“We are already doing a lot of this work without a name”

Diffusion of FGC in Guatemala
Everett Rogers on Diffusion of Innovation

- What is innovation?
- “Perceived as new”

- Why diffuse innovation?
- Creating change

- How to diffuse innovation?
- Communicating across people and time
FGC Adoption

Assumptions
• Consensus-building needed across different influential groups
• Groups more willing to adopt model if see it as compatible with their traditions
• Sustaining key practices while adapting model to own cultural context

Training Steps
• Invite groups needed to support implementation
• Provide opportunities to connect FGC to own values and experiences
• Encourage assessment of model fidelity
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<td><strong>Respecting Diverse Family Cultures</strong></td>
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<td>• What we do: shared practices</td>
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<td>• Who we are: continuity in identity</td>
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<td>• Just processes: fairness &amp; efficacy</td>
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International Team

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• Karen Rotabi, United Arab Emirates University
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Support

• Brigham Young University
• UNICEF
• USAID
• Donation of time by international team

• Justo Solórzano, UNICEF Guatemala

• Flora Ramos, Social Welfare Secretariat, Guatemala
Guatemala

“Place of Many Trees”

Central America
Nearly 16 million people
About half under 18 years
56% living in poverty
About half indigenous, primarily Mayan

Language
- Official – Spanish
- 26 languages
Intercountry Adoptions

- 2000-2007, over 30,000 Guatemalan children placed mostly in USA
- Coercion and financial enticements for birth mothers
- Primarily adoption of healthy infants and toddlers
- 2007, moratorium on adoptions

Schuster Institute for Investigative Journalism

Adoption: Guatemala
Intercountry Adoptions

• Contrary to Hague Convention
  – Priority on family-based, domestic solutions
• 2008, Guatemala signed Hague Convention
• 2010, USA closed adoptions from Guatemala

US Department of State

This program is: Closed
Institutionalization of Children

- 2008 national study found 6,000 children in 133 childcare facilities, linked to intercountry adoptions
- 2012 found similar rates of institutionalization
- Court order decreeing institutions as permanent placement for many children
Why FGC in Guatemala?

Exploring alternatives to placing children in institutions
FGC Training in Guatemala City

- Breakfast for High Officials—Overview of need, concepts, outcomes, and costs
- 2-Day FGC Training to 41 psychologists and social workers from government, non-government organizations, and universities
- Half-Day Focus Groups on potential benefits, challenges, and pathways for FGC in Guatemala
Anoche vino mi tía Nela como de costumbre pa la noche Güena

Last night my Aunt Nela came over for Christmas eve as she does customarily.
FGC Training

• Range of learning experiences – experiential, skills-building, feedback, application, reflection
• Simultaneous interpretation – made opening on use of interpreters in FGC
• Flexibility – responsively modifying training agenda
• Emphasizing local leadership – insights, talents, and commitments
Roleplay
Pre/Post Training Survey: Instrument

- Assessing model fidelity within a family rights framework
- Adapted from Achievement of FGC Objectives (Pennell, 1999)
- Focus on what could be covered in the training
- Back-translation
Pre/Post Training Survey: Results

- Started and ended training with general understanding of core FGC practices
- Good indicator of FGC compatibility for Guatemala
- Backed up by focus groups
Strengths of FGC

• Translating traditional practices into modern terms

• Congruent with *Popol Vuh* (Mayan bible)
  – Elders reaching resolutions through group decision making

• “Facilitate communication within the family and helps bring up certain issues such as alcohol, violence, and poverty . . . Not always talked about”
Helpful to Practice

• When to use:
  – Before child goes into institution
  – Reintegrating child into family

• Why use:
  – Ensuring children’s rights
  – Encouraging collaboration
Challenges of FGC

• Gendered reality of male dominance and violence
  – “Especially in indigenous cultures, women do not talk in front of men”
  – “Possibility of hosting an all-woman FGC to ensure that we hear their voices . . . And then a co-gender meeting”
Proposed Next Steps

• More in-depth technical training
• Educating judges and Solicitor General’s Office
• Incorporating FGC into university curricula and agency trainings
• Evaluating results
Update on Developments

• FGC included in some university curricula
• FGC used by student interns in adolescent and family court
• FGC used in a residential care institution
• Buckner Foundation on a USAID funded project to strengthen child protection system will include FGC section in curriculum for judges, lawyers, social workers, and psychologists
“We are already doing a lot of this work without a name”

FGC designed to balance family culture and human rights

Guatemala teaches us about the necessity of finding this balance

Given history of colonization, war, loss of children

AND

Traditional understandings of collective decision making

AND

Modern necessity of including voices of women and children

Family + Rights

Respecting Diverse Family Cultures

• What we do: shared practices

• Who we are: continuity in identity

Upholding Universal Human Rights

• Just processes: fairness & efficacy

• Just outcomes: safety, connection, & wellbeing
Guatemala FGC References


Muchísimas Gracias!