

Child Status Index

Tool

Topic	Key-Issue	1 - very bad	2 - bad	3 - fair	4 - good	A
Food Security	<i>Quantity of food and frequency of meals</i>	Children rarely have food and go to bed hungry most nights	Children frequently have less food to eat than they need and complain of hunger	Children have enough to eat some of the time, depending on the season or food supply	Children are consistently well fed and eat regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many meals do most children eat per day? • Do children often complain of hunger? • What are the main challenges families face in providing enough food for their children? • Tell me about times when there is no or less food. Does this depend on the harvest season?
Health Care services	<i>Access to preventative and curative health treatment by professional doctors or nurses</i>	Children rarely receive healthcare services from professionals	Children only sometimes receive the health services that they need	Children receive treatment when they are ill but some services are missing (preventative or curative)	Children generally receive all necessary healthcare treatments and preventative services that they need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens when children fall ill? How are they treated? • When children need medicine, how do people get it? • Tell me about health services the children need but do not receive. What are the barriers? • Do most children receive vaccinations to prevent illness? • Has anyone talked to children about risks for HIV/AIDS and how to protect against these risks?

Education	<i>Regular attendance at school</i>	<p>Many children are not even enrolled in school, especially at pre-primary level, and attendance is poor</p>	<p>Many children are enrolled in school but many rarely attend, others are not even enrolled</p>	<p>Most children are enrolled in school, but not at every level, and attendance can be irregular</p>	<p>Most children are enrolled in school, even at the pre-primary level, and attend regularly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are most children enrolled in school – at pre-primary, primary or secondary levels? • Do children attend school regularly? • What are the main barriers to accessing education? (i.e. distance, fees) • How often do children miss school? What are the common reasons for poor attendance? • At what level do children often drop out of school?
Care	<i>Love and attachment received through caring interactions with adults</i>	<p>In our community, many children have to care for themselves because there are no adults in their household who are taking responsibility in care for them</p>	<p>Many children in our community lack consistent adult caregivers around them and do not receive love, attention, and support</p>	<p>Children have adult caregivers who are present but these adults may spend little time with them and are concerned mostly with physical issues (i.e. food, health)</p>	<p>In this community, almost all children have adult caregivers who are involved in their lives and actively protect and show love to children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there many semi-orphans and orphans in this community? • Who to children express their feelings to – whether positive or negative? • How often do you see parents or caregivers talking to and playing with their children? • When children are crying or hurt, how do adults usually respond? (Are they comforted when this happens by loved ones OR ignored and told to keep quiet?) • Do children generally feel free and happy with their teachers and parents/caregivers? Or are they often fearful?

Abuse and Exploitation	<i>Cases of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, neglect, or child labour</i>	<p>There is a high number of cases where children are abused physically, sexually, or forced to work in our community.</p>	<p>Many children in our community are ignored, ill-treated, or asked to do work that is inappropriate for their age</p>	<p>Children are not supervised very closely so there is the possibility children are not treated well</p>	<p>Almost all children in our community are protected from physical, emotional and physical abuse. Children are closely supervised, and are not asked to do heavy or inappropriate work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there many cases of physical child abuse in this community? Sexual abuse? • Do children and parents know about child rights? And respect them? • What are the biggest threats to child safety and protection? • How much household work are children responsible for? • Do children often miss out on schooling or other child-activities due to responsibility to work?
Emotional Health	<i>Experience a normal range of emotions but are generally hopeful and positive</i>	<p>Many children in this community are hopeless, sad, and prefer to be alone</p>	<p>Children often appear sad, upset, fearful and withdrawn</p>	<p>The majority of children in this community appear happy in some situations but may be isolated and act shy in public</p>	<p>Almost all children are generally happy and hopeful about the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are children happy or sad most of the time? • How can you tell if children are happy or unhappy? • What makes children sad, worried, or fearful? • Do children (especially adolescents) have positive dreams for their future?
Social Behaviour	<i>Respectful attitude towards others and ability to cooperate with peers</i>	<p>Many children display anti-social or risky behaviour such as lying, stealing, hurting others, etc.</p>	<p>Many children are disobedient with adults and get into frequent fights with peers</p>	<p>Children have some problems getting along with peers or adults</p>	<p>Children play well with peers and participate easily in group activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do children behave towards adults? • Do children need to be punished often? For what types of behaviours? • Do children have time to play and interact with other children their age? • Do children fight a lot with each other? • What worries do you have about children's behaviour in the community?



Instructions

Sample

Because it is not possible to include all beneficiaries in the data selection, a sample is taken. These are the guidelines for making a sample:

- Each group should consist of approximately 12–15 members.
- If the group is bigger (e.g. a SHG of 25), a random sample can be made.
- For **children groups**, a smaller group of **8–10 children** can be selected if preferred.
- The aim should be to use this tool with the same groups throughout the project. The group name gets recorded in the datasheets.
- When it is not possible to use the same group, another group is selected.
- By selecting the same groups throughout the whole project phase, it is avoided that later founded groups affect the results.
- Most groups in the community are bigger than 15 members. The 12–15 members selected for the exercise may differ from year to year as long as the same group is selected.
- Make sure that both genders are included in the group, if possible.
- Take a random sample of 10% of the total number of groups, with a minimum of 8–10 separate groups. If there are fewer than eight groups, all groups should be included in the sample.
- Try to include various groups in the sample if that fits the tool. For example, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Cluster Level Associations (CLAs) or Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), youth groups or children's groups, could be included in the CSI. This doesn't apply to group-specific tools like the Family Farmer Statement and the Youth Statements.



Facilitation

The facilitator or enumerator has an essential role in conducting the focus group discussions. The tools are participatory by nature, as groups come together to discuss different topics. The facilitator is responsible for explaining the tools well, guiding the conversation, making the participants feel at ease, and encouraging them to speak out to give their honest opinions. The facilitator does the exercise together with a note-taker. The facilitator introduces the questions and leads the discussions. The note-taker records the scores and takes notes of the reasons for giving certain scores.

All the participatory tools use the same methodology; therefore, the same instructions apply to all tools. Be aware that the target groups are not the same for every tool. The facilitator and the note-taker can take the following steps to prepare and conduct the focus group discussion:

Preparation:

- Make sure that the tools are translated into the local language.
- The facilitator and the note-taker prepare a printed version of the tool and data form or Kobo to record the data.
- If applicable, last year's average scores can be prefilled on the data form.

Facilitating the group exercise:

- The exercise should take approximately an hour and 15 minutes to keep everyone on board. Long discussions may need to be ended if time runs out.
- First, the facilitator introduces the tool to the group and explains what it is about and what topics it entails.
- Second, the facilitator explains the meaning of the scores. For each topic, there is an “*ideal situation*” (or “nearly ideal situation”) or a “*good situation*”(4). The highest rating implies that for this aspect, no further improvements in the situation are needed or even possible. The lowest rating is a “*far from ideal situation*” or a “*very bad situation*” (1). A lot of improvements are needed to move towards the ideal situation. In between, there are two other scales: “*first steps*” or “*bad*”(2) when the situation is better than the “*far from ideal situation*”, but there is still a long way to go. And “*moving on*” or “*fair*”(3) when steady progress is made toward the “*ideal situation*”, but one or more



serious issues are still lacking to consider the situation “*nearly ideal*” and clear further action points can still be defined. The exact meanings of the scores are described in the tools (e.g. Food Security (CSI), score 4 = Children are consistently well fed and eat regularly). For some of the tools, the two “in-between scales” are not precisely defined but should be used intuitively; the group can discuss if the situation is still closer to the “*far from ideal situation*” or closer to the “(*nearly*) *ideal situation*”.

- Every group member receives four stones or beans (or something similar). After introducing the statement for rating, the facilitator invites the members to put 1, 2, 3 or 4 stones/ beans in front of them, representing their opinion.
- Most tools have **guiding principles/ questions** (considerations) for each topic or category. These questions can help the facilitator guide the conversation and clarify the topic and can help the group to determine what score they want to give. The facilitator does not need to use all questions. **The group does not have to answer all the guiding questions.** They can be seen as helpful tools in having a good discussion.
- For most tools, the statements ask about a reflection of the community instead of the individuals, except for the Farmer Family Statements (PIP). This allows the participants to better reflect on sensitive issues without becoming too personal. The facilitator should keep this in mind.
- The stones/ beans should be **placed at the same time** to avoid participants copying each other. The facilitator could count down.
- When everyone has placed their stones/ beans, the facilitator can ask people why they gave this score. In this way, there can be a discussion about the positive and/ or negative remarks that help people determine their end score. Group members are free to add or remove stones during the debate.
- Please note that the participants are not obliged to give a reason.
- The note-taker makes notes of the reasons for the partner’s reflection.
- The note-taker can also make notes of possible actions that need to be taken by the implementing partner. This is for the partner’s reference.
- When doing the scorecards repeatedly with the same groups, the scores can be compared to the score of the previous discussion. The facilitator should bring the old scorecards or write the last score on the form. Comparing the scores can be helpful for the discussion; this is up to the facilitator.



- During the discussion, the participants are invited to give their ideas to improve the situation for the coming year. This is how group members play an active role in data collection, sensemaking and planning for the next steps.
- Sometimes, participants give an answer or reason to their score that does not fit the question (it may serve another question better). In that case, the facilitator can help the participants by explaining the question or referring to another question. The facilitator must be very familiar with the tools.
- The facilitator should listen well to the stories being told and see if the score corresponds to that score. The facilitator should not tell the participants to change their scores but can help decide the appropriate score by asking questions and guiding the conversation.

Scoring:

- When the discussion is finished, and everyone is satisfied with the number of stones/ beans placed, the note-taker or the facilitator writes the number of participants who scored a one, two, three and four and the total number of participants (because people may leave during the session).
- **For example: 1 participant gives a 1, 4 participants give a 2, 5 participants give a 3 and 3 participants give a 4. The total number of participants is 13. The total score is 36 ($1 \times 1 + 4 \times 2 + 5 \times 3 + 3 \times 4$), divided by 13 gives an average score of 2.8. (The calculation can be done later at the office and is done automatically in the datasheets and Kobo).**
- Kobo sheets and MS Word forms are available to collect the scores.

Additional guidance for facilitating children groups:

- The session with children should be led by a facilitator who knows the children and who is trained as a children's group facilitator.
- The facilitator should ensure the group is a safe space for children to speak out.
- A group of **8-12 children** should be sampled for the tool. Because most children's groups are bigger, a random sample from the group can be drawn every time the tools are conducted to avoid the same children getting selected every time and because children leave the groups when they get older.
- It is essential to take note of children who influence other children and to avoid that from happening.
- The facilitator should keep explaining the scoring to the children during the process, not only at the start.
- The facilitator should explain to the children that giving a score of 1 is okay to prevent children from thinking they score poorly themselves.



- The facilitator explains to the children that the information they give is safe and that their names are not mentioned.
 - It is essential to include enough breaks to keep the children's attention. Games, dances, and songs can be helpful to keep them engaged.
- The facilitator and note-taker should be alert to see if children need after-care after the session. This should be noted to ensure that follow-up is provided.