Engaging Hard-to-Reach Youth in Research and Evaluation

YouthPower Learning
Youth Engagement Community of Practice
& American Evaluation Association
Youth Focused Evaluation Group

May 17, 2017

Advancing solutions to transform the lives of young people
YouthPower Learning Youth Engagement (YE) Community of Practice (CoP)

- Co-champions
  - Christy Olenik, Making Cents International
  - Mike Sweigart, National Democratic Institute

- Facilitator:
  - Lindsey Woolf, Making Cents International

- Started December 2015
- 393 members
YE CoP

**Goal 1**: Contribute and disseminate a *shared definition of YE* for YouthPower

**Goal 2**: Support the development of *measurement indicators* focused on YE

**Goal 3**: Create a space for the sharing of YE experiences and group problem solving

**Goal 4**: Develop a *clearinghouse* of resources and tools on YE

**Goal 5**: Bring the youth voice into YouthPower activities
Thank You to our Co-Hosts

American Evaluation Association
Youth Focused Evaluation
Topical Interest Group
Speakers

Mr. Saji Prelis  
Ms. Abigail Stevens
Speakers

Mr. Joseph Walugembe
Ms. Josephine Alidri
Ms. Susana Morales
Engaging Youth in Research in Conflict & Crisis

May 17, 2017
Search for Common Ground
YouthPower Learning Youth Engagement CoP Webinar
Search for Common Ground

We don’t just know about the conflict; we live it.
Our Experience

• Search implements projects that put the power of research, design, and advocacy in the hands of young people

• These projects allow youth to deepen understanding of conflict dynamics and issues in their community, strengthen relationships and skills, and create space for engagement and leadership in peacebuilding

• Our lessons learned and insights on youth-led research come from our projects in:
  • Guinea  
  • Liberia  
  • Sierra Leone  
  • South Sudan  
  • Burundi  
  • Tanzania  
  • Timor Leste  
  • Indonesia
WEST AFRICA CASE STUDY: YOUTH AS PARTNERS IN PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN
Project Overview

- **Duration**: March 2014 - September 2016
- **Location**: Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia
- **Donor**: European Union
- **Overall Goal**: To contribute to the eradication of all sorts of violence against children
Project Objectives

A Research to Consultation and Joint Action Strategy

- Identify the worst forms of violence against children and understand the cumulative impact of current approaches addressing them;
- Utilize children and youth recommendations to influence country-level programmatic and policy actions to involve children and youth;
- Mainstream findings at a societal level to enable communities to prevent worse forms of violence;
- Build capacity of children and youth to advocate for their needs and prevent violence against their peers.

Approach: Youth-led, adult supported and technically advised
Listening & Learning methodology

This approach uses guided conversations as an inquiry process, grounded in the principles of Participatory Action Research.

It shifts information-gathering from a one-sided interview to an exchange of experiences and emotions that alters power dynamics for more open and sincere conversation.

Access our toolkit for the Listening & Learning methodology.
Youth-led Research & Action

- 75 Youth Researchers led research and consultations, with training & support
  - Capacity building and 3 desk reviews to lay foundation
  - 2,006 “Listening & Learning” conversations in rural and urban areas
  - 72 structured interviews with experts and key informants
  - National and regional data analysis workshops
  - 3 national reports on “The Worst Forms of Violence against Children & Youth” with recommendations

- Youth-led, adult-supported action on findings
  - 10 local, regional, national “Curriculum Summits” with relevant authorities and civil society
  - Country-specific manuals with info and resources to inform programming and policy
  - “Youth Talk” radio program on national and community radio
  - Short films & documentaries produced and screened
Young Researchers’ Experience

Abigail Stevens, lead young researcher, Sierra Leone
LESSONS LEARNED, GOOD PRACTICES FOR YOUTH RESEARCH IN CONFLICT & CRISIS
Challenges & Lessons Learned

Learning from evaluation conducted by Michael McGill of Young Peacebuilders & our guidance note on projects in West Africa, Burundi, South Sudan, and Tanzania:

- Navigating crises - ex. Ebola crisis for West Africa project
- Potential for harm - ex. vicarious trauma
- Dynamics among youth
- Dealing with community perceptions
- Logistical considerations
Good Practices

- Conflict sensitivity & do no harm
- Adult supported and technically advised
- Building diverse research teams
- Age considerations
- Ethical standards
- Community engagement
- Continued support and avenues for action

See our [guidance note](#) for more information.
Guidance Note:

Visit our toolkits page for more resources: https://www.sfcg.org/tag/children-youth-toolkits/
ENGAGING “HARD TO REACH” PERSONS IN RESEARCH BY DESIGN

The Case of “Market Based Solutions for the Extreme Poor” by ADD International
ADD International

• ADD International is a disability rights organisation
• An ally to the disability movement
• 30 years’ experience working with Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and their organisations in Asia and Africa.
• To achieve independence, equality and opportunity for PWD living in poverty.
• ADD’s Headquarter is in the UK
ADD’s Work

Anchored on international and national frameworks key of which are:

UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWD)

Agenda 2030 (Sustainable Development Goals) principle of “Leave No One Behind”
Market-Based Solutions for the Extreme Poor [MBS]:

From Oct 2015 – December 2016, ADD international implemented the Market based Solutions for the Extreme Poor; a global research project assessing the potential for market-based solutions among extreme poor.
Funding & Partnership

The Rockefeller Foundation

Institute of Development Studies

Coady International Institute
St. Francis Xavier University
Igniting Leadership

ADD International
Collaborations

- Five (5) National organisations of persons with Disabilities - with disability, gender and area specific focus

- Twenty (20) Peer Researchers as Facilitators
Engaging “Hard to Reach” Persons in Research by Design
Engaging “Hard to Reach” in Research By Design

Focus

• The research set out to address the limited evidence and knowledge of how to reach and engage with Persons with Disabilities and other highly marginalised groups around MBS as one of its key problems.

• Approaches that make markets work for this category
Engaging “Hard to Reach” in Research by Design

Targeting

• Focus on the marginalised as its primary target with specific emphasis on the most marginalised women and youth with disabilities identified through a set of criteria
Engaging “Hard to Reach” in Research by Design

Criteria
1. Living in hard to reach/poor location - urban and rural
2. Gender - Male and female youth
3. Representation of all types of disabilities (except Intellectual Disability due to inadequate internal capacity then)
4. Low level of education and income, etc.
Engaging “Hard to Reach” in Research by Design
Engaging “Hard to Reach” in Research by Design
Engaging “Hard to Reach” in Research by Design

Methodology and tools

- Qualitative – based on lived experiences
- Participatory – PWD at the lead
- Peer Led Approach
- Story – Life stories
Engaging “Hard to Reach” persons in Research by Design
Key Considerations to make:

• Human rights – with Participation as a human right

• Ethical considerations – review and approval of protocols by research ethics committee, securing informed consent, etc.

• Risks Management – mapping, mitigation and response
Key Considerations to make:

- Adult and child safeguarding
- Collaboration with organisations of persons with Disabilities to identify the youth and other participants – a useful link
- Recognising and responding to diversity – gender, types of disability, etc. (not homogenous)
Key Consideration to make:

- Use of appropriate research methodology and tools – peer and Life story approach
- Building capacity of the youth in technical (how to do) through training, practice, coaching
- Skills and knowledge transfer to organisations
- Building soft skills (confidence and esteem) – reassuring
Key Considerations to make:
Key Considerations to make:
Key Considerations to make:

Steps of Story Collection:

1. Introductions
2. Project
3. Consent Confidentiality

30 min - 45 min
Key Considerations to make:
Key Considerations to make:

• Reasonable accommodation – enabling participation – sign language, guide
• Role of support – analysing and responding to the needs of the youth: Research Assistants, Child minders, Local language translation
• Technical backstopping - IDS
• Learning , learning and learning
Key Considerations to make:

- Resourcing – time and finances
- Commitment, determination and Positive attitude of the research agency – fear and anxiety are normal but must be overcome
Youth populations
Low-income
Opportunity Youth
Youth involved in the Juvenile Justice System
Youth of Color
LGTBQ

English learners
Undocumented
Immigrants
Benefits

• Stories are valuable data
• Perspective and understanding is unfiltered
• Empowerment
• Groundtruth data
Approaches

• Youth focus groups
• Key informant interviews with adult allies
• Individual interviews with youth
• Y-PAR (youth-led participatory action research)
  • Shifting the power paradigm so youth can be participants, researchers, and evaluators
  • Youth design research question, methodology
  • Youth collect data and analyze
  • Youth report findings
• Photovoice
Challenges

• Youth are very shy
• Fear and distrust
• Hard to recruit
• The stories of impact are usually shared by the adult allies
**Must**

- Partner with trusted community organizations
- Show-up
- Be transparent
- Be open to outcomes
- Cultural humility
- Age awareness
- Create a safe space
Lessons Learned

• Programs are powerful youth development vehicles
• Programs provide multiple benefits
• Youth deserve the chance to become agents of change in their communities and for their communities
What can you do next?

• Contribute to the Twitter stream and spread the message of PYD.
• Join a YouthPower Community of Practice.
• Visit the YouthPower Learning Hub at www.YouthPower.org and use the resources, best practices, and knowledge shared.
• Apply for a grant under contract in the next round.
• Register on the Learning Hub and share your own reports, studies and other resources on the Learning Hub, write a blog, announce a PYD event.
Thank you!

Thank you for participating in the YouthPower Learning event co-hosted by the Youth Engagement CoP and the American Evaluation Association Youth-Focused Evaluation Group.

The recording, presentation, and any resources shared during this event will be sent to all registrants.

@YPLearning

YouthPower Learning