

Wellcome Online Network Ambassador Mini-grant

STORIES WITHOUT VOICE

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Oxford University Clinical Research Unit (OUCRU) Indonesia - 2024

Executive Summary

Indonesia faced significant challenges in raising public awareness about climate change, especially among its diverse population of 275 million. Public understanding was limited, with 20% of Indonesians unfamiliar with the term "global warming." In Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) province, where extreme weather and rising sea levels directly impacted communities, communication platforms often excluded disabled people, including deaf individuals, due to accessibility barriers.

The CERITA TANPA SUARA (Stories Without Voices) project aimed to address the knowledge gap and improve accessibility to climate change education for the deaf community in Sumba Island, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Through inclusive and culturally sensitive communication, it sought to empower the deaf community by producing and disseminating short educational videos on climate change concepts, impacts, and solutions.

In partnership with deaf communities named KOTSU (Komunitas Tuli Sumba) and Komunitas Tuli NTT, this project had two main activities: video production, which involved two deaf interpreters from NTT, and video screening, conducted both online and offline. During one month of video screenings, more than 900 deaf people were reached, both online (N=3,771) and offline (N=19). Two-thirds (68%) of the offline screening participants reported finding the content relatable to their situation and daily life.

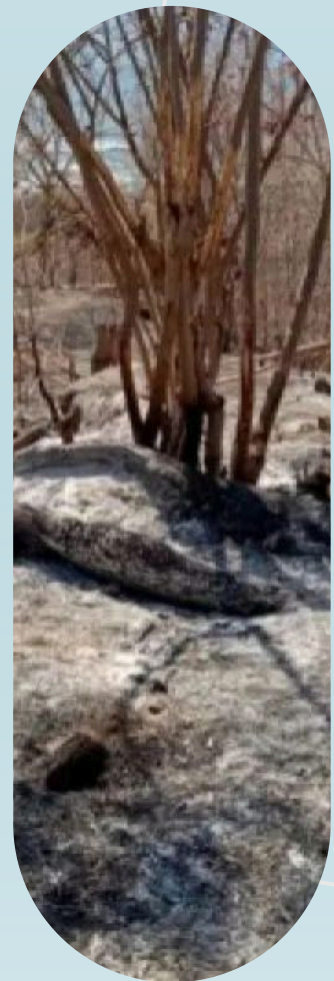


Project Background

Engaging individuals, communities, organizations, and governments is essential for effective climate change adaptation. In practice, the meaning of engagement can be elusive. For many climate change is a distant, intractable problem. It is also a contested problem: research in developed countries shows that climate change views of public citizens often (and increasingly) diverge from the scientific consensus. What people 'know' about climate change is as much a reflection of their beliefs, values, worldviews and objectives as a descriptive account of what climate change is and what they must do about it.

Because climate change cannot always be directly or immediately sensed, individuals are especially reliant on social and cultural cues to inform them about climate change, the risks it poses, and how to respond. Therefore, inclusive and culturally sensitive communication approaches are important to bridging this knowledge gap. This is especially true for a country like Indonesia, home to 275 million people and more than 1,300 recognized ethnic groups.

Despite Indonesia's status as one of the world's top ten greenhouse gas emitters, public understanding of climate change is limited. A 2023 study found that while 55% of Indonesians know "a little" about global warming, 20% have never heard of it. Raising public awareness is equally important to simplify the message, considering that the concept of climate change can be complicated and highly technical. To do this, the narrative on climate change should resonate with people's everyday lives.



For instance, in East Nusa Tenggara province, people depend on television, radio, and social media as their primary sources of information. Unfortunately, those platforms are often inaccessible to those with hearing impairments. On the other hand, the effects of climate change are becoming increasingly evident in East Nusa Tenggara, manifesting in extreme weather patterns, droughts, and rising sea levels which affected all people, including the disabled groups.



Project Objectives

Using a participatory approach, this project aimed to produce an educational video that effectively communicated the concepts of climate change and its impacts on the environment and society, tailored for the deaf community in Sumba, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia.

The project was expected to enhance the self-esteem of the deaf community to speak up about issues they faced by using visual materials. It also aimed to trigger local key actors to become more aware of climate change issues and the critical need for inclusive information while addressing the gap in accessible educational resources.

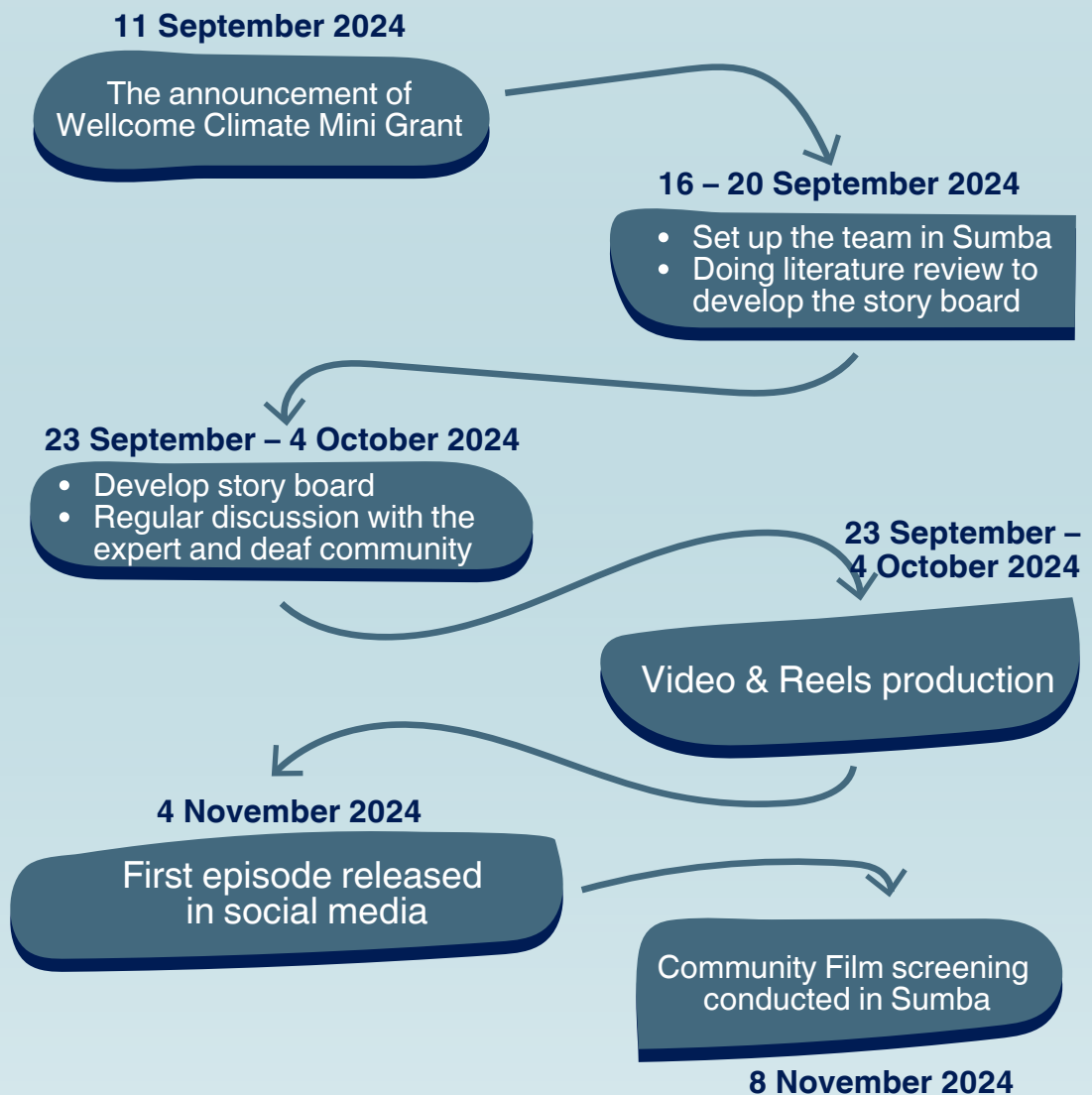




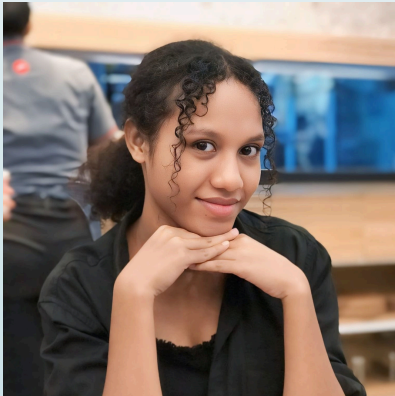
Project Partnership

The applicant collaborated with 2 local deaf communities in East Nusa Tenggara; KoTSu (Komunitas Tuli Sumba/Sumbanese Deaf Community) and Komunitas Tuli Kupang (Kupang Deaf Community). Both communities played important roles in the video production, circulating the videos online and in-person, and being translators when deaf participant had questions regarding the information shown in the video.

Timeline



Key Personnel



Novelita Paulencia Beatrix Libing (Novel)

Novel is currently student at Nusa Cendana University, Kupang, NTT majoring in education for special needs. She is also actively involving in NTT deaf community activities both as a sign language interpreter or campaigner for the deaf rights justice in NTT area. In this project, Novel was involved as the sign language interpreter in the video.

Daniel Yohanis (Daniel)

Daniel runs a café in Sumba called Cafeln. The café employs the deaf as their baristas and waitresses. He has also open sign language classes for hearing people in Sumba at the café. In this project, Daniel was involved as the sign language interpreter in the video.

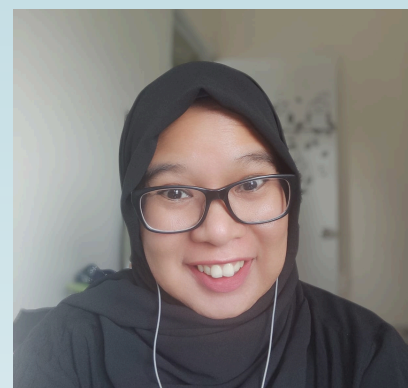


Willy Jhon Antonio Anakay (Willy)

Willy is a youth activist and local influencer in NTT who focuses on promoting deaf right justice and climate change to the public. He is also supporting the deaf communities across NTT to organize sign language classes for hearing people. In this project, Willy was the project coordinator in charge for all screening activities online and offline.

Soraya Weldina Ragil Dien (Ragil)

Ragil is currently working as public and community engagement officer for OUCRU Indonesia. As a visual communicator, she is expanding her interest to the climate and health issues. In this project, Ragil was the team leader who is also in charge for the concepting and editing the video.



Project Implementation

Video Production

This stage began with a series of discussions with deaf communities in Jakarta and Kupang (the capital of NTT province) to understand the types of educational tools or platforms they frequently used and found easy to comprehend. From these discussions, it was found that social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram were the primary learning platforms for deaf communities. They also preferred short videos with a duration of less than 10 minutes. Based on this insight, the team decided to develop four episodes of short videos rather than producing one long film.

For the content, the team conducted a literature review, focusing on educational materials about climate change tailored for communities in rural areas. Since many deaf people in NTT had not attended formal school, we assumed they might have a limited sign vocabulary. To address this, the storyline was simplified, and reviews were sought from members of the deaf community. The entire video production process took four weeks. All videos, including both the Bahasa Indonesia and English versions, can be accessed through this link:



Film Screening with deaf community

The event was held in Weetabula, the capital of Southwest Sumba, on the 8th of November 2024. Nineteen participants attended, coming from West and Southwest Sumba. The event also included three hearing participants (one of whom was an OUCRU Indonesia staff member) and was facilitated by Willy and Daniel. Cafeln was chosen as the venue because all the baristas are deaf, and it is a common gathering space for the deaf community in Sumba.

The film screening began with a brief explanation of why the team initiated this project and what they expected from participants after watching the films. There was a short Q&A and discussion session after each video. Participants were also asked to fill out an evaluation form after watching each video. The guidelines for the film screening can be found in Annex 1, and the full process of the offline video screening can be accessed through this QR:



Based on feedback forms completed by participants, it was found that the episodes on climate change impacts (Episode 3) and prevention measures (Episode 4) were the easiest to understand. Conversely, Episode 2, which discussed the concept of climate change, was the most challenging to comprehend. Additionally, 68% of participants stated that the examples provided in all four episodes were relevant to their lives and experiences.

Regarding the use of sign language, only 20% of participants fully understood the signs. Meanwhile, 50% reported understanding only a portion of the signs but were supported by the visuals (images and videos), which helped them grasp the overall information



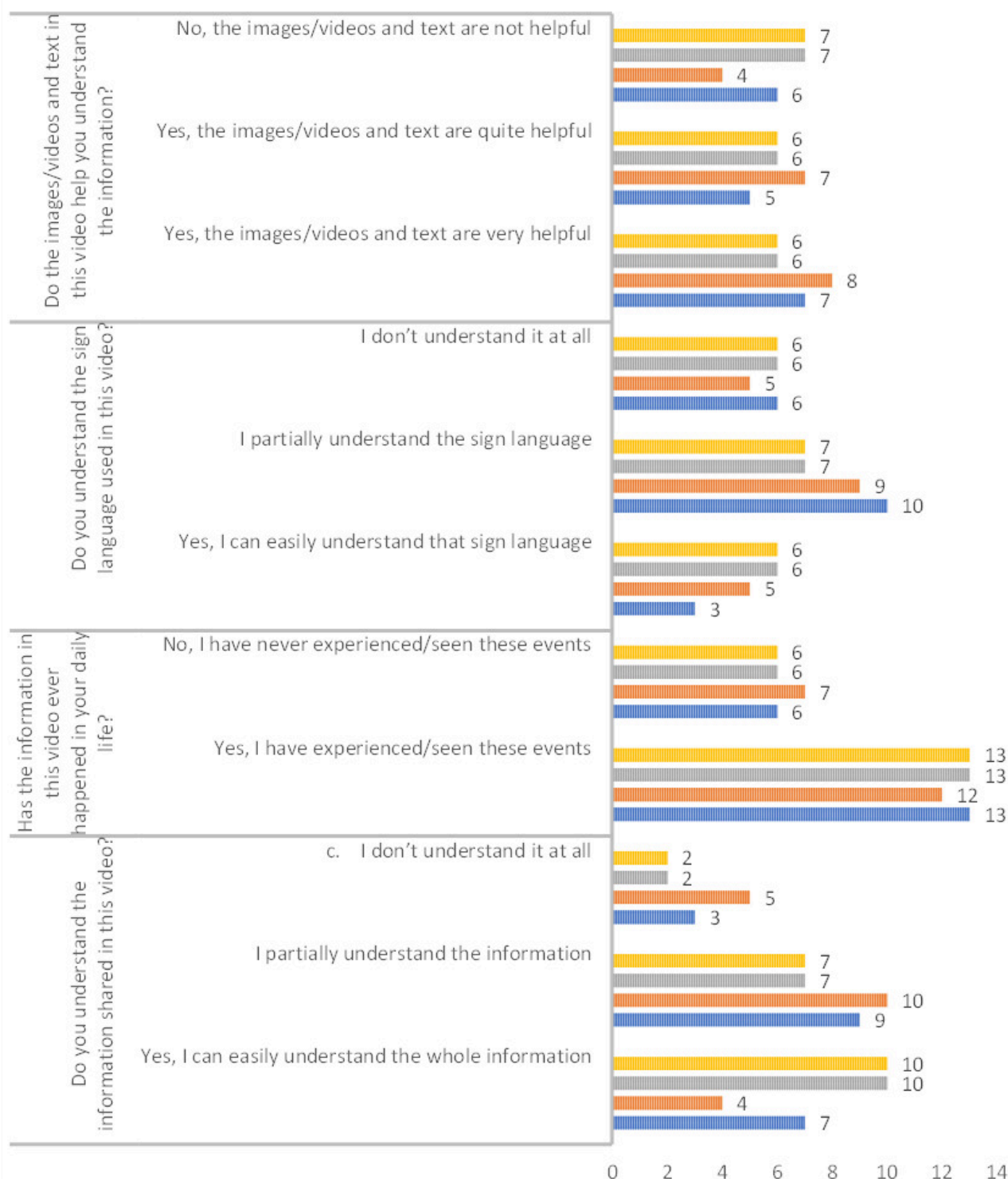
Participants and facilitators took picture together after the screening

Participants watching the film comfortably at the Cafeln Sumba



PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

■ # of respond Episode 4 ■ # of respond Episode 3 ■ # of respond Episode 2 ■ # of respond Episode 1



Online Film Screening at Social Media

The four episodes were published online on 4th November 2024 on two community Instagram accounts (Sumba Deaf Community and NTT Deaf Community) as the main platforms. For a wider audience, they were also published on the project team's personal Instagram accounts and the OUCRU Indonesia YouTube channel.

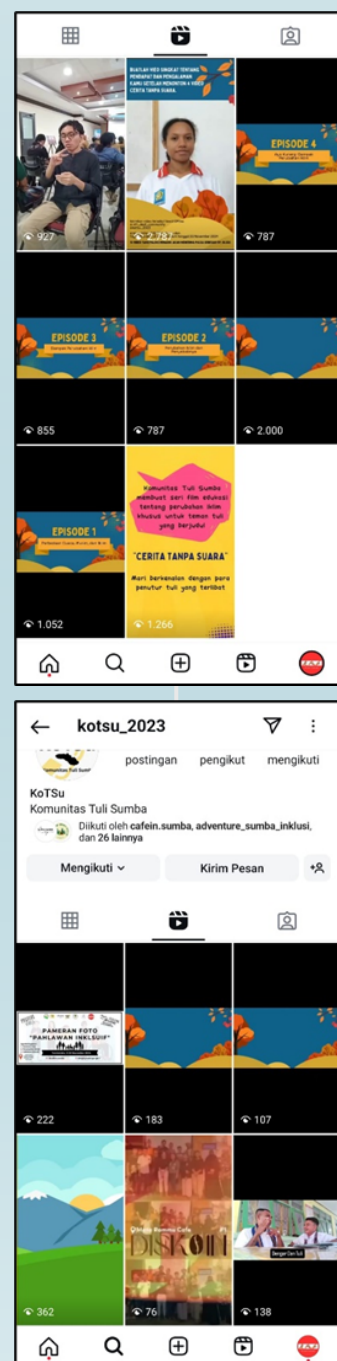
By 29th November 2024, the videos had been watched by 3,771 unique accounts, with an average of 942 unique viewers per episode. The detailed total viewership of each episode was as follows:

- Episode 1: 1,159 viewers
- Episode 2: 970 viewers
- Episode 3: 855 viewers
- Episode 4: 787 viewers

In addition to the full videos, the team also created four reels to promote each video. The reels were accompanied by captions, allowing those who wanted to repost or share the videos to use a consistent message. Shortly afterward, the team planned to showcase the videos on the OUCRU official website and social media platforms. For those who wanted to support the promotion of these videos, the reels could be accessed through this code:



Screenshots of video viewers
in two partners' Instagram accounts



Challenges & Lesson Learned

- Some participants had a limited understanding of sign language, even though the videos used NTT sign language. The main factor behind this challenge was that many participants had not attended formal schools or courses, and relying instead on gestures for communication. The team learned that this issue could be addressed by conducting a series of in-person sessions, allowing the team to re-explain the video content using participants' local gestures to ensure better comprehension of the information. We received a suggestion to conduct pre-event assessments of participants' literacy levels and sign language comprehension to improve their understanding. However, the team felt that this approach might exclude many illiterate deaf individuals and overlook the fact that they are equally affected by climate change.
- The feedback or evaluation sheet needed improvement. The current evaluation sheet used a traffic light color system, typically designed for children, where participants would choose a red sticker if they didn't understand the message at all, a yellow sticker if they partially understood it, and a green sticker if they easily understood it. However, it was observed that participants were not familiar with this system, which required repeated explanations to ensure its proper use. As the solution for further engagement, we are planning to apply the emoticon stickers (happy, sad and flat faces) which probably easier to understand.
- In the feedback session during the in-person film screening, some participants shared feedback that they were more attracted to the images or animations than the interpreter's video, while the other two participants mentioned their limited sign language vocabulary, therefore it easier for them to focus on the motion graphics and images. From the team's observations, participants who fluent in sign language paid close attention to the interpreter's video, often nodding or using gestures to indicate comprehension.

- The interaction and discussion during the in-person session were more engaging compared to the online sessions. Participants asked questions about the climate situation in their area, shared personal experiences, and confirmed their opinions. Topics discussed included weather patterns, methods for predicting weather, and the relationship between the number of mosquitoes and the seasons. Some participants also sought clarification on specific terms, such as the meaning of "heat/hot" in the context of climate change, how to differentiate legal and illegal logging, and effective waste management practices.

Suggestion for Future Engagement

- **Continue in-person film screenings;** based on the insights that online platforms may not be suitable for self-learning among the target audience, continuing in-person engagement is essential in NTT province. These screenings should be complemented with local campaigns encouraging actionable steps. A related recommendation is to collaborate with international and local NGOs as well as special schools across the province to maximize impact.
- **Expand engagement to other provinces;** engage with deaf communities in other provinces to replicate the films, adapting them to local sign languages. In addition, we can provide training for deaf individuals to become climate ambassadors who can lead discussions, workshops, and screenings in their areas.
- **Collaborate with national deaf organizations;** initiate a partnership with national deaf organizations, such as GERKATIN (*Gerakan untuk Kesejahteraan Tunarungu Indonesia*/Indonesian Deaf Welfare Movement), to improve the information access in climate change knowledge, particularly among deaf individuals in areas highly affected by climate change.

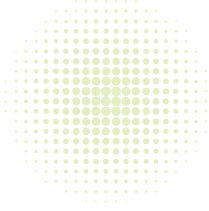


- **Develop additional episodes in Stories Without Voice series;** produce additional episodes addressing various aspects of climate change, such as its impacts on health and detailed strategies for reducing climate-related risks. These episodes should provide actionable and practical information tailored to the needs of the audience.
- **Initiate a participatory climate storytelling project;** this community-led project will involving deaf individuals in the entire filmmaking process, from scriptwriting to acting, to ensure cultural and contextual relevance. Incorporate personal stories from the deaf community to highlight the local impacts of climate change and create a stronger connection to the subject matter.

Project Expenses

The total budget for the event was GBP 500 or equivalent to IDR 10,042,000 that funded by the Wellcome Cimate Health Network Mini Grant. Detail expenses for this project can be seen below:

| Descriptions | Total Expenses in IDR | Total Expenses in GBP (GBP 1 = IDR 20,084) |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| Film production (incl. fee for sign language interpreters, videographer and video editor) | 5,500,000 | 273.85 |
| Film screening (incl. venue, equipment, stationery, documentation, refreshment and transport allowance for participants) | 4,500,000 | 224.05 |
| Total expenses | 10,000,000 | 497.91 |



The 'Stories Without Voices' video series is a collaboration between Komunitas Tuli Sumba (KOTSU), Komunitas Tuli NTT and the Oxford University Clinical Research Unit (OUCRU) Indonesia. The project is part of the Online Network Ambassador Mini-grant funded by Wellcome

