



# PHOTOVOICE ICE

## Facilitator's Manual

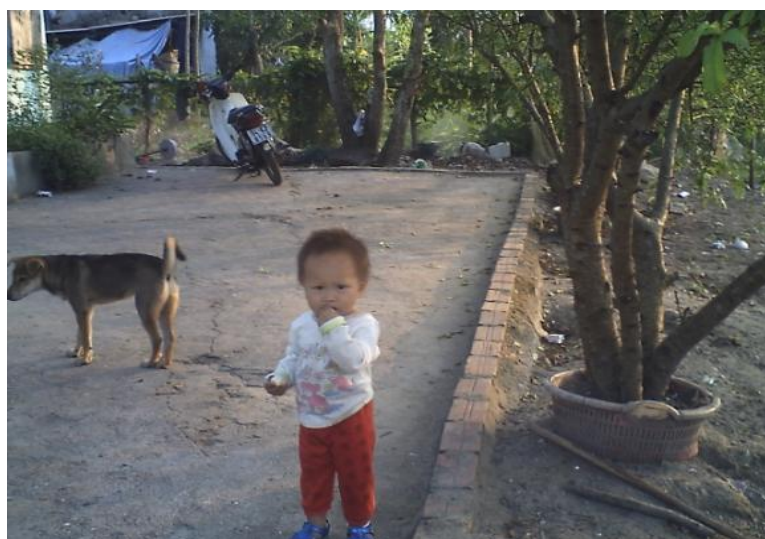


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## PART 1: INTRODUCTION



***Additional income from oyster farming helps improve living quality, more money to raise and take care of children better***

*(Photovoice participant photograph & diary comment on impact of Australian government funded project for aquaculture in Vietnam study by Pierce with ACIAR 2012)*

### Purpose of this Photovoice Guide

This guide to conducting a *Photovoice* project has been developed to help you understand *Photovoice*, why it has value to your aquaculture (or fisheries) projects, and what you need to do to prepare, organise and facilitate a *Photovoice* project. There are also examples of photographs and participant comments from other *Photovoice* projects.

This guide has been prepared by an Aquaculture without Frontiers (AwF) volunteer already experienced in conducting *Photovoice* projects in developed and developing countries.

AwF volunteers can help you in training you in *Photovoice* either by visiting you and working with you, or by assisting you online to facilitate your own *Photovoice* project, and can help you to record your results of the project. You may want to do a *Photovoice* story to document your aquaculture project for your community, or to write it up into research for publication, or to present at conferences. You may also want to use your *Photovoice* findings as a part of a funding application, to report on funding already granted, and on progress of your aquaculture project, or to encourage key decision makers to listen to you. We have included examples from other *Photovoice* projects to give you ideas of style, however your project will be unique and individual to your community.

Our big goal in AwF in this *Photovoice* manual is to enable you to have a more powerful voice, to reflect on your work as you collaborate with others on your aquaculture projects, to document your successes, and to help you reach key decision makers. Your *Photovoice* story can also be added to our AwF community shared resources, so you can also become part of inspiring and helping others as they develop their own AwF projects to help for a better life for us all.

**Dr Janine Pierce AwF volunteer & Roy Palmer Executive Director AwF (Australia) 2018**

***We wish you success in your Photovoice project***

## How to use this Facilitator's guide

In this *Photovoice* manual you will find background on the *Photovoice* approach, why it has value as a research method and how to use it. You will also find an outline of the stages needed and some forms that are useful and can be modified to fit with your *Photovoice* project. The manual is written by a *Photovoice*\_community researcher who shares approaches to use and some of the photographs from different *Photovoice* projects. *Photovoice* is an exciting and fairly easy approach to research, and is both enjoyable and empowering to participants, as it puts the research into the hands of community members to tell their own story from which it is hoped social change or other desired actions such as needed funding may follow.



***Nature provides ways if we only know how to look deep for answers, to respect and act sustainably***

***But sometimes we need to show and help others to a better way to a better life***

***Aquaculture is an opportunity to achieve this***

***(AwF with Janine Pierce project in Southern India in 2016 investigating turning unused coconut ponds into aquaculture ponds)***



## PART 2: What is Photovoice?



*I am selling fish for last 20 years. My husband passed away from cancer. No house, own house given as dowry to oldest girl's marriage. I am diabetic patient. I start from home early home by 8.30pm. Make 5-10 US \$ per day. I start from home early home by 8.30pm. Make 5-10 US \$ per day.*

Pierce & AwF research team in Southern India 2016

Context of photograph: Southern Indian woman fish seller. *Photovoice* research conducted to assess if there might be a need for aquaculture to benefit women for a better life than long hours fish selling for low pay

## Introduction to Photovoice



Photovoice.org (google photo)

*Photovoice* can be defined as a participatory research method through which :

*“People can identify, represent and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique” Wang and Burris (1997).*

In *Photovoice* participants use photo video images to capture aspects of their lives and experiences and thoughts to share them with others. Pictures are then usually enhanced with captions to provide context to the pictures with the aim to reach the public and policymakers.

*Photovoice* is a participatory action research method that has continued to become more popular since first being used by Caroline Wang and May Anne Burris in the early 1990s. *Photovoice* involves giving cameras to community members who might be part of either a geographically defined community, or a community defined by their social identity (such as members of an AwF project, or perhaps a person with a disability, or a homeless person or refugee). Community members then can tell their own story through taking photographs and having a narrative diary to accompany these photographs, of an issue or something they have been involved in which then can have value not only from being a means for community members to tell their stories both individually and collaboratively with other community members, but also for their photographic stories to act as a catalyst for change (Wang & Burris, 1997). *Photovoice* as a research method has been extensively used in assessing issues from homelessness, illness, energy price impact, community assessments, and in areas like impact of funding from government to aquaculture projects (Pierce & O'Connor, 2013).



***I find myself running out of food due to the massive increase in energy costs***

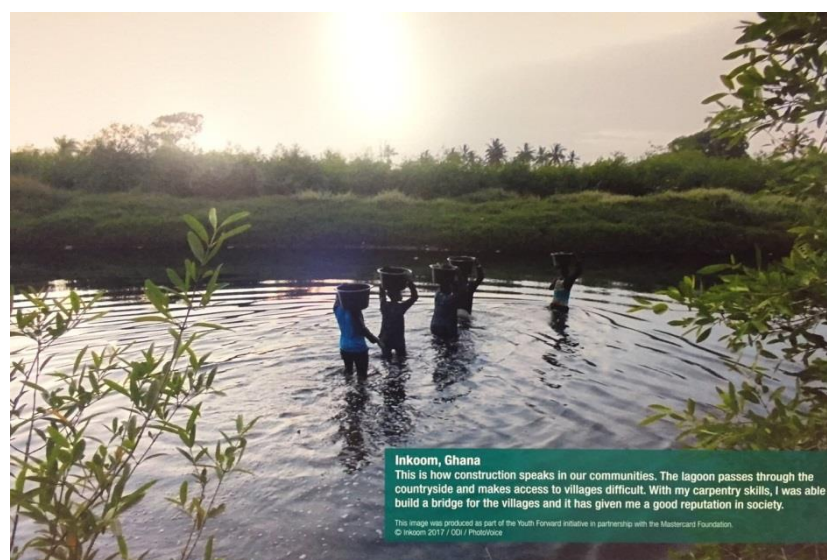
***(Pierce & Uniting Communities shared study on impact of power price increases on lower income people, 2014)***

### **Value of Photovoice as a research method:**

*Photovoice is really an approach that uses both images and words to express what we feel, think, value, wish for, and want changed*

Photographs are a powerful force to encourage policymakers and funders to see experiences and realities through the eyes of the photo taker. *Photovoice* is an empowering process in which the participants become the researchers and through their photographs and accompanying narratives to become the influencer for social change (Pierce & O'Connor, 2014). In this way community strengths and struggles and successes and viewpoints are captured, reflected on both individually and through group discussion, and photographs are then used as a catalyst for change to gain the attention of policy makers and hopefully influence them through viewing a situation through the eyes of another (Wang and Burris, 1997). A further benefit of *Photovoice* method is that it transcends language and power barriers that often prevent marginalised community members from expressing their views. A *Photovoice* project might also bring funding, better conditions or a better life overall. Caroline Wang and May Anne Burris (1997) had three main aims for the *Photovoice* approach:

- 1) To provide a means for people to document their stories both as individuals and as members of a community, and then reflect on the strengths and issues they have in their community in a certain area
- 2) To be a catalyst for the start of critical discussions, and to access and document knowledge about issues of importance relevant to the focus from reflecting on photographs either individually or in a bigger group such as a focus group (group who discusses and shares ideas on a subject)
- 3) To use the findings and the outcomes from the study to reach policy makers, who in the final analysis are the ones who can make a difference in changing situations, creating new policies or providing funding (Wang & Burris, 1997).



<https://twitter.com/photovoice>



*A Photovoice participant performs many roles: participant, photographer, reflective writer, gatherer and analyser of data, and is really a co-researcher.*



Vietnam social impact study of oyster funding and assistance( Pierce with Aciar 2018)

### Why should a Community use Photovoice?

- Overall *Photovoice* is a powerful and yet fairly simple, relatively inexpensive, and fast research process, that enables people to:
- Answer questions that quantitative methods (such as surveys) cannot
- Enables participants to document and then reflect on the strengths of their community or project, and record any issues or activities they are involved in. This enables them to then identify their community (or projects) in relation to strengths, weaknesses, or issues to address.
- *Photovoice* is particularly well suited to marginalised people who are often not consulted by decision makers and may not have a good standard of literacy.
- *Photovoice* is an authentic first hand data gathering method not filtered by researchers that tells a unique story relevant to community members
- *Photovoice* enables gathering and sharing of critical information about community issues from participants who firstly take photos, then collaborate with others for group discussions and taking findings to decision makers
- *Photovoice* can be customised to reflect individual community issues and situations, can be culturally adapted, and has the flexibility to be displayed in many spaces whether physical locations or through the internet to reach a broader audience
- *Photovoice* presents real first hand stories that can be used to attract attention of policy

- *Photovoice* enables gathering and sharing of critical information about community issues from participants who take photos, then sharing with others for group discussions and taking findings to decision makers
- Most important: *Photovoice* engages with the human factor in research

**Goal of *Photovoice* is to take photos, tell stories, involve community members, and to get action from decision makers**

### **Photovoice has mainly Advantages but some Limitations**

Advantages	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community members involved in research on their community</li> <li>• Gain more self confidence</li> <li>• Participants gain new skills e.g. photo taking, research, reflection</li> <li>• Get chance to meet &amp; collaborate with other community members</li> <li>• Gain more insights into their community</li> <li>• Get opportunity to bridge the social and political divide with decision-makers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of equipment (cameras may get lost or damaged). Also cost of transport childcare</li> <li>• Community members may have limited time to participate</li> <li>• Participants may not take honest photographs(or any) of community members as they are fearful or do not want to offend them</li> <li>• Although hoped for re changes as a result of the <i>Photovoice</i> project, positive outcomes are not guaranteed</li> </ul>

### **How many participants are needed in a Photovoice project?**

- Unlike much other research, *Photovoice* is a qualitative style of research, so it is about quality not quantity of data. Around seven to ten participants was suggested by Wang (1999) as an ideal size for a *Photovoice* project, however a few more than this number can be managed in a project (as some participants may withdraw or not deliver photographs as needed).
- A participant is a member of a community who is part of the *Photovoice* data gathering (photographs and narratives).

### **Who else is needed in a Photovoice project?**

- A *Photovoice* project needs funders for the project, however to administer the project there needs to be included:
- **Project manager:** this person is involved throughout the whole *Photovoice* project from initial planning, arranging and managing funding, refining the *Photovoice* topic and questions to ask in the study, determining location and venues for meetings and exhibition, number of participants arranging ethics aspects, time frames for different stages of the project, interviews with key stakeholders and decision makers, publicity such as media interviews and public talks, opening the exhibition, analysis and writing up of the findings

- **Facilitator(s):** If the project is small the project manager may also be the facilitator. If the project is larger there may be more than one facilitator. The facilitator supports the project manager in arranging cameras and teaching camera usage suitable for a *Photovoice* project, preparing diaries for narratives, accessing and registering participants and explaining the study to them, arranging consent and release forms, working with participants when they return photographs and diaries and forms to ensure photographs match the narrative and number of the photograph, loading photo data to laptops and computers for analysis, supporting and encouraging participants through the *Photovoice* process, developing photographs, arranging and helping manage focus groups for collaborative photograph analysis, and carrying out administrative tasks for the final exhibition.

### Connection and Consultation: Understanding the Community:

It is not enough for an outside researcher to think they want to do a project with a community. First they must understand the real issues from the community members' viewpoints and ways a community functions, and must build trust with the community members. This relationship cannot be built in one day but takes some time to establish your intentions, that you are there to help them and to encourage community members to communicate with you and trust you. Getting this stage right and a trusting and understanding relationship in both the outside *Photovoice* facilitator and the community members will forge a strong base for the *Photovoice* project.

#### Building trust

All relationships whether is a *Photovoice* project or in life require a basis of trust. This trust is two way between the facilitator and the community members and the community members and the facilitator. It is important to explain to the community members and to then show this is true by actions that they are part of the process from start to finish and that essentially it is their project with your guidance and support as a facilitator. Meeting with the community about the project and how the results will be used, that no photographs will be used without their consent and what benefits may be gained is a good start. The facilitator may also show some photographs of other *Photovoice* projects to explain the type of research that is intended. There may be roles that community members want to be involved in, not just participating with their photo story and narrative, but perhaps to provide networks into the community, help with planning or transport, giving feedback re local policies or ways of doing things, or feedback on how well the project is going or if it is capturing the real issues of the community.

#### Identifying the issues

Although the researcher may think they have a good idea for research based on what they have read or think they are aware of, it is not until they speak with and experience the

community first hand by being there with the people (as photographer did below in Chennai), that they can work with the community to identify what are the important aspects to include in the *Photovoice* project. The challenge always is to find a diverse range of community members, not just the most powerful people.



SL Shanth Kumar, Losing Ground to Manmade Disaster, 2015 / Chennai in southern India. *"This photo shows the type of damage that a **combination of man-made and natural forces is wreaking on the coastline. Untreated chemical effluents from factories make for the sort of foamy substance that has fatal consequences for coastal and marine flora, which are instrumental in protecting the coastline from erosion.**"* This photo highlights the need for possible Photovoice study of climate change & man made environmental issues on poor people in Chennai as a starting point for action

## Materials Needed for a Photovoice Project

- Cameras (either digital or disposable (if disposable ensure that photographs can be increased in size suitable for an exhibition))
- Plastic tags to code each camera (e.g. Camera 1: contact phone number of facilitator of the *Photovoice* project (the name of participant will be stored in a separate file). If lost that way photographs taken are not easily identifiable to the photo taker
- Diaries or other paper based forms of recording narratives to go with the photographs. There should be a page in the diary for each question so the participant can record their reflections under the question with a number of the Photograph
- Computer or other technology source onto which the photographs can be loaded and filed
- Printer (to print out photographs for viewing: should be colour printer). Later access to a quality printer for the exhibition will be needed

- Voice recorders (useful when participants return their photographs and diaries to work with the facilitator to further explain or clarify photograph meaning)
- Information, Consent and release forms (to be given to participants at time of their initial commencement in the study)
- Photograph display boards, or a venue suitable for exhibition with wall space or panels (needed both for a follow up focus group in which all participants and other community members may attend), also needed for final exhibition

Regardless of what is ideally provided for the Photovoice project, it is still dependent on the budget allocation. Sometimes there may be donations such as cameras or venue usage.

## Funding

All *Photovoice* projects need funding, although often facilitators work for very little or no income except expenses, but there will be costs. Some *Photovoice* projects are done by consultants and the project is well funded, but often the funding may come from more than one source such as government or a community organisation. Sometimes there may be donations such as cameras or venue usage.

Regardless of the funding source a budget is needed before the project, and this will need to be managed by the *Photovoice* project manager or the facilitator. Accompanying the budget will be a written timeline for the *Photovoice* project.

## Cameras

The cameras are the key research tool for *Photovoice* projects. The budget will determine the type of cameras. Disposable cameras can be good value but often the photographs cannot be enlarged to a good size for exhibitions and quality of photographs may be reduced when compared with digital cameras. There are cheaper options such as the Holga camera or more expensive options which enable better quality images which can be enlarged without losing quality.



Waterproof disposable camera (used successfully in Vietnam for a government funded aquaculture



Holga camera



Regardless of cost, these cameras need to be lent to participants by the *Photovoice* facilitator. Cameras are then returned to the facilitators when the photographs have been taken

All participants should be using the same type of cameras to ensure the same standards of photographs. Therefore it is still important that *Photovoice* participants have some sort of training, even if short, to ensure they are:

- Aware of the nature of *Photovoice* methodology
- Know how to use a camera to achieve best effect
- Understand the nature or recording any comments about the photographs (e.g. in a diary)
- Are aware of ethics compliance requirements
- Be sensitive to what should and should not be recorded
- Understand that ultimately the photos belong to their community of which they are a part



Learning how to use cameras  
(Photovoice.Australia. (google image))

### **Need for Photovoice method training:**

Although many powerful *Photovoice* photographs are not professional in nature, they can still have a strong impact. As can be seen in photograph below taken by a non- experienced photographer with a very cheap disposable camera, the photograph may convey a powerful

message, in this case better water in the community since money from oyster farming.



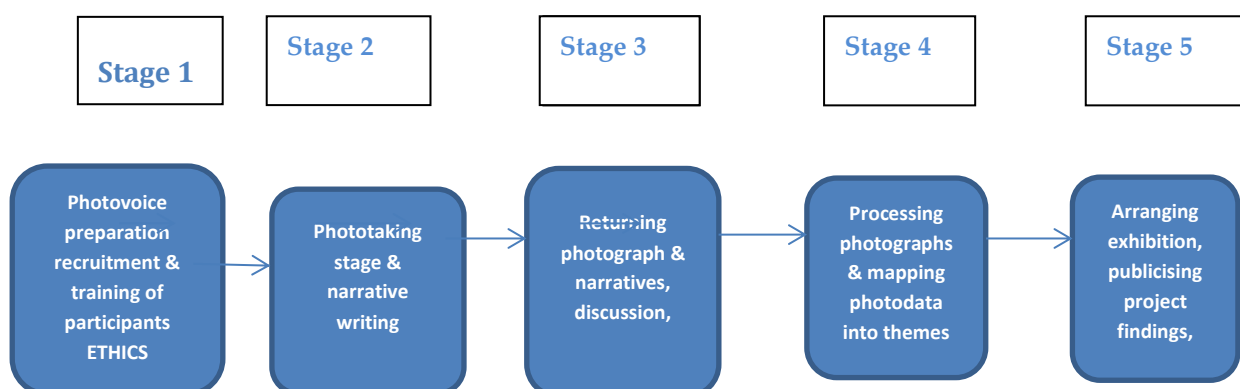
***With money from oysters, 100% of households in the village had clean water wells. They don't have to use water from open stream for cooking as in the past*** (Pierce study of social impact of oyster farming with ACIAR 2012)

Meetings prior and throughout the *Photovoice* project will need to occur to provide motivation and support and to ensure the photo taking and ethics compliance is on track, and to assess if extra support is needed for participants. A suitable community location will need to be booked and materials such as a whiteboard or flipchart paper, markers, pens and other stationary will need to be provided.

### The Five Stages of the *Photovoice* project:

*Photovoice* needs to follow certain steps from start of the idea for a project to the final exhibition and presenting of results, with attention to required timelines. Therefore the *Photovoice* project starts with an idea, requires application for and commitment for funding, assessing viability, ensuring willing participants are available at time needed, then having a project manager and facilitator to oversee the project. Taking photographs is only one stage of the process as cameras are required, knowledge of how to use them, ensuring ethical guidelines are followed, logistics of time and place. Then comes returning the cameras and narratives to the facilitator with related discussion, possibly a follow up focus group of community members to ensure the photographs most reflective of the whole community view are selected (with some variation of course as not all people are of the same view), then arranging the exhibition and completion of the project. The process is represented below.

#### FIVE STAGES IN PHOTOVOICE PROCESS



## Stage 1: Preparation, recruitment & training & ethics:

At this stage the *Photovoice* project needs to be determined, the stakeholders decided on (later this becomes important also with who to invite to the exhibition and to share results with), key people employed such as project manager and facilitator(s), participants and community members, funding achieved, budget allocation, timing, location and ethics aspects to consider, cameras purchased. Required forms need to be prepared: see sample Information sheets on the study (Appendix 1), sample Consent forms (Appendix 2a & 2b), sample Diary narrative prepared (see Appendix 3) and participants recruited. There should be some consideration on what incentives can be offered to participants (such as vouchers or transport costs), to show appreciation and to encourage participation. Meeting locations need to be accessed and booked. At this stage if there are any under-age participants, signed consent must be obtained from their parents or guardians.

Roles, timelines and diary dates for meetings and exhibition must be set up.

After the training in the *Photovoice* method (see Appendix 4 for a few ideas on taking photographs), and what needs to be considered such as ethics compliance, cameras are then distributed to participants (having been tagged and checked off with the number of the participant (for example 'Participant 1'). Participants are also given relevant forms to participate re Information sheet (see sample in Appendix 1) and Consent form (see samples in Appendix 2a & 2b), signed initially by the participant, and other forms given to them to distribute to people who will be in their photographs. An accompanying diary or recording sheets (see sample in Appendix 3), in which participants can record the number of the photo and comments to make it easier to establish which photo is on the camera and the context of the photograph) is also distributed to each participant. If the *Photovoice* project is related to aquaculture or other water areas, it is suggested a laminated cardboard cover or similar is provided for the diary to guard against water spots.

It is suggested that no more than 20 photographs are taken, and no more than five photographs are taken on each theme or question given to take photographs on. It is too difficult to have a massive range of photographs to work through from all participants.

Prior to taking photographs there should also be discussion between the facilitator and participants about the nature of photographs and that they may be taken differently for example of real people or places or if difficult, with symbolic representation of the theme. It is also suggested that the participant practices using the camera prior to them going to take their own photographs. Working through the *Photovoice* diary with participants is also important to ensure participants are understanding of different questions.



Explaining the study to participants

*As in this Vietnam study with very busy oyster farmers, sometimes the Photovoice facilitators have to go to the participants. Also there is a need to conduct the discussion in a culturally appropriate way. In this case sitting cross legged on the hard bamboo poles of the oyster farm, having travelled to the participants by boat. In this photo the nature of the study, camera usage, ethics requirements and how to fill in a diary for comments relating to photos to be taken is being explained and that ethics approval forms are signed prior to participating in the study. The Photovoice facilitators then returned to each oyster farm 8 days later to collect the cameras and diaries, to download photos to a laptop whilst getting explanations of meaning and value of each photo to participants. (ACIAR oyster farming social impact project 2012)*

## Ethical Considerations in Photovoice:

The Photovoice facilitator has a responsibility to ensure that at all times and at all stages of the *Photovoice* project that activities are carried out in a respectful and fair way to the community, and does no harm or cause embarrassment to people in the photographs either at the present time or in the future. There are strict guidelines for *Photovoice* projects, which if followed carefully should ensure a good outcome for all involved and give integrity to the *Photovoice* project. There is usually an ethical board that must fully approve the project before it is conducted, such as a university (if that is who the project is being conducted through) or a professional association or body.

In taking photos, videos or even in recording comments or stories from those we are researching, we need to consider their wishes as to who and where the results of the research will be made available to or released into the public domain. *Photovoice* is a public type of research which can make people vulnerable or cause embarrassment, therefore this must be guarded against by clear discussions with photo taker participants before the *Photovoice* project, and at the stage of working with the photo taking participants when photographs are returned. Types of issues to consider are: rights of children, negative interpretations of people in photographs, photographs taken without informed consent, or photographs of illegal activities.

Do not forget either there must be concern to protect the safety of the photo taker. Wang (2003) has cautioned to be aware of these risks to photo taking participants such as potential physical harm or publicly revealed identity of the photo taker that may make them vulnerable or at risk if photographs that are sensitive are released publicly. In the following photograph there were no identifiers so only verbal consent for the photograph was required.



**40 fishermen (Perumathura beach) southern India take nearly 2 hours to pull in 3 nets from ocean for less fish catch than previous years**

*AwF project in southern India investigating need to shift to more labour efficient aquaculture as a new income stream (Pierce & AwF 2016)*

Unlike wording, it is harder to disguise identity of individuals or other identifier such as location (although sometimes participants may request faces or location identifiers to be pixilated to hide identity). Some guidelines are presented here to ensure you always follow ethical processes and practices in your *Photovoice* research. It is important to address all areas of ethical issues before you do a *Photovoice* project and often you will be working with vulnerable people so that you help them not harm them.

### *Ensuring Informed Consent:*

Ethical questions you need to ask before you take photographs recommended by Wang and Jones (2001):

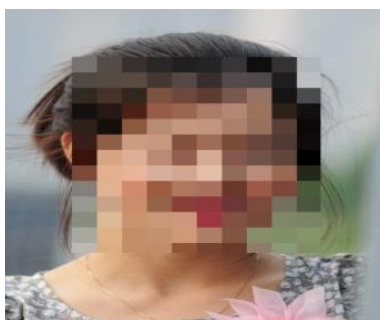
- Does this photograph enter a person's private *space* (this includes both the homespace or workspace) without their consent? If answer is 'yes' DO NOT take the photograph or if taken by a *Photovoice* participant without the person in the photograph's written consent if they are identifiable, do NOT use the photograph
- Has anything of a potentially *embarrassing* nature been portrayed in the photographs about the person or their lives gained pre approval by a signed release form, and are they aware that this photograph may be made available to be released in the public arena (either physically in an exhibition, in a publication or online? If answer is 'yes' DO NOT take the photograph, or if taken by a *Photovoice* participant without the person in the photograph's consent if identifiable, do NOT use the photograph



- Is the way the photograph is presented or is planned to be taken *authentic* and reflective of what the person in the photograph would have intended, and is not misrepresented? If answer is 'yes' DO NOT take the photograph, or if taken by a *Photovoice* participant without the person in the photograph's consent if identifiable, do NOT use the photograph
- Is the person in the photograph aware they have ongoing access and right to the photos and is ongoing usage of photographs done with awareness and approval by the *Photovoice* participant? If answer is 'no' please inform the *Photovoice* participant of their rights, and if photographs have been printed out in hard copy give them the negatives, and if electronic give them an electronic version of the photographs.

If you want to read more about ethical issues the following link provides more detail  
<https://photovoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Ethical-Statement.pdf>

Prior to the participants starting in their *Photovoice* project it is essential that they understand the types of ethical issues relating to taking photographs of people, and also sometimes of locations. Gaining informed consent either from adults (Appendix 2a and 2b) or from adults acting on behalf of minors, or acting on behalf of a person without full faculties for whom they have responsibility to make decisions such as mental disability (Appendix 2a & 2b), is a requirement before taking the photographs in a *Photovoice* project. People consenting to photographs need to be aware and have signed forms that consent to the photographs being used for publications, exhibitions, conferences, or posted online. Consent must also be given (which is written) for people who will be identifiable in photographs. One way of allowing photographs to be taken but not identifying people, is to have a pixilation of identifiers (for example faces or addresses or specific locations), or remove the face from the photograph.



**There is also free software to help you pixilate to de identify images**

<https://www.facepixelizer.com/>

### *How do I know when to gain consent before taking a photograph?*

Consent is Needed	Consent not needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking an identifiable photograph(such as facial features, distinctive hair, tattoos, body piercings or other identifiers)</li><li>• Taking photographs of underage people(under 18 years)</li><li>• Taking photographs of an identifiable location related to the person in the photograph that may be sensitive as an identifier to the person, belongings or other identifiable personal property, for example sacred sites or refuge locations such as for domestic violence victims</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Photographs of public figures</li><li>• Taking photographs of people who cannot be identified such as long range or part of a body or back view , or personal property that does not enable identification of the person</li><li>• Taking a photograph of environmental locations or public buildings or settings that do not act as identifiers to a person</li></ul>

### **Further considerations before taking photographs**

- It is always important to present an honest picture of what you are addressing in your photographs of the themes. This does not mean including sensitive or unapproved photographs but be truthful and authentic regarding what you feel in your photographs.
- Am I not only protecting others against harm in taking photographs but am I ensuring I also am not placing myself at risk (for example not going into unsafe spaces or situations). Harm is measured not just by physical safety but also emotional harm, damaging reputations or not respecting rights of others to not be included in photographs

**Stage 2: Photo taking and narrative writing in diary:** At this stage the participants need to focus on finding people and situations and places to reflect what they want regarding the themes of the study. By now they would be aware to gain written consent first and to ensure their camera is kept in a safe place. Participants should also be recording a narrative (short) for each photograph ideally straight after they have taken the photograph while the photo they have taken is still fresh in their mind. If they are using a disposable camera they will not be able to view the photograph they have taken, so need to in their diary until it is time to download their photographs onto a laptop or other electronic device when they meet with the facilitator. Participants also need to write number and name of each photograph also on relevant page of their photo diary in the sequence in which they have taken the photographs. . Plus they will need to keep all the signed consent forms in one folder safely. It is suggested that each week the facilitator ring each participant to answer any queries they

have, to ensure they are following due process for *Photovoice* and ethics aspects and to keep them motivated. Once they are nearing the end of their photo taking start to arrange a date to meet with each participant to return the cameras and photographs, signed consent forms and to have a photograph discussion of photographs they have taken. This process is estimated to take up to an hour or so to complete.

**Timelines:** for returning of the cameras and contact details of the participants are also required to be kept by the facilitator. A recommended workable time to gather photographs and write up comments of usually no more than *two weeks* is set, from time of camera issuing to time of return of cameras and diary or other comments. Although sometimes participants would prefer to take photographs on their mobile phone it is wise to discourage this, as photos are readily shareable. Also mobile photos may be used by others, or forwarded to others, may be deleted, or need scrolling through amongst other photographs participants take. Storing photographs on designated cameras ensures a tighter and more easily administered research process. It is recommended that each participant is phoned at least twice during the photograph gathering period, to ensure that they have started the data gathering, to answer any questions they have, and to confirm the return date for the cameras and associated ethics related forms.

It is difficult to state exactly how long from issuing of cameras to returning of cameras. This is dependent on many factors such as geographic limitations, work commitments and also if an overseas project there may be limited time for the visiting researchers. From around 1 week to 3 weeks is a fair time to allocate for taking photographs.

### **Stage 3: Returning photograph & narratives, discussion:**

This is an important time for both the facilitator and the participant, in which the participant shares their story. It is essential that the facilitator is a good listener, patient and sensitive, not only to photographs taken by the participant and the associated narrative, but that no photographs proceed into the stored data if they have not been approved with written consent. At this stage the completed consent forms are also gathered. This ethical aspect of the study is essential as without consent there cannot be usage of any photograph. The facilitator works with the photo taker to get further explanation of meaning of the photograph and to ensure they have not had second thoughts as to what photographs they want to keep in (sometimes participants change their minds about releasing photographs for public viewing). Photo takers may also decide to keep in people or places in the photographs, but will identify to the facilitator(s) if they want any identifiers pixilated to de-identify the person in the photograph or a locational or other identifier. Sometimes the facilitator(s) will also need to advise the photo taker that a particular photograph is not suitable for public release and identify sensitively the reasons why. If it is clear that photographs are not appropriate, or may cause issues for people in the photographs it is important to clearly explain why they are not suitable to be included in the study data.

The best process for this stage is to download the photographs from the camera onto a laptop or similar electronic device, and the facilitator then works through with the participant while they explain the meaning of the photograph, ensuring the written diary narrative is also reflective of this story. Sometimes it is mutually decided that an audio recording is made of participant comments (non identifiable), as it does sometimes happen that extra comments may be made to add to the context or meaning of the photograph. Sometimes the participant will decide they do not want to use a photograph they have taken.

There is a suggested logical process for participatory analysis of the photo data (facilitator working with the photo taking participant) recommended by Wang & Burris (1997)

1) *Selecting photographs*: this stage involved the participants selecting from their photographs the photographs they feel best represent their community issues, strengths, good and bad or whatever is the key focus of the study questions. This stage forms the basis of the discussion that will follow in the next stage of contextualising.

So cameras have now been returned, photographs stored on an electronic device in a folder clearly named with e.g., “participant 1” and date and name of the study. The names for each participant would be kept in a separate folder with participant number against each name. This ensures some confidentiality for each participant.

Returned signed consent forms have been received, and diaries clearly labelled with participant number. It is also suggested that the facilitator asks each participant to identify three most important photographs they have taken on each theme.

2) *Contextualising*: this stage involves participants telling the story of their photograph, the meaning, how it fits with the issues in the *Photovoice* project. The photographs can be discussed with the facilitator at the camera return stage, or in the wider context as a catalyst to generate discussion at a focus group stage with others from the community. At this stage the ‘VOICE’ aspect of *Photovoice* really starts to emerge as shared talking and feelings and ideas are discussed collaboratively as community members share on their own lives and the lives of those in their community

The participant is then thanked for their contribution to the study, a small consideration is sometimes given at this stage such as a voucher to spend, then they are advised they will be contacted when there is to be a follow up focus group or exhibition date.

#### **Stage 4: Processing photographs& mapping photodata into themes**

This stage is for the facilitator(s) and involves printing out or developing all the photographs and looking at all the photographs for all the participants, and mapping them into themes as identified initially by the participants. It is suggested that the photographs are all printed out with participant number written on the back (so if photographs are displayed in a focus group or exhibition the participant name is confidential. The facilitator

must be sensitive to the fact that the community member may limit their sharing if their identity is revealed as they have to live in the community.

- Photographs are then sorted into key themes with all participant photographs being put together under the theme labels.
- It is suggested that key words from the narrative are placed on the bottom of each photograph, or if too extensive can be placed under the photograph. A photograph needs context so the narrative is important to give meaning.
- Analysis of the types of themes and trends can then be assessed initially by the facilitator but if a focus group also by the community members. The photographs will tell a story, and sometimes this is quite different than what might have been thought would emerge from the photographs from the facilitator. It is suggested a first run of examining the photographs be done to see trends across all participants' photographs, then narrowed down to key three main photographs on each theme (these key three photographs would have been identified and each photograph marked either on a hard copy photographs or in the narrative diary by marking the page of each high priority photograph taken, when the photo data was returned by each participant. The facilitator then can assess if there if there is any mirroring of themes.
- At this stage the photographs can then be assembled to proceed from key photographs to the exhibition stage or may have another useful stage which is a focus group:

**Focus group:** This is an option to ensure a wider community collaboration of overall main themes and can be included or not in the *Photovoice* study. However a focus group will provide a wider community perspective on what the community overall thinks on a topic. Today this focus group may be face to face in a physical space, or if distance is a challenge it may be conducted online. To conduct online there can be a skype hookup, or the photos can be voted on then prioritised then voted on again. This approach enables a wide range of community members to participate. An online site would need to be set up with access only to community members. This can follow after the individual photo taking stage and gives a chance for all participants and the wider community collaboratively to decide on a story which best reflects their perspective as a community.

If a face to face focus group photos may be examined on tables then sorted into themes by attendees, may be viewed on a powerpoint presentation and discussed and decided on by group members or voted on. The focus group will involve the need for a location for the focus group to be held at, refreshments to be provided, invitations to be prepared at least two weeks in advance. Around 12 -15 participants maximum is enough for a focus group. Participants will also need to sign a consent form (similar to ones provided in Appendix 2a and 2b).



Photographs if in hard copy would be placed around walls or on tables in themes, or put into a slideshow that can be shown to focus group attendees. It is important that participants are not identified.

One approach is to have stickers of priorities 1,2 or 3 to be placed onto photographs that have been arranged into themes. The other method is to have each attendee have a piece of paper on which they can place their priorities of importance when photographs show on the slideshow as in the focus group shown below in Kilburn/Blair Athol.



*Photovoice participants and other members of the community were invited to a display of all photos taken in the study, and asked to prioritise photos into high, medium and low priority. Key identified photos were later used for the exhibition*

*Photovoice focus group conducted in South Australia with Kilburn/Blair Athol community members: prioritising photographs by stickers in different colours of priority of importance (Grogan & Pierce 2014)*

A modern version of gaining this input from the community can be through placing the slideshow online with a voting mechanism set up or a social media site on which viewers from the community can vote on their priorities of the photographs and comments.



On May 26th, 2017 the participants of Cabotsquare Photovoice project met to discuss issues around Montreal 375th narratives and how we could offer a counter narrative to acknowledge Indigenous peoples, experiences and knowledges in the city.

*Focus group of community members collectively looks at photos taken by individuals. At this stage group members can together decide on their best mix of photos to tell their photo story*

([ethnographylab.concordia.ca](http://ethnographylab.concordia.ca) from Google images)

There may be other comments made by attendees at the focus group which can be then added to the data gained from individual participants which would occur if the study is put into a report.

These photos can then form the basis of key themes to discuss and photographs to present in an exhibition, or some of them to be included in reports and articles.

### Stage 5: Arranging exhibition, publicising project findings

Now that the photodata has been gathered, analysed and sorted into themes (possibly with the input from a wider group of community members, including the community photographers).

It is now time to celebrate the ending of the project with publicising the photo story that has been created. This is the celebration stage as the *Photovoice* project moves towards completion, and is the chance to share with key decision makers such as government representatives, the media or other key stakeholders including the wider community. It is important to also widen the net of who should be invited to an exhibition, and should include community members, key decision makers, and other stakeholders such as business owners, environmentalists or anyone with a stake in the outcomes of the *Photovoice* project. The real purpose of *Photovoice* projects is to raise awareness of issues, and what is working well or not.

#### Invitations:

It is now time to send out invitations, mount photographs onto display boards or other display methods (depending on the budget), arrange a location and refreshments, and a relevant and significant opening speaker who needs to hear the message from the *Photovoice* project. This time is also special for those who have participated in the study to see their work, to feel valued and included and thanked, and hopefully empowered at seeing their viewpoint and their handiwork with their photographs. It is important to prepare an engaging invitation to the *Photovoice* exhibition launch, that can be distributed either in written form or by email (see examples below). The invitation should include the name of the project, who conducted the study, funders, location time and also have a couple of photographs from the study that capture the interest of the person receiving the invitation.



**PHOTOVOICE EXHIBITION II**

*An exhibit of photos and stories reflecting the lives and views of Black Mothers in their community in San Francisco*

**WHEN:** DECEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup> 2015  
5:30PM - 7:30PM

**WHERE:** SF Jazz Center  
201 Franklin Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Please RSVP by November 20, 2015  
Call: 415-776-4457

<http://hoodline.com/events/photovoice-exhibition-with-san-francisco-s-black-infant-health-program> (google images)



**The PhotoVoice Project  
Flashes of Brilliance**

Toowoomba Clubhouse and PhotoVoice Australia invite you to an exhibition of photographs and stories by people with mental illness.

Official opening by Sandy Pottinger  
Saturday 13 July 2013 1:30pm for 2:00pm  
Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery

*Flashes of Brilliance* exhibition dates  
Wednesday 10 July – Sunday 4 August 2013

Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery  
531 Ruthven Street Toowoomba Qld

T: 07 4688 6652 F: 07 4688 6895  
E: [art@toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au](mailto:art@toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au)  
W: [toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au/trag](http://toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au/trag)

Gallery hours: Sunday 1pm - 4pm  
Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 4pm

PhotoVoice Australia (google images)

## The Exhibition

The *Photovoice* exhibition has two key purposes and is an important part of the *Photovoice* process:

- To acknowledge participants and their community with a celebratory closure, and to show them the results of their work
- To convey the story and messages from the *Photovoice* project to key decision makers and other stakeholders such as funders, policymakers, government, media, and other bodies

Sometimes you may choose to extend the exhibition advertising or the exhibition itself to online to reach more people as in [Photos: “Take A Walk in My Shoes’ Art Exhibition](http://bernews.com/2016/11/photos-mindframe-photovoice-art-show/)  
<http://bernews.com/2016/11/photos-mindframe-photovoice-art-show/>

## Publicising the Project :The Exhibition

[http://www.pwhce.ca/photovoice/pdf/Photovoice\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.pwhce.ca/photovoice/pdf/Photovoice_Manual.pdf)

**Facilities:** A public space is needed to open the exhibition that is big enough to hold the people asked to the opening, that is accessible to people in the community, that is public enough to attract viewers of the exhibition for a while after the exhibition as in a public library. You will also need appropriate space that does not interfere with the space such as walls or floor space This space would have to be negotiated and booked prior to the exhibition. Suggested areas that can usually be arranged free are council chambers, schools, public libraries, community centres, or other public shared spaces that can spread the messages of the *Photovoice* project. It is ideal after all the hard work has been done in assembling the exhibition that it could remain on public display for 2-4 weeks.



Photovoice exhibition (cultural suitability Cultural practice.com:Google images)



*Exhibition to which key decision makers from government and the community and Photovoice project participants and families were invited. These exhibitions need to be mentioned in the local press, television or other media and are both an acknowledgement to participants that their voice is being heard, a celebration of the completion of the Photovoice project, and a voice from the people to decision makers (Kilburn/Blair Athol SA: Grogan & Pierce 2014)*

Exhibition display from  
IMAGEin my  
Community:Kilburn/Blair Athol

**Materials:** Prior to the exhibition the following would have to be arranged :

- Key photographs identified by participants and follow up focus groups that best reflect the themes of the *Photovoice* questions. These photographs may need enlarging and possibly framing dependent of the style of exhibition wanted, cultural appropriateness and budgetary limitations
- Display stands, or other related support for photographs
- Lighting (if at night) for photograph displays
- Catalogue or list of themes or an information booklet on the study

**Refreshments:** It is recommended for an exhibition opening to create a celebratory feel that refreshments such as drinks and light snacks are provided. Quite often the exhibition is at lunch or dinner time, and guests may have travelled from a distance so drink, tea and coffee and light snacks are required

#### **Ways to publicise the Photovoice findings for an exhibition or other methods:**

*Photovoice* has as its ultimate goal to bring the findings to decision makers, and to share community 'voices' with others. Therefore it is imperative that *Photovoice* outcomes are publicised and reach the people who make decisions, also to reach the media. Media coverage may include a segment of public interest on a news program, the local newspaper, social media site, or other popular ways a community networks into the community and its members

- Announcements at community locations (for example at meetings and posters, websites)
- Invitations to key people (for example government and other community representatives, *Photovoice* and community representatives, media representatives)
- Media press releases and interviews and articles (newspapers, television, radio stations)
- Website on the *Photovoice* study with a powerpoint presentation of the overall results (including photographs and comments)
- Articles written and published in journals, magazines or community publications such as newsletters
- Arranging meetings for a presentation with politicians, policy makers of relevance to the nature of the *Photovoice* project for example educators, medical professionals or social workers, military, environmentalists, all of these totally relating to the nature of those interested in the particular area of the *Photovoice* focus



After the exhibition time is over and photographs have been packed away, the exhibition can sometimes be set up in other community spaces if it is relating to an area that has a wider appeal and interest

This is now the ending of the project but in some ways the beginning as the facilitators and project manager write up and report results, and continue to lobby on behalf of the community members for the issues that have been identified by the community members. It is also suggested that the *Photovoice* project results are posted to the internet, an overview of the *Photovoice* project provided, and key findings attractively presented in a powerpoint presentation is one suggestion.



***Attracting workers, creating jobs for farmers and young people, so that they do not have to go to work in other locations.*** (Pierce with ACIAR social impact of oyster farming 2012)

*Photovoice* study conducted in Vietnam to assess impact of government funding and skill advice from Australia for poor farmers through introduction of aquaculture.

## PART 4: PHOTOVOICE STORIES

### Stories have many viewpoints

Although it is tempting on a project to often only report the positives, be aware that to be authentic requires an honest story (see picture of two children with an autism spectrum disorder: one honest and confronting (Photograph 1) and the other celebratory re school camp milestone (Photograph 2). However always be considerate to what might be too confronting for the viewer, or too sensitive for those in the photos if publicised. Always ensure you have explained the study and how it might be publicised in the future, and gained permission from the persons in the photos that they are fully aware that the photos might be published, written up in publications, and always ensure permission to publish either in reports or on the internet or in public exhibitions. A person needs to be aware of the possibilities of where their photos and stories might be publicised. They may then decide to say they only want e.g. a report but not public availability, or they may want faces or locations or other identifiers pixilated or concealed, or may say no even sometimes after they have taken the photos.



## Photo 1

How being a primary caregiver of a child with an ASD impacts on my life



Sharyn

### Photo 1: Comfort & distress

This photo is one of many bitemarks/bruises that my son did out of the inability to communicate. This makes me sad but also thankful that I am his comfort at those times of distress

Pierce & Morrison, ASD study 2015)

Phototheme: A photo which celebrates the achievements and pride I feel as a parent of an Autism spectrum disorder child or young person.



### Photo 2:

#### *First Camp!*

*A proud moment for all parents when your child first goes on camp. This year was an amazing year for our son who became so independent. Going on his first camp for three days had us worried but we knew he needed to do it on his own. With a few supports in place, and a very understanding teacher, he did it!* (Pierce & Morrison 2015 ASD carers study)

*Two sides to the question:* We often see in the media stories that paint either a good or bad story of what really is in reality often a mixture of good and bad, depending on whose story you tell, and what you decide not to include. If you are doing a story on an AwF project or any community project there may be aspects that are not working well or that are negative as well as positive. It is important to present the balanced picture of the story, as this is a starting point to address and improve the issues. However sometimes photographs tell a

story that all is positive, that usually occurs after a new strategy has been implemented, whereas before this new strategy the situation may have been perceived as mostly bad as in Negative photograph below. Out of what is not working well can come ways for community members, and then decision makers with power and money to discuss how to implement change for the better. Be sensitive also to the community you are reporting on, and ensure photographs are not ambiguous to be taken out of context e.g. rubbish (maybe it is only in one area not the whole area). Or in final results ensure it is clear that this is only one aspect.

The same situation may have both positive and negative perceptions from participants, as in a *Photovoice* study of how aquaculture industry jobs have good things but also have associated negative aspects (see Photographs below)

### *Positive*



*This new industry creates jobs for my family and village*

### *Negative*



*Working by hands is very tiring. Should work by machine.*

### *Is the story really reflective of the truth and sensitive to the community?*

***Sensitivity and professionalism:*** Although *Photovoice* represents the voices from the community and often from marginalised groups, a facilitator (preferably with support from at least one other person) is needed. Wang & Burriss (1997) have profiled the type of person suited to be a *Photovoice* facilitator.

A *Photovoice* facilitator must understand and be familiar with the *Photovoice* process, be committed to conducting it according to *Photovoice* methodologies to ensure quality results, and at all times ensure that the *Photovoice* project is conducted in an ethical way. The *Photovoice* facilitator if outside of a community needs at least one community member to part of the facilitating to ensure windows of contact and trust into the community, and to be aware of 'how we do things around here' which reflects different cultures for different projects. At all times the *Photovoice* facilitator must be mindful of the power of the camera, to abide by sensitive community and human rights boundaries, be aware of difference in photograph takers and their priorities, and ensure the photographs reflect the intentions of the photographer in telling their story as they see it.

**Symbolic Meaning of Photographs:** Although it is ideal to take photographs to represent a situation and how a person feels about an issue based on real people and real places and situations (figure ), sometimes participants find it not realistic or difficult to capture a photograph to say how they feel with an expression, so may take a photograph of something that represents their feelings (Figure ) and Figure of a blank television screen which powerfully captured the message aiming to be conveyed.

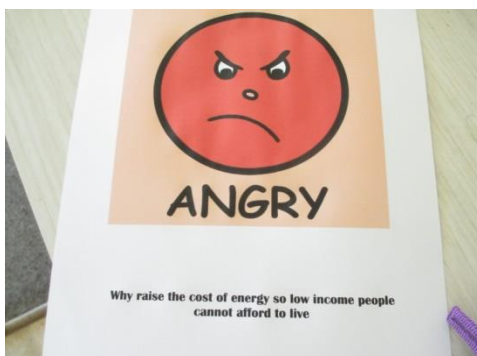
**Real: Image that illustrates what oyster aquaculture means to you.** Note: in this photograph text has been embedded into the photograph (this works quite well in exhibitions



**Photovoice study in Australia of impact of oyster farming on local community (Pierce, 2012)**

***“New kindergarten built for the large population of children, due to the young families moving to our community for employment on oyster leases”***

**Symbolic:** sometimes you want to convey your feelings about a situation but do not want to do this with your own expressions



***I want to know why do they need to keep raising energy costs and making it hard for low income people to live?***

(Study on Impact of High Power Prices on low income people in South (Pierce & Uniting Communities 2014)

The photograph below of a blank television screen with no picture was very powerful and symbolic and generated a lot of response from the viewers and decision makers:

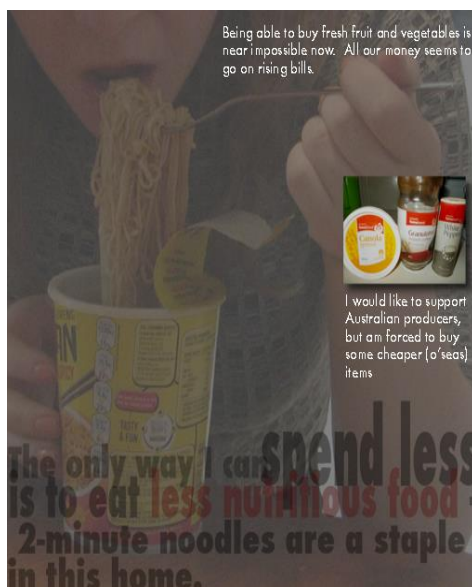


***“Help for young migrant males who have lost their culture from original communities.***

***Mainly African young men who have seen traumatic things and lived through traumatic times. I wish for young migrants to become part of a structured and useful way of life”***

**Study on what community members in a city in Australia want for their community’s future** (the area has experienced a new influx of migrants and refugees) Study by Grogan and Pierce (2014)

**Photograph collages:** Sometimes in an exhibition you may compile a series of photographs into a photo collage of similarly themed photographs to save printing costs and display space issues which does not disturb the authentic nature of photographs taken (Power increased costs impact in photograph below)). This range of photographs was shown in a television news story and photographed very clearly and effectively (useful for media coverage when time is limited to get message across to viewers).



***Impact of increased power prices on living standard***

Impact of power prices on consumers (Pierce & Uniting Communities 2014)

## Final questions to ask as a facilitator and as a participant:

Does this photograph reflect integrity and an authentic *Photovoice* story:

### Ask yourself:

- *Is this a fair and balanced story that reflects perspectives of the whole community or project? Is there any potential for harm, safety, reputation or possible legal impact on a person (either the person(s) in the photograph, the participant, or the Photovoice project itself as to liability or risk?*
- *Are all photographs aligning with ethical requirements and written approval?*

## Social change and Positive Outcomes: Will these occur?

The goal of *Photovoice* is to achieve social action and social change. Careful consideration before the *Photovoice* project and questions to be investigated and ways to conduct the *Photovoice* project should have:

- Created questioning and reflection in community members about what they have and what they want and giving them a voice to decision makers to state their 'Voice' on these issues and wants. In this questions should also be considered are there policies (or grants) that might result that might occur once responses to questions are provided as to needs?
- Developing a more connected community that can work together collaboratively on community issues
- Developing community members who are more confident and empowered to voice their concerns on community and personal issues, with the confidence that their voice will be valued
- Adding to knowledge on existing issues as a catalyst for further responses in funding, policies and other changes to benefit and address identified needs from *Photovoice* projects
- Extended awareness of the community issues that are focus of the *Photovoice* project to decision makers and the public

Ideally it would be wonderful to say a *Photovoice* project will always achieve the desired areas for change, whether improved conditions for a community, more funding, or other desired areas for change. However sometimes change does occur but it may be dependent on funding, policies that cannot be changed, or decision makers with different priorities. However sometimes change does result from community action. Also continued funding does sometimes occur and even get increased as a result of positive feedback from



participants in *Photovoice* projects who have documented how a funded project has enhanced lives (Figure)

Possible outcomes: Is it possible to create social change using *Photovoice*? Photography is an incentive for participation and a vehicle for *Photovoice*. Participants need to spend an equal amount of time taking pictures, and expressing their ideas in free writing, at the same time facilitators will engage participants in critical dialogue about pictures or to assist reluctant writers in expressing their ideas.

## Reflections on Photovoice

Remember as a *Photovoice* facilitator you are just that: a person whose role it is to enable community members to tell their story, to follow correct ethical guidelines, to bring the story to its conclusion and gain public interest, particularly from key decision makers

- **Step back and let community do the work to tell their story**
- **Be a facilitator only: authenticity is everything**
- **'Tyranny of distance' in rural, local or global research can be managed through modern communication methods such as phones, emails, online chats, skype and online posts of photos and for online focus groups**
- **Look and listen to photos, diaries & discourse**
- **Become media savvy-publicity is key to getting story out there. For example television stories, media articles, posting *Photovoice* results and stories online, inviting important decision makers to opening of exhibitions of *Photovoice* stories**

As apparent in this manual, *Photovoice* is a flexible, easily administered and understood form of social research that is suitable for aquaculture and fisheries. *Photovoice* is a culturally adaptable form of research that overcomes many language and literacy barriers. However specific aquaculture/fisheries related considerations would relate to times of year (for example avoiding typhoon season or rainy season or harvesting times). Participants and those they are taking photographs of are often very busy and in different locations, and often on the water, so these considerations need to be planned for.

However *Photovoice* can be a very rewarding experience for participants, for the researcher, for the funders who make decisions about the value of the project, and as in the case of the photograph and comments below verifying regarding whether financial opportunities from aquaculture, and aquaculture related skills have been beneficial to the community. There is also a photograph taken in a longitudinal study 6 years later that documents the progress of the oyster farmers's life many years on from first study to see if impact of funding and assistance was sustainable. As the photograph shows clearly, the support from ACIAR has provided ongoing benefit to the community and this particular oyster farmer.



*Sometimes there is a moment when you just know what has been desired is achieved (2012)*

***Happiness of farmers when harvesting oysters. From this, income of my family and other farmers is more stable, my village is more beautiful (Vietnam oyster farmer's own words & photo)***  
From study in Vietnam in 2012 by Pierce for ACIAR on social impact of oyster farming funding



Same oyster farmer 6 years later. Now well established and photo shows his thriving shop which he has as well as the oyster farm. Also shows community spirit & knowledge sharing due to oyster farming

**Question: what is good about oyster farming?**

***Villagers sitting together to rest after working on the oyster farms, discussing methods and techniques of raising oysters using string rafts, which is more profitable than the previous way using bamboo.*** (Followup longitudinal study by Pierce for ACIAR on impact of oyster farming funding in Vietnam 2018)

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## Appendix 1: Sample Participant Information sheet

Title of the study xxx

### ETHICS Requirements contact:

Name (role...)

Phone: XXX Fax:XXX Email: XXX

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

We invite you to participate in 'xxx' a photovoice study of xxx (state focus of study here). The project is a research endeavour from the xxx(state organisation or institution).

### Research Purpose

The aim of the study is to investigate the state study focus and aimxxxxxxx now state locationxxxxxx, and to identify xxxx state purpose e.g. to find out information The study uses a Photovoice method which is a community centred photo taking exercise in which participants tell their stories through photos.

Stage 1 involves taking photos on loosely based themes using a digital camera (either their own camera or one provided by the researcher). Participants also make brief explanatory comments in an accompanying diary.

Stage 2<sup>1</sup> involves participating in a focus group in which group members collaboratively select a set of photos which the group believes best represents the key photo question themes identified in Stage 1 of the study. Participants from Stage 1 may choose to be involved or not in this second stage. There will also be participants in this second phase who have not taken part in Stage 1. The focus group will be conducted at xxx location at xxx time on xxx date. (Or you may want an alternative wording here if online focus group or skype linkup. A pptx pptx presentation will be arranged to run for participants to comment on and discuss in real time via telelink (*note this is a modern way of connecting people in different places*) This research has value as a visual authentic representation of state here what you are investigating state topic here..... and in which you would perform a valuable role in participating in this innovative research.

### Participation

Participation in the study is voluntary

**Stage 1:** Involvement will require your participation in taking photos, making diary comments to accompany photos, and meeting with the chief investigator to load photos to a laptop computer. The total time commitment would be around 4 hours of your time for photos and meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> It is optional whether or not to include a focus group so leave out if not conducting a focus group



**Stage 2:** This would involve participation in a focus group to discuss photos from Stage 1. Time commitment would be approximately 2-3 hours.

### **Possible risks and inconveniences**

Apart from time involved in either Stage 1 or Stage 2 of the study, the researcher does not foresee any risks to you in participating in this study. Involvement in the study is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time.

### **Management of your information**

All information collected as part of the study will be kept confidentially in a password protected location without personal identifiers of your name for three years in a safe location by the researcher.

- Only the chief researcher and an assistant will have access to identified data and this will remain confidential.
- No information which could lead to identification of any individual will be released: with photos there will be no identified names and if you request faces in photos to be pixelated this will occur.
- All data will be coded in a de-identified manner and subsequently analysed and reported in such a way that responses will not be able to be linked to any individual. The data you provide will only be used for the specific research purposes of this study.
- A conference paper and publications and exhibition and possible media release will occur at the end of this study, but no individuals will be identified in published material without their signed consent to release their faces and no names will be released unless agreed to.

### **More information**

- You may contact the researcher involved in the study at any time with questions about the study.

### **Chief researcher**

Name:xxx

Phone: xxxxx mobile xxxxx email:xxxxx

Postal address:xxxxx

### **Complaints and concerns**

This project has been approved by the xxxxx state here the organisation. Often your employing organisation will have their own ethics forms and regulations to follow. If you have any ethical concerns about the project or questions about your rights as a participant please contact the chief researcher.

Enclosed are two consent forms: one for Stage 1 and one for Stage 2 of the study. Please complete either one or both if you want to be involved in both stages of the study (or none if you choose not to be involved). I will be in contact with you soon to confirm your participation, and to make arrangements for the interview time and place. Thanking you for your interest.

*Chief researcher xxxxx*

*Date:*



## Appendix 2a : Sample Ethics Consent Form

Participant name.....

I \_\_\_\_\_ give permission to (name of person conducting the project or organisation) the right to display photos I have taken for exhibitions, and to publish these photos and related comments either in print and/or electronically.

I affirm that I have read and agree to the above

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_

Printed name:\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent or guardian (if under 18 years of age):

Printed name:\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

I do/do not want certain faces or locations pixilated in photos (please circle which you have agreed to) and that I have discussed with the facilitator which photographs these pixilation requests are in

I acknowledge these photographs I consent to:

1. May be identifiable (although names or sensitive locations are not provided)
2. That the copyright (including if portraits are done) and other intellectual property rights related to images and narratives associated with the photographs belong to..... (state name of organisation that commissioned the project) but that the Photovoice participant has a right to the negatives
3. Portraits and related narratives associated with photographs are made with approval of the signatory on this form
4. It is agreed that the organisation.....(that commissioned the project) is indemnified against claims relating to the Photovoice data and its publication
5. It is authorised that photographs and associated narratives as agreed to by the signatory on this form are approved to be made available for exhibitions, media publication or other forms of publication

## Appendix 2b Sample Ethics Consent Form

### Photovoice Consent Form: stage 1.Photos and diary entries

This form is to be completed by both participants in the study and also people who appear in the photos and parents acting on behalf of children and young people under 18 (for whom the parent is a guardian)

#### CONSENT FORM

**Project Title:**

**Xxx**

**Name of Investigator xxx**

Phone:      xxxxx      Mobile:      xxxxx      Email:xxxxx

*Organisation researcher is from xxxxx)*

I AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

**Please Initial Box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and understand the purpose of the study and my involvement in it. I have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

☐☐

3. I understand that the photodata and diary entries from participants will be coded to avoid any use of identifying personal names or details to ensure confidentiality. Names and personal details needed by the researcher will be stored on a password protected flash drive in the xxxx (location) for three years. Access to the raw data will be restricted to the researcher.

☐

4. (this section for people in the photo to complete before photo is taken)

I understand that the photodata will be coded to avoid any use of my name. I understand that I can agree to have my photo (or the photo of my child for whom I am guardian) if I tick the agree box. I understand that if I tick the box to have my photo or that of my child for whom I am guardian to be non-identifying that the identifying facial features will be pixilated. To ensure this I will tick the box do not agree. I understand that my name and personal details needed by the researcher will be stored on a password protected flash drive in the (location) for three years. Access to the raw data will be restricted to the researcher.

*Please tick in this box if you agree for your face or your child to be identifiable*

.....

*Please tick in this box if you do not agree for your face or your child to be identifiable and to be pixilated*

.....

☐

5. I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, my name and my personal results will remain confidential.

☐

6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes from diary comments associated with photos in publications.

7. I would like a copy of key findings from this study sent to me by email.

☐

8. The photos I take may have some faces I choose to pixilate. Those that need to be pixilated (which includes faces or other identifiers in the photos that have not received consent but may appear in the photo), or if confidentiality is preferred as indicated by ticking the relevant box 'do not agree', will be pixilated at the time of meeting with the researcher when the photos are loaded onto a computer.

☐

9. I am over 18 years of age or am a guardian for person in photographs who is under 18 years of age.

☐

**Name of participant** .....

**Signed** ..... **Date** .....

I have provided information about the research to the research participant and believe that he/she understands what is involved.

**Investigator's signature and date**.....

**OTHER PEOPLE IN PHOTOS (IF IDENTIFIABLE):**

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

Signed..... Date.....photo no:

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

Signed..... Date.....Photo no..

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

Signed..... Date.....Photo no:

### Appendix 3 : Photovoice Diary Example

#### Suggested page for diary

It is suggested a diary is handed out to each *Photovoice* participant. This diary should have a cover page stating the name of the study, date of the study (see example below),

There should also be on the front cover of the diary an email address and ideally phone number to contact for the facilitator. This serves two purposes 1) useful for Photovoice participant 2) useful if the diary gets lost so there is a contact name and way to contact the facilitator

Sample page in diary (there should be around 20 pages one for each photograph and comments as ideally around 20 photographs would be taken on different themes).

#### This would be suitable for a cover for the diary

***COME AND SEE MY LIFE:***  
***A study of Homeless People and their lives in Melbourne area***

***Photovoice diary***

Organisational contactxxxxx

Phone number:

Email:

Participant number:.....

Date:



### Photo 1

**Please tick box below for theme the photo best reflects**

- ☐ How being a homeless person impacts on my life?
- ☐ A photo which reflects the challenges of feeling unsafe
- ☐ A photo which reflects the support and information I receive to help me
- ☐ Photo(s) from my wish list of how I could be better supported (e.g. agencies, chance to work, organisations, community) in managing and improving my life.
- ☐ Photo (s) which reflects inclusion (or non inclusion) in society due to my homelessness.
- ☐ A photo which represents what I need to improve my life

*Reflections below on the photo:*

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**(there may be room to put a small photo here as a prompt for discussion)**

## Photo 2

**Please tick box below for theme the photo best reflects**

- ☐ How being a homeless person impacts on my life?
- ☐ A photo which reflects the challenges of feeling unsafe
- ☐ A photo which reflects the support and information I receive to help me
- ☐ Photo(s) from my wish list of how I could be better supported (e.g. agencies, chance to work, organisations, community) in managing and improving my life.
- ☐ Photo (s) which reflects inclusion (or non inclusion) in society due to my homelessness.
- ☐ A photo which represents what I need to improve my life

*Reflections below on the photo:*

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(there may be room to put a small photo here as a prompt for discussion)

## Appendix 4: Points to Consider before taking Photographs

### *Why a camera and not a mobile phone photograph?*

Although phones often take a much better photograph than some cameras, the purpose of a separate camera to your other photographs on your phone is to keep the photo data separate, confidential and easier for the Photovoice facilitator to download all your photographs and view them easily while meeting with you and discussing the photographs with you, rather than scrolling through all your photographs. It is also easier to have all your photographs in one sequence that then maps easily to the narrative comments to keep in your photo diary. However some *Photovoice* projects do use mobile phones to record photographs. Some *Photovoice* projects with small budgets also sometimes use disposable cameras. Be aware that expanding photograph size from disposable cameras is not always possible to increase in size and quality needed for an exhibition or quality photograph display.

### *Thoughts before taking the photograph?*

You will not take all your photographs at one time. Sometimes there is a magic moment when the photo opportunity is just right, or sometimes it is possible to pre plan such as a photograph of a tree.

Regardless, always step back before taking the photograph and ask yourself these questions:

- Have I got the *required ethical written consent* before taking this photograph?
- Do I understand what the question I am taking a photograph of means and does the image I am about to take reflect of what this theme means to me?
- Will the photograph also be *clear* to the viewer (there will be narrative to go with the photograph that I will record immediately after taking the photograph)
- Is the photograph containing *sensitive or identifiable information* that is without approval or that may harm someone? (if so stop now and do not take the photograph!)
- Have I got *permission* to take the photograph from the person(s) in the photograph or their guardian? If long range and unidentifiable as to persons in the photograph approval will not be needed. Also apply this rule to locations, as a location may potentially cause embarrassment or risk to a person (for example a photograph of a person taking drugs or doing graffiti that is identifiable), even if at the time they said fine to take the photograph should not be included in the final photograph data
- Is the photograph *interesting*? To achieve this think what makes this photograph engaging, for example it may contain a bit of colour or happiness or perhaps you

may want to take the photograph in black and white to convey a more sombre or depressing tone. You can take photographs at different angles not just perfectly from the middle front, sometimes you take photographs from behind and this works well for hiding identities. Sometimes photographs are symbolic such as a long road stretching out in front of a person.

### *Putting together a short narrative for each photograph*

Once the photograph has been taken and before moving onto another photograph, complete the related narrative comments in the photo diary with firstly the number of the photograph on top. You will in the diary need to have the number of the photograph,

The question theme stated and then your comments. Sometimes one sentence powerfully states your feelings and sometimes you may say a bit more.

Depending on the question being asked your narrative comments may reflect what you are seeing, experiencing or feeling in the photograph, what is the issue, the good or the bad (depending on question theme) and if the question is asking how could or should things improve you may have a photograph on this theme that addresses what area needs to be changed or improved.



Checking the grouper juveniles. So the raising of grouper fish has brought about happiness for the village (Pierce with ACIAR Vietnam social impact study re grouper project 2018)

Thanks to all the community photographers whose efforts in taking photos has been so valued to contribute to *Photovoice* research and to give feedback to the community, and to funders such as ACIAR on value of their projects. The author thanks all the participants whose photos appear in this manual. Thanks also to Dr Wayne O'Connor from Primary Industries NSW, who saw the value of *Photovoice* as a social research method long before it became an accepted research method, to An Nguyen from ACIAR Vietnam for her tireless community work to improve lives in her country, to other members of ACIAR who assisted and supported me in the projects referred to in this manual. Thanks also to Dr Karen Grogan, Susan Morrison and Mark Henley who have worked with me on *Photovoice* projects.

Particular thanks goes to Roy Palmer from Aquaculture without Frontiers who commits so much of his life for his ongoing support for me and others to achieve better lives through aquaculture, particularly in developing countries.

*Janine Pierce*

***"Photography is the story I fail to put into words."*** (Destin Sparks)