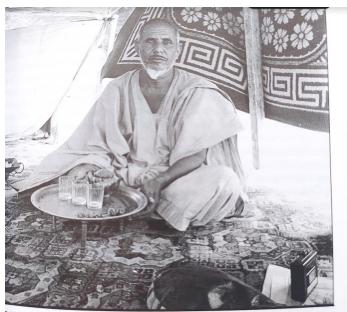- Background in evaluation research across statutory and voluntary sector

24b Lehbat Ould Sidi Brahim Ould Bouzeid (M. 56 years). Nouakchott

Halima Ahmed (F. 43 years). Wad el Hileau

My ongoing research

- 'Exploring the links between mental health, experience of school and gang membership from the perspective of young people'

- How am I encouraging collaboration?

- Setting up advisory groups; one for YP one for professionals, practitioners and 'experts by experience'.

- Involvement of highly marginalised groups is challenging

- Advisory group discussed impact of my positionality (white, middle aged, entitled) on ability to engage meaningfully with target group (generally distrustful and disenfranchised)

- Discussed use of 'peer' researchers – resource/budget constraints

- Different agendas and positionality will inevitably give rise to different outputs. Can I experiment with different techniques and observe outcomes?

- Bias and subjectivity not always detrimental but should be recognised.

Positionality and reflexivity

- Pros and cons of insider/outsider perspective

- Research benefits from a balance between "involvement and estrangement" (Hellawell, 2006, p. 485)

- The dualism of 'inside' and 'outside' has limitations, but the recognition of differently situated positions highlights the necessity for reflection about the researcher's own situation

- Privileged knowledge should be abandoned in favour of partial visions and *'socially situated knowledge'* (Haraway 1988). Partial knowledge includes embodied knowledge that is produced from multiple perspectives.

- All knowledge is partial, situated and incomplete – different perspectives from using a variety of methods of collecting data will add depth and a more complete understanding.

Overcoming challenges and tips!

- Don't be afraid to reach out to people in different sectors.

- **Outputs:** Plan outputs which will be relevant to different levels of stakeholder. Real collaboration means all partners need to feel the benefit. Ask them what they want. Think out of the box:
  - **Public/research participants**: Engaging and meaningful
  - **Policy**: keep outputs brief and relevant
  - **Practice:** focus on evidence. Help with theories of change
  - **Research**: New learning. Publications

- Meaningful engagement tends to be slow and expensive. Plan for collaboration in budget.

- Generate interest through broad based dissemination (blogs, social media, academic journals).