The Participatory Research Newsletter

This monthly newsletter aims to highlight the participatory research initiatives emerging from Participatory Research @ McGill (PRAM), and Centro de Investigación de Enfermedades Tropicales (CIET), as well as share new opportunities for projects, courses, funding, and more!

Note, the CIET-PRAM Newsletter is offered in the following languages:

Français | Español

A Month in Review

An ever busy team, below are a few updates from the CIET-PRAM network.

Monthly Meeting

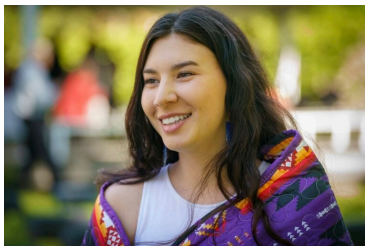
Understanding *malata*: history, causes, and lived experiences

This month, **Cristina Novakovic** and **Lisa Matmati**, working under the supervision of Dr Anne Cockcroft presented their ongoing research on *malata*, a term referring to children involved in unregulated labour, often sent to work on cattle posts, agricultural lands, or in households.

Lisa began by outlining the history of *malata* in the literature. While the term today is often used to describe informal labour arrangements involving children, historically it was tied to systems of servitude in which BaSarwa (San) and Bakgalagadi peoples were subordinated by dominant Tswana groups.

Cristina shared findings from recent fuzzy cognitive mapping sessions with community leaders, service providers, and former *malata* in Botswana's Kweneng District. Participants identified several key factors influencing children's involvement in *malata*: absent parents, school non-attendance, children running away from home, ill treatment, and poverty.

Finally, Lisa presented preliminary results from a pilot household survey, including demographic proportions of respondents and those who had been *malata*. She described where these children worked, their working conditions, and their experiences of violence while in *malata* roles.



Acknowledgements

Megan Légaré wins Tahatikonhsontóntie' Doctoral Scholarship

We are proud to share that doctoral student Megan Légaré has been awarded the Tahatikonhsontóntie' Doctoral Scholarship from the Quebec Network Environment for Indigenous Health Research (QcNEIHR) for the 2025–2026 academic year. Megan, who is completing her doctoral research under the co-supervision of Dr. Neil Andersson and Dr. Iván Sarmiento, will focus on Inuit youth's vision of health and the role of cultural safety and continuity in shaping it.

This prestigious award recognizes Megan's important contributions to Indigenous health research - congratulations on this well-deserved achievement!

Participatory Research in Action: Bauchi Project Documentary

We are thrilled to share the documentary of our successful project in Bauchi, Nigeria, which supports equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and is now in its final year!

To capture and share its story, the Bauchi team produced a film showcasing the project's aims, methods, and results. Filmed by a local producer in intervention communities across Darazo Local Government Area (LGA), the documentary features active support from community members - some of whom appear on screen! The documentary will be shared in Bauchi with their State government partners, the Darazo LGA, and with government and non-government stakeholders across the state. The film also serves as a valuable resource for explaining the steps of this participatory research project to a wider audience.

Join us in watching and sharing the documentary!

Fall 2025 Courses - McGill University

It's never too early to start thinking about school! Whether you're planning your course schedule or looking to deepen your understanding of participatory research, now is the perfect time to explore what's ahead. This fall, several McGill courses taught by PRAM team members offer students a unique opportunity to engage

with the science behind participation, co-production, and knowledge mobilization, while exploring the foundations, methods, and real-world applications of participatory research in health.

FMED 603: Foundations of Participatory Research

Hybrid | Professor Neil Andersson

FMED 603 is a one-credit research course offered by the Department of Family Medicine at McGill. Foundations of participatory research covers the science and discipline of partnerships underlying research, research governance, ownership of research products and relationships behind research objectives and methods. Founding principles include respectful partnerships, cultural safety, and intercultural dialogue. The course introduces participatory frameworks and methods for co-design and co-management of research, participatory media and integrated knowledge translation, quality improvement, and adaptive management of services.

FMED 604: Advanced Participatory Research in Health

In-person sessions | Professor Neil Andersson

FMED 604 provides an overview of participatory research with community, clinical, and organizational stakeholders. Content focuses on participatory engagement and data collection methods, while students have an opportunity to work through aspects of their participatory project with the help of group discussions, small group work, roleplay, and guest presentations from actual participatory projects.

Here are a few testimonies from former students:

"What I really took away was how participatory research, or participatory approaches, aren't just about including a diversity of stakeholders, voices, or opinions – it's the fact that by including this diversity, something more comes out of the whole process."

"The class was a radical transformation for me. It validated my gut instinct and gave me the knowledge (and power and tools) to do what I always knew was the right way."

If you have any questions about the courses, please contact Michaela Field.

IHDW Summer Newsletter: Featuring PRAM Voices

Our friends at the Institute for Human Development and Well-Being (IHDW) have just released their Summer 2025 newsletter, which features updates on inspiring initiatives and research. This edition includes contributions from PRAM team members Dr. Neil Andersson and Dr. Anne Cockcroft, highlighting collaborative work that bridges research and community impact.

You can read the full issue here: IHDW Summer 2025 Newsletter

Podcast Series: Participation Science Dialogues

Don't forget to tune into our podcast, where we discuss the world of participatory research!

Listen on Spotify!

Listen on our site!

Latest Publications

Highlighted below are some of the most recent publications from the industrious CIET-PRAM team:

Four analysis moments for fuzzy cognitive mapping in participatory research

Authors: Iván Sarmiento, Anna Dion, Mateja Šajna & Neil Andersson

Visit our website for more publications from the CIET-PRAM team

Departmental Newsletters

McGill | Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences | Department of Family Medicine

Ask 5 Podcast

The Institute of Health Sciences Education and the Office of Ed-TECH in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences are excited to share their next episode from their ongoing podcast series, Ask 5! The episode is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, Audible, Podbean, and iheartradio and a video version of the podcast is available on YouTube.

Keep in touch! Subscribe to our newsletter here.

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