needs without the help of others. These are people who are deprived of education, security and protection, food and sustenance, and acceptance and care.

The role of social workers is to help these people meet their needs. Simply put, they serve as the clientele of social workers.

**Words to Remember**

- **client** – people or organizations that use private or public services
- **persons with disabilities** – people who have conditions that limit their physical or psychological functioning



How do you think social workers address the needs of people in the community?

Types of Clientele and Audiences of Social Work

The clientele of social work can be classified according to the scope or number of people who require services. Some social workers focus on problems that are specific to an individual. Others work with more people such as in groups or organizations, as well as in communities.

The Individual

Social workers can provide direct help to individual clients with specific needs. In such instances, social workers take on the roles of either counselors or case managers. As counselors, they can meet clients in a one-on-one setting to work on the latter's concerns.

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These sessions can involve assessment and intervention that make use of approaches in counseling and psychotherapy. For example, a social worker can help a recovering drug-dependent client practice refusal skills so that relapse is prevented.

Social workers can also work as case managers of individuals who have special needs, such as the elderly or children, in conflict with the law. In such instances, social workers monitor and evaluate the cases assigned to them and identify services that might be needed.

Group or Organization

Groups and organizations are collections of individuals with similar or common interests. Groups can include sectors whose situations give them a significant disadvantage in life, such as street children or victims of intimate partner violence. Often, social workers are hired by organizations that aim to provide for the needs of these groups. These include people's organizations, which represent particular sectors such as farmers or indigenous groups, and nongovernment organizations with particular missions. For example, a nongovernment organization might offer education for young girls as its main objective. Such an organization will hire social workers to formulate and implement intervention programs to increase young girls' educational participation.

Communities

Social workers can provide much-needed services to communities. This usually happens when the whole community is deprived of basic necessities or services. Intervention, therefore, is directed to most if not all members of the community. For example, a remote community might not have access to basic health services. Social workers can collaborate with other health professionals to develop a program that provides such service to the community.

Some community work might also involve encouraging members to participate in its program. For example, social workers can implement community-wide programs on public sanitation and hygiene that require the involvement of all residents. This will involve ensuring that everyone in the community has access to clean water and proper toilets.

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Fig. 1. Social workers can collaborate with community members.

Needs of Clientele and Audiences of Social Work

There are different people living in a community and the needs vary from one person to another. Some of these clients have specific needs that can be addressed by social workers.

1. **Abandoned children.** Social workers cater to the needs of children who have been abandoned or orphaned. These children are often sheltered in institutions run by a government agency such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development or by a nongovernment organization.
2. **Homeless elderly.** The elderly experience a significant decline in both health and physical vitality. Some are in need of assistance from family members for their well-being. However, others are unfortunately left with either no home or family members to shelter them. In this case, social workers can help the homeless elderly in institutions that offer comfortable places to live in as well as regular provision of services such as health checkups and medication.

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- 3. Substance dependents.** Social workers also serve individuals who have developed a dependence on substances. Usually, help is given in settings such as rehabilitation centers. Social workers collaborate with drug dependents to help them develop helpful life and coping skills, establish healthy relationships, and get involved in meaningful occupations or interests.
- 4. Victims of intimate partner violence.** Social workers also provide help to individuals who experience interpersonal violence. This type of violence can be physical such as slaps or punches, or it can also be psychological such as belittling, extreme possessiveness, or control. Social workers provide help by giving medical, psychological, and reproductive health care. Some individuals choose to take legal actions against their perpetrators to ensure their safety and to obtain justice. Others might also need help to detach from the relationship and seek protection from possible retaliation of their former partners. Social workers can help by tapping on their networks of legal resources to protect the victims.
- 5. People with disabilities.** Life is significantly harder for people with disabilities as they have to live through a world that is not designed for them. They can experience everyday inconveniences such as problems in performing tasks or accessing certain areas for those with physical disabilities or creating a healthy structure or routine for those with psychological disabilities. They also suffer more from global disadvantages such as poverty, unemployment, and discrimination. Social workers can help ease these burdens either through case management, counseling, development of livelihood programs, or by lobbying for policies and laws for people with disabilities.

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 Check Your Progress

Why do people with these specific needs require the help of social workers?



 Wrap-Up

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- Social workers provide services to **individuals, groups or organizations**, and **communities**.
 - Regardless of who the clientele is, the goal of social workers is to reduce the disadvantage that people experience in terms of accessing services.
 - Social workers also address the **needs of specific populations** who are particularly disadvantaged such as abandoned children, homeless elderly, substance dependents, victims of interpersonal violence, and people with disabilities.
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 Try This!

True and False. Write *true* if the statement is correct. Otherwise, write *false*.

- _____ 1. Social workers can help individuals as case managers.
- _____ 2. Social workers only serve communities.
- _____ 3. Nongovernment organizations can also help communities.
- _____ 4. Social workers can provide counseling when working with individuals.
- _____ 5. Social workers can also provide direct legal services to victims of interpersonal violence.
- _____ 6. Social workers can only assist people with disabilities in everyday tasks.
- _____ 7. Social workers need the cooperation of many community members to implement a program.
- _____ 8. Substance dependents are taught life skills while under the guidance of social workers.
- _____ 9. Victims of intimate partner violence can only experience either physical or psychological abuse.
- _____ 10. People with disabilities have to face problems with poverty, unemployment, and discrimination.

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Challenge Yourself

Essay. Read the following questions carefully. Write your answers on the space provided below.

1. Do you agree that social workers contribute greatly to the community? Justify your answer using concepts and ideas in the lesson.

2. If you are a social worker, how can you help children who are living on the streets?

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Suggested Rubric for Grading

The rubric below is a suggested one. Your teacher may modify it based on your needs. Consult your teacher for the final rubric.

Criteria	Performance Levels			Suggested Weight	Score
	1 Beginning Proficiency	2 Proficient	3 Advanced Proficiency		
Content	The answers to the questions are not comprehensive. They lack explanations to support the argument.	The answers to the questions are somehow comprehensive. They include explanations to support the argument.	The answers to the questions are comprehensive. They include thorough explanations of the argument.	× 3	
Grammar and Mechanics	The answers had a lot of mechanical and grammatical errors.	The answers had a few mechanical and grammatical errors.	The answers are free of mechanical and grammatical errors.	× 3	
Total Possible Score				18	

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