

CHILDREN, MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

RES-167-25-0028 INCEPTION REPORT

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The first UK steering group meeting, June 2006

This first meeting of the UK Steering Group was held on 7th June 2006 in Durham. All members of the group (Professor Nina Laurie and Dr Janet Townsend, University of Newcastle; Ms Marinke van Riet, International Forum for Rural Transport and Development) attended the meeting with the UK researchers, Dr Gina Porter and Dr Kate Hampshire. The agenda for the meeting included the following:

1. Brief review of the project and its history (including issues from the child-centred component in the pilot) (GP/KH) - matters arising
2. Role of the steering committee - for discussion. (n.b. e.g. our Case for Support refers to a "thorough review of survey design, procedures and qualitative methodology by the UK Steering Group")
3. Issues for possible discussion in this meeting:
 - a. Ethics form for DU ethics committee and use by collaborating institutions.
 - b. Referee comments, especially re shifting focus away from urban areas
 - c. Tape recording/transcription

Following a full review and discussion of the project's aims, objectives, main features of the research programme and ethical approvals, the following conclusions were reached:

- Urban sites should be included in the study, at least in the preliminary stages. (This discussion was prompted by a referees' suggestion that urban sites might be omitted.)
- Extra country-specific questions would be included in the qualitative research and at the end of the survey questionnaire where appropriate.
- Experimentation with use of disposable cameras by the child researchers would be useful.
- Tape recording versus note taking alone is ultimately the personal choice of the researcher and may be dependent on research context.
- Care in selection and monitoring of staff employed on the project will be needed, since they will be working with children.
- The linkages between transport and multi-tasking need full exploration.
- IFRTD will look to include a short overview of the project programme in its next forum news.
- A link to the project can be provided from the DARN (Developing Areas Research Network) website.
- The next meeting will take place after the inception workshop, around November 2006.

Other UK preparatory work (prior to the inception workshop)

An ethics form was prepared and ethical approval received from the University of Durham ethics committee.

The child mobility website www.durham.ac.uk/childmobility/ was updated with a short note on the new project.

Preliminary draft checklists and survey questionnaires for the adult-to-child/adult-to-adult strand of research and other relevant materials were prepared as discussion documents for the workshop by Dr Gina Porter and Dr Kate Hampshire in Durham. These were based on an extensive review of the relevant literature on children,

mobility, transport, children's education, health care, etc. The following draft documents were produced, for full review and revision at the inception workshop and during the pilot studies (all with accompanying notes for field assistants on procedures for application):

- Checklist for adult researchers to use in interviews with children in study settlements
- Checklist for adult researchers to use in interviews with parents of children aged 0-18 years in study settlements
- Checklist for adult researchers to use in interviews with key informants (with topics for general discussion with community leaders etc. and separate sections for teachers working at schools serving the study settlements; for health professionals and community based health workers, traditional healers, NGO health staff etc.; and for public and private transport operators, transport owners etc. working in or from the study settlements).
- Survey questionnaire for adults interviewing children

Advice on potential sampling methods for the survey questionnaire was obtained from Dr Steve Fisher (Department of Politics, University of Oxford).

Other documents prepared for the inception workshop included:

- Ideas for qualitative research with/by children i.e. a list of possible methods including a wide range of visual and verbal methods, essay/story/diary, and ethnographic methods, with short descriptions of each.
- Exploring children's mobility and transport: a review of key questions from the literature, earlier research in Ghana, and the child researcher pilots (Ghana, South Africa, India).

A draft programme for the inception meeting was prepared, circulated to all collaborators for comment and revised following receipt of comments, a few weeks prior to the workshop.

A short presentation on the project topic was made by Gina Porter at the EPSRC-sponsored seminar on Transport and Development Trends in Africa at University College London on 4th September 2006.

Preparatory work undertaken by overseas project collaborators (prior to the inception workshop)

Malawi: all local planning and preparation for the inception workshop (in Blantyre) including accommodation etc.; research permissions with the Ministry of Education and the University of Malawi; contact with Blantyre district schools; selection of children for participation in the inception workshop and first children's training workshop (based on child volunteers' production of essays about children and transport/mobility, teachers' assessment of ability to cope with loss of school time etc.); negotiation of all necessary permissions from children, parents, head teachers and teachers; preliminary selection of research sites for discussion at the workshop; interview and selection of potential Research Assistants; identification of potential Country Consultative Group members; identification of relevant local grey literature/statistical information.

Ghana: contact with selected children from the previous child-centred pilot study re the visit to Malawi for the inception workshop; negotiation of all necessary permissions from children, parents, head teachers and teachers; organisation of passports, travel documents, vaccinations etc. for the children and accompanying teacher for the visit to Malawi; research permissions from the Ministry of Education and the University of Cape Coast; preliminary selection of research sites for discussion at the workshop; identification of potential Country Consultative Group members, and first Country Consultative Group meeting; identification of relevant local grey literature/ statistical information. Additionally, Professor Abane met with Dr Gina Porter during a visit to UK, to review project issues. [Sadly, the youngest Ghanaian child selected for participation in the Malawi workshop, Anthony Brebi, died shortly prior to the visit. Consequently only two Ghanaian children – both girls - participated in the Malawi workshop.]

South Africa: contact with selected children from the previous child-centred pilot study re the visit to Malawi for the inception workshop; negotiation of all necessary permissions from children, parents, head teachers and teachers; organisation of passports, travel documents, vaccinations etc. for the children and accompanying teacher for the visit to Malawi; all necessary research permissions; preliminary selection of research sites for discussion at the workshop; identification of potential Country Consultative Group members; identification of relevant local grey literature/ statistical information. Additional work in South Africa subsequent to the inception workshop has included research permissions gained from the District Education authorities, identification of local consultative group, development and dissemination of brochures for introducing the research project (as well as an introductory letter); discussion with University of Walter Sisulu regarding research assistants for the Eastern Cape district sites, interviewing of prospective research assistants will take place in late November.

The inception workshop, Blantyre, Malawi, Monday 25th September to Sunday 1st October 2006

This residential workshop (at the Grace Bandawe Conference Centre, Blantyre) was organised by Dr Elsbeth Robson and Dr Alister Munthali, the lead Malawi researchers. It was attended by the two main project researchers (except in the case of South Africa, where Mac Mashiri was unavailable at the time of the inception meeting and was replaced by Ms Denise Buiten), one teacher and 2-4 children per country (see Appendix 2 for a list of attenders).

The inception workshop enabled the key country researchers to meet and review their research plans with each other, the UK team and Professor Michael Bourdillon (who is advising the project on the research component with children). The workshop comprised a mix of joint meetings with all researchers, teachers etc. and a second component when teachers and child researchers undertook activities separately from the adult researchers. Teachers acted as chaperones and provided translation where they considered it necessary.

Key features of the workshop included the following, with any relevant decisions recorded

- The programme for the workshop is shown in Appendix 1. The adult researcher component was amended slightly during the course of the workshop to ensure sufficient time was spent on reviewing the draft questionnaire survey and checklists (which took considerably longer than anticipated). Sessions on data entry and analysis and the focus group trial and qualitative methods review were postponed to the pilots. Minor amendments were also made to the timing of the child researcher programme.
- Recap and review of the development of the current project and its antecedents with the full group [power point presentation by Gina Porter, see Appendix 4.]
- Presentations to the full group by Ghanaian and RSA child researchers on their previous research. Malawian children presented their perspectives on transport issues which affect them.
- Full day visit by Ghanaian and RSA children and their teachers to a local Blantyre school where they observed local transport and talked to school children about their travel/mobility. [Subsequently the findings were presented back to the full group at the workshop and then at the school they had visited. The Ghanaian and South African teachers also presented their perspectives on the differences between the school they had visited and their home school].
- Review of *ethical issues in social research* with children and child participation by Michael Bourdillon with the adult researcher group and drafting of project ethical code. This was subsequently reviewed and provisionally agreed by all researcher children and adults. [see appendix 7]
- Adult researcher review and *full revision of the draft checklists and the draft survey questionnaire* (bearing in mind the need to balance comparative study with country specifics).
- Review by the whole group of adult and child researchers of *child-researcher facilitation and child researcher methods* used in previous child-centred pilot (review by whole group): attributes and problems (including child facilitation difficulties experienced in South Africa by CSIR). Subsequently it was agreed by the adult researchers that, given the difficulties faced in South Africa, it would be advisable for Professor Bourdillon's support to the second children's training workshop scheduled for Malawi to take place in South Africa instead.
- Presentation by Dr Robson and Dr Munthali of *background to transport and children's issues in Malawi*. This raised a number of important issues including links between disability and mobility (on which Dr Munthali has conducted research).
- Circulation of the very accessible *brochures* prepared by the Malawi researchers for introducing the project to teachers, children, NGOs and other stakeholders. A similar format is to be adopted in Ghana and RSA.
- Discussion of *zonal foci* of research in each country. There will be a minimum of 2 zonal foci per country (as indicated in the Case for Support), with selection partially determined by funding constraints which limit the potential to undertake extensive research in those regions furthest from the researchers' base. Provisional selections reported at the inception workshop were as follows:
Ghana: coastal savanna zone; Brong Ahafo forest region

Malawi: Lilongwe plains; Blantyre Shire highlands region.

RSA: Port St John's coastal area (former Transkei); zone north of Pretoria

- Discussion of the importance of ensuring research in *roadside and off-road settlement areas* in each (urban, peri-urban and rural) location. This is likely to increase the number of questionnaire surveys and qualitative interviews etc. which need to be conducted.
- Discussion of *timetable for pilot field research*. Ghana and RSA pilots will take place, as scheduled in the Case for Support, in January or February 2007, according to local researcher availability etc. The Malawi team felt they needed to build on the momentum of the work already conducted in preparation for the inception workshop. Agreed that the Malawi pilot will take place in November 2006, instead of early 2007. [GP and KH have made arrangements to be present].
- Report of UK stakeholder meeting.
- Report of first Ghana Country Consultative Group meeting.
- Discussion of *language issues* by adult researchers: the problem that children may select English as their preferred language for discussion in interviews etc., when their knowledge of English is imperfect, especially outside specific school lesson contexts. Decision reached that work with children will be in the appropriate local language since this is the language in which they are likely to express themselves most freely.
- Preparation of an *introductory statement* (Appendix 6) for use by all researchers (adult and children) in presenting the project to potential respondents (for translation into relevant local languages).
- The need to carefully clarify *the role of teachers* in the research and training programmes: i.e. that teachers play a role as translators and chaperones in the workshops, and are important members of the Country Consultative Groups but will not have a role as researchers on their own account in the subsequent project (as they in some cases might like) since the power relations between teachers and their pupils make it difficult for teachers to successfully research and report on these children's issues. Moreover, RAs are being employed for this research and there are no funds for a teacher component. This needed careful explanation to all teachers concerned (done as the inception workshop proceeded and during the subsequent children's training workshop).
- Importance of *school support* for the research and any work conducted by child researchers within the school context. Agreement that all schools where child researchers participate in the project should receive a small donation of books, part way through the project.
- Discussion regarding the *issue of payment directly to children* for work conducted within the project. Decision reached that children should receive some benefit for participating as researchers, particularly if asked to undertake work specifically for adult researchers. There are clear benefits for all participating children in terms of skills learned, workshop participation etc. The former can be recognised at each children's training workshop by provision of a certificate of attendance showing skills learned. However, it was agreed subsequently that since watches are needed for some of the children's studies, inexpensive watches should be purchased in UK and provided to the children concerned. Each child will also receive a disposable camera for use in the project and will be given their personal copy of the prints produced. Where locally appropriate, and where not contravening local

labour laws, there could be a small payment at the end of the project related to local labour rates. This will depend on the availability of funds and the quality of the work produced.

- Clarification of the *children's researcher focus*. Agreed that our requirements of child researchers have to be flexible and dependent on their interest and other commitments (including paid and unpaid work). If they are at school, permission to undertake research will depend on the school. However, school work may limit what can be done and it may be realistic to focus on research by the child in their home settlement. Consequently, there will not necessarily be a match in precise settlement locations between the work conducted by adult researchers and that conducted by children. A one-week diary (to be continued if they are enjoying it) is likely to be one of the most easily accomplished and flexible methods which can be used by child researchers since it requires no permissions (apart from their own) and can be conducted wherever they find themselves. A range of research methods will be taught/reviewed in the children's training workshops
- At the end of the workshop every child and teacher was provided with a certificate of participation signed by Drs Robson and Munthali. These were extremely well-received.

Children's training workshops

The first Malawi training workshop, Monday 2 October to Thursday 5th October 2006

This 4-day residential children's workshop was held, like the inception workshop, at the Grace Bandawe Conference Centre, Blantyre. The workshop was led by Professor Michael Bourdillon. It was attended by 12 children from three different schools in the Blantyre district: one urban (Zingwangwa Secondary School), one peri-urban (Ndirande Hill Secondary School) and one rural (Mpemba Community Day Secondary School). Each school group was accompanied by one teacher. The four children from Zingwangwa, along with their teacher, had already participated in the inception workshop. Other participants included the lead Malawi researchers (Elsbeth Robson and Alister Munthali), the UK team (Gina Porter and Kate Hampshire), and four newly appointed Malawian research assistants from Chancellor College, Zomba.

We were unable to hold the workshop over 5 days, as originally planned, because of the need to move the Country Consultative Group meeting in Lilongwe forward to 6th October to avoid a public holiday the following week. This meant a reduction in some of the role play exercises, unfortunately. In future children's training workshops five full days need to be allocated to ensure adequate coverage of all aspects of the training. Nonetheless, it proved highly advantageous to run the first Malawi training workshop in the week immediately following the inception workshop for a number of reasons:

- Michael Bourdillon was able to combine the training workshop with attendance at the inception workshop and thus to meet the full research team and provide input and advice on children's research issues throughout the inception meeting.
- Gina Porter and Kate Hampshire were able to stay on after the inception workshop for the children's training workshop to observe and assist (e.g. allowing a fairly full transcription of all proceedings for use by all future children's training workshops in the project).

Thus, the timing allowed additional staff inputs to both the inception workshop and the training workshop.

The children's workshop was conducted entirely in Chichewa with translation to English or, where the speakers were non-Chichewa speaking, in English with translation to Chichewa. A detailed report of the workshop is provided by Michael Bourdillon in Appendix 5 (the transcription is also available on request from Gina Porter: r.e.porter@durham.ac.uk).

At the end of the workshop each child, teacher and research assistant was provided with a certificate of participation indicating the research methods they had learned during the week. Again, the certificates (signed by Drs Robson and Munthali, presented by Professor Bourdillon) were extremely well-received.

The first Ghanaian training workshop

To be arranged: since this involves no external inputs, it will occur at a time to suit Cape Coast staff, but prior to the pilot research programme which is scheduled for January 2007.

The first RSA children's training workshop

Discussions are in progress between CSIR and Professor Bourdillon. It is likely that the workshop will take place in January 2007, i.e. prior to the pilot research programme (which will then probably take place in February 2007).

Country Consultative Groups

Ghana CCG

The first Ghana CCG meeting was held in Accra, just prior to the visit to Malawi for the inception workshop. It included the following organisations:

National Population Council; UNICEF; Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit/Ghana Police Service; Ghana Private Road Transport Union; Ministry of Education/Ghana Education Service; Cape Coast Municipal Assembly; Representative from Parliament; Ministry of Transport; Child Rights International; Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment; Ghana Statistical Service; Electoral Commission of Ghana; UCC [Pro-VC, Dean – Faculty of Social Sciences; all Professors – Department of Geography & Tourism; Rep. from Consultancy Unit & 3 Members of the Ghana Research Team.

Issues arising from the meeting:

- The project is considered a vital component of research on children. There has been little research in area although some child rights activities are taking place in the country.
- Need for team to undertake a comprehensive review of laws and policies on children in the country.
- Need to invite the following for next meeting: parents, religious organisations, other researchers in the area, e.g. MECAMP
- Research team should look at concept of risk as

perceived by children and factor into work. Also, issue of self-efficacy should be examined. E.g. to what extent can children say yes or no to a demand/request? Further, it may be useful to look at rights of children, the environments they operate in and how they are influenced by them.

- The need to tackle all aspects of ethics – issues of consent (by parents, teachers, political and administrative powers) to be taken seriously.
- The study should produce recommendations for planning and policy in the country.
- Recommended that the study should cover urban, peri-urban and rural communities and children.
- The Team was advised to consider taking up travel insurance. This issue emerged when the death of one of the children who was due to travel to Malawi was announced.

The ethical committee of the University of Cape Coast will review the ‘instruments’ [questionnaire survey, qualitative checklists etc.] to be applied in the research.

Malawi CCG

There were two components to the first country CCG, organised by Alister Munthali and Elsbeth Robson (Gina Porter was able to participate, being in Malawi for the inception workshop). The two-site meeting was necessary for this first Malawi CCG because although the ministries and many major NGOs are based in the capital Lilongwe, other child-centred NGOs and one major transport group – T2- are based in Malawi’s main commercial centre, Blantyre.

a) A meeting in Blantyre with local organisations on Wednesday 4th October at the Grace Bandawe Conference Centre. The participants were as follows: Dr Ignacio Ngoma, T2 Centre¹; Mr Witness Kuotcha, T2 Centre; Mr Jimmy Kwangwani AYISE (Active Youth Initiative for Social Enhancement); Mr Geoffrey Mbuzi, Samaritan Trust; Mrs Mercy Manyungwa, Zingwangwa Secondary School; Mr Peter Muthete, Ndirande Hill Secondary School; Mr Steven Malizani, Mpemba, Community Day Secondary School; Dr Elsbeth Robson; Dr Alister Munthali; Dr Gina Porter.

b) A meeting in Lilongwe on Friday 6th October at the Malawi Institute of Management. The participants were as follows: Mr M.D. Tembo, National Research Council of Malawi; Mr E.N.B. Chibwana, Ministry of Transport & Public Works; Mr Aubrey Chibwana, National Youth Council of Malawi; Mr Felix Limbani, Youth Net Counselling (YONECO); Mr Andrew Lwanda, Malawi Rural Travel & Transport Programme; Mr Donnex Bengo, Save the Children (US); Mr John Knozi, Ministry of Education; Mr James Gumulira, Road Safety Council; Mr Elton Ntwana, World Vision iNternational; Mr Martin Nkuna, Plan Malawi.

Both meetings were chaired by Alister Munthali and followed a common format:

- Self introductions round the table
- An introduction to the project and the Country Consultative Group (CCG) concept with power point presentation (Gina Porter)
- Questions and comments

¹ Malawi Transportation Technology Transfer Centre, The Polytechnic, University of Malawi.

- A review of key features of the Malawi study with power point presentation (Elsbeth Robson)
- Questions and comments

In each meeting, the project and the concept of the CCG as a) a means of achieving local ownership through helping advise and shape the project, b) avoiding replication of earlier work, and c) achieving ongoing dissemination, was received very positively. There was common recognition that knowing more about children's transport and mobility issues is likely to be key to reaching a number of MDGs. Participants at both meetings provided information on relevant documents to be consulted and in some cases offered to provide them. Key issues raised:

- The age range of children included and labour laws. Subjects of research clarified as 0-18 years. However, Malawi researchers will all be secondary school pupils and will do the majority of their research in the school holidays. So long as they work no more than 4 hours per day they won't contravene Malawi's labour laws.
- The location of the research. The Lilongwe group pointed to the need to extend work into remoter settlements in Blantyre district: they classified Mpemba as 'semi-rural' rather than rural. They were also strongly in favour of including northern Malawi in the study, because conditions are different from those prevailing in southern Malawi. The research team recognised the validity of this point and agreed to consider the suggestion, while pointing to logistical issues and resource constraints which may limit their choice of sites.
- The importance of taking adequate account of seasonality in transport and mobility.
- The importance of consulting opinion leaders in the community, including clergy.

RSA CCG

Members of the CCG may include the National Departments of Transport and Education, provincial representatives of transport and education, South African Parliament Portfolio Committee Chair on Children, district and local authorities and representatives, as well as parents from the project communities. Bilateral discussions will be held with national and provincial nominees to ensure participation. Thereafter, regular progress reports will be disseminated to them. RSA's first CCG is scheduled to take place in late November 2006.

Work in progress/about to commence

- The survey questionnaire has been revised in Durham and is currently with each country for a second review (i.e. prior to its translation into local languages). It will shortly be translated into Chichewa for the first pilot, in Malawi, in November 2006.
- Qualitative checklist topics are being prioritised by each country prior to review in Durham (since the checklists are currently too long. We need a mix of comparative and country specific questions).
- Marinke van Riet (IFRTD) has been lobbying on behalf of the project to ensure that the issue of children's transport and mobility is on the agenda of the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Program's SSATP Annual General Assembly (October 28th to November 3rd 2006) since this is a key meeting for transport policy in Africa (organised by the World Bank etc.). Unfortunately,

she has to be in Egypt at the time of the meeting but Gina Porter will make a presentation at the meeting (in Maseru, Lesotho, scheduled for 29th October) before proceeding to Malawi for the first pilot.

- Literature and data searches are continuing in UK and all focus countries. The aim is to ensure all relevant available statistical data – on school attendance, transport ownership, population densities, livelihoods etc. - has been collected prior to the pilots (with the possible exception of Malawi because this is occurring earlier than planned) and key points summarised.
- A list of key published academic literature relating to children and transport with short notes on each publication is being compiled in Durham for each of the focus countries.
- A search of francophone literature for references to children and transport.
- Newspaper cuttings relating to transport and children's issues are being compiled in each country.
- Guidelines on oral life histories for RAs.
- Guidelines on ethnographic diaries for RAs.
- RAs are being trained/prepared in all focus countries.
- Interview trial using oral history guidelines by RAs (test on each other) in Malawi.
- Preparations for the country pilots including selection of settlement sites for pilot are in progress. The Malawi pilot will take place from 11th to 17th November (inclusive).
- Malawi's Blantyre zone child researchers will start their research on 21st November. They may have completed their one-week diary prior to this.
- The next UK steering group meeting will take place in early December 2006, following the first (Malawi) pilot.
- All first zone children's training workshops have to be completed prior to the pilot studies.
 - Ghana's first children's training workshop will take place shortly.
 - RSA's first children's training workshop will take place a week after schools have re-opened i.e. 22-26 January 2007.

Conclusion

We are currently making good progress and anticipate keeping broadly to the timeline presented in the Case for Support (given that we commenced work on 1 May 2006, rather than 1 April as originally anticipated). The project has already elicited considerable interest and support from ministries, NGOs and a range of other organisations in the focus countries.