TOOL:

COMMUNITY MAPPING GUIDE

Community mapping is an important step in beginning the engagement process with persons of concern. It provides the foundation for developing a communication plan for information provision, and feedback. The process aims to better understand the trusted structures that exist in the community and their levels of influence. Identifying the key influencers in a community is important for determining how to engage with the community when providing information and collecting feedback. This understanding also forms the basis of engagement plans for different groups in the community.

Relationship Mapping

Meaningful participation and Inclusion requires awareness of the different influencers in the operating environment, and how these specifically affect different community groups. Relationship mapping is an extension of the community mapping process that goes a step further after identifying community structure. It looks beyond the surface to the underlying relationships between the different structures and how these affect different groups in the community.

Preparation

Community Mapping should be done by UNHCR and partners as part of an internal planning process in which relevant staff inform the mapping from their understanding of the community through their daily interaction. The exercise should be done with different community groups as different groups in an environment are impacted and experience the community structures differently.

The exercise should also be done with different community groups as different groups in an environment are impacted by and experience the community structures differently. This is particularly true for marginalized groups or minorities that may have limited or no access to the community communication structures identified.

Process

- Ask participants to list all stakeholders who influence their lives.

- Ask participants to group them in order of influence and importance and map these on colour coded paper/ circles.

Most Important   More Important   Important

- Probe for additional information with questions like: Which ethnic/religious groups exist in
the community? Which are the largest? Most influential? Are persons of concern from the same groups? What are the main languages are spoken?

- Ask participants to draw arrows showing the nature of the relationships between different groups- e.g. Straight arrows indicate good relations broken arrow shows broken relations, wavy arrows can show indifference.

- Document any debates or differences of opinion that may arise between participants.

- Document the discussions on power relationships and implications for the Pilot.

⟶ Good

⤏ Strained Relationship

Indifferent Relationship

Results

The resulting information is useful for determining which community systems or structures are most important to engage with for the success of the programme. That is, which structures need to have an information
provision plan created for them and what means of communication would be most accessible
to them. It also highlights systems that may be perceived as negative or positive by persons of concern. When the mapping is done with
community groups, the information is important for determining the most accessible and influential (both positive and negative) systems available to engage with a specific population group.

For example: The below is an example of a mapping process with a group of women, with examples of the groups identified.

Population Group: Women (Ages 25-45)