



Problem Tree Analysis is a simple yet effective tool for community groups to use to properly identify problems and determine what the most effective interventions are. This method is used by groups to determine the extent to which an organization's program activities address the root causes of the problems it seeks to alleviate and to verify that these programs can achieve the desired impact.

Who should be involved?

- The participants should consist of participants of the target group.
- The facilitator should present and explain to the participants the nature of the analogy. Pointing out what the different parts of the trees are and what each represents.

Elements of a Problem Tree

Roots – the root causes of the problem

Trunk – the problem

Branches – the consequences of the problem

A Problem Tree can synthesize information and give it meaning by use of an analogy. The objective of this approach is to analyze the root causes of an issue facing a community and to ensure the solution addresses the root cause.

Steps to take when using Problem Tree Analysis:

- 1) Draw a tree. Ask participants to list the root causes of the problem on a card. Tape the cards to the roots of the problem tree.
- 2) Ask the participants to name the consequences of the problem. Write these responses on cards and tape them to the 'branches' of the problem tree.
- 3) The participants should then briefly discuss to what extent the organization's activities address the root causes. It's very important there is a distinction made between a root cause and a consequence.
- 4) Repeat the process with other problems once participants demonstrate that they understand the process, they can split up into pairs or small groups to work on different problem trees.
- 5) Display the Problem Trees and ask the participants to take a "walk through the forest." Group members can briefly present their trees to one another.

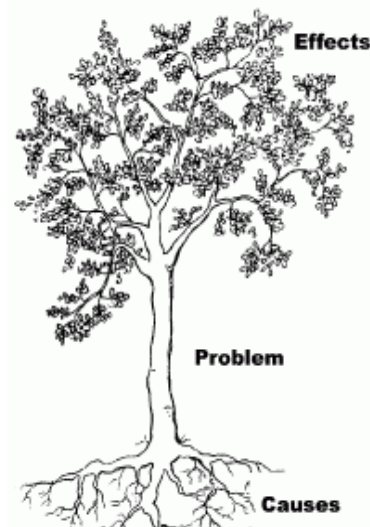


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Major Source: World Neighbors (2000). World Neighbors Field Guide: From the Roots Up, World Neighbors Inc. 4127 N.W. 122nd St. Oklahoma City, OK 73120-8869

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