Developing games as a tool for understanding MHM in Bolivia: the process and the potential

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Save the Children®
Objective and Agenda

Objective: To describe the process of adapting an MHM focus group discussion (FGD) guide into a board game.

Agenda:
- Background
- Key Components:
  - Game rules and administration
  - Adaptation of the FGD questions
  - Results
  - Lessons Learned
- Implications for research and practice
Background

• Research was part of the 2012 Emory University and UNICEF multi-country MHM research

• Data collected in rural Cochabamba, Bolivia.

• The game was developed because the girls FGD pilot resulted in thin data.
Game administration and rules

1. Female facilitator and note-taker were present
2. Purpose of visit explained
3. Informed consent
4. Rules of the game
5. Facilitator conducted the game
6. Note-taker assisted with activities, documented the order girls spoke, and all non-verbal actions.
Game rules and administration

**Goal:** To be furthest along the path when questions ended.

- Roll the die to determine order of play.
- Number on the die = spaces player advances
- The facilitator reads a question allowed
  – if answered, player advances.
  – If not answered, player moves back 3 spaces.
- Landing on orange squares allowed girls to advance further along the path.
- At the end, the 3 leading girls competed for the final prize.
Materials

• Six-sided die
• Animal figurines
• Poster board in plastic
• Nametags
• Flipchart and paper
• Colored pencils and markers
• Audio recorders
Game administration and rules

- Question cards were faced down and always read in the same order.
- Cards were picked from a pile and read aloud by the facilitator.
- Cards had the question and probes in both languages.
Adaptation of FGD Questions

Objectives of the adaptation:

• Maintain fidelity to the original FGD guide
• Increasing girls’ participation
• Ensure all girls were equally engaged
• Reduce the risk that any girl fell behind, lost interest, felt left out, and stopped contributing.

• This was primarily achieved through the game questions.
Adaptation of FGD Questions

• FGD questions were changed to sound like a game, but also to:
  – Increase interaction
  – Improve the detail of responses
  – Integrate activities and participation methods
  – Keep the game fair and fun
### Varying group activities: MHM Game questions

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<td>You get to draw! Divide yourselves in two groups and in five minutes draw the bathroom in your school. Include all the details you can and then explain the picture to the group. Tell us what is good and bad about the bathroom. The group with the most detailed drawing and explanation advances 3 spots.</td>
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- Fun!
- Interaction
- Detail
- Hypothetical scenario
Results

• The MHM game resulted in 4 types of data:
  – audio recordings
  – transcripts
  – written data (participants)
  – Drawings

• Adaptation of the MHM game produced superior results in the Bolivian context:
  – girls were more responsive
  – generated richer data
  – created an enjoyable environment
Lessons Learned

1. Strategies for Success
2. Areas for Improvement
Lessons Learned

1. Strategies for Success
   – Engage the local research team
   – Use local language and context in the adaptation
   – Increase and diversify participatory methods.
Lessons Learned

2. Areas for Improvement

– Capture girls’ discussions during group work
– Strategically design writing activities to better assist with data analysis
– Avoid questions that insert bias and limit responses
Implications for Research and Practice

• Research Method
  – Existing game easily adaptable to focus on other WASH-related behaviors (ex: hand-washing)
  – Discussing other sensitive topics
  – Research with children who are not accustomed to open communication with adults.
Implications for Research and Practice

• Development Practice
  – Situation Analysis – children’s perspective and knowledge assessments.
  – Program check- how well are children learning and changing behaviors?
    • hypothetical scenarios
  – Promoting skills-based learning
    • peer-education – in-class or health clubs
    • “write down the key times you should wash your hands and then demonstrate to the group how to properly wash your hands”
Works Cited


