



Capacity strengthening for Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

BULLETIN

Key Updates and Good Practical Examples

Introduction

The CBPR Capacity Strengthening Group takes forward 'Capacity strengthening learning research'. Our aim is to understand and strengthen the capacity of co-researchers in each setting to achieve an effective and equitable CBPR partnership.

Terminology eye Reflexivity involves an immediate, dynamic and continuing self-awareness that reminds the researcher to deconstruct their positionality with the aim of producing a more trustworthy, transparent and honest account of the research. Practical reflexivity can be done in several ways:

- Keeping a research diary allows for the recording of thoughts and experiences, before, during and after data collection and analysis
- Verbal collective reflexivity in research teams or with research participants promotes open discussions about how different positionalities are affecting the research
- Verbal/written individual reflexivity explores difficult questions about one's culture or social standing/environment

CBPR animation Thanks to everyone who joined the meetings to co-produce the CBPR animation highlighting our research approach and values, its live and available [here](#). Share within your networks, teaching and social media. Let us know how you use it and any feedback you get. We've already received positive feedback from the co-researchers in Kenya: *"Me I loved the Video, I will like to be part of the people translating it to Swahili. (Name of a person) don't leave me behind when translating because I know how to make it better understood by community. I also have a nice voice"*.



Remember to get in touch with Kim or Prasanna to add other languages.

Country updates: CBPR approaches and engagement of co-researchers

Sierra Leone The ARISE team organized an initial group discussion with co-researchers on CBPR principles followed by a capacity assessment session where they explored what skills co-researchers already have in terms of community engagement, mobilisation and education and how these could be strengthened and shared through peer education. Audio and video recordings of these activities have captured reflections as well as new learnings arising from the group. The team will now capture how co-researchers' skills are applied within ARISE, and their learning journey, through reflexivity sessions using a newly developed reflexivity tool, to adapt when necessary.

India The ARISE team has been working with partners to select the co-researchers on the basis of a specific list of criteria. Reflectivity was captured through research journals and audio recordings. Because some of the selected co-researchers are not literate, the team, in collaboration with partners, will explore methods and approaches to ensure an inclusive and equitable participation of all co-researchers.

Bangladesh In summer 2020, the ARISE team led a remote GIS mapping of their three study sites. Maps were created using various data sources. Due to the lack of proper data in the Dholpur slum site, the team engaged a co-researcher, familiar with the use of smart phone applications. He provided accurate information (e.g. position of safe and unsafe spaces in the slum), remotely co-produced the map and shared it for use by a local youth organization. The mapping process blog is available [here](#). Following this training, six co-researchers have been recruited and will be trained to engage further in the GIS mapping process.



Inception workshop with governance actors and service providers in Dholpur slum

In December 2020, inception workshops were successfully held with community members in each study site. Issues faced by their communities were raised such as the lack of healthcare services, sexual harassment, fear of eviction and income loss due to covid-19. Inception workshops were also held with governance actors (ward councillors, local leaders, community development group members), and service providers from government organizations, NGOs and INGOs. They also highlighted challenges they face, working in these urban spaces, like services overlap between organizations, the lack of coordination and concerns about the sustainability of services and projects. These workshops helped to explore priorities and get reflections from these different groups.

Kenya Co-researcher training on governance diaries was conducted in January 2021 led by APHRC with input from LSTM, SLURC and IDS. Co-researchers built on their knowledge of qualitative research approaches and interviewing skills such as rapport building and covert/overt observations. We also focussed on reflexivity and co-researchers examined their positionality and ethical dilemmas faced when collecting data. They were excited to pilot a reflexivity tool, originally developed in Sierra Leone, in the community. One co-researcher shared a reflection as follows:



A co-researcher guiding the community in social mapping.

“When I heard of governance diaries... I thought we were going to study mainly about the government but it was so interesting to see how simple and interesting it is during mock interviews... I was glad how we had diverse facilitators to strengthen my skills in qualitative studies, power and positionality and how facilitators were engaging and friendly... they took their time to design practical activities”

UK The ARISE team developed capacity strengthening indicators against the MEL Objective 4 ‘To ensure collaboration and equitable partnerships within and between community co-researchers and Hub members’. These qualitative and quantitative indicators will capture how learning is acquired and applied but also how new knowledge is co-created, which is key to ensure an equitable CBPR partnership. The team is also moving forward the creation of a CBPR competencies framework based on literature available on ‘partnership readiness’ and equitable community participation.

Next steps

- Complete the CBPR competencies framework to inform the capacity strengthening activities with co-researchers
- Develop standard tools to effectively capture the learning journey of co-researchers across contexts
- Discuss plan on how best involve co-researchers in the group moving forward
- Share the first draft of the training video.