

## Using videos in research



Using videos in research is a less common method than traditional methods such as surveys and questionnaires. However, it is an effective tool for capturing information, monitoring or evaluating a project or programme.

It is an interesting and engaging way to:

- Track project beneficiaries
- Present findings
- Gather opinions

There are three main methods used in video research:

**Reports to camera** – reporting findings, research, or opinions to camera, can be used instead of writing a formal report.

**Video diaries** – a technique often used in reality T.V shows. Research subject talks to the camera giving a diary of how they are feeling or what has been happening to them. Usually undertaken in private where the research subject is alone with only the camera.

**Vox pops** – a technique often used by journalists to gather opinions of the public. Vox pop means 'voice of the people' and involves asking many different people the same question.

## Benefits and limitations of using video

There are benefits and limitations of using video as a research method - keep these in mind:

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- People enjoy this method more than filling in something like a questionnaire.
- It gets people talking.
- People say to videos things they wouldn't normally tell an interviewer.
- People are honest.
- Allows the researcher to return to footage after the interview.
- Provides clips that you can use in marketing and presentations to funders.

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- It can be time-consuming and resource intensive to collect and analyse data.
- Equipment can be costly.
- You'll need the capacity to edit footage and produce a video.

## Guidelines

### General

- Choose a suitable environment – comfortable, quiet, and private.
- Position the camera away from direct sunlight, as it causes images to appear in outline.
- Have a 'dry run' to test all the equipment is working correctly, you can hear sound and see the subject.
- Ensure you have enough tape.
- Explain to the research subject what they will need to do, what it is for, how it will be used and who will see it.
- Ensure staff or others expected to use the video equipment know how to use it.

### Reports to camera

- Ensure the reporter knows how to use the equipment.
- Ensure filming takes place in a quiet environment.
- You will need a consent form from the research subject.

### Video diaries

- Provide guidelines so the research subject knows what they have to talk about.
- Brief the person on how often you need them to contribute to their video diary. They can then consider and plan what is interesting to report since their last contribution.
- You will need a consent form from the research subject.

### Vox pops

- Consider where is the best place and time of day to collect the vox pop.
- Consider who you should speak to and how you will approach them
- Consider what your response will be if people react negatively.
- Edited footage should last about 5 minutes.