Episcopal
Relief & Development
Working Together for Lasting Change

# Wellbeing Map

## I. Description:

The Wellbeing Map is a group exercise that reveals people's perceptions of what constitutes or depicts wellbeing. Specific wellbeing characteristics can be explored to categorize resilient households or disaster-prepared households and communities.

## II. Purpose:

The Wellbeing Map helps identify people's definitions and indicators of wellbeing, as well as reveal existing socio-economic stratification within a community. The specific characteristics of low, medium and high wellbeing are decided upon by the community members participating in the exercise, and thus give insight into people's preferences and values. The information discovered during the exercise can be used by project staff and community groups to target project participants, ensure social inclusion, and discern participant-identified goals (dreams) and indicators of higher well-being.

## III. Project Cycle Application:

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| **1 - Assessment Phase** | Can be used to help people develop their community profile of demographics and socio-economic information. |
| **2 - Planning Phase** | Can be used to help people describe their individual and/or shared visions for the changes they want to achieve, and identify indicators or benchmarks to target as project results. |
| **3 - Implementation & Monitoring Phase** | Can be used to focus or redirect peoples' engagement of new or additional community members to ensure inclusion of those who may benefit but are not currently participating, and/or those within the lowest level of community-identified wellbeing indicators. Can be used to verify that project and participant activities are in agreement with people's real-time values and perceptions of wellbeing. |
| **4 - Evaluation Phase** | Can be used to help people measure/demonstrate that the pre-project proportion of community members in each wellbeing level have positively changed. |
| **5 - Reporting Phase** | Can be used to help people illustrate their program successes, and actual progress toward their pre-conceived wellbeing visions. |

## IV. Facilitation Steps:

### Step 1: Preparation

Prepare for the exercise by identifying a place to conduct the discussion, e.g., a hall with a chalkboard and chalk or a place for people to sit around poster paper. Materials required include: at least three sheets of large paper, a variety of markers, and post-it notes.

### Step 2: Introduction

The exercise should take about 1 hour depending on the level of debate and conversation within the community. Inform participants that you would like their help so that you can learn more about their community. Emphasize that this exercise is going to explore their ideas of wellbeing, and that it will be based on examples of wellbeing that are important to them, not national or global standardized wealth or other wellbeing criteria.

### Step 3: Exercise Instructions

**Institution Strengthening:** Participatory Methodologies
**Tool:** Wellbeing Map

1ˢᵗ  Instruct the participants to sit in a circle, and place three large sheets of paper and markers in the middle.

2ⁿᵈ  Ask for three volunteers to help with record-keeping, i.e., one per paper.

3ʳᵈ  Explain that you would like to learn more about their community on three different contextual levels of wellbeing - i.e. low level of wellbeing, medium level of wellbeing, and high level of wellbeing. Explain that each level of wellbeing will be captured on its own paper (hence the three sheets and volunteer recorders). Ask the recorders (left to right; low, medium, high) to write the level of their wellbeing on the top edge of their paper.

4ᵗʰ  Explain that you would like the community's help in defining the characteristics of each level (low, medium, high). Explain that you have a listing of possible household wellbeing characteristics that you will share, one-by-one, and that you would like them to discuss their community's importance of each characteristic and to provide real-life examples of what wellbeing means to them at each level. You may help them to understand by sharing the following example:

> *"In some communities, one characteristic of household wellbeing is the number of animals the <u>household</u> owns. For example, a low wellbeing household would be exemplified by two or three chickens, a medium wellbeing household would be characterized by an additional 1 to 3 goats, and a high wellbeing household would be characterized by an additional 1 to 2 cows."*

Be sure that everyone understands before continuing.

5ᵗʰ  One-by-one introduce the following possible characteristics of wellbeing, focusing the discussion on wellbeing examples at the individual household level.

| Wellbeing Assets | 1- Household Assets (type of house/construction, rooms, furnishings, other) <br> 2- Water & Sanitation Assets (water, latrine, etc.) <br> 3- Natural Assets (type and/or dimensions of land, forest, etc.) <br> 4- Livestock Assets (types of animals) <br> 5- Transport Assets (car, tractor, pushcart, etc.) |
|---|---|
| Wellbeing Activities | 6- Livelihood Activities (types of agriculture, small business, both, other) <br> 7- Access to Resources (regular or inconsistent income, savings, credit) <br> 8- Employment (migrant workers, day laborers, self-employed, employs others) |
| Wellbeing Values | 9- Power Structures (ethnic origin, relationships, traditional roles, other) <br> 10- Religious Affiliations and/or other social groups <br> 11- Work Ethic <br> 12- Other |

- For each characteristic (1-12), be sure to give the community members time to understand, discuss, and decide on the thee different examples representing how the wellbeing characteristic differs between households at the low, medium and high wellbeing level.
- Ensure that each recorder captures on paper the community members' example of the household wellbeing characteristics for their respective wellbeing level.
- It may be possible that some of the wellbeing characteristics (1-12) that you ask about are not important to the community, and they therefore may choose to not include them; likewise the community may come up with their own without specific prompting.

6ᵗʰ  After all of the different characteristics have been listed for each of the three levels, explain that you would now like the community members' help in identifying how the households in their community are distributed across the three wellbeing levels.

- Ask for 10 volunteers, and give each volunteer 10 post-it notes.
- Explain that each post-it note represents 10% of their community's population, and that each volunteer holding 10 post-it notes holds 100% representation.
- Explain that all 10 volunteers to use their own knowledge and divide up their post-it notes by proportion into the three wellbeing categories, i.e., each volunteer will decide what percent of the population falls within the low wellbeing level, medium wellbeing level, and high wellbeing

level. For example, if 40% are low, then the volunteer will place 4 post-it notes on the low sheet of paper, if 40% are medium, then 4 post-it notes on the medium sheet, etc.

- Each volunteer will do his/her own estimation and place his/her own post-it notes.
- After all volunteers have posted their notes, engage all participants in a tabulation of the subtotal for each category, ensuring that the grand total is equivalent to 100%. Write the final sub-total percent on each sheet of paper (i.e., % of population estimated at low, % estimated at medium, and % estimated at high).

**Step 4:** Debrief & Learning *(Look, Think, Plan)*

After the conclusion of the exercise, encourage a round of applause for everyone's participation and contributions. In line with a vision-setting wellbeing purpose for the use of the Wellbeing Map exercise, facilitate a learning dialogue with questions such as:

- How did the exercise make you feel?
- What does your Wellbeing Map tell you about the level of wellbeing of members in your community? What did you discover or learn that was new? What surprised you?
- What types of wellbeing characteristics are the most common? Which are most coveted? Why?
- What *new* vision or project ideas does the Wellbeing map create for you? How can the Wellbeing Map help you to establish personal or community-wide development goals?

- ❖ Post exercise, project staff can also use the characteristics revealed in the middle and higher wellbeing categories to develop community-identified indicators of achievement for a project, i.e., as the basis of community-led planning, monitoring and evaluation activities.

In line with a participant-targeting purpose for the use of the Wellbeing map exercise, facilitate a learning dialogue with questions such as:

- What does your Wellbeing Map tell you about the level of wellbeing of people in your community? Are there more low, middle or high?
- Are there specific zones within the community where the majority of low, medium and high households live? Ask participants to explain.
- How can this exercise help you to ensure that you are including and respecting those most in need in your development conversations and projects?

- ❖ Post exercise, project staff can also have a planning discussion with the community or parish committee to ensure their activities are inclusive of all community members (wellbeing levels).
- ❖ If this exercise is done after a People's Map (Tool 1.1), use the wellbeing categories to mark in different colors the different wellbeing zones or areas (or households) in the community.

## V. Useful Hints:

- Be sure to have community participants identify **their own** wellbeing characteristics. For illiterate populations, these can be documented by symbols or icons that are locally understood.
- **Role play can help people to overcome barriers** of social hierarchy or language. Encourage those who don't often express their opinion or are less articulate to join in the conversation.
- Be aware that the use of the tool may bring out feelings of inadequacy or reveal glaring inequities within the community. **Be cautious and intentional** about the use of empowering language when speaking of 'low wellbeing' so that community participants who fall into this category are not stigmatized or discouraged.
- If appropriate, you could conduct parallel or follow-up Wellbeing Map exercises to reveal the perceptions of specific sub-groups, e.g., by gender, age or another project-relevant demographic.

## VI. Pairing Pathways: The Wellbeing Map is useful when paired with:

- Other mapping exercises, such as People's Map and Transect Walk, to illustrate or overlay areas or households of lower-wellbeing, and/or to verify that identified project areas and participants fit the targeted wellbeing criteria.
- Seasonal Calendar to explore how household wellbeing may fluctuate throughout the year.
- Contextual Bible Study on Matthew 5: The Beatitudes. This passage can be used to examine teachings on bringing to the forefront the most vulnerable and serving those most marginalized in society.

## VII. Examples of Tool Usage

Images: Results of Community Wellbeing Mapping in Myanmar (2018)
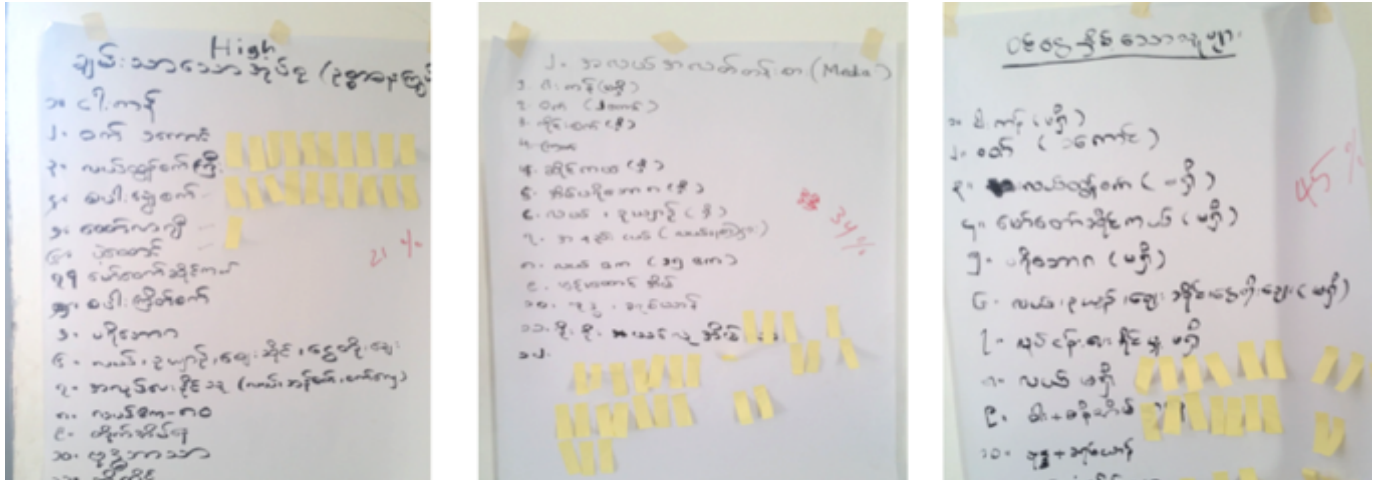


| **High Wellbeing Household** *21% of the community* | **Middle Wellbeing Household** *34% of the community* | **Low Wellbeing Household** *45% of the community* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Livestock assets: 5 pigs, 1 cow, many chickens<br>2. Agriculture assets: Home-garden, 80 acres of paddy and a fish pond<br>3. Transport assets: motorcycle, motorboat, tractor, threshing machine<br>4. Household assets: brick house, many furnishings (beds, TV), flush toilet<br>5. Livelihood assets: farm, garden, shops, loaning capital, provides jobs to others<br>6. Religious assets: All are Buddhist | 1. Livestock assets: 2 pigs, many chickens<br>2. Agriculture assets: Home-gardens and 15acre paddy<br>3. Transport assets: motorcycle, cultivator<br>4. Household assets: timber house, limited furnishings, fly-proof pit toilet<br>5. Livelihood assets: farm, garden<br>6. Religious assets, Buddhist and Christian members | 1. Livestock assets: 1 pig, many chickens<br>2. Agriculture assets: home-gardens<br>3. Transport assets: none<br>4. Household assets: bamboo house, fly-proof pit toilet<br>5. Livelihood assets: no regular income, some are migrant workers<br>6. Religious assets: Buddhist and Christian members |

## VIII. Sources

Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO). *Participatory Approaches: A facilitator's guide Tools, Part III Toolkit*. 2009
http://www.cropwildrelatives.org/fileadmin/templates/cropwildrelatives.org/upload/In_situ_Manual/VSO_Facilitator_Guide_to_Participatory_Approaches_Tools.pdf

*BSR's Participatory Learning and Action Toolkit (2012)*
https://herproject.org/files/toolkits/HERproject-Participatory-Learning.pdf