

Exploring our context - part 2

What is the purpose?

The purpose of this guidance is to explore the starter group's understanding and definition of the most vulnerable. The starter group identifies characteristics of the most vulnerable and maps the most vulnerable groups and stakeholders who are currently involved in working with the vulnerable.

objectives

- To explore and increase understanding of the most vulnerable in the local context
- To increase understanding and define vulnerability for the local context
- To identify the most vulnerable groups in the primary focus area
- To map the most vulnerable groups in the primary focus area

who participates

Starter group members

time allocation

approximately 4 hours

products

- Descriptions and characteristics of the most vulnerable
- Lists of vulnerable groups in the area
- Maps of the most vulnerable groups in the primary focus area

Note: Keep all of the products developed in this meeting. They will be used again in the next meetings and in future steps of the Critical Path.

who facilitates

The DF identifies starter group members who can co-facilitate. The DF works with the co-facilitator(s) to prepare for the meeting. Each facilitator is clear about what exercises they are facilitating or co-facilitating. Print a copy of this facilitation guidance for each facilitator. See note below.

Note: It is important that the DF supports and facilitates a community-led process and not a WV-led process. From the beginning, DFs begin to coach and mentor starter group members.

process

Exploring our context - part 2

exercise #	time	name of exercise	description of exercise
	30 minutes	Introduction and recap	Starter group members introduce any new starter group members, recap the learning from exercises from Exploring our context - part 1, and provide an overview of the agenda.
1	45 minutes	How does it feel to be vulnerable?	An exercise where starter group members begin to explore what it might feel like to be a vulnerable child
2	45 minutes	What makes children vulnerable?	An exercise where starter group members identify characteristics of children who are not doing well in the community
3	1 hour	Who are vulnerable groups in our area?	An exercise where starter group members identify vulnerable groups in their area
4	1 hour	Where are the most vulnerable?	An exercise where starter group members map their areas, the location of vulnerable groups, and the location of stakeholders currently involved in working with vulnerable groups

exercise #1 How does it feel to be vulnerable?

objective

To explore and increase understanding of the most vulnerable in the local context

time span

approximately 45 minutes

materials

□ cards on page 4

Take a step

What is this tool?

This exercise helps participants experience what it feels like to be vulnerable.

Recommended Process

1. Create a calm atmosphere, ask the participants for silence.
2. Hand out the role cards or photos at random (see list of roles on page 4), one to each participant. Tell them to keep it to themselves and not to show it to anyone else. Note that you can consider substituting some of the roles for situations of children (especially most vulnerable children) identified during the assessment.

Note: These roles can be changed to fit the local situation. However, there should always be a mix with a majority of roles describing children in vulnerable children, and a small percentage who are in moderately good situations and a couple who are in privileged positions.
3. Invite them to read their role card silently.
4. Now, ask them to begin to get into their role. To help, read out some of the following questions, pausing after each one, to give people time to reflect and build up a picture of themselves and their lives:
 - What is your childhood like? What sort of house do you live in?
 - What kind of games do you play? What sort of work do your parents do?
 - What do you do in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening?
 - How much money do your parents earn each month?
 - How do you contribute to the family livelihood?
 - What do you do in your free time, if you have it?
 - What do you do in your holidays, if you have any?
 - What excites you and what are you afraid of?
5. Now ask people to remain absolutely silent as they line up beside each other (as on a starting line for a foot race).
6. Tell the participants that you are going to read out a list of situations or events (statements provided on page 3). Every time that they can answer “yes” to the statement, they should take a step forward. Otherwise, they should stay where they are and not move.
7. Read out the situations one at a time. Pause for a while between each statement to allow people time to step forward and to look around to take note of their positions relative to each other.
8. At the end invite everyone to take note of their final positions. Before discussing the exercise, remind them that they are now ‘themselves’ again.

Take a step notes

Statements

- Your family has never encountered any serious financial difficulty.
- You have a decent house with a television.
- You feel your language, religion, and culture are respected in the society where you live.
- You feel that your opinion on social and political issues matters, and your views are listened to.
- You have never felt discriminated against because of your origin.
- You have adequate social and medical protection for your needs.
- Your family provides high levels of love and support.
- You can go away on holiday with your family once a year.
- You can invite friends for dinner at home.
- You can buy new clothes at least once every three months.
- You can fall in love with the person of your choice.
- You can use and benefit from the Internet.
- You receive support from three or more nonparent adults or peers.
- You go to church regularly or attend another religious institution.
- You go to a school which provides an encouraging, caring environment to learn.
- You have caring neighbours.
- Your parents get involved in your school and homework.
- You feel safe at home, at school and in the neighbourhood.
- Your best friends model positive, responsible behaviour.
- You are encouraged by parents and other adults to do well.
- You spend time in cultural or recreational activities with other young people.
- You are optimistic about your future.

Debriefing

Start by asking participants about what happened and how they felt during the activity and then go on to talk about the issues raised and what they learned. Before they answer any questions, have them share what their role was. Some key questions:

- How did you feel during the exercise?
- How did it feel to step forward? To be left behind? What did this make you feel about yourself and others?
- What reflections do you have about exclusion and vulnerability of children from this exercise?

Daughter of a banker, attending a private school. She sponsors a child and writes regularly.	Son of a local businessman and recent immigrant. Attends state high school. Bullied by peers.	Boy working in a brick factory. Parents are indebted to local moneylenders.
Youth whose parents recently divorced after prolonged domestic violence. He is in foster care.	Girl adopted by a Hollywood star. Lost both parents to AIDS.	Adolescent boy in a juvenile reform centre. His father is an alcoholic and abusive.
Girl who has been trafficked by her uncle. She is trapped in prostitution and unable to communicate with her family.	Boy in primary school. His father is a fisherman and village elder. He helps fish on weekends.	Girl who has been displaced by conflict. She helps her mother teach out of school children.
Adolescent girl, member of a working children's organization. Parents are day laborers.	Adolescent boy whose parents died of AIDS. He cares for three siblings.	Son of a government minister. Currently attending a private boarding school.
Daughter of missionary parents who have lived for years in a remote village.	Adolescent girl whose boyfriend is a gang member. She has dropped out of school.	Boy who is fighting for a rebel militia. His family was killed by government forces.
Adolescent girl with a scholarship to a prestigious high school. Her parents are poor, strong church members.	Girl from an ethnic minority group. Her mother leads a local organization that fights for indigenous rights.	Boy being raised by a single working mother. He is cared for by his grandparents.
Girl from low caste. Forced to drop out of school and get married. She joined a NGO self-help group.	Girl who sells fruit to foreigners and rich nationals on the beach, and does not go to school regularly. She studies English at a private school three days per week.	Boy living and working on the streets. His stepfather beats him. He sniffs glue.
Adolescent girl elected president of the local children's parliament. She helps her mother roll cigarettes.	Disabled boy who is carried to school each day by his father.	Adolescent boy who lost his legs in a mine blast. Campaigns for the rights of other children like her.
Girl who is HIV positive. Cared for by her grandparents. She is barred from school.	Boy who lives with parents and five siblings in a slum.	Boy who lives with his mother and two younger siblings. Juggles on the street for tourists to earn money.
Girl who has lived in several foster homes. Her mother is a drug addict and unable to care for her.	Adolescent boy in a rural setting. His father is a local pastor. He helps leads the children's group in his church.	Girl in high school. Her mother works in a textile factory. She is pregnant.

exercise #2 What makes children vulnerable?

objective

To increase understanding and define vulnerability for the local context

time span

45 minutes

materials

- flipchart paper
- coloured markers
- masking tape
- white cards

product

- Drawings of children with notes about how they are not doing well
- 8 to 10 agreed upon characteristics of the most vulnerable in the local context

Defining vulnerability

Recommended Process

Introduction

The purpose of this exercise is to develop a shared definition of vulnerability for this area.

The previous exercise helped us to understand what it can feel like to be vulnerable, excluded, or to have limited access to the same rights or services available to others.

It is important that the starter group defines vulnerability in their community, discussing what makes children most vulnerable to ending up in the worst situations in their community. In this initial exercise, the starter group will make an initial attempt to define what vulnerability looks like in their community. The definition developed may be revisited later. It may be necessary to sensitize the starter group on some issues of vulnerability that are not acknowledged or have strong stigma, such as children with disabilities or children in domestic work. They can use the following process or other locally appropriate processes to do so.

Facilitator

Now we are going to do a similar exercise to one we did before but this time instead of describing a child who is doing well in this area, we are going to describe a child who is not doing well.

Divide the participants into small groups. Give each group a piece of flipchart paper and some coloured markers.

Ask each group to draw a picture of a child who is not doing well in the center of their paper. Ask them to add notes or pictures to describe some of the signs of how they know the child is not doing well.



Tips for Facilitators

- If participants are writing statements such as 'not healthy' or 'not educated' ask them to describe or draw how they know that the child is 'not healthy'.
- Be careful not to give descriptions, these should come from the participants.
- If groups are having difficulties coming up with descriptions, consider using these probing questions:
 - Do you see any types of exploitation or abuse? If so, what types?
 - Do you see any types of disasters affecting certain households? If so, how is it affecting the children?
 - Do you see extreme situations of children not having what they need? If so, what types of needs are unmet?

Defining vulnerability notes

After the groups have finished their drawings, ask each small group to present their drawing to everyone in the starter group. Discuss similarities and differences between groups.

Now that we have these drawings of children who are not doing well in this area, we are going to use these to help us define vulnerability.

Divide the participants into small groups and give each group 8-10 blank cards. (Assigning participants to new groups will encourage them to share from the last exercise.) Ask each group to use one of the drawings they created earlier. Ask them to use this drawing to identify the **reasons** why these children are not doing well.

For example, if a description says, 'this child is crying', the group would write down on a blank card a reason why they think the child is crying.

The groups will work through their drawings, writing on cards the reasons why the children are not doing well. Write one reason per card.

After the groups have written all the reasons, each group works on their own to arrange their cards in the order of increasing seriousness of each reason.

Once each group has completed the exercise, they should present and explain their answers to everyone in the starter group.

Post all of the cards on the wall and arrange them so that cards that have the same or similar reasons on them are grouped together.

Based on all the reasons posted, work with the starter group to come up with a list of the top 8 to 10 agreed-upon reasons causing vulnerability.

Give each participant 8 to 10 coloured dot stickers. Ask the participants to place stickers on the cards that they think are the most important reasons that cause vulnerability in their area.

Identify the top 8 to 10 selected reasons.

Write this list on a flipchart paper. This list summarises the most important factors causing vulnerability in children in this area.

exercise #3 Who are the vulnerable groups in our area?

objective

To identify the most vulnerable groups in the primary focus area

time span

approximately 1 hour

materials

- flipchart paper
- coloured markers
- masking tape

product

List of the vulnerable groups in the area

Identifying the most vulnerable children

Recommended Process

We have now looked at what it means for children to be vulnerable in this area. We have discussed the characteristics of children who are not doing well and identified some of the reasons why the children are not doing well. Now, we are going to look at which groups of children are vulnerable in our communities.

Using the definitions developed in the previous exercise, consider the following questions together and develop a list of the groups (or types) of most vulnerable children from the discussion.

- Which children are living in the worst situations in this community? Why?
- Which children face the most discrimination in this community? Why?
- Which children have the lowest possibility of a bright (good) future? Why?

Initially, the facilitator should try not to give any examples, but if the group is really struggling with these questions, the facilitator may give 1-2 examples so that they understand the exercise (such as, a child is vulnerable if his mother is chronically ill; or a child is vulnerable if she is a member of a certain tribal minority group; or children working in the brick factory are very vulnerable).

After the list is generated, the facilitator can use the list below (considering the local context and which of these are relevant) to help the group consider if there are children in the area who are:

- living or working on the streets
- sexually exploited
- involved in exploitative labour
- without a primary caregiver
- affected by HIV and AIDs
- affected by armed conflict
- affected by natural disasters
- involved in gangs
- using drugs
- victims of domestic or community-based violence
- affected by stigma associated with disability
- affected by discrimination against certain ethnic or religious groups
- part of landless families
- heading their households
- have a chronically ill member of the household
- living in households that have taken in orphans
- have parents or guardians that have disabilities
- have been sexually abused or trafficked
- in a family with women who sell sex
- married at a young age
- living in institutions (orphanages, group homes, institutions for children with disabilities, prisons, detention centers)
- in a family with parents who abuse alcohol or drugs
- immigrants or refugees

After the list has been developed, discuss with everyone how starter group members would prioritise the vulnerability of the different groups. Which groups are more vulnerable than others? Recognise that different participants may have different perspectives and views. This is an initial discussion and can highlight the need for gathering more information from the individuals from the vulnerable groups, including children.

exercise #4 Where are the most vulnerable?

objective

To map the vulnerable groups in the primary focus area

time span

approximately 1 hour

materials

- flipchart paper
- masking tape
- coloured markers

product

Maps of the most vulnerable groups in the primary focus area

Mapping vulnerability

What is this tool?

This tool is used to help participants create a map that identifies the locations of vulnerable groups and households in their communities. Participants also map children who are at risk, places of safety, and places of risk.

Recommended Process

Now that we have an agreed-upon understanding of vulnerability, we are going to create maps to help us see where the most vulnerable are located for this entire area.

Ask participants to form into small groups based on their knowledge of specific geographic areas, such as neighborhoods, villages, or communities. Participants group together by the places they live or know the best.

Provide each group with a large sheet of flipchart paper, or several sheets taped together.

Ask each group to draw their assigned geographic area. Using the information from the previous exercises, ask the groups to draw on the map the places where the most vulnerable children are located.

Ask the groups to also include on the map:

- Individuals, groups, or organisations who work with and help the most vulnerable
- Groups of children at risk (disaggregated for boys and girls, as well as other groups of children)
- Places of risk for children in the community
- Places of safety
- Places where children (disaggregated for boys and girls, as well as other groups of children) gather during the day and night
- Adult advocates or allies for most vulnerable in the community
- Existence of services for children

When the groups have completed their maps, post the maps on the wall and ask each group to share about their geographic area. Discuss similarities and differences between the areas. Add anything that comes up during the discussion.

After all the groups have shared, look again at the list of vulnerability factors developed in the previous exercise. Ask the participants to reflect and discuss the factors. Is there anything missing? Add factors if needed.

Conclusion

Explain that these exercises will inform the starter group about who to include in the upcoming community engagement process.

Check to see if there are any outstanding questions before closing the meeting.