Mobility Map

To explore where people go, for what reasons, the frequency of their visits, distances covered, and modes of transport used.

Steps in the Process

1. Ask participants to construct a map showing where people go and for what reasons.

2. Start with an agreed picture/symbol of their community and ask the open questions: What places to you go to? What other places have you been to?

3. Ask participants to draw symbols to represent the different towns / locations that are mentioned. This may be done by asking the participants to identify a distinguishing feature of each place and to draw a simple picture of that on a card to lay out on the ground. You should also ask them to write the place names on the cards (with help if needed).

4. Once a good range of places have been mentioned and cards are laid out around the central card of the village, ask the participants: For what reason do you go (or have you been) to each place?

5. The reasons may vary enormously. They may include market, work, health, education, visiting relatives, etc.

6. Ask participants to draw simple picture cards to represent each of these reasons.

7. When all the places / reasons have been completed, ask each of the participants to put a stone (or bean, etc.) next to each symbol, if they have been to that place for that reason. You might wish to separate out men and women to get a gender breakdown of mobility. Add these up and place a number by each card.

8. Once the map is completed, a large copy should be made on paper.

Ideas for Discussion

- Were people more or less mobile in the past? Why?
- What are the main reasons people are travelling?
- Is there a difference in the mobility of men / women / old / young? If so why? Can / should this change?
- What languages are spoken in the different places? Is this an obstacle?
- Are people travelling long distances for services such as health and education that should be available locally?

Ideas for Action

- Mobilization around road improvement, particularly for repairing / maintaining access roads to remote communities
- Exploring the possibilities of working cooperatively to market / transport crops out of the area.
- Mobilization with the district education / health office to expand access to quality education / healthcare in the area.

Ideas for Literacy and Numeracy

- Beginners might focus on practicing reading and writing the names of the different places on the map. Practical activities such as reading the names and distances on road signs or on the front of buses could also be useful.
- Participants might be asked to write phrases about where they go and why.
- More advanced participants might be encouraged to write letters relating to the important actions that they have identified. For example, writing letters to government departments, making the case for improving road maintenance or upgrading a particular school.

Suggested Uses

- A similar process could be used to create a map of displacement or migration. In the context of conflict, participants could be asked identify the number of people who have been displaced, where they have been displaced to and why. It could also be useful to explore the number of people who have arrived in the area having been displaced from other parts of the country. In a migration context, the focus would be on the different places that people go to in search of seasonal employment - the numbers who go, the duration of their stay and changes over the past few years. You could also add the number of people who have permanently left the community and where they have gone to. Discussion might focus on the causes and effects of displacement / migration, the problems of reintegration and ways in which those involved could best be supported. See Reflect Mother Manual, p. 228-229.

References

- Reflect Mother Manual, ActionAid International, 1996, p. 207-212.