



## *Love Beyond Borders: The Interfaith Movement to End the Pandemic*

### Suggestions for Writing a Story on the Pandemic and Vaccines

Stories are a great way to connect with people. They make the impact of the pandemic and the need for vaccine very real to people who may not realize how others are living with this disaster. *Love Beyond Borders* uses stories in several ways: as examples of what is happening in different countries, as a resource for those who are working to raise awareness, and as a pastoral resource for use in sermons and church lessons.

Authors of the stories are credited for their work in the story. They are posted to the blog and website and may also be linked to Facebook. Submitting a story implies permission to use the story in this way.

#### **Guidelines**

Stories should be original personal accounts of living with the pandemic and the cost of not having access to vaccine. Stories about families and houses of worship are most useful. One story can include several examples or be a detailed description of one family or church.

The audience for the stories is the general public. These are not academic or research articles and should avoid technical or academic language.

The length can vary, but in general, should be between 500 and 1,000 words.

The preferred language is English, but other languages, such as Spanish or French are also desirable. Having a story translated into several languages is highly desirable. If the story is about a country where English is not the first language then it is best to have it in the language of that country and then translated to English.

The author should include a statement of the authors role and relationship with the subjects of the story and the country.

Choose a title that is descriptive. For example “A church in Sri Lanka works to get people access to vaccines”.

Include pictures, maps, and other illustrations. If you take pictures of people be sure to ask their permission for the pictures to be posted online.

Consider ending with a call to action. This can be stating the importance to everyone of making vaccine available, a call to prayer, a call to share the story and raise awareness, etc.

Stories can be written, but video recordings are also acceptable.

## Tips

Some people find it helpful to start with an outline. When making an outline consider including the following:

- Start by being clear about your focus. What is the main theme, issue, or idea you want to get across. This can be a good place to start your story, for example, “Nepal is a country divided about the vaccines and trust of health authorities. Although Christian churches in Nepal are in the minority, they work hard to reach people across faiths and help them get vaccinated”.
- Introduce and describe the characters in your story. Make the descriptions personal, how they live and who they are, not just roles or titles.
- Describe the context of your characters. Where do they live, how do they live, what are their day to day lives like.
- Bring your story to some conclusion. What is the current state of the family, person, or church and what is likely to happen with them.
- Write a strong close. What does the story show? Don’t hesitate to tell the reader what they should conclude from the story.

Organize these points into an outline that guides and structures your writing.

Have a friend or colleague read your story and then ask them what they learned from the story. See if what they learned matches what you wanted to say.

Remember this, potentially, a global audience. If you refer to something local assume your reader does not know what that is and explain it. It is OK to use slang or colorful local language, just be sure explain it for your reader.

Please email your story or questions to [dboan@icrinc.org](mailto:dboan@icrinc.org)