



Module 2: Introduction to Video Advocacy

Session Objectives

Total Time: 4 hours

Within this Session participants will be able to:

- Identify personal experiences and the experiences of WITNESS with effective video advocacy
- Reflect on the concept of video advocacy
- Recognize and identify strengths and limitations to using video as a tool for human rights advocacy
- Outline the key elements to developing a video advocacy strategy

Materials for this Session:

- Power Point: Introduction to Video Advocacy
- Worksheet: Experiences With Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work
- Worksheet: Strengths and Limitations
- Reference Sheet: Strengths and Limitations
- Reference Sheet: WITNESS Defining What Video Advocacy IS and IS NOT
- Flipchart version of Worksheet: Experiences With Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work
- *Seeing is Believing* film on DVD OR *Rule of Gun in Sugarland* film on DVD or <http://hub.witness.org/en/RuleOfTheGunInSugarland>

Facilitator Module 2 Experiences With Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work

Materials

- Worksheet: Experiences With Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work
- Flipchart version of Worksheet: Experiences With Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work

Preparations

Write up instructions on participants' page on a flipchart and post it in the room.

For Version B only, prepare a flipchart version of the **Worksheet: Experiences With Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work** (enough sheets for all participants to have space to write)

Time

30 minutes

Description

The aim of this session is to have participants identify their own experiences with effective uses of video in human rights work and to learn about the experiences of others.

Instructions

Part A (15 min)

Version A: Share Your Experience with Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work

- Randomly divide participants into small groups of 4 or 5.
- Go over the instructions with participants.
- In small groups, ask participants to complete **Worksheet: Experiences With Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work**.
- Tell participants they have about 2 minutes each to discuss their experience with small group members. They should note down the information that their group members are sharing with them on the Worksheet in the space provided.

TIPS FOR FACILITATOR:

Due to the time limitation of this session, you can also consider having each group post a flipchart version of the worksheet on the wall as they complete them and ask participants to do a go-around to read over the information being shared. Alternatively, participants can work individually or in pairs and write up their experiences directly on the flipchart version on the wall; ask participants to go around and read over the information (see instructions for Version B).

Since participants have not yet had a discussion around definitions of video advocacy, this session can be framed as experiences of effective use of video in human rights work/advocacy'





- Ask each group to identify one participant to briefly summarize selected experiences from their discussion with the large group. Tell them they will have about 3 minutes to do so

Version B: Small Group Presentations

- Participants work in pairs or small groups on completing version of the **Worksheet: Experiences With Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work** posted on the wall.

Part B (15 minutes)

Version A: Share Your Experience with Video Effective Use of Video in Human Rights Work

- Ask each small group to present the results of their discussion with the larger group. Remind them of the time they have to do so.
- Briefly comment about their presentations and identify commonalities.

Version B: Presentations

- Ask participants to walk around the room and familiarize with other people's experiences. Remind them of the time they have to do so.

Ask participants to comment on experiences and identify commonalities Session

Facilitator Module 2 Sharing Ideas about the Concept of Video Advocacy

Materials

- Power Point: Introduction to Video Advocacy
- Reference Sheet: WITNESS Defining What Video Advocacy IS and IS NOT

Preparations

Set up and test the LCD and laptop with presentation, or flipchart version of Reference Sheet
Reference Sheet: WITNESS Defining What Video Advocacy IS and IS NOT

Time

30 minutes

Description

The aim of this session is to have participants to reflect on their understanding of the concept of video advocacy as WITNESS approaches it and to identify anything surprising; anything that they might like /dislike/agree/disagree with; anything to be defined differently. A discussion will follow to determine a working definition of these terms among the group.

Instructions

Part A (10 minutes) Participants' Understanding of Video Advocacy

- Keep participants in the small groups from previous Session
- Go through the participants' instructions.
- Hand out WITNESS definition of video advocacy to each group (**Reference Sheet: WITNESS Defining What Video Advocacy IS and IS NOT**). Have them identify the elements of the definition that might be surprising; anything that they might like /dislike/agree/disagree with; anything to be defined differently reflecting back on their sharing of experiences in previous Session (10 minutes)
- Ask each group to identify a rapporteur.
- Ask each group to share the results of their discussion, building upon and not repeating points made by other groups (10 minutes)
- On a flipchart, list out comments and questions that come out

Part B (10 minutes) WITNESS' Concept of Video Advocacy





- Using the PP presentation/flipchart version of the **Reference Sheet: WITNESS Defining What Video Advocacy IS and IS NOT**, examine WITNESS' concept of video advocacy in light of the comments made. Tell participants they can refer to the **Reference Sheet: WITNESS Defining What Video Advocacy IS and IS NOT** and take notes. Encourage questions and move toward shared understanding and working definition for this group.

FACILITATORS' NOTES:

As WITNESS understands it (not an exclusive definition)...

What Video Advocacy IS...

- Driven by the need to mobilize/persuade/engage/shame an audience in order to achieve change.
- Not just documentary films or TV, but found footage, PSAs, short films etc...
- Video **FOR** not **ABOUT**

What Video Advocacy is NOT...

- An effective tool on its own. Must be part of broader advocacy strategy and other human rights methodologies.
- Video simply as a communications, fundraising or PR tool. Rather an advocacy tool to promote changes in human rights policy or practice.
- Just for professionals. You can use their help, but the understanding and intent should come from human rights activists for use in advocacy as you are rooted in this.
- Possibilities of access and long-term understanding of activists.
- Not just about strong graphic imagery. Most WITNESS partners' work is testimony-based.
- Not for every human rights issues. Like all approaches, it has strengths and weaknesses.

Facilitator Module 2 Strengths and Limitations of Using Video as a Tool for Human Rights Advocacy

Materials

- Seeing is Believing* film on DVD OR *Rule of Gun in Sugarland* film on DVD or <http://hub.witness.org/en/RuleOfTheGunInSugarland>. For an even shorter film, consider *Shoot on Sight* 4-minute version.
- Post-it notes (largest size) and markers
- Board split and marked on two sides: **Strengths** in the first column, **Limitations** in the second column (make sure that this is visible to the whole group)
- Worksheet: Strengths and Limitations
- Reference Sheet: Strengths and Limitations

Preparations

Test the DVD player prior to the session. Set the film to the clip you would like to share with participants.
Prepare the Post-it notes, markers, pad and pens prior to the session and ensure that every group has the proper amount.
Prepare the board with the headings **Strengths** and **Limitations** and post it in the room.

Time

1 hour (with Rule of the Gun in Sugarland)

Description

The aim of this session is to enable participants **to recognize strengths and limitations of video as a tool for human rights documentation and advocacy**. It provides them with an opportunity to **hear ideas** about strengths and limitations of using

TIPS FOR FACILITATOR:

Remind participants to draw from their experiences as well as what they notice in the film clips.

Encourage participants to consider different viewpoints (e.g. limitations from point of view of an interviewee, video advocate, or audience member)

Be creative with dividing participants into buzz groups. Because they are aspiring 'film-makers' perhaps use film terminology to identify different grouping (e.g., producers, sound technicians, camera operators)

Consider also having a break between section A and section B to allow 'fresh eyes' and connections





video as a tool for advocacy and to **share** their own experiences and respond to these ideas through buzz group and large group discussion. By engaging participants in this kind of exercise, they are able to identify **how** and **when** video is either effective or ineffective as an advocacy tool in their work.

Instructions

Part A (30 minutes)

Go through instructions with the participants

- Present the context of the film clip (**see facilitators' notes**) and ask participants to note their ideas about Strengths and Limitations of using video as a tool for human rights advocacy on **Worksheet: Strengths and Limitations**
- Provide a couple of examples on Post-its of strengths and limitations – e.g. 'Filming process is participatory', 'Conveys personal stories', 'Difficult to present quantitative evidence?'
- Show the film clip (10 – 15 minutes)
- Divide participants into buzz groups of 3 –5 participants per group. Tell them to discuss the suggested questions listed in **Part A** and the ideas they noted on **Worksheet: Strengths and Limitations**.
- Ask them to summarize 2 – 5 ideas per group for each category and write them on post-its. One idea per post-it, and in large letters! (Strengths and Limitations)
- Have participants place their post-its on the board in the corresponding categories (Strengths and Limitations of using video as a tool for advocacy)
- As participants are posting their ideas, group the post-its on the board according to similarities among them in each column

Part B (30 minutes)

- Review the ideas that have been posted on the board under each category.
- Briefly **summarize** them and point out/make clusters of ideas and random ones.
- Note which ideas might be a strength or a weakness depending on the situation
- Add ideas from the facilitators' notes that participants have not noticed.
- Present the PowerPoint slide on **Strengths and Limitations** with participants and tell them to refer to **Reference Sheet: Strengths and Limitations**. Let them know they are welcome to take notes on the space provided.

TIPS FOR FACILITATOR:

Consider giving participants a break between Parts A and B to allow them to have a fresh look at the ideas generated

FACILITATORS' SPEAKERS NOTES FOR *SEEING IS BELIEVING*

Film made by a television production company; by Canadian filmmakers who explore the use of video and other technologies in HR and social change.

Gives a sense of the possibility and international scope of action and a starting point for a discussion on the strengths and limitations of video as an advocacy medium

Keep in mind that this documentary talks mostly about the impact of loose/found footage and the work of individual activists, not so much about personal testimony and videos for advocacy by organizations.

Brainstorm the strengths and limitations of video:

- What kinds of stories does video capture well?
- What types of images are best captured by video?
- What are the strengths of creating a video for a human rights advocacy campaign? What are the potential limitations?





FACILITATORS' SPEAKERS NOTES FOR *RULE OF THE GUN IN SUGARLAND*

Film made by WITNESS partner Joey Lozano with NAKAMATA, another WITNESS partner. An indigenous coalition in Mindanao, Philippines conducts video documentation of their legal and peaceful survey of ancestral land claims. Attacks on members are captured on video and lead to an investigation into the violence. November 2001.

Introduce film, explaining context (NB audio can be hard to hear so best to explain context of Mindanao and indigenous land claims)

Brainstorm the strengths and limitations of video:

- What kinds of stories does video capture well?
- What types of images are best captured by video?
- What are the strengths of creating a video for a human rights advocacy campaign? What are the potential limitations?
- What are the strengths and limitations of creating and using video online?

STRENGTHS:

- “Put a face on it”: **Voices of those directly affected** can be brought to locations that are otherwise inaccessible (e.g. refugees, marginalized people); truth-telling sense
- “Seeing is Believing”: ‘Indisputable’ **direct evidence** of a violation (seeing is believing; ‘indisputable’)
- **Personal testimony** (the power of eye contact)
- **‘Presencing’** direct neglect or inaction of authorities (recording inaction of police/local officials, and holding accountable to higher authorities)
- Powerful at **illustrating contrasts** (between places/and over time – e.g. IDP settlements in Burma?)
- Can **compress** time and space
- **Storytelling** potential – including power of positive envisioning, particularly relevant in ESC/other rights where fulfillment can seem distant
- Make **links of individual stories and systemic issues**; emblematic or representative cases/case-studies of wider problems.
- Can create space for action
- **Accessible** to most – does not require literacy, and potential to share information, and engage viewers in debates (cf. lessons from participatory development communication)
- Through good visual and verbal storytelling can **emphasize indivisibility of rights** – someone can talk about how they were denied justice at police station; shots of them at home in poverty can dramatically and in an unspoken manner highlight a why
- Can be strongly **participatory process** – visual medium, easy-to-use technology, easy to share material and discuss particularly while filming
- Potential **deterrent to abuses** occurring as recording events
- In online advocacy, there is an instant global reach (**‘anyone’ can see it and share it**), and the power is pushed to the margins
- Consider gender-based segregation in Saudi Arabia for example. A testimony of a woman from Saudi Arabia posted on the internet and viewed by thousands globally would effectively challenge gender-based segregation and isolation. While the prospect for direct action in Saudi Arabia might be limited, the prospect for generating international pressure from all margins is now more feasible.
- With some online platforms, the **context of human rights violation** is immediately available
- Some online video sharing platforms provide easy to access written material which contextualizes the violation and/or provide link to other sites, organizations, and resources for more information
- With some online platforms, **call to action is readily available**, easy to engage with, and share further

NEUTRAL:





- **Emotional/visceral impact** encouraging to action - flip side is misuse in **propaganda**; depends on integrity of filmmaker/activist
- **Audience is less literate** in editing; tends to place trust in television and be less questioning of how put together; opportunity to abuse trust depends on integrity of maker
- **Process and product** can be representative of marginalized groups
- Can simplify and clarify issues

LIMITATIONS:

- Requires **access** to locations or people
- Limited in use for **quantitative** analysis
- Not good for abstract concepts or procedural issues
- Can **reduce complex structural issues** to personal stories and lose the bigger picture
- Potential **risk** to people involved in filming and distribution
- Editing process can be non-participatory
- Can intrude into **privacy**; need to take extra care with consent and security
- Can make the **person filming a target** depending on local circumstances
- **Global reach might not be truly global**; further, not all issues need global audience
- Think access to the Internet; think technology gap; think video-sharing modality gap (online vs. mobile); think languages
- Online, loss of control over context of usage
- Online platforms might render the context provided impersonal, academic, group-specialized or informal
- The need for follow-up to close the feedback loop and secure change (this can be done either online or offline)
- Think email list maintenance; think updating those who took action on campaign results; think taking online initiative offline

