

Dirty methods as ethical methods?

In the field with 'The Cultural Politics of Dirt in Africa, 1880–Present'

*Stephanie Newell, Patrick Oloko, John Uwa,
Olutoyosi Tokun, Jane Nebe, Job Mwaura,
Rebeccah Onwong'a, Ann Kirori and Claire Craig*

Abbreviations and acronyms

Dirtpol – The Cultural Politics of Dirt in Africa, 1880–present

ERC – European Research Council

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

LAWMA – Lagos Waste Management Authority

PC – Project Coordinator (Claire Craig, Sussex University)

PI – Principal Investigator (Stephanie Newell, Yale University)

PR – Project Researcher (John Uwa, Olutoyosi Tokun and Jane Nebe at the University of Lagos; Job Mwaura, Rebeccah Onwong'a, Ann Kirori at the British Institute of East Africa, Nairobi)

RC – Regional Coordinator (Patrick Oloko, University of Lagos)

In 2013, 'The Cultural Politics of Dirt in Africa' project (Dirtpol) set out to understand practical as well as cultural, political and historical aspects of urban living through people's perceptions of waste management, public health, migration, public morality, environmental hazards, neighbourliness and town planning in two African cities: Lagos and Nairobi. We wanted to find out about local understandings of 'dirt' – a term we chose for the diverse numbers of African-language words, phrases and connotations it generated in translation, as well as for its own rich array of connotations – as an entry-point into people's responses to urbanization and the environment. In examining local and transnational concepts of dirt from the period of European colonial expansion in the 1880s through to the present day, the project positioned contemporary media and public health debates in relation to the two cities' long histories of intercultural encounters with the Global North and other parts of the world.¹ Interdisciplinary at all levels of enquiry, the aim was to historically contextualize and compare wider policy issues relating to public health, urbanization and community relations in African cities, as well as to position these policy issues in relation to the media and public opinion. At its core, the project asked how public opinion is shaped, including the opinions of one particularly neglected section of the

'public': children and young people. The six Project Researchers (PRs), who came from disciplines as diverse as literary studies, media studies, education, public health, environmental and biological sciences, focused their work on how particular urban spaces came to be regarded as dirty or as full of dirt, and how certain objects and subjects came to be labelled using categories related to dirt. We asked: how do ideas about dirt shape local perceptions of the urban environment, and in what ways do the media contribute to the formation of public opinion?

This project was 'lo-fi' in terms of hardware. Each team member was given a digital voice-recorder and plug-in microphone, and a laptop with the relevant programs installed, including NVivo for classifying data, plus word processing, spreadsheet and transcription software. In three weeks of intensive research training in the UK provided by NatCen Social Research and tailored to the requirements of the project, we learned about – or relearned in the case of the researchers with social science training at Master's level – qualitative research and fieldwork skills such as in-depth interviewing and focus group organization. As part of this short training period, we also attended a conference together, drew up a project timeline and work packages, and agreed deadlines and key goals. Our objective was to ensure mutual understanding within the team about research methods and ethical guidelines, as well as to build a collective identity that would help to maintain coherence when we returned to our respective countries. Training also included techniques for obtaining informed consent and for recruiting children and young people as participants.

Working together in this three-week period helped us to understand that the project depended upon collaborative processes of knowledge exchange and regular communication between team members, rather than knowledge transfer up, or down, a pyramidal management structure. In particular, given the importance to the project of African-language work across multiple language groups and urban socioeconomic contexts, and given the European Research Council's (ERC) removal from the budget of the large tranche of money requested for professional transcription and translation services, we debated the methods best suited to translation and transcription, and agreed that the labour required for these tasks necessarily also positioned the researchers as interpreters – as well as collectors – of data. The challenges of transcribing and translating with insufficient training are discussed below.

For the duration of the project we held regular fortnightly online meetings using a video conferencing package. Problems with connectivity caused frequent interruptions to these team meetings: rarely did all six PRs successfully sustain a full conference call. Even without these technical difficulties, however, meaningful communication between such a large team spread across three different regions of the world with diverse disciplinary backgrounds was not feasible through conference calling alone: six individual researchers generally had six separate sets of issues to discuss. Substantial discussions with the team leaders took place through the feedback on the fortnightly reports submitted by each PR using a template that included sections on the reasons for the success or weaknesses of particular methods, reflection on problems encountered in the field, details of individual and collective efforts to resolve these problems, and details of ongoing or new research support needs.

An extract from a report submitted by the PR for Health and the Environment in Nairobi in June 2014, during the three-month pilot period, gives a flavour of the issues raised in our fortnightly reports:

In the last fortnight, I started all over again building new networks in Kangemi. This is because the networks I had previously built collapsed. The private garbage collector with whom I had made connections seemed to be too busy for me. Kangemi slums² are located along Waiyaki Way in Westlands Area, Nairobi. The slum is subdivided into smaller villages.

I focused on a village called Gichagi. The village is located close to a high-end neighbourhood called Mountain View. The contrast between the two neighbourhoods is clear. On one side of the wall, there are small houses made from iron sheets. Open sewers run along the muddy footpaths. In contrast, the other side of the wall has modern brick houses, with well-manicured lawns.

Gichagi area has many small wetlands. The open sewers, which run along the footpaths, drain into the swamps. I saw children in the wetlands and I thought they were playing. However, a local told me that they were fishing. When it rains, some areas in the slums are completely cut off and the residents have to use alternative routes. There are no *matatus*³ plying the alternative routes. This means that during the wet season, I have to walk for almost 45 minutes to get to the village.

I had prepared to try out my topic guide through an in-depth interview, but when I reached the site things changed and I had to adapt to the situation. I met five women sitting by the road side. I introduced the project and myself. They agreed to participate in the study, but they refused to be interviewed separately. They insisted on having the discussion together. I did not have a room for a focus group discussion (FGD), but because it was not easy to get volunteers I decided to hold the discussion by the roadside where I found them. The place was wet as it had rained the previous night. A key factor in my decision to hold the discussion there was to accommodate one of the ladies, who was selling sweets and biscuits by the roadside. The other four women had young children with them. There was nobody they could leave their children with so that they could fully concentrate in the interview. Despite these potential distractions, I decided to give it a try. The FGD went well. However, the interruptions from children and customers made me forget some questions and consequently, I did not prompt and probe well. When I listened to the audio recording that evening, I realized I did not ask some questions based on the participants' answers.

After the discussion, the women promised to introduce me to other ladies in the neighbourhood but on the second day, no one was willing to talk to me. I conducted four in-depth interviews in the area. The interviews went on well and I hope they will get better as time goes by. It is a wet season in Nairobi and, as I mentioned before, it takes a long time (traffic in the city and long walking distances) to access the site so I can only manage to conduct one or two interviews in a day. Also, because of the rain, I have to leave the sites early.

Rebecca Onwong'a, Report, 13 June 2014

Researchers' fortnightly reports often included detailed observational commentaries of this kind, furnishing important information about the contexts and power dynamics shaping the collection of audio data in neighbourhoods where our ethical guidelines prohibited us from taking photographs.

Many similar obstacles to those described above – 'obstacles', that is, if the models furnished by our training programme were to be regarded as 'ideal' – arose in the environments in which the researchers worked, necessitating creative thinking and negotiation, and generating considerable commentary and reflection in the fortnightly reports. Our work with diverse urban communities helped us to think about the challenges of standard research methods in cross-cultural contexts. At one Lagos primary school, for example, socioeconomic factors prevented our plans to schedule follow-up interviews with participants several months later and also impacted on the categories the PI had proposed for the analysis of different groups of participants. In her fortnightly report, the Nigerian PR for Education and Schools wrote:

I am very conscious of the fact that I am working with pupils in a state-owned primary school. In these schools, tuition is free and books are supposedly provided for free, to an extent. It appears that most of the thirteen- to fifteen-year-olds in this primary school do not stay with their biological parents. Usually, this age group should be in the secondary school. Some of the teachers have mentioned that a lot of the pupils in the school are domestic house-helpers brought from the rural areas. They also observed frequent drop-out rates due to these domestic house-helpers returning to where they came from, changing guardians, or merely [being removed from school] according to the self-centred whims of their employers. If there are instabilities and relocations as indicated above, it would not be surprising to find such overage children in a primary school. It is therefore important to contextualize the data within assumed socioeconomic status dimensions.

Jane Nebe, Report, 13 June 2014

Overage children, such as those described above, became a ‘problem’ because our project wished to work with, and compare, two specific age-groups of children and young people: children aged seven to nine and young people aged 13 to 15. At the proposal stage, the British-born PI had not questioned her assumption that the first group would be found exclusively in primary schools, and the second group in secondary schools. Furthermore, as the Nigerian PR for Education and Schools pointed out, ‘There have been incidences of differences between the age in the school records and the one that the pupils declare for themselves during the interviews’ (Ibid.). On one occasion, ‘a pupil whose year of birth in the school records was indicated as 2005 insisted that he was twelve years old’ (Ibid.). Obviously, the presence of a 12-year-old in an in-depth interview or FGD designed for seven- to nine-year-olds would distort the content. In this case, and in principle, the researcher chose to accept the information provided in school registers rather than the pupil’s self-declared age, and so this participant was included in the study. Such a principle, however, required sensitive handling as it risked generating feelings of embarrassment and shame in the pupils concerned if they were simply ejected from a group of participants. Jane Nebe also had to address the problem of forged signatures on some of the forms submitted by pupils who were eager to participate in the project, but could not obtain parents’ or guardians’ consent as signatories:

I observed irregularities in [two of] the signatures, which aroused my suspicion. After much probing and cajoling, they confessed and explained the circumstances surrounding their decision to forge the signatures. The fourteen-year-old pupil lived with different guardians, while the mother of the eight-year-old had travelled. It was not until I gave them new parental consent forms the third time, did I get properly signed forms from a guardian and a parent, respectively.

Report, 13 June 2014

There is a large and growing literature on techniques for research involving children, including methods for encouraging them to talk, and considerations of how adult researchers ‘can understand the child’s world’ and ‘free him/herself from the adult-centered perspective’ (Kyronlampi-Kylmanen and Maatta 2011: 87; see also Thomas and O’Kane 1998; Drotner and Livingstone 2008; Stanley and Sieber 1992). With these considerations in view, we decided to adopt a competency-based method that employed children’s and young people’s abilities and skills, including drawing and painting (‘draw-and-talk’ techniques), diaries following particular urban themes, dramatizations and performance workshops, essays on set topics, recorded (voice only) group interviews and structured, recorded (voice only) one-on-one interviews.

The emphasis in our project was not so much upon children per se, as upon schoolchildren in relation to their peer groups as interpreters of public opinion. Children learn social and cultural information at school as well as at home and within the community, and schools are vectors for children's and young people's perceptions of urban identities in multicultural educational contexts. As such, the focus of our research was upon young people's perceptions, representations and experiences of urban environments and broader issues concerning health, consumption and recycling.

Children, however, are often considered secondary, or inferior, to adults (teachers, parents and gatekeepers) by researchers involved in data collection. The PR for Education and Schools in Lagos offered a compelling description of the space she opened up for young people and illustrated how our project emphasized the necessity 'to consider the children themselves as research subjects' (Kyronlampi-Kylmanen and Maatta 2011: 87):

I had great focus group discussions with the thirteen- to fifteen-year-olds. It was like a normal peer group, but this time you have a topic for them to discuss, so it was quite interesting to watch the dynamics. You know, it's very uncommon to do this research where you allow these young people to say their mind: it's not a normal thing, especially in our context. It's not common to have them say their mind about issues. It was quite interesting to get them to *speak*, you know, speak through interviews and focus group discussions, without fear, in a safe space for them to say their mind, as they felt. That was my experience in the field.

Jane Nebe, Interview, 3 May 2016

With the seven- to nine-year-olds, however, a different approach was required:

Now, for those who were aged seven to nine, the option I had in mind initially was ask them maybe to draw their thoughts, and the other option was the [one-on-one] interview. I started with public schools, and I found that the option of drawing or painting their thoughts was an unfamiliar platform for them to express their thoughts or opinion about the issues I had an interest in. Even the private schools I worked with, and the middle-class public school I worked in, the idea of using paint to express their thoughts was not very effective. It was not something they tried to pick up, it was not an option that worked. So for those schools I focused on one-on-one interviews with them. I got them to tell me things from a familiar place, tell me what they like, tell me what they don't like, so it was just the face-to-face conversations.

Jane Nebe, Interview, 3 May 2016

As these comments demonstrate, activities such as artwork projects cannot be adopted regardless of context and competency, and must be used cautiously and reflexively. One cannot assume that all children can express themselves through the medium of drawing. The PR rightly abandoned the paint-box because the medium inhibited, rather than facilitated, the children's self-expression.

We operated on the principle that children absorb and reflect upon socialization processes and political currents in their communities, and they often do so through knowledge- and information-exchange in school environments (Punch 2002; Nesbitt 2000). Working with children and young people in a wide variety of educational settings, the PRs for Education and Schools were keen to emphasize that it was necessary to adapt our formal research methods to each school environment. Methodological 'innovations' were off the agenda. 'I cannot see anything that could be considered an invention', Jane Nebe explained. Rather:

I had to plan my research work around the school calendar, and then around the school day, and around the weekly timetable, and around the school events, because when there are school events you can't do so much. Then I had the problem that the research period, when you could get the most data, was a very noisy period, during the break, you know how our children play quite noisily, and usually where I held the interviews are not far away from where the children are playing. I would always have interruptions, I would always have distractions arising from the children playing a lot. So a lot of my issues were about logistics, trying to see how I could fit myself around the children, when they had a free period or maybe something else is going on somewhere, and then you move away from where those things are. So that was the kind of adaptation I had to do.

Interview, 3 May 2016

We adopted the following core principles in our work with children, drawn from the work of educationists in countries in the Global South and Africanist researchers who work with children and young people as participants: careful identification of and discussion of the research with gatekeepers (see Tindana, Kass and Akweongo 2006); appreciation that the terms 'children' and 'young people' are inadequate to describe the multiplicity of perspectives, skills, interests and experiences of participants (Moses 2006: 5); training of the researchers on how to deal with the possible disclosure of information of a personal nature during the in-depth qualitative interviews; training of the researchers to recognize signs of anxiety, stress or humiliation among participants and to address these with sensitivity (France, Bendelow and Williams 2000); deletion from the database of incidental disclosures and material not relating to our structured questions; a guarantee of confidentiality to the participants and full anonymization of the results according to international and national protocols (for further discussion of this, see below).

In contrast to the often over-enthusiastic Nigerian schoolchildren, obtaining signed informed consent forms was especially difficult in Nairobi. In the final months of her work for the project, Ann Kirori, the Kenyan PR for Education and Schools, was compelled to return to many of the schools in which she had worked to retrospectively collect missing informed consent forms, arousing the mistrust of teachers and administrators who were sceptical about her reasons for requiring such a paper trail. 'I found that it was not very easy to get somebody to sign a paper', Job Mwaura, the Kenyan PR for Media and Communications, said in an interview with his Nigerian counterpart, John Uwa:

although some participants would openly agree, others would say, 'I don't want to sign anything. Just ask me the questions. I will respond. Whatever is personal I will not answer, but whatever the answer I will not sign the consent'.

Interview, 26 May 2016

Asked to speculate about why this problem arose, he suggested that many people were suspicious of putting their name to paper because 'they don't know what they are going to get into when they just sign that paper' (ibid.). Other members of the Nairobi team gave up completely on attempting to obtain written consent forms to accompany the oral consent recorded at the start and end of interviews:

Job Mwaura: The ERC required every participant to sign an informed consent declaration. How did you go about ensuring that?

Rebecca Onwong'a: Unfortunately, I did not. At the beginning of the discussion, I just asked them: 'Would you allow me to record the discussion?' If you listen to the audio recording

of the discussion, you will hear the voices saying, 'Yes I agree, yes I agree, yes I agree'. That is what I relied on. You know how our people work. They are suspicious of anything and everything, so you have to reassure them. I thought signing would cause a problem, so I left it out. I know it is a requirement, but I didn't do it.

Rebecca Omwong'a, Interview, 28 May 2016

Of all the ERC's ethical stipulations about research methods and procedures, obtaining written informed consent caused the most difficulties to the researchers in Kenya, even with our provision for orally recorded consent to be witnessed in writing by an independent third party and held in a secure database for sampling.

In low-income neighbourhoods of Nairobi, we encountered considerable reluctance and refusals to participate in one-on-one interviews, especially on the part of women. People were suspicious, and when in-depth interviews were secured, participants 'just said "yes", "no", and even if you probed further, you just got a "yes" or "no", and short sentences' (Ibid.). No sustained data could be obtained in low-income settlements in Nairobi using one-on-one interviews. Participants were unwilling to risk accusations of 'secrecy' by fellow community members if they entered a closed space alone with the facilitator. Indeed, the very assurances of confidentiality we offered at the outset of the interview aroused suspicion on the part of participants about the content and purpose of our questions, especially when accompanied by the appearance of an audio recorder and an informed consent form.

Viewed from the perspective of 'the field', these problems arose as a direct consequence of the tensions between, on the one hand, the ethical standards regarding confidentiality agreed in the research proposal and, on the other hand, culturally specific notions of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and communication in the townships. As with several of the other examples given in this chapter, our research methods were often caught in-between incompatible principles about confidentiality and disclosure in the presence of strangers.

This reluctance to be isolated in a closed space with the PR also arose in particular types of focus group discussion in Nairobi: for example, after repeated instances of male domination of FGDs and women's silence in mixed groups in Kibera, the PI suggested hiring a room at a local community centre outside the entrance to the township, in which a women-only group could meet. We would use the same topic guide, familiar to everybody, but the space would exclude the more dominant members. This would be followed up by FGDs with all other interested parties, divided according to age, gender and other criteria, to be held at the same venue. Nobody would be excluded from the FGD experience, but each group would be governed by our selection criteria.

For several reasons, this idea was found to be unworkable. As one PR recalled,

It was difficult to get a room in those low-income areas where you could conduct your interviews, and the rooms that were available [for hire] were very far away, so it would be very inconveniencing to tell people, 'Now, thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview, let's go somewhere else about two kilometres away to have our discussion there'.

Rebecca Omwong'a, Interview, 28 May 2016

The situation was compounded by the fact that other members of the community would accuse participants of gossiping – or worse – if they met behind closed doors in the manner the PI had suggested.

As the project progressed, the 'Dirtopol' blog, managed by the PC, emerged as a space in which we could discuss challenges such as the ones described above in a relatively informal, yet

public-facing, environment. As a form of communication that did not require a scholarly, analytic mode, the blog allowed us to showcase the disparate elements of our work as it progressed, and provided a vital forum for comparing ideas about methodology and content. With a rotating structure for blogposts generated by the PRs and managed by the PC, the blog showcased examples of methods-in-action, and provided a vital toolkit for team members to use in their own fieldwork. The blog brought the team together as readers and commentators on the project as a whole, as well as creating a public interface through which 'Dirtpol' could consolidate its identity: through it, the PRs became interpreters of the research process as well as producers and interpreters of data.

In a blog posted on 28 April 2015, the PR for Health and the Environment in Lagos, Olutoyosi Tokun, offered a careful reflection on her work for the project, describing what she had learned and understood about the project as a consequence of her interactions with interviewees and other participants:

My Dirtpol journey has been an eventful one. At the start of the project it was quite challenging to get study participants to speak about dirt beyond hygiene and sanitation. I had to do some digging on social media and make a list of behaviours, situations and trends that have been described as dirty. This list seemed to help facilitate conversations. From that point the list grew longer and longer as the project progressed.

In the first few months of the project I established communication with a community known as Dustbin Estate, located in Ajegunle, Lagos. The community is so-called because it was built on a refuse dump. Interviews conducted with residents of this community have been quite revealing; we talked mostly about human interactions within the community. These kinds of discussions have become relevant considering the rate of urbanization in Lagos.

After obtaining approval from the Lagos State Waste Management Authority (LAWMA), I visited the main landfill site in Lagos and other waste management facilities operated by LAWMA. I also interviewed private waste collectors; it was interesting to know how they felt about their job and the attitude of Lagosians towards them as they carry out their duties.

Discussions with public health users and providers have been very rich. Issues such as sexuality, polygamy, the activities of traditional birth attendants in certain areas, skin bleaching, and individual beliefs that influence health-seeking behaviours have been covered. I have been able to gather very diverse opinions on these issues.

Leading up to the general elections in Nigeria that held on the 28th of March and 11th of April, 2015, a lot of data was collected in the form of election campaign materials. It was not unusual for one political party to accuse another party of playing dirty politics. Also certain campaign strategies were simply described as 'disgusting' and 'repulsive'.

I was surprised to find that the labelled recycle bins provided on campus at the University of Lagos in order to encourage the separation of recyclable waste were not being used appropriately. Hence a quick survey was conducted on campus to investigate the situation. I interviewed Environmental Health Officers, as well as students on campus, and the phrase 'The Nigerian Factor' kept coming up as the reason for the situation. It would help to know what 'The Nigerian Factor' is all about; meanwhile one of the Environmental Health Officers interviewed on campus told me all about the role of sanitary inspectors during the colonial era. We touched on the 'White man's plague' and other issues prevalent during the colonial era.

Given that the project involved six researchers and other personnel in three separate countries, to ensure the stability of fieldwork across the continent, very few novel or unconventional methodologies were encouraged in the pursuit of data. The following example of an adaptation of the conventional FGD illustrates the ways in which the research teams on this project were compelled by local circumstances to adopt alternative methods, the manner in which the blog facilitated discussion of these innovations, and the drawbacks as well as the potentialities, of such initiatives.

In a blogpost on methodology, one of the Kenyan PRs described how her FGDs in low-income areas required different skills from those we learned during our research methods training in the UK. In one low-income neighbourhood of Nairobi, FGDs could not be physically contained in the controlled environment of a room with a door, and discussions were frequently attended by more people than could possibly contribute to the session. In training, we had agreed that our ideal-sized focus group was six to eight people, but FGDs in low-income communities were never this small. They generally attracted as many people as would fit into the room provided by the local host, with onlookers poised outside the open door to enter whenever a person left. People constantly wandered in and out of FGDs, cell phones rang, babies cried, participants were summoned out of the room on business, only to return ten minutes later, and on every occasion the owner of the space, as host, was given first refusal by the group to set the tone of discussions and debates. Such space-owners were always men of status in the community, the gatekeepers with whom social convention required us to work closely to convene each meeting. Ann Kirori's blogpost captures the combination of public curiosity and individual mobility that characterised these sessions:

On my part I would say 'participant exchange' during a focus group discussion has been my remarkable experience. What I mean by this is that: you start a FGD with ten participants and after exhausting the first topic, one or two of the participants leave the group and are replaced by another participant who is new and quickly gets absorbed into the discussion. This then means you might end up with different people from the ones you started with. In my case I only had two constant participants in an FGD of 13 people. The other 11 kept exchanging and new ones coming. The most interesting bit is that it never affected the quality of data and the discussion became more exciting as we progressed. The discussion was mainly about current and emerging issues such as Ebola, teenage pregnancy, culture degradation, people's lifestyle changes/behaviours just to mention a few.

6 November 2014

With outsiders walking in, and insiders walking out, the already oversized focus group environment was anything but containable. As the blogpost explains, this mobile type of FGD could be relabelled a 'Participant *Exchange* Focus Group' to account for the PR's perception that, rather than introducing confusion, 'the quality of data and the discussion became more exciting as we progressed'.

The two other Kenyan PRs experienced the same type of mobile, flexible, uncontainable FGD in low-income neighbourhoods of Nairobi. Rebecca Onwong'a described the research environment:

We would sit in the open and the discussion would start with a group of six people. As you know, most people in low-income areas don't have anything to do; most of the time, they are just sitting along the pathways, having a good time with friends, idling, or waiting for something to 'come up', meaning a call from a friend alerting them that there is a job

somewhere. The discussion could start with six participants. And then somebody else just comes along, stands and listens to what we are talking about, and then joins. By the time you realize that there is a new addition to the group, this person has already contributed to the discussion. Then another person would join. So you can start the discussion with six participants, but end up with 21 participants! So that's the cumulative focus group discussion, and it's really difficult to control people.

I remember one time in Kangemi I found a group of six people. Some were working in a shop, and they all agreed to take part in the study. A few minutes into the discussion, other people started coming along and listening. I paused my recorder, just to tell them 'Please don't contribute to the discussion. We'll interview you later'. They would oblige, but when we were talking about sensitive or interesting issues, they couldn't contain themselves. They just joined. So it became a mess. Controlling the crowd was not easy.

I remember one particular man said, 'I have to speak before I leave. I don't have any time. I cannot wait to be interviewed another time. Just allow me to speak'. Considering how difficult it was to get participants, I let him speak. Today you might get people, but tomorrow everybody might refuse. Those frustrating days! So I allowed them to participate. For me that worked well, because then people are more free, and they talk about a lot of things.

Rebecca Onwong'a, Interview, 28 May 2016

The Lagos team also reported 'welcome intruders' whose presence necessitated adaptations to the research methods developed in training, but in Nigeria there was nothing on the scale of the 'cumulative FGD' experienced in Nairobi. Interviewing his Nigerian colleague Olutoyosi Tokun in May 2016, John Uwa, the PR for Media and Communications in Lagos, remembered the blogpost about 'participant exchange focus groups' in Nairobi:

John Uwa: Do you remember the blog where Ann Kirori talked about participants who were not scheduled to participate and had to smuggle themselves somehow into the room?

Olutoyosi Tokun: [laughs] Passing the baton!

John: Have you had any experience relating to that?

Olutoyosi: Yes, I have been there, but it wasn't with the focus group discussion. It was with just the regular one-on-one interviews. Somebody comes along with his friend, or I'm conducting the interview in his office, and there's somebody else sitting in that office, and the person cannot help but voice his own opinion about things.

John: When you find yourself in situations like that, with an intruder, do you respond to it?

Olutoyosi: Yes. You have to. I am very open to it. The more the merrier, I think, although of course it really changes the standard. It is supposed to be a one-on-one interview, but, hey, the overall aim of the project is gathering information and opinions, and usually that kind of chipping-in helps because it also – I will use the Lagos slang here – *gingers* the original interviewee to keep speaking [laughs]

Interview, 11 May 2016

In the first annual appraisal of the project in December 2014, the ethical auditor on our advisory committee terminated the 'Cumulative FGD', 'Participant Exchange Focus Group', and other similarly flexible methods we had developed in the field. She explained that the objectives and outcomes of the research had not been explained to every individual present in one of our cumulative groups, and unless we were willing to halt the discussion every time a new person entered the room in order to re-read our introductory statement describing the project objectives and participants' rights, we could not claim to have obtained informed consent

from all parties. Moreover, in the 'exchange' format, we had no signed consent forms from those participants who had left and not returned during the session. Data from these FGDs were therefore deemed unusable according to the ethical standards that we had agreed with the ERC and participating institutions at the outset of the project and discussed at length in training.

As part of the audit, further problems were identified in relation to disclosures on the blog. In one set of photographs, the PR for Education and Schools in Nairobi was celebrated by children and teachers at a secondary school in Kibera as their 'Guest of Honour' after a term of research involving creative projects and extra-curricular activities. The class and teachers dressed the PR in a school uniform for fun, and asked her to give a speech as part of their 'cultural day' on the theme of environmental conservation. The spirit of celebration in the photographs was clear, and we unthinkingly posted the images on the blog alongside the PR's enthusiastic 'end of term' report which included several teachers' and students' first names. The report also named the school. While the photographs did not name the teachers or children who featured in them, the school uniform was clearly visible, and their unpixelated faces caused a serious breach of confidentiality. As a consequence, we were advised to withdraw all research associated with the school from the data pool, even though the material had been anonymized according to protocol. The fact that the images and report had been published online meant there was a risk that individual children might be identified from the anonymized transcripts.

Reflecting on the divergence in ethical standards between the stringent ethical criteria we were required to follow and material freely available on the Internet or published in national newspapers without concern for anonymity, the Nigerian PR for Media and Communications remained frustrated at what appeared to be double-standards based on geographical location:

We cannot snap photographs of people without their consent. And some days you have to take photos of a marketplace to portray what you are talking about, and you discover the ethical concerns of the project are prohibitive of snapping without getting consent. Am I going to get consent from the whole lot of people I see in the market?

He continued:

Even our newspapers, our media houses, don't follow all of these consents, these *ethics*! They snap freely. What is ethical for the European Research Council may not necessarily be ethical for our media houses here. They put all manner of things in the newspapers. Why should I as a [Nigerian] researcher be bound by the European ethical standard? It prevents me from getting this important data. In our social-cultural background, some of these ethics may not really be practical.

John Uwa, Interview, 11 May 2016

For this member of the team at least, national newspapers' regular representations of named individuals, without consent or concern for defamation, highlighted the significant disjuncture between our academic research methods and those of other professions, including journalists in Lagos.

At the time, we felt the removal of Ann Kirori's data was overly punitive, but an example from our Nigerian fieldwork illustrated the risks of disclosure carried by non-anonymized photographic material. As part of an FGD in Lagos, one of the PRs produced a picture of a well-known low-income settlement in the city, downloaded from the Internet, featuring a ragged man picking waste in the foreground. The participants were invited to comment on the obvious lack of waste management facilities in that community, and to speak about the environment in

this type of urban setting in Lagos. One of the participants recognized the person in the photograph. This caused the termination of a focus group that had taken weeks of careful planning, as well as great discomfort to the PR and participants. After this incident, we agreed in principle that FGDs in both cities would use images sourced from locations outside the city. Even so, we remained nervous about using non-fictional material, and in Nigeria we turned instead to a rich source of stimuli for discussion and debate about urbanization and public morality: popular 'Nollywood' movies, with a plethora of DVDs on topics current to our project, such as Ebola, urban sexualities and urban popular culture.

A different type of ethical breach occurred in Nairobi when the PR for Media and Communications was pickpocketed on a *matatu*: his digital recorder was stolen, containing three un-transcribed interviews. In training, we had agreed to upload audio material to the secure online database as soon as interviews had been completed, but day-to-day circumstances had prevented this as the PR moved around the city. The interviews, each containing an oral confirmation of the participant's name, age and occupation, were lost. In response to this incident, we could only reiterate and collectively re-confirm the principles of confidentiality and data security agreed at the outset of the project.

In institutional environments such as schools and health centres, the researchers were more likely to be able to control numbers within FGDs than in low-income areas, and to conduct confidential one-on-one interviews following agreed informed consent procedures. Even so, the quest for a secluded space away from interruptions often meant that PRs found themselves in unconventional parts of buildings. In Lagos, the PR for Education and Schools appropriated the sick-bay of one school as an interview room. 'During this fortnight', she reported,

interruptions during the interview became a common occurrence. It appears that my activity of talking to pupils one-on-one in the sick-bay room is arousing the curiosity of both pupils and staff alike. There were times when pupils drop in for one thing or the other and I had to stop to attend to them. Some of these interruptions would be noticed in the audio recordings.

Jane Nebe, Report, 13 June 2014

Once she sought space in a dilapidated school building adjacent to the new school, and on other occasions she used a head teacher's office for interviews that were punctuated by multiple interruptions (Interview, 3 May 2016).⁴ In Nairobi, one interview with a caretaker took place at the back of a school bus awaiting the bell at the end of lessons, while the driver was – or appeared to be – asleep. Other interviews took place sitting under a tree in the open air, by the side of busy roads, or indoors in the presence of onlookers who chipped-in with comments, or interrupted in the ways described above.

A particular obstacle we faced in Lagos at the outset of fieldwork was the impact of a controversial BBC documentary entitled *Welcome to Lagos* (Prod. Will Anderson), first screened in 2010 and reproduced on a number of online platforms. For its many Nigerian critics, this three-part documentary reflected the Western media's obsession with the people of global 'slums' far more than it represented the full complexity of life in Lagos. Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka described the documentary as 'jaundiced and extremely patronising. It was saying, "Oh, look at these people who can make a living from the pit of degradation"' (cited in Dowell, *Guardian*, 28 April 2010).

In spite of the multiple ways in which this documentary was a boon to our project as an example of Eurocentric mediations of Lagos, unfortunately the BBC had also chosen to represent the Lagos State Government as an urban bully, treating its most vulnerable people as trash, with

heavy-handed slum-clearance tactics and schemes to shape Lagos into a global ‘mega-city’ by removing the majority of its low-income inhabitants. The programme clearly positioned itself on the side of the small people – represented as citizen-survivors – whose shacks were bulldozed by the Lagos Task Force, and who were driven into further extremes of poverty and survival where human relationships snapped under pressure.

The memory of *Welcome to Lagos* was still strong among officials four years after the broadcast, as Olutoyosi Tokun approached the LAWMA and Jane Nebe approached the Ministry of Education for permits to conduct their research in the city. The BBC had, in the view of officials, exploited the trust of the Lagos State Government who granted the film crew access to Olusosun landfill and other key sites. As one commentator in the *Guardian* vividly stated, in the programme ‘our dirty linen were yanked from our very loins and aired on the international veranda’ (Nwaubani, 6 May 2010). Understandably, officials were not going to make the same mistake a second time. As a consequence of the word ‘dirt’ in our project title, suspicious managers interrogated the researchers again and again about their intentions, and were reluctant to grant access to municipal dumpsites and government schools. As Olutoyosi Tokun recalls:

Actually this suspicion originated in the BBC’s *Welcome to Lagos* documentary . . . When I went to LAWMA to get approval, it was such a difficult assignment for me. It took several months for them to approve that I access their refuse dumps, because it is exactly the same research environment that *Welcome to Lagos* was based on, because some of it was based on the refuse dump in Lagos and I was also going back to that refuse dump with an international organization. It helped that the University of Lagos was part of the project, and they gave me all the support necessary to secure approval from LAWMA . . . Nobody wants a bad name. As much as things are a bit different in Nigeria, we want to promote the good aspects of the country. We don’t want to be misrepresented. Somebody called it ‘the single story’ – Chimamanda Ngozie Adiche⁵ – that’s what she calls it. We want at least a holistic, a fair, representation of what’s happening in Lagos.

Interview, 11 May 2016

Arriving in Lagos with a research project containing the word ‘dirt’, we had become caught up in the very media discourses we wished to research. Government officials were ‘reading’ us through their negative interpretations of the BBC’s international media text. In an effort to allay officials’ concerns, we emphasized the ways in which our objectives differed from the BBC’s; we highlighted the involvement of the University of Lagos as a research partner; and we agreed to send copies of our final reports to the ministries at the completion of the project in 2018. Jane Nebe observed:

Because of this BBC documentary it was not surprising that people within the Ministry [of Education] were very sceptical of such research. What they felt the BBC documentary did was to hype the negatives and ignore the positives, or talk about the positives in a way that was not really hyped as positives. The scepticism was really there.

Interview, 3 May 2016

In spite of the examples given above of participants’ reluctance about particular research methods, people from all socioeconomic backgrounds were generally willing to participate in our research once the themes and objectives of the project had been explained. The voluntary nature of participation and the right of participants to withdraw at any stage were emphasized at the outset of interviews, and information was provided about the anonymization process and the

ways in which the data would be stored and used. The PRs emphasized repeatedly that this project could not contribute directly or materially to changes in the urban infrastructure, nor could we influence government policy. People's complaints and requests could not be taken forward to officials or ministers: rather, we would circulate our findings at workshops and conferences, and in academic papers, as well as making use of data in our interviews with public health and waste management professionals. The most our project could hope for, we explained, was a 'trickle-up' effect. Even so, volunteers were plentiful in the FGDs run by local researchers in multi-linguistic settings where African languages were the dominant medium for discussions.

Asked about what motivated participants, the PRs offered a number of explanations ranging from the practical to the intellectual. In particular, the topic of material benefits arose in the PRs' reflections. We were not allowed to offer cash payments for participation, and this generated considerable discussion between the PI and the PRs. According to our ethical agreements,⁶ cash payments for participation were forbidden. In Lagos, however, our agreement in principle to cover participants' transport costs for their journeys from various parts of the city to the 'Dirtpol' offices at the University of Lagos, to a maximum of N4,000 (approximately £14.00 in 2016), rapidly became a euphemism for cash payments. Meanwhile, in Nairobi the PR for Media and Communications undertook in-depth interviews at restaurants over drinks and lunch charged to 'Dirtpol' expenses, and our FGDs in low-income communities were always concluded with the distribution of soft drinks.

In Lagos, John Uwa expressed a strong sense of injustice at the contradictions in this prohibition of overt payment. During our training in the UK, he pointed out, we had seen examples of research for which participants were compensated in cash for attending interviews:

John Uwa: . . . but in Africa they say it's unethical to pay. I have very serious qualms over this. *Olutoyosi Tokun:* [*interjects*] When money is given as part of recruitment, as an incentive, it leads to some sort of bias, so the people that need the money are eventually recruited into the study. That might be why it's unethical. But if this incentive does not influence the selection of the participants, it's okay, because the person has given his time anyway and didn't demand anything, so just to appreciate his time and his effort, you give him some money.

John: Yes, you are right. I never give money before an interview, and sometimes I don't tell them I am going to give them anything. Some people expect it, you know, you have these NGOs going out interviewing people and they give them money, so when they see you come like that they say, 'Ah, what are you going to give?'

Interview, 11 May 2016

At least one of the Kenyan PRs strongly agreed with this view:

Some of the ethical issues, I found them very ridiculous! Why would you pay somebody in Europe after the person has given you data, and not in Africa? Are we not the same? That was very ridiculous. I think some of these ethical issues should be contextualized. They should not just look at Europe and decide, these are the people you are going to give money to and leave these others. We are all human beings. We all have needs. We all want to be appreciated after such an activity. So it was also very difficult for me to tell somebody, 'Yes, I'm coming to interview you, but you are going to pay for the snacks, for the refreshment that you are going to take, because I don't want to influence the responses that you are going to give.' That was totally wrong. Nobody would accept to come for such an interview!

Job Mwaura, Interview, 26 May 2016

The European examples cited in the PRs' recollections related to examples of market research and data gathering for government departments that we had examined during the training period in the UK, for which cash payments had been made to participants. We, however, were disallowed from offering any financial incentives to participants deemed 'vulnerable' according to the ERC's language for the residents of 'developing' countries. The team was confronted with the status of the project as a scholarly undertaking following ethical standards designed for academic data collection across international contexts, in which the economic and power inequalities between Global North and Global South were understood to introduce potential biases to data. We could not adopt the principles used in European research; but, as the PRs insisted, we also could not refuse to give participants refreshments and snacks at the end of an interview, nor to reimburse their travel to and from our venues. As such, few of our respondents participated 'for free. They would expect you to give them something at the end of the interview' (Job Mwaura, Interview, 26 May 2016).

All the researchers commented on the effectiveness of using local languages in one-on-one interviews and FGDs. 'When you speak their language, they tend to let their guards down, then I'm able to connect very well with them and probe more and more', John Uwa said of his Lagosian participants:

They do not think the recorder can interpret their language, so they come out and say all manner of things, especially on some very topical issues. They are very careful: they don't want to be seen as racist, or chauvinistic, but when you begin to speak their language, they open up and are able to tell you that the Igbos are dirty in very emphatic terms, or that the Yorubas sleep with shit around them. Most of the English interviews I've had, I've not heard anyone say that the Yorubas can eat with shit around them, or sleep with shit around them, or use their potty to eat regular meals.⁷ But when you begin to speak other languages you see all the discriminations. All the sentiments, begin to play out. African language is a very wonderful thing!

Interview, 11 May 2016

Across our research contexts, African-language interviews generated a fluency of opinion, whereas English often produced stilted, overly formal responses. 'One way to get some good responses was to converse with these respondents in a language that they were comfortable with', Job Mwaura commented in Nairobi: 'When I broke the formality completely, such as when they were able to talk in Sheng or in their mother-tongue, then those sensitive issues became a little bit easier to talk about' (Interview, 26 May 2016).

A problem arose in transcribing this rich data, however. While all the researchers were fluent in more than one African language, they had no training in how to write these languages. 'The major challenge I had was transcribing', Jane Nebe remarked:

because I needed to be able to find expressions as accurate as possible, and as near as it was possible to be in the English language equivalent. We were asked to transcribe in the original language and then do the conversion, the translation to the other language. This was really difficult, you know, because Nigerian Pidgin and Yoruba are languages that you don't really get to do a lot of writing in. It's normal you speak them, you talk, you discuss with them. Writing them was another situation entirely.

Jane Nebe, 3 May 2016

This posed especial difficulties for the transcription of Yoruba interviews, in which diacritical marks were essential to the meaning of words, but also for the transcription of flexible languages

such as Nigerian Pidgin and Sheng, in which words and meanings change continuously. ‘There is always a possibility that you might mistranslate. There’s always a possibility that you might over-translate. It’s possible you might under-translate’, Jane Nebe added, ‘so what I always do is ask questions’:

Jane Nebe: Sometimes there are words that have contextual meanings, there are phrases that have contextual meanings, that if you don’t understand that context, you might take the literal translation, but that is not what it means. What comes to mind is when someone says ‘eh-heh’. Now, eh-heh has many meanings. It’s a Pidgin word, eh-heh. You can never transcribe it, too, you cannot really transcribe the word. If someone says eh-heh, it could mean ‘yes’, eh-heh could mean ‘yes continue’, eh-heh could mean . . .

John Uwa [interjects] ‘. . . you have been caught, you have been caught! Have you seen? It’s over!’

Jane: Exactly so, yes, it means up to ten different things if you sit down to analyse what eh-heh means. But when I write it in my transcripts, people might not understand what the eh-heh means if I do not try to put in a comment to say this person was trying to say, ‘yes I agree with what you are saying’, or a person can say eh-heh to mean ‘you don’t mean to say, I don’t believe what you just said is true’. So you see, some of these things are not just pure language, but also contextual meaning as treated with these phrases. Some of them are slang. Some of them are proverbs. So you really need to explain these things as footnotes, as endnotes, and even sometimes in brackets, especially when you are translating from the familiar language of data collection to the English language.

Jane Nebe, Interview, 3 May 2016

In response to these challenges, in our transcripts we developed the referencing systems mentioned above, including footnotes for the cultural translation of terms translated literally in the text and square brackets for the inclusion of non-verbal expressions and for phrases in the original language where the English translation was only an approximation.

Project management by the PI and RC revolved around the effort to maintain intellectual and methodological coherence across the regional and disciplinary boundaries of our research. Of special concern was how to ensure sufficient methodological consistency to enable comparisons between data produced by PRs with parallel portfolios in Lagos and Nairobi. For the ‘Public Health and Environment’ researchers, for example, who were responsible for building relationships in the field of public health, environmental strategy and waste management, Nairobi and Lagos yielded such different sets of local topics, sites and concerns that the work of the two researchers rapidly diverged. For different reasons, the two ‘Media and Communications’ researchers were also unable to build comparable archives from their work, because their portfolios involved sampling a wide range of material from local newspapers, radio and television documentaries, as well as from popular music, popular films, television soap operas, online blogs, local publications and other popular urban media. They sampled numerous different media on different days, and sorted data according to project themes, but the sheer quantities of material meant that methodological consistency was difficult to maintain between Lagos and Nairobi. The ‘Education and Schools’ researchers were able to produce comparable data by sharing topic guides, and by communicating regularly about research methods and strategies. Of particular relevance to these researchers in schools, and generating conversation between them, was the question of how to reduce the power-relationship between themselves and the pupils, who were often overly deferential to the researchers in the context of schools’ hierarchical institutional structures.

In total, over 200 interviews were recorded by the team, including translations into English from Yoruba, Nigerian Pidgin, Gikuyu, Swahili and Sheng.⁸ In both cities, we met with public

health providers and users, waste management professionals, residents from diverse neighbourhoods, school children, teachers, other school staff, media producers and media consumers. Clearly this project could not have been undertaken by any individual researcher, but, as the Project Coordinator reflected, understanding the conceptual underpinnings of the project *as a whole* posed ongoing problems for individual team members. Alongside the PI and RC, 'our team was composed of research assistants, collecting data, but they were not just going out and harvesting data. The project was much more demanding than that because it was so conceptual' (Claire Craig, Interview, 1 June 2016). While individual work packages were anchored to definable topics and fields, the question of how to develop an overarching understanding of the project remained open and unresolved for the duration of the project. As a consequence of the vagueness of the overarching project title, each of us developed a different understanding of the project, and the resulting data are heterogeneous. Nevertheless, through our interviews and FGDs with diverse urban communities, we have established that urban encounters and identities – relationships with others, as well as the implementation of environmental and public health policies – can be understood differently when filtered through concepts relating to dirt in its local and global manifestations, rather than concepts relating to hygiene and cleanliness. Current discourses around the spread of diseases and urban planning are underpinned by cleanliness as a desirable goal, but a focus on the antithesis of cleanliness potentially takes us much further in comprehending urban processes and relations.

Our project attempted to address practical questions relating to research methodologies alongside conceptual questions about urban experience. The interviews and media materials collected by the researchers – and the PRs' blogposts and reports – helped to build a database of public opinion about environmental policy, waste management, urban morality and daily routines in East and West Africa, as well as a commentary on research methods in African urban contexts. At the same time, as the project matured, we tried to identify and reflect on the presence of what the Project Coordinator eloquently described as our own 'cultural skeletons' within the data and interpretations we produced (Interview, 1 June 2016).

One methodological outcome of this project – unanticipated in the initial proposal – was our realization not only that adjustments to standard social science methods have ethical implications, as discussed above, but that the attempt to implement standard social science methodologies might actually *produce* ethical problems. Whether conducted in the Global North or the Global South, the agreement to abide by international ethical standards is fundamental to academic research, but the researchers on this project found that the concept of 'confidentiality' is culturally variable. It can produce risks to participants if assumed to be universal. Assurances of confidentiality might, in some fieldwork contexts, be interpreted as 'secrecy' rather than a guarantee of safety, and thus pose a danger to the participant's well-being. A further set of ethical considerations might thus be produced in the very process of implementing international ethical standards for scholarly research.

Notes

- 1 Strong Arab-Islamic religious and cultural networks can be found in Nigeria and Kenya. Kenya's centuries-old history of trade and religious exchange is focused largely on Mombasa, with its pronounced Arab-Islamic urban influences and ancient trading networks with the Indian subcontinent along the famous spice routes. Flows of trade in the nineteenth century, including the slave trade, generated global networks in Nigeria and Kenya that far exceeded European colonial routes and boundaries.
- 2 While in the UK for training, we had debated appropriate terminology for low-income urban settlements, but in our various research contexts we sometimes reverted to local terms such as 'slum' and 'ghetto'.
- 3 Privately owned minibuses for public transport.

- 4 Risk assessment was almost impossible to implement in the field due to such rapid, last-minute changes of venue.
- 5 Adichie is author of the global bestselling novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006). In an interview in July 2009, she famously described negative Western constructions of Africans as the creation of a 'single story', saying 'show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become' (www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/transcript?language=en).
- 6 The project underwent ethical screening and approval by committees at three separate institutions: the ERC, the University of Sussex and the University of Lagos.
- 7 In residences with no interior bathroom, some households keep a potty in their living quarters for nighttime use, preferring this to the option of going outdoors to the communal toilet at night. This practice has given rise to stereotypes and abusive jokes about Yoruba domestic hygiene. In an unrecorded interview with John Uwa, one elderly woman living in Lagos insisted that the Ijebu (Yorubas from a part of Ogun state) use their potty as an eating bowl: in her opinion, this is why they are called '*Ijebu oloorun*' (smelly or dirty Ijebu). This idea was strongly refuted by a participant of Ijebu origin in a separate FGD. On another occasion, while at a car mechanic's, John Uwa's request that an apprentice dispose of his engine oil in a container, rather than on the ground, attracted the attention of the boss: 'is he not a Yoruba boy?', the manager said within earshot of the employee: 'That is how Yoruba people behave! Yoruba people can live with shit in their house, eat where there is shit, and even eat with the same plate they use for shit, so I am not surprised at his stupidity'. Such negative cultural stereotypes are generally expressed in African-language encounters rather than in formal FGDs or English-language interviews.
- 8 We did not have language coverage for Arabic speakers, which affected the communities with whom we could work in Lagos and Nairobi.

References

- Dowell, B. (2010). Wole Soyinka Attacks BBC Portrayal of Lagos 'Pit of Degradation'. *The Guardian*, 28 April.
- Drotner, K. and Livingstone, S. (Eds.) (2008). *International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture*. London: Sage.
- France, A., Bendelow, G. and Williams, S. (2000). A 'risky' business: researching the health beliefs of children and young people. In A. Lewis and G. Lindsay (Eds.) *Researching Children's Perspectives* (pp. 150–162). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Kyronlampi-Kylmanen, T. and Maatta, K. (2011). Using children as research subjects: how to interview a child aged 5 to 7 years. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 6(1): 87–93.
- Nesbitt, E. (2000). Researching Eight to Thirteen Year-Olds' Perspectives on their Experience of Religion. In A. Lewis and G. Lindsay (Eds.) *Researching Children's Perspectives* (pp. 135–149). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Nwaubani, A. T. (2010). Nigeria's Anger at the BBC's Welcome to Lagos Film. *The Guardian*, 6 May.
- Punch, S. (2002). Research with children: the same or different from research with adults? *Childhood*, 9(3): 321–341.
- Stanley, B. and Sieber, J. (1992). *Social Research on Children and Adolescents: Ethical Issues*. London: Sage.
- Thomas, N. and O'Kane, C. (1998). The ethics of participatory research with children. *Children and Society*, 12(5): 336–348.
- Tindana, P. O., Kass, N. and Akweongo, P. (2006). The informed consent process in a rural African setting: a case study of the Kassena-Nankana district of Northern Ghana. *PMC*, 28(3): 1–6.

Note: Five of the PRs describe their work here:

Ann Kirori: www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbBf8njMrNE

Job Mwaura: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qa8ixy8G4iI

Jane Nebe: www.youtube.com/watch?v=REdCmyD5Yws

Olutoyosi Tokun: www.youtube.com/watch?v=G11zCWid7FY

John Uwa: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rwtyy9gIxEI