

## Needs Assessment Tools Handout

Description of Tool	Examples of Questions to Ask
<p><b>Community Theater</b> The children and adults will work together to identify an important community need, a strength, or an asset of their community. Develop a short skit or drama around that issue. Perform your drama to the large group. When you finish, discuss the issue with the group using the SHOWD questions.</p>	<p><b>SHOWD questions</b></p> <p>S = What do you <u>S</u>ee? H = What is <u>H</u>appening? O = Does this happen in <u>O</u>ur place? W = <u>W</u>hy does this happen? D = What will we <u>D</u>o about it?</p>
<p><b>Dream Trees</b> As a group, draw two trees with roots, a trunk, and branches. On one tree, focus on the problems. On the second tree focus on the solution or on your dreams for your community. Use Post-It notes or cards to add notes to the trunk, roots, and branches.</p>	<p><b>Problem Tree</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the main problem or need (the trunk)?</li> <li>▪ What are the causes of this problem (the roots)?</li> <li>▪ What are the results of the problem (the leaves and fruits)?</li> </ul> <p><b>Dream Tree</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Think of your community as you would like it to be. What major change would you like to see (the trunk)?</li> <li>▪ What root changes (in attitudes, skills or behaviors) are needed to do this (the roots)?</li> <li>▪ How would this make it a better community (the leaves and fruits)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transect Walks</b> Go for a walk around the community with the children. As you go, ask the children to point out special features of their community.</p>	<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is important to you about your community? Why?</li> <li>▪ What are your favorite parts? What do you like about your community? Why?</li> <li>▪ What don't you like? Why?</li> <li>▪ What are you afraid of? Why?</li> <li>▪ Where do the children with disabilities or special needs live?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ranking</b> Give each child ten beans or ten stones. First list some of the positive aspects or strengths of their community. Ask the children to place their beans next to these positive aspects to vote or show which are most important to them. Then list some of the problems or needs of the community. Again the children will vote with their beans on which problems or needs are most important to them.</p>	<p><b>Which are most important to you?</b></p> <p>Positive aspects or strengths of your community:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ●●●</li> <li>2. ●●</li> <li>3. ●●●●</li> <li>4. ●</li> </ol> <p>Problems or needs of your community:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ●●</li> <li>2. ●●●●</li> <li>3. ●</li> <li>4. ●●●</li> </ol>

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<p><b>Mapping</b> Ask the children to draw a map or drawing of their community. Their maps should answer one or more specific questions.</p>	<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Where do you live?</li> <li>▪ Where do you go every day?</li> <li>▪ Where do you come from?</li> <li>▪ What are your favorite parts of your community?</li> <li>▪ What are the worst parts of your community?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mapping the Future</b> Ask the children to draw a map or drawing to show what they would like their community to be like in the future.</p>	<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What changes would you like to see?</li> <li>▪ How would you like to improve your community?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Daily Activities Chart</b> Give each child a large piece of paper. Ask them to draw pictures to show the activities of a typical day. Also show how long this lasts—how much time are they in school? How much time they spend playing, watching television, working, or helping with chores?</p>	<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What do you do on a typical day?</li> <li>▪ How long does each activity last?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Songs</b> Ask the children to make up a song or rap song about their concerns for their community.</p>	
<p><b>Focus Group</b> Form a focus group of eight to twelve children of similar interests (such as street children, children from one neighborhood, or children with special needs). Sit comfortably in a circle. One facilitator will lead the discussion of an issue pertinent to them, while another will take notes.</p>	

**Source:**

These needs assessment tools are adapted from *Roots 7: Child Participation*, 2004, Tearfund.