

# Baby Bank Alliance: Fundraising Storytelling

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Save the  
Children



Baby Bank  
Alliance.

# House keeping

Please...

- Keep your mics on mute to avoid any background noise
- Feel free to keep your camera on or off
- Use the chat if you've got questions or would like to add anything
- Bear with us! We'll do our best to answer your questions live but may need to come back to you later



# Session agenda

- Introduction to Storytelling Fundraising
- How to collect stories
- Ethical storytelling
- How to use stories
- Examples of good stories
- Q&A



# Why?

- Relationships between charities and supporters rely on **establishing an emotional connection**.
- People will not donate to a charity to which they do not feel connected.
- Donors feel strongly about a particular issues and want to help address it.
- Storytelling helps recruit new donors, as well as maintaining and improving relationships with existing donors.



# People vs. donor centred

## People

- Empowering people to tell their own stories and giving them agency
- Treating people with care and respect
- Being honest about the challenges people face
- Being honest about the impact you have/can have

## Donors

- Match/align to donor aims
  - Beware: mission drift
- How they can help you achieve impact / address need
- How you can help them achieve their aims
- Being ambitious about the impact you have/can have



# What does this look like?

Don't just repeat bad news

Is there a new, unexpected way to tell the story?

What would be the traditional angle – can you challenge it?

Show the impact

A backdrop of jeopardy is important but we want there to be hope

Use questions to challenge the norm

Grab attention at the beginning

Use quotes

Use an active voice

Relevant to the audience – why should they read this now?

Own achievements

Communicate like a human



# Collecting stories

# Where to find stories

- Who: Families, professionals you work with, staff & volunteers
- The most immediate way to help people connect with you causes is by using of imagery.
- Powerful images grab attention and clearly highlight the importance and impact of your mission.
- If you can't get images of people, use images of the items you donate





# How to collect stories

- Case Studies from families, professional referrers, staff, volunteers, etc.
- Interviews – written, video or audio
- Consultations or surveys
- Focus Groups
- Creative sessions – crafts, video creation, audio, journalling
- Anything else?... **add it to the chat!**



**Ethics**

# What does 'decolonising' our comms mean?

## OUR AIM MUST BE TO PRODUCE COMMS THAT:

- ✓ Challenge the conventions of the 'colonial mindset'
- ✓ Leads the aid narrative to one based on solidarity
- ✓ Change perceptions of users of aid and development
- ✓ Bring audiences with us, driving deeper engagement

There's no 'right' way to do it. We need to define the vision for SCUK.

a vision that rests  
on principles of

**equality**

**commonality**

**coalition**

**solidarity**

# PROMOTING WIDER CHANGE THROUGH ETHICAL COMMUNICATIONS

We're working to shift the power in our communications and to challenge long-held stereotypes and negative tropes. We're supporting children and families to tell their own stories in the way that they want and to film and photograph them in a way that they prefer. We're placing children at the centre of our storytelling, showcasing their own words and perspectives and covering issues that matter to them.



• This article is more than 4 years old

## Comic Relief stops sending celebrities to African countries

Move follows criticism that its promotional films reinforced 'white saviour' stereotypes



📷 Comic Relief co-founder Lenny Henry with Griff Rhys Jones in 1987. Photograph: REX/Shutterstock

**What are some words or phrases that you would challenge?**

# How can we do this?

- Give more control of narrative and imagery
  - Break the 4th wall, selfies, facial expressions that fit the situation, returning the gaze.
- Shifting who's conveyed as having power, authority and agency
  - Local activism and decision making, diversity of power, demonstrating their knowledge, supporting other communities (sharing success).
- Need is temporary, not their normality.
  - Show the before, not just the after. What's been lost? What comes next?
- Show fully rounded people and communities.
  - Focus on the why and the how, show people's lives in 360
- We are in this together.
  - Avoid "them" and "us". Show symbols of unity, solidarity drives change.
  - Reframing as "we".



# Ethical Storytelling

- Sharing personal stories is a powerful tool for your charity, helping different audiences connect to your cause and service.
- Consulting communities on how they want to be described is essential for ethical storytelling and crafting effective messaging.
- Contributors should co-produce content with you, including images and words that might be used to represent them.
- When thinking about power dynamics, [Oxfam's Inclusive Language Guide](#) is a useful starting point.
- Make sure to care for your contributors and your team.





# Consent

- When someone tells their story they can be open to different harms.
- They can also open to positive things - but are still in a vulnerable position.
- It's important to give and get “informed consent”, with full knowledge of how it will be used and what the known risks are.
- Ultimately, the decision to tell a story is up to the storyteller; the decision whether to use it rests with the organisation.
- The ethical challenge is how to reconcile the interests and power of each.



**Using stories**

# Using stories

- **'Need'/'problem'** will help an audience connect and **care about your cause**.
- Your **'solution'** & **'impact'** will convince them to **support you**.
- Define your audience, understand **what's important to them** and what **connects them to your mission**.
- Always include a **call to action**.
- Avoid jargon, acronyms, and overused words.
- Be honest - when using data it's important not to overstate the need or your achievements.
- Show the room for growth/progression.



# Where to tell stories

- Fundraising applications
- Fundraising comms
- Impact reports
- Annual report
- Website
- Social media
- Press
- Events
- Anything else?... **add it to the chat!**

# THE EMERGENCY FUND

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2024 IMPACT REPORT



Save the Children



Tetiana\*, two years old, at a child friendly space supported by Save the Children in Ukraine. Her mum Yuliia says it's made a huge difference to her daughters' wellbeing.

Image Credit: Sacha Myers / Save the Children

# Stories that demonstrate the 'need'

- Need: what's wrong and who is it affecting?
- What is the **essence** and the **consequences** of the problem faced?
- What is not obvious about the problem?
- Why is this need not being met?
- Use a **story** that can help make this problem tangible?
- What **evidence** do we have to support this story: nationally, regionally and locally?
- How does this **match** the funder's priorities?



# Stories that demonstrate 'impact'

- What impact will your solution have on the people you work with - primary and secondary?
- How does this **match** the funder's priorities?
- This should balance what you said in your problem statement.
- What **story** shows this initiative works?
- How can you show the impact numerically – thinking not just about how many but also how much?
- How will you measure impact?



# Examples of great storytelling

# Scrolling Story – Emergency Watchlist

- <https://stories.savethechildren.org.uk/2025-emergency-watchlist/>





# Design tips

- Canva is a great resource to build content and share designs
- Primary palette / secondary palette
  - Can the audience see who is creating the materials?
- Clear call to action
  - What do you want the audience to do, think, feel?
- Use images and quotes to draw attention
- Always have the audience in mind



Q & A

# Thank you!

## Up next

### Fundraising drop-in 7th April 2025

### Training session on 'Crowdfunding' Last week of April 2025

