

# SINGLE-MICROPHONE SOUND RECORDING

**Duration** 5 to 20 minutes

**Participants** 5 to 15

- Goals**
- Arouse the curiosity of participants
  - Introduce participants to radio equipment
  - Teach participants to record a sound

- Materials**
- The ideal here is to have different portable recorders (at least one per pair or trinomial depending on your budget). For example, you can offer:
    - Several Zoom type H1n, H2n
    - Several Zoom type H4n or H5
    - One or two Zoom type H6

Place as many headphones and windshields as there are recorders on the table.



Also plan for return times:

- A speaker
- A double jack cable to connect the Zoom to the speaker

If you don't have a budget offer to use cell phones!

## Preparation

Place the various devices on a table so that they are visible to all.

## Instructions

- ① Ask participants to form pairs or trinomials depending on the number of recorders you have.
- ② Explain to the group that you are going to introduce them to the materials needed to perform a single microphone recording. For example, to record a person during an interview, during a micro-sidewalk or to capture ambient sounds. Tell participants that for this type of recording, they need a audio recorder, headphones and microphone. They can use simple equipment (like their cell phone), as well as more complex and expensive equipment (like the one on the table). The ideal is to use Zoom brand portable recorders that have built in microphones - they are simple to use, easily transportable and record great sound.
- ③ Then ask people to take a recorder, headphones, and windshield from the table.
- ④ In pairs or three people, they must figure out how to turn on the device and set it up in order to make recordings. Go through each group to check that everything is going well. You can then show them how the recorder they are using works.



- ⑤ Have them take turns recording around a simple question such as :
  - “if you could pick a superhero power, what would it be?”, “What is your best vacation? ”
  - “ What do you like to do to relax? ”Each person must at some point have the recorder in their hands and take care of the technical part.
- ⑥ Give them time to listen to the recording again on their headphones.



- ⑦ Come back as a large group. You can then show how a Zoom H4n type recorder works and how to take a sound recording during an interview (see appendix).

## Variant

- ① Instead of inviting participants to register, offer them to record different sounds (noise of doors slamming, finger snapping, etc.). They will then have to make the participants guess which noises they are talking about during a collective listening session.
- ② This activity can also be associated with the activities presented on the following pages.

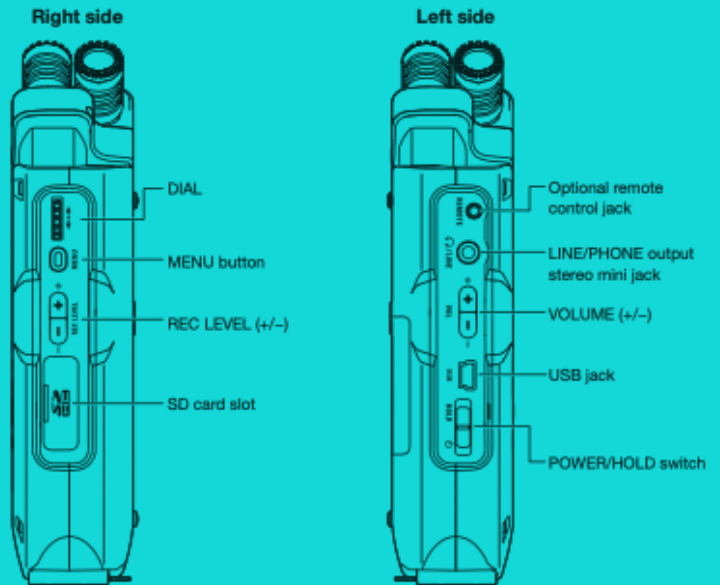
## Tips for facilitators

This activity allows participants to quickly get hold of the radio equipment and facilitates their empowerment for the rest of the workshop.

### **Appendix ①** *How the H4n zoom works*

- ① Explain that the microphone is placed on the front of the zoom. This is a directional mic. It records in priority the sound of the voice of the recorded person. With headphones, participants will therefore hear the surrounding sounds more faintly. But that doesn't mean they just disappear.<sup>①</sup>
- ② You can then show the basic operation of the device. Mimic these different actions:
  - Turn on the device (on the left side)
  - Place the SD card and check that there is room
  - Check the battery level of your device
  - Plug in your headphones<sup>②</sup>
  - Press the red "REC" button for the first time, which lights up and turns red.
  - Adjust your sound using the recording level buttons ("REC level" on the right side of the Zoom)
  - Adjust the sound you hear through headphones ("VOL" on the left side)<sup>③</sup>
  - Press the "REC" button a second time to record<sup>④</sup>
  - Press stop button to stop your recording





*Diagram taken from the Zoom H4n user manual*

Indicate how to adjust the registration level to participants. Specify that the sound level is displayed as a spectrum on the backlit Zoom display. Good sound quality is around the number -12.

Be careful, if it happens in the -6 to 0, the sound is saturated. It will then be difficult to use later!





**Appendix ②** *Record a person with a Zoom H4n*

- ① Invite a participant to join in and act out a recording situation.
- ② Explain that they must complete these different steps before registering someone :
- ③ Place the Zoom in line with the recorded person's mouth.
- ④ Ask your interviewer a question (eg: what did you eat this morning?) To adjust the recording level.
- ⑤ Then listen to this recording again to make sure everything is working correctly.
- ⑥ If the interview is long, put your arm in a comfortable position.
- ⑦ Registration starts!

