

Evaluation of Spatial ethnography and Critical cartography training
led by Tiffany Chu and Courtney Sung
UNDP Regional Workshop and Meeting
with a Focus on the Informal Economy and Small and Medium Enterprise
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The following are excerpts from the post-workshop participant evaluation forms.

1. What did you learn from the fieldwork exercise with Courtney Sung and Tiffany Chu?

Reoccurring comments (x participants):

- * Learning the method and how it is a new (and very helpful) way to collect data on the informal economy (10)
- * How good and highly significant interviews and the micro level are when making policies, and that they can help greatly when work around policies is conducted (9)
- * A better and deeper understanding of the informal economy- its strengths, weaknesses and its challenges (7)
- * Seeing things from Tiffanies and Courtney's perspective (2)
- * How the life and work of the vendors looks. A chance to see things from their perspective. (2)
- * Some people are very reluctant to be interviewed, while others try their best to answer you even if they might be busy (1)
- * A stall might be licenced, but informal activity might still take place and can take on any form (1)
- * Any person can work in the informal economy, and they can be happy and work hard. So the government should deal with the social security and health of those in the informal economy (1)

The method:

- Conducting and presenting surveys is an easy way to learn (1)
- * Mapping was the most interesting part (1)
 - * The group work was a exciting and challenging (1)
 - * Learned that just discussing the issues and looking at statistics is not enough, we need qualitative information as well (1)
 - * Even though one had seen street vendors before, this was the first time doing an indepth interview (1)
 - * That this method could actually be applicable on other areas of qualitative research that touched the human scale (individual level) in terms of how to find the right balance to coexist in the ecosystem (1)
 - * Asking questions can help to improve their (vendors) economy (1)

What was most surprising?

- * The kind and dynamic interactions between vendors and customers, different age groups and classes, and how friendly the vendors were towards the participants (6)
- * Street vendors could work in the informal economy for such a long time (10-40 years)(4)
- * Vendors could earn a considerable amount (4)
- * The relationship between vendor: they constantly assisted and depended upon each other, and some even donated the balanced meals to other vendors (3)
- * Elderly were happy to work in the informal economy and were very active (2)
- * Lifestyle and culture of the vendors (2)
- * Some (or all) vendors were non Malay and could not speak Malay (2)
- * Vendors had to support their families until they could survive on their own (2)
- 8
- * Seeing young leadership and how competitive young vendors were (2)

The depth reached through the method/workshop:

- * The topic itself surprised me and I enjoyed it, and it relates to many different areas that interact with each other such as: the traditional vs. the non-traditional, young and old generations, immigration (1)
- * How much information one can find from a single interview method- meeting people face to face gives a whole new dimension to understanding the world (1)
- * Discussing with the delegates (at the workshop) is really similar to discussing with my friends, except on a deeper level (1)

Who else do you think would benefit from the fieldwork exercise experience?

- * Government, - bodies, -officials, -authorities, -ministries and municipalities (10)
- * Academics, researchers, students and interviewers (8)
- * Policy makers (6)
- * Colleagues of participants and the institutions they represent (4)
- * Vendors and informal entrepreneurs (3)
- * Different layers/sectors of society (2)
- * Business people (1)
- * Town planners (1)
- * Those who are working with this subject (1)
- * SMEs (1)
- * SME foundations (1)