# Telling Canada's international assistance story

## Practical tips for partners on capturing photos and videos to share with Global Affairs Canada

Strong photos and videos help Canadians see the people, partnerships and progress that Canada's international assistance supports. By capturing authentic, respectful images and stories, partners can help demonstrate project results and build public understanding of Canada's role in supporting communities at home and around the world.

Use this guide when planning, capturing and sharing visual content connected to Canada-funded international development or humanitarian assistance activities.

## Tell a clear, people-centred story

| Element | What to capture | Context to provide |
|---|---|---|
| **People** | Participants, staff, local partners and community members actively involved in the project. | **Who** is involved? Who is benefiting? Use names only when appropriate and consented. |
| **Activity** | Training, service delivery, equipment in use, community engagement, field work or other project activities. | **What** is happening? What project activity does the image show? |
| **Location** | The setting, landscape, facility, school, clinic, community space or other recognizable local context. | **Where** and **when** was it taken? Include country, city or community, and project site if appropriate. |
| **Impact** | Visible changes, participation, results, skills gained, services delivered or opportunities created. | **Why** does it matter? What changed because of the project? What impact is being achieved? |
| **Canada's contribution** | Appropriate visibility, signage, materials or context that connects the activity to Canada's support. | **How** is Canada contributing? Use agreed credit lines and visual identity requirements when applicable. |

## Respect, dignity and consent

**Before taking or sharing photos and videos:**

- Obtain informed consent.
- Respect local customs and cultural norms.
- Protect the privacy and safety of vulnerable individuals.
- Portray people with dignity and agency.
- Avoid images that reinforce stereotypes or sensationalize hardship.

**Take particular care when photographing or filming:**

- Children
- Vulnerable populations
- Survivors of violence
- Participants involved in sensitive health-related projects

***A useful test – ask yourself this question:*** *Would I be comfortable if this image were used to represent me, my family or my community?*

## Photo tips

| DO | AVOID |
|---|---|
| ✓ Capture people doing something, not just posing<br>✓ Take a mix of wide shots, action shots and close-ups<br>✓ Use good lighting<br>✓ Capture both horizontal and vertical images<br>✓ Take multiple versions of important moments | ✗ Blurry, grainy or low-quality images<br>✗ Empty infrastructure with no human context<br>✗ Photos that only show handshakes or formal meetings<br>✗ Images that identify people in sensitive situations without appropriate permission |

## Video tips

Short video clips can be highly effective for storytelling and social media.

**Consider capturing:**

- Activities underway
- Community interactions
- Equipment or services in use
- Project environments
- Short testimonials (30-60 seconds)

**When recording testimonials:**

- Choose a quiet location
- Ensure the speaker is well lit
- Encourage natural, unscripted responses
- Keep responses concise

**Helpful questions include:**

- What has changed because of this project?
- What are you most proud of?
- How has this initiative helped you or your community?

***Authentic responses are the most powerful.***

## Simple storytelling template

**Use this structure to draft a caption, story, report blurb or social media post:**

With Canada's support, [Partner organization] is helping [beneficiaries] in [location]. Through [activity], participants are gaining [skills, opportunities or services], helping to improve [outcome].

***Tip:*** *Specific examples, numbers and results can help make stories more tangible and meaningful for Canadians.*

## Tag us on your storytelling posts

**Tag us on your social media** *(it will make it easier for us to find your posts)*.

These are our handles:

- **X**
  - EN: @CanadaDev
  - FR: @DevCanada
- **Facebook**
  - EN: @CanadaDevelopment
  - FR: @DevCanada
- **Instagram**
  - EN: @canadadev
  - FR: @developpementcanada

## Additional resources

For questions about submitting photos, images or video footage, contact the visibility and recognition team at visibility-visibilite@international.gc.ca.

For the complete visual identity requirements, consult Recognizing Canada's international assistance – Visual identity guidelines.