

## Insighting Participation: Using Photography to Boost Young People's Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation

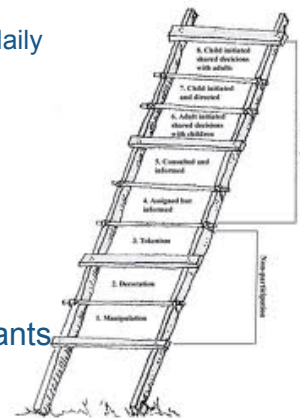
**Mónica Ruiz-Casares, PhD**

*Assistant Professor & Scientific Advisor*

AEA, Washington, DC October 2013

## Evaluation Roles of Young People

- Listening to children (Clark, 2005)
  - active process of communication involving hearing, interpreting & constructing meanings
  - not limited to the spoken word
  - a necessary stage in participation in (a) daily routines as well as in (b) wider decision-making processes
- **Benefits** research, dissemination & evaluation, participants, adult researchers, communities
- Young people as Subjects > Consultants > Partners > Directors



Sources: Checkway & Richards-Schuster, 2003; Clark, 2005; Gilshrist et al, 2013; Hart, 1997

## Involving Young People in Research & Service Evaluation

### ➤ Collaborative & Child-Centered Research Methods

- Diaries & other life narrative techniques
- Drawings, Maps, & Cartoons
- Grouping & ranking exercises
- Use of 'stimulus materials' or prompts
- Video-documentary
- Photography

### ➤ Participatory Photo Interviews

- Qualitative participatory research methodology
- Personal reflection or group dialogue
- PEI: Interview driven by the participants (who took the photos)



Sources: Fargas-Malet et al., 2010; Gilchrist et al., 2013

## Young People and Photography in M&E

### 0 Photographic Monitoring & Evaluation

- |                   |  |           |
|-------------------|--|-----------|
| PPI with Children | 1 Researcher takes/selects photos to facilitate conversation | Deductive |
|                   | 2 Researcher takes photos with young people                  |           |
|                   | 3 Researcher gives camera(s) to group(s) of young people     | Inductive |
|                   | 4 Researcher gives one camera to each young person           |           |



0

## Photography & Visual Estimation for M&E

- **Sun** protection behavior
  - ✦ **Process evaluation of sun protection intervention targeting adolescents** (Jones et al., 2010)
- **Meal** selection & consumption
  - ✦ **Evaluation of human dietary intake & behavior** (Hinton et al., 2013; Small et al., 2009; Swanson, 2008)
    - Settings: restaurants, school cafeterias, home-made meals
    - Weight & photo b/a consumption (+ diary + nutrition eval.)
    - Counts of servings and/or nutritional composition
    - Strengths
      - ✓< participant burden & missing data
      - ✓> data quality & cultural adaptation
      - ✓Cost

1

## Researcher Selects Images

Assessing children's experiences to **inform** service & policy development

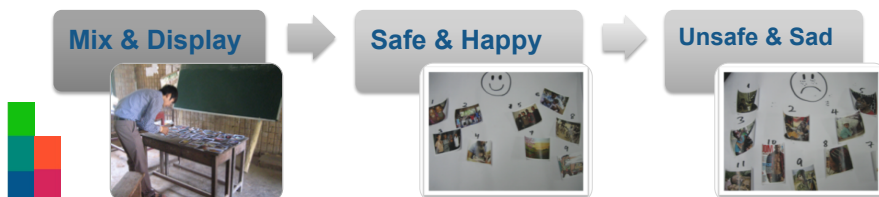


**Method** appropriate to context & culture & developmental stage

Examples:

✦ Photolanguage

✦ **Child Protection Needs Assessment (Liberia)**



Sources: Bessell, Deese & Medina, 2007; Ruiz-Casares, 2013; Ruiz-Casares et al., 2013

## Arms: Risk

"It is not good to fight war; this boy is holding a gun; he could kill anybody"

"I don't like this photo because war can make you to run away from your home, the soldier will come and take all your good things from your house and burn it."



FGD child participants

## Arms: Protection

"When the war comes to Liberia, I will be safe when I am holding a gun. Nobody will kill me."

"The boy holding a gun makes me feel safe because the gun will protect him from bad people."



FGD child participants

## Food

### Protection

" Good food makes you well"

"When you get money, you will  
buy your small things & food"

### Risk

" The boy is greedy; if a child is greedy  
he or she could get killed; someone can  
fool him and carry him because of food  
and harm him/her."

FGD child participants

## 2

## Researcher + Child Collect Data

- **Facilitating role** of the researcher
  - provision of technical equipment;
  - financing of transport & consumable items;
  - developing of photographs;
  - provision of material for collages;
  - assisting with organizational tasks & giving advice.
- Training all participants at the beginning of the research + collecting data with young people

### ★ Neighborhood Walk

Sources: Bryant, 1985; Wells, 2011

### 3

## Group(s) of Children Take Photos

★ **Community Health Initiatives Evaluation** (Morrow, 2001)

- Triangulation of methods
- Structured, visual, group discussion, & photo-tour commentaries
- Working in groups & sharing cameras

★ **Youth Neighborhood Mapping Initiative** (Santo, Ferguson, & Trippel, 2010)



*Sources: Docket & Perry, 2005; Schafer, 2012*

### 4

## Individual Children Take Photos

★ **Outdoor Education Program Evaluation**  
(Smith, Gidlow & Steel, 2012)

- Sand Tray Pictures (Linzmayr & Halpenny, 2013)

★ **Photofriend & migrant/refugee experiences**  
(Oh, 2012; Wells, 2011)

★ **Alternative Child Care Needs  
Assessment(Laos)** (Ruiz-Casares, 2013)



## Analyzing Photographs

- Focus on the **subjective meaning** of images for the participant(s)
  - Seek intending rather than interpretive meaning w/ participants
- Children's photographs are **polysemic** (capable of generating multiple meanings in the viewing process)
  - Return to participants to reconfirm findings
- **Internal & external** narrative
  - Develop broad categories from the photographs
  - Compare photographs with their accompanying interview narratives



Source: *Barker & Smith, 2012; Clark-Ibáñez, 2004; Jorgenson & Sullivan, 2010; Smith, Gidlow & Steel, 2012*

## PPI: Strengths

- Better capture children's attention
- Ease rapport & trust building
- Trigger memory & structure interview
- More detailed descriptions of participants' worlds
- Power balance
- Sense of ownership & camaraderie
- Build capacity
- Cultural sensitivity
- Lead to new & surface hidden perspectives



## PPI: Challenges

- Financial cost
- Time demands
- Technical difficulties
- Institutional support or insider connections
- May create delicate situation for researcher & interviewee

### → Ethical considerations in visual M&E

- Consent
  - ✓ Researcher- & Participant-generated images
- Anonymity and confidentiality
  - ✓ Identifying people & places
  - ✓ Dissemination process
- Ownership & copyright



Factors Influencing Ethical Issues & Decision-Making

Source: Wiles et al., 2008

## Conclusions

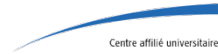
- Photography with young people is promising tool in M&E
  - First-hand accounts of children's experiences
  - Stand-alone or supplementary methodology
  - Participant-employed &/or -developed photography
- Seek higher 'rungs' of participation
  - Involve young people in interpretation
- Attention to ethical & cultural considerations







Centre de santé et de services sociaux  
de la Montagne



Centre affilié universitaire

Contact:  
[monica.ruizcasares@mcgill.ca](mailto:monica.ruizcasares@mcgill.ca)