

Thematic Tree – Part 1

 **Step:** Two - Choose an issue!

 **Time:** 30 min

 **Space and materials:**

- Posters;
- Large printouts of designs of trees;
- Colour markers.

 **Description of the tool**

A thematic tree is a great tool that can be used to record and structure research on a specific topic.

1. Draw a tree which comprises a visible root, a tree trunk and the branches. Explain to the participants that the trunk represents the topic/problem (e.g., water pollution), the root represents the causes of the problem, and the branches define the outcomes or the results of the specific problem. Part 1 of the tool will be conducted before the actual research is carried out by the participants further in the process.
2. Divide the participants into 3 small groups and give them a poster and colour markers. Since the topic covered in this case is the environment, the teams can be allocated a topic each (water pollution, air pollution and land pollution). Give time to the groups to explore their topic and visualise its causes on the roots and its consequences on the branches.
3. After the teams complete their trees, invite them for a joint discussion on their findings and understanding and try to observe any similar root causes or outcomes from the three subtopics that can be discussed further. Part 1 ends here with the facilitator requesting the participants and their teams to investigate and research the topic further.

 **Additional remarks**

The methodology can be used in several ways. For instance, on certain occasions, the facilitator can design the tree or use one of the templates. Another alternative is to divide a larger group into teams and ask them to design their own thematic trees by breaking a big topic into sub-topics and exploring them in-depth.