PhotoVoice: A Study on Youth Interventions and Community Engagement in Morocco

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Study Background

• **Purpose:** To understand the extent to which youth apply the skills and assets developed through their participation in a USAID-funded youth development program to their everyday lives, especially as it pertains to peaceful conflict resolution, positive behavior choices, and resiliency.

• **USAID’s Youth Development Program goal:**
  – Help marginalized youth reject crime, drugs, irregular migration, violence, and violent extremism;
  – Support at-risk youth to become integrated, productive citizens
Research Objectives

• We wanted to know ...
  – What youth experience as they engage in their own communities
  – If/how they use their improved assets in their daily lives, especially to peacefully resolve conflict, make positive choices, and demonstrate resiliency;
  – What effect this has on the community; and
  – How the community can either further encourage or cause regression of those assets.
Why PhotoVoice?

- Enables beneficiaries to record and reflect on their own engagement within the community, including the community’s strengths and concerns;
- Promotes critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues for study participants through group discussion of photographs and diaries; and
- Helps USAID and FHI 360 understand how their programming impacts the community, and informs future program activities that can better benefit the community as whole.
PhotoVoice Methodology

1) Introduction and Technical Training
2) Photography
3) Photo Reflection and Discussion
4) Photo Exhibit
1) Introduction and Technical Training

- **Icebreaker:** Introduce participants and establish a comfortable space.

- **Introduce PhotoVoice (PV):** Explain the concept and how PV has been used.

- **Introduce the Study:** Give an overview of the Youth Intervention/Community Engagement study, its purpose and objectives.

- **Technical Training:** Explain the basic concepts and provide basic photography training; present ethics and legal guidelines.
2) Photography

- Give cameras to study participants
- Ask them to visually document their daily lives based on a set of specific prompts
  - Example: “Take 5 photos that express XYZ topic to you.”
- Provide participants with a timeline for the activity
3) Photo Reflection and Discussion

- **Focus Group Discussions and Reflection**: participants explain why they took the photos and its importance to them; other participants reflect on and discuss the photos.

- **Narrative/Caption Writing**: participants articulate their reasons for taking the image and its impact on them.
4) Photo Exhibit

*Photography Exhibit:* Hold a community-wide exhibit of the photographs for friends and family
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Instill a sense of purpose and confidence
- Raise public awareness of community-identified issues
- Highlight youth perceptions and/or perspectives about these issues
Outputs

- Number of Photos collected from 4 groups: 913
- Number of captions/commentaries submitted by participants: 913
- Number of discussion hours recorded and transcribed: 95 hours

**Exhibit:**
- 62 photos and captions in total
- 4 different events in each of the 4 communities

**Photo-book:**
- Catalogue of 62 photos and captions printed and distributed with community, partners, and participants.

That is a lot of Data to process and analyze: plan accordingly!
Best Practices

• Ensure PV is locally-grounded
  – Use local language(s) for materials, handouts, and discussions
  – Recruit local researchers with deep knowledge of the local context, traditions and culture; and know the language used by youth

• Recruit male and female facilitators

• Invite/include parents to launch meetings and events
Gender and Age Considerations

Consider ...

• Gender dynamics when planning activities
  – When will youth be available?
  – Are there any challenges to girls’ participation?

• Grouping participants by gender and/or age for certain activities
Lessons Learned

• Selection Process
  – Balance at-risk/hard-to-reach youth versus already-engaged/top performing youth

• Recognize potential for significant attrition and develop strategies to mitigate it
  – *Example*: Provide technical training and/or incentives to keep youth engaged

• Schedule: Youth are very busy!
  – Take into account their various activities and responsibilities
Lessons Learned

• Clarify roles and responsibilities of:
  – Local CSOs
  – Research NGO
  – Youth

• Communication is critical!
  – Communicate between all parties involved: participants, parents, CSOs and technical staff, and donor
Thank you!

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