

# COMMUNITY MAPPING

## What is it?

Community mapping is a participatory learning tool to facilitate understanding of the community's resources and explore issues of access and control as well as gaps. It is done with a diverse group of community members and supports mobilisation and creation of community ownership of the programme.

## Purpose

Community/social mapping is used to help the community identify the existing resources such as the water sources, major roads, the market, farms, schools, and health centres. The community map can facilitate discussions on the enablers and barriers, for example for good nutrition for children in the community, or other topics of interest for formative design of community programmes.

The community map may also be used as a guide for the transect walk, which would also provide verification and expand on the community map.

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## Preparation

**Approximate duration:** 1 hour

**Materials:** large sheets of paper, markers, tape, scissors, notebook, phone/camera.

**Facilitators:** 1-2 facilitators

**Community members:** 4-5 community leaders (women and men), 1-2 community health workers (CHWs).

***Note:** In contexts where men and women need to be separated, different groups can be arranged for the activity.*

*For disability inclusion, mobilize 2-3 caregivers with children with disability (can be generally defined as children with restrictions in mobility, hearing or vision impairment, and/or cognitive impairment) to participate in the community mapping exercise.*

**Setting:** indoor or outdoor, as long as it is shaded, protected from the elements, and participants can draw on a table or the ground.

## Conducting the Activity

1. Introduce the facilitators and explain the purpose of the community mapping activity.
2. Ask permission from community members to record, use and share the information gathered for the design of the community programme. Take notes on discussions throughout the activity.
3. Conduct the mapping (approximately 30 minutes) where participants draw a map of their community, of which they have first-hand knowledge. It is up to participants to decide the boundaries of the community or space they are mapping, but the boundaries should remain within a border that most people can access by walking or a short drive.
4. Ask the participants identify all major landmarks that are important for community members. They can come up with their own coding systems, e.g., using different colors, pictures, symbols, etc. Remind the group to include a legend.

### **Important landmarks and resources:**

- Water sources (such as ponds, rivers, lakes, swamps, bore holes/bole holes, wells, and springs)
  - All houses of children under 59 months of age with disabilities in the village
  - All houses of children under 59 months of age
  - Gardens or farms
  - Schools, childcare centres
  - Health centres, hospitals, outreach posts for growth monitoring promotion, disability support services
5. Ask participants to share their map and present what they have created. **Take notes** on what participants share. Take a photo of the community map.
  6. Ask questions about the map, for example:
    - How did you decide the boundaries of the community?
    - Where do people in the community access food (whether grown, collected or bought)? (You may probe for different kinds of food like meat, fish, eggs, green leafy vegetables, fruits, beans, nuts, legumes, grains).

- How often do people go to markets? To shops? Which markets or shops do people access most? What items would people buy in the market or shop? How do they get there? Who goes to the markets and shops within the household?
- How do households access water? (Discuss the different landmarks on the map or perhaps there are other sources that were not yet noted.) What sources are commonly used? What sources are less used?
- Where do households access sanitation? (Probe whether households have shared or non-shared latrines, the distance, who uses them commonly, any difference between women, men, girls, boys and groups among them, like those with disabilities.)
- Where do people take their children (younger than five years of age in particular) if they are sick? How do they get there?
- Looking at the map, which features support good nutrition? Which contributes to malnutrition?
- What spaces are safe? Who are they safe for?
- What spaces are dangerous? Who are they dangerous for?

## Sample exercises for training:

- 1. Practice Community Mapping:** Break into small groups. Assign a person to be the facilitator. All other members of the group are from the same imaginary village. The facilitator will work with them to develop a community map. Mark main landmarks, water points, fields, houses. Show which parts of the community have malnourished and children with disability. Remember to develop a legend for all the symbols on the map.
- 2. Interpreting Data from Community Maps:** Using the sample community map below, ask the group to highlight: 1) key observations note on the community map of Lugala Village; 2) key challenges for good nutrition of young children in this village.

