**Discussion plans – Focus groups**

**Assessment of public services**

Three discussion plans have been developed to help facilitators lead focus groups on the safety of specific life settings. Each plan contains a detailed, but non-exhaustive list of topics that can be discussed in order to explore the issues of disorder and incivility, safety and the feeling of safety, and the perceived quality of public services. Sample questions are presented for each topic.

The plan selected will depend on the focus group's objectives. Note that each plan contains more questions than necessary. It is suggested that you give priority to three questions and reserve a fourth one for discussion if time permits.

Each discussion plan comprises two columns. The left-hand column contains the different questions. The right-hand column is not part of the plan per se, but is a checklist of aspects that might be talked about during the discussion and that will help to familiarize the facilitator with the various concepts. These aspects might also serve as categories for analyzing the data gathered during the focus group. To learn more about disorder, incivility, safety, the feeling of safety, and public services, see Appendix 1 of the *Safety Diagnosis Handbook* of the *Safety Diagnosis Tool Kit for Local Communities*.

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| **These three discussion plans are available in MS Word format on the Web site of the Québec Safety Promotion and Crime Prevention Resource Centre/Centre québécois de ressources en promotion de la sécurité et en prévention de la criminalité (crpspc.qc.ca).** |

**Assessment of public services**

| **Topics discussed** | **Aspects that might be considered** |
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| **Introduction** | |
| Services delivered to a population can have an impact on people's safety and their feeling of safety. Therefore, the following questions deal with your perception of various public services. | |
| **Police services** |  |
| 1. In general, are you satisfied with the work done by the police in your sector/ municipality/neighbourhood? | * Confidence in police services * Assessment of services offered * Use of services |
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| 1. What are the main reasons you are **satisfied** with these services? 2. Do you have any reasons for being **dissatisfied** with these services? | Reasons for being satisfied or dissatisfied:   * presence * efficiency and effectiveness * visibility * prevention work (e.g. in schools) |
| 1. Have you ever called on the police services in your area? If so, in what circumstances? |  |
| 1. What are the main reasons you are **satisfied** with the services received? 2. Do you have any reasons for being **dissatisfied** with the services received? | Reasons for being satisfied or dissatisfied with the services received:   * quality of the reception you received in filing a request or complaint * quality of the response or follow-up you received regarding a request or complaint |
| **Recreation services** | |
| 1. In general, are you satisfied with the recreation services in your sector /municipality/neighbourhood? | * Assessment of services offered * Use of services * Safety of installations |
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| 1. What are the main reasons you are **satisfied** with these services? 2. Do you have any reasons for being **dissatisfied** with these services? | Reasons for being satisfied or dissatisfied with the services offered:   * presence * availability * maintenance * supervision |
| **Layout and maintenance of roads, streets and sidewalks** | |
| 1. In general, how would you assess the layout of roads, streets and sidewalks in your sector/municipality/neighbourhood? | General assessment of their layout |
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| 1. What are the main reasons you are **satisfied** with their layout? 2. What are the main reasons you are **dissatisfied** with their layout? | Reasons for being satisfied or dissatisfied with their layout:   * safety of intersections * presence or absence of road signs and traffic lights * adequate lighting |
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| 1. In general, how would you assess the maintenance of roads, streets and sidewalks in your sector/municipality/neighbourhood? |  |
| 1. What are the main reasons you are **satisfied** with their maintenance? 2. What are the main reasons you are **dissatisfied** with snow and ice removal from streets and sidewalks? | Reasons for being satisfied or dissatisfied with their maintenance:   * cleanliness of streets and sidewalks: cleaning time and quality * state of roadways and sidewalks: repair time and quality * frequency and quality of snow removal * replacement of streetlights |
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| **Layout and maintenance of parks, facilities and public spaces** | |
| 1. In general, how would you assess the layout of parks, facilities and public spaces in your sector/municipality/neighbourhood? | General assessment of their layout |
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| 1. What are the main reasons you are **satisfied** with the layout of parks? 2. What are the main reasons you are **dissatisfied** with the layout of public spaces? | Reasons for being satisfied or dissatisfied with their layout:   * safety of parks * safety of play equipment * safety of other equipment * safety of public spaces * adequate lighting |
| 1. In general, how would you assess the maintenance of parks and public spaces in your sector/municipality/neighbourhood? |  |
| 1. What are the main reasons you are **satisfied** with the maintenance of parks? 2. What are the main reasons you are **dissatisfied** with the maintenance of public spaces? | Reasons for being satisfied or dissatisfied with their maintenance:   * cleanliness of parks * cleanliness of facilities * cleanliness of public spaces |
| **Other services** | |
| 1. The previous questions may be used as models for formulating other questions aimed at measuring how satisfied the population is with other services linked to personal safety:    * + other municipal services;      + front-line health network services (CSLCs, ambulance services, etc.);      + community or non-governmental organizations;      + etc. |  |
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| **Importance of problems** | |
| 1. Based on everything that was discussed during the focus group, what three factors do you think most affect your feeling of safety? | Can the participants agree on the order of importance of these factors? |
| **Possible solutions** | |
| 1. What could be done to improve the services offered in your sector/municipality/ neighbourhood? | * Municipal action * Action by non-governmental organizations * Citizen action |