

Report on Training of Trainers (ToT) in Child Research Techniques



Currently, among other issues to be researched children have become a focus of attention by different organizations at different levels. However, child research has its own unique research approaches and ethical considerations that any child researcher has to know. A well-trained workforce is of critical importance to deal with the extraordinary challenges (such as poverty, migration, mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, etc.) facing children in the world where Ethiopia is no exception. That is why ESSSWA in collaboration with the Ethiopian Center for Child Research (ECCR) under the Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI) organized a three days Training of Trainers (ToT) in ***Child Research Techniques***. The training was conducted from **07 - 09 December, 2017** at Ras Amba Hotel. The training brought together about **35 (7 females)** experts from the governmental organizations, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), development partners and ESSSWA staff.

The main focus of the training was to introduce researchers and practitioners from different institutions (academic, governmental and none governmental) about the fundamental issues to be considered while conducting child research. This training was then organized with high expectation of these TOT participants to take the training back home to their colleagues, government and non-government stakeholders.

Two main reasons initiated ESSSWA to organize this Training of Trainers on Child Research:

- Based on the findings of the survey undertaken in 2015 by ESSSWA on knowledge and skill gaps of university graduate class students, instructors and practitioners (particularly in the fields of Sociology, Social Anthropology and Social Work) of selected Universities in Ethiopia.
- Based on observed gaps (both in quality and ethics) during ESSSWA's knowledge sharing and annual conferences in relation to the research capacities of members.

Furthermore, ESSSWA is currently inclined to be involved in child focused action researches it has initiated to improve the capacity of researchers (from universities, NGOs and Governmental organizations) in child research.

The Training started with the welcoming speech by Mr. Zelalem Anteneh, Executive Director of ESSSWA. He welcomed all participants and commended the high turnout at the training. He mentioned the purpose of the training and gave an overview of EIRC-PCSAE project which is financed by Oak Foundation. Then followed by Dr. Zena's opening remark. He paid tribute to the Executive Director and the staff of ESSSWA for making this training to happen today and warmly welcomed all the participants on behalf ESSSWA board. In his speech Dr. Zena has mentioned that the government, civil societies and the academic institutions working on children should appreciate research and evidence based policy making and implementation. He also emphasized the importance of conducting studies on children that can provide us with in-depth picture of the situation of children, which, directly or indirectly influence our actions. Finally, Dr. Zena expressed his sincere thanks to the honorable trainer and senior member of ESSSWA - Yisak Tafere (PhD) for his commitment and time to give this Child Research ToT freely.

Main Topics Covered During the Training

In the three days training the following major topics have been covered. The contents were:

- Safeguarding Children
 - ✚ Child Abuse & Child Rights

✚ Best Interest of a Child

- Legal Framework (Constitution, NSPP, NCPP, FDRE Criminal Code and Revised Family Code)
- Introducing about the Ethiopian Child Research Center(ECCR) at EDRI
- Introduction to Childhood and Child Research
- Children’s Participation in Research
- Research Ethics in Child Research
- Participatory Child Research Tools

✚ Community Mapping

✚ Drawing House Space

✚ Body Mapping

✚ Understanding Child Poverty : Poverty Tree

✚ Life Course-Draw-and-Tell (LCDT)

✚ Time Use- Self-Reported Diary

- Data Management and Analysis (**ATLAS TI**)

Training Methods

Generally, as there was sincere interest by participants on the subject, the training was engaging and live. To achieve the objective of the training, the trainer has used different training methodologies such as scenario illustration, group work, question and answer and case presentations. The practicality of the training was ensured by involving four children (3 girls and 1 boy) who have exercised participatory child research tools using one of the tools – “Community Mapping”. Prior consent and assent have been obtained from both children’s parents and the children themselves to exercise the tools respectively.

In addition to introducing the methods, tools, ethical considerations and data analysis in child research the training has opened the opportunity for networking among the trainees who come from different organizations.

The Way forward

- The trainee reached consensus that using multidisciplinary approaches enhances value and quality of research outputs. It was also made clear that theories and methods in different disciplines (sociology, social psychology and anthropology) have their own limitations and strengths and unable to fully explain child issues alone.
- The researches done in Ethiopia in child related issues are not well documented and shared so that attempts should be done in compiling and providing for the consumption of stakeholders (researchers and both governmental and NGOs). Moreover, annotated bibliography of child researches/works done in Ethiopia need to be developed.
- There was strong and shared demand to conduct similar trainings such as on qualitative software data analysis system.
- Researchers should utilize existing Children Parliaments, child related data from Ministry of Women, and Children Affairs.
- As long as one of the three pillars of universities in Ethiopia is community services so that it will be important if children are taken into account in their community services
- Even though there is no national ethical clearance in social researches in general and for child researches in particular researchers have to take care/responsibility not to affect children by considering the necessary/recommended ethical considerations

Future Collaborations on Child researches, conferences and others

- ECCR/EDRI is interested to close work with ESSWA and its members on child related issues (in organizing conferences, conducting researches, providing training opportunities, etc.)
- Young Lives, universities and ministry of women and children affairs are also interested to work with ESSWA on child issues

- EDRI is interested to offer courses in relation to children (childhood) for university students. It has also opportunities of funding for students and researchers who are interested to conduct qualified and problem solving child researches.

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