

*Community Mapping** will help development facilitators (DFs) to begin developing their relationship with children and youth leaders. It provides a basis for thinking, talking and identifying what is already being done (Step 3 of the Critical Path), and what could be done (Step 4 of the Critical Path), in contributing towards improved child well-being in the community, particularly from the perspective of children and young people. This tool can be used by itself, or in combination with *Photo Voice* or other tools depending on the context.

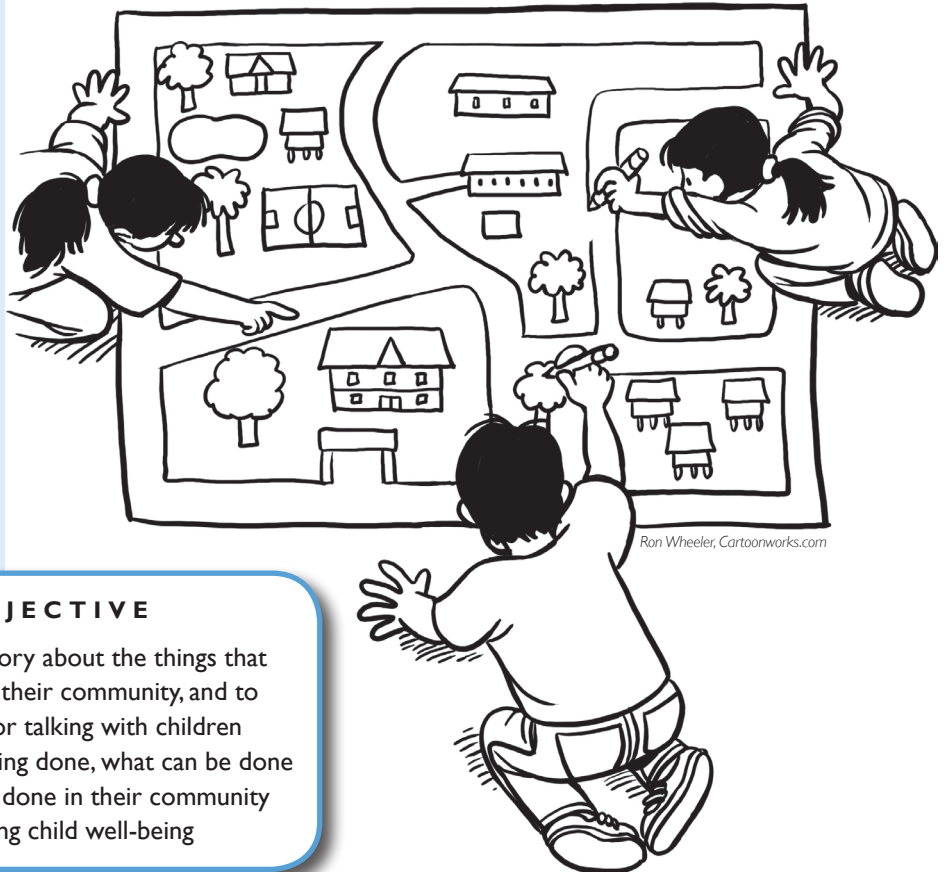
time span

Approximately 1.5 hrs including discussion and note taking

product

A drawing or map which represents the community as it is now (for Step 3 of the Critical Path)

A set of pictures stuck onto the first drawing or map of the community, showing how children and young people would like the community to be different (for Step 4 of the Critical Path)



Ron Wheeler, Cartoonworks.com

OBJECTIVE

- To tell a visual story about the things that children value in their community, and to provide a basis for talking with children about what is being done, what can be done and what will be done in their community towards improving child well-being

who facilitates

One or two development facilitators (DFs) can co-lead with a child or youth facilitator

who participates

This activity is suitable for children 10 years old and above.

Form groups of up to eight children in each group (with boys and girls in separate groups if possible).

This can include child and youth members of the starter group.

materials

- large sheets of flipchart paper
- small cards or sticky notes for 'future' pictures
- tape
- coloured pens or crayons
- notebook for recording discussions

Introduction

This tool can be used for both children and adults and can produce a considerable amount of useful and interesting data. However, the tool requires good facilitation because the DF must ask a lot of relevant questions to encourage helpful reflection. The groups must also record their answers for this tool to be as useful as possible. The important part of this tool is what the children say about their drawings. It is useful to separate boys and girls as they usually have different ideas and priorities that need to be taken into consideration.

TIP

Children often draw 'hybrid' maps that are a combination of picture and map. They are also likely to include representations of people and other non-geographic things. This is a strength of this tool as it gives an opportunity to investigate the social aspects of their lives.

Recommended process

PART 1 – DRAWING THE ‘PRESENT DAY’ MAP (FOR STEP 3)

Do the steps separately for each group of boys and girls.

- 1 Ask children to draw a map of their community. Explain to them they should draw a picture of where things are in their community.
- 2 Don't dictate what they should draw, but if necessary give them general guidance to encourage them to include the following:
 - things or places that are important in their life and their families' lives
 - things or places where they like to spend time, especially socially
 - things or places that are dangerous, worrying or they don't like
 - things or places that are especially important for vulnerable children, including where they live.
- 3 Take a photo of the map for record keeping or keep the map and post it in a place where community members can see it.
- 4 Ask questions based on the facilitation questions below and record their answers.

FACILITATION QUESTIONS

- Why is this place or thing important to you?
- How does this place or thing make your life better?
- Who uses or controls this place or thing?
- Why is this place or thing difficult, dangerous or worrying?

Observe and take note of:

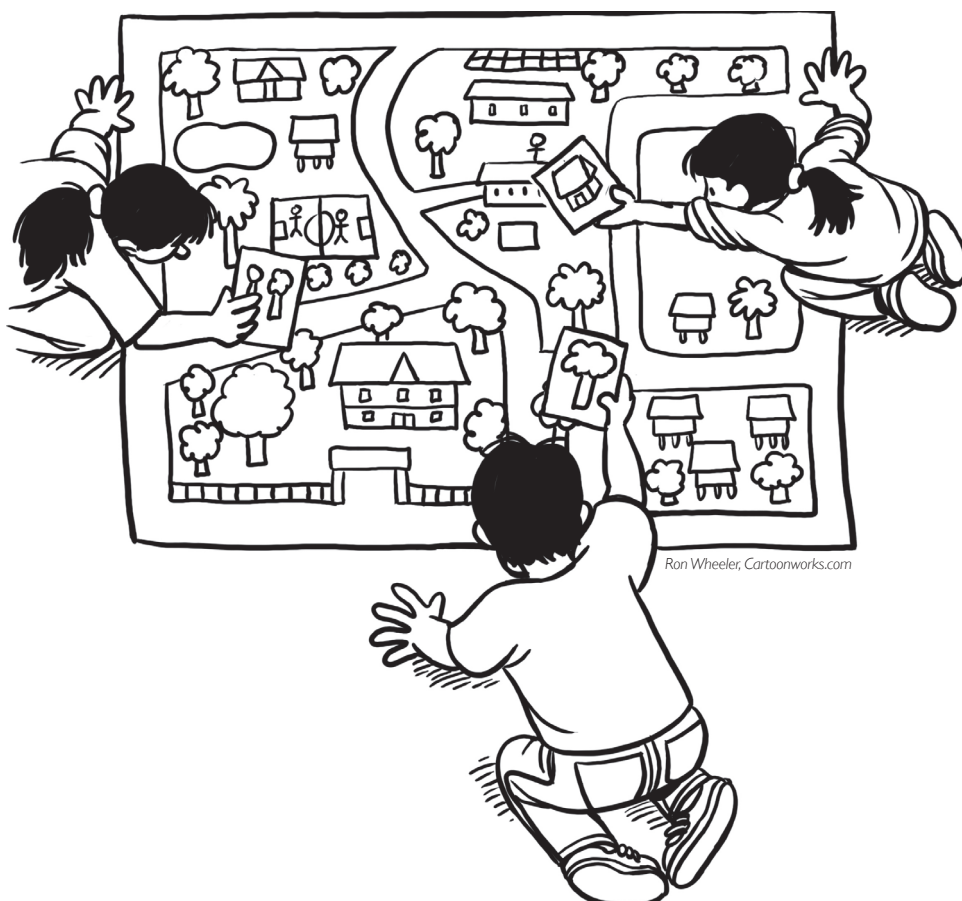
- What do children draw first? This is often the 'centre of their universe' or the place or thing that is most important to them, even if they don't say it.
- It can be hard to represent people's movement on a map and children will often describe it as they are drawing. The development facilitator should take note of this as it can give insight into the social aspects of community life.

PART 2 – DRAWING THE ‘FUTURE’ PICTURES (FOR STEP 4)

- 1 Ask children “What would you like to change in your community to make it better?” and “What is planned or is already changing in your community to make it better?”
- 2 Ask children to draw these changes on the small cards and stick them onto the relevant places on the map.
- 3 Remind them to include changes that would particularly help the most vulnerable children.
- 4 Take a photo of the map for record keeping or keep the map and post it in a place where community members can see it.
- 5 Ask questions based on the facilitation questions on page 3 and record their answers.

FACILITATION QUESTIONS

- Why would these changes be important to you?
- How would these changes make your life better?
- Who could make these changes happen?
- What would they need to make these changes happen?
- What can children do to contribute to these changes?



TIP

If the Photo Voice tool has been used, the photos can be attached directly to this map to give a more complete picture of the children's perception of their community.

Other uses for this tool:

- The photos taken during this process can be used as a project baseline. During evaluation cycles, ask children to repeat the activities in this tool to see how things have changed in their community, and how their ideas and attitudes about what is important to them have changed. Besides giving useful and interesting data, it shows the children that they have been listened to and their views have been valued. If the resources are available, this is a great way to report progress to sponsors.
- This tool can also be used to explore what children view as assets in their community. 'Assets' can be defined as the positive experiences, attitudes, relationships, values, skills, and qualities found in children, peers, families, schools, and communities. Using facilitation questions, ask children about the 'assets' in their community and they can add these to their maps.

*This tool has been adapted from Ervin-Ward, G and Matter, D (2009), *Communities for Child Wellbeing: Tools for Child Focused Programme Design* WorldVision Lao PDR.