



Tool 2: Focus Group Discussion - Parents

Purpose: This set of tools provides questions to help understand the perspectives of children, youth, and adult community members, and teachers about key aspects of education in the area and how they have been affected by the conflict ongoing in the LGEA and Nigeria. This particular tool focuses on children.

Unit of analysis: Focus group discussions should be conducted with groups of 7-10 participants. Separate groups should be organized by age and sex, and for the IDP/host community learners. The aim in grouping focus groups as such is to enable the participants to be as relaxed and honest as possible. The unit of analysis will be the overall categories of respondents, such as teachers, boys, and girls.

Instructions: Focus group discussions must be deliberately organized, well-facilitated, and properly documented in order to gain the type of quality, in-depth information sought. Recommendations for making focus group discussions effective are:

Organizing focus group discussions:

- Organize homogeneous groups of similar ages, sexes, and experiences together.
- Keep the groups small. Sessions should have 7-10 participants.
- Choose the right facilitator for the group: men with boys/men and women with girls/women. Identify adults who have good rapport and skills for working with children and youth.
- Limit the presence of onlookers to enable participants to speak freely.
- Conduct the discussion in a location where participants can sit comfortably and talk with some privacy.

Facilitating focus group discussions:

- Warm the group up with energizers to make participants feel at ease and get them talking.
- Assure the participants that everything said in the session will be kept confidential.
- Don't only rely on what the well-off, better educated, and more vocal have to say.
- Probe and cross-check each question by listening closely to what is being said, challenging answers (where appropriate), and asking for more details.
- Carefully lead up to sensitive questions.
- Keep to a manageable length – around 10 questions and between 45-90 minutes.

Documenting responses:

- Assign one note taker to record what is being said and observed.
- The responses to questions can be documented in a notebook, but be sure to capture all the information under the 'General Information' section of the form for each group.
- Do not mix in interpretations of the responses during the note taking.
- Record the responses of the majority of the answers provided by the group. Also note any important differences in responses between groups of respondents (e.g. differences by gender or age).



Focus Group Discussion for Parents

Interview Identification	
Instrument Code: _____	Date of assessment: ___/___/___ (dd/mm/yy)
Name(s) of Assessor(s): _____	Organization(s): _____
Location of Assessment	
Name of State/Admin level 1: _____	
Name of LGEA/Admin level 2: _____	
Name of Community/Village/Admin level 3: _____	
Source of Information	
# of men: _____	# of women: _____

Equal Access to Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do all children in this community go to school? What groups of children or young people in this community are most often not in school? Are there IDPs? Do they attend school? Why or why not? What could be done to help such children get into or stay in school? What is common to IDP and local children’s learning requirements? What are the differences between IDP and community children? Are your children able to go to school every day? If not, why? Do you know of other children who cannot go to school? If so, why do they not attend? For the young people in this community who cannot go to formal school, what types of classes or training would be best for those who cannot attend? What impact does the conflict have on children in this community? Does it affect whether or not they go to school or stay in school?
Protection and Wellbeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the school accessible and located in a secure area? Are your daughters safe on their way to and from school? Are your sons safe on their way to and from school? If not, why? Have the concerns you mentioned gotten worse over the last year, with increased insecurity? What is being done to make sure children are safe when traveling to and from schools in this community? What additional efforts are needed? Have you heard of children or youth being abused or harassed while they are in school? What type of children experience these things the most (e.g. girls)?



- Do you know where children go for support if they experience abuse or violence against them? Is this common/not common?

Participation

- What are the main ways community members currently support schools/NFLCs/learning spaces in this community/site?
- What additional roles are priorities for the community to take on to improve education in this community/site?
- What school management decisions does the PTA/SMC have a say in? What were the top two issues discussed at the most recent SMC meeting?
- What are the three most essential priorities for improving education in this community/site? What roles can community members play to address these issues?

Community Resources

- What community based learning activities exist here? Are families holding classes in homes or in community structures? Are there informal gatherings of children for non-formal/recreation activities? If yes, how often and where are they held?
- If you could change or improve three things for the IDP children in this community, what would they be?
- What can children and young people in this community do to help address these issues?