

# Agricultural map



To show the different crops grown and / or livestock kept in a community.

## Steps in the process

1. The group may wish to begin the exercise by taking a walk around the area to note key features they wish to represent and analyse.
2. Initially, a map should be created on a large scale on the floor or any large surface, so that all participants can actively contribute and clearly see what is going on.
3. Start the map by adding major points of reference, such as main roads or important buildings, to help people to orient themselves and therefore participate more actively.
4. Many different materials can be used to represent the different crops grown and / or animals kept. These could be anything that is easily available and easy to move, such as sticks, stones, etc. The meanings of the symbols should be selected and agreed upon by the whole group. Movable objects are crucial, as everyone needs to be able to go back, change and add elements as the map develops. Less assertive participants find this particularly helpful.
5. Once complete, the group can reflect on the map as a whole, drawing out insights or conclusions to stimulate discussion. The completed map often enables people to see issues or phenomena in a new light - as they are removed from daily reality whilst simultaneously gaining new perspectives of it.
6. In some cases the "real" map may then be used as a starting point for developing an "ideal" or "visioning" map, showing future changes, whether

practical and achievable, or idealistic and visionary. In some cases such maps can become practical planning tools.

7. For the map to be recorded on paper or card, participants need to identify pictures, symbols or words with which to label key elements on the map. Once down on paper, participants may wish to make their own, smaller copies.

## Questions for discussion

- What are the advantages / disadvantages of the different crops / animals?
- Which crops / animals are produced for the market and which are for family use?
- How has the situation changed in the past 10 / 20 / 30 years?
- What are the different responsibilities of women / men / girls / boys in relation to each crop / animal?
- What are the different soil types / physical conditions in the area? Which crops are appropriate to these?

## Suggestions for use

- Building on the agricultural map, a similar process could be used to develop a **land tenancy map**. This involves classifying land into various types such as small holding, large plantation, rented land, share cropping, cooperative land, land in dispute, government land, etc. discussion is likely to focus on land distribution, the fairness / unfairness of the situation, changes over time, the situation for women, land reforms, land disputes, land invasions, land inheritance and ownership, the cost of land, and legal and non-legal means of challenging land ownership. It's important to be aware of the context as the issues likely to emerge can be extremely politically sensitive. For more information see: Reflect Mother Manual, p. 150-151.
- If the knowledge is well recorded, and rigorously documented over time or in different communities, then it can be used as evidence to convince decision makers, either at local, national or regional level to change unjust land tenancy structures as part of a **research project** with a **lobby/advocacy goal**.

## Related tools

- **Access & control matrix** - to analyse who has the power to access and control different resources in a community and who is denied this.

## Resources

- [Reflect Mother Manual](#), ActionAid International, 1996, p. 148-9.