

STRIVE *Learning Series* Technical Primer No. 1

STRIVE (Supporting Transformation by Reducing Insecurity and Vulnerability with Economic Strengthening) is a 6.5-year, \$16 million cooperative agreement, funded by the USAID Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, in close collaboration with the USAID Microenterprise and Private Enterprise Promotion Office. STRIVE uses market-led economic strengthening initiatives to benefit vulnerable children while aiming to fill current knowledge gaps on effective approaches. Lessons learned from STRIVE's four country-based programs (in the Philippines, Afghanistan, Mozambique, and Liberia) are being evaluated with the aim of establishing best practices for similar interventions promoting sustainable, market-based approaches to poverty in developing countries. For more information on STRIVE, see <http://microlinks.kdid.org/library/strive-factsheet>. Contents of this publication are the responsibility of FHI 360 and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the US government.



Photo: credit: DCG

Filipino children express what is most important to them through drawings, during a PRA exercise under the STRIVE program.

Time Use PRA Guide and Toolkit for Child and Youth Development Practitioners

How Do You Target Young People Effectively? Start by Knowing How They Spend Their Time

By Obed Diener, Whitney Moret, and Diana Rutherford of STRIVE

Understanding how children and youth spend their time is crucial for designing effective development interventions that improve their well-being.¹ Child time-use studies provide a tested way of shedding light on this essential topic. Perception of time varies by culture, gender, and age. For example, in many societies, girls tend to engage in home-based, non-economic chores, while boys engage in

economic labor away from home. Economic labor is often more highly valued than home-based labor, profoundly affecting how girls and boys perceive themselves and their value and place within the household. The interdependence of people within the household and the value placed on their work (at home, away from home, economic or not) influence well-being.

For practitioners and researchers interested in the safety, wellbeing, and development of children and youth, researching time use yields important indicators, as well as valuable contextual information to inform the design of interventions and the measurement of outcomes. Information on time use sheds light on important topics like school attendance, access to opportunities for play and associating with peers, safety, child labor, and gender inequalities.

¹ Ben-Arieh, A. & A. Ofir. 2002. "Time for (More) Time-Use Studies: Studying the Daily Activities of Children." *Childhood*, 9(2), 225-248.



Photo: credit: DCG

Child PRA participants in the Philippines describe how they spend their time.

Though information about child and youth time use has traditionally been gathered from adults, there is a growing understanding of the advantages of gathering information directly from children and youth. Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) methods tailored for gathering information on time use from children and youth offer one effective and child-friendly means of doing so.

The STRIVE Philippines project, which has the goal of improving the well-being of vulnerable children and youth through economic strengthening of households and individuals, created a time use PRA tool for participants ages 8-18 to gather key information used for project evaluation. The tool was piloted in January 2010 with follow-up in January 2012.² Drawing from that experience, this guide provides an overview of issues to be taken into account when researching child time use with PRA methodology, along with a sample tool (see Annex A).

The Role of PRA Methods in Child Time Use Research

The use of PRA methods as a means of gathering information in a rapid, systematic, and participatory way has been well established in the development

² PRA data gathering in the Philippines was conducted by local research firm DCG, with technical support from STRIVE on tool development, training and piloting.

Tips for Participatory Research With Children

- Tips: listen well, be respectful, nonjudgmental, genuine, and friendly.
- Make children feel welcome immediately. Children will respond and participate more freely if they are comfortable. Facilitators' ability to make the PRA sessions fun, with age-appropriate interactive warm-up exercises and games are vital. The time devoted to warm-up will not be wasted.
- Be nonjudgmental. If you communicate discomfort or dislike of what is said or how it is said, then the discussion will be bounded by your viewpoint.
- Allow children to collaborate on their answers.
- Stay on their level. When working with children, sit with them, rather than standing over them. It is important not to "speak down" to children but to use words that they understand, taking care to verify how participants understand the meaning of key terms used in exchanges with them.
- Ask questions to verify your understanding of the meaning and significance to points that they make. Listen respectfully to what they have to say.

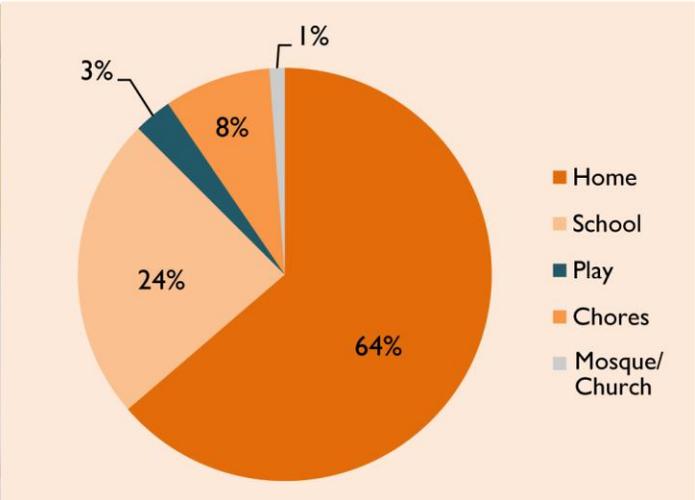
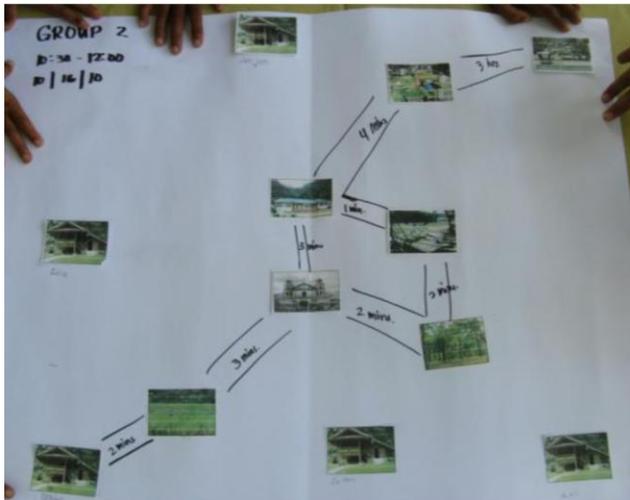
See *Researching Children's Experiences* by Melissa Freeman and Sandra Mathison, The Guilford Press, 2009.

field.³ PRAs are particularly useful for projects that have limited time and funding to conduct extensive quantitative surveys, or that wish to complement quantitative research with qualitative insights. It is also effective when working with children and youth for whom participatory methods are friendlier than quantitative surveys.

³ USAID. 2010. "Using Rapid Appraisal Methods." Tips, No. 5 Second Edition. <http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/evalweb/documents/TIPS-UsingRapidAppraisalMethods.pdf>

Figure 1: Mapping Child Time Use

HOURS/DAY	HOME	SCHOOL	PLAY	FARM	MARKET	FOREST	WELL	CHURCH
Monday	15	8	1					
Tuesday	15	8	1					
Wednesday	15	8	1					
Thursday	15	8	1					
Friday	15	8	1					
Saturday	16			3		2	3	
Sunday	16				2	2	2	2



Finally, PRA can illuminate both individual and group level dynamics within a given population. PRA draws upon a variety of approaches to facilitate interactive discussion. These tools map children’s activities across time and space, and can include creating calendars, schedules, and time diaries or filling out questionnaires.⁴

Child Time Use PRA findings help us understand where young people are and when. In particular, they can identify such information as:

- Routes and means of movement between locations where activities take place;
- Where interventions might be located and when they might be carried out;
- Where safety might be an issue; and
- How target beneficiaries perceive time and value their current activities.

⁴ Rutherford, Diana. 2012. “Understanding Child Time Use An Introduction to a Measurement Tool.” *Youth Economic Opportunities*. <http://www.youtheconomicopportunities.org/resource/910/understanding-child-time-use-introduction-measurement-tool>

Research methodologies that fail to engage children directly miss important details and can yield inaccurate results. STRIVE Philippines combined household surveys with child time use PRA tools to better understand the well-being of children ages 8-18 from households engaged in seaweed production as well as woven goods.

Findings illustrate differences between child and adult reporting of how children spent their time. It was found that adults may provide less reliable information on how children and youth spend their time, as parents generalized more than children. For example, when describing time the child spent walking to or from school, parents reported that the child was in school.

Children, in contrast, reported the time as both walking and engaging with friends, making what could be a 20-minute walk into an hour including valuable play time.

Essential Considerations for Human Subjects Research Ethics

For every research study—including many evaluations—researchers and evaluators must submit an application to an Institutional Review Board for ethics review. Common elements include:

Informed Consent: a process through which study participants (in this case, both parent/caregiver and child) come to understand what the study is about; what their rights are; how the information will be used; any benefit or harm that may result from study participation; what they will be asked to do as participants; when and for how long, and that participation is voluntary. Each interaction is an opportunity to engage participants in the process.

Privacy and Confidentiality: strategies to provide participants with privacy and confidentiality are needed, including how data are handled, where they are stored, and who will have access. Information should be gathered and discussions held in places where participants can reasonably expect what is said will not be overheard.

Referral and Reporting Systems – a plan should be developed for referring or reporting suspected cases of wrongdoing or harm. While these are context specific, some ethical considerations are universal. If someone working with participants observes wrong-doing (something illegal or harmful), they should look to the referral or reporting system. A referral is typically to a locally-available social service provider. A reporting system typically refers to following the local justice system. Depending on the circumstances, both may be appropriate.

Limitations

PRA is most illuminating when paired with other research methodologies. The PRA tool presented here may not be appropriate for children younger than 8 years old who are not developmentally ready for the required activities. Ease of use with older children will vary based on their level of education.⁵

Guidelines for Effective Design and Application

Research and evaluation experts should be consulted for design and analysis of child time use PRAs in order to incorporate the most appropriate tools for a given context, particularly in addressing the following issues:

✓ **Establishing Goals:** The most important technical issue is to determine in advance what is to be explored by the process, in order to adapt the tool so that information captured is relevant to the research or evaluation questions. In addition, in order to focus the conversation and understand responses in context, it is important to gather as much information in advance as possible on issues like the structure of children's school

schedules in particular (e.g. half-days, full days, time of day, etc.)

- ✓ **Sampling:** if the results are to be used for beneficiary targeting, researchers must determine how to sample appropriately in order to reach the target population. Possible sources are: census data, youth-serving organizations, schools, social services agencies, etc.
- ✓ **Human Subjects Research Ethics and Local Laws:** Laws and norms related to parental/caregiver consent requirements must be followed, in order to obtain approval to conduct research with children. See the Code of Federal Regulations for protection of children as research subjects for all US government-funded activities.⁶ Similar rules are found throughout the world.
- ✓ **Analysis:** Engaging project staff with researchers or evaluators to analyze the data gathered may yield the most in-depth findings.

The principal feature of this methodology, and the key to its successful application, is the central role that children play as participants. There are many activities that can be used to collect data, including creating maps, calendars, and time diaries or conducting questionnaires. The child time use tool can be used in combination with other PRA tools.

⁵ For other examples including some designed for very young children see ChildFund International's Child-and Youth-Friendly Participatory Action Research Tool Kit (May 2010).

⁶ Department of Health and Human Services. 2012. <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html#subpartd>

The tool developed by STRIVE Philippines utilizes maps, time tables, and drawings to understand the complex environments in which children live, and can be completed in about an hour. The discussions can be facilitated by anyone who is skilled in participatory research and sensitive to the particular needs of children and youth.

After getting informed consent from parents or caregivers and participants, facilitators work with participants to identify how and where they spend their time. The key elements of an effective PRA include:

- selecting places where youth/children spend time
- mapping the community
- linking places (routes, transport modes, time)
- allocating time spent per location
- expressing what activity is most important to youth/children

Conclusion

Minimal supplies are required: posterboard, markers, photos representing typical places, and tokens (to represent time). A good facilitator and a safe place are all that is needed for success

Child and Youth Time Use PRA methods provide a versatile, useful, and relatively low-cost assessment option that complements quantitative methods. For STRIVE Philippines, PRA methods such as the tool provided were tested and yielded valuable information. When designed and implemented appropriately, child time use PRA is an effective way to understand child time use and strengthen program design, implementation, and evaluation.

Resources

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- Young Lives. 2012. *Young Lives Methods Guide*. <http://www.younglives.org.uk/what-we-do/research-methods/methods-guide>

Annex A: STRIVE PRA Tool

Child Time Use PRA

Target groups: Children/youth ages 8-11; 12-15; 16-18

Key question: How do children usually (most commonly) spend their time?

[If you want detailed information about what children do in the home, then add a question for discussion or add another time chart for the hours spent “at home,” which could mean taking care of younger children, fetching water or fire wood, or economic activities.]

Recruiting

After speaking with the parents/guardians requesting permission to speak with a child(ren), then approach the child(ren).

To children:

My name is _____. I’m studying what children like you do – how you spend your time. I’d like to hear from you, so I asked your parents for permission to talk with you. I am arranging for a group of people your age to meet at [place], at [date and time] for about an hour to talk about what you do and how and where you spend your time. It is for you to decide if you want to participate. You don’t have to say yes, and if you say no, you don’t have to give a reason. I would not talk with anyone you know about what you’ve said. Are you interested in joining the group? *Be open to questions and answer them as straightforward as possible. If there are many questions or the person appears very nervous, suggest s/he talk with his/her parent/guardian before deciding. Then make arrangements to stop in again to get an answer.*

PRA design

Make nametags for the children as they arrive and hand them to them and use their name. Make eye contact to help you get to know them and make them comfortable.

Introduction

My name is _____. I’m studying what children like you do – how you typically spend your time. I’d like to hear from you, so I asked your parents for permission to talk with you. We have about an hour to talk today about how you spend your time.

My job is to listen and to keep the discussion moving along. If it sounds like we’re done with a topic, I’ll move us along. If someone is talking more than others, I may interrupt in order to give time for others to talk. I don’t mean to be rude, and I hope you’ll understand that everyone’s thoughts are important. If you aren’t talking much, I might ask you a direct question.

So first, it’s important to set some ground rules for our discussion. Let’s do that together. What do you think is important to make our group discussion work? *Discussion – be sure to cover respect, confidentiality and muting mobile phones.*

OK, now that we have decided on the rules, let me assure you that your names will not be used in any of our reports. This discussion is voluntary. We hope that you will stay throughout our discussion, as your opinion is important. I would not talk with anyone you know about what you’ve said, unless you talk about the risk of someone being harmed. And then, I’d talk with you first about what could be done to help. If you have any questions, please ask me. I also have contact information for the study leader.

While I guide the discussion, I would also like to audio record the session so that I don’t miss anything. Is that ok with all of you?

Opening question: Let’s start with introductions. My name again is _____. *Turn to right and go around the circle; use name tag. With the younger groups, you might want to try tossing a ball to the first child, and then s/he throws it back to you, and then you toss it to the next, etc., until all are introduced. This can be a good icebreaker.*

Exercise 1 (about 5 minutes): Show the group the cut outs representing places (home, school, farm, market, city, church/mosque); ask them to identify each.

Let's talk about where you spend time. **MAKE SURE PICTURES ARE UNDERSTOOD.** Child's name pick one of the pictures. Thank you. So who spends time at _____? Discussion What other places do you spend time? Children select the pictures appropriate to them as a group. Are we missing any places? If yes, then make a card to represent that place with the word and a simple line drawing.

I'd like to know how much time you spend in each place. Think about where you spend the most time, and put the picture up here. Then where do you spend the next most time. Not all of you will spend the same amount of time in each place, so decide together what is the best order of the pictures to represent your group.

Exercise 2 (about 20 minutes): Time Table completion. Present the table. Explain the rows and columns. Discuss how to complete the table, or use counters and photos instead of using a table (see alternate wording below for younger children).

I'd like you to work as a group to complete this table. Please help each other with the time and hours. Please ask me if you are unsure of the time or the number of hours or minutes, and together we can complete the table.

Exercise 3 (10-15 minutes): Review time table. So tell me about this day (state the day – pick one that looks easy and complete). Listen attentively and the note taker should take detailed notes. Thank you. That's very interesting. Ask questions to clarify if needed. Ask for each day if everyone has this same schedule or if someone does something different, then listen and ask if anyone else does something different.

So what about this day? (state the day – pick one that looks incomplete or complex, or one that generated a lot of discussion among the children while they were completing the table). Listen attentively and the note taker should take detailed notes. Thank you. That's helpful. Ask questions to clarify if needed.

Review the other days with the children and ask: Have I got that right? I want to be sure I understand.

Exercise 4 Mapping Exercise (this can take time with younger children, e.g., 20-30 minutes, but far less time with older children/youth and fastest with cut-outs of places that can be glued/taped to the map): Thank you. You've given me lots of information to go on. It would be really helpful to have a map of the places you spend time. Would you please take this piece of paper and the pictures and map them? Here's some glue or tape and markers to show how you get about between the places (walking, bus, habal-habal, etc). Take about 15 minutes to make a map and then we'll move on.

Step away and listen and take notes without being obtrusive. After 10 minutes, look over the map with the participants and help them put in time and mode of transport between places. Let them tell you the story the map represents for them, and write it down.
COLLECT THE MAP

Exercise 5 (about 10 minutes): Most important activity for them. You can do this one of two ways: with the younger ones, you might let them draw something, and for the older ones, you might just ask and see what kind of answers you get. Note whether there is consensus.

Now I'd like each of you to draw a picture of the most important activity that you do. Here is a paper for each of you and a pencil/pen/crayon. We have 10 minutes remaining. I'd like to collect the drawings when you're done.

Let the children work independently. If someone asks about "important to whom," say that's up to them.

Or ask: What is the most important thing you do? Once the children have finished, ask if they would like to share their drawings and tell their story.

Ending: I really appreciate this discussion. I've learned a lot. Thank you for sharing with me.

Sample Time Table

Consider using a table like this. You could take the pictures and color code them in advance for use with each group, or at least the younger groups. Then have them color in the cells for each hour to match the picture. Use crayons or pens. Revise the times in the first column as needed. Would anyone be up and out at 5 a.m. for instance?

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:00-7:00 a.m.							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-noon							
Noon-1							
1-2 pm							
2-3							
3-4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-midnight							
Midnight-6a.m.							

Alternate to grid that works well with younger children: *Thank them and review the order to be sure the group is in agreement. Then: So now that you have where you spend time, we want to know about how many hours. We're going to use these chips: the white ones are for when it's daylight and the blue for when it's night, and each is 1 hour. So since there are 24 hours in every day, you have 12 white chips and 12 blue.*

Now think about the weekdays: Monday through Friday. Use the chips to tell a story about where you usually spend time on the weekdays. *You might probe and ask if they go to school, and then ask from what time they start to end, and then ask them to figure out the number of hours and put the white chips representing daylight beside the picture of the school. **Ask the children to tell you about the story.***

This is great work. Is there any week day that's special where you might spend time somewhere but not every day? *Listen and takes note on the grid given to you and complete it for each group. **Ask the children to tell you about the story.***

Repeat for Saturday and then separately for Sunday. *Complete your grid and show it to the group and ask if anyone has anything to add or if this looks right to them. **Ask the children to tell you about the story.***