

Ranking lines: exploring local indicators of wealth and health

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A really useful tool that Development Focus has used in a UK context is a ranking line for determining local indicators of poverty and wealth, health, local environment etc.

It is really easy for people to interact with this tool on the streets as well as in facilitated groups. You can also start people off in groups by making physical lines with extremes at either end of the line – say good health and poor health, or lots of sleep and no sleep, or good diet and poor diet. People get onto different positions on the line and then say why they are there. They also discuss how they would take action to move up the line to the positive end. This physical exercise can also be used to introduce a team to concepts of relative positions, discussion of those positions on the line, flexibility to move on the line, indicators defined by participants and making tools action-orientated.

Visually, the line can be drawn out with a question that you are asking at the top or an issue you are exploring. Different visuals and words are then discussed and decided on by the team. For example putting a happy and sad face at either end, or putting the words, for example in a UK context 'skint' meaning poor and 'rich' at either end.



Above: A physical ranking line with young people from Save the Children's Saying Power Project.

Right: The Action 4 Living Team using a ranking line in a Newsagents in Lincolnshire

Participants then put sticky dots on the line with their reasons WHY they have placed themselves in a particular place below the line on post-its or cards. In a different coloured card they can put the reasons that people may find themselves at different ends of the line. Participants are then asked to put ideas for ACTION to move themselves up the line unless they are happy to stay where they are. From this, teams have been able to look at



Photo: Development Focus

Photo: Development Focus



different local indicators defined by participants and ideas for action to take forward and explore further with further questions and tools.

Wealth Ranking lines can be a very useful way to start to explore local indicators of poverty, and to explore further and feed into

monitoring a process to ensure involvement of the poorest and hardest to reach people in a particular society.

Ranking lines can be useful in starting off, for example, local needs assessments and health action plans, or they can be used to start to

explore specific issues, such as food poverty or safety in the community.

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