Overview

Ranking can be used in two main ways – to prioritise future actions, or to evaluate what has been achieved. The main purpose is therefore to help make a decision, or to think through what has been achieved in a more analytical way.

Instructions for prioritising future actions

After discussions (using other participatory tools such as community mapping) to explore development needs or opportunities in the community, it is normally the case that several needs will arise. It is hard to then choose what to do in response to these initial discussions and it is important that community feel part of this decision making process.

- The participants are asked to list the options of what they could do moving forward to address the situation at hand. These are listed, as in the table below or another suitable way.
- When the list is ready, the participants are asked to vote for their top priority of what they would want to see change. (If there are lots to choose from, they could be given up to 3 priorities)
- Discuss the results together. What appears as the top priority? Are participants happy with this? If there isn’t a clear top priority, would they like to eliminating some of the lowest priorities and vote again? How can the priorities be shaped into a project moving forward?

Instructions for evaluation

When a project or initiative is completed, it can be obvious to the implementer what they think what went well, what didn’t go well and what

- The participants are asked to think of 3-5 successes or achievements of the project/activity. These are listed, as in the table below or another suitable way.
- When the list is ready, ask the participants to vote for the achievement they feel was most significant for them.
- Discuss the results together. Why is what they have chosen important? How does it compare with original project objectives?
- Repeat steps 1-3, but this time ask participants to consider any ongoing challenges that they are still facing. These could be connected with the activity and the issues that they were trying to address, or wider problems they face.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More children attending school</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happier teachers</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades have improved</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents feel part of school decisions</td>
<td>xx</td>
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Participatory Tool
RANKING

- Finally, repeat steps 1-3 again. This last time consider the future. Be careful not to promise new projects, but discuss what lasting affects (outcomes) the project will have. These could be positive or negative, but the aim is to consider the most significant aspects of the legacy that will be left.
- The results should be analyzed and summarized before being put into reports or used to continue developing the relationship between The Salvation Army and the community.

Go Deeper

Do ask open questions as the process is going on and results are shared. This helps us learn with them what opportunities and constraints they might face economically, socially, environmentally and spiritually.

To use the tool to see how the situation changes over time, simply repeat the activity at a later date and compare the results with the first time.

Top Tips

Pens, paper, stones, markers on the ground, hands raised and countless other resources could be used to cast the vote. (See picture)

Make sure everyone in the group has an equal chance of voting. This tool is a good opportunity to involve them in the conversation. Do look out for quieter members of the group who may have important opinions but are afraid to share them.

It is very important to have a note taker for this exercise (to remember the votes cast, and take notes from the subsequent conversation).