



Critical Perspectives on PhotoVoice as a Tool to Explore the Challenges of Balancing Work and Childcare Among Mothers in Kenya

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Introduction

Although insider knowledge is key in finding local and relevant solutions to social issues, specifically in community-based research, to date there have been few studies which have sought to study ‘up close’ what the barriers for women are from the perspectives of mothers themselves in relation to balancing work and childcare. A promising method for this kind of ‘up close’ insider approach, either by itself or in combination with more traditional tools such as focus groups and in-depth interviews, is the method of PhotoVoice. In this method, community members, as insiders, use cameras to explore stories, experiences or ideas about a particular topic or issue of importance in their community. As Wang, Cash and Powers (2000) ask in their visual work with the homeless, “who knows the streets as well as the homeless?”. Photographs can act as a visual “voice” (with or without written captions) to help to narrate these stories. This type of conversation regarding community issues can lead to what might be referred to as the ‘co-production’ of knowledge. PhotoVoice is the term coined by Caroline Wang in her work with women farmers in China in the early 1990s (Wang and Burris, 1997). In that work, which focused on women working in rice paddy fields, the use of PhotoVoice provided the women with the opportunity to document critical issues in their lives, which were related to health and childcare. The participatory visual methodology of PhotoVoice includes giving simple point and shoot (usually digital) cameras to participants, allowing them to visually voice an issue which is often difficult to put into words. As such, PhotoVoice is a tool to see ‘through the eyes’ of those who are often the most marginalized in the research process (Wang, Yi, Tao, & Carovano, 1998; Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang, 2006). PhotoVoice is not only a tool of inquiry through which the participants express their views, it is also a tool for communicating their concerns. Once the participants have documented their concerns visually, they can be presented to community members, other stakeholders and policymakers through exhibitions. In Wang’s work, women presented their photos to local policymakers, who saw the issues ‘through the eyes of the women’ themselves. PhotoVoice, as a method, is deeply rooted in feminist traditions. When used in areas such as women’s health and economic development, this method has the potential to challenge dominant views of how girls and women are seen.

This research report explores the use of PhotoVoice and how it can be applied in contemporary work with mothers in an informal settlement in Nairobi. What can we learn through a participatory visual approach by engaging those most affected by the issue of childcare? What are the critical issues that need to be considered in using such a methodology? What is the potential of this work to contribute to social change? To explore these questions, we offer a case study, in which we present the context for the fieldwork, the background of participants, the methodological process of implementing PhotoVoice, and some key findings as represented by the mothers. We then go on to consider some of the benefits and challenges of this methodology.

A case study: Through the eyes of mothers in Korogocho

The context

Conventionally, and around the world, care work is considered to be a female responsibility (Ferrant, Luca, and Nowacka, 2014). Women's role in unpaid care accounts for a significant percentage of their time and labour, and yet this is not factored in when calculating their economic contribution, to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), for instance. In the global South, few governments have worked to give supportive structural systems to enhance women's economic participation and support their caregiving to children and the elderly. Women in sub-Saharan Africa are faced with the challenge of balancing work or employment and other care responsibilities. Paid work and childcare are perceived to conflict with each other, thereby making it difficult for women to balance the two demanding roles, especially in low-income contexts with limited financial and structural resources. The dilemma faced by mothers in these contexts is to either seize the available employment opportunities (often located outside of the household) or to remain at home and take care of their young children. Given the economic constraints faced by most of informal urban populations, the need for the supplementary household income from women cannot be overlooked. Moreover, single-headed female households face an additional challenge as sole breadwinners for their children or families. In urban informal settlement areas of Nairobi, and throughout sub-Saharan Africa, women's ability to achieve economic autonomy is often limited by their concurrent responsibility to care for young children. For many women, full engagement in the labour force depends on their ability to find safe and affordable childcare. Iddy and Kisimbii (2017), in their case study in Kenya, argue that socio-economic status of women and biased perceptions regarding their capabilities "has both direct and indirect negative effects on women participation in community projects" (p. 124).

But, how do the women themselves see the issues and even more importantly, what do they see as the solutions? The work that we describe here focusing on the use of PhotoVoice was part of a larger study in Korogocho, which is a large informal settlement in Nairobi. This study was called "Creating better economic opportunities for women in Nairobi slums through improved childcare options". As Clark and Muthuri (2016) highlight, the project aimed to deepen understanding of the links between mothers having access to daycare and pre-school support for their children, and their economic empowerment. More specifically, its goal was "to assess whether subsidized and enhanced quality childcare can influence a women's ability to work and earn" (p. 7). The study applied mixed methods, including multi-purpose quantitative data collection through baseline surveys, and PhotoVoice sessions for qualitative data collection.

Conducting the fieldwork using PhotoVoice

For this study using PhotoVoice, we recruited mothers between the ages of 24-49 years who lived in Korogocho and had one or more children aged five years and below. The aim was to understand the challenges that they faced in their daily lives. During the PhotoVoice activity, the mothers worked in four groups (representing different area of Korogocho) of various sizes but no more than 12 women.

FIGURE 1 – STEPS IN PHOTOVOICE

PhotoVoice: Capturing Mother's Voices in Korogocho



Learning Visual Ethics



Learning How to Use Cameras



Taking Photos



Selecting Photos



Printing Photos



Writing Captions



Producing Poster-Narratives



Presenting

The participating mothers were first introduced to the study by the research team, who explained to them the objectives of the study. An essential element of PhotoVoice, as a participatory research approach, involves training participants about how to go through the PhotoVoice process. The prompts that we used were, “how does childcare affect your work?” and, “what are some of the challenges and some of the solutions?” Each session followed a similar process based on a series of steps (see Figure 1) including (1) learning about visual ethics including the ‘no faces protocol’ (Mitchell, 2011); (2) learning how to use the camera; (3) how to take pictures; (4) process of selecting the pictures to be printed out; (5) learning how to use the portable printer and printing the pictures; (6) writing captions; (7) producing poster-narratives; and (8) presenting their analysis of the poster-narratives and photos to the larger group. The final step is to disseminate the work through exhibitions to community members and policymakers.

In total, the women produced more than 100 photos along with 16 poster-narratives (4 per group) through which they offered their analysis of the issues of balancing work and childcare. A selection of 30 or more of the photos was also exhibited in a travelling exhibition titled, “Through the Eyes of Mothers”, which was showcased at various events in Nairobi (Kenya) and Montreal (Canada).

Working with the data

As has been explored by Mitchell (2011), PhotoVoice lends itself to a multi-layered approach to working with study data and indeed highlights the question ‘what counts as data?’. Gillian Rose’s (2012) visual discourse approach highlights three sites or sources of data: (1) the site of production or how the participants produce the images; (2) the site of the image (content, themes, mood and so on of the images), and (3) the sites of audience (how the images are exhibited and received by various audiences). In the case of the mothers from Korogocho, the first source of data is the individual photos and captions along with the poster-narratives produced by the mothers working in small groups and presented to the bigger group. The second source of data is the audio recordings from the follow-up discussions and the resulting transcripts. The third source of data drew on what might be referred to as ‘process data,’ which documented how the mothers participated, and what they said or demonstrated in relation to the photos they produced. Finally, there was the follow-up data based on exhibitions and the ways that various audiences (community members or policymakers) interacted with the exhibit.

Data analysis in this PhotoVoice study includes several layers and approaches. Analysis can be carried out using conventional thematic approaches of working with transcripts based on what the women say about their photos, and including the use of NVivo software (see Appendices A-C). The second is a more holistic view of the process, as interpreted by the research team. The third layer of analysis is based on studying the exhibition process in relation to engaging various audiences.

Thematic analysis of the poster-narratives

Broadly, the challenges that mothers focused on in their poster-narratives can be divided into three main categories: a) economic and financial challenges, b) infrastructural challenges and c) socio-cultural challenges. Among these challenges, there are some that have more direct connections to the project prompt, which was “how does childcare effect your work?”. Here we can narrow down the challenges and offer the findings according to the following three dominant themes: workplace hazards and child well-being, financial security and childcare, and environment and child health.

Workplace hazards and child well-being

The problem of a hazardous workplace arose in many aspects of the participants’ discussions and their images. These aspects concerned the safety and well-being of the women themselves, as well as their children. Often, with the little money the women do manage to make, they have to spend it on medical bills because either they or their children have been injured at their places of work. This kind of issue makes it even more difficult for women to save money for daycare since most of it is spent on healthcare. As captured by the following excerpts from some mothers, their concern regarding the well-being of their children is serious:



“This village has become very congested. You can see there is this woman cooking ‘githeri’ (a mixture of maize and beans) here... There is fire there where ‘githeri’ is being cooked. There could be a child who has been sent to buy tomatoes and vegetables and the child gets burnt while passing there.”

“Here there is a mother who is coming from work on the road and there is a trench. She is in danger because anything can happen... she can slide and fall in that trench.”



“There is a child on the road and there is charcoal nearby. There is this other child who s/he is playing, meaning that this child was left with the child and s/he was left to take care of the business. S/he has forgotten about the business and taking care of the younger one and instead s/he is playing.”

“A daycare would be good for us single mothers. You know you’ll be leaving them in a safe place.”



As shown above, women discussed various issues regarding the hazards of the workplace, specifically regarding the health and well-being of their children. Congested spaces make the environment unsafe, mainly since there are no boundaries between people and vehicles, as well as no borders between the working space of a mother and her child. In the congested space, the boundaries between different spaces are not very clear, and this can be stressful. In addition, one concern that repeatedly arose from the women was the fact that their unattended children are at high risk of physical and sexual assault by older children and other adults.

Financial security and childcare

Lack of financial security figured predominantly in the participants’ discussions as one of the obstacles that the mothers have to grapple with in the informal urban settlements. Many participants noted that even if a mother does not have someone to care for her children, she must go to work to have money for food. Also, even if a woman has a job, or runs a small business, she may not make enough money for daycare. Having limited choices, mothers will either take their child to work or assign them to work as well or, if necessary, leave them unattended for the day. These choices also come with risks. As it was mentioned earlier, children can be injured at their mother’s workplace (burned by oil; hit by a car; fall into a trench). Children left unattended may have to scavenge in the trenches for materials to trade for food, and many play out on the street, vulnerable to other peoples’ actions.

“This is a child and s/he is doing three types of jobs; s/he sells at the stall, s/he is looking after a younger child and is looking after the toddler. So, this child has started work so early and still s/he is ensuring that the child does not fall in the drainage and also is waiting to sell for customers and checking out that the mother’s stock is not lost. The child is left here and maybe the mother has gone to do a casual job somewhere else because hustling is so serious.”



This looks like a toilet and there is a drainage where it is and the young one who is on the side can fall in it and so it can cause an accident. It also sees that the children there are the ones charging for the toilets that are there, so it looks like it is child labor which is not good and it is not healthy because of the smell from the toilet and the drainage.”

“If the mother was able, she would not give the child clothes to wash. If the mother had money, she would have looked for a casual employee and paid her so that at least the child could go and study.”

As the mothers’ quotes show, the risks to their own safety and their children’s safety are tied to the limited choices these mothers have for childcare. They sometimes have to ask their children to work and earn money. In this situation, affordable or free daycare is a priority, as is captured from the narratives of the mothers.

Environment and child health

Many participants commented on the health and well-being of their children, which is tied directly to their daily environments. Women expressed their concern over how dirty their surroundings are—whether that is children playing in wastewater or on the roads, mothers washing clothes or cooking food near open sewage trenches—these situations often lead to costly medical bills because their children have picked up a disease or hurt themselves.



“Where the sewer is being emptied, there is a “Mahindra” (cart for carrying feces/human waste). These children are playing in the water that has remained behind from the toilet. This is feces and you know it has dirt. There was that cholera outbreak there. The children have gone to play, but what if they come back with cholera, where will you say they got it from? From this!”

“There are these bones (that are sold) to be weighed. Their mother who is weighing “mandenga” (scrap metal, plastics) here has given these two children the work of picking for her those things and putting them aside and it is not good because they can contract diseases ... and they are not using gloves there.”

“This dirty water is bad because it brings us diseases. When schools are closed, you normally just leave your children as you go to work. So, you will find those children have gone to play in that water, they even swim in that water and they get diseases from that water.”



This is another type of risk that threatens everyone, and specifically children, because of their weaker immune system. If the children become sick, it would not only take extra time from the mother to take care of her sick child but also would cause extra expenses for the mother to provide medication. These costs related to living in places with a lot of health risks become an obstacle for them to save money for daycare and day-to-day living.

Analysis of the process data

As noted above, focusing on the ‘doing’ or the data processing of PhotoVoice adds a rich layer for analysis. While Pithouse and Mitchell (2007) and Mitchell (2011) note, studying engagement (“looking at looking”) can be highly interpretive, we write about it here as a way to draw attention to what we see as the ‘value added’ with respect to learning about the participants involved in PhotoVoice activities. Using PhotoVoice methodology with the mothers appeared to be

empowering. The mothers were trained on how to hold and use the cameras and for those who held the camera for the first time, this was an important experience. While we did not administer any measures of self-esteem or well-being, it was clear from the expressions on the faces of the participants, their general confidence in talking about photos, and from the responses of other community members, that this was a critical activity for them. When they were asked what they liked most about PhotoVoice, many women indicated that they learned how to use cameras and felt empowered. Some even said that they saw a business opportunity whereby they could take photos of people for a fee.

One of the principles of PhotoVoice is that the methodology is participant-centred and drives the research process, unlike some other research designs where the research process and agenda is entirely or mostly researcher driven. Having the camera in the hands of the participants gives them the power to tell their own stories, and at the same time, allows them to represent the situation from their own perspective.

The women who participated acknowledged that they had learned a lot from the research study in relation to taking pictures. Many of the mothers had a cellphone and could take photographs using their phones. At the same time, the training that the mothers were given on how to take photos was very empowering, as noted by one of the mothers during a focus group discussion. One of the mothers commented that in the past she had never known the importance of the research questions that researchers conducted in the community, and had often declined to participate and closed her door on them, but from then on, she said she would be more receptive to researchers and would not be so likely to turn away the field interviewers. Finally, mothers also discussed learning about parenting. As they noted, they realized that parents must carry their own burden of working and caring for their children, rather than leaving the responsibility of childcare to older children. These types of discussions clearly play an educative function for parents.

Exhibiting the photos

Given that a key feature of PhotoVoice is the idea that the images are meant to be exhibited and seen by various audiences, we include here a section on ‘audiencing’ (Rose, 2012). Much less has been written about the impact of photos on audiences, though, as Rivard (2015) discusses, as researchers we need to develop new strategies to see audiences not just as viewers, but as social actors. Mitchell, De Lange, and Moletsane (2017) write that exhibiting is complicated in that it needs to take into account modes of showing, including display and venue, and of course, the different audiences. Delgado (2015) in his comprehensive study of PhotoVoice work with urban youth, acknowledges the significance of the exhibiting phase, and not just the production of images. As he observes: “Having an exhibition boycotted because of its controversial content, or, even worse, simply ignored, with minimal attendance and no media coverage, can have a long-lasting impact on the participants” (p. 99). Perhaps the most compelling point is one that he shares from the work of Haw (2008) and the idea that the opposite of having a voice is being silenced. Our failure as researchers to come up with a way for photos or other visual images to reach appropriate audiences and in appropriate ways is part of that silencing.

Technical aspects of exhibiting

Exhibiting and display are of course components of work in museum studies and fine arts. In the context of PhotoVoice projects typically in social research much less has been written about the technical aspects of exhibiting even though setting up an exhibition is central to community engagement. In the case of the Korogocho photo images described above, an exhibition “Through the Eyes of Mothers” was mounted. A key feature of decision-making in creating the exhibition was the idea of mobility and ease of setting up the exhibition in numerous venues, both in Korogocho for community members, but also in other public venues such as the African Population Health Research Centre and various government venues where stakeholders might access it. Another feature was to take into consideration multiple platforms so that in addition to creating a material exhibition, it is also available online and is available as an exhibition catalogue so that it exists materially beyond the public exhibitions.

Important features of exhibiting including size (how big will the photos be?), number (how many photos can be exhibited in relation to size of venue and costs?), location (community centres, government spaces, outside or inside?), mobility (how easy is it to set up and move the exhibition?); for how long (a one day event of something that will be left hanging for some weeks or months?); types of materials that will be used (framed glass covered? Cardboard, cloth); and materials for hanging or mounting (poster boards, wire or clotheslines; attaching to the wall). The curatorial statement below which was part of the exhibition offers a title and short description of the exhibition for the various audiences and gives a good example of how the material aspects of exhibiting can be important. The photos have been enlarged and printed on what is called ‘blocker’ cloth, a thin, very light weight, highly durable polyester material which does not wrinkle when it is packed away (Figure 9). When it hangs from a wire or clothesline, it has a silky look and moves slightly with the motion in the surroundings.

Curatorial Statement: Through the Eyes of Mothers

These photographs were taken by women living in Korogocho. Working in small groups and using digital cameras, they explored two questions: How does childcare affect your work? What are some of the challenges and some of the solutions?” Their pictures serve as a ‘visual voice’ to represent concerns such as workplace hazards and child well-being, economic insecurity, and environmental hazards. Digitally printed on a soft but resistant fabric, the photographs carefully embody the Korogocho women’s knowledge, inviting us to participate in—and not only look at—the experiences they represent. New technologies have been creatively used in different stages of PhotoVoice as research tools, but also as instruments to materially share and disseminate the views of the mothers. Printed textiles as important cultural symbols for women involve an exchange of meaning between the photographers and the viewers. The images can engage and inspire the communities in Korogocho and many other audiences, to consider how a woman’s ability to work and earn income is often limited by her responsibility to care for young children. This is a feature of daily life in the informal urban settlements of Nairobi but also in similar communities throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

FIGURE 2 – SAMPLE PHOTOS OF ‘BLOCKER’ CLOTH, A THIN, VERY LIGHT WEIGHT, HIGHLY DURABLE POLYESTER MATERIAL WHICH DOES NOT WRINKLE WHEN IT IS PACKED AWAY

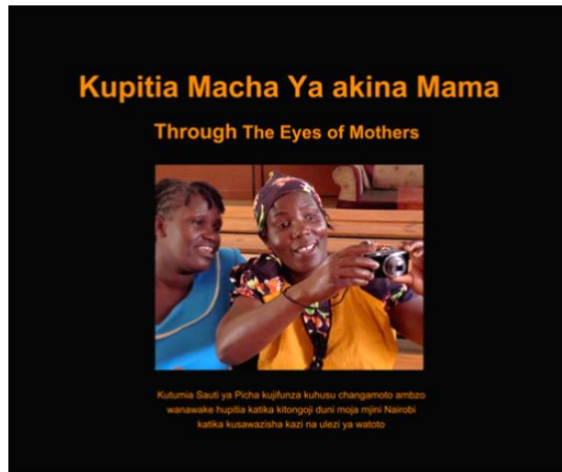


The collection of images and the captions also appeared in an exhibition catalogue (Figure 11) also called “Through the Eyes of Mothers.” As Mitchell et al. (2017) observe, exhibition catalogues help to keep the exhibition alive beyond its original showing and serve as further evidence of the project.

FIGURE 3 – ATTENDEES AT THE EXHIBITION ARE LOOKING AT THE EXHIBITION CATALOGUE



FIGURE 4 – COVER OF THE EXHIBITION CATALOGUE: THROUGH THE EYES OF MOTHERS



Researcher-led reflections on multiple showings of an exhibition

One way to engage in an analysis of exhibiting is to draw on researcher-led field notes based on documenting responses to an exhibition across multiple-showings. An example of this is Mitchell's (2015) analysis on three public exhibitions of PhotoVoice images produced by students engaged in a needs analysis of the situation of Agricultural Technical Vocational Education Training (ATVET) colleges in Ethiopia, as represented in "Our Photos, Our Learnings, Our Well-Being". While follow-up interviews with audiences and participants can be central to this work, Mitchell argues that researcher field notes can also be very valuable and can include a variety of points: modes of display, audience response, the presence (or not) of the participants and their engagement with the audience, researcher reflections on the overall effectiveness of the mounting and presentation of the images. To illustrate, we offer brief reflections from one of the researchers who was present for two exhibitions, one at the African Population Health Research Centre and one at the community centre in Korogocho several days later.

The first exhibition, which took place at the African Populations Health Research Centre, was the official launch of the exhibition and attended by key Ministry and NGO stakeholders interested in women's access to childcare and economic empowerment. In addition to the exhibition, it also included the presentation of a number of papers and reports about early childhood education and health issues. A group of the mothers who had participated in the PhotoVoice work were on hand at the exhibition where they could answer questions and also point out key features of the photos.

FIGURE 5 – EXHIBITION AT AFRICAN POPULATIONS HEALTH RESEARCH CENTRE



While the images, printed on fabric, were designed to hang from a wire or clotheslines, they were hung in this venue in a more conventional 'conference style' on large poster boards so that photos were grouped rather than arranged as individual photos. Did this affect how people looked at them? Several of the mothers from Korogocho were present at the exhibition. I found this interesting in that the mothers were positioned at different boards and as various audience members came around to look at the photos, the mothers themselves pointed out what they thought were features that no one should miss. Something else I noticed is the impact of the presence of the mothers on the audience's viewing practices. Often an exhibition at the end of the day or over tea break has competing agendas for the participants. People want to get their tea or connect up to someone in the audience they haven't seen for a long time. The presence of the mothers and their input compelled people to actually look at the photos. (Researcher field notes)

These field notes highlight the importance of documenting the actual exhibition, particularly when the photographers themselves are present.

The second exhibition, which took place at a community centre in Korogocho, gave a chance for the chief and community members to see for themselves the photos that the mothers had produced in Korogocho. Most of the photographers were on hand to talk about the work and answer questions.

FIGURE 6 – EXHIBITION AT COMMUNITY CENTRE IN KOROGOCHO



Setting up the exhibition itself was part of the event. We arrived in Korogocho to discover that the hall where we planned to set up the exhibition was actually booked by another group and the women in the community who were doing the catering for that event has actually started cooking. After walking around through several other possible buildings, it seemed that we could use the hall after all, but that it required some rearranging of furniture and the best way of attaching all the string and wire we had brought along to hang the photos. This exhibition was hanged like clothes on a clothesline using pegs. Several young men in the community jumped in to assist and I wondered how different it is for young men to hang pictures on clotheslines instead of clothing. Something interesting was the fact that as community members began to arrive, it was clear that walking around in a public building and looking at someone else's photos may be a foreign idea. Community members need to be prodded to go and look and I am intrigued by the fact that many of the participants seemed happier looking at the photos in the exhibition catalogue as opposed to actually looking at the hanging pictures. (Researcher field notes)

Clearly each member of the research team would notice different features of the exhibition and would have their own reflections which could be shared within a team and across more exhibition sites since the advantage of creating an exhibition is that it can be displayed over and over again.

As noted in the two exhibition settings, even the various spaces and venues themselves can be cause for reflection. Where do community audiences go to look at exhibitions? Art galleries? School halls? The lobby of the Ministry of Agriculture? A petrol station? The middle of the village on pensioner day? As described by Mitchell (2011), these community locations bring varying issues with respect to managing public spaces and the technology of display in relation to such factors as safety (no glass), durability (exhibiting outside and under various weather conditions), portability (exhibiting over and over again), along with other obvious factors as cost (avoiding

ostentatious display in an under-resourced community centre). We offer these here simply to give an idea of the interrelatedness of modes of display, audience, and the perspectives of PhotoVoice participants connect as data. The participants could also be interviewed. In the case of the first exhibition, for example, we noted how proud and confident the mothers were in talking about their own images that they had produced.

Reflecting on PhotoVoice as a participant-led tool

As we have highlighted in the previous sections, PhotoVoice gives participants opportunities to document and record experiences and conditions around them, to critically reflect on the issues, and to develop strategies to reach policy-makers. While PhotoVoice has been used with many different populations, it has played a particularly important role in working with marginalized groups. Beyond Wang's groundbreaking work in China and in parts of the United States, and Lykes (2010) work with women in Guatemala, PhotoVoice has been used with such groups as children living in informal settlements in sub-Saharan Africa (Mitchell, Moletsane, Stuart and Nkwanyana, 2006), rural youth in South Africa in relation to addressing stigma and HIV and AIDS (Moletsane, De Lange, Mitchell, Stuart, Buthelezi and Taylor, 2007), girls with disabilities in Vietnam (Nguyen, Mitchell, De Lange, and Fritsch, 2015), community health care workers and teachers working together to address HIV and AIDS (Mitchell et al., 2005), students in ATVET colleges in Ethiopia (Mitchell, et al., 2017), and girls and sport in Rwanda (Rivard, 2015).

Various researchers such as Delgado (2015) and Johnston (2016) remind us that there are a number of technical concerns and critical issues and questions that should be considered by researchers embarking upon this methodology. Below, we consider some issues that we found particularly key.

What's in a prompt? Arriving at a suitable prompt to guide the participants in their PhotoVoice work is something that requires a great deal of thought and discussion. The prompt or provocative question or idea needs to be open-ended in the sense that it invites interpretation on the part of participants, but it should not be so open-ended that the project loses its focus. The prompt, where possible, should invite both challenges and solutions or 'here's the problem but here are ideas for change'.

Visual ethics? An on-going issue is the question on who can take pictures of what, and how as a research team do you make sure that participants receive enough training to support them in taking pictures in the community. (See also Wang and Redwood-Jones, 2001). As we noted in the Steps in PhotoVoice (Figure 1), training on visual ethics is a stage in the PhotoVoice training. We typically exhibit a clothesline or wire of 8-10 photos which participants can look at before they start taking pictures. Each one is meant to frame a discussion around the question: "Would it be okay to take this picture? Why or why not?" Researchers would do well to build up a collection of culturally relevant photos that participants might look at before they go out to take their own pictures to guide explanations on visual ethics.

What are the logistical challenges? Running a PhotoVoice activity with a group of participants can pose many logistical challenges: managing and keeping track of the cameras, ensuring that all the cameras are fully charged; making sure everyone knows how to use the camera; purchasing a printer; keeping tracking of memory cards and digital storage. All of these challenges are manageable with advance preparation and planning, and paying enough attention to the detail. It also has costs attached to it, including those associated with follow up exhibitions and community engagement activities that may require a venue and refreshments.

PhotoVoice as a single participatory visual tool? For the participatory visual research with the mothers of Korogocho, the only method used was PhotoVoice. However, researchers may sometimes combine more than one participatory visual method (Participatory video making, cellphilmimg (cellphone plus video), digital storytelling, drawing, or PhotoVoice) with more conventional forms of data collection such as surveys, focus group discussions and interviews. Mitchell, Chege, Maina & Rothman (2016) combined PhotoVoice, mapping, and drawing in their work with children in informal settlements in Nairobi with the idea that the children in the study were able to represent their ideas both as individuals (through drawing) and in a group (through mapping and PhotoVoice). Since we carried out individual interviews in the study, we were able to learn about both individual and group perspectives.

False promises? Participatory research may raise the hopes of participants that something will be done. As we noted above in our discussion of Delgado's (2015) work, the research team itself has to do everything it can to make sure that participants are supported in their work, and that images reach the appropriate audiences. We can never predict the outcome or impact of a set of images. This is true of all social research, including methods such as interviewing and surveys but because there is often a greater investment of communities in participatory work, they may expect things to change. Participants may come to feel that although they were engaged in the work, perhaps the research team did not really take it seriously or did nothing to further the issues beyond the data collection phase. Milne (2012) also raises the point that community members should be able to say 'no' to participation. In the case of Korogocho, the sustainability of the voucher program was perhaps the most contentious. While the project as a whole provided a range of support mechanism to the community (the voucher program itself, training for the daycare workers, material support to improving some of the local daycares through, for example, the provision of cots, learning materials, and potties), it also brought together various stakeholders and funders to consider the need for further work in this area. However, the long-term sustainability remains a concern.

Why photos? The photo-theorist Susan Sontag (2003) argues that "Photographs do something else; they haunt us." (p.71). Her comment is an important one for reminding us of what photos can do and why it is so important to study the impact of photos on audiences. We should consider when the photos themselves might be too haunting or indeed consider if photos are the best medium. Gubrium and Harper (2013) remind us that not all visual media forms may be appropriate for addressing all issues. In the case of the Korogocho photos described above, the medium seemed particularly appropriate. Mitchell (2011) refers to images produced by a group of young people in South Africa in several different projects, one on stigma and HIV and AIDS and one on sexual

violence, and notes that perhaps, given their graphic content on suicide and sexual violence these should not be shown to all audiences. Mitchell (2015) also refers to an exhibition produced by a group of ATVET students where it was not the photographers who commented on the appropriateness of the photographs but rather the deans of their college, who were concerned about the pictures the students had taken and whether they were appropriate to show to an international audience. Perhaps the most important point is to consider what the impact of the individual photos and the exhibition as a whole might be, and to consult as much as possible with the participants themselves in setting up exhibitions.

Social change? Finally, we return to the idea of PhotoVoice and social change. In this Research Report, we have given consideration to many of the technicalities of implementing a PhotoVoice project, but we would be remiss if we did not give some consideration to the question of ‘so what?’ or ‘what difference does this make?’ in relation to community and policy dialogue? As noted earlier, the PhotoVoice component of the project was only one of the methods used to learn about the situation for mothers, and this work took place alongside a voucher program. Perhaps some of the most critical issues for policy dialogue come from the community members themselves in viewing the “Through the Eyes of Mothers” exhibition and a subsequent exhibition, “Picturing Change”, that took place after the voucher program had ended. As noted elsewhere (Nyariro, Muthuri, Sadati, Mitchell, and Njeri, 2017), the occasion of the “Picturing Change” exhibition held in Korogocho provoked community members to engage in dialogue about how children who had been in daycare might now be back on the hazardous streets again. While other stakeholders such as the various ministries responsible for early childhood and children’s health are also implicated, it is clear that community support is a vital first step for future initiatives.

Conclusion

In this research report, we have offered a consideration of PhotoVoice as a participatory visual methodology using the context and fieldwork of a case study in Korogocho. The case study was about mothers of young children and the challenges they face in combining paid work and childcare. In so doing, we have highlighted the ways in which PhotoVoice can serve a number of difference functions: a research strategy that uses photography (putting cameras in the hands of participants) as a *tool* for social change; a process that gives people the opportunity to record, reflect and critique personal and community issues in a creative way; a grassroots policy making strategy that starts with the voices of community members. At the same time, we have offered a number of cautionary notes so that, like any method, PhotoVoice is not seen as a panacea. Unless the research team is prepared to invest in ensuring that the images reach audiences, there may be limits to what can be accomplished in relation to influencing policy dialogue. The idea those who are most effected by policy to be at the centre of this work remains as one of the most important features of PhotoVoice.

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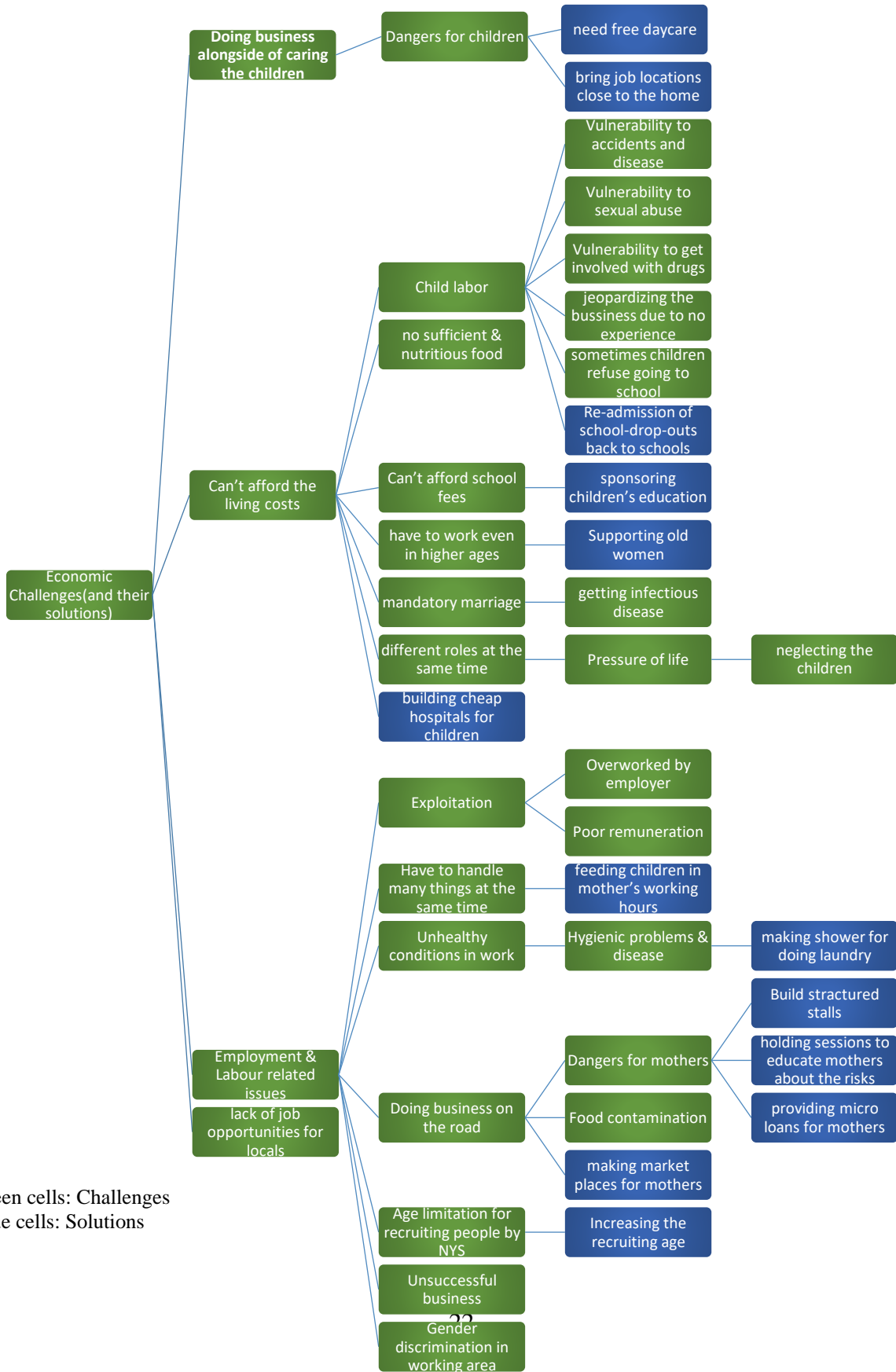
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Appendix A – Economic and Financial Challenges and Solutions



Appendix B – Infrastructure Problems and Solutions

Green cells: Challenges
Blue cells: Solutions



Appendix C – Socio- Cultural Challenges and Solutions

