

STAGE 1 OF 7

Understand the need

This stage is about asking people what they need before you decide what to do about it. Write down their own words.

This worksheet: A worksheet about community needs, and questions you can ask. Start here if you care about a problem but have not yet asked the people it affects.

BEFORE YOU ASK ANYONE

What have you noticed?

Write down what you have seen or heard yourself. Stick to what happened — you can come back to your ideas for fixing it later.

EXAMPLE — DO NOT KEEP

The recycling bins at the estate by my school are full by Friday most weeks. People leave their bags on the floor next to them. Saw it again last week.

QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK

- ☐ How is it for you right now?
- ☐ When did this last cause you a problem? What happened?
- ☐ Who else does it affect? Is it worse for some of them?
- ☐ Has anyone tried to help before? How did that go?
- ☐ If you could change one thing about it, what would you change?

Ask if it is all right before you write anything down. Try to put down what the person actually said, in their words, and do more listening than talking.

WHAT DID THEY SAY THEY NEED?

Use one block for each person you talk to. If you speak to more people, copy this bit onto another sheet.

Who you spoke to (their role, not their full name):

Date and place:

YOUR SUMMARY

Who has this need:

The need, in one sentence

What did they tell you that you did not already know?

YOU HAVE FINISHED THIS WHEN...

You can say what the need is and who has it, and you have written a short summary of what people told you.

Next: Talk about what you found with a teacher, mentor or someone you met in the community.