

DOCUMENTING STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Your Guide to Respectful Storytelling

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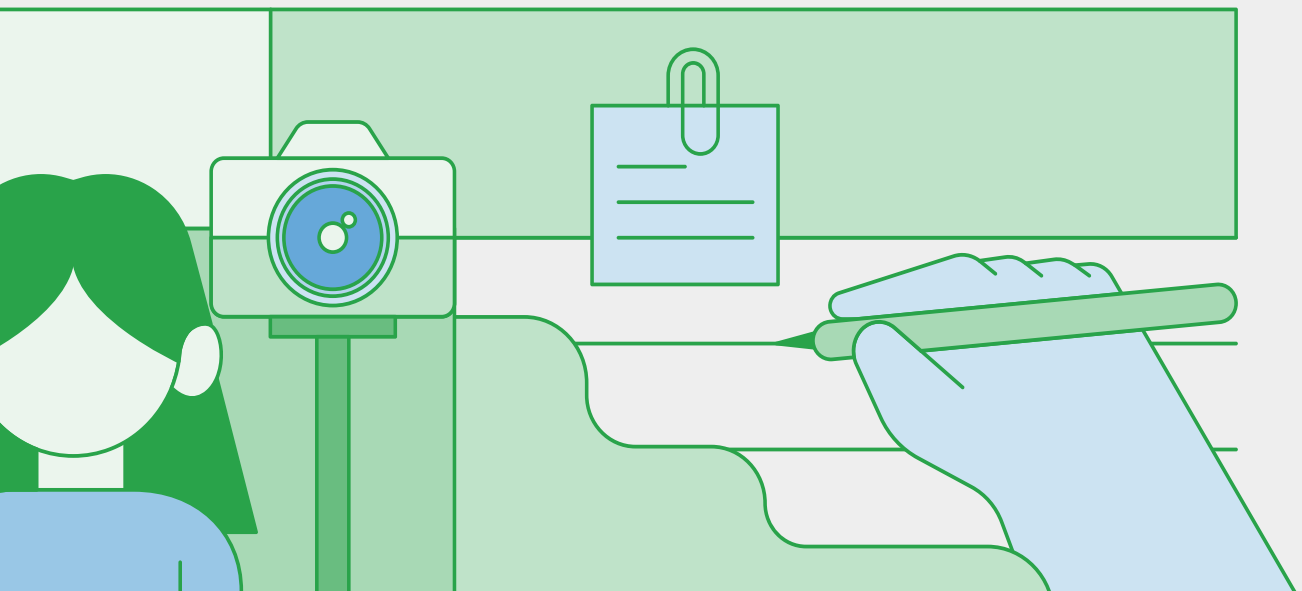
1. Introduction: Your Role in Inclusive Storytelling

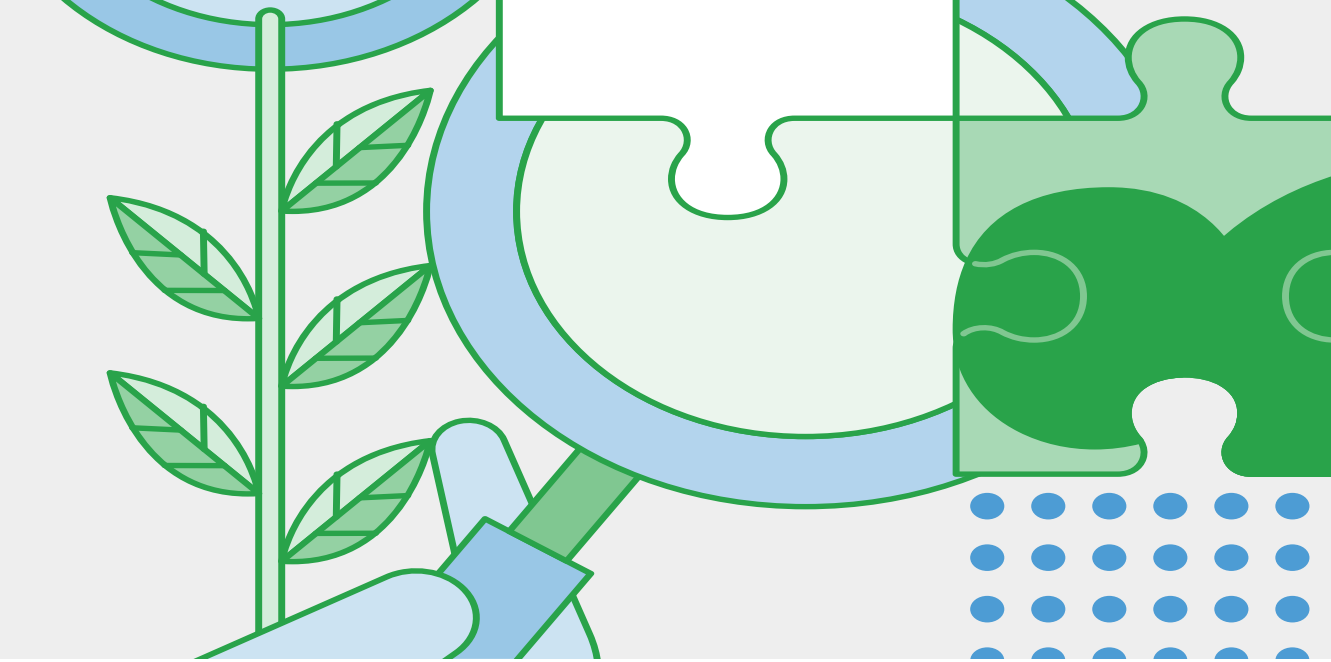
Welcome, future storytellers!

Your time in the field is incredibly important. You're not just taking notes or snapping photos; you're helping us understand the real-life impact of the FINCAPES Project's work. Every person you meet has a unique story to tell, and it's our job to help everyone hear it. We want to make sure everyone's voice is heard, we believe everyone has a right to be seen and understood.

Purpose of this Guide: This guide is designed to equip you with the knowledge and practical tips needed to respectfully and effectively capture human-interest stories from communities in and around peatland and mangrove areas. It emphasizes an inclusive approach, ensuring that diverse perspectives, especially those of vulnerable groups, are highlighted. Your contributions will be vital for showcasing the real impact of the FINCAPES Project works.

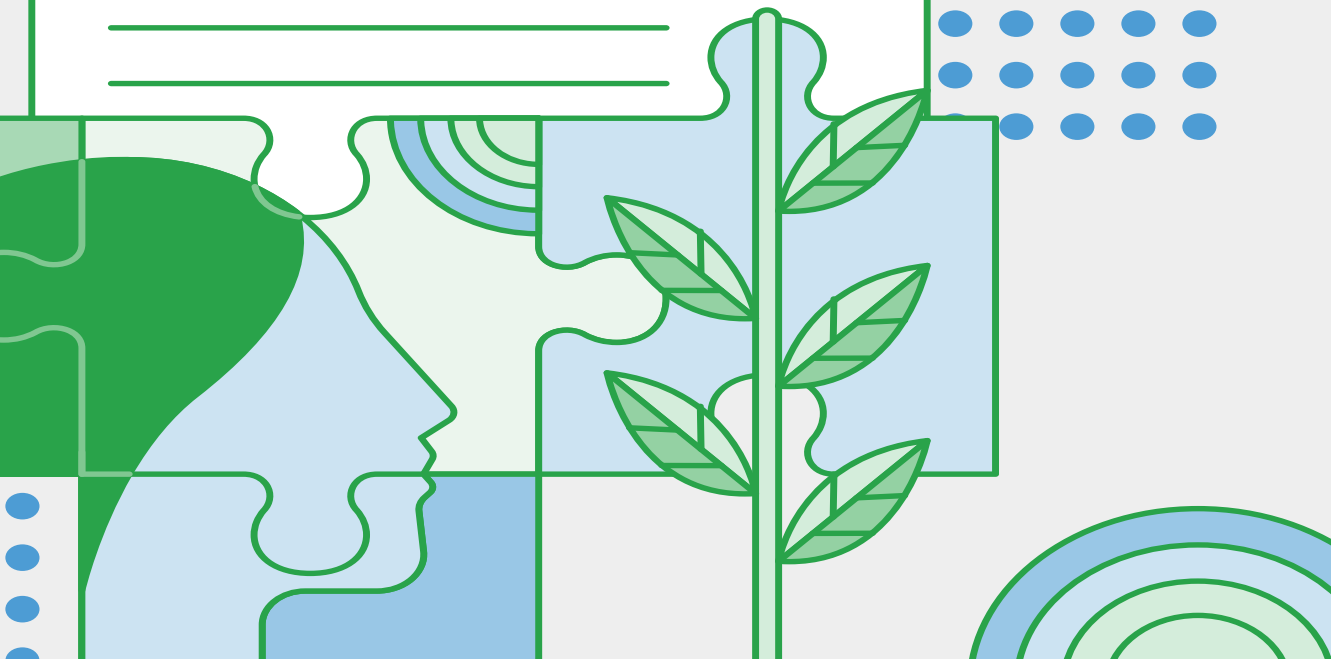
Who Should Use This Guide: This guide is primarily for interns and field staff involved in data collection and community engagement for the FINCAPES Project. Anyone who will be interacting directly with community members and documenting their experiences or the project's activities should use this resource.





How to Use This Guide: This document is structured to provide guidance at every stage of your storytelling process:

- ▶ **Understanding the Human Story:** This section helps you grasp the importance of diverse perspectives, focusing on how vulnerability and resilience shape individual and community experiences in relation to restoration efforts.
- ▶ **Planning Your Fieldwork:** Before you go to the field, this part provides essential considerations for ethical engagement, obtaining consent, and ensuring accessibility for all participants.
- ▶ **Implementing Story Capture:** This section offers practical communication strategies for interacting respectfully with diverse individuals, including specific tips for communicating with people with various disabilities, children, elderly individuals, and disempowered women.
- ▶ **Annexes:** Additional appendices provide practical guidelines for photo documentation and photography for publication.



2. Understanding the Human Story: Diverse Perspectives from the Field

Imagine a big, beautiful puzzle, and each person you meet holds a piece of it. Your role is to help put these pieces together to show the full picture of life in the villages around our peatland and mangrove areas. This means looking closely, listening carefully, and going beyond what's obvious to truly understand how our work touches lives.

Seeking Every Voice: Everyone has a story.

What it means: Don't just talk to the community leaders or the most outgoing people. Look for those who might be shy, or less visible, and offer them a chance to share. Their experiences are just as valuable.

Example: When visiting a village involved in mangrove restoration, you might talk to the head of the fisherfolk group, but also seek out a woman who collects crabs in the mangroves, or an elder who remembers how the mangroves used to be years ago.

Capturing Change & Transformation: Vulnerability, Resilience, and Our Reach

What it means: This section is about capturing the real-life stories of how our mangrove and peatland restoration efforts are shaping communities. We want to understand the changes people experience, especially how these changes intersect with their vulnerabilities and reveal their resilience. Your stories will help us see if our program is truly extending its reach to everyone, ensuring no one is left behind.

Communities living near peatland and mangrove areas often face specific challenges due to environmental degradation, such as increased flooding or reduced resources like fish and clean water. Our program aims for these restoration activities to positively impact *everyone*. Your field stories are crucial for showing these impacts and confirming that benefits reach even the most vulnerable groups.

This includes capturing narratives from:

People with disabilities: How does someone who uses a wheelchair get to the new mangrove boardwalk?

Example: We met Pak Budi, who lost his sight years ago. He told us how the newly restored mangrove area, with its firmer ground, makes it easier for him to navigate and fish independently, compared to the muddy, degraded areas.

Women and girls: Are they involved in the restoration efforts? Do they feel safer or have new opportunities because of the changes?

Example: Ibu Ani shared how the mangrove seedling planting program has not only provided her with a small income but also a sense of empowerment in protecting her village's coastline.

Potential story could also be other women and girls in the village may experience new change, such as participating in farmers group's meeting and socialization, have the opportunity to share opinion regarding restoration activities.

Older persons: Are their traditional ways of life being supported or challenged by the changes? Can they still access resources from the environment?

Children: How does a healthier environment affect their play, their health, or their schooling?

Individuals in remote or underserved areas: Is our program reaching the farthest corners of the community? What are the unique challenges they face in accessing help or benefits?

Those experiencing poverty or social exclusion: How does the program affect their ability to earn a living, get food, or feel like a part of the community?

Example: Nenek Siti, who is over 70 years old, explained that while she can no longer walk long distances to collect firewood, the improved peatland health has brought back certain medicinal plants closer to her home, which she can now easily access.

Example: Little Dio, 8 years old, showed us how he now catches more fish near the restored mangrove area, which means his family has more food to eat.

Example: In the most isolated hamlet, Ibu Lina told us that before the program, they had to travel far for clean water. Now, with improved water management from the peatland restoration, they have a reliable source closer to home.

Example: Pak Candra, a daily labourer, explained that the restoration activities provided him with temporary work, helping him feed his family during a difficult period.

The Power of Personal Narratives: It's about 'them'.

What it means: Our program's goal is for restoration activities to be impactful for *all* communities. This means your stories should highlight how these activities are making a positive difference, whether by reducing flood risks, improving livelihoods through increased fish populations, or providing better access to clean water. It's also important to specifically explore how these benefits reach vulnerable groups and ensure no one is left behind. Capturing these stories helps us understand if the program is making their lives better, or if there are still gaps.

Ask questions like:

- ▶ How has the healthier mangrove/peatland ecosystem directly improved your life or your family's daily activities?
- ▶ Are the benefits from these restoration efforts, like more fish or cleaner water, reaching everyone in the community, including those who face extra challenges?
- ▶ How has the project adapted to make sure people like you can also participate in and gain from these activities?
- ▶ What are your hopes for the future of your community?

Beyond the Obvious: Look closely, listen deeply.

What it means: Not all struggles or impacts are easy to see. Some people might face challenges like chronic illness, mental health conditions, or social stigma that aren't immediately clear. These are sometimes called "invisible disabilities" or unseen hardships. Your job is to be sensitive, observant, and create a comfortable space for them to share if they wish.

Example: During a visit, you might notice someone who seems withdrawn. Instead of pushing for an interview, you could subtly observe if our program's community group activities offer a welcoming space that encourages their participation, even if it's just being present.

Authenticity and Dignity: Always treat people with respect.

What it means: Approach everyone with genuine curiosity and respect. Remember, you are a guest in their community. Their experiences are valuable, and your stories should reflect that truth, without judgment or exaggeration. Make sure your documentation makes them feel proud, not exposed. This means that when you are capturing stories and images, you should aim to present the individual in a positive and empowering light, highlighting their strengths, resilience, and dignity. You want them to feel good about how their story is told and how they are portrayed.

Example: Instead of taking a photo that emphasizes someone's poverty or a broken-down living situation (which might make them feel exposed or pitied), you could:

- ▶ Focus on their active participation in a restoration project, showing them planting mangroves or working with their community.
- ▶ Capture a moment of joy or connection with their family in their home, showcasing their resilience and the warmth of their relationships.
- ▶ Highlight their skills or knowledge, for instance, an elder sharing traditional wisdom about the peatland, making them feel valued for their contributions.

In essence, it's about shifting the narrative from "look at what they lack" to "look at what they do, who they are, and how they contribute."



3. Planning Your Fieldwork: Capturing Meaningful Human Stories

Before you even step into the boat or onto the village path, some careful planning will make your story capture much more effective and respectful.

Relevance: Identifying the Heart of the Story

What it means: Think about why we're going there. What kind of human stories are we trying to find? How do these stories connect to our work in restoring mangroves and peatland?

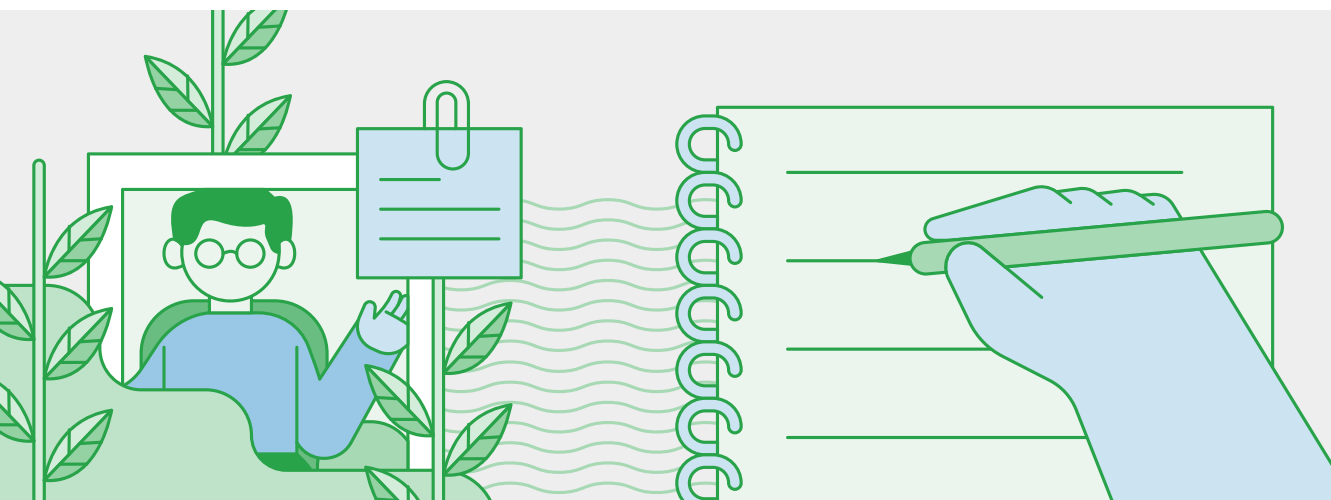
Key questions to think about:

- ▶ "How do people in these communities rely on healthy mangroves and peatlands for their daily lives?"
- ▶ "What problems have they faced because these areas were degraded?"
- ▶ "How has our program helped them directly, or what are the challenges that still exist even with the program?"

Look for opportunities to show both problems and solutions:

Don't just focus on the negative. Show how people are coping, adapting, and finding strength, even in difficult situations.

Example: Before going, I'll think: 'I want to capture stories about how mangrove restoration brings back fish, but also how it impacts the women who traditionally gather shellfish.' This way, I'm looking for both ecological and gender-specific human impacts.



Diverse Voices: Ensuring Every Perspective is Heard

What it means: Don't limit yourself! Try to talk to a wide variety of people. This means actively seeking out individuals from different age groups, genders, and those who might be vulnerable or marginalized.

Prioritize those often overlooked: These are the stories that often go untold and provide the most unique insights. This ensures our stories truly represent the entire community.

Always aim to get the story directly from the person: If you want to know how a program affects someone, ask *them*. While family or friends can sometimes help explain, their own words are most important for their story.

Example: When I visit the village, I won't just talk to the head of the community. I'll ask to speak with the elderly fisherman who has lived there his whole life, the young woman involved in planting seedlings, and if possible, someone in the community who uses a wheelchair to see how they access the restoration sites.

Participation: Fostering Collaborative Storytelling

What it means: It's not just about you getting a story from them. It's about them having a say in *their* story. They have a right to be involved in deciding if and how their story is shared.

Work with the community: Look for ways to involve local people or community groups in shaping how their stories are told. This could mean asking for their input on what details to include or how to phrase things.

Example: I'll explain to a community elder that we want to share stories about the importance of peatland restoration. I'll ask if he'd be willing to tell his story and if he has any suggestions for how we can best share it with others.

Ethics and Consent: Upholding Trust and Dignity

What it means: People's personal information, especially about their health or challenges, is very private. We must handle it with extreme care and respect.

Informed Consent – The Golden

Rule: Before you record anything (audio, video, or just notes), you *must* explain clearly:

- ▶ Who you are and why you're there.
- ▶ What story you want to capture.
- ▶ How their story (and photos/videos) will be used (e.g., on our website, in reports, for fundraising).

That they can say “no” at any time, or stop the interview, or ask you not to use something they've said. Make sure they understand this *fully* and give their permission freely.

If a family member is helping, make sure the person themselves *still* understands and agrees.

Example: I'll say: 'Hello, my name is [Your Name] from [Our Organization]. We are here to document stories about how the mangrove restoration is helping your community. Would you be willing to share your experiences? Your story might be used on our website or in our reports to show how important this work is. You don't have to share anything you don't want to, and you can stop at any time. Is that okay with you?' Then, I'll have them sign the consent form.

Note: Download the photo & video release form (consent form) [here](#).

Privacy and

Confidentiality: Always treat any personal details, especially about someone's health or any struggles they mention, as private. Explain that their privacy will be protected.

Example: I'll assure them:

'Anything you share with us about your health or personal challenges will be kept private and only used with your explicit permission, and we can make sure your name isn't used if you prefer.'

Managing Expectations: Be honest. Don't promise things we can't deliver. If someone thinks sharing their story will automatically get them help or money, gently clarify.

If there *are* local services that can help, be ready to provide that information.

Example: I'll clarify: 'Your story helps us show others the impact of this program, but I can't promise direct personal assistance. However, if you're looking for support for [specific need], I have information about [local service/organization] that might be able to help you.'

Removing Barriers: Think about any costs or difficulties someone might face just by talking to you (like losing time from work, or needing to pay for transport to meet you). Try to minimize these burdens.

Example: If someone needs to travel to a specific meeting spot to share their story, I'll offer to meet them closer to their home or provide transport reimbursement if feasible and allowed by our policy.

Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation: Ensuring Everyone Can Share

What it means: Be ready to change your approach to fit the person, not the other way around. This means being flexible so that everyone can participate comfortably.

Practical Steps:

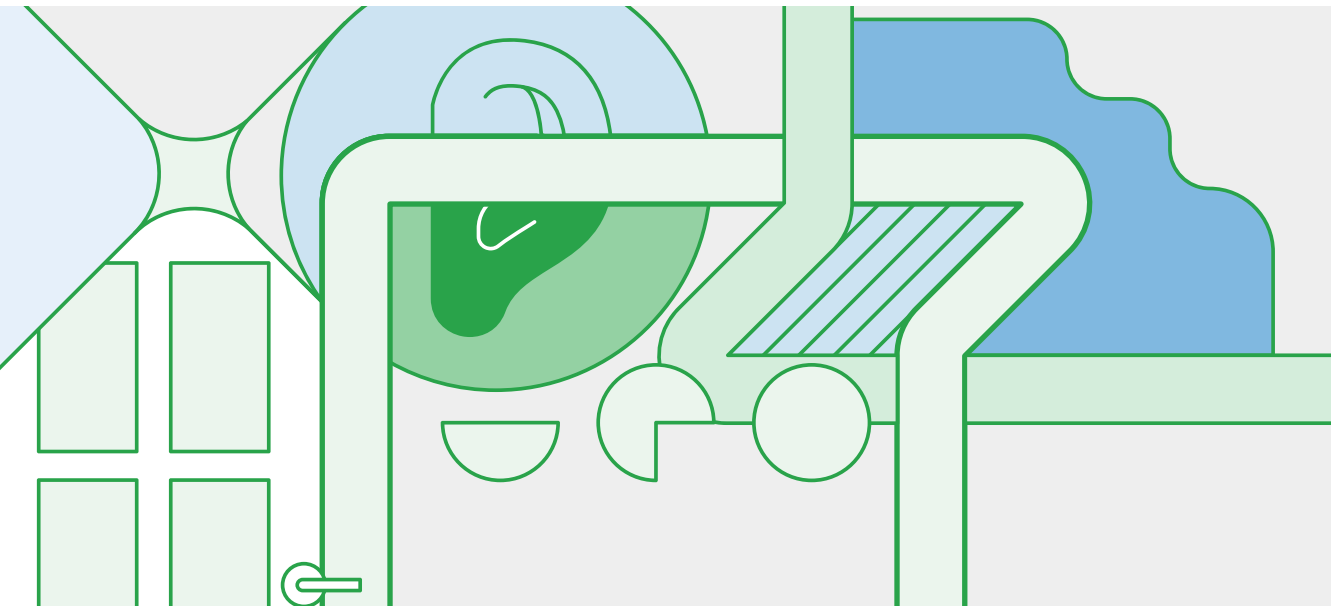
This could mean: using simpler language, showing pictures, giving them more time to think and respond, or meeting them in a place that's easy for them to get to.

Example: If I'm meeting someone who finds it hard to speak loudly, I'll find a quiet spot away from noisy areas. If someone needs information in a larger font, I'll have that ready. If they prefer to talk at their own home because moving is difficult, I'll go to them.



4. Implementing Story Capture: Respectful Communication & Connection

Once you're in the field, how you talk and interact with people is super important. It's about building trust and truly understanding their perspective. Be mindful and adjust your style for each person.



4.1. General Communication Principles: The Basics of Good Conversation

Direct Engagement: Talk to the person directly.

What it means: Even if someone is there helping (like a family member, a translator, or an assistant), always look at and speak to the person whose story you want to hear.

Example: If Ibu Sari's daughter is helping to translate, I'll still look at Ibu Sari when I ask a question, and listen to her response as translated, rather than just talking to the daughter.

Ask and Listen: They are the experts on themselves.

What it means: Don't assume you know what's best for someone. Ask them directly how they prefer to communicate, where they'd like to sit, or what makes them comfortable. They know their needs best.

Example: Before we start, I'll ask, 'How do you prefer to communicate? Should I speak slowly, or write things down?' or 'Where would you be most comfortable sitting for our chat?'

Eye Level: Connect respectfully.

What it means: Try to be at the same height as the person you're talking to. If they are sitting, you should sit too. This shows respect and makes them feel more comfortable.

Example: If Pak Doni is in a wheelchair, I'll pull up a chair and sit down so we are at eye level, instead of standing over him.

Respect Personal Space and Devices: Hands off, unless asked!

What it means: A person's assistive devices (like wheelchairs, crutches, or walking sticks) are part of their personal space. Never touch or lean on them unless they specifically ask you to.

Example: When talking to Ibu Lena, who uses a crutch, I'll be careful not to accidentally bump or touch her crutch, treating it with the same respect as her personal space.

Inclusive Language: Speak kindly and respectfully.

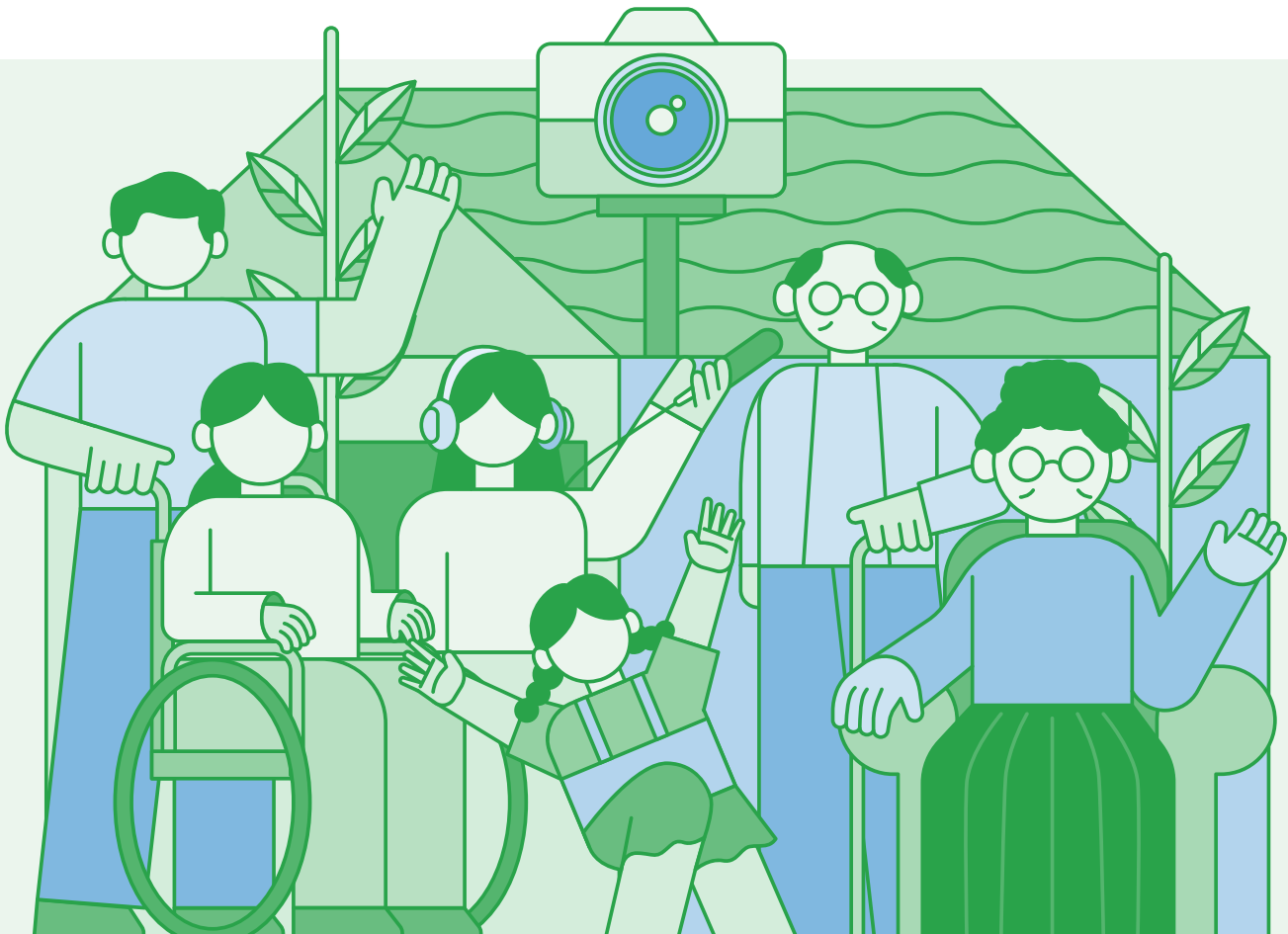
What it means: Always use words that are respectful and positive when talking about people. Avoid old, outdated, or hurtful terms related to anyone's disability or background.

Example: Instead of saying 'confined to a wheelchair,' I'll say 'uses a wheelchair.' And instead of calling someone 'disabled,' I'll say 'person with a disability'.

Diverse Formats: Not just talking.

What it means: When you're explaining something, or in a group discussion, use a mix of ways to get your message across. This could be talking, showing pictures, writing things down, or even demonstrating.

Example: In a community meeting about peatland rewetting, I'll not only explain it verbally but also show simple drawings or diagrams of how the water levels will change, to make sure everyone understands.



4.2. Tailoring Your Approach: Specific Communication Strategies for Diverse Needs:



For People with Physical Disabilities:

Clear Pathways: Make sure the path to where you're meeting is clear and easy to navigate.

Table Space: If you're at a table, ensure there's enough space for someone using a wheelchair to pull up comfortably.



For People with Vision Impairments:

Ask about materials: Ask if they prefer large print, Braille, or electronic versions of any written materials.

Introduce yourself: When you first meet, say your name clearly. In a group, say your name each time you speak so they know who's talking.

Read aloud: Describe any pictures or written information you use.

Say when you leave: Tell them if you're stepping away from the conversation or leaving the room.

Don't guide without asking: Never grab someone's arm to guide them. Ask first if they need help.



For People with Speech Impairments:

Allow time: Give them plenty of time to speak. Don't rush, interrupt, or finish their sentences.

Ask for repetition: If you don't understand, politely ask them to repeat or rephrase. Never pretend you understood if you didn't.

Ask about interpreters: Ask if there's someone nearby who might be able to help interpret.



For Deaf People and People Who Are Hard of Hearing:

Ask about

communication: Find out what works best for them: sign language, lip-reading, or writing notes.

Use an interpreter:

If they use sign language, it's best to have a professional interpreter. If a family member helps, make sure the deaf person agrees.

Face them: If they lip-read, look directly at them and speak clearly. Don't look at their interpreter or family member.

Where to sit: Ask where they prefer to sit to follow the conversation best.

Get attention: Wave or gently tap their arm/shoulder if you need their attention.

Write it down: Always have a pen and paper ready in case you need to communicate by writing.

Normal volume: Speak clearly and at your usual volume. Don't shout.

Quiet spot: If someone has partial hearing, move to a quiet area with less background noise.



For People with Cognitive Disabilities (e.g., learning difficulties, memory challenges):

Build trust: Take your time to build a comfortable and trusting connection first.

Simple words: Use clear, simple language and short sentences. Avoid jargon.

Use visuals: Show pictures and photos instead of lots of words.

Respectful tone: Talk to adults and teenagers like the adults they are, not like children.

Repeat & show: Repeat information and use demonstrations to help them understand.

Hands-on: Use practical activities and give real-life examples.

Plenty of time: Give them lots of time to think about what's being said and to respond.

Remove distractions: If possible, find a quiet space with fewer distractions.

Accept differences: Be understanding of behaviors that might be different from what you're used to, as long as they don't harm anyone. Lead by example and don't allow teasing or bullying.

Notice & reminders: Some people benefit from more notice for events and gentle reminders.

Small pieces: Provide information in smaller, easier-to-digest chunks.

Support person: For new activities, ask if they prefer to have a support person with them.



For People with Psychosocial Disabilities (e.g., mental health conditions, emotional challenges):

Accept differences: Be understanding of different communication styles and be ready to adapt. This might mean giving more time for answers or breaking information into smaller parts.

Support person: Check if they prefer a support person to attend activities with them, especially if it's a new situation.

Notice & reminders: Give them enough notice for meetings or activities, and offer gentle reminders, as preparation can be important.

Accept diverse behaviors: Be understanding of behaviors that might seem unusual but are not harmful. Lead by example to prevent bullying or teasing.

Smaller groups: If big groups make them uncomfortable, offer options for smaller group activities or individual conversations.

Rest breaks: Make sure there are frequent breaks, as people might get tired or lose focus more quickly.

Allow movement: Some people feel calmer if they can move around. Be flexible and allow them to come and go if needed.

Respect and opinion: Always treat the person with respect and ask for their opinion in discussions.

Understanding fluctuating energy: Be understanding that their energy levels might change day-to-day. If they need a break from activities, stay in touch to make them feel welcome to return.



For Children

Always Be Accompanied:

Children must **always** be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian during any interaction for story capture. This is crucial for their safety and comfort. Ensure consent is obtained from the parent or guardian.

Engage Playfully: Use age-appropriate language, games, or drawing to help them express themselves.

Visual Aids: Use pictures, toys, or real objects from the environment to help them describe their experiences.

Focus on their world: Ask about their daily activities, play, school, and how the changes affect these aspects.

- ▶ **Example:** "What games do you play near the mangroves? Has it changed now that the mangroves are healthier?"

Maintain Child Protection

Policy: Strictly adhere to all child protection policies. Your priority is the child's well-being and safety.

Short & Simple: Keep questions and explanations brief and easy to understand.

Safe Space: Ensure they feel safe and comfortable. Avoid interviewing them alone.

Respect their 'no': If a child is unwilling to talk or appears uncomfortable, do not pressure them.



For Elderly Individuals

Allow Time: Be patient and give them plenty of time to process questions and respond. They may speak slower than you are used to.

Listen Actively: Pay close attention, as their stories may contain valuable historical context and nuanced observations.

Clear & Direct: Speak clearly and at a moderate pace. Avoid shouting.

Comfortable Setting: Choose a quiet, comfortable location for the conversation, considering their mobility and hearing.

Respect Wisdom:

Acknowledge their life experience and wisdom. Ask about how things have changed over the years.

- ▶ **Example:** “Nenek, what was this area like when you were a child? How does it compare to today, especially with the restoration?”

Offer Assistance: Offer to help with seating or walking if needed, but always ask first.



For Disempowered Women (or other disempowered groups)

Private & Safe Space:

Ensure a safe and private environment for the conversation, free from potential observers who might influence their responses or cause discomfort.

Build Trust Gradually:

Be patient and spend time building rapport before delving into sensitive topics.

Empathetic Listening:

Listen without judgment and validate their experiences.

Respect Cultural Norms: Be aware of local cultural norms regarding communication, especially between genders.

Offer Choices: Empower them by offering choices (e.g., who to include in the interview, what topics to discuss, when to meet).

Focus on Agency: Frame questions to highlight their strengths, contributions, and efforts, rather than solely focusing on their vulnerabilities.

- ▶ Example: Instead of “How badly has the flooding affected your household?”, try “What strategies have you and other women in the community used to cope with the increased flooding, and how has the project supported those efforts?”

Link to Collective Action: If relevant, explore how their experiences connect to broader community issues or how collective action might address their concerns.

- ▶ Example: “Do you think other women in the village share similar experiences? How do you think women’s voices could be better included in decisions about the restoration activities?”



Responding to Distress and Supporting Autonomy: Being there for everyone.

If someone seems upset: If anyone appears distressed (no matter their background), respond kindly. Listen to their worries, ask if they are okay, and offer to connect them to help if it's appropriate.

Respect choices: Always be flexible and give people the chance to make their own decisions. Never assume someone can't decide for themselves just because they have a disability or face other challenges. Sometimes, they might just need a little extra support or time to make a choice.

Annex 1. How to Document Field Activities

1



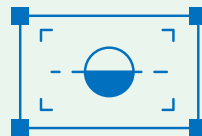
Clean the lens before taking pictures.

2



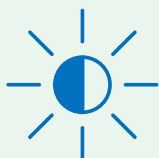
For mobile phone photography, turn off flash mode and ensure the phone camera is set so that the photo size is at least 1 MB. Try to take pictures in landscape/horizontal format (elongated).

3



To ensure the image is in focus, use both hands when taking photos, or if possible, use a tripod.

4



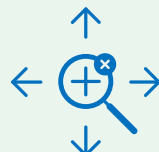
Ensure the lighting is bright. Avoid photographing with the subject backing the sunlight, as this will make the subject appear dark.

5



To ensure photo size is not reduced, try not to send them via messaging applications (WhatsApp, SMS, etc.), but through cloud services (Dropbox, Google Drive) or email. If you are forced to send via WhatsApp, make sure to select the "Document" feature when attaching the photo, not "Gallery".

6



If you want to clarify the camera's focus on the subject, avoid zooming and it's better to move closer to the photo subject. Zoom on mobile phones is digital, not optical, which reduces image quality.

7



If possible, the photo subjects should be balanced between male and female workers.

8



Request consent from all photo subjects by having them sign the Photo Video Release Form attached with this guide

Annex 2. Photography Guidelines for Publication



Plan the topic or story you want to document by doing a simple mind map.

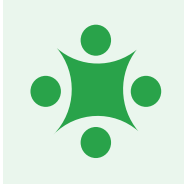
For example:

- ▶ **Main topic:** Community activities for mangrove planting or peatland rewetting.
- ▶ **Supporting stories (events that can be documented with photos):**
 - ↳ Community members receiving seedlings or tools.
 - ↳ Project staff distributing or handing over materials to community members.
 - ↳ Staff conducting data collection (writing/filling out forms, holding data collection devices, etc.).
 - ↳ Interactions between staff and community members (talking/dialoguing, shaking hands, etc.).
 - ↳ Community members planting mangroves, digging canals, or engaging in other restoration activities

Accessibility: Easily accessible subjects are important for creating a photo story. The closer the photographer is to the subject, the stronger the story captured by the photo will be. This

Examples of Human-Interest Photos: Capturing Action





closeness allows the photographer to capture details of the object or subject being photographed (e.g., facial expressions).

Photograph your story subjects from various angles. A simple principle in photography is EDFAT (entire, detail, framing, angle, time). This method helps us become familiar with the environment and also trains us on how to view something with detail.

- ▶ **Entire**, also known as an “established shot,” is the overall capture of a place or event. This stage aims to create a sequence of photos.
- ▶ **Detail** refers to the specific things in a location or event. While “entire” captures broad and general images, “detail” can include symbols, objects, or the subject’s facial expressions.
- ▶ **Frame** or “framing” is how we position an object or subject within the photo to become the Point of Interest (POI) in such a way that it is surrounded by other elements in the photo.
- ▶ **Angle** or “shooting angle” determines from which direction we will take a photo. We can try various angles when photographing subjects or objects. “Eye-level view” is a normal angle representing a human’s viewing position. “Low angle” indicates an angle lower than eye-level view, while “high angle” indicates an angle higher than the normal angle.
- ▶ **Time** or “capture time” provides variation to the photos we can produce. “Time” also refers to the photographer’s ability to capture a scene or event to produce a strong and dramatic photo

This guideline has been prepared to help capture insights from experts or informants regarding a subject. The recorded videos will be used for activity documentation, supporting the development of audiovisual or promotional materials, as well as learning resources. Following these guidelines will ensure high-quality recordings that effectively convey the valuable knowledge and experiences of our experts.

1 Interviewing a Resource Person

Microphone and Audio Setting

- ▶ Use a lapel (lavalier) microphone for the interviewee and a boom or handheld microphone for the interviewer.
- ▶ Test audio levels before starting. Listen for background noise and adjust the environment or equipment as necessary.
- ▶ Position the lapel microphone 6–8 inches below the chin to capture clear audio. Ensure no clothing or jewellery interferes with the mic.
- ▶ Use a secondary recording device as a backup in case of primary audio failure.

Camera Setting

- ▶ Use a high-quality camera with good resolution. Ensure it is stable on a tripod to avoid shaky footage.
- ▶ Set the camera to record in high definition (1080p or higher) at 24 or 30 frames per second.
- ▶ Use manual focus to avoid shifting during the interview. Ensure the interviewee is in sharp focus.
- ▶ Position the camera at eye level with the interviewee. Use a medium shot (waist up) for a balanced view.





Background and Environment

- ▶ Ensure adequate lighting. Use soft box lights if indoors, or natural light if outdoors, but avoid harsh sunlight which can cause shadows.
- ▶ Choose a quiet, well-lit location with a non-distracting background. Ensure the environment is relevant to the interview content.
- ▶ Minimize background noise by choosing a quiet location and using soundproofing techniques if necessary.

Stylistic Guidelines

The interviewee should look at the interviewer, not directly at the camera, for a natural look.

Rule of Thirds: Position the interviewee slightly off-center using the rule of thirds to create a visually pleasing composition and also to make room for graphic/text for editing process.

Interview Conduct:

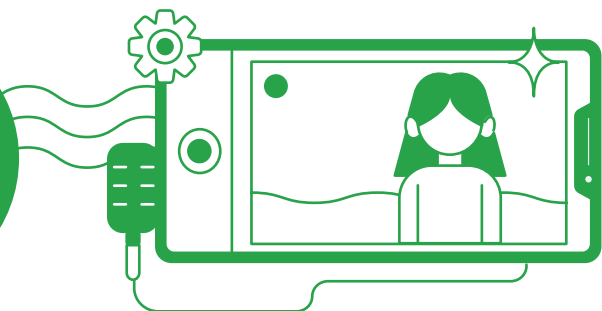
- ▶ Brief the interviewee on the interview process and objectives.
- ▶ Prepare the questions and review them with the interviewee, so they can prepare their answers.
- ▶ After the camera is on, ask the interviewee their detail information (name, role in the activity, institution, country of origin).
- ▶ Start with an introduction and a few easy questions to warm up the interviewee. Proceed with the main questions, maintaining a conversational tone.
- ▶ Monitor the audio and video feeds for any issues.
- ▶ Inform the interviewee to speak clearly and take their time answering questions. Reassure them that pauses or re-takes are acceptable.
- ▶ Maintain open and positive body language. Avoid crossing arms or looking away frequently.

2 Self-Video Recording

This section is for when *you* are the one doing the storytelling, reporting on your findings from the field, or sharing a message directly to the camera.

Equipment

- ▶ Use any available recording device (video camera, webcam, handycam, tablet, laptop, desktop computer, or smartphone).
- ▶ Select the highest quality settings available on your device (at least 1080 HD or 4K).
- ▶ The rear camera on a smartphone typically offers better quality than the front camera. For the best video quality, use the rear camera on your smartphone.



Camera Angle

- ▶ Position the camera at eye level.
- ▶ Avoid a “talking head” shot. Frame yourself from above the shoulders, aligning your eyes with the camera.
- ▶ Apply the rule of thirds: Imagine your screen divided into nine equal segments by two vertical and two horizontal lines. Position yourself at the intersections for a balanced composition.
- ▶ Film in landscape mode.
- ▶ Avoid using your phone’s digital zoom, as it reduces image quality. Use zoom only if your phone has optical zoom or a telephoto lens.
- ▶ Be consistent with your eye contact. Either look into the lens to appear as if you’re making eye contact with viewers, or look at the screen to seem like you’re talking to someone else. Choose one and stick with it.

Audio Recording (Microphone)

- ▶ Use an external microphone if available for better audio quality.
- ▶ Test your audio setup before the final recording. Check for echoing, muffling, or clipping.
- ▶ Speak loudly and clearly. Face the camera or screen while speaking, and avoid turning your head.
- ▶ Prepare notes or talking points about your topic. Some prefer a full script, but try to memorize it to maintain eye contact with the camera.
- ▶ Avoid frequent pauses or tangents to maintain a professional appearance. Knowing your content will improve your confidence and the video’s flow.
- ▶ Rehearse your content to anticipate your next sentence.

Environment

- ▶ Record in a quiet space, free from background noise.
- ▶ Choose a room with minimal echo.
- ▶ Eliminate potential noise sources (e.g., fans, air conditioners, typing, mouse clicks, shuffling papers).

Recording Tips

- ▶ Leave a 10-second buffer at the beginning and end of your recording.
- ▶ Record in one continuous clip, including mistakes, to maintain consistent sound quality.
- ▶ Record backup audio on your phone if concerned about quality. Set your phone to 'Do Not Disturb' or Airplane Mode to avoid interruptions.
- ▶ of your video. Consider how your clothes interact with your background. Avoid busy patterns to prevent distracting your audience.
- ▶ Avoid casual wear like sweatsuits or sleeveless tops for formal videos.

Lighting

- ▶ Use natural light from a window as your primary light source.
- ▶ Ensure the light is evenly distributed to avoid shadows on your face.
- ▶ Avoid being backlit (light source behind you).
- ▶ Aim for front lighting (light source in front of you) or side lighting (light source to the side).
- ▶ Overhead lighting can also be effective if it provides even illumination.

Appearance

- ▶ Wear clothes that make you feel comfortable and confident, enhancing your camera presence.
- ▶ Match your clothing to the tone

Further resources

1. RDI Network, CBM Australia, Nossal Institute for Global Health and Pacific Disability Forum, [Research for All Toolkit](#)
2. United Nations, [Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities](#)
3. UNFPA Asia-Pacific, [Disability Data Microsite](#)
4. CBM Global, [Accessible Meeting Toolkit](#)
5. CBM, [Digital Accessibility Toolkit](#)
6. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2012). IFRC photography guidelines: [A guide to digital photography.](#)

About FINCAPES PROJECT

The FINCAPES project, a 5.5-year, gender-responsive initiative funded by the Government of Canada and jointly undertaken by the University of Waterloo, aids Indonesia in sustainable climate change adaptation, mitigation, and biodiversity conservation. Aligned with Indonesia's national priorities, FINCAPES builds capacity in forecasting and mitigating flood impacts, promoting Nature-based Solutions for peatland and mangrove restoration, and strengthening climate finance policy with a focus on carbon financing.

For information:
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