1. WHY
STORIES
MATTER
For at least 40,000 years – dating to the earliest known cave paintings – oral and visual stories have been a part of people’s lives.

The first stories were probably told long before then, passed from generation to generation, connecting people, shaping their worlds, changing lives – even changing history.

**STORYTELLING IS BOTH A SCIENCE AND AN ART. STORIES ARE IN OUR NATURE. OUR BRAINS ARE WIRED FOR THEM.**

They make us experience information, as opposed to just consuming it.

They help us see ‘cause and effect’ relationships, beyond facts and data, by triggering at least seven major areas of the human brain that shape our thinking and trigger our emotions.
In today’s digital age, stories can be created and shared like never before. Just over half of the world’s 7.7 BILLION people can now create, consume and share digital content socially.

Increasingly, social media platforms are where people turn for discovery, information and entertainment. About 970 million people used social media in 2010, compared to 4.2 billion users in 2021.

With this increased digital connectivity, misinformation can spread very easily. As we’ve experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, the circulation of incorrect health information can influence political discourse and decision-making and undermine adoption of protective behaviours, creating the conditions for faster disease transmission.

This can cause a great deal of human suffering and loss of lives.

In this world of information overload, widespread misinformation and shrinking attention spans, great stories are more important than ever. They can cut through digital noise in ways that other forms of communication cannot.

**STORIES ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS. THEY STIMULATE BOTH OUR EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS SO THAT WE FEEL CONNECTED NOT JUST TO THE STORY, BUT ALSO TO THE STORYTELLER.**
When we advocate for something, we tend to rely on convincing arguments, facts and figures. But research shows that **PEOPLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO BELIEVE A PERSON OR ORGANIZATION WHOSE STORIES RESONATE WITH THEM.**

And when information and stories are communicated together, people are persuaded both **intellectually and emotionally.**

Whether informing people about health services, influencing behaviours, galvanizing community action or shaping social norms, **STORIES CAN HELP TO ENGAGE AND PERSUADE OUR AUDIENCES TO ADVANCE OUR PUBLIC HEALTH GOALS AND SPARK CHANGES AT THE INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY AND SOCIETAL LEVELS.**
HOW STORIES WORK

So, how do stories engage and persuade people? Behavioural science research shows that there are three key elements to stories that can influence people’s behaviour:

1. TRANSPORTATION
Have you ever been watching a movie or reading a book that was so interesting and emotionally compelling that you forgot about the real world? When we experience this, we become more open to taking on new ideas and changing our minds.

2. RELATABILITY
When audiences can relate to a story or a character, they are more likely to believe and remember the message. Stories that feel authentic can also inspire acceptance. Real-life stories, or stories that resonate with audiences’ experiences, lead the audience to trust both the story and the storyteller.

3. EMOTION
Neuroscience has shown that our emotions hold more sway than logic in many of the decisions we make. Even though we might think we are making a conscious decision, we are often using logic to rationalize a decision we have already made based on emotion. Emotional stories can also create a feeling of empathy, which allows us to share experiences with others. Empathy involves an exquisite interplay of neural networks. By activating several parts of the brain, empathy enables us not only to understand someone else’s feelings, but to care about and share those feelings too.
STORYTELLING AND COMMUNICATION FOR HEALTH

The World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for the Western Pacific has embarked on a priority initiative to strengthen strategic communications for defined public health outcomes, known as Communication for Health (C4H). A significant part of the C4H initiative is harnessing the power of storytelling in health communication.

C4H draws insights from social, behavioural and communication sciences to inform and shape people’s knowledge, attitudes and behaviours as key determinants of their health. C4H can contribute to addressing and mitigating virtually any public health challenge at individual, community and societal levels – from chronic diseases to emerging risks.

C4H USES BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS, DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION TO INFORM HEALTH COMMUNICATION INTERVENTIONS THAT BUILD TRUST, ENGAGE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOURAL HEALTH INFLUENCERS, AND EFFECTIVELY REACH RELEVANT POPULATION GROUPS.
It can help to inform and empower all kinds of audiences – including individuals, health workers, communities and policy-makers – to make important health choices, like getting vaccinated, quitting smoking, reducing stigma around mental illness and advocating for inclusive health policies.

C4H STRIVES TO COMMUNICATE IN WAYS THAT ARE TARGETED, EVIDENCE-BASED, MEASURABLE AND IMPACT-DRIVEN.

As we’ve seen, evidence from neuroscience, psychology and behavioural science shows that storytelling is a powerful way to engage and persuade people.

That is why storytelling is a key part of C4H.

Storytelling that is developed according to C4H principles – with a strong understanding of the audience and the drivers of its behaviour – can enable governments, WHO, partner organizations and experts to communicate with greater relevance and impact. Stories help to build public trust and connect with people’s hearts – so audiences not only think but feel, care, remember and, with sustained efforts, take action.
2. CREATING YOUR STORIES
Stories can be told using many different media and platforms, like:

- **VIDEOS**
- **PHOTOS**
- **WRITTEN PIECES FOR THE WEB OR OTHER PLATFORMS**
- **RADIO**
- **ANECDOTES USED IN SPEECHES**
- **COMMUNITY MEETINGS**
- **SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS**
- **COMICS**

**STORIES CAN BE BASED ON REAL EXPERIENCES, OR THEY CAN BE FICTIONAL.**

In this chapter, we will look at some **steps, concepts and activities** that you can use as you start to unleash your inner storyteller.
PLAN YOUR STORY

EXPLORE YOUR CHARACTERS

DEVELOP YOUR STORY ARC

CREATE YOUR STORYBOARD

CONDUCT YOUR INTERVIEW
PLAN YOUR STORY

TO ENSURE YOUR STORY HAS IMPACT, FIRST WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE AND WHO WE ARE TRYING TO INFLUENCE.

What is your SOCO (Single Overarching Communication Outcome)?
SOCO = The change you want to see in your audience as a result of your communication.

Who is your target audience?
Is your audience composed of policy-makers, health professionals, donors or the public? If it is the general public, try to be more specific – are you targeting a particular age group, gender or cultural group?
Ask yourself: who has the power to make the change we want to see? For example, if we want to influence children’s diets, our main audience might be parents, grandparents or school canteen managers.

What barriers might the audience face when it comes to achieving the SOCO? What motivations might they have?
Draw on existing evidence where possible, or refer to Chapter 5 for ideas on how to gather data.

Who should deliver the message?
What kind of person or institution would be most convincing to the audience?

What format will work best?
Based on the information you have gathered, would your story be best told as a video, web feature, photo essay, animation, Twitter thread, TikTok video….? Usually, it will be more than one, so think about what would be the most effective and feasible combination.

Which channels will be best for sharing the story?
Which channels does your audience use? Channels may include press, TV, radio, social media, community gatherings or other communication platforms.

By thinking through these questions, we can come up with a STORY IDEA.
EXAMPLE: HAITANG'S STORY

Throughout this chapter, we’ll use Haitang’s story as an example. Watch the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqnDCmlIMoDo

These are the planning steps that led to the development of Haitang’s story:

**SOCO (Single Overarching Communication Outcome)**
Viewers understand the health risks of COVID-19, especially for health workers, and the impact on families of those infected.

**TARGET AUDIENCE**
General public, particularly people whose family members or friends are frontline workers.

**BARRIERS**
People may underestimate the impact of illness.

**MOTIVATIONS**
People may be motivated by a desire to keep their families safe and together, more so than by concerns for their own health.

**CHANNELS**
The story will be shared on social media, so a video less than 2-3 minutes is ideal.

**POTENTIAL STORY SUBJECT**
The family member of someone who has gotten very sick with COVID-19.

**STORY IDEA**
Haitang lives in Wuhan, China. His wife, Ting Li, is an emergency room nurse is infected with COVID-19. The story shows the challenges for their young family as Haitang cares for Ting Li throughout her illness.
EXPLORE YOUR CHARACTERS

Most stories have a leading character, plus supporting characters.

THE PROTAGONIST
First, there is the protagonist. Stories tend to be most powerful when they feature just one protagonist.
Your protagonist might be:

• A hero – a character who embodies specific qualities and virtues such as idealism, courage, compassion and morality; or

• An anti-hero: – a character who lacks the hero’s qualities and virtues. The anti-hero may be seriously flawed, yet ultimately guided by good intentions.

Choose a protagonist who is relatable to your target audience. As we saw in Chapter 1, audiences are more likely to remember and believe messages coming from people they relate to.

THE ANTAGONIST
The antagonist is the person or non-human force that opposes the protagonist and creates difficulty for them. Antagonism is a critical tool of storytelling. Most stories don’t move forward without conflict that is produced by three main types of antagonists:

• The villain – a person or non-human force that is directly opposed to the story protagonist(s).

• The conflict creator – a less adversarial opponent to the protagonist(s), yet still a conflictive force in the story.

• The non-human force – can take the form of any event such as an earthquake, flood, drought, fire, monsoon, virus, etc.
In public health stories, the antagonist is typically a public health risk, threat or concern. It can be complex and challenging to communicate these topics through stories that are also scientifically and technically robust. Yet well-told stories can make these topics more real, important, believable and influential.

**EXAMPLE:** Haitang’s story.

In this story example, Haitang is the primary protagonist and his wife, Ting Li, is a secondary protagonist. Their son and a doctor are ‘supporting characters’ in the story.

The antagonist of this story is COVID-19 – essentially a *villain virus*. 
DEVELOP YOUR STORY ARC

A story arc (also called a narrative arc or a dramatic arc) is the path a story follows. It is the story’s full progression, from beginning to end.

Story arcs generally have four parts. We’ll use Haitang’s story to show some examples of each part.

1 SET-UP
This is the first part of the story, when its main characters are introduced. The set-up must be interesting enough so that the audience decides to continue reading or watching the story.

Haitang is providing home care to his wife, an emergency room nurse, who became infected with COVID-19 and is seriously ill. He wears personal protective equipment, sterilizes the home and leaves her meals outside their bedroom.

2 RISING TENSION
This happens when a sequence of events or obstacles pose increasing difficulties for the story protagonist, setting the rest of the story in motion.

Ting Li’s condition worsens. They decide to go to the hospital, where Ting Li has a CT scan.
3 CLIMAX
This is the peak of the story arc and the moment of crisis and truth for the protagonist. It is often a highly emotional moment.

The CT scan confirms that the virus is spreading in Ting Li’s body. She makes an emotional phone call from her hospital room. Many days of uncertainty and anxiety follow for the couple.

4 RESOLUTION
This is the conclusion. The hero finally overcomes the conflict, learns to accept it, or is ultimately defeated by it. This is where the journey ends.

Haitang finally gets the news that his wife is well and will be released from hospital, after spending 50 days there. Ecstatically happy, he drives to the hospital and returns home with Ting Li where she is reunited with their young son.
NOW IT’S YOUR TURN TO COME UP WITH A STORY IDEA!

Work through the steps in the ‘Plan your story’ section of this handbook. Then, use the story arc template on the next page to imagine how the story will play out.

TIP! Now is a good time to start thinking about the style and format of your story.

Will it be based on a real person or will it be fictional? Will it use the written word, video, photos or illustrations? If you are planning a video, will it be told only in the voice of the protagonist, or will it include text or voice-over narration? These decisions will change the way you approach the next steps.
EXAMPLE: HAITANG'S STORY

SET-UP
Haitang is providing home care to his wife who is infected with COVID-19.

RISING TENSION
Ting Li's condition worsens, and she fears that Haitang will become infected also.

CLIMAX
The CT scan confirms that the virus is spreading in Ting Li's body. Many days of uncertainty and anxiety follow for the couple.

RESOLUTION
Haitang finally gets the news that his wife is well and will be released from hospital, after spending 50 days there.

STORY ARC TEMPLATE

SET-UP
LOCATION:

RISING TENSION
CONFLICT:

OBSTACLES:

CLIMAX

RESOLUTION

CHARACTERS
PROTAGONIST:
ANTAGONIST:
SUPPORTING:
CREATE YOUR STORYBOARD

If you will use visuals to tell your story, the next step is to make a storyboard. This is a way to **visually represent your story arc.** It will help you to plan the production of your story through video, photography or illustration.

A simple storyboard template is included below. Your storyboard is flexible – it can be changed and adapted throughout the production process.

Storyboards don’t have to be works of art. Even very rudimentary “stick figure” sketches can help you to visualize important concepts and events in the story sequence.

HOW TO MAKE A STORYBOARD

- Refer back to the story arc that you drafted earlier
- Sketch each part of the story from set up to resolution, showing the important scenes for each part
- Add a descriptive caption below each frame
- Try sketching your story from different angles (wide, medium, close-up) to closely guide the filming or photography.
Haitang introduces himself and his wife.

Haitang is providing home care to his wife, an emergency room nurse, who is sick with COVID-19.

Haitang takes care of his wife.

Haitang cooks for his wife and family.

Ting Li’s condition worsens, and she fears that Haitang will become infected also. They decide to go to the hospital, where Ting Li undergoes a CT scan.

The CT scan confirms that the virus is spreading in Ting Li’s body. She makes an emotional phone call to Haitang from her hospital room.

Haitang finally gets the news that his wife is well and will be released from hospital, after spending 50 days there.

He drives to the hospital and returns home with Ting Li.

They reunite with their young son.
NOW IT’S YOUR TURN!

Use this storyboarding template to construct a story. Use as many squares as you wish (feel free to add more) to include interesting story elements, characters, details and/or situations.

STORYBOARDING TEMPLATE
TIP!

If you’re creating a fictional story, or if you plan to use text or voice narration, your storyboard captions will help you to write a script. MAKE A DRAFT SCRIPT after you have finished storyboarding, and keep coming back and refining the script throughout the rest of the process.
CONDUCT YOUR INTERVIEW

Many health stories rely on interviews. *Interviews enable the audience to understand how a health concern or challenge is experienced by real people.* Interviews also help people to tell their own stories, by asking questions that bring out the person’s experiences, challenges, perspectives and emotions.

The person sharing their story is known as the subject. You can find subjects to interview during field missions, through personal or programme networks, and through partners, like nongovernmental organizations.

A GOOD INTERVIEWER MUST BE A PATIENT, EMPATHETIC AND NON-JUDGMENTAL LISTENER.

By establishing a trusting relationship, asking questions skillfully and listening actively, the interviewer creates the right conditions for the respondent to tell their own story.
INTERVIEWING STEP-BY-STEP

1 DECIDE ON THE INTERVIEW FORMAT

**DIALOGUE:** The subject is visible on camera, and the interviewer may or may not be seen. Questions and answers are recorded.

**MONOLOGUE:** The subject is visible and the interviewer is off-camera (the audience can’t see the interviewer). The interview can then be edited so that the audience hears only the subject’s answers, and not the interviewer’s questions. This means you need to encourage your subject to answer questions using full sentences.

TIP!

Now is a good time to think about if you will include narration in your story.

Some videos benefit from a scripted narration, with either text or voice-over explaining aspects of the story or adding extra information.

However, this can sometimes be unnecessary and distracting. **Stories told only in the voice of the interview subject can be more authentic and powerful, because the viewer may feel more like they are having a conversation with the subject.** Sometimes, a narrated voice-over disrupts the experience of emotional connection and transportation.

At other times, narration or text on screen is crucial for telling the full story. **THIS IS YOUR CHOICE AS THE STORYTELLER!**
2 PLAN YOUR INTERVIEW

- If possible, speak to the subject in person or by phone before the interview to find out more about their story and get a sense of their personality. **You may speak to more than one potential subject and choose the person with the best story and delivery style.** Choosing someone who is comfortable telling their story is important. A very shy person may not give a very good interview, for example.

- Decide whether your story will be told entirely through the interview or whether it will have other elements, like narration or on-screen text. This impacts how much detail you need to get from your subject during the interview.

- Based on your pre-interview phone call, **make a list of questions for your interview.** Think about which questions will bring emotive answers. For example, don’t just ask about what happened, also ask about how the respondent felt at each step of their journey. There’s an example of a question list at the end of this section.

- You may decide to share your questions in advance with your interview subjects if you think this will make them more comfortable and improve the interview.

3 CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- Before asking the questions on your list, **make the person you’ll be interviewing feel comfortable and build rapport by starting with a friendly chat.**

- Begin your interview with simple questions and draw out specifics later. You can use phrases like, **“Can you tell more about...”** or **“You mentioned x, y, z. Can you give me more detail about y in particular?”** or **“That must have been a very difficult/emotional/wonderful time. How did you feel when that happened?”**

- Listen carefully, don’t interrupt and give your subject the time to talk freely.

- Respond to what the subject is saying, rather than just reading each question in order. Think of this as a conversation.

- Allow your subject to answer any questions again if they wish. You can also ask them to repeat their answer to a question, especially if the first answer was not very clear or detailed.
After completing the interviews for your story, it’s a good idea to go back and review the sections ‘Explore your characters’ and ‘Develop your story arc’. Based on your interview, does something need to change? Have you found a better character? Is the conflict and resolution in their story what you expected? **YOU CAN ALWAYS ADJUST THESE ELEMENTS AS YOU GO.**

**TIP!**

We’ll cover more specifics on filming in Chapter 3, but here are some specific elements to think about if you are filming your interview:

**Choose your location.**
What location makes sense for the story: A hospital? The subject’s home? An outdoor area in their community?

Is the location indoors or outdoors? Try to minimize background noise by choosing a quiet location where you won’t be interrupted.

**Let the respondent know where to look.** Most of the time, they will look at the interviewer, not the camera.

**Film against a simple background** that doesn’t distract from the person being interviewed.
EXAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Here are some example interview questions to get you started. For your interview, adjust and add to this list. And remember - try to make the interview feel like a conversation! You don’t need to stick to your question list, feel free to improvise.

THE BASICS
Tell me about yourself – what’s your name, and where do you live? Tell me about your family/house/community. Before ____ happened, what was your daily life like?

RISE TENSION
When did you first realize that ____ was going to be a problem for you? What were some of the challenges you were facing? How did it feel when ____? What was going through your mind when ____? What did you do to try to solve these challenges?

CONFLICT & RESOLUTION
What was the most difficult moment in your journey? Did you ever feel like giving up? Is there a particular moment or memory that stands out for you? What kept you going, despite the challenges? What was most surprising to you about ____? What have you learned about ____? What are your hopes for the future? How has this changed you? Is there an achievement or contribution that you’re most proud of? Why?

CONCLUSION & ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS
What would you say to people who disagree with ____? What would you say to someone considering ____? What do you think other people should know about this disease/issue/organization? Is there anything else you’d like to share with me? Is there any question I should have asked you, but didn’t?
WELL DONE! We’ve covered the first five steps of the storytelling process. When you’re creating your own stories, you may not always follow these steps in order. Sometimes you will interview the subject before you make the storyboard, sometimes after. Sometimes your story arc will change completely after you’ve done the interview. And you will often need to come back and revisit earlier steps along the way. Storytelling is a creative process, so it doesn’t always look the same each time you do it. THAT’S WHAT MAKES IT SO INTERESTING!
WHAT MAKES A STORY GREAT?

We’ve looked at some of the steps involved in planning and making a story. But what makes a story great? Insights from behavioural science can tell us a lot about what makes a story memorable and impactful. Here are some tips! We’ll use a story about a doctor in Mongolia to illustrate these tips.

Watch Gantsengel’s story: [https://youtu.be/Tyyxgs20NY0](https://youtu.be/Tyyxgs20NY0)

Great stories often have the following characteristics:

1. **UNEXPECTED**
   There’s an element of surprise that makes the audience pay attention and remember.

   Example: In the very beginning of Gantsengel’s story, we learn that his grandmother died in his arms. This is such an unexpected and unusual situation that audiences are more likely to continue watching.

2. **INDIVIDUAL**
   Feature a person/subject with whom your audience can relate. Give some detail about their life, so that they come across as a rounded, real person.

   Example: Gantsengel is an intensive care doctor and frontline health worker in Mongolia. A wide audience, including health-care workers, can immediately relate to his story. Details about his life are shared. For example, he talks about how he likes to climb a hill in his city with his friends, and watch the sunset.
IDENTITY
Think about what values are important to your audience. Find someone who embodies these values.

Example: Gantsengel is a doctor at a military hospital. Respect for and love of his grandmother are important to him. He is likely to appeal to audiences from cultures where duty and respect for elders are important values.

CONCRETE
Keep it simple and specific. Your story should paint a simple picture, which highlights specific details about someone’s life. Avoid jargon.

Example: Gantsengel does not talk about the medical or technical parts of his job. He goes into detail about the difficult emotions and long hours that health workers face, and these elements are shown concretely in the scenes where we see the sweat on the health workers’ uniforms and the marks on their faces from wearing masks. Showing this kind of detail makes their struggle real for the audience.

EMOTIONAL
Engaging your audience emotionally as well as intellectually is key to effective storytelling. Highlight your character’s struggle and emotional journey.

Example: Right from the start of Gantsengel’s story, the emotion of his situation is clear. He talks about losing his grandmother and shares fond memories of her.

STRUGGLE
Highlighting the struggle or conflict makes the audience ‘invest’ in the story. We want to see what happens and how the challenges resolve.

Example: By openly talking about his struggles and the struggles of his colleagues, we learn about the stark reality of working as a health worker during a pandemic. The audience’s hearts are touched by the story, so they are more open to Gantsengel’s call to action when he encourages the audience to follow public health advice and get vaccinated.
3. CAPTURING PHOTOS AND VIDEOS
PHOTOS AND VIDEOS CAN MAKE STORIES MORE ENGAGING, RELATABLE AND PERSUASIVE.

This chapter introduces you to some basic tools, tips and techniques for capturing and editing photos and videos for use in your stories.

It’s a good idea to have your smartphone, tablet or digital camera with you as you go through this chapter.

PHOTO AND VIDEO: STEP BY STEP

1. LEARN ABOUT YOUR EQUIPMENT

2. PRE-PRODUCTION: PLAN YOUR VIDEO OR PHOTOSHOOT

3. PRODUCTION: SHOOT YOUR SCENES

4. POST-PRODUCTION: EDIT YOUR PHOTOS AND VIDEOS
LEARN ABOUT YOUR EQUIPMENT

SMARTPHONE
- Do you have enough space on your device for your photos and videos? If necessary, you may need to invest in an external memory drive or a ‘cloud’ account.

  - Which apps do you have on your phone for video recording and editing? See the recommended apps table [Annex 1].

  - Does your smartphone record good-quality video and audio? Test it! Usually, you will want to use high resolution (around 1920x1080 or higher). You can adjust the resolution in your phone’s settings.

CAMERA
- Using a camera can give you excellent-quality video and photos, but there are many elements to understand. If this is something you want to explore, do some research on these topics:
  - Aperture (which determines depth of field)
  - Shutter speed (as it relates to image movement, exposure and sharpness)
  - ISO (your camera’s sensitivity to light).

  - Play around with these settings on your own camera. You can find more information on your camera manufacturer’s website, and there are a lot of videos and tutorials online that may be helpful.

  - When using a camera, make sure that you have enough space for your photos and video footage. You might need extra SD/memory cards for your photos and film.
**MICROPHONE**

Test your smartphone or camera’s microphone sound before you start recording — you do not want to notice poor sound quality after filming hours of footage!

**TIP: An external microphone for smartphones will improve your video’s audio, especially for interviews.**

If you don’t have access to an external microphone, make sure you:

- Film in an environment with very little background noise.
- Film close to your subject.
- If it’s not practical to film close to the subject, consider using a second smartphone to record audio. This can be placed closer to the subject.
- Do a sound test before you start recording.

**BATTERY**

Always make sure that your battery is fully charged before you start. Bring an extra battery (or batteries) and a portable charger for smartphones.

**MONOPOD OR TRIPOD**

If possible, use a monopod and/or tripod to keep your device and shot steady. If you don’t have access to either of these, try using a chair, table, wall, or even somebody else’s shoulder to steady your shot.
**Plan Your Video or Photo Story**

**Pre-Production**

- Use your storyboard to create a list of shots, scenes and footage you will need in the story.

- This list will help to ensure you capture all the elements and scenes you need to tell the story. Without the storyboard, you may lose important scenes or shots that you will not be able to capture later.

- Don’t forget to include shots of the environment that give the audience a sense of where the story takes place.

- As part of your scene/shot list, include names, locations, and dates.

- Develop a list of props if necessary. For example, if the story is about healthy eating, you might need to have fresh fruit and vegetables ready to be used in the shoot.
PRODUCTION: SHOOTING YOUR SCENES

Use **ABCDE** to frame your shots

**A » ANGLE**
Film horizontally for most purposes. Film vertically only if you intend to post your video on Instagram reels or stories, TikTok or Facebook stories.

Shooting your subjects and environments from different angles will make your video more interesting to audiences. Can you shoot some scenes from above, below, or from one side, for example?

**B » BACKGROUND**
Avoid shooting with distracting background movements and noises that divert the viewer’s attention from what you want them to see and hear.
**C » COMPOSITION**

**Rule of thirds**

Look at the entire frame of your videos or photos and visualize three horizontal and three vertical 'grid lines', like this:

When viewing images, people’s eyes naturally go to one of the intersection points, rather than the centre of the shot. Frame/move your subject along the lines of the grid so that the key elements (usually people’s faces) are placed at points where the lines meet. **This will help ensure the viewer’s attention goes to the most important part of the image.**
D » DISTANCE
Experiment and be creative by featuring wide-, medium-, and close-up shots and scenes in your photo and video stories. See examples below.
E » EXPOSURE
Avoid ‘backlighting’ your subject. Backlighting is when the source of light is behind the subject, which makes the subject hard to see. Try to have the subject facing the light source, whether it’s a lamp inside or the sun outside.

Take a test shot/film to check whether there is enough light in the space, otherwise the footage will be grainy.

When shooting outside, cloudy days, early mornings or late afternoons usually allow for softer, lower-contrast and more dramatic outdoor lighting. This is particularly important when shooting close-ups of people’s faces that require excellent lighting.

You can also experiment with different shooting modes to learn the best ones for different indoor and outdoor lighting situations.

TIP!

IF YOU’RE SHOOTING WITH A SMARTPHONE, JUST BEFORE YOU BEGIN RECORDING, TAP THE SCREEN ON THE INTERVIEW SUBJECT’S FACE OR THE OBJECT THAT IS MOST IMPORTANT. YOUR PHONE WILL AUTOMATICALLY FOCUS THE PHOTO OR VIDEO IMAGE ON THAT OBJECT.

Normally, we avoid backlighting, but sometimes we do it on purpose! Backlighting that silhouettes your subject can be a very good way to photograph or film somebody whose identity should be protected or who does not want to show their face. You can also film from the side or behind the subject so that their face isn’t visible. Shoot some extra close-up footage – of their hands, for example – so that the video or photo story is more engaging.
**POST-PRODUCTION: EDIT YOUR PHOTOS AND VIDEOS**

Using your storyboard and story arc as reference, look through your footage and photos to select the shots that best tell your story. If you’re using an interview, you might choose to transcribe the interview (write down the subject’s words) so that you can build a script from what they said.

Haitang introduces himself and his wife.

Haitang is providing home care to his wife, an emergency room nurse, who is sick with COVID-19.

Haitang has to take care of his wife.

Haitang cooks for his wife and family.

Ting Li’s condition worsens, and she fears that Haitang will become infected also. They decide to go to the hospital, where Ting Li undergoes a CT scan.

The CT scan confirms that the virus is spreading in Ting Li’s body. She makes an emotional phone call to Haitang from her hospital room.

Haitang finally gets the news that his wife is well and will be released from hospital, after spending 50 days there.

He drives to the hospital and returns home with Ting Li.

They reunite with their young son.

Photos captured from the video.

People of the Western Pacific: Haitang’s story. © WHO
EDIT YOUR VIDEO FOOTAGE

You can edit your video footage on your smartphone or computer by using the recommended apps at the end of this chapter (Annex 1). The length of the video depends on the platform you will be using. For example, social media videos should usually not be longer than 3 minutes.

Use the apps to choose the footage that you want to include and move scenes around to get the best flow for the story. Cut out unwanted scenes to make the video as short and succinct as possible.

Consider adding to your videos:

- Screen transitions (for example, fade to black)
- Titles and text (names, locations, job titles, etc.)
- Subtitles are a good idea if the video is intended for social media, as many people scroll through without sound. Subtitles may also be in a language that is different from the audio, depending on the languages your audience speaks. Branding and logos.

Sounds are as important as visuals when it comes to video storytelling. Make sure the voices are clear and audible.

You may choose to add a soundtrack or music to your video story. Music can be used to mark the different parts of the story. For example, you might use tense music during the conflict and climax sections, then change to happy or calm music during the resolution section. Make sure to use royalty-free music, so as not to infringe upon copyright laws. YouTube Audio Library is one source for this. Pay attention to the audio levels of the music as compared to the voices of people talking.
EDIT YOUR PHOTOS

Think about the formats required for specific social media or web stories. For example, square images work best for Instagram.

Use the recommended apps (Annex 1) to edit for lighting, contrast and focus. Play around with these editing features to get the look you want.

Save your images as medium- to high-resolution JPGs or other file types required by the channel you will be using.
TIP! MAKING A GOOD PHOTO STORY

1. BE CLEAR IN YOUR MIND ABOUT THE SIMPLE, MEANINGFUL STORY YOU ARE TRYING TO TELL. USE THE PLANNING STEPS FROM CHAPTER 2.

2. CHOOSE WELL-SEQUENCED AND COMPOSED PHOTOS THAT SHOW EMOTIVE, INTIMATE AND REVEALING MOMENTS.

3. INCLUDE WELL-WRITTEN AND ENGAGING STORY TEXT (FOR EXAMPLE, ONE SHORT PARAGRAPH PER PHOTO).
ANNEX 1.
SUGGESTED APPS FOR PHOTO AND VIDEO EDITING

Use the key to find the right app for you! Unless indicated, the apps listed are free to download. Apps and software programmes are constantly being updated, so do some extra research as well.

PHOTO & VIDEO
VSCO: Photo & Video Editor* 📱 Apple 📱 Android
Pixelmator 📱 Apple 📱 Android

PHOTO
Snapseed 📱 Apple
Adobe Lightroom CC* 📱 Apple
Foto Photo Editor* 📱 Android 📱 Windows 📱 Mac
Photos (pre-installed) 📱 Apple
GIMP 📱 Apple 📱 Windows
PhotoScape X 📱 Apple
Adobe Photoshop Express 📱 Android 📱 Apple
Mextures* 📱 Android 📱 Apple 📱 Windows
Simple Gallery Pro 📱 Android 📱 Apple
PhotoPills 📱 Apple
TouchRetouch 📱 Apple
Luminar 📱 Apple 📱 Windows
Adobe Photoshop Elements 📱 Apple 📱 Windows
PhotoDirector 10 Ultra 📱 Apple 📱 Windows
Capture One 📱 Windows

Any app you choose should allow you to:
- Balance color/lighting
- Balance sound
- Add screen transitions
- Add titles/text
- Add royalty free music
VIDEO
iMovie (pre-installed)  📷/UIKit
KineMaster: Video Editor* 📷UIKit
YouCut (No Watermark)  📷Android
FilmoraGo* 📷Android
DaVinci Resolver 15 📷UIKit
OpenShot 📷Linux
Blender 📷Linux
Lightworks 📷Linux
VSDC Free Video Editor 📷Linux
LumaFusion* 📷UIKit
FiLMiC Pro 📷Android
VideoShow Pro (No Watermark) 📷Android
AndroVid Pro - Video Editor 📷Android
Final Cut Pro X 📷Mac
Lightworks 📷Linux
Adobe Premiere Pro 📷Mac
Adober After Effects 📷Mac
VideoPad Video Editing Software 📷Mac
PowerDirector 17 Ultimate 📷Mac

*Possibility to pay for an app upgrade or extra features.

Note: Many apps are available for both iPhone and Android devices.

TIP!
MANY FREE APPS ADD A WATERMARK TO YOUR VIDEO. CHOOSE APPS THAT DON’T ADD WATERMARKS, LIKE iMOVIE.
Most, if not all, digital cameras feature different shooting modes and settings for aperture, focus, shutter speed and focal length that provide the user with different levels of creative control. While these can vary significantly from camera to camera, these are the most common modes:

**AUTO MODE**  
- Optimum shutter speed, aperture, ISO and flash settings are automatically chosen  
- Best for when the photographer doesn’t have time to change settings

**PORTRAIT MODE**  
- Focuses the foreground subject and blurs the background  
- Great for interviews or close-up shots

**MACRO MODE**  
- Useful for taking pictures of objects smaller than your head  
- Gives you super close-up images  
- Works best in bright conditions

**LANDSCAPE MODE**  
- Creates well-focused images from foreground into the distance  
- Works best in well-lit areas

**SPORTS MODE**  
- Great for high-speed activities (running, bike-riding, cars, etc)

**NIGHT PORTRAIT MODE**  
- Camera auto-selects the foreground subject for best lighting  
- See "Portrait Mode"

**ADVANCED CAMERA MODES**  
- Other modes are also available such as M (Manual), AV (Aperture-Priority), TV or S (Shutter Priority) and P (Programmed Auto)  
- Names and symbols vary  
- Usually for more advanced photographers
4. CREATING UNDERSTANDING
FOR A STORY TO HAVE IMPACT, IT MUST RESONATE WITH OUR AUDIENCE’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE TOPIC.

OUR UNDERSTANDING OF AN IDEA OR TOPIC IS SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCED BY OUR CULTURAL BACKGROUND, AGE, EDUCATION AND MANY OTHER FACTORS.
UNDERSTANDING CONCEPTS

Say that your story is about liver disease. What does the liver mean to people in your audience? In some cultures, the liver is associated with anger and frustration, while in other cultures, it’s the organ of courage. Your audience may know something about the liver’s function, or they may never have heard of it.

If your story is about an infectious disease, what does the audience think about how diseases are spread? Do the words ‘germ’ or ‘virus’ have meaning to your audience? Is disease associated with spirits or magic in this community?

If nutrition is the topic, what are local attitudes about ‘junk food’ and ‘healthy food’? Some people may see processed food as superior to home-grown food from the garden, due to associations with wealth. In other contexts, it may be the reverse.

IT’S VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE DON’T ASSUME THE AUDIENCE SHARES OUR KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE TOPIC.
UNDERSTANDING VISUALS

In the same way, we might sometimes assume that visuals mean the same things to all people, but this is not the case. **It’s a great idea to use visuals to communicate your story, especially when targeting audiences with low-literacy levels.** But how will you visually represent something like a virus, for example?

And of course, you know that a virus is a microscopic structure that hacks your cells to multiply and attack your immune system.

Why do they keep showing us these giant spiky balls and telling us it is a disease?
CO-CREATION, RESEARCH AND TESTING

Because we all understand concepts and visuals in different ways, it’s very important to get the input of your audience when developing a story. Co-creation is a great way to do this.

CO-CREATION

Co-creation is where you involve representatives from the target audience in the development of your story. Instead of using a top-down approach, you collaborate with the representatives of your target group at each step of developing your story. This is a wonderful way to work, because:

- Your collaborators will help you to avoid wrong assumptions about concepts and visuals.
- You will produce a product with the tone and message that best engages your audience.
- Your collaborators will feel ownership of the product and be more likely to spread the messages in their own community. This means you avoid creating the feeling that the suggested health behaviours are being imposed from an institution that does not know or understand the community.
- You will develop relationships with members of your target audience. Since most campaigns will need more than one story or product to change behaviour, these relationships will be useful for future parts of the campaign.
RESEARCH AND PRODUCT TESTING

If co-creation is not an option due to time or budget constraints, it’s still very important to gain insights into your audience’s understanding of a topic and its interpretation of your story.

The next chapter on Measurement, Evaluation and Learning will show you some easy ways to gain baseline insights about your audience’s knowledge, understanding and practices. It also shows how you can test your story to see if it is understandable and effective.

THIS PART OF THE PROCESS IS VERY IMPORTANT!

IF YOU SKIP THIS STEP, YOU MAY SPEND TIME AND RESOURCES DEVELOPING A STORY THAT HAS NO MEANING, OR A CONFUSING OR UNINTENDED MEANING, TO YOUR AUDIENCE.
CONSENT AND ETHICAL REPRESENTATION

In many stories, we use photos and videos of real people. It’s important to ensure the representation of individuals and groups are ethically considered.

CONSENT

Each country has different laws on privacy. **Photographers and film crews should always comply with local laws, customs and sensitivities.** Your organization may also have a policy on consent in photos and videos – check this and always comply. On the next page is a guide developed by WHO to get you thinking about when you may need to get written or verbal consent from people in your story.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consent not required</th>
<th>Written consent or recorded verbal consent required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>GENERAL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-recognizable individuals in public (faces and all other identifying features are obscured)</td>
<td>All recognizable individuals, in all settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public figures/personalities in public (e.g. politicians, public figures)</td>
<td>Images of children and adolescents (consent from a parent or guardian is required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speakers at the World Health Assembly or other public meetings or conferences</td>
<td>Recognizable individuals in any setting where personal, private or clinical information is exposed (e.g. patients or health workers)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowds in public locations not depicting identifiable individuals (e.g. an audience at an outdoor concert, festival or public medical intervention)</td>
<td>If photos/videos are to be taken in a building or facility that is not open to the public (e.g. a hospital, health centre or school), written permission is required from the owner, director or manager in order to access the building and take photos or film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Images of persons whose clinical status or social situation may carry a stigma (e.g. people with HIV or a sexually transmitted infection; a story about pregnancy termination; sex work; people who’s sexual orientation and gender identity may carry a stigma in their context; a history of alcohol and drug use; survivors of gender-based violence)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Medical records, names and ID cards should usually be blurred out.

When getting consent from a subject, it’s important that the person fully understands what will be captured and how the products may be used in the future. Explaining this in the subject’s own language and in a culturally appropriate way is crucial.

In some cultures, for example, family consent is required, as well as individual consent. If you do not speak the local language and/or do not have a deep understanding of cultural norms in that place, bring a local interpreter.
ETHICAL REPRESENTATION

Even after you have obtained consent from a subject, think carefully about the ways in which you will use their story and image.

To reach the audience on an emotional level, we may be tempted to use images that convey strong negative emotions. But we must be careful that our images do not contribute to stigma or negative, harmful stereotypes. For example, showing very graphic images of someone living with tuberculosis may increase stigma around that disease. Advocating for better sanitation by showing people from a certain community living in dirty conditions might contribute to the idea that this group of people is unclean, or that they are unfortunate victims.

AS STORYTELLERS TRYING TO SPARK POSITIVE HEALTH CHANGES, IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE WE ARE NOT DOING HARM.

AGAIN, CO-CREATION WITH THE TARGET GROUP, RESEARCH AND TESTING ARE KEY TO MAKING SURE WE ARE NOT UNWITTINGLY USING IMAGES IN AN UNETHICAL WAY.

If you’re telling a story about tuberculosis, for example, involve people living with the disease in the creation of the story. Or, if this is not possible, at least get their insights before you start and get their feedback on the story as you develop it.
5. MEASURING AND EVALUATING STORY IMPACT
So far, we’ve looked at how stories can educate, engage and influence audiences for positive health outcomes. But how do we know if our stories are having the impact that we want? This is where measurement, evaluation and learning (MEL) comes in.
Measuring, evaluating and learning helps us know what works and what doesn’t. Without this, we are starting from the beginning with each project and relying on assumptions, rather than using our previous experiences to improve and reach better outcomes.

**MEL IS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING OUR SUCCESSES, SO THAT THEY CAN BE REPLICATED IN THE FUTURE. IT ALSO HELPS US TO KNOW WHEN A PROJECT IS LESS SUCCESSFUL THAN WE HOPED, BECAUSE WE CAN LEARN AND MAKE CHANGES NEXT TIME.**

Integrating MEL in storytelling projects can also help others see the value of your work. You can give donors, partners and internal stakeholders a clearer, more compelling picture of the impact and gain support for more storytelling projects.

Let’s look at some basic steps and techniques for measuring and evaluating stories:

1. REVISIT YOUR SOCO
2. ESTABLISH YOUR BASELINE
3. DEFINE YOUR SMART OBJECTIVES
4. DEVELOP A PROGRAMME LOGIC MODEL
5. IDENTIFY YOUR INDICATORS
6. COLLECT YOUR DATA
7. ANALYSE AND APPLY YOUR DATA
REVISIT YOUR SOCO

Revisit the ‘Single Overarching Communication Outcome’ that we worked on in Chapter 2.

For Haitang’s story, for example, the SOCO is: Viewers understand the risks of COVID-19, especially for frontline health workers, and the impact on families of those infected.

Now we need to figure out how to measure whether or not our story effectively achieves our SOCO.

ESTABLISH YOUR BASELINE

A baseline is the starting point from which you can measure change. We have to know where we are starting from to know where we want to go.

For the purposes of health storytelling, a baseline can be linked to an audience’s knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP).

To establish a story baseline, you can use these “KAP” indicators.

KAP INDICATORS

Knowledge - What does the target audience know about the story topic?

Attitudes and beliefs - What are the attitudes and beliefs of the target audience concerning this topic?

Behaviours and practices - What are the behaviours and practices of the target audience respective to this topic?

Where possible, these indicators should be informed by data. For example, has research on the audience’s knowledge, attitudes and practices about the topic been conducted previously by another organization or programme?

Can you conduct research to understand your target audience’s KAP through focus group discussions, online surveys or key informant interviews? For guidance on this type of research, see the section on Collecting Data for Storytelling Projects.
**EXAMPLE:** When developing Haitang’s story, we could collect data to understand our audience’s current KAP by answering the following questions:

**Knowledge:** What does the audience know about the health risks associated with COVID-19?

**Attitudes and beliefs:** How likely does the audience think it is that they or their families will be affected? What are their attitudes towards frontline health workers responding to the pandemic?

**Behaviours and practices:** How well are audience members following protective measures like masking and physical distancing?

To zoom in on one part of the KAPs, let’s imagine that a survey conducted by a local public health organization shows that only 20% of people in our target audience believe that COVID-19 can be ‘very dangerous’ to their health. This can inform our baseline – we know that we want to increase this percentage among people who see our story.

**DEFINE YOUR SMART OBJECTIVES**

We can’t usually expect to change health behaviours through a single story, but we may be able to influence some elements of knowledge, attitudes and practices. It’s helpful to define these desired changes using SMART objectives.

**SMART objectives are:**

- **Specific:** Contain numbers of percentages, dates and details of target audiences.
- **Measurable:** Measurement, evaluation and learning are planned from the beginning.
- **Attainable:** The objective can be achieved in the timeframe.
- **Relevant:** Align to overarching organizational objectives, goals and priorities.
- **Timed:** Have a target date or deadline.

Look at your SOCO and your baseline data. What are some SMART changes you’d like to see?
For example, for Haitang’s story, one SMART objective might be:

**After watching the video, 50% of viewers respond that infection with COVID-19 can be ‘very dangerous’ to their health.**

Write down the SMART objective for your storytelling project:
DEVELOP A PROGRAMME LOGIC MODEL

Once you’ve defined your **SMART objectives**, develop a programme logic model. This is a planning tool that will help you to define the steps you need to take to reach your SMART objectives.

The programme logic model is important to ensure that your evaluation process is systematic, integrated and evidence-based. There is a template for a programme logic model below. Usually, the following MEL stages are included in the model:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INPUTS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES (short-term)</th>
<th>OUTCOMES (longer-term)</th>
<th>IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is needed to plan and prepare the story?</td>
<td>What must be done to produce the story?</td>
<td>What is produced that reaches and engages the target audience?</td>
<td>How does the audience respond to the story?</td>
<td>Are changes occurring in audience knowledge, attitudes and practices?</td>
<td>What is the result of these outcomes? (the bigger picture)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IDENTIFY YOUR INDICATORS

Indicators help to measure whether our storytelling is effective and whether we are meeting our objectives. They should be identified and collected at each stage of your storytelling activity. They can draw on quantitative and qualitative data.

For example, for Haitang’s story we want **50% of viewers to believe that infection with COVID-19 can be ‘very dangerous’ to their health.** So, the indicator of success here will be increased belief about the health impact of COVID-19.

How do we measure this?
A viewing panel could be one way: viewers could be asked about their beliefs about COVID-19 before seeing the video, then again afterwards. In this case, the indicator is the change in the percentage of people who respond differently after the video.

For another example, if your objective is about getting as many audience members as possible to see the video, you may want to measure key statistics from your social media (e.g. views, likes, shares).
COLLECT YOUR DATA

You’ve already collected some data in Step 2: Establishing your baseline. Now, you should continue collecting data to monitor your progress. For example, when you have a close-to-final edit of a video story, you could conduct a key informant interview, where you show the draft video to someone representing your target audience and ask them a series of questions, then make changes to the video accordingly.

Then, once the project is complete, you can collect final data to understand what your audience thinks about the story, what messages they received and understood, and whether the story has influenced or changed their knowledge or attitudes. For example, you may like to record their reactions to the video on social media, or you may like to set up a viewing panel where you measure the audience’s knowledge, attitudes and practices before and after viewing the story.

More details about these data collection methods appear below in the section Collecting Data for Storytelling Projects.

Now that you have identified the metrics and how these will be collected, you can fill in the programme logic model table below.
Here is an example of what the programme logic model and indicators might look like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS</th>
<th>INPUTS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES (short-term)</th>
<th>OUTCOMES (longer-term)</th>
<th>IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan and prepare the story</td>
<td>Produce and share the story</td>
<td>Reach and engage the audience</td>
<td>Collect data about the audience's initial response</td>
<td>Collect data on KAPs changes</td>
<td>Collect data on public health impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INDICATORS (How we know if we have successfully completed the step)

| SMART objectives | Baseline on audience KAPs | Baseline social media and web stats of previously published videos on similar topics or from the same series |
| Develop the story arc, create the storyboard | Story produced | Viewing panel conducted | Video shared (e.g. posted on social media and website) |
| Reach (total number of viewers) | Social media number of views | Web number of views | Number of views of at least 50% of video length on web and social media |
| Number of views of complete video (90+%) on web and social media | Number of views from viewing panel |
| Social media engagement (likes/shares/comments) | Viewing panel comments/initial reactions (e.g. How well did the audience relate to the protagonist? How would they rate the transportability of the story?) |
| Increased knowledge about the topic | Attitude change about the topic (e.g. perceptions about the importance of preventive measures against COVID-19) |
| Increased commitment/intention to follow desired behaviour (e.g. comply with preventive behaviours against COVID-19) | Reported change in behaviour (e.g. 6 months after viewing, more compliance with preventive behaviours than before) |
| Overall impact on health topic (e.g. reduced COVID-19 transmission among your target group) |

METHODS (How will we gather the information to know if we have met our indicators?)

| Literature review | Social media and web analytics | Social media analytics | Social media analytics | Viewing panel results analysis |
| Literature review | Social media analytics | Web analytics | Viewing panel results analysis |
| Web analytics | Viewing panel activity observation | Viewing panel activity observation |
| Epidemiological data on case numbers |

| Social media analytics | Web analytics | Viewing panel activity observation | Viewing panel results analysis |
| Social media analytics | Web analytics | Viewing panel activity observation |
| Viewing panel results analysis |
| Epidemiological data on case numbers |
**Programme logic model template**

Now it’s your turn! For each part of your programme logic model, write down the relevant indicators to show how you will track and measure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES (short-term)</th>
<th>OUTCOMES (longer-term)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INDICATORS (How we know if we have successfully completed the step)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| METHODS (How will we gather the information to know if we have met our indicators?) | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
ANALYSE YOUR DATA

Here is where we evaluate and learn from our efforts. Bring together the insights from all your data collection efforts, and reflect on these questions:

- **What specific change(s) were you able to achieve, according to your data?**
- **Did you meet your SMART objectives?**
- **What challenges did you face?**
- **What would you do differently next time?**

Revisit your findings next time you are beginning a storytelling project to help learn from the successes and challenges.

You might like to put your findings into a simple report or presentation, so that they can be easily shared with relevant people, such as partners or colleagues who work in the same technical area or who use storytelling in their own work, so that they can learn from your experience too.
ANNEX 3.
DATA COLLECTION METHODS FOR STORYTELLING PROJECTS

Collecting data can sometimes seem daunting. But there are some easy and valuable ways to get this information. Below is a brief description of some methods you can consider.

**FOCUS GROUPS**

Focus group discussions (FGDs) are *guided discussions bringing together a small group* (e.g. six to 10 people) *with a shared characteristic* (e.g. age, gender or occupation) *to discuss a particular topic*. They are a relatively quick and cost-effective way of gaining an understanding into the range of health attitudes and practices within a particular location or cultural setting, or among a particular social or demographic group.

The analysis will involve comparing the KAPs of viewing panel members before and after watching the video and identifying changes. Viewing panels provide qualitative, descriptive data. **Participants’ words, stories and examples become the evidence that we consider as we make MEL judgements.**

**VIEWING PANELS**

Viewing panels are similar to focus groups discussions. **A group of people who are representative of the target audience are brought together to view the film or video and provide feedback.**

Viewing panels start with a series of questions about the topic of the film to gather a baseline of knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP). Then participants watch the story and are asked to identify their understandings and recognition of key messages.

**KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS**

Key informant interviews (KIIIs) *can provide in-depth, qualitative insights from different individuals – including community leaders, professionals or residents – who have first-hand knowledge about a community or topic.* Interviewees’ words, stories and examples become the evidence that we consider as we plan the story and/or later when we make MEL judgements about outcomes and impacts. Unlike more formal research methods such as surveys, **KIIIs help us to understand an issue in depth.** Key informant interviews are usually easier to arrange and are less costly than focus groups or surveys, and they provide first-hand information that is often directly on topic.
SURVEYS

Surveys gather information from a sample of people to source data and insights. They are very adaptable and can be qualitative, quantitative or both, depending on the questions asked. But they can be more expensive than the other methods listed here.

ANALYTICS

Analytics in the storytelling context refer to the results achieved after sharing your story on different channels and platforms. Basic analytics may include the number of shares and likes on social media, the number and quality of media mentions, the number and duration of online views, and so forth. Tracking this data can give insights into the reach of your story and how the general public responded to it.
Congratulations! We’ve reached the end of the *Storytelling Handbook*. By now, you have explored the key elements of storytelling for health impact, including:

- Why stories matter and how stories contribute to Communication for Health
- How to plan and create stories
- What makes a great story
- How to create understanding through stories across different audiences
- How to monitor, evaluate and learn from your storytelling projects.

Remember, storytelling for health impact is both a science and an art. The more you practise, the more your storytelling skills will develop.

Return to the guidance and templates in this handbook as you continue your storytelling journey!
REFERENCES


