Beyond surveys “made in EU”? Evaluation, Participation, Action Research

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Symposium: Researching Children’s Rights Globally
LSE, 12-14th February 2015
- Multi-disciplinary ICT4D research centre
- 10 academics, 13 PhDs
- MSc Practising Sustainable Development & MSc ICT4D
- Committed to top-quality research in partnership with, and in the interests of, marginalised people everywhere

www.ict4dc.org
ICT4D at RHUL

Sub-fields:
- access
- e/m-participation
- e-literacy
- e/m-learning
- e/m-health
- e-government
- e-business
- ...

Themes:
- digital divides
- value-sensitive design
- gender
- youth/children
- social innovation
- sustainable IT
- traceability & Internet of Things
- Big Data
- privacy
- ....

Stakeholders:
- users
- non-users
- int. organisations
- business
- state
- civil society

2013, 2014: Voted Top Ten Think Tank globally in Science and Tech (U of Penn survey of experts)
Reminder: 6 methodological limitations of survey research on children and ICTs “made in global North”

- Reported behaviour is not the same as behaviour
- Invites children to externalise the online
- Some groups excluded/hard to reach (e.g. street children; those in remote regions)
- Questions can come with normative assumptions which are context-dependent:
  - about the nature and construction of childhood/adulthood
  - about gender roles (esp. role/aspirations for girls; heteronormativity)
  - about the “nuclear, two-parent family ideal”
  - about how information and technology is consumed (e.g. individually/collectively)
    - about ownership and access
- “life reality” as expressed through text (non-visual), then put into numbers –
  => increasingly de-contextualised
- Insufficient openness to the future and to the unforeseen
  (children! + technology! + different contexts!)
Quantitative + Qualitative/ Qualitative + Quantitative

OK, so we need qualitative research (observation, visual data, interviews, focus groups etc) as well, but how can you “standardise” qualitative research across contexts?

Maybe frameworks (as mapping tools) can travel?
The Choice Framework

**STRUCTURE**
- institutions and organisations
- discourses
- policies and programmes
- formal and informal laws including:
  - Norms on usage of space
  - Norms on usage of time
- technologies and innovations including: access to ICTs
  - availability of ICTs
  - affordability of ICTs
  - skills needed for ICTs

**AGENCY**
- SR (Social Resources)
- MR (Material Resources)
- FR (Financial Resources)
- GR (Geographical Resources)
- PSR (Psychological Resources)
- In (Information)
- He (Health)
- CR (Cultural Resources)
- Ti (Time)
- Age
- Ethnicity
- etc.

**DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES**

**Primary:** Choice
**Secondary, as chosen by individual, e.g.:**
- easier communication
- increased knowledge
- better/more social relationships
- healthy environment
- increased income
- increased mobility
- more voice
- more autonomy
- etc.


The Choice Framework

**DEGREES OF EMPOWERMENT**
- existence of choice
- sense of choice
- use of choice
- achievement of choice

**Structure**

- Institutions and organisations
- Discourses
- Policies and programs
- Formal and informal laws including:
  - Norms on usage of space
  - Norms on usage of time
- Technologies and innovations including: access to ICTs
  - Availability of ICTs
  - Affordability of ICTs
  - Skills needed for ICTs

**Agency**

- Educational resources (ER)
- Social resources (SR)
- Psychological resources (PsR)
- Material resources (MR)
- Financial resources (FR)
- Natural resources (NR)
- Cultural resources (CR)
- Health (He)
- Information (In)
- Time (Ti)

**Access:**
- Availability
- Affordability
- Skills needed

Norms on the use of space
Norms on the use of time

**Degrees of Empowerment**

- Existence of choice
- Sense of choice
- Use of choice
- Achievement of choice

**Primary:** Choice

**Secondary, as chosen by individual, e.g.:**
- Easier communication
- Increased knowledge
- Better/more social relationships
- Healthy environment
- Increased income
- Increased mobility
- More voice
- More autonomy
- Etc.

**Achieved functionalities**

From Chile to South Africa…..travelling frameworks

**STRUCTURE**
- Institutions and organizations
- Policies and programmes
- Formal and informal laws
- Norms on usage of space
- Norms on usage of time
- Access to ICTs
- Availability of ICTs
- Affordability of ICTs
- Necessary skills for ICTs

**AGENCY**
- Information
- Educational Resources
- Social Resources
- Psychological Resources
- Material Resources
- Financial Resources
- Natural Resources
- Geographical Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Health

**DIMENSIONS OF CHOICE**
- Existence of choice
- Sense of choice
- Use of choice
- Achievement of choice

**DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES**
- Principal: Choice
  - Easier communication
  - Increased knowledge
  - Access to markets
  - Business ideas
  - Increased income
  - More voice
  - Time saved
  - Higher job satisfaction
  - ...

Chile – Qualitative Research

Scientific and Industrial Research Council of South Africa

Qual & Quant & Participatory Action Research
Beyond qual + quant: Why participatory research?

- Children have a right to participate in imagining the future – *their* future
- Rather than having children/young people as an “object” of research, they can become co-researchers, co-constructors of meaning/agents in their own personal development
- Participatory photography, participatory mapping, participatory video....

- Participatory Action Research: children/youth can be co-designers of technology
- Participation = better sense of need & higher sense of ownership = higher chance of project sustainability
ICT and development

Available at: http://www.unicef-irc.org

#ICT4kids @ict4dc
Examples of ICTs for child-related development

- cash transfers & social protection (Vincent & Devereux 2010; Muwanguzi & Musambira 2011; Asian 2011)
- birth registration (Samson & Cherrier 2009; Wassago 2012)
- pre- and post-natal information to mothers (Noordam 2012; Mosoke 2009; Lambo 2011)
- Content for health care workers to operate more effectively in their roles (Cuttrell and Ramahandran 2010)
- E-learning and m-learning (Mitra 2003, Selinger 2009, Isaacs and Hollow 2012)
- awareness campaigns on sanitation and hygiene (WASH) issues (Butterworth 2009); female genital mutilation (FGM) (Thioune 2013)
- reporting violence against children (Pinheiro 2006); Frontline SMS and Ushahidi
- Youth participation in politics, e.g via surveys - U-Report by UNICEF Uganda (Dralega 2010; Shanker 2012)
Demand-driven, user-centred, participatory approaches

- Don’t start with the technology, start with the challenge
- Understand existing contexts, systems, stakeholders
- Work with local people, where possible with local designers, where appropriate with children/youth themselves
- Design for equity
- Build in Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning (MEL)
Overall research needs

• More Global South data (both quant & qual) needed on children’s internet access and use

• Comparative work: more and less privileged groups of children within a country or community

• Scoping the risk of working with marginalised groups [Data needed here!]

• Participatory action research

• Researchers as partners in ongoing M&E and Learning

• Policy research
Areas of work:

- **Policy**
  - (and policy evaluation)

- **Data, measurement, children/youth perspectives of “Kids online”**

- **Social innovation, interventions, ICT4D (and evaluation), participation, action research**
Thank you.

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CURRENT POLL - 09/Apr/2014 :

YOUR SAY: Where do women in your community go to get antenatal care?

“In our community we do not have health centre, but we have one in Ableton which is about 25 km from our community.”

Map data ©2014 Google
“Children, particularly the girls we worked with [...] are so busy [...] many of them are not in school because they are tending to the farm, tending to other children, they are taking care of the household, their time is so valuable and limited. You are designing services, we tend to think about the luxury market, the person who has all the money in the world is the most demanding consumer, but I would argue young girls in these environments are probably the most demanding end user you can probably design for in the world.”

(Practitioner, designer of ICT4D technology)
Examples of ICT4D projects

- Cash transfers & social protection (Vincent & Devereux 2010; Muwanguzi & Musambira 2011; Asian 2011)

- Birth registration (Samson & Cherrier 2009; Wassago 2012)

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