

HANDOUTS FOR PHOTOVOICE



These can be used as handouts or made into a booklet and printed out for Community Facilitators to have as reference materials.

If used as handouts, please give CFs a folder where they can keep them all in one place.

- How to get the Photos You Want
- Homework (after Day One)
- Study Questions
- Preventing Problems
- Sample Timeline
- The SHOWeD methodology
- Processing Photos
- Collaborative Sorting
- How to be an Effective Note-Taker
- Organizing a Photovoice exhibition

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How to get the photos you want

1. Stand steady, legs apart to keep the camera still when you take your photo and hold the camera with both hands. Loop the cord over your wrist so you don't accidentally drop the camera.

2. Play with lighting to get different effects and different moods. You might want to use the lamp or flash if there is not a lot of natural light. Or you may want your picture to be darker, to give a feeling of sadness. Soft light in the early morning and evening gives a different effect than noon-day sun. Sun behind your back gives a different effect than sun shining in your face. Try it out! Your camera may have different modes or settings you can use for different lighting.

3. Design your photos. Don't worry too much about design, just know that you can play with your design to change the look and the meaning of your photos. Here are a few examples:

- a. Framing: (like a doorway or trees) can be included around the edges of a photo to bring attention to your subject.
- b. Lines: Look for lines in the environment such as fences, street lines, or the horizon. Lines can help lead the viewer's eye to the focus of your picture.
- c. Different points of view: Looking at something from different angles (from above or below, from the side, close up or far away) can change the look and feel of the photo a lot. Experiment with different views until your photos and subjects (people or things you are photographing) look how you want them to look.
- d. Mood: Lighting, colors, and the photograph's subject and background can all come together to create a picture's mood – from tense and gloomy to bright, happy, and hopeful.

4. Practice, practice, practice! The more you practice, the more you will be comfortable getting your photos to tell the story you want to tell. You can take a lot of photos and delete a lot of photos. When you see a photo that really captures what you are looking for you may have a strong feeling like "Yes! That's it!". Or you can go through the photos you like with someone else and discuss which ones seem to work the best to bring out your message or story.

5. Advanced Design: You can explore using symbolism as well as reality. There are a lot of different ways to tell your story. Symbolism (something that represents something else) can be used instead of taking a picture of the actual thing itself. For example, a bird cage with an open door might be a symbol of freedom after feeling trapped. A butterfly is often used as a symbol of change or transformation. What other symbols can you think of? There are several symbols that are very often used such as hearts and doves. There may be some symbols that are frequently used in your culture. You can also create your own symbols; perhaps you will see something that reminds you of something else. You can take a photo of that. Use of symbols can be helpful when you are dealing with sensitive topics when it may be too private to take the pictures you might want to take.

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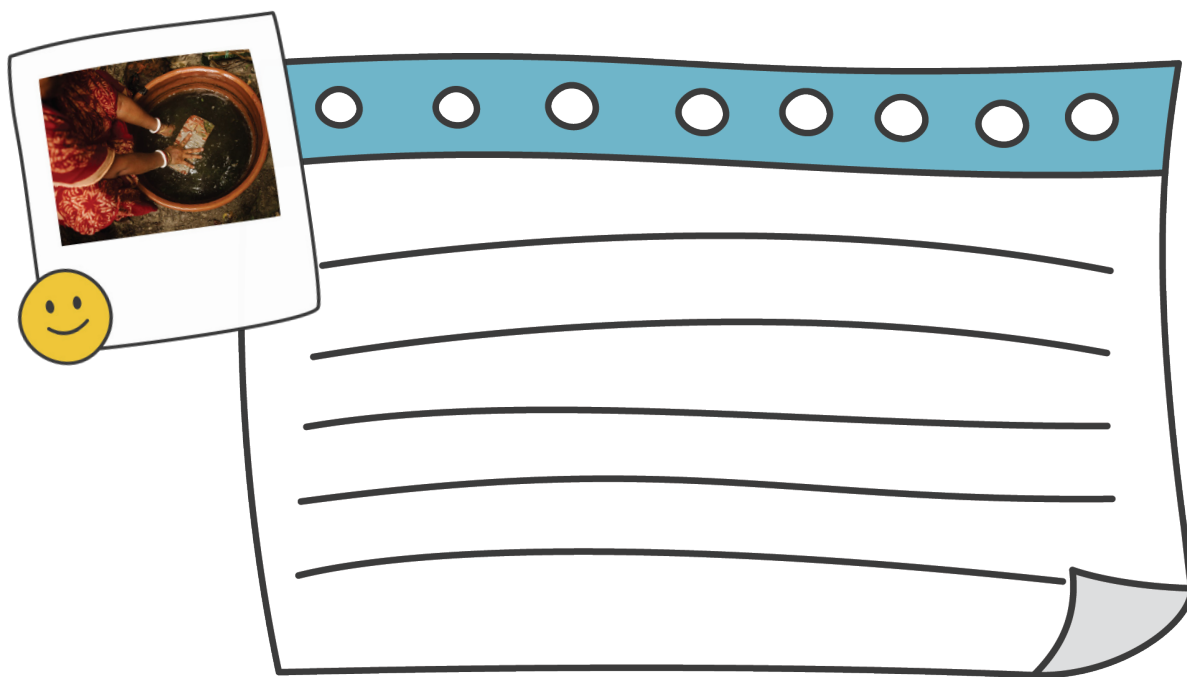
Homework for tonight (After Day One)

For your homework tonight please take several pictures that answer your study question. You can play with lighting, symbolism and design if you like, just remember to try to take at least some photos directly related to your study question. Don't get nervous! There is not any single "correct" way to take photos! As the photographer or artist, you get to decide which photos you like and whether they captured what you wanted them to.

Even though you are not really in the community where you work, you can take photos that are like the answers you imagined to your study question. Remind the CFs that it is important to ask permission from people first before taking their picture. If you are taking a photo of places or things, without people, you may not have to ask permission. You can explain that you are taking a workshop and learning about telling stories with photos. If people don't want their pictures taken, respect their wishes.

Be careful with your cameras – try not to drop them (if there is a loop you can put around your wrist, that helps) and avoid having it stolen. Treat them with the same care you would give to a cell phone. Have fun experimenting with your cameras!

Write your study question here:



Study Questions

Three important decisions:

- What's the story that needs to be told?
- Who needs or wants to hear the story?
- Who can tell the story and doesn't often get heard from?

A good photovoice study question:

- Is personal (it includes the word you or your in the question)
- Is 'open' (cannot be answered with just 'yes' or 'no')
- Is clear and specific
- Is directly related to the lives of the participants
- Results in answers that can be shown through pictures

Some examples of photovoice study questions:

- Why is it important to you to have access to youth friendly services?
- What does having access to respectful maternity care mean to you?
- How has your involvement in the livelihoods program affected your life?
- What makes it harder or easier for you to feed your children a variety of healthy foods?
- What has changed since you were a child about the kinds of foods your children eat?
- What are some ways you like to play with and teach your child? What makes it harder or easier to interact very much with your child?

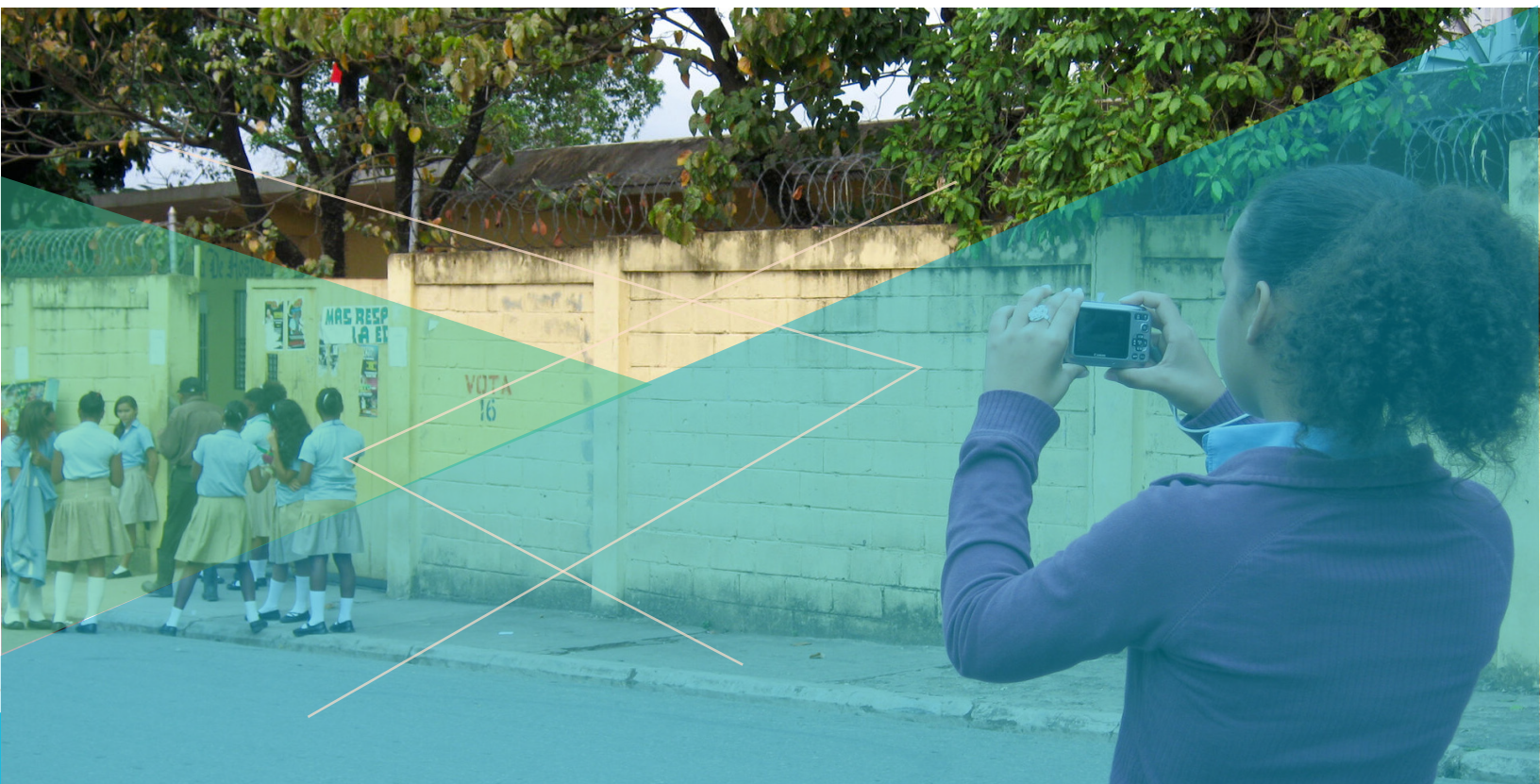
Very Sensitive Topics:

What if the Study Question Topic is very sensitive? Suppose you are working with a group of young mothers who were married while very young, and you are thinking about using this study question: How has child marriage affected your life? This question might be much too risky for the participants and for your organization to address directly. What if you changed it to something like this: What are your hopes and dreams for your daughters? The issue of child marriage might come out in a way that is safer for the participants and more acceptable in the community, yet still powerful.

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Preventing Problems when taking Photovoice Photos

- Be polite and respectful.
- Ask permission before taking a photograph of a person or someone's private property.
- Written consent is always a good idea, even if it isn't required in your setting, so that it's very clear that permission is being given.
- For a child, ask the child and the child's parent or legal caregiver for permission. The child can give assent, and the parent or legal caregiver gives consent.
- If someone changes their mind after giving permission, respect their wishes and delete the photo.
- Don't go alone, especially to unfamiliar places.
- Don't go somewhere that seems unsafe to you or leave quickly if you begin to feel unsafe.
- If someone tries to steal the camera, stay calm, and give up the camera - don't resist and risk getting hurt.
- Be aware that some situations may be very sensitive. Don't put pressure on anyone to give you permission to take the picture. Don't take pictures that could embarrass someone or that might be evidence of something illegal.
- Be sure you understand the photo consent form(s) and have enough copies with you.
- You don't need permission to take pictures of famous people, public places, or pictures of people you can't clearly identify.



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SAMPLE TIMELINE

	Week 1	Week 2-4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13-15
Training Community Facilitators	X										
Recruiting Participants		X									
Intro to Photovoice			X								
Take Pictures				X	X						
Discuss Photos and develop descriptions (individually and in optional group discussions)						X	X				
Collaborative Sorting								X			
Planning Exhibition and Inviting attendees								X	X		
Print Photos and Descriptions for Exhibition									X		
Community Exhibition										X	
Develop Photobook or other product											X
Closing Celebrations											X
Continuous Planning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

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The SHOWeD methodology

See, Happen, Our lives, Why, and Do

S: What do you See here?

H: What is really Happening here? (Why did it happen?)

O: How does this relate to Our lives? (or How does this photo make you feel?)

We: Why does this challenge (problem) or strength (opportunity) exist? Or Why is the situation like this?

D: What can we Do about this?

Answer these questions to help participants write a good description of the photos. Keep the study question in mind as well.

These questions can also be used for a group discussion or workshop about the photovoice photos. The whole group can answer and discuss the questions together. For a group discussion be sure not to have too many photos to discuss as it will take a while! Perhaps just 5-7 of the photos that represent the main themes or categories, that respond to the study questions. You will need to record the discussion or have a good notetaker if you conduct the group discussion.



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Processing Photos

Here is a suggested process for reducing the number of photos to a manageable number, and then use the **SHOWeD** method to write descriptions for the selected photos.

Participants will have taken a lot of photos. The CFs will need to help the community participants narrow down to just a few photos that best answer the study questions and the description using **SHOWeD**. Here are some reminders of the steps to reduce the photos and select the ones that best answer the study questions.



- From all their photos, community participants choose 10-15 that they feel best answer the study questions.
- Participants may sit with a partner to choose their top 5-7 photos – not looking for the most beautiful photo, but for photos that best answer the study question.
- Then they sit with a CF to choose their top 3 photos. These should be the photos that are not necessarily the most beautiful, but ones that best answer the study questions. Then, write the descriptions, while doing the SHOWeD process together with a CF.

This will be time consuming – it could take 45 minutes to an hour per person. The CF may want to invite 3 participants to come in the morning and 3 in the afternoon for 2 days until all the descriptions are written. While the CF meets with one person, the other two people can be showing each other their photos and discussing them. Or the CF could just schedule one person at a time to work together on descriptions.

This can be done on the CF's laptop in PowerPoint: this is one easy way to do this – put the photo on one slide and the description on the next slide.

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Collaborative Sorting Steps

1. Record SHOWeD descriptions for each selected photo
2. Save the Photos and descriptions on PowerPoint slides
3. Print out the Photos and the descriptions and post them on sticky wall
4. Have participants look for photos that are similar and put them near each other.
5. Give each group or category a name that makes sense to participants.
6. Reduce to 5-7 categories at most by voting for three that are “most important” and that best answer the study questions.
7. Make sure each photovoice participant has at least one photo in the final selection of photos.
8. Take time to be sure everyone is comfortable with the final selection.

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How to be an Effective Note-taker

Below are some tips for taking meaningful notes:

1. Take notes on what you hear of interest to the study topic:
 - Answers to study questions.
 - Factors that influence change.
 - Influential groups and people.
 - Presence or access to resources.
 - Role of feelings and desires in influencing factors.
2. Take notes on what you observe that may give more meaning to what the discussion group participants are sharing.
 - Looked nervous talking about...
 - Seems happy telling about...

- Uncomfortable talking about...
 - Seemed proud of...
 - Spent a lot of time...
3. Make sure your notes are clear and avoid unnecessary or unhelpful words or information.
 4. Use point form, also known as bullet points
 5. Include powerful quotations, especially connected to the study questions.
 6. Ask for clarification at the end, if needed.
 7. Write time, date, and location of event, and names of facilitators and note-taker in your notes.
 8. Review and revise all notes immediately after the interview while it is all still easy to remember.

"I noted that three of the group members talked the most and two said very little."

(Shared by note-taker with the facilitators after the participants left)

This Handout was adapted from the Tips Sheet, How to be an effective notetaker, in: Ayers, J., Boswell, C., DeCoster, M., Romkema, J., & Woodside Alegre, L. (2021). Unearthing Collective Wisdom: Strengthening Disaster Preparedness & Early Action with Participatory Learning and Action Tools and Principles. Washington, DC: Resilience Evaluation, Analysis and Learning (REAL) Associate Award. https://fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/STC_PLAToolsBooklet_Final.pdf

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Organizing a Photovoice Exhibition

- Inviting the intended audience
- Setting up the exhibit
- Will you need refreshments?
- Will you need per diems for some official guests?
- Guiding a discussion of the Photovoice exhibition
 - Ask: What did you like? What surprised you? What stood out for you?
- Have a notetaker – capturing important quotes from the discussion.
- Have someone who can take photos at the exhibit of guests viewing the photos and take photos of the photographers too.



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