

Kimberly Green
Latin American and Caribbean Center
Florida International University and
Syndemics Project
Presents...



Kimberly Green
Latin American and
Caribbean Center



Lens Project

Photovoice Methodology Project in the Dominican Republic

FIU

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Capotillo is a poor neighborhood in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. In recent years, it has had a growing problem of heroin addiction. The most important barrier to the recovery of persons with addiction is the intense criminalization and stigmatization of drug users.



Major Corridors into the United States



The growth of the heroin epidemic in the Dominican Republic is due in part to changes in trafficking routes from South America, which increase the availability of heroin for local populations. Local laws do not support a public health approach (“harm reduction”) rather than incarceration.

A group of seven brave men and women who have battled drug addiction worked with researchers at Florida International University in 2014 and 2015.

They wanted to tell their stories.

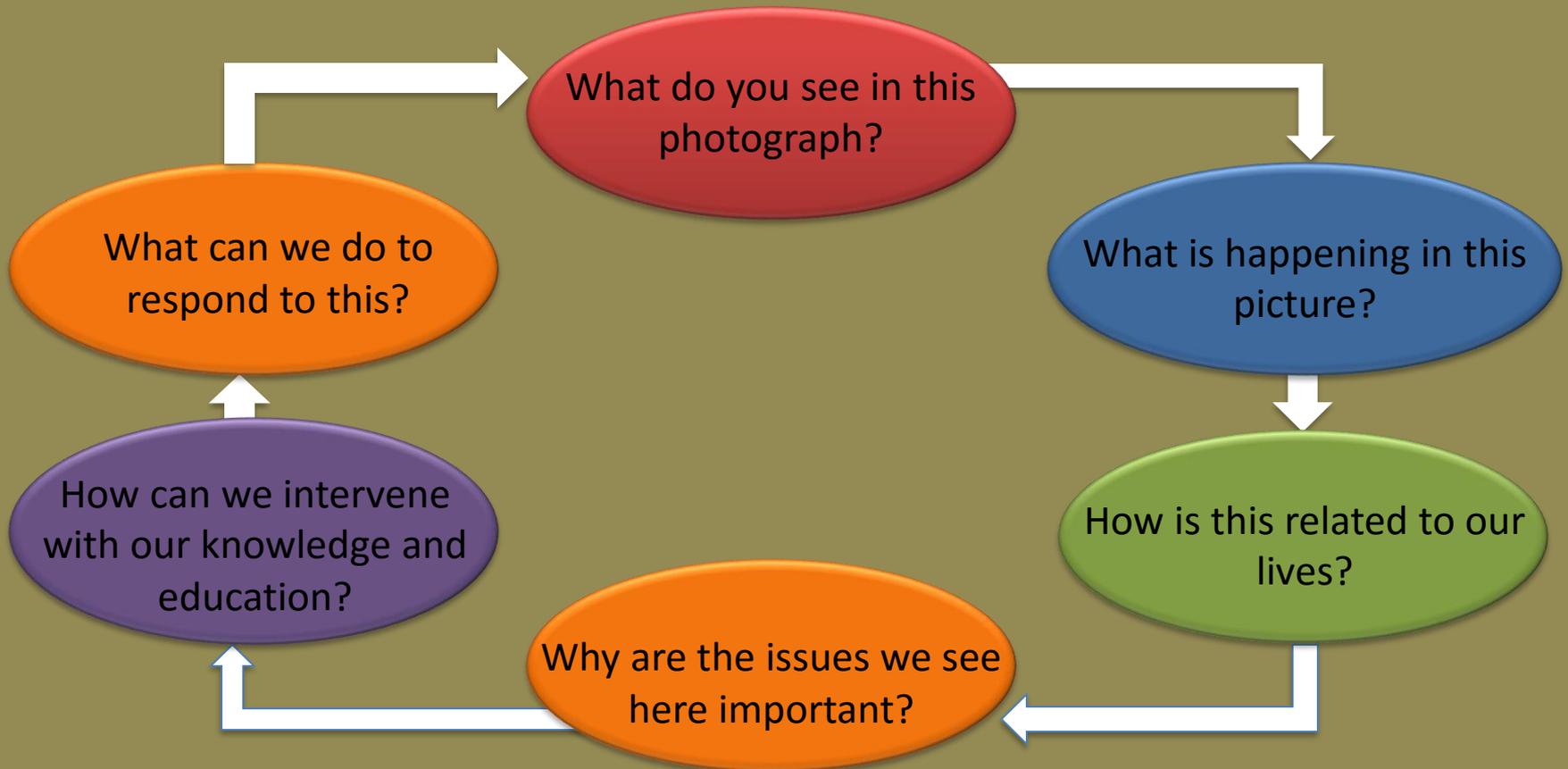
They said:

"We do not want to be invisible slaves of drug seeking nor social ignorance."



PHOTO VOICE uses inclusive and participatory research methodology that aims to amplify the voices of community members through images, creating new opportunities to reflect and represent issues and concerns in a creative and personal way.

Photovoice develops over several group sessions in which community members discuss their photos, collectively analyze them, and think critically about how to generate solutions to community problems. This involves several steps which are summarized below:



Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR) Process / Community Facilitation

The following participants were trained in photography, PhotoVoice methods, and ethics.

Then they took pictures of their communities to tell the stories of their lives and struggles.



"This goes beyond what others can see, the reality of life."



"I support a change against drugs."



"An ignored reality of pain and suffering."

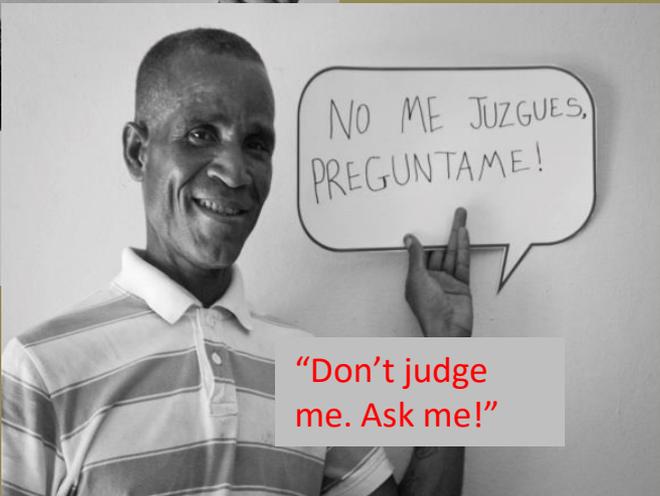


"My photos will change society."



"Struggling for recognition of my humanity and rights."

"Photovoice Family"



"Don't judge me. Ask me!"



"Looking for a way to serve my community."

Here are the pictures taken by the

PhotoVoice Family ...

Analysis: Ruins and abandonment are home to many Dominican migrants. Desolation and unemployment spark danger.

Alternatives: Conduct a census to reveal the number of people living in this way. Strengthen literacy. Improve housing conditions for these groups. Make effective solidarity cards (vouchers for electricity, gas and food) for this population.



1. "Echoes of the Rubble"

Analysis: It is common to use terror to gain ground, mark a territory, and impose a law. A state of defense due to the use of illegal substances.

Alternatives: "If someone is drowning we have to get into the water to save him. " Society as a whole must address the drug problem because it is not a problem of delinquency alone.



2. " Reflection of power"

Analysis: Amid poverty feelings remain. There is a parallel world that we do not know, a comfort zone where tenderness lives.

Alternatives: Support programs with neighborhood associations, churches and the state with more effective community services. Introduce this perspective to those who are unaware.



3. " The Tenderness of Jesus"

Analysis: Consumption is the highest priority for some people, simply because it relieves pain, overcomes the lack of health services and makes you forget the lack of opportunities.
Alternatives: Specialized health services for people who have their lives in the hands of inopportunity and drugs.



4. "My Life on the mirror"

Analysis: Self discrimination and emotional sadness are the soul of users. Consumption can lead people to unimaginable circumstances and spaces.

Alternatives: Creation and strengthening of rehabilitation centers. Each person in society can put their grain of sand, through cooperation and linkages within this reality.



5. " Footprints remain"

Analysis: The power is in the hands of who supply it temporarily. At times there is no discrimination or social class distance between users. The risk of infection is a lifelong and distinguished companion.

Alternatives: Peer education, professional services and behavioral harm reduction.



6. "Host pleasure"

Analysis: Extreme poverty and high levels of marginality are equivalent to poor quality of life and serious public health problems that concern us all.

Alternatives: Health campaigns. Access to adequate public services. Find the wealth there is in poverty and the capacity that exists to promote change.



7. " Labyrinths of poverty"

Analysis: Improvised clean homes with art and creativity. What is useless for someone is useful for another, a cycle that demonstrates connectivity but for many is a gap between people.

Alternatives: Employment generation (microenterprises). Meet basic living needs through government organizations.



8. "Extreme of an extreme"

Analysis: The site and the conditions do not matter when it comes to fun.
Parental neglect and pollution are destructive of child development.
Alternatives: Programs for parents directed toward caring for children in poverty.
Consciousness raising, norms and regulation of environmental health.



9. "Fun and hope contaminated "

Analysis: From the highest social levels environmental factors are neglected, threatening the future, especially for infants.

Alternatives: Strengthen security in recreational areas that require it. Implement campaigns to reduce waste disposal to the river or the sea. Restructure recreational spaces.



10. " Innocence in Danger "

Analysis: Need and drug consumption don't involve cleanliness measures. Within marginalization and neglect there is a way to bathe and maintain privacy.
Alternatives: Creating spaces for cleanliness for street dwellers.
Education campaigns and drop-in centers.



Analysis: The use of substances comes from aspects that obscure life as existential emptiness, isolation and social pressure, contributing to involvement in addiction and deterioration.

Alternatives: Education regarding the therapeutic use of some medications.
Strengthening education to prevent drug use.



12. "Enemy that rolls up"

Analysis: Household of consumption that sparks bad familial relationships, abuse and theft. Aspects that threaten life and that can generate codependency.

Alternatives: Changes in punishments instead of jail, community service with monitoring programs. Expand the concept of integration including human aspects and remove labels.



13. "Dark Light"

Analysis: Isolation and abandonment are other ways to resort to drugs. Socio-emotional disorders are at the forefront of addiction; under these conditions those who aren't addicted become so.

Alternatives: Review the society's policies and laws regarding mental illness and management. Focus work on people with mental problems.



14. "Moments of forgetfulness"

Analysis: Those who do not fit into the social constructions are seen as bad people. Pillow, quilt and sheet show that there is some dignity and that there is still hope.

Alternatives: Early interventions in schools to talk about addictions.

Fighting poverty that exists to give; poverty is not only economic.



15. "Dignity remains"

Adaptation of SHOWED Method to street drug users



O bserve . **A** nalyze . **A** ct .



OBSERVE



ANALYZE



ACT

To make a picture speak, we need to resolve these questions and come to a conclusion.



O

What do you *See* in this photograph?
What is *Happening* in this photograph?

A

How does that relate to *Our* lives?
Why are those themes sustained?

A

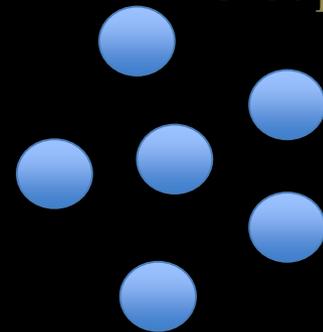
How can we succeed in those themes with our new social conscience and *Education*?
What can we *Do* to approach those themes?

Final quote

Individual

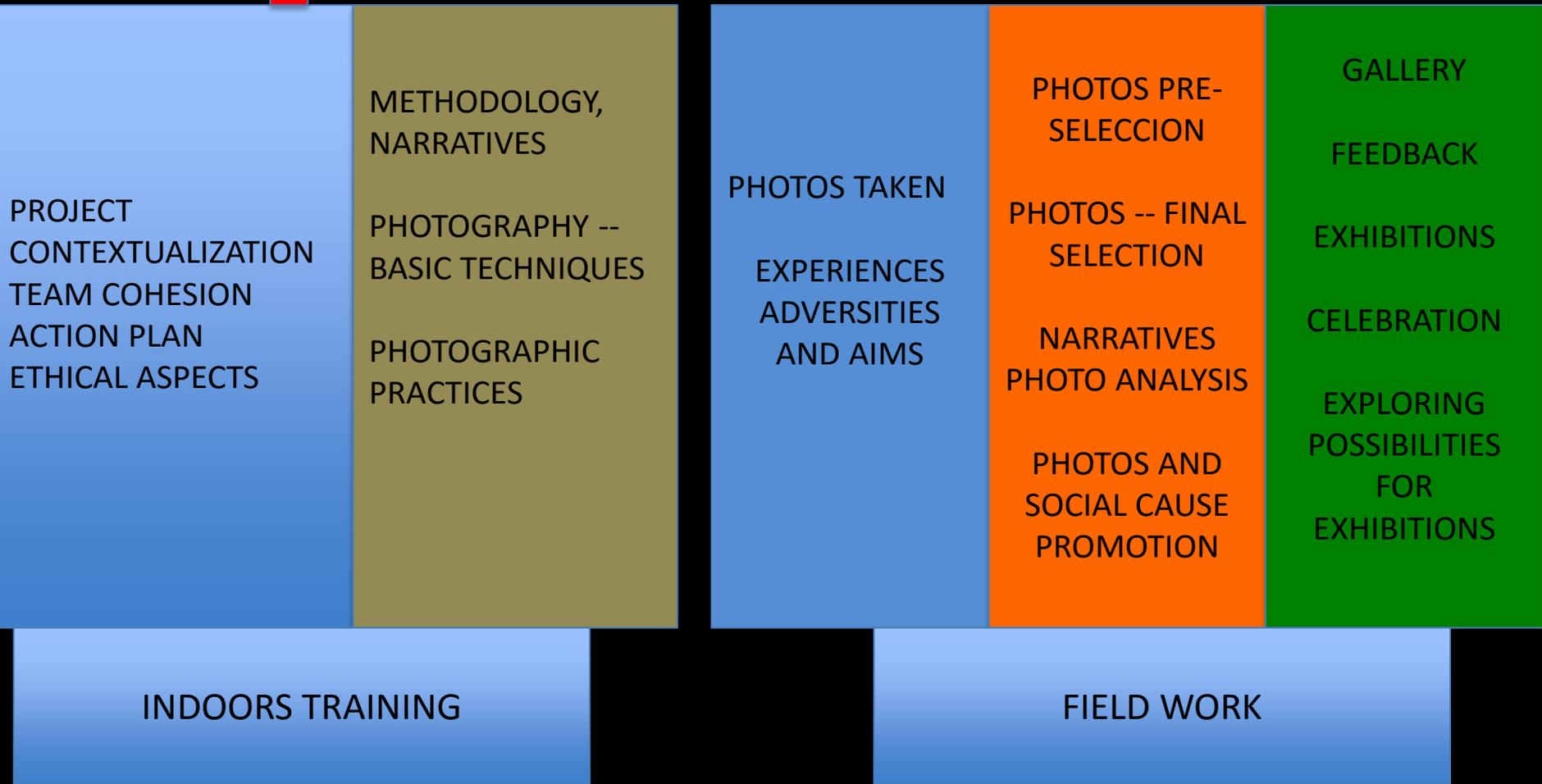


Group



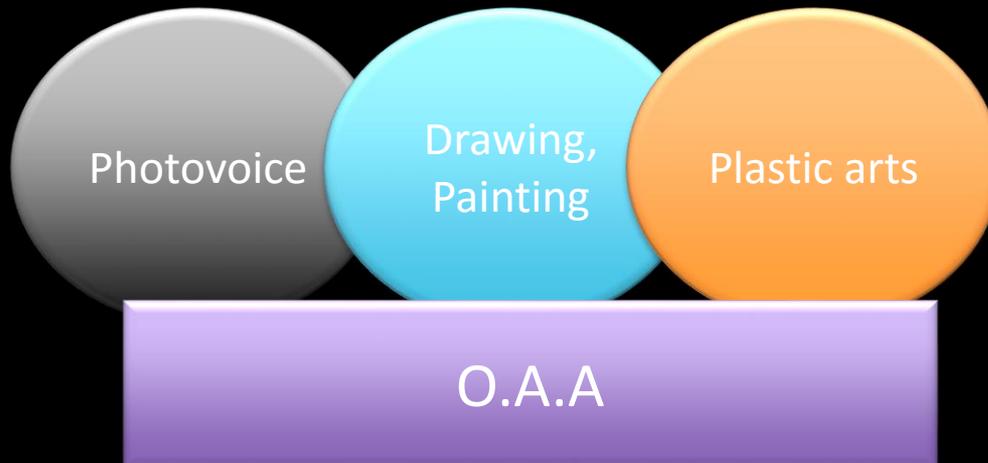
Lenses Project process

Photo-Voice Methodology



Examples of the use of Photo voice methodology for classroom projects

- Bullying
- School violence
- Arms use
- Drug prevention and rehabilitation
- Community needs assessment
- Prevention of emergency situations
- Importance of physical activities



And your ideas...?

Effects of being a part of Photo voice Family....

Increase Self Esteem

External Solidarity

Company

Listened to by others

Reflect deeply on marginalize conditions

Be a protagonist

Have More Life control

Be part of Social transformation

Understand how participation could foster the
change process

Empowerment

Better group relationships

Be aware that they are not alone

Appreciation for the concept of unity



Discussion



Next steps for our project:

- Curriculum development for schools in Miami and Dominican Republic
- Obtaining funding for sustainability of project (how to fund staff?)
- Professionalizing curation (placards, didactic information, etc.)
- Involvement of Photovoice family as permanent experts and presenters
- Formalize linkages to stakeholders (government, policy makers, private sector, etc.)
- Connect to larger heroin prevention and treatment initiatives

Analysis: "The lock works,
what does not work is
the door."

Illegal drugs create false
security and they
crumble existence.

Alternatives: Prevent
others from falling into
consumption and
bottoming out.

Social assistance to
improve the quality of
life.

Create jobs and
opportunities.



Analysis: The loss of valuable people increases the unresponsiveness of the community; every person we lose is a loss for everyone.

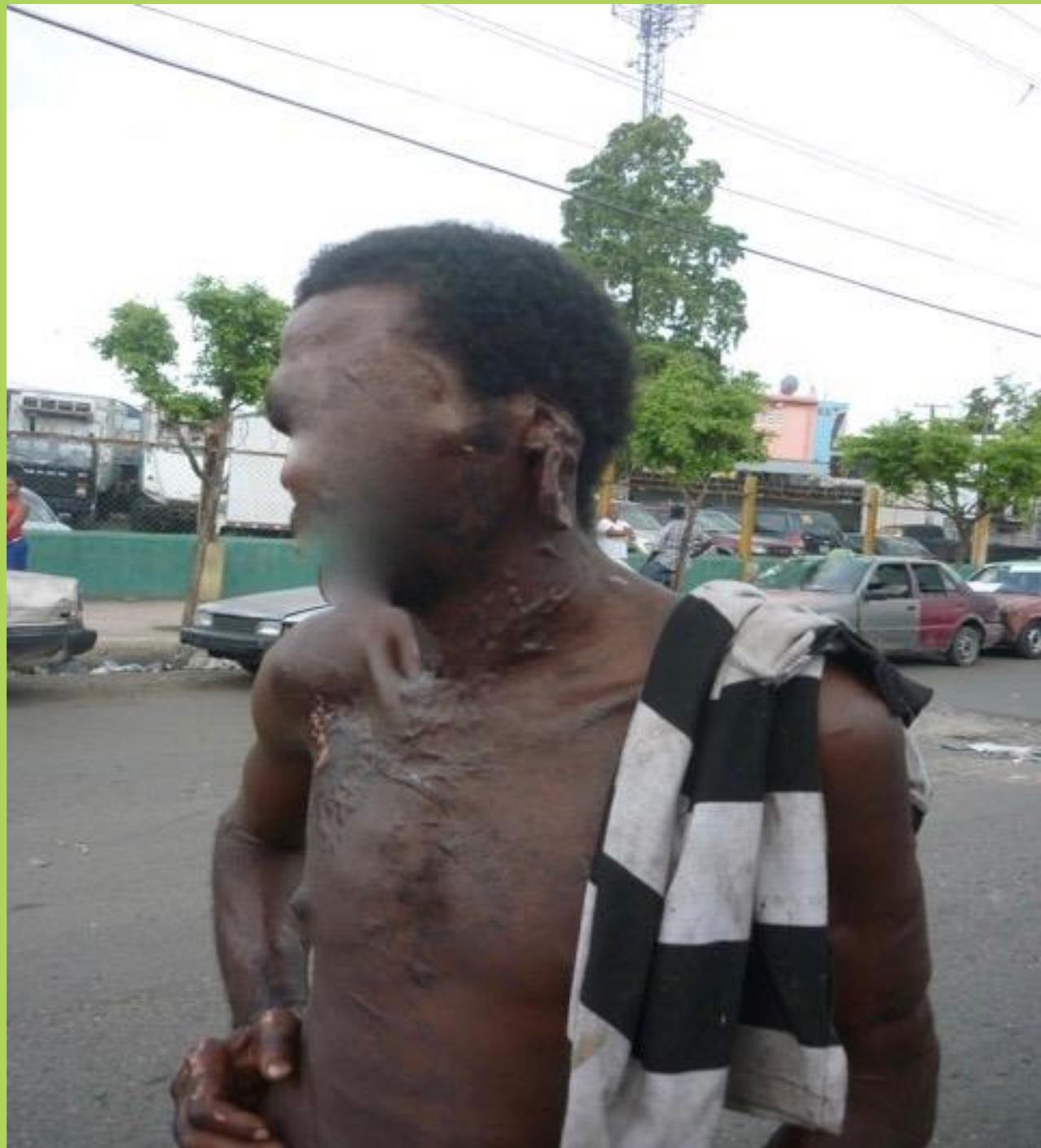
Alternatives: Care and programs focused on people who are abandoned.

Improve and strengthen primary health care.



Analysis: Results of addiction can be rejection and social violence; the community commits inhumane acts like burning people as punishment.

Alternatives:
Community education to reduce collective violence.
Do not take justice into their own hands.



Analysis: Bleak scenario, the result of substance abuse reflecting disease and wasted youth. A panorama that parents avoid for their children.

Alternatives: Bringing people to health centers where they can receive proper care. Health brigades for the homeless.



19. " Comfort of the pavement"



Analysis: The use of performance and deception is a mockery to society which involves the loss of credibility and confusion. Addiction is not just drug addiction; there is also sex, money, gambling, lying.

Alternatives: Citizen oversight for this type of problem.
More employment and education. It is necessary to stop blaming others and to participate.



Analysis: Injecting drug use transcends social classes. Often it is a public act that for some children and communities can be a daily occurrence.

Alternatives: Educate about consumption while it is not eliminated; that is, do harm reduction for the community and not just people who use drugs.



21. "Consumption without borders"

Analysis: Caught by society, racial discrimination and immigration status. Isolation is a condition that requires criminal acts, drug use and the creation of gangs.

Alternatives: Treat others as you want to be treated, giving what you wish to receive.

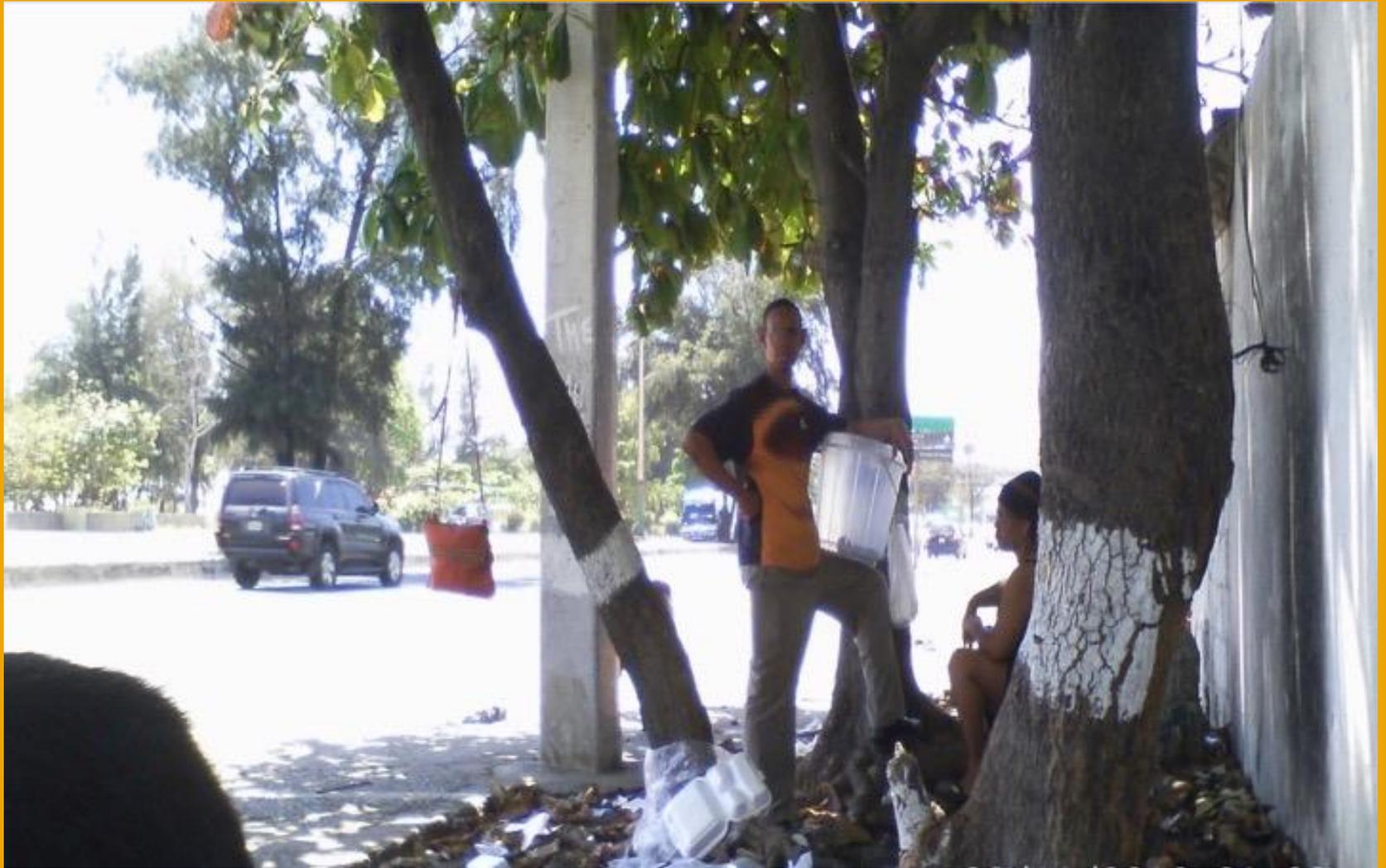
Governments seek for themselves and their children security and respect, without giving what they demand.



22. “Prisioneros sin rejas”

Analysis: Exchange of sex for money in order to consume. The business of the sale of sex and drugs is common. "I was there, I did that, and now I don't."

Alternatives: Support for informal work. Education not only in addiction, but also in values of individuals and societies. Edifying jobs not shameful ones.



23. "Business of Pleasure"

Analysis: Disease is used as a means of survival. Many people in these conditions are part of our societies. Manipulation and necessity on one side and mistrust and intolerance on the other.

Alternatives: Conduct a deeper analysis of need and intolerance. The social process should contribute sustainably and go beyond giving.



24. "vicious circle"



Analysis: Consequences of neglect of parents toward their children. Shining shoes, selling flowers, are costumes of drugs and prostitution in order to supply fantasies to others.

Alternatives: Education and spaces to rebuild discipline. Deeper work programs with family.

Analysis: Zone for businesses where garbage has its place; hundreds of people live of this work.

Alternatives: Re-organize space for garbage collection and train those who recycle.



26. "Survivors of the garbage"

Analysis: Going down those stairs the visitor or inhabitant does not know what to expect.
Area of the machete, pistol and drugs where the strongest is the one that survives.
Alternatives: Working with communities in neighborhood safety.
Working with the police on issues of ethics, humanity and corruption.



27. "Tunnel of the unknown"

Analysis: As with this man thousands are awaiting a moment for change. This was possible with the opportunities and support he had, while others do not have the same fate.

Alternatives: Learn to believe more in others, sensitize collectively about the damage that rejection generates. Promote cooperation and participation.



Analysis: Art in Capotillo highlighting the needs of the neighborhood. Beautiful phrases without major consequences.

Alternatives: Provide the option to the community to express their needs. Identify and work with community leaders. Strengthen NGOs that help in neighborhoods with different problems.



Analysis: Precarious hospitals endangers the health of users. Not only the infrastructure is weak but doctors lack social sensitivity.

Alternatives: Improve regulations of emergency rooms and waiting rooms in centers of care. Implement specialized health services for users of illegal drugs and street dwellers. The life of a person does not depend on the will of a security person.



30. "ER waiting"

Analysis: Perfect team for the destruction of life, pleasure and false calm; no rules or restrictions in the preparation of substances.

Alternatives: Prevent within the family for new generations about this ghost.

Strengthen strategies for harm reduction among users.

Support the modification of Law 50-88 for the protection of people with addictions.



Analysis: A fuzzy world and a hopeless being. Unequal opportunities are marked by lack of study in a country where there are programs for education.

Alternatives: Work on awareness about the importance of attending classes. Expand the coverage of literacy programs. More aggressive educational projects. Work with dropouts.



32. "Sentinels of misery"

Analysis: Childhood cut short in decline and in the midst of abandonment. A future that looks uncertain. Many children are used as drug carriers.

Alternatives: Special programs for single mothers or householders. nutritional work and early inculcation in the value of education.



Analysis: The community raises its voice against corruption. Many complaints about the mistreatment and abuse of authority show an evil that continues to grow.

Alternatives: Awareness of the police. Higher pay and treatment of police to improve their work. Empowerment and citizen oversight against injustice.



Analysis: There are no borders to seek relief from so much misery. For men and women, the dose of the day in any space or any time is ideal. This is the fruit of the same society in which we live.

Alternatives: The community must understand that addicted people are not a waste, but are only sick people who need help. What they do not capture others can see, and society cannot live what they are living.



Analysis: In addition to the deficiency in recycling, small boats and canoes, camouflage drugs and contribute their share to the ecological chaos.

Alternatives: Supervision and traffic regulations for these vessels. Sanitation areas near housing. Specialized training.



36. "Pollution"

Analysis: The drug takes away the lives of thousands of people around the world. Many users end here. Every time a person dies other consumers are invaded with fear and ask for spaces for rehabilitation.

Alternatives: Improve and facilitate access to treatment. Increase in day centers with health programs, nutrition, and information about harm reduction. Government support for NGOs working in rehabilitation.



37. "End of the road"

Analysis: Distributors of substances are recognized and supported by the community because they solve needs of their neighbors and in some cases share their profits.

Alternatives: Working at the political level of social problems. Community review with the dangers of consumption. A fragmented work does not resolve.



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