

*Photo Voice** helps development facilitators (DFs) to begin developing their relationship with child or youth leaders. It provides a useful basis for thinking, talking about and identifying what is already being done (Step 3), what can be done (Step 4), and what will be done (Step 5) in the community in contributing towards the well-being of children from the perspective of children and young people. This tool can be used by itself, or in combination with the *Community Mapping* tool, depending on the context.

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 to contribute towards child well-being

time span

20 min for photo taking
Up to 1 hour for discussion and note taking for each step

product

A series of ten photographs with interpretive paragraphs for Step 3 of the Critical Path

A series of five to ten more photographs with explanations that build on Step 3 with a particular emphasis on the most vulnerable children, for Step 4 of the Critical Path

who facilitates

Two development facilitators (DFs)
Youth DFs if applicable

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

- written results from the tool under focus
- digital cameras (preferably one for each group)
- laptop computer
- photo printer (preferably a portable one but a laptop could be used if a printer is not available)
- notebook



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Introduction

This tool proves very interesting for children (and for adults) and can produce a large amount of useful data. However, it relies heavily on good facilitation skills, as the DF must ask lots of relevant questions and record the answers. **The important part of this tool is what the children SAY about their photos**, not the photos themselves. An adult cannot interpret the photos - this must be done by the children themselves.

It is useful to separate boys and girls as they usually have different ideas and priorities that need to be taken into consideration.

TIP

If you do not have the technical resources for this tool (such as a camera, laptop or printer), this tool can be adapted. Walk around the community with children as 'tour guides' and ask them to point out their special and important places. Either ask the children to draw pictures or take careful notes of these places.

Recommended process

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

- 1 Ask children to list ten places in the village that are important to them, such as:
 - places that are important for their development
 - places where they spend their free time
 - places or things that make their life difficult, or they would like to see improved.
- 2 Give each group a digital camera and show them how to use it.
- 3 Ask them to go around the village and take photos of the places they listed. Ensure each child takes a turn at using the camera.
- 4 Download or print the photos.
- 5 Encourage the children to talk about themselves. Use the suggested key questions below, but revise them for each context. Remember to GUIDE discussion, not IMPOSE ideas.
- 6 Have a notetaker write down the discussion. Ensure that the notetaker does not summarise or write down the discussion in their own words, but rather take notes word-for-word of what the children share.
- 7 Keep a copy of these photos and answers and give a copy to the children. These will be needed again for the next Step of the Critical Path.
- 8 If after using this tool, not enough information has been gathered to answer all of the Guiding Questions, use the *Community Mapping* tool, or similar tool as a further prompt.

ADAPTATION FOR STEP 3

Complete the basic process asking facilitation questions to answer the Guiding Questions for Step 3 of the Critical Path (see *Good Practices for Putting WV's Programmes into Action*).

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

ADAPTATION FOR STEP 4

Use the photos taken and explanations recorded for Step 3 (or repeat the basic process) but now use information based on the children's perception of what the most vulnerable children in their community might think. Ask facilitation questions to answer the Guiding Questions (see *Good Practices for Putting WV's Programmes into Action*). Check the existing explanations first as many of the answers may have already been provided.

- Why is this place or thing important to you?
- How does this place or thing make your life better?
- How could this place or thing make life better?
- What places or things are missing that could make life better?
- Who could help and who does help to make children's lives better?

Other uses for this tool:

- This tool can also be used with younger children as long as the facilitator adapts the questions appropriately. In some communities, this can be an engaging tool for adults too, especially where a digital camera is a novelty.
- Photos taken during this process can be used as part of the 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 their views have been listened to and valued. If there are sufficient resources, the results of this tool are an excellent 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. Children can take photographs of what they think are 'assets' in their communities.