What can participatory photography and bottom-up approaches teach us about water?

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Interests

1. What can we learn from local communities about the crucial role water plays in a climate change context?

2. How do we engage audiences around water research in new, more interactive ways?

3. How to ensure that people’s experiences, stories and realities are accurately and ethically captured, represented and shared?
HIMALAYAS TO OCEAN (H2O)

www.himalayastocean.com
WHAT:
To document the diversity of ways in which climate change is affecting water security, and people's daily lives.

HOW:
- Guided by scientific research;
- Interview based;
- Using multimedia outputs such as photography, film, and audio recordings;
1. Kali Gandaki Valley, Mustang
   - Mountains -

2. Ullikhola, Gulmi
   - Mid-hills -

3. Durlunga, Nawalparasi
   - Foothills -

4. Chitwan
   - Floodplains -
Outputs

- Workshop with Nepalese environmentalists
- Immersive multi-media exhibitions
- International Conferences
- Published in online media, blogs etc.
- Musical collaborations
- Events, webinars & public engagement
Learnings

- Scope for research-artistic collaborations;
- High demand for this kind of multi-media content;
- However, difficult to measure tangible impacts
WATER SECURITY & CLIMATE CHANGE IN ETHIOPIA
Learnings

- High demand for scientific-artistic collaborations + multimedia content;
- Photography ethics: whose perspectives are we representing?
Photo Ethics

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
How do we interact with the communities we photograph?

REPRESENTATION
How are we representing the communities we photograph?

INTERPRETATION
How does the viewer/audience understand the issues captured in the images?
Learnings

DECISION MAKERS
Reported increased understanding of local issues

PHOTO VOICE PARTICIPANTS
- Increased understanding of local decision-making process (who does what, limitations etc.)
- Higher expectations;
Learnings

PHOTOGRAPHY
• Less aesthetics but wider diversity of issues and experiences represented;
• More time and geography covered;
• Community empowerment;

WHAT'S NEXT?
Measuring long-term impact
Final takeaways

POWER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Value of photography, as a tool for scientific communication as well as a tool for community engagement.

MEASURING LONG-TERM IMPACTS
We need more concrete measures.

PHOTOGRAPHY ETHICS
What we communicate, and to whom, is as important as how we communicate.
Webinar series: Development and photography ethics

DO NO HARM: WHY WE NEED PHOTOGRAPHY ETHICS
Savannah Dodd, Director of the Photography Ethics Centre

WHAT A VISUAL GEOGRAPHER HAS LEARNT ABOUT PHOTO ETHICS
Prof Gillian Rose, Head of University of Oxford School of Geography and the Environment

ON REPRESENTATION, POWER AND CONSENT
Martha Tadesse, Humanitarian photographer

ON EQUITABLE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PEOPLE WE PHOTOGRAPH
Smita Sharma, National Geographic photographer

WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY? THE ETHICS OF COMMISSIONING IMAGES
Tobin Jones, Humanitarian photographer

TOWARDS FAIR & EQUITABLE NORTH-SOUTH PARTNERSHIPS
Dr. Maru Mormina, Ethics Advisor, University of Oxford