

**Participatory mapping**

In scenarios with very little to no access to the area where the program is being implemented, a participatory qualitative mapping approach can be used to digitize program-relevant locations.

*Methodology*

The participatory mapping will use a qualitative approach collecting data through participatory mapping Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). With limited to no access to the location where the program is implemented this approach is using an area of knowledge (AOK) methodology design as applied in various inaccessible locations by [REACH Initiative.](https://www.reach-initiative.org/what-we-do/publications/) The AOK methodology refers to an approach where respondents, who have recently left the inaccessible area, are interviewed about the conditions in the location they left. Because of the access constraint the interviews should take place in the location they have arrived at, which is accessible to the team conducting the interview. For example, people may leave the reduced access location to access different services or markets, or they may have left the reduced access location as they were migrating to another location. As people are coming to accessible areas the team has the opportunity of interviewing them in the new accessible location.

*Sampling*

A purposive and snowballing sampling approach should be used for all FGDs. The FGD respondents should include people with recent knowledge about the reduced access location where the program of interest is being implemented. Ideally, the respondents should not have left the reduced access location more than 3 months ago. Depending on the type of locations to be mapped the respondents should include informants with expertise on what is being mapped. For example, if the objective of the participatory mapping FGD is to map WASH infrastructures, FGD respondents could include population groups culturally known to be responsible for fetching water in the area (often women), or respondents with technical knowledge about the existing WASH infrastructures in the location of reduced access. The respondents for the FGD should be recruited from arrival points for people arriving from the reduced access location, for instance markets, reception centers or IDP camps.

The number of respondents per FGDs should be 5-8 and, when possible, separate FGDs should be conducted for women and men, youth and elders. Ideally approximately 10% of the FGDs should include at least one person with a disability to be able to capture access challenges experienced by people with a disability. The respondents in each FGD should be from the same area to maintain continuity in the discussion. Where possible, the FGD facilitator should translate the discussions; otherwise, local translators should be hired to translate the discussions.

*Data collection*

The questionnaire for the FGDs and mapping exercise will be informed by the objective of the mapping exercise. The mapping exercise will take place alongside the question route and will include mapping major relevant landmarks such as roads and rivers in the program area either a reference map of the program area or a blank flip charge paper. Thereafter, the respondents are asked to place the locations relevant to the program on the map. During the FGD the facilitator should assign a volunteer from the FGD to mark the relevant landmarks and specific locations on the map. To make the map as accurate as possible a reference map of the program area should be printed ahead of the FGD in minimum size A3. If a reference map of the program area is not available, the map can be drawn on a blank flip charge. The FGDs should take place in locations where the team conducting the interview have safe access to, and where a private discussion can be facilitated.

The number of FGDs to be conducted for the same program areas depends on when saturation of the findings from the FGD is reached. Ideally 2-3 mapping exercises should be conducted for the same area and program-relevant locations. The different maps generated from each FGD should be used to triangulate the locations mapped and thus be used as a validation of the map.

During the FGDs a note taker should be assigned to take as detailed notes as possible. When possible, the notes should be verbatim of the discussions and include notes of interactions between the FGD participants and note potential disagreements of location of the mapped indicators.

The following questionnaire and FGD facilitation guidelines can be used as an example but should be adjusted to the objective of the mapping exercise and the program indicators to be mapped.

[Participatory Mapping – Facilitation guide and questionnaire route](https://mercycorpsemea.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/paqhq/_layouts/15/doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7Bcccd03f8-50fb-4e42-9d75-9c355d5cfec2%7D&file=program%20indicator%20mapping%20-%20%20facilitation%20guide%20and%20questionnaire%20route.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&cid=663ab333-caeb-4864-986d-b24f02d706b4)

[Data analysis plan](https://mercycorpsemea.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/PaQHQ/EYvsF9AI0wRBuFgmZ-tum8wBMpN06dguqhCxqpMhUUn_9g?e=siJVEW)

*Analysis*

As soon as possible after completing the FGDs, the notes taken during the FGD should be transcribed and translated where applicable and saved on a central server with restricted access. The hard copy of the maps developed in the FGDs should be photographed and transcribed into an electronic version of the map (see table x below).

Once both discussions and the maps have been transcribed, a simple saturation grid should be completed to keep track of new information collected and monitor when a saturation has been reached. If resources allow it further qualitative analysis can be conducted using MAX QDA or other qualitative data analysis software that the team is comfortable using.

*Data verification*

Because several maps are generated for the same area, the maps may have some variations. The variations and similarity of where indicators are mapped should be used to assess the validity of the map. If the same program-relevant location (e.g. a market) is mapped in the same location more than once, the accuracy of that location is assumed to be higher compared to if the same market has been mapped in different locations. The accuracy of the mapped location can be illustrated when transcribing the maps into *Google My Maps* by adding a note to the mapped location describing the consistency of how the given location was mapped. Additionally, due to the margin of error and slight variation expected between the mapped locations, if indicators are approximately mapped in the same location a location between the two locations should be selected. One master map for each program location with the relevant locations mapped should be generated.

*For tips and tricks on how to create a context map using Google My Maps see* [*this*](https://mercycorpsemea.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/PaQHQ/EQRk2UWs0z9OtAhZ5UHPHY8BwZucIWqBaMsrwGyeMxRZ3A?e=RLe5HL) *guidance.*