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Participatory video in agrifood systems and digital environments

A practitioner's guide

Digital
Green



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About this guide

Participatory video can be used as an interactive tool to promote more inclusive and sustainable forms of development, mirroring local realities and sharing people's values, cultures and perceptions. By adopting a Communication for Development (ComDev) approach, farmer organizations, rural institutions and practitioners can use participatory video to drive development. Thanks to digital tools, participatory video can be applied extensively to domains as diverse as innovation systems, digital marketing, policy dialogue, accountability and informed consent, among many others.

This field practitioner's guide provides step-by-step guidance for creating and using participatory video within a ComDev process. The guide is part of a modular training series, but can be used as a stand-alone resource for self-learning. It is intended for use by communication practitioners, farmer and civil society organizations, field workers, extension services, farmer field schools and innovation brokers.

This guide helps to identify the purpose, content and context for using participatory video as well as the advantages of using video for development, and presents tips about how to use and share participatory video.

The guide will enable users to understand how to produce and share participatory video and how to use it to promote change in rural environments by engaging and giving voice to family farmers and smallholders. It explains how to use video to promote dialogue and engagement and to share knowledge and information, using the right e-platforms, tools, methods and practices to display video content and incorporate it in development processes and initiatives. The guide also touches upon the technicalities of video production, including framing shots, devising sequences, following shooting protocols and applying editing techniques.

Chapter 1, Using participatory video in development, clarifies the context in which video can be used as one of the most efficient communication media to facilitate participatory processes within social and productive environments. It establishes the role of video and explains how it is linked to different ComDev strategies and approaches.

Chapter 2 is entirely dedicated to participatory video production: the basic rules and techniques to be followed to create an audiovisual narrative that is perceived as a smooth and continuous message, without communication "noise" resulting from mismanagement of the audiovisual language.

Chapter 3 addresses the participatory video sharing process. It describes different ways video can be shared: offline and online, in groups and individually. It also describes the different roles of the facilitators as well as key aspects to be taken into consideration when organizing video-sharing events.

Chapter 4 provides basic information about the technical characteristics of video tools and equipment. It also provides recommendations regarding the conditions for video recording.

Finally, **Chapter 5** presents a number of exercises and activities users can carry out to improve their skills in the use of instruments; in planning, scriptwriting, shooting and editing; and in sharing the final audiovisual product.

As part of a modular training programme that will be periodically updated and expanded, this guide is necessarily a work in progress. It also represents a first step in a broader capacity-development effort that foresees the implementation of a series of online and face-to-face training events, as well as the establishment of communities of practice in collaboration with ComDev platforms and initiatives, namely: Collaborative Change Communication; ComDev Asia; YenKasa Africa and Onda Rural.*

This guide and the associated training will offer a common ground for practitioners in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other regions to share experiences and lessons learned related to the use of participatory video in many different agroecological, social and cultural contexts.

* More information regarding each initiative can be found at:
CCComDev: www.ccomdev.org, ComDev Asia: <https://comdevasia.org>, YenKasa Africa: <https://yenkasa.org>, and
Onda Rural Latin America: <https://ondarural.org>.

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Foreword

Access to knowledge and information is essential to achieve sustainable agrifood systems, and such access greatly advanced due to the widespread use of digital technologies. Nevertheless, digital exclusion and the lack of appropriate content are limiting factors, especially in rural areas, depriving smallholders of access to services and hampering their development opportunities.

To mitigate this divide, farmer organizations and rural institutions are increasingly utilizing low-cost digital media to ensure equal access to knowledge and information. This implies not only improving connectivity but also promoting digital literacy, developing farmer-centred rural communication services and ensuring that adequate content is available to rural people at the right time in the appropriate formats and languages.

Participatory video is a communication approach to video production and sharing in which community members and stakeholders actively participate in the planning, creation and dissemination of video content. This process empowers individuals and groups to share their knowledge, perspectives, experiences and concerns using the medium of video to raise awareness, advocate for change or document their own stories and realities. It is instrumental in fostering collaborative change.

Several studies have demonstrated that participatory video can be applied to different agrifood systems, ecological conditions and development programmes to facilitate the co-creation of content and the active engagement of communities. It can easily be appropriated by rural institutions, extension services, farmer field schools, farmers and Indigenous Peoples' organizations and can be shared extensively through digital environments.

Taking into account the knowledge-sharing power and versatility of participatory video and its potential to advance sustainable agrifood systems, FAO, Digital Green and the College of Development Communication of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, joined efforts to develop this practitioner's guide to serve as a reference document for both training programmes and self-learning. We hope it will help practitioners apply participatory video in their respective fields, leveraging the opportunities provided by digital technologies.



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Abbreviations

ComDev	Communication for Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FPS	frames per second
GB	gigabyte
HD	high definition
ICT	information and communication technology
PRCA	Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal
RAM	random access memory
RCS	rural communication services
ROM	read-only memory
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

Participatory video: a definition

Participatory video is a communication approach to video production and sharing in which community members and stakeholders actively participate in the planning, creation and dissemination of video content. This process empowers individuals and groups to share their knowledge, perspectives, experiences and concerns using the medium of video to raise awareness, advocate for change or document their own stories and realities. It is instrumental in fostering collaborative change.



Chapter 1

Using participatory video in development

As stated in the *Communication for Rural Development Sourcebook*:

Communication for Development (ComDev) combines a range of participatory methods and communication tools to address the knowledge and information needs of rural stakeholders, and to facilitate their active involvement in development initiatives. Stakeholder engagement is required at every stage of the development process (FAO, 2014a).

Video production and sharing is part of the ComDev process, which begins by conducting a Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal, or PRCA, to identify the key issues and problems to be solved, as well as the main audience segment and the priority stakeholder profile. Within this framework, video – frequently accompanied by other communication materials such as radio programmes, leaflets, social media products, etc., is often the primary instrument through which information and knowledge are shared in connection with the communication objectives established in the ComDev strategy. In fact, video is often the central element of participatory methodologies that combine multimedia materials and the use of ICTs, as well as dialogue, face-to-face interaction and field practice.

The participatory video process requires taking into consideration, from the start, the characteristics of the intended audience, respecting their perception, language and culture, as well as identifying the most suitable option for sharing the video – whether it be online or offline.

As part of a communication process, participatory video can be a driver for technical innovation and for social change, bringing to light local priorities and experiences, and giving voice to local stakeholders. It is therefore important to adopt a ComDev approach to ensure both the adoption and the appropriation of participatory video according to local realities.

This chapter will enable the reader to:

- learn about the key elements of the ComDev approach and process;
- consider the different functions of participatory video in inclusive agrifood systems and in digital environments, including supporting the active engagement of farmer organizations and rural stakeholders in development initiatives; and
- discuss how to implement participatory video as part of a ComDev approach.

1.1 The Communication for Development approach

ComDev planning aims to design a communication strategy and plan in a participatory and systematic manner to achieve development objectives that are defined with the local stakeholders. It involves establishing a dialogue and mobilizing the intended stakeholders to determine appropriate communication outputs according to their characteristics, needs, capacities and resources (FAO, 2014a). ComDev activities play key functions, such as:

- **amplifying rural people’s voices**, knowledge and standpoints, and bringing to remote communities the information they need in accordance with their language and culture;
- enabling **stakeholder participation** in decision-making and promoting **coordinated and collaborative action**;
- facilitating the **co-creation and sharing of knowledge**;
- preventing misunderstandings and helping to mediate and **resolve conflicts**; and
- **leveraging local media and ICT** for development purposes.

The ComDev process includes four phases: (1) a PRCA; (2) the design of a strategy and a plan of action; (3) the implementation of a communication plan and the production and use of multimedia materials, such as videos and other types of media products; and (4) an assessment of results and sustainability (Figure 1). The process is deeply rooted in the local reality, and it facilitates the active engagement and ownership of local stakeholders in the participatory video approach and in the communication activities associated with it.

The use of video within a ComDev approach serves to address different challenges and deploy communication functions within a development initiative. Video can be used as an interactive and inspirational media. It is highly engaging and, thus, leads to high retention of information, as well as facilitating knowledge sharing regardless of the literacy level of the audience. It can convey messages through sound and images, making them easy to understand and to be shared numerous times with a variety of audiences.

Figure 1. The four phases of the ComDev process



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Using participatory video in development entails ensuring that the videos produced share relevant content, in accordance with the needs of rural people. It is also critical to ensure that the content and the core messaging being shared are accurate, relevant and appropriate to the stakeholders' sociocultural, economic and environmental reality. In addition, it is necessary to identify the most suitable communication channels that are available to the rural stakeholders in a given territory for sharing videos and to determine whether videos will be shared in person or virtually, identifying the right platforms and activities for this purpose. Table 1 presents the most common functions and applications of participatory video.

Table 1. Functions and applications of participatory video

Function	Description	Application
Knowledge co-generation and sharing	Produced with local stakeholders, blending local and technical knowledge on relevant issues related to specific environments or activities, in order to promote collective action and positive change. Often used to promote the uptake of innovation processes (production, harvest, post-harvest, etc.). Effectiveness is enhanced when used jointly with complementary communication materials, dialogue, field observation and practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Agricultural innovation ■ Farmer-to-farmer exchange ■ Farmer field schools ■ Technical assistance and extension
Awareness raising, preparedness and risk reduction	Video can be very effective as part of communication campaigns to raise awareness, increase preparedness and reduce risk, covering issues such as climate change and food security concerns. The views and experiences of farmers facing such difficulties and devising solutions are realistically shared through participatory video.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Information and awareness campaigns ■ Resilience building ■ Risk communication ■ Early warning ■ Climate adaptation
Dialogue, advocacy, accountability and engagement	Social interaction can be facilitated using video to present problems and solutions, showing local realities and employing to the voices and images of the stakeholders themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communication for social change ■ Community mobilization ■ Free, prior and informed consent
Internal and external communication	Video can be used to raise awareness of members of farmer organizations about business and market opportunities, production standards and good agricultural practices. It can also be used to influence decision-making about sectoral policies. In each case, video should be shared through adequate platforms according to the preference of the intended audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business possibilities of farmer organizations, digital marketing ■ Competitive and comparative advantages ■ Horticultural value chains ■ Internal organizational situation
Planning, participatory evaluation and reporting	Participatory video is an effective means to document rural people's needs and requests, as well as to record agreements, recommendations and results achieved in the context of development initiatives. It is essential in people-centred and participatory development approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sharing of opinions and negotiation ■ Participatory planning, monitoring and accountability ■ Reports of participatory evaluation ■ Systematization, project presentations, fundraising

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

1.2 Participatory video: a key tool for engagement, knowledge sharing and inclusive development

An important dimension of the structural transformations affecting family farming and rural livelihoods is the role that communication and digital technologies play in facilitating access to knowledge and information, allowing family farmers and their organizations to make their voices heard. A truly inclusive participatory video process facilitates dialogue, the co-creation of knowledge, and informed decision-making, using the audiovisual language to mediate across different perspectives, meanings and realities.

Throughout the process, it is essential to constantly elicit and validate content that can influence the perceptions, decisions and collective action of the intended audience. Care must be taken to ensure the content's sensitivity towards gender, religion and race, being mindful of the sentiments of the community that will be watching the video. It is also critical to ensure that the content and the core messaging being shared are accurate and appropriate. As such, videos must be vetted and approved by subject-matter specialists and must initially be screened on a pilot scale with the intended audience to ensure that they are culturally and ethically sound.

With regard to understanding the local context, for example, understanding a community's cropping cycle will help clarify during what month the farmers will need each step of a best practice. This will enable the person making the videos to plan in advance the best time to produce and share them. Similarly, it is important to consider what development issues and processes the community, organization or institution is engaged in and to prioritize the issues that will be covered, in order to create videos that will help drive the changes needed to benefit families, communities and individuals.

Before beginning to read this guide, it is important to decide how you will apply what you will learn about participatory video; that is: What are your objectives for learning about participatory video? Clarifying this will help you prepare a plan for producing and sharing your video. Visualize where and how you see the video content being used, who will watch it, when and where. Answer questions such as: What challenges is the community facing? What is their current situation, experience and knowledge gaps in relation to the subject of the video? Will this content be easy for them to understand and readily applicable? This guide will help you address these questions and make effective use of participatory video.

Creating low-cost, highly scalable video content is an efficient way to create a flexible, highly-versatile communication tool for community mobilization, capacity building, demonstration or simply for sharing experiences. The more contextualized and customized the information shared in the videos, the more effective they will be. Furthermore, video can be incorporated as part of a dedicated set of rural communication services (RCS) to advance economic,

environmental and social dimensions of family farming (for instance: by shortening the value chains linking producers to markets; improving resilience and climate change adaptation through community-based early warning systems; or supporting farmer-led advisory services for inclusive innovation).

Participatory video focuses on elements of the community itself – its language, geography, setting, people, available resources and even stories. This makes the content relevant and entails a participatory process for planning, producing and sharing video. This, in turn, makes the video more relevant and credible from the perspective of the audience, as the information is shared by community members who have social and economic situations similar to those of the audience and with whom they share cultural beliefs and experiences.

Video is an extremely effective tool for facilitating and strengthening dialogue among participants of a communication process. Before beginning the video production, all stakeholders (including farmers, their organizations and relevant institutions located in the area considered by the ComDev plan), should discuss and agree on the content and use of the video. It should be noted that technical aspects of the video content should be reviewed by subject-matter specialists and discussed with local communities, blending local and technical knowledge. Farmers themselves should be involved in the production of the videos and should be the protagonists of the videos, presenting the issues at hand, their views and their experiences, in their own words.

The process of sharing the videos includes communication activities that take place both before and after showing each video. This implies developing beforehand a plan for the use of the video, in consultation with interested parties, such as farmer organizations, farmer field schools, extension services and communities.



Chapter 2

Participatory video production process

When creating participatory video, questions arise such as: How can the different segments of the narrative be visually represented? What exactly should be shot, and how should the audiovisual elements flow from one shot to the next? This chapter answers those and other practical questions about video production. It begins by describing the different stages and aspects of participatory video production and different communication approaches, and continues with practical aspects, including types of sequences, shots and angles and their purposes.

This chapter will enable the reader to:

- explain the basic characteristics of visual and hearing perception;
- develop scripts of extensive content and messages, based on the outcomes of the PRCA, focusing on the main issues identified and the solutions offered by the stakeholders involved;
- apply the principles and elements of audiovisual production and video shooting techniques to produce an engaging video;
- create a storyboard, taking into consideration the script requirements, the continuity of the audiovisual narrative and transitions;
- prepare a workplan prior to shooting in the field; and
- render the final video in various formats, so it can be shared with different stakeholders.

2.1 Participatory video process

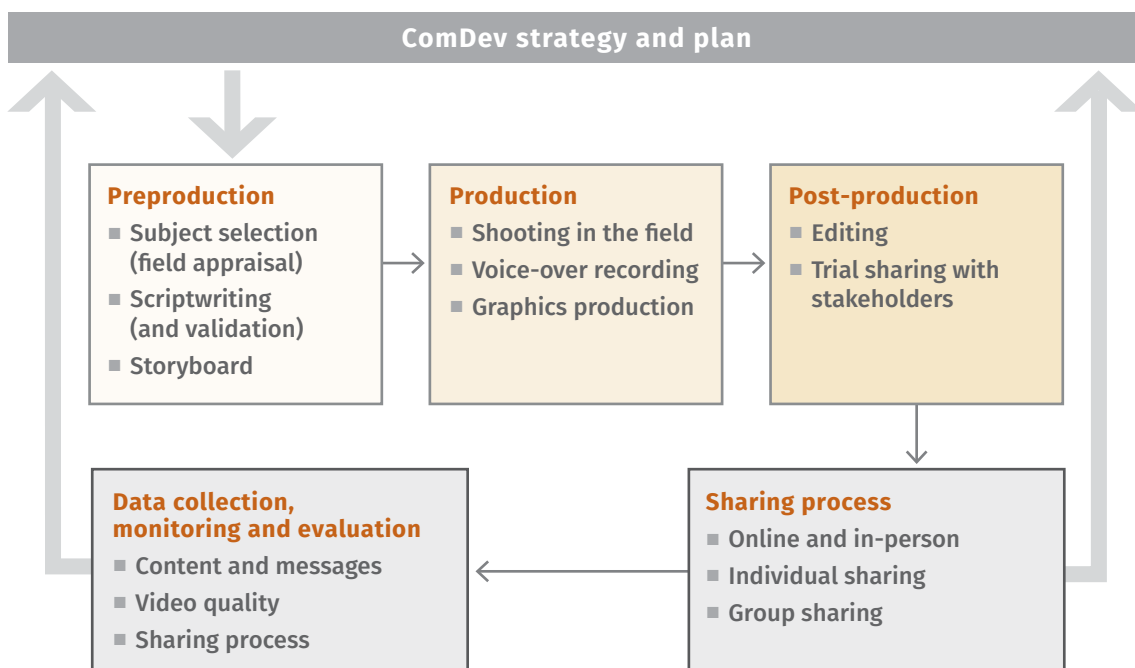
The process of video production in a community or a larger territory is an inclusive, participatory process that begins, develops and ends with the people of the community or territory. This is in accordance with the ComDev model, which engenders community participation and ownership, and seeks to create content that is accessible and relevant to the people.

The video production process includes three main phases:

1. preproduction, which begins with an appraisal of the situation and the selection of the subject (if possible based on a PRCA) and continues through preparing the storyboard;
2. production, consisting of field-level video shooting, animation and graphics, and, if needed, some studio shoots; and
3. post-production, which includes editing the video and exporting the completed video in one or more formats.

Once the video has been produced, it must be shared, which is, in itself, a vitally important process. Additionally, all aspects of the process should be monitored and evaluated (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Process of participatory video production and sharing



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

2.1.1 Preproduction phase

- 1. Subject selection:** The selection of the subject arises from the outcomes of the PRCA, during which the needs of the community are understood and prioritized through a process of dialogue that combines local wisdom and experience with scientific knowledge. It is important to note that the subject as well as the solutions presented in the videos must be relevant in relation to the socioeconomic, productive and environmental situation of the intended audience.
- 2. Scriptwriting (base text):** Based on the subject selected, a script is then prepared, focusing on the key messages and non-negotiable points identified. It is important to consider that the script should be based on the local reality and should include – as appropriate – local stories, practices and culture. During this step, it is also necessary to confirm the accuracy of the content with subject-matter specialists. However, the participatory video approach offers a flexible production process to capture the point of view and knowledge of the stakeholders, who directly express the key messages. The script is therefore a reference source that guides the production process and supports the co-creation of relevant messages.
- 3. Storyboard preparation (video design):** During this stage, the video producer makes a visual and audio description of each shot, using simple drawings and text, according to the script, covering all the different concepts and proposals included in the script. Once again, prior to creating the storyboard, it is essential to have the technical script reviewed, adjusted as needed and approved by a subject-matter specialist.

2.1.2 Production phase

- 1. Shooting in the field:** Before beginning to shoot the video, a number of aspects must be carefully arranged (including location, participants, logistics and, especially, recording equipment), so that everything goes smoothly. Even at the time of shooting, there are protocols to follow that will keep the experience organized and minimize the scope for error.
- 2. Complementary images and sound:** The production phase also includes adding elements to the video – such as animation, graphics and voice-over – after shooting in the field. Protocols for this process, as well as for recording images with ambient sound but without noise (unwanted sound), and for recording video and audio interviews are described later in this chapter.

2.1.3 Post-production phase

1. **Video editing and approval:** Once the video has been shot, it must be edited to create the final product. This can be done on a mobile phone or a computer, using simple, accessible editing platforms. The first objective in editing is to assemble all the shots recorded in the field or in other locations. Editing also involves adding text, voice-over, graphics and other elements. It is important to ensure that the new elements are part of the storyboard and do not contradict the main information provided in the video or send a different message.
2. **Trial video sharing in the community:** Once a video has been approved for use, the next step is to share it at a pilot scale with the audience or community for which it is intended, in order to get feedback before sharing the video on a larger scale. Feedback sessions can be organized to validate both the messages and the visual appearance of the video. The video can also be shared on a trial basis by selecting an appropriate platform, channel or event (such as community meetings). It is important to remember, however, that the trial sharing should be conducted with a small group who will watch the video and provide feedback.

2.1.4 Sharing phase

1. **Video sharing and usage:** After pilot trials, adjustments and corrections, the finalized video is ready for extensive sharing and use. There are several ways in which video can be shared for different objectives, such as to convey information, foster the adoption of a technology or practice, raise awareness, or support negotiation and mediation. These activities can be broadly clustered as individual sharing and group sharing, but also as online and in-person sharing.
2. **Data collection, monitoring and evaluation:** Monitoring is a means of controlling and evaluating the results of a video. This step involves collecting and analysing data to determine the degree of success of the video (broadly evaluated as: irrelevant, meets expectations or exceeds expectations) and to identify which aspects of the video are effective and which aspects need improvement. According to the results of the monitoring and evaluation, the video should be adjusted to increase its effectiveness. This phase also serves to identify follow-up actions and new issues to be treated using participatory video.

2.2 Developing core content

How is content selected and created? How important is it to identify the subject of a video so that it delivers a solution that is relevant, time appropriate, acceptable and adoptable? How adequate is the approach for each video? These are some of the critical issues discussed in this section.

A crucial issue in participatory video is to properly identify the main content and key messages to be included. The key criteria to keep in mind in this regard is that the content must fulfil the objective that has been identified. That is, it must address a specific need or problem in a specific context. In order to do this, one must have a clear understanding of the outcome that is expected as a result of watching the video.

The first step in determining the subject, content and outcome of a video is to conduct a PRCA.¹ This is a research method that uses participatory techniques to generate information about stakeholders' communication needs and priorities. Through this process, local stakeholders plan and participate in development initiatives that meet their needs, reflect their perspectives, and build ownership and commitment within the community. The timing of the appraisal and the video production should be planned so as to ensure that the final video is of timely relevance to the audience.

Once the topic is clear and the sources of information have been identified, it is time to begin developing a script that covers the desired content or helps document and accompany the process considered in the participatory video exercise. Depending on the subject of the video, there may be key messages that must be included in the script.

2.2.1 Core content script (Scriptwriting)

A video requires a core content script when the amount of information to be covered is considerable. Core content scripts structure the information to be included in the video.

Developing a core content script starts with the preparation of a **content outline**, similar to the table of contents of a book or a report. The outline should be prepared together with local stakeholders, community leaders, representatives of farmer organizations and relevant specialists, to ensure that all the needed content is included. Once the content outline is prepared, the **script** should be written together with the key stakeholders, ensuring that it reflects the way they learn and perceive, and includes relevant information that is adequately explained (see Table 2). Once the script is completed, communication specialists, members of organizations and selected community stakeholders should review the script. This often entails narrowing down the script to cover specific ideas in order to come up with a concise script that people can clearly understand and stay actively engaged with during the production phase.

A general rule to follow is to consider breaking down complex subjects into simpler subtopics that can be discussed over a series of videos instead of creating a single long and complicated video. When presenting a series of messages, it is best to use the same style and format

¹ For more information on field participatory appraisals, see Chapter 2 of the Communication for Rural Development Sourcebook, at www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/c5b8b5d6-132a-4cf4-8b05-21572b2be2b7.

for all the messages. Additionally, each message should be connected to the experiences of the intended audience. This will increase the audience’s connection to the message and the likelihood that they will adopt what is being proposed.

The following points should be considered when developing a core content script:

- If the topic includes a cause–effect relationship, the **order of the information** must follow the natural order of that relationship.
- Tackle **one problem or situation at a time**.
- Begin by describing **the stakeholders’ current situation as they perceive it**, and then focus on the specific problem or problematic situation.
- Explain the causes leading to the unwanted situation **carefully and in detail**. (Ask “Why?” several times to reach the root cause of the issue.)
- **Define the best possible solution** to the problem or situation in a participatory manner (facilitating consultations or mediation among relevant stakeholders).
- Adopt a **balanced treatment of the information** (neither too complex nor too simplistic), and explain all technical points the audience is unlikely to be familiar with.
- **Validate the core content** with subject-matter specialists and with the intended audience.

Table 2. Core content script

Element	Description
Brief description of the main problem or situation (issue or need).	What is affecting the household, organization or community and to what extent?
Causes and effects of the problem (issue or need) – situation analysis.	How and why do the causes affect the organization or community directly or indirectly? What is the relationship between the cause and the effect?
Identification of the root cause and secondary causes.	Ask “Why?” five times to get to the root of the problem, and analyse the “invisible” secondary triggers that influence the main problem.
Proposal of a solution.	Based on the analysis, search for solutions. Involve all partners and stakeholders who can contribute to the solution.
Describe how the solution will resolve the problem–situation.	Describe the assumptions regarding how the situation will change and define collective action and learning processes, if necessary.

Source: FAO. 2020. Empowering farmers and their organizations through the creation of social capital - Bond learning guide for trainers. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb1423en>

2.2.2 Key messages

A **message** is a short verbal, written or recorded communication. Messages should be credible, concise, relevant and compelling and should respect the vision and values of the people represented in the video (see Table 3). Each message should contain a central idea with supporting arguments. A message map (see Table 4) is a tool used to create compelling messages for a priority audience. Messages may be communicated at three levels: within an organization or community; among peers and closely related organizations or communities; and with external institutions and organizations. Participatory video is often used to convey messages from a social group within the same sector to another segment of the population or to the general public, with the aim of raising awareness, sharing knowledge or fostering social change.

As shown in Table 3, messages should be credible, concise, relevant and compelling, and should communicate values.

Table 3. Characteristics of effective messages

Credible	Factually accurate, providing information to back up assertions. Delivered by people who are trusted and knowledgeable about the subject.
Concise	A good message is clear and simple. Concise messages that people can understand and remember are much more effective.
Relevant	Messages should begin with people's interests – what they already know and think, and guide them to the new information or concepts that the video intends to share.
Compelling	Strong messages should inspire people to act.
Communicate values	Messages that are framed in a way that resonates with people's core values (e.g. fairness, equality, freedom and honesty) are the most powerful.

Source: FAO. 2020. Empowering farmers and their organizations through the creation of social capital - Bond learning guide for trainers. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb1423en>

Table 4. Message map

Key message 1	Key message 2	Key message 3
Supporting fact 1.1	Supporting fact 2.1	Supporting fact 3.1
Supporting fact 1.2	Supporting fact 2.2	Supporting fact 3.2
Supporting fact 1.3	Supporting fact 2.3	Supporting fact 3.3

Source: FAO. 2020. Empowering farmers and their organizations through the creation of social capital - Bond learning guide for trainers. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb1423en>

Videos should be concise and focus on the core message (key messages) instead of attempting to cover other themes that may take the focus away from the key content. Moreover, the key messages should be addressed according to the cultural values of the audience, thus enabling the audience to connect to the key messages more readily. Finally, it is important that videos end with a call to action (the final key message) that suggests what actions the audience should take after viewing the video.

2.2.3 Validation and quality assurance

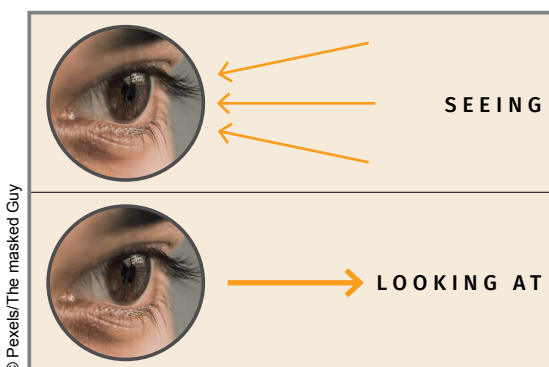
All content that is going to be covered in a video must be reviewed to ensure that it is accurate. As a video producer, you will build capacity toward making excellent videos, but you may not necessarily have expertise regarding the subject of the video. Videos can create large-scale impact, resulting in actions and leading to changes in behaviour on the part of large numbers of people. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the video producer to ensure that the content is approved by the community and subject-matter specialists.

2.3 Audiovisual production elements

Our senses are the instruments through which we communicate with the world around us. Our sensory organs collect information from the environment, transform that information into nerve impulses and send them to the brain. The brain compares the information with other information in our memory bank and processes it through image associations, deciding how to react – physically, intellectually or both.

Perception is the sensation of receiving stimuli from the environment. These stimuli can be intelligible and constitute information, or they may fall into the category of “noise” and be discarded. The sensory organs have a wide range of perception, within which the stimulus is effortlessly decoded. However, the sensory organs do have thresholds – limits of perception beyond which information, or stimuli, are not captured.

2.3.1 Human perception



Our eyes and ears are key to human perception. Our eyes see everything that enters our visual field and send these images (in the form of electrical signals) to the brain for analysis. If the brain recognizes an element of interest in the visual field, it commands the visual system to focus on it, intentionally switching from the function of **seeing** to the function of **looking**, which consists of examining the object of interest. Physically, this causes the eye to reorient and the curvature of the lens to adjust

in order to locate the image of the element of interest and enlarge its size on the retina.

Hearing occurs automatically when incoming sound waves cause the tympanic membranes of our ears to vibrate. To hear it is only necessary that our auditory system work correctly. As with our visual system, the brain receives the signals of what we hear via the auditory nerve, compares them with our existing memory and identifies the sounds, or does not.

However, as we know, we do not necessarily listen to everything we hear. **Listening** is a conscious act of paying attention to one or several sounds in particular, an intentional discrimination, separating valid information from “noise”.

The common audiovisual instruments created by man, such as cameras, do not have the ability to look or to listen. They can only see and hear what their visual and auditory fields allow them to capture. Thus, the camera operator must intentionally manipulate the camera in such a way as to move into the sphere of looking and listening.

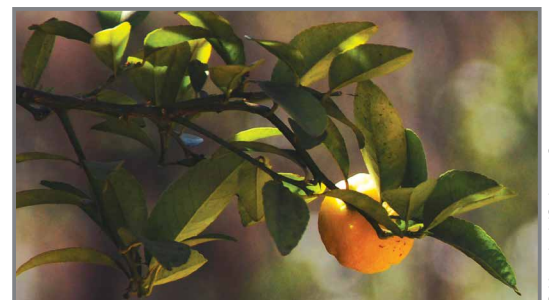
2.3.2 Shooting basics

How can a segment of a story or particular information be represented visually? What scenes or images should be captured with the camera and how can one manage the transition from one shot or topic to the next? The following text in this chapter addresses these questions by providing information on how to use the camera (framing, angles and different shots) and manage other elements (such as light), as well as other recommendations that help to make the video realistic and appealing. We begin by setting out the basic terms and concepts involved in video shooting.

Foreground and background

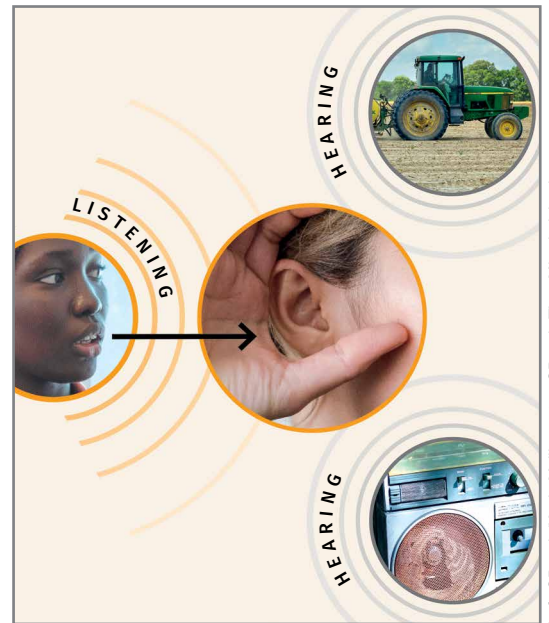
Everything in a video frame creates an impression on the audience. If there is a tree, a well, a house or a child, apart from the main subject, their presence in the frame will establish a relationship and tell a visual story. Hence, it helps to understand what should be included in a shot in relation to the main subject.

- **Foreground:** The item that is in front of the camera and therefore appears nearest to the observer, generally appearing as the main subject, is the foreground. The foreground is the subject or object that should be seen by the observer at first glance. It is what the observer must see without any distractions.



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- **Background:** Whatever is visibly farthest from the observer, which may or may not be out of focus, is called the background. Instead of leaving the background to chance, it is extremely effective to establish a background that relates to the topic being addressed. The background can also be manipulated to become less predominant or provide no information at all, for instance by using a solid neutral colour for the background.



Left: ©Pexels/Kevin Malik; center: ©Pexels/Tima Miroshnichenko; top: ©Pexels/Mark Stebnicki; bottom: ©Unsplash/Dave Wetherall

Frame, shot, scene and sequence

- **Frame:** A frame is a single image. Many frames (usually 24, 25 or 30 frames per second) make a moving image. Frames are codified in “time codes” (which indicate the start and end time of each shot). These are later identified by the camera and the editing machine.
- **Shot:** Whatever is captured by a camera from the time it begins recording until it stops recording is called a shot.
- **Scene:** All shots captured in the same location and at the same time form a scene. (Note that a single location can serve different objectives in a video and, thus may be used for various scenes, or even for various sequences.)
- **Sequence:** Several scenes developing the same thematic unit form a sequence, and several sequences form a video. Some sequences provide descriptions of things (environments, interiors, machines, etc.). These are called descriptive sequences. The order of the shots in descriptive sequences should be arranged to provide the clearest description of the item being shot. That is, the order of the shots should be chosen with an educational purpose. Other sequences show specific processes and should follow the order in which the events or steps of the process occur. These sequences are called story or narrative sequences.

2.3.3 Framing and camera positions

Audiovisual or film language is an accepted system of visual communication. It has its own rules (or “grammar”) that make consecutive images flow smoothly to develop a story or a subject. In the same way that writers use the grammar of written language to tell a story, audiovisual grammar helps to connect images which portray words, sentences, paragraphs and even punctuation marks. There are various elements of a good shot, including framing, steadiness and composition. These elements serve to create good visual quality.

Rule of thirds: The rule of thirds is a way of positioning the elements composing a frame so that they are visually balanced. The rule divides the frame into nine equal parts using



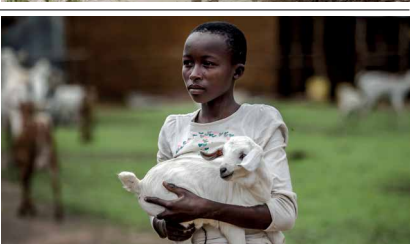



two horizontal and two vertical lines (see figure at left). This rule indicates that the main object or person in the shot should be placed along the dividing lines or at their intersection points. If there are two subjects, they should both be placed along each of the vertical lines dividing the frame. The horizon should also be positioned along either the top or bottom horizontal line.



Shot size

Shots are the minimal image (and sound) expression in a scene – like words in a sentence. Shot sizes (such as close-ups, long shots and over-the-shoulder shots) are used to provide a specific type of information to the viewer. Thus, it is important to be familiar with the different shot sizes and their application in video. Six commonly used shot sizes, and their uses, are described in Table 5.

Table 5. Types of shots

<p>Establishing shot or extreme long shot (ELS): This shot is used to establish the location and context. This is a very wide-angle shot and generally covers landscapes, people, houses, fields, etc.</p>	 <p>© Unsplash/Frantisek Duris</p>
<p>Long shot (LS): This shot shows a subject (person, animal or object) in full, along with some background. It helps to establish the connection of the story with the person or object, showing the current situation of the subject (attire, gender, condition, etc.) and helps the viewer understand what they are doing.</p>	 <p>© FAO/Levy Bouassa</p>
<p>Medium shot (MS): Medium shots show the subject from the waist up. They are often used when recording a conversation or an interview. These shots help to focus on the main character or subject, showing details such as their facial expression and clothing. These shots also help to establish a strong connection with the audience.</p>	 <p>© FAO/Luis Tato</p>
<p>Close-up (CU): Close-ups are used to show specific parts of objects or to focus on the faces of people (from the top of the head to the chin or from the shoulder upwards). Such shots help to focus the viewer's attention. Close-ups of people show emotion and draw in the observer to listen carefully to what the person is saying.</p>	 <p>© Pexels/Dodo Phanthamaly</p>
<p>Extreme close-up (ECU): This shot is used to show details or small items, such as a fungus or a bug on a leaf.</p>	 <p>© Unsplash/Eric Karits</p>
<p>Over-the-shoulder shot (OTS): Another shot that helps to show conversations (in addition to medium shots) is the over-the-shoulder shot. In this shot, the camera is placed behind the listener such that part of their head and shoulder are visible and the face of the person speaking to them is visible.</p>	 <p>© Pexel/Greta Hoffman</p>

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Camera angles, height and movements

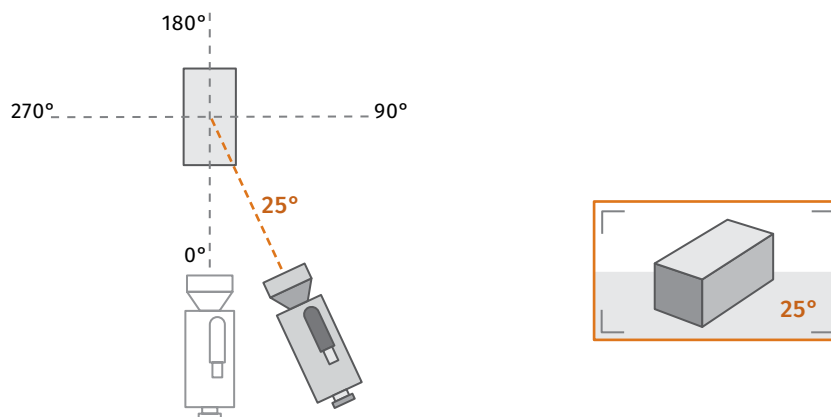
Camera angles, height and movements are important elements of visual storytelling. This chapter describes the main camera angles, heights and movements, and how to use them when shooting.

Camera angles

Almost any object or subject has one side that is more prominent than the others. This side is commonly considered the front of the object (like the front of a person or a building). Any object or subject shot directly from the front forms an angle of 0° between the line that passes between the camera lens and the front of the object or subject, as illustrated in Figure 3.

The camera angle is determined in relation to the face of the person or the front of the object being shot. Shooting an object, such as a house, directly facing the front of it (at 0°) will result in a flat image, showing no depth. As such, this is not recommended. In order for the image to have some depth, move at least 25° to the left or right of the front of the object. This provides a more complete perspective of the object. Generally, shots taken from angles of 0° , 90° , 180° or 270° (see Figure 3) do not show the volume of the object. It is better to shoot from intermediate angles (such as 30° , 150° or 315°) in order to recreate the three-dimensionality of the objects.

Figure 3: Camera angles



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Camera height

The height and tilt of the camera can be used to achieve different purposes. The next paragraphs describe the different camera angles and how they can be used.

Eye-level or normal angle: Used primarily to form a connection between the audience and the characters or subjects. The eye-level height is most effective in shooting conversations, to create a sense of connection with the subject. Eye-level shots can be taken simply by increasing or decreasing the height of the tripod to match the eye level of the speakers, particularly in regard to whether they are sitting or standing.

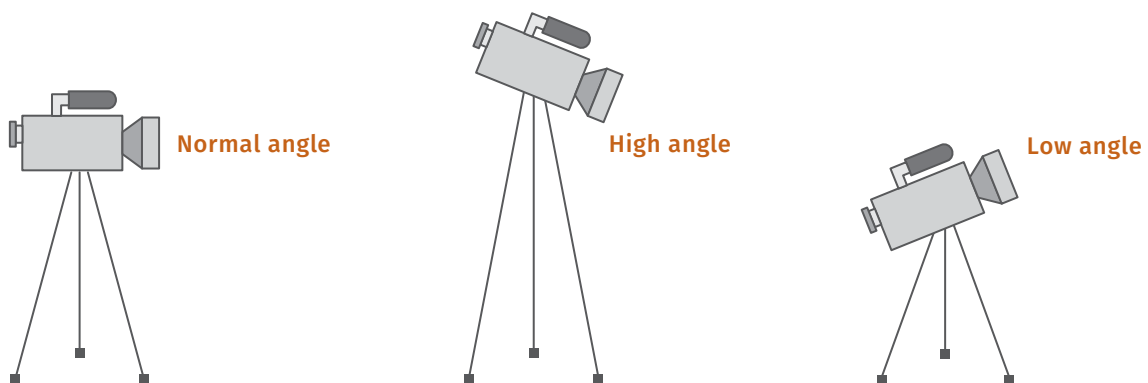
High angle: In this angle, the camera is positioned higher than the subject and is tilted down towards the subject (see Figure 4). This angle serves three purposes:

- to make the subject look smaller and less reliable;
- to suggest vulnerability or inferiority; and
- to cover a large area within a frame or to show something very specific.

Low angle: This angle is achieved by positioning the camera lower than the subject and tilting it up towards the subject. This angle has two purposes:

- to make the subject look larger or prominent; and
- to establish the height of a tall object rather than its length.

Figure 4: Camera height

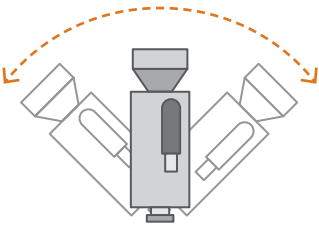
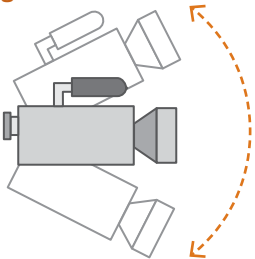



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Camera movements

Camera movements can help establish connections or give visual coverage where a single static frame cannot provide sufficient coverage. However, it is important to note that camera movements are not highly encouraged because they are often not smooth and result in unstable shots, which are not visually appealing. Table 6 describes several common types of camera movements.

Table 6: Camera movements

<p>Panning: Moving the camera from left to right or right to left with a steady horizontal axis and with even rotation. Panning can be used to show the movement of a person or vehicle, or even to cover a large horizontal area, like a field. It is also often used as a long shot to introduce a character.</p>	<p>Panning</p> 
<p>Tilting: Moving the camera from top to bottom or bottom to top on a steady, vertical axis. Tilting is generally used to capture an object or person from top to bottom or bottom to top when it is not possible to capture this without moving the camera.</p>	<p>Tilting</p> 
<p>Zooming: Zooming should generally not be used, but it is presented for the sake of conceptual understanding. Zooming helps make objects appear nearer or farther. It is strongly advised not to use zoom features since it makes the video appear jarred, jerky and unclear. To successfully achieve this camera movement, the camera must be kept steady and moved slowly, counting silently as the camera is moved to make sure the movement remains constant.</p> <p>To ensure stable camera shots, use a tripod. If a tripod is unavailable or difficult to mount, use the camera strap (hung around your neck) to build some stability or place the camera on a stable object, such as a table.</p>	

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

© Pexels/Eric Scheel

2.3.4 Visual rules

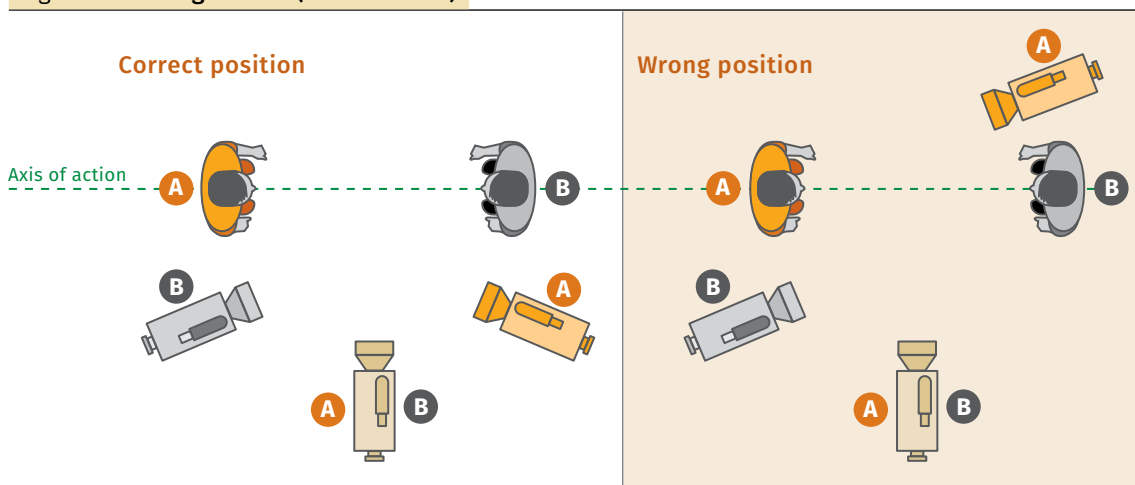
Visual grammar rules, techniques and positions help to ensure that the video is produced according to people's perception and that the content is appropriate.

Rules

180-degree rule (axis of action): When filming two people talking or one person looking at an object, imagine there is a line between the two people or between the person and the object. The 180-degree rule states that, when filming such a scene, the camera can be moved between shots, as long as it remains on one side of this line. If the camera crosses to the other side of the line, the background shifts, giving the audience the impression that the location has suddenly changed. Hence, the 180-degree rule helps to maintain an appearance of reality in the shot (see Figure 5).

30-degree rule: The 30-degree rule states that if the same character or object is shown in two consecutive shots, the second camera setup should be positioned at least at a 30-degree angle from the original camera setup. This way, the background will move enough for the shots to flow smoothly and not give the impression of visual discontinuity or of an unintentional camera movement. This requires planning ahead for the shoot and developing shot lists to take full advantage of the rule, ensuring that between each consecutive shot there is a difference of 30 degrees or more in the position of the camera. There are exceptions to the 30-degree rule, however. Cutting from a medium shot to a close-up, for example, can be done even if the camera is not moved. The point is to make each shot as visually different from the one preceding it as possible, so that the viewer's point of view of the scene appears to change naturally.

Figure 5: 180-degree rule (axis of action)



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Techniques for sequencing

Ellipsis: Ellipsis is the technique used to condense time, to jump forward or backward in time or to jump to a different place. Correctly applying the rules of audiovisual language enables the video producer to do this without the viewer perceiving these changes as jumps. Temporal ellipsis is the most important instrument in audiovisual production as it eliminates non-relevant information and enables the synthesis of key information. The observer does not lose the continuity of the sequence, even if intermediate steps have been eliminated. Two specific ellipsis techniques are action segmentation and cutting in motion.

Action segmentation consists of analysing whether the portrayal of an action in a sequence appears realistic. It usually involves selecting relevant moments and discarding irrelevant ones. Most audiovisual programmes employ temporal ellipses, as almost all processes must be reduced in time. Just as three-dimensional reality cannot be reproduced, neither can the real time of the processes be reproduced in a video.

Cutting in motion is used to reduce the time of a prolonged action without losing its meaning. This is done because reproducing a prolonged action in real time will result in unnecessarily long shots with segments that provide no additional information, hindering instead of supporting the communication of key ideas. To cut in motion, the shots must be cut and joined in full motion. That is, shots must begin and end while the action is happening (before the action ends), except for the last shot in the sequence when the action actually ends.

Positioning

The image in the screen should resemble what the observer would perceive with their eyes. The action or intention of an action, such as looking, is part of the image context. If something is moving (such as a tractor), the space in front of that thing (towards which it is moving) should be taken into account as part of the action and included in the shot. The same is true when someone is looking at something. Our senses expect to see what is in front of that person, thus our perception attempts to follow the line of sight of the person in the shot.

Look room: Entails positioning a person who is supposedly conversing with someone off screen on the left or right third of the screen, looking in the direction of the supposed listener.

Head room: Space should be left between the subject's head and the top edge of the screen so that it does not seem as if the head is bumping into the screen and to avoid cutting off the top of the head. Avoid showing the head alone on the screen, as it will take the brain more time to differentiate the head from other spherical objects like a ball or a globe.

Walk room: If a person or vehicle is moving in a particular direction, space should be left in the frame in the direction of the movement, rather than behind the subject, so that the camera is able to follow the movement smoothly.



© Unsplash/Vasile Valcan

2.3.5 Lighting

Lighting consists of managing lights, shadows and contrasts, keeping them within the permissible limits of the recording equipment, in order to recreate the illusion of the third dimension and to create more realistic images.

Strong natural sunlight, such as that produced on a clear day between 11.00 hrs and 15.00 hrs, produces hard shadows, with well-defined edges and a marked contrast between light and shadow. This type of light is known as “hard light”. It is best to shoot in early morning or late afternoon in order to avoid the hard light and the strong shadows and contrast it produces. “Soft light”, on the other hand – light that comes from several points simultaneously, such as sunlight on a cloudy day – produces diffuse shadows, without sharp edges and with low contrast between light and shadow. Soft lighting is generally recommended for participatory video production.

Lighting sources can be managed to turn hard light into soft light, or vice versa, in order to achieve the type of light that is most convenient for each shooting situation. The use of artificial light sources and passive reflective screens as alternative sources of light is very useful, as are blocking and diffusing screens that attenuate the intensity of a fixed source and turn hard light into soft light.

Some light fixtures are designed to emit diffuse light, while others produce a hard, concentrated beam. Accessories, such as hoods, make it possible to limit the area that is illuminated or to focus light differentially on subjects or objects.

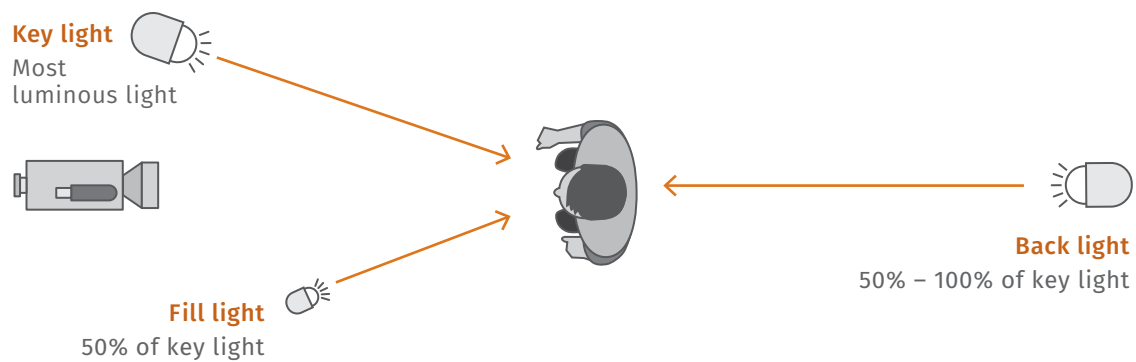
Lighting scheme

A basic lighting scheme consists of three active light sources, which can be complemented with some passive reflective screens, depending on the recording situation (see Figure 6 and Figure 7). This chapter describes the main elements of a basic lighting scheme.

1. The light coming from the most luminous source (called the **key light**) is located on one side of the object–camera axis and should be at a 30° to 45° angle. It should be placed slightly above the person or object, and should point directly at them. This light source will cause high contrast and create deep shadows on the opposite side of the object or person being shot.

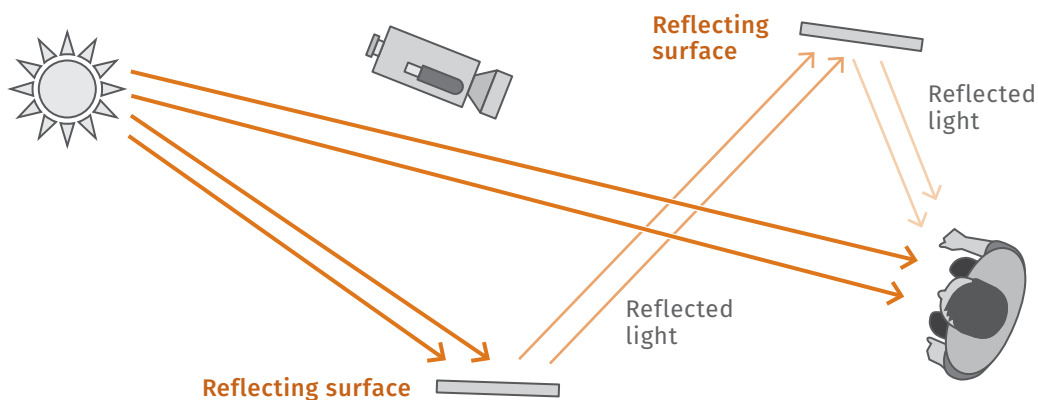
2. A second light source – the **fill light**, having approximately half the intensity of the key light, should also be facing the object or subject, on the opposite side of the object-camera axis, at the same angle as the key light. The purpose of the fill light is to increase the luminous intensity of the object or subject and to soften the shadow produced by the key light.
3. A third light source – the **backlight**, may vary in intensity with respect to the other two sources (equal or weaker). It should come from above and slightly behind the object or subject. When shooting people, it will illuminate the shoulders and the upper part of the back of the head, creating the illusion of volume.

Figure 6: Basic lighting scheme



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Figure 7: Reflective screens



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Characteristics of light sources

The lighting required does not always coincide with the characteristics of the light sources. For instance, sometimes a diffuse light is necessary, one that reaches the object from different points or from all directions. This type of light resembles the illumination on a cloudy day, when the sunlight is diffused by clouds that randomly modify the direction of the light rays. This soft light causes the objects or subjects to be illuminated more evenly, producing diffuse and soft shadows.

Natural source

Undoubtedly, the main source of visible light is the sun. Sunlight is distributed quite homogeneously – illuminating the entire surface of the object or subject with the same intensity (unless the light is reflected by objects at the shooting location). Most artificial light sources do not have the capacity to produce an equivalent intensity of light to that provided by the sun.

Artificial sources

Artificial light sources are designed to meet specific objectives and purposes. Lamps and other light sources used in residential and other buildings are intended to illuminate objects that will be perceived directly by the human eye and are not manufactured under particularly high-quality requirements. However, when it comes to illuminating objects or subjects to be recorded by technological means, there are special factors involved and several additional considerations must be taken into account. As such, domestic incandescent lamps are inadequate for video purposes. Halogen or quartz lamps, on the other hand, are widely used for lighting in video production.

2.3.6 Sound

A very important element of video, often not considered during the preproduction stage, is sound. Even if the visuals are great, if the audio and sound effects of your video are not satisfactory, information will not be transmitted to the audience effectively. In fact, with poor sound, the audience will quickly lose interest in the video. On the other hand, skilfully designed sound in a video can contribute immensely to the effectiveness of the video – attracting the attention of the audience, heightening their involvement and making the video more enjoyable. Moreover, for less-literate viewers, audio is a vital source of information. There are various kinds of audio elements in videos:

- **Narration or voice-over:** Narration, or voice-over, is often the primary means of transmitting information in a video. The narrator could be the creator of the video, a participant in the video or another person.

- **Interviews and conversations:** Video audios may include interviews or conversations between two or more people.
- **Ambient sound:** Ambient sounds are the background sounds that occur naturally in the location, such as the sound of livestock or birds. These sounds should always be recorded together with the primary sounds and images of the video. They should not be avoided or erased.
- **Music:** Music should only be added in specific parts of the video (at the beginning, at the end, between sequences) that do not interrupt or confuse the message. Music that transmits information unrelated to the main story, causes noise or interferes with the target information being transmitted should be avoided.
- **Silence:** The absence of sound can cause the viewer to refocus on the screen. Silence is often introduced after a sequence finishes, providing a “space” for the viewer to think about what he or she has just heard and observed.
- **Background noise:** Unlike ambient sound, background noise refers to sounds in the shooting location that cause a disturbance and draw the viewer's attention away from the primary focus of the video, such as the whirring of a fan or traffic sounds.

Narration or voice-over distinction

The voice-over text is usually defined during the preparation of the storyboard, which has a special column for including audio. Generally, voice-over serves as the primary means to transmit the main content of the video, while interviews and dialogue are complements – for instance, a farmer introducing the problem that will be addressed in the video or explaining a specific technical tip.

Voice-over should be recorded separately in a noise-free environment, using recording software that is available by default on the equipment used to record the video (such as a smartphone or a laptop). Once the voice-over has been recorded, it can be added to the video during the editing process. It is important to note that there should be no voice-over during dialogues or interviews.

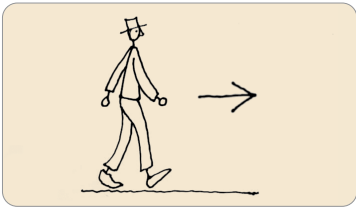
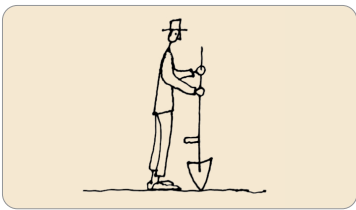

2.4 Storyboarding

The storyboard for video production must be designed on the basis of the script - the document which sets forth the proposed content of the video. Note that the script is the main source of information, not only for the storyboard but also for any complementary communication material (booklets, radio programmes, etc.) that could be required, in addition to the video, in order to meet the proposed objective.

2.4.1 Storyboard

A storyboard is a sequence of drawings representing the shots planned for a video, along with notes describing the shots, the voice-over and any complementary elements in each shot, such as interviews and dialogues (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Storyboard sample

Video title: Transplanting a cacao tree				
Shot #	Image (video track)	Shot description	Time	Sound (audio track)
1		Type of shot: ELS Angle and position: 270°, normal - right side Action during a shot: person walking from left to right, stops before leaving the screen.	12 sec	The first step is selecting the right tools
2		Type of shot: LS Angle and position: 300°, normal - right side Action during the shot: person taking a tool.	10 sec	Be sure the tool (to be named) is in good condition
3		Type of shot: CU Angle and position: 325°, normal - right side Action during the shot: face of the person. Looking at the tool action, tool not visible.	5 sec	The audio track must complement the information that cannot be shown. It should not repeat what is seen. The audio track is not a recorded voice of what is written in the script.
Total time			27 sec	

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

The storyboard is the video producer's creative tool, wherein he or she proposes the best audiovisual options to transmit the intended ideas, concepts, situations and processes. The storyboard is written by and is the responsibility of the person who produces the video. It does not have to be validated by a subject-matter specialist, although sharing it with a specialist or with stakeholders can provide the opportunity to receive useful suggestions. Revising the storyboard according to the sequences actually shot is a good practice as this will be useful during editing. When editing and assembling the final video, this final version of the storyboard must be followed. Disregarding the storyboard in the editing process can lead to errors and discontinuity in the flow of information.

2.4.2 Sequence continuity

Continuity refers to the relationship between the different shots that make up a sequence and between the sequences in the video as a whole. The final assembly of the video must result in a continuous, clear and meaningful flow of information for the viewer. In order to achieve this, the following aspects of continuity must be taken into account when assembling the video:

- **Content continuity:** There must be continuity of content. That is, an action or process must continue from one shot to the next, unless the action or process has finished or changed, in which case, this should be made explicit either through image or sound. If a person is holding a mobile phone in his right hand in one shot, he should continue to hold it in his right hand in subsequent shots. If the person is talking, what they are saying should flow naturally from one shot to the next.
- **Position continuity:** Continuity is also important in terms of the position of the subjects or objects in the shots. For instance, if a subject is on the right side of the screen in one shot, in the next shot he or she should still be on the right side.
- **Motion continuity:** Motion continuity applies to the direction of camera movement. If a person moves from right to left in the first shot, they are expected to do the same in the next shot. Otherwise, from the viewer's perspective, it would seem that the person returned to their point of origin.
- **Sound continuity:** Sound continuity is critically important. If the action over a series of shots or sequences happens in the same place and at the same time, the sound should also continue from one shot to the next.

2.4.3 Transitions

Transition is essentially the way shots and sequences are linked to ensure continuity between them - just as words in a sentence or paragraphs on a page must be linked logically to each other. Also, two complementary ideas represented by two sequences must be connected coherently. Transitions could improve or ruin the continuity of the narrative.

A straight cut, where two shots simply follow each other like two words in a sentence, is the most basic way to join shots. Like in a sentence, where a comma or a full stop may be needed to make the message clear, there are different ways to transition from one shot to the next to ensure that the message in the video remains clear. The following are some of the most common transitions. (A word of warning: Fancy transitions can interrupt the flow of speech and become communication noise. It is best to use these transitions as needed to enhance the clarity of the message.)

- **Chaining or crossfade**, which serves to add a pause (like a comma), is when one shot fades out, while the next one gradually appears.
- **Fading** is when an image gradually changes to a single colour, or when an image gradually appears on the screen. This type of transition represents a full stop – and normally separates one sequence from the next.
- **Curtains, or wipes**, consist of the progressive replacement of one shot by another as if a curtain were opened, going from one side of the frame to the other.
- **Blur**, as its name indicates, consists of blurring the image to move on to the next one, which should initially appear out-of-focus and gradually become sharper.

Both continuity and transitions must be devised when the storyboard is being designed, since this is the right moment to design consistent audiovisual sequences.

2.5 Shooting in the field

Before beginning to shoot the video, a number of aspects must be carefully looked into so that, on the day of the shoot, everything is prepared and goes smoothly. These aspects include: location, those who will participate in the video, sound and equipment. Moreover, at the time of shooting, there are protocols to follow that will keep the shooting experience organized and minimize the scope for error.

2.5.1 Shot list

The production breakdown, also called a shot list, is an outline of the scenes that will be shot at each location. It provides information for each shot, such as the resources that will be needed and additional information (see Table 7). Thus, it serves to organize the recording at the field level. Organizing the shot list by location allows for travel planning and estimating the time needed at each location.

Note that the shot list does not replace the storyboard, which should be kept on hand during the shooting as a source of information regarding technical details and elements to keep in mind to ensure the continuity of shots filmed on different days.

Table 7. Shot list

Location	Shot #	Resources	Notes
Community AA	10	Farming tools, taken from their farm. Interview with Mr. X, Bring lights.	The interview will take place inside a shed.
	11		
	12		
	23	A bag of seeds	
	24		
	25		
Community BB	55	Reflective screens and cardboard for infinite curves (backdrop).	Record in the morning, the light in the afternoon is inadequate for these shots.
	56		
	57		
	58		
	59		
	60		
	61		
	62		

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

2.5.2 Tips for recording audio in the field

With a proper microphone, usually a lapel microphone attached to the camera, sound can be recorded while an interview is taking place. Ambient sound, or any sound produced by a machine that is part of the shot, can be recorded with the microphone on a mobile phone or camera. As the recording equipment may not be of high quality, it is important to monitor the quality of the sound while shooting. The following tips will help ensure good sound quality:

- Monitor the audio on headphones during a shoot and stop shooting if the audio is poor.
- In addition to monitoring the sound while recording, once you have finished shooting and are still in the field, listen to the audio at different points in the video to make sure it was recorded properly.
- When monitoring the sound of the video, listen for a popping sound; audio that is not loud enough; noise from motorbikes, cars or music; and other interruptions.
- Try to identify farmers or technicians who have loud, clear voices to participate in the video and ask them to speak loudly enough so that it is not necessary to increase the volume level during the editing phase.
- If using a hand-held microphone, make sure it is held at a proper distance from the speaker's mouth to ensure the sound is clear. If the microphone is held too close to the mouth (less than 20 cm from the mouth), it might create unpleasant popping or breathing sounds. If it is held too far, the sound won't be recorded properly.

- Before beginning to shoot, ensure that other people at the location are silent. Also, listen carefully to determine if there is any background noise that will interfere with the shooting.
- 30 seconds of “natural sound” should be recorded in each environment. This can be used if the recorded sound of a shot in a similar environment was not well recorded or included unexpected noise or interruptions.

Avoiding noise

- If using a lapel or corded microphone, make sure the cables remain out of the frame.
- Explain to the speakers that they should not touch or brush against the microphone or cables as this will create noise.
- Avoid placing microphones in the direction of the wind or close to noisy activities or equipment, such as digging or water pumps, as this can cause disturbance. If the sound of the wind is audible in the headphones, the person speaking should face the wind, and the video producer holding the microphone should have his or her back to the wind.
- To the extent possible, choose locations with minimal noise.
- If there is no microphone, use an audio recorder or mobile phone to record the sound. This can be used as a backup in case the sound recorded by the camera is inaudible or unclear. This is not ideal as it will require synchronizing the sound with the movement of lips when editing the video – which is difficult to achieve. However, it can serve as a last resort when the sound quality is poor.

2.5.3 Selecting the location

When preparing the script and storyboard, one generally visualizes how the scenes will look: the field, village scenes, farmers in the field, farming equipment, etc. It is necessary to locate suitable locations, such as those imagined in the script and storyboard preparation phase, that work well with the theme of the video and help the viewer experience the visual journey the video aims to create.

These considerations should be followed when selecting scene locations:

- Select a location that is easily accessible for shooting the video.
- If multiple scenes are required in the video, try to select locations in the same area to facilitate moving to the different locations without wasting time.
- Choose locations that are far from main roads, schools or public places where traffic, people and noise may be a problem.

- Visit the location before the shoot and inform the stakeholders or peer-group members who live nearby to involve them, if appropriate, and to ensure that there will be no disturbances at the location on the shooting day.
- If required, request permission for video production from the authorities and secure needed permits, including from the people involved in the video.

Tips for shooting

When planning the field activities, it is important to make a list of the shots that need to be taken in each location, even though they belong to different sequences or different programmes (videos). This production plan will save time and resources by avoiding traveling back and forth from one location to another.

Before shooting

Here are some points to keep in mind before the shoot:

- Be sure to organize all shots that have been planned in the storyboard.
- Check different compositions through the camera viewfinder in a house or space before selecting the final frame. Take time to plan the angles you will use at each location.
- Try to record any discussion or dialogue in locations where there is less background noise.
- Avoid white clothes for actors and white backgrounds.
- Move closer to the subject, when needed, rather than zooming in.
- Keep the camera at least one meter away from the subject. Otherwise, the image will blur.
- Ensure proper light on the subject.

While shooting

While shooting, keep in mind the following points:

- Take shots as per the storyboard. Ensure you have taken all the shots included in the storyboard before leaving the location.
- Do not press the record button so hard that the camera moves.
- The minimum duration of a shot should be 10 seconds. Check the sound after every shot.
- Avoid panning and tilting the camera and using zoom while recording, unless absolutely necessary.
- Take other shots related to the story – such as the farm, farming equipment or a farmer working.

- You might also record the subject doing some of his or her daily activities at the location, such as household chores, getting ready for work, etc. These will help establish the context.
- Be sure to inform the subject when they are being filmed.
- Stick to your role in the video production team, if there is a production team.

2.6 Editing

Although different platforms can be used for editing, the editing process across the different platforms is the same. This chapter describes the steps used to edit video and then discusses basic editing software that can be used create the final product.

2.6.1 Editing basics

Editing is the process of collecting all the footage that has been shot and combining the different shots and elements together into a single video. It entails removing unwanted footage and filling the gaps to create a unified, continuous story.

Editing enables us to:

- Place all the necessary shots in order in each sequence, according to the storyboard.
- Adjust the length of each shot to make the sequence audiovisually fluid.
- Eliminate footage that is not useful in the video and add necessary elements, such voice-over or text (titles, subtitles, captions and labels, names of persons interviewed, etc.).
- Correct any abnormalities in the shots to improve visual and auditory quality (only if truly necessary, as this is not necessarily easily done).
- Export the final video in the format, or formats, needed.

Editing software and applications contain different tools that facilitate the work of ordering the shots, managing transitions and cleaning-up video and audio tracks.

2.6.2 Editing process

Video editing software generally includes a timeline (the editing software tool where shots are put in order according to the storyboard) and controls that activate and deactivate video and audio tracks. Additionally, the software has level adjustments and a time scale to better visualize the work to be done. This is the place where each shot (also called a clip) is adjusted to be added to other clips to form a sequence that will eventually become the final video.

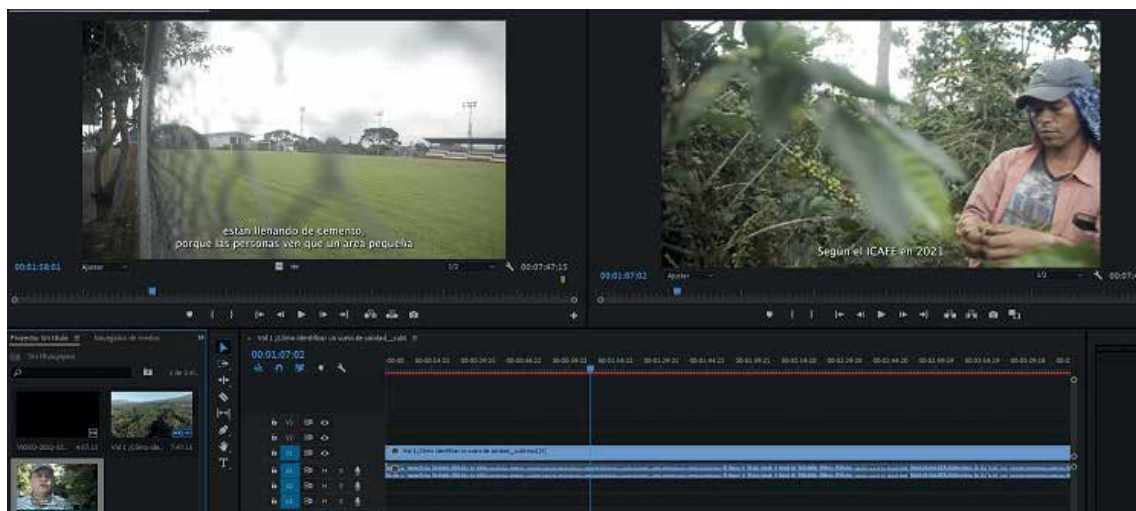
The software usually consists of two video tracks (or channels) where the shots are placed and displayed as rectangles with a thumbnail image at the beginning for its visual recognition. It has independent audio tracks where the sounds are placed, also represented by rectangles whose extension represents the duration. Each clip has an audio and a visual track; these tracks can be edited jointly or independently.

The software enables the images and sounds of the video to be shortened or lengthened (although not beyond what was recorded), adjusting the position of shots in the timeline. Each shot can also be cut and separated into two parts and the remaining part can be selected with the cursor and deleted from the timeline. Any change made to the timeline changes the program data (the in/out timecodes and the overall length). These changes are not reflected in the original recorded shot.

The objective of the editing process is to reproduce what was devised in the storyboard – connecting shots, managing transitions and adapting the conditions of the shots according to the original design of the video. The connection of two successive shots must be technically clean to achieve the fluidity of the audiovisual narrative.

Once the editing is complete, the file must be converted into a format (or formats) which can be reproduced on the devices or channels appropriate to the plans for sharing the video. The file produced in the editing application can only be played on the same computer or mobile phone where it was edited, thus the need to convert it to a different file format that can be broadly reproduced.

Figure 9: Video editing



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

2.6.3 Editing suggestions and tips

The following recommendations will help to ensure an effective editing process and an end product that effectively communicates the intended message.

- Transfer the shots to the folder where the editing software or application is installed: Once filming is complete, the raw material (shots or clips) should be transferred to the computer, or placed in a single file on the mobile phone if the video will be edited there.
- Create folders and subfolders with clear names or numbers: As indicated above, all the files for a particular video should be in a single folder. Create chronologically numbered subfolders for the sequences, and place all the video shots, graphics and photos for each sequence in the appropriate subfolder.
- Use a video monitor or smartphone to check the required clips and sequence them as per the storyboard: The first step in editing is to review all the raw clips and put them in order in the video editing application according to the storyboard.
- Edit the video: Join all the shots of each scene in the timeline and trim them if necessary.
- Add titles, captions, annotation slides and credits.
- Add voice-over at the same time as the clips in each scene or sequence.
- Balance sound levels if necessary.
- Correct brightness: Do this very carefully and only if there is a stark difference in the level of brightness of one clip in comparison to the other clips on the timeline.
- Review the video for final approval: After the video is edited, it is necessary to review the video with a subject-matter specialist to ensure the accuracy of the content.
- Convert the video to the format needed (such as AVI/MP4).

Exporting edited videos

When exporting an edited video, it is generally recommended to maintain the same resolution as the original footage (usually 1080p) and to follow the parameters recommended in the default menu. In some cases, video compression may be necessary; however, this can lead to a reduction in quality.

The choice of compression method depends on the program, media type, and format used.

It is best to develop a video sharing plan in advance, so that the settings can be tailored to the specific requirements of the intended use. As a general guideline:

- **For in-person sharing:** It is usually best to keep videos uncompressed and at a high resolution, ensuring the best quality for video projection.
- **For online sharing:** On platforms such as YouTube, opting for compression can be more practical, balancing file size with acceptable quality.

As you gain experience, you may wish to deepen your understanding of key parameters such as resolution, codec, format and bit rate.



Chapter 3

Sharing participatory video

With participatory video, the video-sharing process is not limited to simply presenting the video to the intended audience. Rather, it includes a process of communication carried out both before and after showing the video. Communication activities carried out before presenting the video prepare the audience to watch the video, while activities carried out afterwards encourage and facilitate the viewer's implementation of the actions promoted by the video. Activities after showing the video often include a demonstration or a practical action related to the practice or other action discussed in the video.

This chapter will enable the reader to:

- describe how participatory video can be used to build ownership and participation within the community through an inclusive video-sharing process;
- enumerate the protocols for disseminating knowledge by sharing videos on online platforms;
- organize activities to use video for different objectives, such as training on innovative agricultural practices, holding community discussions about local issues, negotiating value chain issues, etc.; and
- analyse the process of sharing the video.

Although a crucial aspect of the video-sharing process is the sharing of the video itself – through in-person viewings or on virtual platforms – the process goes far beyond that. It is, of course, an opportunity for the intended audience to learn about the topic presented in the video and to implement it. But it is also an opportunity for community interaction, participation and appropriation.

Whether video content is shared in-person or online, whether it is shared individually or with a group, a standard protocol of communication should be followed to provide an optimal learning opportunity and interactions. This is important because each viewer comes to the video showing with their own particular experience, understanding and needs. Rather than simply showing the video and expecting all the viewers to adopt its proposal, it is important to follow the principles of adult learning that create an experiential learning process in which the viewers participate and take the reins of the learning process and any subsequent action.

As adults, the members of the intended audience already have experience and knowledge, and are looking for real-life applications of everything they learn. They are motivated by different factors than those that motivate children. As such, different instructional methods must be used than those which assume that the learner has no prior knowledge or experience. Therefore, the recommendations for video-sharing provided in this chapter are based on adult learning principles.

3.1 Using video for knowledge sharing

Once the video is finalized, simple, calendar-based planning can be used to decide when it should be shared with the audience. If a video is to be shared about a farming practice, for instance, it is important to share it at the time when the intended audience is making decisions related to that practice, so they can consider it and eventually apply it accordingly.

There are several ways in which video can be shared to provide information and foster the adoption of a practice. These can broadly be divided into two categories:

- **Individual sharing:** The video is shared through WhatsApp or other similar applications, on social media channels, or via an email list, and each individual decides if and when to watch it.
- **Group sharing:** The video is presented during an organized event.

Each of these methods of video sharing has benefits as well as drawbacks. Often, especially in a community setting, it is best to use a collective approach when sharing videos. This serves two purposes:

- a. understanding of the topic is enhanced through discussion among the viewers; and
- b. the shared experience and discussion help motivate the viewers to adopt the practice.

Understanding individual sharing of videos

- Individual sharing of videos provides the benefit of viewers being able to concentrate on the video without any distractions.
- Discussions about the video, organized using WhatsApp or a similar application and conducted after the viewing of the video, should be tailored to the audience's needs.
- It may take more time for the same number of people to see the video vs group sharing.
- Collective learning opportunities are minimal when sharing individually.
- The opportunity to share experiences can be missed if individual viewers do not interact.

Understanding group sharing of videos

- Group sharing provides an opportunity for the video to address community issues or provide information to the entire community.
- The entire community can participate in discussions about the video and the issue or topic covered.
- More viewers will see the video in one event – saving time in disseminating the information or practice.

Arranging a collective process for sharing the video can be done through a series of interventions, such as the following:

- Training sessions can be organized at the field level, using video as part of the training.
- The video can be systematically shared, either virtually or in-person, as a part of an existing extension system.
- The video can be shared on social media channels for anyone who is interested in accessing it.

Like all digital tools, video can be used to share knowledge both offline and online, as described below:

- **Offline sharing** generally entails showing the video in a collective space where the audience is physically present.
- **Online sharing** entails sharing the video online through channelled and targeted groups or on open-media platforms which the viewers access virtually.

3.2 Facilitating learning

Facilitating learning refers to the art of creating an environment which enables the achievement of a particular learning objective. It involves supporting a process of discussion. The aim is for the participants to reach the stated goal. Effective communication is necessary for good facilitation.

The process and components of facilitating learning are the following:

- **Introductions:** The first step to effective facilitation is to introduce the learning situation. This includes introducing the facilitator(s), the setting, the programme and the participants. This may also include giving the viewers an opportunity to get to know each other and build trust through small talk or icebreaker activities.

- **Context setting:** It is important to clearly state the objectives of the video-sharing session, so that all conversation or discussion around the topic of the video will be contextualized. The facilitator should have the ability to draw people out and help them share their opinions about the topic and how it relates to or impacts the community, the environment and the situation.
- **Asking questions:** Instead of dictating information, a facilitator guides the learning process by enabling the audience to acquire knowledge based on their own experience and learning. Asking questions is the easiest way to get people talking about their experience and knowledge and, thus, to begin the learning process. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that effective communication is not just about talking, but also about listening and responding effectively.
- **Participatory approach:** Facilitators should create a participatory environment and actively facilitate the discussion so that the audience can reach their own decisions. Paraphrasing the participants' comments is useful to ensure that everyone understands what has been said. Instead of standing on the sidelines, the facilitator should help steer the discussion.
- **Conclusions:** This crucial part of the video-sharing process includes asking questions about the main points of the video to make sure that the audience has understood them. Particular attention should be paid at this stage to ensuring the audience has understood points related to adopting the practice or innovation presented in the video as well as the reason for adopting the practice. Again, the conclusion period should be conducted in a question–answer format, where the facilitator asks questions to ensure that participants have understood the main points.
- **Actionable outputs:** The facilitator should be very clear about what action points the participants should take away from the video discussion. The facilitator should provide information about what, when and where the action will be carried out and what each stakeholder's responsibility is. The discussion may also help identify new topics to be treated with participatory video or the need for additional video-sharing sessions.

3.3 Using video for in-person farmer training

For in-person farmer training, it is much more practical to use a collective knowledge-sharing approach in order to share the knowledge with all those involved more quickly. Group sharing also encourages participation and ownership of the topic within the group and facilitates mutual encouragement and support to ensure that the community learns together, acts together and grows together. This can be implemented by projecting the video for the entire group to see or by sharing the video online and having all group members present in a collective space to watch it on their devices. The benefits of group sharing are the following:

- Group sharing enables the entire community to address an issue or receive information.
- Discussions of the topic can be general or focused on a real situation.
- Time is saved in sharing the information through a group video-sharing event.
- Collective learning is rich and fruitful.
- Participants can witness each other's responses, which facilitates a deeper and broader understanding of the topic.

3.3.1 Advantages of video

This video-based approach at the community level helps create a culture of participation and ownership as video content is prepared through a bottom-up approach that focuses on the needs of the community in a timely manner. Some advantages of using video for training and knowledge sharing are the following:

- Video is an extremely effective channel for knowledge sharing as it uses both audio and visual tools, instead of using written materials, to create awareness.
- Community videos allow for a very scalable knowledge-transfer process, as the same video can be used multiple times to share information without compromising the quality of the information or the communication.
- Community videos are made in the local language and include local customs, culture and even appearance. As such, they are highly relatable.
- The community video approach includes mediation and facilitation by people who belong to the community, which facilitates community discussion and participation around the topic of the video.

Collective awareness and learning

When using video for awareness-raising or training, the sessions are carried out collectively. As such, awareness and learning increase within the group, rather than individually, based on the exchange of experiences and the joint efforts carried out by all the participants. On the other hand, those making the video learn through practice. As such, they value the participatory video process when it is planned together with the community and when it includes collective, practical activities. This, in turn, is extremely beneficial for farmers as it provides the conditions under which they learn best.

Massive reach

The massive reach of video as a training tool is due to the fact that it can be used successively and that the same innovative proposals can be made simultaneously in different places. Another important benefit is that the information being shared in these different places has been validated by a knowledgeable authority, thus the video enables all farmers to receive the same high-quality information and proposals.

3.3.2 Video training phases

Using video to share particular content with farmers follows a four-step process to accomplish the expected objectives (see Figure 10). Regardless of the context in which this takes place, it is always valuable to follow these four steps:

- **Determination of needs:** The objective of this phase is to identify the information and knowledge needs of the farmers and the ways in which farmers can be helped to solve their problems regarding their rural socioeconomic situation. Such help can be provided through extension or agricultural assistance systems, but also by conducting a PRCA or responding to the needs of farmer organizations that are blocking family farmer development, and then highlight the need for video production, awareness-raising and training.
- **Programming and organization:** This involves all of the complementary programming and organization that goes alongside the video sharing. This includes having clear objectives, goals and an understanding of the organizational requirements needed to deliver successful training events (adequate premises, communication materials, etc). The organization must be done in close collaboration with the farmers, sharing responsibilities and allocating tasks in order to share the work of the video sessions.
- **Execution:** Execution refers to the implementation of the awareness-raising and training activities, including: presenting the video; using the complementary communication materials, if any; and conducting the practical demonstration or guided practice. To effectively carry out this task, facilitation skills should be applied.

- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Monitoring and evaluation is a continuous process that follows-up on the entire process and focuses, in particular, on specific milestones in order to analyse the performance of facilitators, procedures, materials and farmers.

3.4 Online video sharing

Videos can be shared online through channelled and targeted groups or on open media platforms. They can be shared only online or the online sharing can complement in-person video-sharing events.

What does it take to effectively share video through online platforms? What communication protocols should be followed and how do we make sure that action-based outcomes result from online video sharing?

3.4.1 Preparing to share the video online

It is now possible to create virtual gatherings on platforms, such as Zoom and WhatsApp, that are fast becoming part of our daily lives.

The first step in sharing a video virtually is to create a data list of people you would like to participate in the virtual group. Who should be included in the list should be based on the objectives of the programme and will likely be the people with whom the facilitator has already been conducting meetings in person. It is best to include this same group of people in the virtual video-sharing group, as well as others who are interested in participating.

If there are no existing groups that have been participating in in-person meetings, select community members who most closely fit the video's intended audience. To help select and mobilize interested community members, enlist the help of progressive and influential members of the community, such as village leaders, successful adopters of practices, progressive farmers, teachers, health care workers, etc.

Appropriate and adequate information should be provided to key community members before including them in the group. Inform them about the objectives of the group and how important their participation is, not just for their own benefit but also for the benefit of others who will be influenced and inspired by them. Once the data list is ready (with the names and telephone numbers of the members of the group), create the group on the platform you will be using and assign fellow moderators. These could be other extension workers, supervisors or a person from within the community who is skilled in the use of technology and eager to take initiative for the benefit of the community.

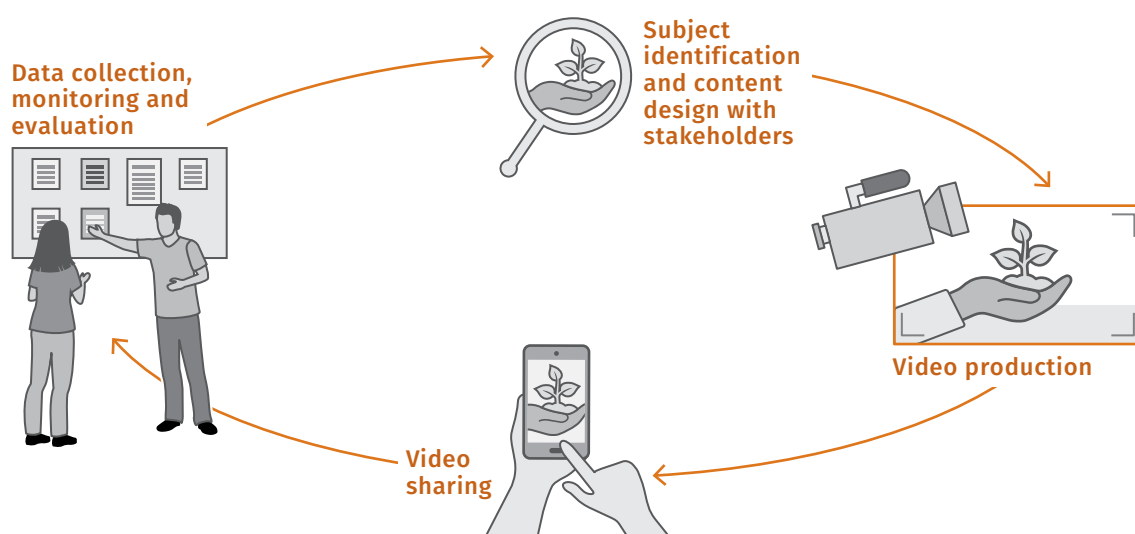
3.4.2 Sharing the video online

Once the group is created, send out written and audio messages explaining once again the purpose of the group. Be sure to do this in a way that promotes ownership and participation on the part of the members of the group. Hold conference calls with the group moderators and discuss their role, which includes:

- Making sure information is passed on to their neighbours regarding the group, in order to increase community participation.
- Informing facilitators about any new persons who could be added to the group.
- Providing access to videos for community members who do not have smartphones.
- Modelling the adoption of the practices and participating actively in group discussions.
- Setting up an appropriate time for video sharing based on group consensus (depending on when the participants have time to watch the video and access to a smartphone), and, as needed, suggesting that neighbours watch the video together if some don’t have smartphones.

In determining the time to share the video, consider what time the audience you are addressing is most likely to have their phones and to be able to watch the video. Consider carefully when they actually have time to watch the entire video. Is it at the end of the day, in the middle of the day when they are taking a break, or perhaps at the start of the day before they begin their daily activities?

Figure 10: Process for video sharing



Source: Authors’ own elaboration.

3.4.3 Platforms for video sharing

There are several platforms that can be used to share video either in small groups or with an open audience. These include focused group platforms (such as WhatsApp groups) and open media platforms (such as Zoom). Both types of platforms provide the opportunity not only for the video producer to share his or her video, but also for the viewers to provide feedback and share their own videos, creating a shared learning process between everyone involved.

Here are some popular focused group and open media platforms:

Focused group platforms

- **WhatsApp:** WhatsApp is a popular platform that allows you to connect with people individually or in groups. The platform allows the sharing of photos, videos and even voice messages to facilitate the exchange of information and comments. It is possible to create very large groups on WhatsApp, but this is not always recommended, as the purpose of the group and communication between members tend to become diluted once the number of participants becomes too large.
- **Telegram:** This popular platform offers the same features as WhatsApp, except that there is no limit regarding the size of files that can be shared and even larger groups can be created.

As both platforms provide similar options for communicating and sharing information, it is recommended that the one which is more popular or more easily accessible in your area be used.

Open media platforms

- **YouTube:** YouTube is the most commonly used video-sharing platform. It allows people to follow your channel and to be notified when you upload a new video. It also allows viewers to leave comments, although the channel owner or manager can control what comments are published.
- **Facebook:** Facebook allows you to publish your own videos or other videos you wish to share, along with information regarding the video. Anyone who has access to your profile can view the videos. As with YouTube, viewers can comment and discuss aspects of interest.
- **Instagram:** Instagram is a slightly less common platform, although it is gaining popularity among younger community members. It allows you to share photographs, videos and stories that can be viewed by anyone, if your account is public, or by those who follow you, if your account is private. Like YouTube and Facebook, viewers can comment on and share the videos you post.



Chapter 4

Basic equipment and settings for producing and sharing video

This chapter provides basic information and tips regarding video production equipment and devices, and their use.

This chapter will enable the reader to:

- describe the basic equipment and accessories needed to shoot videos in the field;
- understand and use basic camera settings appropriately for filming; and
- describe the equipment and characteristics of premises necessary for in-person video sharing.

There is a broad array of devices and equipment that can be used to produce and share videos, ranging from mobile phones and cameras, to lenses, lights, sound equipment and tripods. Although not absolutely necessary, reflectors and black and green screens are recommended accessories. The range of equipment to be used in producing and sharing videos depends on the availability of resources, the type of location and even the timing of the shoot. Furthermore, regardless of the equipment used, it is important to understand and properly use the most important settings of the equipment in order to produce and share high-quality video.

4.1 Basic camera equipment and accessories for video shooting

The basic equipment required for most kinds of shooting is the following:

- **Camera:** A video camera is a recording device that captures images in motion along with the natural and surrounding sound. Cameras contain image sensors and electronic components that process the video and audio signal and record them on a storage device (hard drive, memory card, etc.) for later recovery.

The lens and the viewfinder are attached to the camera body. The lens is the optical device that brings the subject or object into focus and captures the image. The screen or viewfinder enables the videographer to view what the lens is capturing. The camera also has a recording button to start or stop recording, and a power button to switch the camera on and off.

Memory cards and external memory disks for storing photos or video clips in the camera add additional memory space. Memory cards range from 2 GB (gigabyte) to 512 GB. Additional hard disks also help to create storage backups on which images can be stored for subsequent editing.

- **Lens:** The lens is actually a combination of single glass devices that make up the camera objective. The lens captures light rays from different points of a subject or object and makes them converge on a given focal plane (the image sensor position) where the image is formed sharply and then captured.
- **Batteries:** Camera devices run on batteries. Most cameras have single, rechargeable batteries. Depending on the use and capacity of the battery, they can last from two to five hours of continuous shooting. It is best to carry one or two extra, fully charged batteries.
- **AC adapters:** It is advisable to use AC adapters (which supply electricity directly to the camera) when shooting indoors where electricity is available in order to save battery charge. Most AC adapters also function as battery chargers.
- **Tripod/monopod:** Tripods and monopods are stands that help keep the camera stable while shooting. They help to get stable shots, especially when moving the camera, and can be adjusted to different heights and angles. Tripods vary depending on the type of head (friction, fluid, ball or other types) and the type of legs. The tripod must be selected according to the weight of the camera.
- **Sound recording equipment:** Sound recording instruments include wire and wireless microphones, receivers, external recording devices, etc. Cameras have built-in cardioid microphones of mid-level quality and several input slots for attaching different microphones with specific patterns (generally directional or ultra-directional).
- **Light equipment:** Various kinds of lighting equipment, including LED lights, reflectors, ring lights, soft boxes, etc. can help illuminate your shots and scenes, soften harsh light or reflect sunlight. These are most useful when natural light is insufficient.

4.2 Basic camera settings for video shooting

Among the most important camera settings for video production and sharing are those related to how much light reaches the electronic sensor. These settings should be positioned between the minimum and maximum thresholds, otherwise the image will be dark (with noise) or burned in white and lacking details. Two complementary devices control the amount of light that enters the light-sensitive element: the aperture, or the space through which light enters the camera (measured in the size of the opening, in f-numbers – f1.4, f2, f2.8, etc.), and

the shutter speed, which controls the time the shutter remains open. The three values (the sensitivity of the sensor, the aperture and the speed) work together to provide the correct exposure. For normal shooting, the sensitivity and shutter speed are set automatically (the dynamic range of the sensor and the shutter speed are 24, 25 or 30 frames per second [FPS], or 50-60 fields per second), leaving only the aperture to be set – if it is not also automatically set.

Focus, aperture and shutter speed settings can be used to enhance photography and video operations (video is more restricted). These must be used judiciously, as, otherwise, they can ruin the shot.

1. **Focus:** The focus setting helps to create maximum sharpness and resolution, focusing on a particular object in the frame, based on its distance from the camera. It is possible to focus on and, hence, increase the sharpness of one object, while keeping other objects at different distances out of focus or blurred. This depends on different conditions: the intensity of the light that illuminates the object and the background, the distance between the camera and the object, and the focal length of the lens.
2. **Aperture:** This mechanism controls the amount of light that enters the camera through the lens. The sensor has to receive between a certain maximum and a certain minimum quantity of light to produce a correct response. The aperture of the diaphragm controls this.

The higher the number of the aperture, the less light will enter the lens, making the image sharper in most of the frame. The aperture gets smaller when the external light surpasses the maximum threshold sensitivity of the image sensor. This does not mean that the amount of light the sensor receives is not appropriate to produce a good image; rather, the aperture automatically adjusts the incoming light intensity to create a better response from the sensor – that is, to produce the best possible image in terms of contrast and brightness. This also means that more of the shot will be in focus as the depth of field will be wider and deeper.

3. **Shutter speed:** Shutter speed is the length of time the camera shutter remains open, exposing the camera sensor to light. This is another feature that can be controlled in cameras that allow manual settings. If the shutter speed is high, the shutter will close faster. This helps to capture fast-moving objects and allows for less light to enter the camera, thus preventing overexposure of the sensor. On the other hand, if the shutter speed is low, more light will enter the camera. However, this means that fast-moving objects, such as vehicles or birds, will be blurred.

In video cameras, the normal shutter speed, which is electronically controlled, is the rate at which the video recording system runs, generally 25 FPS or 30 FPS. Some cameras have a manual shutter control which makes it possible to produce special effects.

4.3 Smartphone cameras

The quality of smartphone cameras has increased consistently. Nowadays, video produced on a smartphone is not very different from video produced on non-professional video cameras. In terms of video quality, a great deal depends on the videographers' knowledge of the language of filmmaking, regardless of the equipment or device used to produce the video.

Smartphone camera requirements: Smartphones with front and back cameras of at least 12 megapixels are preferred. It is ideal if the camera allows shooting at 30 frames per second.

Camera sensor: Sensors define the size of the pixels and, therefore, the quality of the photo or video. A 2.4µm-size sensor is considered to be of superior quality. It is best to use a camera with a sensor size as close to that as possible.

Optical zoom: Optical zoom, as opposed to digital zoom, does not pixelate the final photo or video. Instead, it uses attributes of the actual lens for the zoom feature. An optical zoom of 2x is common in cameras nowadays and can work well for shooting participatory video.

Video resolution: Resolution should be at least 1080p, which provides Full HD (high definition) resolution.

Memory: Smartphones have three types of memory: RAM (random access memory) and ROM (read-only memory). These memories function in the same way as computer RAM and ROM. The third type is storage non-volatile memory.

- **RAM** (random access memory) is volatile memory, meaning that the data is lost once applications are closed. RAM is available from 2GB to 12GB on smartphones. The amount of RAM will determine the performance of the editing application and, hence, determine how fast or slow the phone will function and how smoothly it will record and edit videos.
- **ROM** (read only memory) is the internal stored memory that contains a smartphone's, tablet's or computer's basic operating instructions. ROM cannot be rewritten with end-user tools. (This can only be done with developer tools.) Nowadays, ROM also plays a role in non-volatile storage due to the possibility of rewriting sectors of it. Today's smartphones have ROM ranging from 8GB to 256GB, and more.
- **Storage** (non-volatile, solid-state drive - SSD) is a type of memory that can store information even after the power is switched off. It is the memory that is used by a smartphone, a computer or a tablet to store information that can be kept for a time and erased when it is no longer needed.

When shooting with a smartphone camera, the resolution should be set at 1080p (Full HD). This resolution is widely accepted in different media and the quality is more than acceptable.

It is the default option on most devices and is a good balance between video quality and an acceptable file weight. Each minute of recording in Full HD at 30 FPS is about 130 MB.

With regard to resolution, it is important to clarify that **1080p** resolution in devices indicates that there are 1080 pixels in the image height and 1280 pixels horizontally (16:9 format). The letter “p” refers to “progressive scanning”, while if the letter “i” (appears **1080i**) it indicates “interlace scanning”.

Progressive scanning displays both the even and odd scan lines (the entire video frame) at the same time, while interlaced video displays even and odd scan lines as separate fields. The even lines are drawn on the screen first, followed by the odd lines. The most common resolutions for smartphones are:

- **HD at 30 FPS:** 1280 x **720p** resolution – 60 MB per minute / 3.6 GB per hour
- **Full HD at 30 FPS:** 1920 x **1080p** resolution - 130 MB per minute / 7.8 GB per hour
- **DCI 4K:** 4096 x **2160** resolution - 375 MB per minute / 22.5 GB per hour
- **Full Ultra HD 8K:** 7680 x **4320** resolution - 800 MB per minute / 36 GB per hour

Most mobile phones come with a built-in microphone and speaker. Using an extended microphone wire helps to get directed audio by moving the recorder closer to the source of the sound. Additionally, audio software can be used to enhance the sound recording and editing capability of the smartphone.

While it is easy to hold and operate a mobile phone in your hands, this may result in unintended movement and unsteadiness of the recording. Using the right-sized tripod will add stability and facilitate achieving beneficial angles while shooting. Using a tripod also enables the person shooting to record him or herself while the mobile phone or camera is on the tripod.

4.4 Premises and equipment for in-person video sharing

Certain conditions and equipment must be considered when planning an in-person viewing of the video. For instance, the lighting in the location where the video will be shown must be appropriate. When showing the video on a television screen, although it is not necessary for the space to be completely dark, it is best if the light is soft or somewhat dim, while, at the same time, having some light so the participants can take notes if they wish. When displaying the video using a projector, the area where the screen is located should be fairly dark in order for the images to be clearly visible. In either case, position the television set or the screen so as to enable the participants to see the video clearly.

It is also important to ensure sufficient volume and quality of sound for a good viewing experience. Large-screen televisions usually have sufficient volume for a small group of viewers (20 to 25), as long as the viewers remain quiet while the video is playing and there is little external noise. This is the case, for instance, with a television that has a 55-inch screen and 20W audio. When using projectors, or when the audience is larger, more volume is needed. This is generally achieved by using a sound amplifier, for instance a 40W Bluetooth speaker. It is best to avoid inviting children to the video presentation in order to minimize disturbance.

The electrical power required for video-showing equipment is that of regular residential electrical installations. However, it is important to check that all wires, fuses and electrical outlets are in good condition. A 55-inch television set, for instance, consumes around 150 to 200W, while a 3 000-lumen projector (maximum screen dimension of 300 inches) consumes 250 to 300W, and a compact 20 to 40W Bluetooth speaker works with rechargeable batteries, but can be connected to an outlet using the charger.



Chapter 5

Recommended exercises

This chapter presents theoretical and practical exercises that will assist the user in acquiring further knowledge and developing the psychomotor skills needed to improve his or her abilities in video production.

This chapter will enable the reader to:

- apply the recommendations of the Participatory Video Guide, incorporating both theoretical knowledge and practical skills in participatory video production.

5.1 Exercises for Chapter 1

Exercise 1.1 Participatory video roles

Using participatory video for development requires understanding the entire video-production process and being responsible for sharing relevant knowledge and content in accordance with rural people's needs.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- explain how participatory video will help in documenting the regular activities of an institution or organization; and
- write a rationale for producing a participatory video.

Activity

Discuss with other participants or colleagues the advantages of using participatory video as a regular practice in your organization or institution. Then analyse the differences between the various uses of participatory video listed in Table 8 and identify practical situations in your own context in which a particular video use could be applied.

Table 8. Uses of participatory video

Uses of participatory video	Application
Knowledge generation and sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Agricultural innovation ■ Farmer-to-farmer approaches ■ Farmer field schools ■ Technical assistance and extension
Awareness raising, preparedness and risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Information and awareness-raising campaigns ■ Risk communication ■ Early warning
Dialogue, advocacy and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communication for social change ■ Community mobilization ■ Participatory planning and monitoring ■ Free, prior and informed consent
Internal and external communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business opportunities for farmer organizations ■ Competitive and comparative advantages of agricultural produce ■ Produce value chains ■ Internal situation of farmer organizations
Planning, participatory evaluation and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sharing viewpoints, negotiation ■ Reports of participatory evaluation ■ Systematization, project presentations, fundraising

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Expected output

A written article which can also be used as a basis for a presentation to decision-makers to advocate in favour of implementing participatory video as an institutionalized practice.

Exercise 1.2 Rural communication

The ComDev approach is an organic, constantly evolving process arising from and responding to community needs, understanding and responses. The ComDev process comprises four phases:



This process amplifies rural people’s voices; improves the participation of stakeholders in decision-making and promotes collaborative action; facilitates the co-creation and sharing of knowledge; prevents misunderstandings and helps to solve conflicts; and leverages local media and ICT for development purposes.

For a complete description of the process, see Chapter 2 of the *Communication for Rural Development Sourcebook*, at www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/c5b8b5d6-132a-4cf4-8b05-21572b2be2b7

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- discuss the phases of the ComDev process and identify the steps necessary to accomplish all four phases.

Activity

Go to the following link and study the steps needed to develop a product for each phase of the ComDev process: www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/c5b8b5d6-132a-4cf4-8b05-21572b2be2b7. Analyse the phases and briefly explain them.

Expected output

A written analysis of phases and steps that explains the process of participatory communication.

5.2 Exercises for Chapter 2

Exercise 2.1 Understanding extensive content and messages

As a video producer, it is important to evaluate how to arrive at the subject of the video. Understanding where to start, that is, identifying the content of the video is a critical step.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- explain the process of selecting a subject as well as initiating content creation, while including important criteria to make the participatory video accurate and relatable.

Activity

Work in groups of 3 to 5. Appoint a group leader, whose responsibility will be to ensure that all the group members participate actively. The group should discuss each of the following three points, spending approximately 10 minutes on each, then present their conclusions to the other groups.

1. Identify three subjects about which you would like to make a video. Evaluate the three subjects and select one of them for video production. Describe the process of subject selection, based on the following:
 - criteria for selecting the three subjects;
 - criteria on which the three subjects were evaluated; and
 - criteria for choosing the one to be addressed through the production of a video.
2. After choosing the subject for the video, determine the following:
 - the objective of producing the video on the selected subject;
 - the audience for whom the video is produced;
 - the technical or thematic information that the video should contain;* and
 - contextual information that should be kept in mind while producing the video.*

* Ensure that both types of information are relevant to the video objective and the identified audience.
3. Based on the objective of the video, decide whether the content will be communicated in an instructive style or a message style. Choose a technical or contextual piece of information (from number 2) and demonstrate how this would be presented using an instructive or message style or/and message style by writing a short script and presenting it to the other groups.

Expected output

Improved capacity to ensure relatability, adaptability and acceptability of the video through appropriate selection of the subject and the content, writing a brief script to be shared verbally by the group.

Exercise 2.2 Understanding the audiovisual communication tool

Different visual techniques are employed to bring variety, specificity and continuity to the video. These techniques can be understood through the fundamentals of video making such as frames, shots, etc.

Practice activity 2.2.1 Creating a frame

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- shoot a subject or object and create a visual story through it.

Activity

Carry out this activity in groups of 3 to 5. To ensure that each member of the group participates actively, when presenting, the group should describe the activities that each group member carried out during the task.

Tell a visual story by shooting a subject or object using the foreground and background of the image. Present your story to the other groups, explain why a particular subject or object was shown in the foreground and what is depicted in the background.

Expected output

Further developed ability to capture images and sounds around a particular context.

Practice activity 2.2.2 Composition and types of shots

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- take different types of shots with different compositions, considering the requirements of the storyboard and the audiovisual rules.

Activity

Carry out this activity in groups of 3 to 5. To ensure that each member of the group participates actively, when presenting, the group should describe the activities that each group member carried out during the task.

Select any object or subject of your choice, such as a tree or a person, and capture it through photos or video, using different kinds of shots, as described below. Each group member should take at least one shot. Keep in mind the time limit for this practice exercise.

1. A shot depicting the context of the object or subject – extreme long shot.
2. A shot connecting the object or subject with a story – long shot.
3. A shot capturing the details of the object or subject – medium shot.
4. A shot focusing on some specific detail of the object or subject – close-up.

5. A shot highlighting detailed aspects of the object or subject – extreme close-up.
6. A shot highlighting some activity that the object or subject is carrying out with another object or subject – over-the-shoulder shot.

- determine the purpose of each shot;
- use the rule of thirds while capturing each shot; and
- save all the shots to share with the facilitator once the activity is completed.

Expected output

Improved understanding of the objectives of different kinds of shots and the skills required to capture them.

Practice activity 2.2.3 Camera angles and heights

Camera placement is an important element of visual storytelling. Camera angles can be used to provide a more complete perspective of the object or subject, indicating the situation in which the shot should be taken. The height and tilt of the camera can be used to achieve different purposes.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- use camera heights and angles to capture shots for different purposes and uses.

Activity

Carry out this activity in groups of 3 to 5. To ensure that each member of the group participates actively, when presenting, the group should describe the activities that each group member carried out during the task.

- capture the same object or subject as in Practice activity 2.2.2, but capture it by positioning the camera at different angles;
- describe the purpose of each shot captured at different angles; and
- mention the angles used in each shot.

Present the shots to the other groups, explaining the angles used and the purpose of each shot.

Expected output

Improved skill in using different camera angles and heights to create a scene.

Practice activity 2.2.4 Panning and tilting

Camera movement can be useful in preparing audiovisual scenes or sequences when a shooting situation requires frequent displacements. Horizontal panning, in particular, is useful in depicting extensive geographic areas.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- pan and tilt with different degrees of difficulty, and will recognize the possibilities and limitations of such movements.

Activity

Carry out this activity in groups of 3 to 5. Take the shots described below. Take into account the changes in the distance between the subject and the camera and ensure that the image remains visible and in sharp focus. All the members of the group must perform all the exercises.

- a. One shot of a landscape of your choice, panning from left to right. Make a note of the focal length used.
- b. One shot of a tall object, such as a tree or electricity pole, using vertical tilt. Two participants should select the same object; one will record it in wide-angle while the other will capture it in telephoto.
- c. Shoot the perpendicular displacement of a person walking (from the viewpoint of the camera position) at a distance of 15 meters, under the following two conditions: i) in wide-angle, allowing the subject to enter the frame, following the subject, and allowing the subject leave the frame, ii) the same exercise in telephoto.
- d. Shoot the diagonal displacement of a person walking (from the viewpoint of the camera position), starting at a distance of 15 meters and passing close to the camera, in the following two conditions: i) in wide angle, with the subject inside the frame, following the subject, and allowing the subject to leave the frame, ii) the same exercise in telephoto.

Expected output

Improved skill in handling camera movements and focus.

Practice activity 2.2.5 Light and sound

An appropriate video is produced by using different methods and techniques to capture the shots, positioning the camera, moving the camera, and applying various rules. Adding light and sound to the video can make it more impactful.

An effective audio and sound effect in a video can lead to the transfer of information in a correct manner while attracting the attention and engagement of the audience. The tracks selected should be appropriate, placed correctly and recorded properly. Similarly, lighting plays a huge role in how a shot will be received and paid attention to.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- discuss the use and impact of light, sound and audio tracks in creating video.

Activity

Carry out this activity in groups of 3 to 5. To ensure that each member of the group participates actively, when presenting, the group should describe the activities that each group member carried out during the task.

Imagine that you have to record a discussion between two community members on any topic of your choice. (For example, a new, advanced farming technology or any agriculture-based issue within the community). Select the topic and give details about the use of sound and lighting to make the video more effective, as described below.

- a. Use of various sound and audio tracks to make the video more impactful.
 - select the points where sound and audio tracks can be used;
 - explain what sound and audio tracks can be used at the selected points; and
 - describe the purpose of using these tracks and what impact they will create in the scene.
- b. Use of lighting to enhance the impact of the video.
 - explain what source of light can be used and the position of the light source; and
 - describe how the position of the lighting makes the video more effective.

Present the shots produced to the other groups and explain the use of sound and audio tracks, as well as the use of light, and the impact of each in the video.

Expected output

Improved capacity to use light and sound in making video.

Exercise 2.3 Understanding video storyboards

A content structure, or content outline, is created to organize a large amount of information about the subject of the video. This content structure is used to develop the storyboard – a graphic representation of each shot in the video. The storyboard is the video producer’s creative tool. In it, he or she proposes the best audiovisual options to transmit ideas, concepts, special situations and production processes.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- enumerate the step-by-step process of creating a storyboard for video production.

Activity

Carry out this activity in groups of 3 to 5. To ensure that each member of the group participates actively, when presenting, the group should describe the activities that each group member carried out during the task.

- a. Construct a storyboard based on the script created in Activity 2.1. Divide the story into three components, highlighting:
 - initial context or background;
 - definition of the main problem or situation to be solved;
 - develop the solution, explaining details and consequences; and
 - relate the solution to the change produced in the original situation.
- b. Keeping these factors in mind, use a step-by-step process to build all the sequences:
 - an introductory sequence;
 - sequences containing the majority of the main content; and
 - last sequence (including a synthesis or summary).
- c. The storyboard should contain details including shots, angles, continuity, transitions, sound and lighting. The storyboard should be created keeping in mind that the video should not be too long. (For training in agricultural innovation, videos are generally between 5 and 12 minutes long.)

Expected output

Increased ability to create a storyboard around any story for video production.

Exercise 2.4 Preparations for on-the-ground shooting

Before going to shoot a video, the video producer should be prepared – ensuring that the location, the people involved, the equipment and other resources that will be needed during the shoot are ready and available. An easy way to ensure that one is prepared is to create a “shot list” and a “checklist” of the equipment and resources needed to keep track of the preparations.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- prepare an equipment checklist before shooting and observe a set of protocols to keep the shoot organized and efficient.

Activity

Carry out this activity in groups of 3 to 5. To ensure that each member of the group participates actively, when presenting, the group should describe the activities that each group member carried out during the task.

Make a shot list based on the storyboard you created in the previous exercise (Exercise 2.3) and a checklist covering the preparations you will need to arrange before going to shoot the video.

- a. Write down the areas/locations that should be covered in the shot list.
- b. Write a detailed description of what should be necessary for video production in each area/location.

Expected output

A shot list for on-the-ground shoots. Deeper understanding of how to make the shooting experience more efficient and organized.

Exercise 2.5 Editing – basics and advanced

Editing is the process of collecting all the footage that has been shot and combining different shots and elements to create a single video. An edited video is free from unwanted shots, has had any abnormalities in the shots corrected, and has any gaps filled, creating a sense of continuity throughout the video.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the reader will be able to:

- discuss the video editing process.

Activity

Carry out this activity in groups of 3 to 5. To ensure that each member of the group participates actively, when presenting, the group should describe the activities that each group member carried out during the task.

Suppose you make a video according to the storyboard you created and have edited it to complete the video production process.

- a. Describe the entire process of editing the video.
- b. What different editing issues arose when editing the video? List the points and explain them briefly.

Expected output

Deeper understanding of the editing process and of different issues in the footage that may require editing.

5.3 Exercise for Chapter 3

Exercise 3.1 Community ownership and participation

The video-sharing process is not just about sharing the content in in-person events or using virtual platforms. It is also an opportunity for community interaction, participation and learning.

Objective

At the end of this exercise, the participant will be able to:

- develop a video-sharing plan that is participatory, usable and relatable to the audience.

Activity

- a. Select a suitable subject for a video related to challenges or needs in your community. Create a plan for sharing the video with the community, including the following points:
 - select a group of people to share the video with;

- determine the actions that will be taken to capture the interest and ensure the participation of the group; and
 - create a plan for sharing the video with the group. (Mode of sharing, content to be shared, timeline, availability of the group, role of the community in sharing the video, etc.).
- b.** Depending on the mode of video sharing, develop a detailed process to implement the video-sharing plan using online and/or offline platforms, including the following:
- preparations before video sharing (ensure that the video is shared with all group members);
 - using questions to hold a dialogue around the central topic of the video;
 - engaging the group members during the video-sharing process and taking into account their experiences and suggestions;
 - gathering feedback from the group members; and
 - following-up after the video is shared to assess the quality of the video sharing.

Note: Highlight the use of two-way communication and adult learning principles while developing the sharing plan and process.

Expected output

Deeper understanding of how to make a video-sharing process more participatory and interactive, using two-way communication and adult-learning principles.

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Participatory video in agrifood systems and digital environments

A practitioner's guide

Participatory video is a communication approach to video production and sharing in which community members and stakeholders actively participate in the planning, creation and dissemination of video content. The process empowers individuals and groups to share their knowledge, perspectives, experiences and concerns in order to raise awareness, advocate for change and document their own stories and realities.

This practitioner's guide provides step-by-step guidance for using participatory video to advance sustainable agrifood systems. It can be used to orient training events or as a stand-alone resource for self-learning.

For more information:

www.fao.org/communication-for-development/en
www.fao.org

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