UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL | Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place

COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH TRAINING TOOLKIT

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Liverpool City Council

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CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

This toolkit has been developed as a product from the City Conversation in Clubmoor, a project funded by UKRI's Enhancing Place-Based Partnerships In Public Engagement Programme. It brings together the training materials and guidance developed by the project, with the aim of encouraging and supporting the involvement of residents and frontline workers in policy focused research.

The City Conversation adopted an asset-based approach – recognising the combined knowledge and potential contribution that residents and public agencies working together can make to tackling difficult issues of deprivation. The project was delivered in the Clubmoor ward of north Liverpool, by the University of Liverpool's Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place, Liverpool City Council and MyClubmoor community partnership. The aim of the research was to understand the best things about living in Clubmoor, the features of the area residents would like to change and the potential contributions by the community to make the area a better place to live, and to use this information to inform the development of the **City Plan for Liverpool.**

At the centre of the project was a group of Community Researchers: residents and frontline workers in Clubmoor who were trained to engage local people and undertake data collection for the research. In total 23 people took part in training workshops to prepare them for being researchers on the project. The intention was that the Community Researchers would collect data through a community survey, undertake one-to-one interviews, participate in focus groups and contribute to analysis and dissemination of findings from the project. Unfortunately, Covid-19 prevented the Community Researchers from undertaking these tasks. But the training demonstrated the potential application of community-led research for policy development.

This toolkit shares the information and training materials prepared during the project for use by public and community-based organisations interested in the Community Researcher model. While not exhaustive, as each project will need to tailor the method to fit the agreed research goals, the intention is to provide a guide to engaging residents and delivering the core element of preparatory training.

Further information on the City Conversation project and the method is available from the **Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place** at the University of Liverpool.

A wide range of source materials were used to inform the approach and training used as part of the City Conversation project. The key resources are referenced in the additional sources of information section of this toolkit. However, particular acknowledgement is due to the authors of the Growing up on the Streets **Knowledge Exchange Training Pack**, an ESRC funded project working with street children in Ghana, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has been used as a basis for a number of the core training activities for the City Conversation project.

We are really interested to know how individuals and organisations will use this practitioner's toolkit. Please email the Heseltine Institute at **ippp@liverpool.ac.uk** with your feedback, letting us know how you used the toolkit and what difference this resource has made to running your project.

2 ADOPTING A COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH APPROACH

The selection of any research method is a balance between the best means of obtaining insightful data on a specific topic, the values and approach of the researcher and the organisational requirements and funding available to the project.

Choosing a community-led approach, which broadly defined can include various forms of community-based and participatory action research, puts a particular focus on the relationships between the research(ers) and the community of place, interest or identity that is the 'object' of the research. A community-led approach is intended to lead to the co-production of knowledge that values the unique perspective and experience of community members, as a vital means of exploring complex issues.

A community-led approach to research has significant benefits, but also presents a number of challenges for the researcher – as shown below. In choosing community-led research, professional researchers work through community members in order to gain improved access and insight on the issues of deprived communities that may be unavailable through more direct engagement.

The benefits are intended to outweigh the risks, but they create an additional management responsibility for the researcher and, more broadly, require an ethical commitment to an equal relationship between professional and community researchers.

Alongside the outcomes from the research is an expected legacy benefit for the community, who should experience a skills boost (through the research training), stronger relationships with key stakeholder organisations, and a better understanding of how to address long standing issues of need. Community-led research is intended to have a transformative benefit beyond the research project.

BENEFITS

- Improved access, particularly where potential respondents are wary of strangers.
- Deeper insight into complex issues and problems.
- Possibility for new knowledge co-creation.
- Disrupting power relationships – creating new capacity and confidence.
- New approaches to research method and design.
- Potential to increase reach and capacity through networks.

CHALLENGES

- Increased complexity in delivery and research management.
- Additional ethical considerations.
- Challenges in recruitment and training of Community Researchers.
- Additional time and resource required to design and deliver training.
- Emphasis on quality and continuity control.
- Increased reliance / relationships with community NGOs / partners.
- More limited flexibility to adapt research approach once underway.

3 PLANNING COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH

Community-led research benefits from the engagement of local partners from the earliest stage. Participatory approaches to the scoping and co-design of research topics and questions, through to design of research tools, data collection, analysis and dissemination can ground the project and create a strong foundation for collaboration and trust.

Building a framework and timeline for delivery of the research helps to create a basic structure to identify tasks, areas of potential risks and to phase activity to ensure sufficient time for delivery of preparation and fieldwork.

STAGE	ACTIVITY	OUTCOME
Stage 1 – project design and approval	• Early discussion with prospective community partners on research topic. • Project development, including key aims and objectives and method statement/plan. • Ethical approval (where required) and data management plan for research.	• Research project plan and approach co-designed with community partners.
Stage 2 – detailed planning and preparation	• Timetable and phasing of key research activities. • Design of research tools. • Communication with target community. • Preparation of training materials.	• Research tools and training materials in place.
Stage 3 – preparing Community Researchers	• Engagement and recruitment of Community Researchers. • Delivery of training and testing of research tools.	• Community Researchers ready for fieldwork.
Stage 4 – data collection	• Undertake data collection activities. • Review progress and performance. • Provide support and additional training where needed.	• Data collection completed.
Stage 5 – analysis and reporting	• Data analysis to identify key results and recommendations. • Production of research report. • Community Researcher feedback on project.	• Research findings and report.
Stage 6 – dissemination	• Disseminate findings, in various formats. • Feed back results to targeted community. • Legacy of training materials and methods.	• Resources and capacity of community enhanced.

As an initial activity, it is important to consider and confirm compliance with regulations as part of the stage 1 activity. These include:

- the requirement for formal ethical approval through a university, medical or other ethics committee;
- assessing the impact of involving Community Researchers on their state benefit payments, e.g. claimant availability for work or payment levels where salary or allowances are paid;
- compliance with GDPR and the impact of this on the collection, sharing, storage and care of personal data – see **Information Commissioners Office** for information and guidance; and
- any requirement for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, particularly where Community Researchers are working with children or vulnerable adults.

As the context and objectives for each community-led research project will differ, it is important to consider these and other legal and ethical considerations in the early method design and operation of the research project.

4 COMMUNITY RESEARCHER RECRUITMENT

Recruitment of the Community Researchers is a key part of the wider engagement activity for the research. The Community Researchers will not only collect data and anaylse results, but they will represent the values and objectives of the project.

Depending on the focus of the project, the selection of Community Researchers can be closed or open – the process of selection depending on the approach taken.

- **A closed approach** – can be taken where the requirements are very specific, for example to work with tenants of a housing association, or to support the work of a women's outreach organisation. In these examples recruitment of Community Researchers may be limited to the target group or frontline organisations working with the target group.
- **An open approach** – is where a wider cross section of people is targeted. When working within a neighbourhood or with a large defined group such as young people, a more open approach to selection is justified to ensure that Community Researchers are representative of the people they will be engaging. The selection process in this case can be more extensive.

The following provides a model process that can be tailored or adapted to meet specific project requirements.

Advertise – subject to ethical and data management standards being in place, the first step is to consider how the Community Researcher roles will be advertised. It is important to establish visibility and an open approach early in the project, to build awareness within the targeted community. Preparation should include:

- compilation of a community profile – demographic, spatial and socio-economic characteristics of the area to inform targeting and recruitment; and
- mapping of existing (relevant) community organisations based in the target area, to mobilise local capacity and support.

Projects should make an early decision whether to work through or alongside established community groups to recruit Community Researchers. The advantage of recruitment through established groups is that it can provide a shortcut to identifying potential researchers familiar with the topic of inquiry and strengthen relations with community organisations. However, in working through an existing group there is also a risk of bias, recruitment being 'captured' or being perceived as giving advantage to a community organisation.

Advertising should offer a clear role description, including details such as:

- where the Community Researchers will be working;
- the duration of the project and the expectation of how much time will be required;
- any remuneration – including travel and other expenses paid;
- the training provided;
- the number of Community Researcher roles available; and
- selection criteria (reflecting the specific requirements of the project) such as age, gender, place of residence, language skills, ethnicity, literacy level, etc.

Introduce – potential researchers should be invited to an introduction session, providing information on the project and the role and responsibility of a Community Researcher. Local introduction sessions can be an effective way to give visibility to a project and to begin the selection process. Depending on levels of interest, attendance at the introduction session can be controlled by setting a maximum numbers of attendees or quota based on selection criteria.

Essentially, the introduction session should be used to identify people that meet the selection criteria, have the right personal characteristics to be a Community Researcher and demonstrate commitment to the project.

All attendees should be provided with a participant information sheet that sets out the background and objectives of the research and the role description for Community Researchers. A short registration form should be provided for attendees at the start of the session to collect basic contact details and individual information against key selection criteria important for the project. The introduction session can be structured around three sets of activities:

(i) information giving – an outline of the research, why it is being conducted and what it will be used for and the role of a Community Researcher, including the specific tasks that the Researcher will undertake;

(ii) taster activities – shortened versions of the training components that might include icebreakers, short surveys or test interviews on prepared topics – these help the attendees decide whether research is for them and provide a good indicator of suitability for the research team; and

(iii) question and answer session – open opportunities for attendees to ask any questions about the role and the research.

At the end of the introduction session, attendees should be invited to confirm their interest. The signed-up attendees provide the pool for selected candidates.

Select – drawing from the attendees that have confirmed their interest, select a group for the Community Researcher training. This should include a core group, sufficient to meet the needs of the project, plus a reserve group of at least 25%. It will be important to train more Community Researchers than needed to deal with any attrition during the project.

The selection process should use the information collected during the introduction activities to identify people that both meet the selection criteria and demonstrate aptitude and commitment to the research. This can be assessed through a process of individual interviews or group work activity. The following characteristics are important:

- individuals can demonstrate an understanding of the project and the role of a Community Researcher;
- people that are good listeners, rather than talk but not listen;
- can work well in collaborative activity;
- have good interpersonal skills, are confident in speaking to strangers and have an empathetic manner;
- are willing and able to make the time commitment to the research; and
- can commit to the ethical standards of the research.

5 RESEARCHER TRAINING COMPONENTS

The following provide templates of activity to be used in Community Researcher training workshops. While not exhaustive, they should provide a basic model for training activity. It is important to ensure, when using these materials, that they be tailored to the specific research task or training outcome of the project.

Preparation is key to successful training sessions. It is important to ensure that, for each exercise, trainers:

- **have a clear idea of the types of responses expected / required from participants** – have model answers prepared and use these to prompt the group or direct their discussion, where necessary;
- **make sure timing is closely managed** – keep discussions moving along and participants active, encourage activity standing-up or moving to keep participants energised; and
- **make sure that the needed materials are ready for use** – pens, paper, flip charts and sticky tape are basic requirements, but also a ball or music player or other equipment needed for exercises.

Constant feedback is useful to ensure that the training is effective and that all participants are comfortable and are learning. The trainer should:

- **identify individuals that seem less engaged in the learning to role play activity** – as far as possible try and tailor activities to value different forms of learning style, be aware of cultural / gender differences that give preference to male participants, and be alert to domineering voices and personalities;
- **use time at the end of each session to discuss what went well or was difficult** – this can help inform changes in the training delivery to ensure that all participants are progressing at the same pace; and
- **use evaluation sheets to provide a way for participants to give feedback** (e.g., use a rank of smiling to sad faces), when used anonymously it can encourage individuals to offer opinions if they are afraid to make open comments.

Be prepared to adapt the training. The modules that follow provide basic templates for activities to guide the training. Community-led research is an interactive and dynamic process that should be shaped by the individuals taking part. While keeping to the principles and objectives of the research, the training should be guided to fit the participants.

A ICEBREAKER EXERCISES

DESCRIPTION

Icebreaker exercises are a useful way for participants to overcome nervousness, get to know each other and get ready for group activity. Icebreaker activity should be short (no more than 5 minutes), fun and energising.

ACTIVITIES

The following can be used as an icebreaker activity and can also help to build researcher skills.

(i) WHAT'S MY NAME

... getting to know each other.

- Participants sit it a circle.
- Each participant throws a ball gently to another in the circle. When they catch the ball, they say their name. Continue until everyone has said their name.
- Next, before a participant throws a ball, they should say the name of the person they are throwing the ball to. Continue until everyone has said their name and the name of another participant.

(ii) PASS THE MESSAGE

... listening and remembering exercise.

- Participants stand in a wide circle.
- The first person whispers a long sentence (message) to the person next to them. Use any long sentence, but one that can be remembered!
- The message is then whispered to the next person in turn and this continues around the circle.
- The last person then says out loud to the group what they have heard and asks the first person to say if it was the same sentence that started off the activity.
- It is likely that the sentence will have changed as it went around the circle. Ask the group to discuss what this might mean for the research – focus on the risks that information can be distorted and messages changed during research.

(iii) MUSICAL AIMS

... sharing learning goals

- Explain to the group that music will be played (verbal start and stop commands can be used if music isn't available) and when the music is playing, participants should walk around the room.
- When the music stops, they should find a partner and each should share one aim that they have from the training.
- Repeat this until everyone has shared information with a partner or two.
- Bring the group back together and ask participants to share the information they heard and whether this was similar or different to an aim that they have.
- Summarise the aims on a flip chart and this can be used to set the learning goals for the workshop.

TRAINERS NOTE

Icebreakers should be used at the start of a workshop to ensure that all participants are 'warmed-up' for the training, but can also be adapted throughout the training to introduce new topics as they emerge. Look out for participants that need extra support to feel comfortable in the group or encouragement to take part.

B SETTING EXPECTATIONS

DESCRIPTION

Ensuring that participants have a clear and shared understanding and expectations about the training and their role as a researcher. This provides an opportunity to set out the structure of the training and to surface any early concerns that participants may have.

ACTIVITIES

This can be delivered as a whole group or breakout group activity and should take around 15 minutes.

- Introduce the session by asking what participants expect to be covered by the training – add anything that is missing.
- Note the comments from each participant on a flip chart sheet. Ask the group if there are any issues that they are surprised about or would like to discuss.
- In pairs ask the group to spend 5 minutes thinking about: (i) what they are most looking forward to; and (ii) what they are most concerned about. Each pair should then share their thoughts with the group, with the responses captured on a flip chart.
- Explain to the group that the training is intended to build confidence and help to develop participants' skills to be Community Researchers. The training workshop is very practical and will give participants opportunities to try out all of the roles they will have when the research starts.
- Reassure them that they are not expected to be experts and that support will always be available during the training and when the research starts.
- Keep up the flip charts during the training and encourage people to add to them as the training progresses.

TRAINERS NOTE

Participants will have varying levels of experience and confidence in a research role. It is important to provide an open and supportive environment, where participants feel comfortable to share any concerns they have. As will become clear through the training, participants will already have many of the skills they need to be Community Researchers.

C UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT TYPES OF RESEARCH

DESCRIPTION

Before embarking on researcher training, the group should have a broad understanding of different types of research and how they are used in practice. This session provides an opportunity for participants to begin to understand what they will be doing and why it is important.

ACTIVITIES

To be delivered as a whole group. The session should take around 35 minutes.

- Start by asking participants to say what they think research is and why research is undertaken, noting the points on a flip chart. Use the comments to build an agreed definition of research.
- Then ask the group to name different types of research they have heard of – write these down on a flip chart. Guide the discussion to include different types of research (e.g. surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, diaries, case studies, observation, etc.).
- For each type of research ask the group to identify: (i) what sort of information this might generate; and (ii) what it will tell the researcher.
- Explain the methods that will be used in your research project and with the group discuss: (i) why the method has been chosen; (ii) what new information you hope to generate; and (iii) how it will be used to inform service design, policy, etc.

TRAINERS NOTE

While some participants may come with knowledge or experience of different research methods, the session is intended to provide very general information to ensure that all members of the group have a similar level of understanding. Where people do have specific areas of experience, encourage them to comment on the research they have done and what worked and what didn't.

D BECOMING A COMMUNITY RESEARCHER

DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this session is to demystify the research role, to identify the essential skills needed to be a Community Researcher and to show that participants already have the qualities needed.

ACTIVITIES

This has two linked activities: the first activity should take around 30 minutes and the second around 20 minutes to complete.

(i) Defining our researcher ... identifying the skills and capabilities needed for community research

- Introduce the session by saying that first we are going to identify the key skills and capabilities needed to 'create' a Community Researcher. Put the group into pairs.
- Give each pair a sheet of flip chart paper and a pen and ask them to draw an outline of a human body – this represents our researcher.
- Each pair should mark onto their drawing the skills they think are important. This might include listening skills, thinking (for empathy and understanding), speaking (for communication), friendliness (to approach strangers), sight (for observation), mobility (to do a survey), courage (in meeting new people, etc). These can be presented as words or drawings, e.g., ears, eyes, smile, heart, feet, etc., on the body outline.
- When all the pairs have completed a drawing, ask them to call out the attributes / characteristics and add them to your own blank drawing.

(ii) Using your experience ... explore how participants already have these skills and characteristics

- Still in pairs, ask the group to think about the researcher they have created and whether they think they already have many of these qualities. Invite people to identify any gaps they have in their capabilities – these 'gaps' can then inform the training.
- Explain that community research is about using the knowledge and experience of living in a particular place. As Community Researchers they have a unique advantage of local knowledge over other researchers from outside of their neighbourhood.
- Considering the focus of your research, ask each pair to think about what else they would bring to the role of a Community Researcher on this project. This might include strong social or community networks, knowledge of how the neighbourhood has changed, the ability to identify safe and unsafe places, use of local languages, being a trusted individual, etc.
- Add these added benefits to your own 'researcher' drawing.

TRAINERS NOTE

This should be a fun activity that helps the participants to recognise themselves as researchers on the project.

E RESEARCHER ETHICS

DESCRIPTION

This session explores research ethics and ethical dilemmas in community-led research. Understanding these issues is important to protect both the participants and the researchers and ensure consistent and fair practice.

ACTIVITIES

The session should be undertaken as a whole group and should take around 45 minutes.

- Introduce the topic of ethics in research by asking the group what they think it means. Note answers on a flip chart sheet.
- Explain that ethics help researchers to set standards for behaviour, are a way to identify risks and create protections for both the researcher and the research subject.
- Building on the discussion, define and discuss the meaning of the following terms:
  - consent;
  - confidentiality; and
  - preventing harm.
- Explore how these terms might work in a community-led research setting, through a discussion of:
  - how to obtain consent and when research subjects can withdraw their consent to take part;
  - how to maintain confidentiality and what to do if there are issues raised during the research that suggest wrongdoing or harm to others; and
  - how to identify the possible risks from the research to ourselves and participants, including different types of physical harm and emotional harm.
- Discuss with the group what they can / should do if they are in a situation where they or the research subject is at risk of harm. This should relate specifically to the ethical standards and approval for the project, but may include:
  - dealing with risks to safety;
  - sources of support and advice; and
  - withdrawing from the situation.

TRAINERS NOTE

This can be a challenging area of training, particularly where individuals share their own experiences during the session. The training should both teach and practise ethical standards in research.

F LISTENING SKILLS

DESCRIPTION

Through the use of role play activity, Community Researchers understand that listening is more than just hearing what is said. When we carefully listen, we look out for other signs and signals about how the other person feels about a subject and indications from 'body language' about discomfort or risk. These listening skills are essential for all types of research and key to ensuring that ethical standards are met.

ACTIVITIES

This activity is for pairs and should take around 40 minutes to complete.

- The group should be put into pairs and asked to observe the role play interview performed by the trainers. They need to watch, think about the way the interview is being conducted and provide a critique on whether it showed good listening skills.
- The trainers should perform a role play exercise for the group where they are doing an in-depth interview on a simple subject, such as "a place that makes them feel happy". However, the interviewer should behave as if they are not interested and not listening. This should be reflected in body language (body position and eye contact), interruptions, asking the interviewee to repeat statements, no probing of questions, trying to cut the discussion short, etc.
- When the role play is finished each pair should discuss the role play and identify good and bad listening practice.
- Ask each pair to provide comments back to the group, noting good and bad aspects on a flip chart sheet.
- Conclude with discussion to draw out the impact of poor listening skills on the quality and outcome of the research.

TRAINERS NOTE

This can be a fun exercise where the trainers get to show what very bad practice looks like. Try to keep the situation as realistic as possible, focusing on the use of language, attentiveness and body position – highlighting potential problems that could arise where there is not good listening. If helpful, a further role play showing good listening practice can be provided to extend the exercise.

G COLLECTING SURVEY DATA

DESCRIPTION

This session provides some guidance on training for community-based surveys. While not all community-led research will use surveys, they are an important way to collect information in-volume and to connect with local residents. For this session, it is assumed that a survey questionnaire has already been developed – for sources of support in survey design see section 8.

ACTIVITIES

The activity will need to be based around a survey questionnaire (paper or tablet based) that the Community Researchers will be using.

- Explain the objectives and the format of the questionnaire being used in the research. This explanation should include the role of the Community Researcher in identifying and engaging with their target respondents (e.g. via an on-street survey, house-to-house survey, etc). It can also outline how the question frame has been designed to capture particular data.

- To ensure that all the participants are aware of the content of the survey, provide an adequate amount of time for each person to complete their survey individually.

- With the whole group then go through the survey questionnaire – for each question explaining the meaning, what information is expected back, and the options (if closed questions are used) that are available. Provide time to answer any questions or clarifications that are raised.

- Split the group into pairs where one person is the Community Researcher and the other is the survey respondent. When this is complete mix the group so all have an opportunity to role play the researcher and the respondent.

- Provide information on respondent selection and quota targets (where appropriate). Ensure that these instructions are clearly understood.

- With the whole group, discuss the ethics of community surveys – how to keep the researcher and the respondent safe. Comments should be invited and noted on the following:

  - how to approach people safely, including an introductory script;
  - allowing people to decline to take part – exploring the reasons this might happen;
  - keeping strictly to the survey questions – not turning the survey into an interview; and
  - asking for help – always call on other members of the research team if the situation is becoming difficult.

TRAINERS NOTE

The usefulness of this session depends on the availability of a survey questionnaire to practise with. The training can be helpfully used to test and pilot the questionnaire, so be aware of any potential improvements that can be made to the questions, flow or delivery of the survey.

H UNDERTAKING INTERVIEWS

DESCRIPTION

This session provides guidance on preparing Community Researchers to undertake one-to-one interviews. This is one of the more difficult skills for researchers to feel confident in and also challenging to generate consistently good quality data. Practice, role play and feedback are the most effective ways of learning good interview technique.

ACTIVITIES

The following activities are organised first as a whole group and then in breakout groups. The session should last around 60 minutes.

- Introduce how semi-structured one-to-one interviews will be used in the research project. Ask the group to explain the benefit of interviews when compared to survey methods.

- Remind the group of the exercise on listening skills (if applicable) and the importance of interaction that builds confidence and trust and helps to explore individual thoughts and feeling about particular issues.

- The core of the interview is a focused conversation, where the interviewer enables the interviewee to reflect upon and explain their experiences of the topic.

(i) Getting the setting right ...

- As a group ask the participants to describe the right setting for a one-to-one interview – draw out and discuss key features such as a place where the interviewee feels safe / comfortable, a quiet place, somewhere where they will not be distracted, good lighting, etc. Discuss the consequences of not having a safe and quiet place to conduct an interview.

(ii) Getting the questions right ...

- Explain that a semi-structured interview starts with a set of questions that the interviewer needs to cover, but requires the interviewer to listen to responses and to probe between each question for more details or explanation.

- The way interview questions are asked determines the types of responses given. Ask the group if they can define the difference between a closed and an open question.

    - A closed question is one where the answer can be either yes or no. If just yes or no answers are provided, can this give deep insights into the experiences of interviewees?
    - An open question is one where the interviewee has to provide a more detailed explanation than yes or no. Often interviewees will provide short answers lacking detail – this is where follow-up probe questions are needed.

- The basic form of an open question starts with where, what, who, when and why. Breaking the group into pairs, provide each pair with a prepared topic and ask them to think about open questions that would enable them to better understand the topic. This can be on any subject, but is usually related to the focus of the research.

- Most interviewees will not give full answers to questions you are asking so you will have to listen carefully and ask a follow-up probing question. The types of probing questions include:

  - can you tell me more about ...?
  - is there an example of this you can give me ...?
  - what impact did this have on you or your family ...?
  - how did that make you feel ...?

- Using the prepared topic in the previous exercise, ask each pair now to think about and practise using probing questions.

- Bring the group back together and discuss what they found easy and difficult in these practice exercises.

- Using prepared questions, it is important to give Community Researchers as much practice time being the interviewer and interviewee as possible. Each practice session should be followed by a short exercise to reflect on the experience and build confidence.

(iii) Getting the timing right ...

- An important skill for the Community Researcher is time management. To make responses comparable all of the core questions need to be covered, but equally all explored in detail. Discuss with the group what they see as the challenges of keeping to time.

- Split the group and ask them to discuss the following, what to do if:

  - the interviewee does not stop talking off topic;
  - time is running out;
  - the interviewee is uncomfortable or upset;
  - the interviewee is non-responsive, even with probes; or
  - the Community Researcher feels at risk.

- Bring the group back together and discuss responses to the questions, providing guidance where needed.

6 RESEARCHER-LED ANALYSIS

Extending community involvement from the data collection to analysis stages of the research project can bring additional benefits and insights. Including Community Researchers in the interpretation of data and its meanings is consistent with the principles of participatory community-led research, but also helps to ground research recommendations in the local context.

Data analysis, as a co-productive task, that brings together Community Researchers with local stakeholders (e.g. public agencies) can provide a structure to generate findings that are recognisable and significant to research participants, while also shaped in a way that eases the fit into public policy.

Including researcher-led analysis in project design has a number of implications for the structure and the output of the research activities.

- **Include researcher-led analysis in the project design** – planning this into the phasing of the work and training activity ensures that both the Community Researchers are prepared and the data is structured in a way that is easy to manage.

- **Focus on the particular added value that Community Researchers bring** – project design should help simplify processes to allow Community Researchers to maximise their unique contribution of local knowledge to the research outcomes.

- **Consider how data outputs can be structured to facilitate simple analysis** – large survey datasets or lengthy transcripts are a barrier to researcher-led analysis.

- **Gain consensus on findings** – debating the relative meaning and importance of research findings to build consensus strengthens the legitimacy of recommendations.

Various approaches can be taken to include researcher-led analysis in projects through an iterative process, where researchers reflect upon data as it is collected or as a summative exercise considering all the evidence collected at the end of the fieldwork stage. The method will need to be appropriate to the project objectives and structure, but should be preceded by training using workshops and practice sessions.

Key aspects of the preparation and delivery of researcher-led analysis include the following:

- **Ensure Community Researchers understand what data analysis is** – providing a simplified description of how data is analysed to determine its meaning and importance.

- **Enable Community Researchers to practise interpretation** – workshop exercises to practise prioritisation of issues emerging from the research. Tasks that rank and justify decisions on the relative importance of issues can offer important insights.

- **Discuss policy recommendations** – explore how research findings can be translated into actionable policy recommendations.

7 MANAGING COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH

Managing community-led research can be an exciting, engaging and creative process of exploring important issues with the people most affected by those issues. It can also be a demanding and difficult task, where there are multiple relationships and moving parts to oversee.

The benefits and insights gained from community-led approaches can make an important difference to the quality and usefulness of the research. Some key tips include the following:

- **Do allow time for the development of the methods, the training and the fieldwork** – some elements of the research will not go to plan and will need adapting to changing circumstances.
- **Do use the opportunity of the research to experiment** – exploring the full capability of the community to generate new and insightful research.
- **Do focus hard on quality control** – good quality data allows for good quality analysis and findings.
- **Do keep sight of the core aims and objectives and avoid the research drifting into areas of partisan interests.**
- **Do encourage constant feedback from participants** – use their expertise to provide a productive challenge at all stages of the project.
- **Do enjoy the process** – while the subject may be difficult, community-led research should be empowering for all involved.

8 ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The following provide some additional sources of ideas and information.

Bennett, J., van Blerk, L., Bray-Watkins, S., Bretherton, K., Chitsiku, S., Gbeglo, S., Hunter, J., Rubambura, T.DA., Shanahan, P., & Shand, W. (2016) Growing up on the Streets **Knowledge Exchange Training Pack**

Community Toolbox website - **Community-based Participatory Research**

CORC and South Africa SDI Alliance What You Can Count, Counts: **A Guide to Community-led Data Collection for Informal Settlements**

Institute of Development Studies website - **Learn and Empower | Participatory Methods**

Pain, R., Whitman, G., Milledge, D. and Lune Rivers Trust (2012) Participatory action research toolkit: an introduction to using PAR as an approach to learning, research and action, Durham University. Available: **PARtoolkit.pdf (dur.ac.uk)**

Thomas-Hughes, H., and Barke, J. (2018). **Community Researchers and Community Researcher Training:** Reflections from the UK's Productive Margin's: Regulating for Engagement Programme. (pp. 1- 24). (Bristol Law Research Paper Series; Vol. 2018, No. 010). School of Law, University of Bristol

There are many sources of information and guidance on survey design available on the internet, these include:
NVCO Know How, **Resource Centre** and **Survey Monkey..**

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