Take Action to Earn A Highest Award
Tools for Decision Making

Help girls narrow down their project ideas and determine the root cause of their issue by using some of these tools. These tools can be used for all grade levels. Troop leaders should make modifications as needed to suit the needs and abilities of their girls.

Making Your Pitch

If you find that the girls in your group have many different passions, encourage girls to develop and practice their pitch. Doing so will help them decide if they like how it feels to advocate for this idea and they can pitch it to their fellow Girl Scouts and get feedback. Here are some things girls should consider when planning their pitch.

- **Target audience:** Who are you trying to reach? If you are aiming for kids, think of a story or riddle that would relate your topic to them. Young kids love to rhyme. If you're reaching out to adults, no cute stories! Think about your audience and try to tailor your pitch to connect with them.

- **How you will help:** You have their attention with your story. Now tell them what your project will do to make their lives better.

- **Personalize it:** Why this project? Why this target audience? How will doing this make you a better person?

- **Do it:** Put it all together. Explain your idea in a short and motivating way that clarifies for you and your potential team, target audience, and supporters. Remember, 15 seconds. Go!

Games

Games can help your girls practice skills like identifying root causes and issues. Try this sample game to get your girls thinking.

- Girls pull an object out of a bag.
- For each item, they must identify an issue and a root cause for that issue.
- For example, a book pulled out could represent illiteracy.
- The root cause might be poor reading skills, or lack of learning support at home.
- A possible solution might be implementing a peer-to-peer reading program at school.

Project Idea Chart

Once girls have a few topics in mind, introduce girls to the **Project Idea Chart** to help them explore their top ideas. Have them answer the questions about their project by using the Yes and No boxes. If they answer "No" to any question then their idea could be a valuable service, but is not yet a Highest Award. Encourage them to add the missing component(s) to make their idea shine! If they answered "Yes" to every question, then their idea seems to be a viable Highest Award project, but changes may need to happen. At the Bronze and Silver Award levels, girls should always talk to their Troop Leader for approval. At the Gold Award level, all approval is through the council.

Yes	No	Questions
		Did you find an issue in the community backed by research from multiple sources?
		Did you research to find out what was causing it?
		Did you research to find out what was already in place to help alleviate the issue?
		Did you develop a plan with the help of community members and experts who know about the issue to reduce or eliminate the root cause?
		Is your project a new take on what is already in place because current measures are not working? **OR** Is your project similar to what is already in place because current measures are working but are not sufficient? (How do you know? Back your project up with research)
		Is the project developed challenging for you?
		Will you be able to demonstrate leadership while enacting your project?
		Do you have help and support from the community?
		Do you have a target audience?
		Will each girl earning the award be able to spend the required number of hours on this project? (Volunteer's hours do not count)
		Will the project have a long-term or sustainable impact on the root cause?

Once the chart is complete, girls can answer these questions about each of their ideas:

- Why does this idea matter?
- Who will this idea help?
- What can we do to make a difference? Is that realistic?

This will help them to narrow down their ideas, and how they want to help.

Mind Map

Once girls have narrowed their project ideas and are working together to get to the root cause of that issue, you can guide them by suggesting a Mind Map. Have girls create their own diagram like the one shown here, using one of the issues, they identified.

- Write the community issue in the middle of the paper or anywhere that works for you.

- Think about what some of the causes of this issue could be. In this example, one of the main causes of car accidents is bad weather. Notice how many different causes connect from bad weather.

- Now, try connecting the different causes you come up with to each other and to the main issue. How do the causes connect to each other?

- Do you see a pattern?

This activity will help girls come up with different ways to approach a problem, as well as different ways they might go about addressing it.

Key:	
🟩	Issue
🟦	Possible Root Causes
🟪	Contributing Factors

Poor Visibility

Can't see road signs

Icy and slick roads

Car Accidents

Distracted Drivers

Bad weather

Animals in Roadway

Drunk Driving

Using Cell Phone