

Presentation by Simon Bailey, Research Manager at Aflatoun, Child Social & Financial Education on ‘Rethinking Program Design and Evaluation: An Education NGO’s Interest in the Anthropology of Childhood’

- Child Social & Financial Education makes use of saving clubs in school classes and social activities in which children learn how to use money. The program is implemented via local organizations that have expertise concerning the context.
- More qualitative research is needed in the development field; it is difficult to translate children’s perspectives into evaluation and policy language. Moreover, it is difficult to capture variations in output.
- Anthropological investigations have the potential to improve program design by taking into account the social reality in which programs are often implemented, as well as provide richer research about how programs actually relate to what children know and how they behave.
- Aflatoun welcomes students to do research on the impact of their projects.
- Discussion: Child-rights are defined and organized in the West, where the power and the money is. Thus, the power is with the people that lack knowledge, and knowledge is with the people without power. Evaluations should be the property of everyone, not just the development organization: reports should be shared and discussed with ‘target groups’. Thus we should bring knowledge together to allow people to change their lives.
- Tailor-made evaluations are needed, and anthropologists are equipped to deliver these; anthropologists should move beyond mere criticism and offer constructive comments instead.