



# Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling Field Guide

## What

A guide to plan and organise the details of your Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling session.

## Why

FGD + Storytelling sessions are powerful opportunities to connect with young women. It is important to be ready before heading into the sessions. This preparation can help you to create a meaningful experience for your participants.

## How

Fill in the italicised template. Feel free to adapt or add sections based on the context of your consultation.

Once you finish filling in the guide, share it with your team for feedback. As part of your preparation, you may role-play with a co-facilitator or team member to get a feel for how the session might unfold.

what

why

HOW

We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



# Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling Field Guide

## Overview

**Project name**

**Session theme**

**Session date**

**Session time**

**Number of participants**

**Session location or virtual link**

**Materials**

## Flow of the consultation

### Welcome participants

Include a warm welcome to your participants. Introduce yourself and the research team members who are present.

### Share a brief introduction of the research

Introduce the project to your participants. Be sure to explain the context of the research, its objectives, and its importance. You might also briefly explain the different stages of the research.

### Describe the theme and objectives of today's session

Help participants understand why we are gathered together and how it relates to the research.

### Share how you will ensure confidentiality

Explain how your research team is maintaining confidentiality of the ideas shared here today. Be sure to include information about how you will use the notes and recordings (if applicable).

### Request consent from participants

Gather written or oral consent from all your participants before moving forward. See the [Consent Form](#).

### Build community agreements with participants

Co-create a shared understanding among all participants about how the session should feel. These agreements are less about rules. Instead, they are a way to understand what is important for all participants to feel like this is a safe space.



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Here are some examples of community agreements:

- We will respect the opinions of all people in this space without judgement.
- We won't interrupt each other, and we will talk one at a time.
- This is a safe space where respect is important, and where we will protect each other.
- The information we share here is completely confidential.
- We will all work together to ensure everyone feels listened to and no one feels excluded.

## Do a warm up activity together

Select a warm up activity for participants to get to know each other. This helps build trust among participants before they begin sharing their stories. Encourage all participants to take part.

Here are some examples of warm up activities:

- Do a dance move to be copied by others.
- Share one interesting fact about you.
- Share what is famous about your hometown/ country.



## Engage the group in storytelling

Give participants a few minutes to think about the theme. Then ask if anyone wishes to share their reflections, experiences, or stories about the theme. Allow time to hear from everyone who wants to share before moving on. Do not overlook this activity as it is a critical element for engaging participants. Stories are powerful and play a role in many cultures and traditions where details, descriptions, and sentiments from these stories can be insightful. They help us better understand behaviour, history, motives, etc. Use the [Storytelling Template](#) to guide the group in sharing their narratives.

## Consider taking a break

Even a short one may help participants recharge. Encourage them to hydrate, take a bio break, or step outside to get some air if possible. We understand this might not be possible for everyone, so find a unique way to take a break of a few minutes.

## Facilitate a discussion using the questionnaire

Use the [Questionnaire Template](#) to guide a group discussion.

## Convene a closing circle

Invite participants to make suggestions, share comments, or ask questions. Make note of any questions that you cannot answer in the moment.

## Share gratitude and next steps

Thank participants for their time and energy. Offer them ways to stay in touch with you and with other participants.