

How to Organize Community Mapping

What is Community Mapping?

Community mapping is a participatory process of creating maps or visual representations of the intervention community as seen by community members. Maps can be drawn for various reasons: to determine the context of stigma in the community; for demographic, social and residential classification; field and land use; mobility, etc. The uses of maps are as varied as their type. For IPC program development, Community Mapping is a tool for planning, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating the program.

Why Community Mapping?

Some of the reasons to include community mapping in IPC program development are:

- ◆ To gain insider perspective of the community
- ◆ To identify resources and community infrastructure that may be beneficial to the IPC program
- ◆ To establish baseline information about the target population

What Do You Need For Community Mapping?

Community mapping is a hands-on activity. There is the need for an open space where a group of people can gather together to work on the creation of the map. A variety of materials can be used to create the map. Materials can include: sticks, stones, paper, ashes, empty tins, water, various colors of crushed chalk (where available), charcoal and any other locally available materials as chosen by the group. Often, mapping activities are conducted outdoors, and participants can gather natural materials from the surrounding area. Most often, maps are drawn on the ground, by tracing into the dirt.

Steps to Conduct a Community Mapping Exercise

There are two primary approaches to designing a Community Map. The first involves having each map-maker construct their own version of the map using a central starting point for reference such as a place of worship, the chief's house, etc. Once completed, map-makers can bring their ideas to the larger map for construction. The second involves having map-makers assigned to a particular aspect of the map, like putting in tree markers or stores. Map-makers work in collaboration to develop the map of the community. The decision between these two methods may be based on the number of participants and the type of group interaction you hope to encourage.

1. Decide what type of map to be drawn (social and residential, population, mobility, resources, etc). Use your IPC program to guide you in this decision.
2. Identify community members and/or target group members who are familiar with the location and the subject matter and who are willing to

- share their knowledge. Try to gather a diverse group of map-makers to gain greater insight into the community.
3. Together with community members choose a suitable place to construct the map.
 4. Let the members agree on which items or materials should be used to represent each object.
 5. Be sure to construct a key. This will allow you to know that red rocks are for stores and not for churches, etc.
 6. The map should show:
 - ♦ Major infrastructure (health centers, local government offices, schools, worship centers, water sources, markets, bars, brothels, etc.)
 - ♦ Prominent landmarks not included above. This can include trees or other buildings like people's houses.
 - ♦ Other features of relevance to the team
 7. Using a pencil, accurately transfer the map to paper. It might be useful to make more than one copy.
 8. Include the map-makers' names on the map in recognition of their contributions.
 9. Include date and map location for record purposes.
 10. Keep the map on display for map-makers and program participants to see.