

## A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES AND VOLUNTEERS

# Recording an elder

Anyone can record a grandparent or an elder in their village and send it in. Follow these steps so the elder is respected, the sound is clear, and the recording can be trusted for years to come.

## 1 Ask first, in person

- Visit before the day you record. Explain Setso: their words kept for the children of QwaQwa, with their name on them.
- They can say no, stop at any time, or ask later for the recording to be taken down.
- Agree beforehand what will not be talked about. **Never ask about lebollo** or other sacred matters.
- If it helps, bring someone they know and trust.

## 2 Get ready

- **A quiet room.** Radio and TV off, away from the road, wind and animals.
- **Phone on flight mode**, so calls don't cut in.
- **Use the voice recorder.** Sound only. Video only when the elder shows you something.
- **Put the phone down** on a table or folded cloth, a forearm's length away, microphone towards the elder. Don't hold it.

## 3 Start every recording with consent

Press record, then say these words out loud before anything else. This is what makes the recording trustworthy if anyone questions it later.

### YOU SAY

"Kajeno ke [letsatsi]. Re [motseng]. Ke nna [lebitso la hao], mme ke rekota [lebitso la moholo]."

*"Today is [date]. We are in [village]. I am [your name], and I am recording [elder's name]."*

### THE ELDER SAYS

"Lebitso la ka ke [lebitso]. Ke dumela hore puisano ena e rekotwe."

*"My name is [name]. I agree that this conversation is recorded."*

### THEN ASK TWO QUESTIONS, AND WAIT FOR EACH ANSWER

1. May we keep this recording safely, for the Setso archive?

2. May parts of it be played to the public on Qwahabedi?

A yes to the first and a no to the second is a good answer. We respect it.

## Why this matters

When an elder passes, what they knew goes with them unless someone has listened. One afternoon with a phone can keep it for their great-grandchildren.



## 4 While you record

Say the name of the custom before each new topic. Let the elder talk; pauses are fine. Don't stop in the middle of a story. Make sure these are answered:

**What is it, and when does it happen?**

**Who does what, and in what order?**

**What words are said?**

Ask them to say the words as on the day.

**Why is it done this way?**

**Do other families do it differently?**

Other clans, church families.

**Who taught you this?**

## 5 After you record

- Play back the first few seconds to check it recorded.
- **Do not cut, edit or add music.** Send the original file exactly as the phone saved it. That untouched file is the record if anyone disputes it later.
- Thank the elder. Tell them the panel will listen, and that you will let them know what was decided.

## 6 Send it in

- **Website:** sign in at [qwahabedi.co.za](http://qwahabedi.co.za), open Setso and choose "Send a recording".
- **WhatsApp:** send to [**Qwahabedi WhatsApp number**]. Attach the recording **as a Document**, not as audio, so WhatsApp sends the original.
- In the message, write the elder's name, village, seboko, the date and the custom.

## What happens next

### RECEIVED

The original is stored privately and sealed with a digital fingerprint, so any later change would show.

### PANEL LISTENS

The elders' panel listens at its next sitting.

### PANEL DECIDES

Keep in the archive, publish short clips, ask for a follow-up visit, or not keep it.

### YOU HEAR BACK

You and the elder get an SMS with the decision.

If an elder changes their mind, we take the public clips down straight away. If they ask, we delete the recording too.

## What not to record

- Lebollo, or anything the elder says is not for outsiders.
- A real funeral or ceremony, unless the family agreed beforehand.
- Anyone who has not said yes, including people in the background.
- Children's faces.

## Checklist before you leave the house

- |                                                            |                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The elder has agreed to the visit | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone charged, on flight mode     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You know what not to ask about    | <input type="checkbox"/> This guide, for the consent words |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A quiet place to sit              | <input type="checkbox"/> Something to put the phone on     |