

INTRODUCTION

When recording in the field, explain all the time, to everyone in the community, what you are doing. This is very important in helping to make sure that the project is not seen as something suspicious, secretive, or threatening. Just explaining what is happening and what you are doing with your camera or audio recorder can go a long way to easing any possible tensions that may arise about it, or any suspicions that it is hostile to the interests of men in the community.

These guidelines address the following topics:

- I. Why Field Recording is Important
- II. How Recordings will be Carried Out
- III. Technical Tips
- IV. Evaluating Field Recordings

I. WHY FIELD RECORDING IS IMPORTANT

Collecting interviews in the field is a hugely effective way of helping to build understanding of the project amongst people who are not directly involved in it, especially people living beyond Uganda. When the women we interview tell their stories, particularly when they are still within the communities where they live, they enable us to appreciate their way of life, their everyday living circumstances, their challenges, and their successes.

When recorded over a long period of time, these stories are an extra tool that we can use to evaluate how successful the project has been in helping women meet their goals with regard to land-related issues and where the project has been less successful.

It also helps us to appreciate the complexity of the issues surrounding land ownership in the places where the women are living. This is particularly important because it's tempting to see problems relating to land tenure as having simple causes and simple solutions. In fact, the problems have complex roots, and solutions can likewise be complex.

To summarize - field recordings are important because they:

- Help us to communicate effectively to a wide audience about the project and the women who have taken part in it
- Help us to evaluate the successes and challenges of the project
- Encourage a realistic view of the problems women face, and the potential solutions to those problems

II. HOW RECORDINGS WILL BE CARRIED OUT

- The field recordings will start at the beginning of the project and continue until project completion.
- The recordings will take place in two phases.

The following steps should be followed as the project proceeds:

- Women are approached to take part in the communications part of the project. They are made aware of the Interview Consent Document. They sign it or have it signed by a trustee/representative.
- The first phase of the field recording process begins: a series of biographical interviews with the women who have agreed to take part in the project and who have also agreed to take part in the communications part of the project. Record in audio form (MP3) with accompanying photographs if appropriate.
- The second phase of the recordings will take place at regular intervals over the entire course of the project. Record in audio form (MP3) with accompanying photographs if appropriate.

Biographical Information

These biographical interviews are intended to help us get to know the women who we will be following over the course of the project. Because of that, although the women should be encouraged to talk about their situation with regard to land, they should also be encouraged to talk about a broad range of other subjects relating to their life. In these questions, we are trying to get an all-around picture of the person we are talking to.

Because we'll be following them over a long time, we want to know about their background, the events that have shaped their lives, their life in the village, their families and relations, and their community.

The first questions should establish where we are, who we are speaking to, and why we are speaking to them.

Biographical Interview Suggested Format

For the first biographical interview, here is a suggested format to use:

Introduction

Explain how you'll be doing the interview - recording with a recorder that you will be holding in close to her as she speaks and that there will be translation happening at the same time.

Ask if she is comfortable and explain that if you ask anything she is unsure about answering, she can stop and ask you about it and that she can take a break at any point.

Then start with the questions.

Biographical Questions

- What is your name?
- Where are you from? (Where were you born?)
- How did you come to live here? When?
- Are you married?
- How long have you been married?
- How did you first meet your husband? What was he like?
- Can you describe what happened at your wedding? (Explain here that as you're not from N Uganda you really want to get an idea of what happens at a wedding)
- Did your husband pay bride price? What did that involve?
- Did you miss your home when you moved in with your husband?
- Do you have children? Boys? Girls?
- What are their names?
- How old are they?
- Do they all go to school?
- What do you remember about having your first child?
- Did you spend time in an IDP camp? Which one?
- When did you move into the camp? How did you get there? Was it far?

TEMPLATE: FIELD RECORDING GUIDELINES

- Can you tell me the story of how that happened? So what were you doing when the soldiers came and told you you had to move?
- Who was living beside you in the camp?
- Did you make new friends in the camp?
- Did you miss your home place?
- What was the worst thing about the camps?
- Were there any good things about being in the camp?
- How long did you stay there?
- How did you find out that it was time to move back to your village?
- What happened when you first came home? Can you describe what you saw?
- Was it completely overgrown? Were the houses all gone?

Land Questions

- How did you know where to move back to - what land?
- Who else was moving back with you?
- Did you have any problems when you moved back?
- Did you have access to land for planting?
- Where was your husband/children/husband's family?
- Can you tell me how land is important in your daily life?
- What is the land you use now?
- How do you know that it is for you to use? Where is it?
- Do you feel that it is yours?
- How/who decides what is planted on the land?
- What do you like to plant?
- Why do you plant those plants?
- What do you do with the harvest? Do you sell it? Eat it? Give it to family?
- Where do you sell it? Do your neighbors sell there too?
- When you think about land, what does it mean to you?
- Why is it important to be able to get access to land?
- What would you say is your main problem with regard to land?
- What do you think would solve that problem?
- What do you and your neighbors and friend think about the idea of owning land?
- When you have trouble, where do you turn for help?

Regular Update Interviews

These interviews are intended to chart the progress of the women as they take part in the project over time. As we want to paint a sort of 'before-and-after' picture of their situation with regard to access to land and security of tenure, it's important that we maintain the regular interview schedule throughout the whole duration of the project.

Regular Update Interview Suggested Format

For these regular update interviews with the women who are in the project, here is a list of suggestions for how to begin each interview and how to work through each interview:

Introduction

Each time an update interview is recorded, it should have a clear introduction.

This is very important so that we can keep close track of who is conducting the interview, when the recording took place, where it took place, and who was interviewed. Here's what to say as an introduction on the tape:

- What day it is, what date it is, where we are, and who is speaking.
For example: 'It's Wednesday October 3rd and we're in Pader. My name is Herbert Kamusiime.'
- Who we are speaking to.
For example: 'I'm speaking to Jennifer Ajilong who lives here with the husband and four children.'
- You can also include some descriptive elements if you like.
For example: 'We're sitting under the mango tree outside the school house, the sun is shining but it's not too hot.'

The reason for this is to try and paint a picture for someone who is listening to the interview - to help them imagine what it looks like where you are conducting the interview. If there are any strange noises in the background, it's good to try and move away from them. If you can't get away though, mention them so listeners know what they are. For example: 'That sound you can hear is a man hammering a post into the ground. So Jennifer...' and then ask the first question.

Main Part of the Interview

How to structure the main part of the interview:

- Update us on what the interviewee told us in her previous interview.
For example: 'Jennifer, when we spoke two weeks ago you told us about starting to keep a journal at the start of the project. What have you been doing in the last two weeks?'
- Ask the interviewee for specific details about what she describes.
For example: 'When you say you were keeping a journal, what were you writing in it? Do you have it there? May we look at it?' [Then read a section of the journal if the interviewee is in agreement.]
- Let each question lead you to the next one. Follow your own interest in what the interviewee is telling you.
- On some occasions you will meet with one of the women who you have spoken to and not much may have happened since the last time you met. In that case it's still good to meet, but talk about some other things which aren't directly related to the project. These are good opportunities to explore more of the biographical details which you will have spoken about in the very first interview you conducted.
For example: 'You mentioned that you have three children - can we go and meet them?'
This is an example - it might not always be practical in the field. In which case ask about some other aspects of the interviewee's life that you are curious about. These are details that help create that rounded portrait of the interviewee we mentioned as an objective of the field recordings.
- Other possible scenarios:
 - 'Can we take a walk around the village and talk as we walk?'
(This is a good way to make an interview sound interesting, even when there's not actually much going on. The physical movement helps create a sense of movement in the mind of the listener.)
 - 'What songs do you know? Will you sing it for me?'
(These can be songs from childhood, songs from work, anything that has some meaning for the interviewee.)
 - 'How does the community feel about the project you are part of?'

III. TECHNICAL TIPS

The best way - and the easiest way - to deal with technical issues that arise when doing field recordings is to try and think of them before they happen. Here is a checklist of what can happen, what you should try and do, and what you should try and avoid.

Not Enough Batteries/Batteries Not Charged

Make sure you have a supply of batteries that will last you for as long as you will need them while in the field. It's also important to make sure that rechargeable batteries are always charged and ready to go when you need them.

So, after each day in the field recording interviews make sure the batteries are put in the charger and charged, if possible. This is a good routine to get into at the end of the day, and will save you a lot of time and worry.

Not Enough Memory Cards

If you get back to the base/office in time, try and transfer the audio files to a computer on the day of the recording. If that's not possible because of time, make sure and do it first thing the next day. That way you can ensure you have a safe copy of the files on the computer.

The same applies to photographs and any other material gathered in the field. It's always good to get it transferred to a computer as quickly as possible.

Backups

If you have the computer capacity, make a backup copy of the audio. Then if anything goes wrong with the recorder, computer equipment, or internet connection you have a safe copy of the material somewhere else.

Internet Uploading

Load the audio onto the internet and transfer it to Leslie/Dominic as quickly as you can after you finish recording. Again, that's a good way of making sure nothing gets lost.

Label Everything

Label everything on the day you record it. That way you won't have to go back and try and figure out an interview you did five days ago was about, or who it was with.

So, for interviews recorded on September 30th, you might label them:

1. Josephine 30 SEPT
2. Josephine 30 SEPT
3. Josephine 30 SEPT
1. Margaret 30 SEPT
2. Margaret 30 SEPT

The numbers 1-3 here are helpful because they keep the interviews in order. When they're listed on a computer, sometimes the files end up being catalogued alphabetically or some other way (like by size), so having a number is always really useful. Thus '1 Josephine' is the first interview you did with Josephine on September 30th, '2 Josephine' is the second, etc.

Practice with the Equipment

Practice with the camera and the audio recorder around the office. Interview colleagues about their work and their lives. That's a great way to get familiar with the recorder and the camera and their different settings. For a camera, especially, it's very helpful to get practice taking pictures in different light etc., so that when you come to use it in the field, you are comfortable with it. The same applies to interviewing - the more you do it, the easier it will become and the better at it you will become. Have fun.

IV. EVALUATING FIELD RECORDINGS

The field recordings will be evaluated regularly at the start of the project. Ideally, audio material will be sent every two weeks to the project sponsor, who will review them with the Communications Consultant and provide feedback on the interviews as soon as possible.

By the end of the first two months of the communications activities happening in the field, we should have been able to work together to fine tune the process and the product of Communications activities.

After the first two months of the project have elapsed, we will review this process and make adjustments as necessary.