Protective Community Index

A rapid assessment tool to monitor service access and quality in cocoa communities

Overview

International **COCOA** Initiative

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What is the tool ?

The *Protective Community Index* is a simple tool, developed by ICI, to rapidly assess access to services that help protect children in cocoa-growing communities.

It captures factors related to children's fundamental rights, such as quality education and safe water, as well as other community characteristics that are associated with lower levels of child labour.

The index is a proxy measure – it is not a perfect estimate of the protectiveness of a given community, nor can it be used to estimate the likelihood or prevalence of child labour.

How does it work?

The tool consists of ten simple questions about service access and quality at community level. The information required can be gathered through a mixture of observation and through speaking with knowledgeable individuals, including community leaders and teachers.

Why use the tool?

The *Protective Community Index* can be used to:

- **Monitor service access and quality**, with a focus on the protective environment around children at community level
- **Identify gaps** in the provision and quality of essential services that protect children

- **Support the planning of interventions** aimed at strengthening the provision and quality of basic services that protect children
- **Measure changes** to the provision and quality of services over time (eg. at baseline, midline, endline or on an annual basis)

It can also be used to support in-depth research, for example to:

- Explore the contribution of changes at community level to other outcomes for children measured separately (eg. child labour prevalence, children's learning outcomes);
- Collect information that can be used to match similar communities (eg. as part of treatment or control groups for an impact assessment)

How was the tool developed?

The *Protective Community Index* was developed by ICI, based on (a) knowledge about services that play a protective role for children and (b) on analysis of robust data[1] to determine community level factors associated with lower rates of child labour.

The index is developed on the following principles:

- All ten questions reflect factors that make a **positive** contribution to building a protective environment for children.
  This helps make the index easy to understand and interpret: the higher the score, the more protective the community.
- All questions are based on easily accessible information, gathered through observation or by talking to knowledgeable individuals (key informants) within a community, like community leaders and teachers.
  There is no need to interview a representative sample of households, nor to aggregate or analyse complex data.
- All questions have yes/no answers.
  This makes the information easy to collect and verify.
- The tool includes factors which can be changed by an intervention within a reasonable timeframe and in a tangible or directly observable way.
  This allows us to monitor change over time and allow comparisons between different communities.
- The questions are relevant to agricultural communities in many developing countries.
  The tool can be used in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and other similar contexts.

How to use the tool?

Answers to the ten questions can be gathered from key informants, such as community leaders and teachers, and through direct observation. These questions could be integrated into routine data collection activities, as part of larger surveys, or as a standalone exercise.

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[1] We used the NORC 2018/9 dataset to identify community characteristics for inclusion in the index. When we tested the final index against the NORC dataset, we see that higher *protective community index scores* are correlated with significantly *lower* prevalence of child labour.

What are the questions?

Question	Data source	Scores
1. Do most households in this community have access to a protected water source?	*Community leader, direct observation*	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*
2. Do some households in this community hire adult labourers to do agricultural work?	*Community leader*	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*
3. Has at least one awareness-raising session on child labour taken place in the community in the past year?	*Community leader*	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*
4. Are there any women among the leaders of this community?	*Community leader*	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*
5. Is there at least one pre-school in this community?	*Community leader, direct observation*	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*
6. Is there at least one primary school in this community?	*Community leader, direct observation*	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*
7. Are there separate toilets for boys and girls in the primary school(s) of the community?	*Teacher, direct observation*	*0/1 or 0 to 1 (see next section)*
8. Do(es) the primary school(s) provide food?	*Teacher, direct observation*	*0/1 or 0 to 1 (see next section)*
9. Do some children in the community access scholarships to attend high school?	*Teacher, community leader*	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*
10. Is there an *absence* of corporal punishment in the primary school(s)?[2]	*Teacher*	*0/1 or 0 to 1 (see next section)*
	Total score:	

How to analyse the data collected?

Most of the questions have "yes" or "no" answers only, and therefore binary scores: 1 for "yes", 0 for "no". However, questions 7, 8 and 10 have either binary scores, when there is only one public primary school in the community, or scores ranging between 0 and 1, when there are several public primary schools in the community. 7, 8 and 10 are 0, if 6 is 0.

Formulae for the scores of questions 7, 8 & 10 when there is one primary school or several in the community.

Question	Only 1 public primary school	Several public primary schools
7	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*	*Number of schools where there are separate toilets / total number of schools in the community*
8	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*	*Number of schools providing food / total number of schools in the community*
10	*No = 0 / Yes = 1*	*Number of schools with no corporal punishment / total number of schools in the community*

Final score is obtained by adding together the scores of the 10 questions, and ranges between 0 and 10. The higher the score, the more protective the community.

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[2] This item is less straightforward than the others. Instead of being assessed directly, the following statements should be presented to a sample of primary school teachers, who are asked if they "strongly disagree", "disagree", "agree" or "strongly agree":
- *Sometimes teachers have to hit students to make them listen*
- *Sometimes teachers have to hit students to make them learn*
- *Sometimes physical punishment is the only way to get students to respect the teacher*

If 75% of teachers "strongly disagree" or "disagree" to all the statements, absence of corporal punishment can be assumed in the school.