

Video Production

Do's and Don'ts



AccessAgriculture

www.accessagriculture.org

natural resource management
food security
market development



Prepared by:
Josephine Rodgers
Paul Van Mele

Why use video?

- 1 For documentation and as a future resource (time shifting)
- 2 To give particular messages
- 3 To target particular groups of people or allow all groups to watch
- 4 It has wide acceptance and is popular to watch
- 5 It has high credibility for the viewers and can build trust
- 6 It can easily be duplicated and spread to other areas
- 7 It is cost effective (a well-researched, well-written and well-made video will have a long lifetime)
- 8 It can be translated into other languages
- 9 It is not necessary to be able to read to learn from video
- 10 It can provide motivation and encouragement (farmers will pay most attention to what other farmers say):
Use interviews
 - with innovators to inspire (farmer peer trainers)
 - with subject specialists for particular knowledge
- 11 It is easy to learn from – the viewer both sees and hears information. This can be enhanced by providing practical exercises to do after watching the video
- 12 It can stimulate new practices and demand for new support
- 13 It can be used to disseminate important information
- 14 The learning experience is the same every time
- 15 The same video can be used with many types of target audience, although you may change the style of language in the voice over
- 16 It can be used to remind people of good practices before certain times of the year e.g. dipping, harvest, sowing
- 17 It can help farmers understand the 'why' behind new practices
- 18 It has lasting impact – because people both see and hear information, it is easier to recall this later

BUT ALWAYS ASK YOURSELF . . .
Is the subject matter VISUAL?

The production process

Think how you will multiply and distribute the video

- Pre-Filming**
- ▶ Initial Research / Baseline Survey
 - ▶ Script ideas
 - ▶ Research
 - desk research
 - field research
 - ▶ First draft of script
 - ▶ Discuss with colleagues and end-users
 - ▶ RECCE Visits:
Where can you film? Which farmers?
What new information can the farmers tell you?
 - ▶ Redraft script (maybe many times!)
 - ▶ Prepare for filming:
 - Write questions for interviews
 - Prepare shot list
 - Shooting schedule
 - Liaise with people you are filming with

-
- Filming**
- ▶ Input footage and logging
 - ▶ Select and transcribe interviews
 - ▶ Decide if you need other interviews or shots
 - ▶ Redraft script
 - ▶ Record voice over

-
- Initial Edit**
- ▶ First (rough) edit
 - ▶ Assessment of video with a test audience
 - ▶ Now make further changes to script, pictures and programme

-
- Final Edit**
- ▶ Add captions, music etc. (make sure audio levels are correct)
 - ▶ Prepare any other material that you want to use with the video (e.g. leaflets, experiment or practical skill)

Multiply and distribute the video

Scriptwriting

- 1 First, always consider the target group
- 2 Explore all potential sources of information, including knowledge from farmers and field workers
- 3 Consider the final product and how the video will be watched
- 4 Each video module has to stand on its own, without explicit reference to other modules
- 5 Reflect and exchange on major content of script with staff of farmer field schools and the target group
- 6 Exchange the script with subject matter specialists and colleagues
- 7 Make sure there are no factual errors
- 8 Modify the script after having visited the field and conducted exploratory farmer interviews
- 9 Simplify and reduce the words and phrases
- 10 Practice, practice and practice, as you learn by doing

The three sections of a script

INTRODUCTION

tell the audience what you are going to tell them

THE MAIN BODY OF THE SCRIPT

tell them the information

CONCLUSION

tell them what you have told them

Keep it simple!

Scriptwriting

Do's and Don'ts



Do



Don't

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▶ Start by presenting the broader context | ▶ Don't use difficult words |
| ▶ Avoid complicated words | ▶ Don't use acronyms |
| ▶ Use short phrases | ▶ Don't write in the third person |
| ▶ Write for the spoken word | ▶ Don't use names of organisations or projects |
| ▶ Keep the subject interesting | ▶ Don't use long lists |
| ▶ Follow a logic sequence | ▶ Don't introduce examples that are not feasible or do not inspire |
| ▶ Invite the target group to test the ideas presented | ▶ Don't introduce a lot of numbers and calculations |
| ▶ Finalise the Audio column before putting in pictures in the Video column | ▶ Don't put words between brackets |

READ the script to your colleagues, and to farmers

Do the words 'flow' when they are spoken out loud?

In a video, the viewer cannot easily refer back to something they have heard, so the programme must make sense as you hear the words

Interviews

- 1 Interviews normally explore the opinion and/or experience of the interviewee
- 2 Make sure that interviewees are relaxed
- 3 Choose a good background behind the interviewee (no major distractions; different colour from the colour of the interviewee's clothes)
- 4 Try to keep the number of people standing around to a minimum and also keep any other distractions to a minimum
- 5 The questions are not used in the editing, they should be OPEN QUESTIONS: who, what, why, when, where and how
- 6 The answers should be complete sentences, this will make editing easier
- 7 It is important that the answers are listened to carefully as it is often necessary to ask for more explanation from the interviewee
- 8 It is the producer's job to make sure that there are enough cut-away shots to illustrate what the interviewee is saying
- 9 It is very important that the name and official title/status of the interviewee is collected together with contact details. This is so that name captions can be prepared or that a 'thank you' caption at the end of the programme is correct

It is always better to have one person asking the questions and someone else operating the camera

Interviews

Do's and Don'ts



Do

- ▶ Plan your questions before the interview
- ▶ Ensure the microphone works BEFORE you go to film
- ▶ Use OPEN questions
- ▶ Put the microphone recording to MANUAL and check your sound level
- ▶ Ask the interviewee to talk and respond only to the interviewer
- ▶ Frame the interviewee to allow for 'breathing space'
- ▶ Position the camera on the same eye-line as the interviewee and interviewer



Don't

- ▶ Record interviews in the middle of the day if it is sunny
- ▶ Don't forget the microphone and extra batteries
- ▶ Use CLOSED questions
- ▶ Don't record interviews without listening on headphones
- ▶ Don't let the sound level distort during the interview – it cannot be corrected later
- ▶ Don't talk at the same time as the interviewee
- ▶ Don't let the interviewee 'read' answers

How to cope with interviews that need translating during filming

- ▶ Where answers (and questions) have to be translated during the interviews, remember that this will take extra time.
- ▶ One option is to have a small audio recorder with the person translating, so that either just the translator or both interviewee and translator can be recorded.
- ▶ This audio recording can then be used for transcribing. Many mobile phones now have this recording facility.



Tips on using digital video equipment

Digital cameras, although small, but the quality of the material recorded rests in your hands.

Read the manual and get to know your camera!

A checklist is vital, the essential items are:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1 camera | 2 batteries |
| 3 tapes | 4 interview microphone (and batteries) |
| 5 tripod | 6 headphones |

If you want to do interviews you will need to use a clip microphone, try to hide the cable.

Remember to switch to MANUAL audio mode, if you can.

Don't forget the headphones – to ensure you are recording sound.

Try to always keep batteries charged and everything together in the camera bag.

And now for action

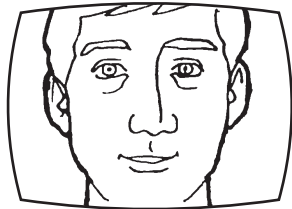
- ▶ load the battery
- ▶ turn on the camera
- ▶ remember to allow some seconds recording before the action you want to film, and also some seconds at the end
- ▶ Remember to **save battery** power by turning off the camera if you are not using the camera for a while and closing the LCD screen when possible
- ▶ In the viewfinder you can see how many minutes of battery life is left
- ▶ **Make sure all batteries are charged!**

Always use the tripod for best results

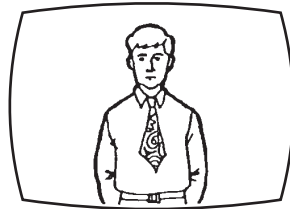
- ▶ Tripods give stability and an easy way to know that the picture is level by using the 'bubble' indicator (the spirit level)
- ▶ There is a 'plate' which attaches to the camera and allows the camera to be quickly attached and detached from the tripod

The Grammar of Video

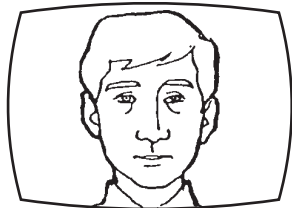
Names of shots



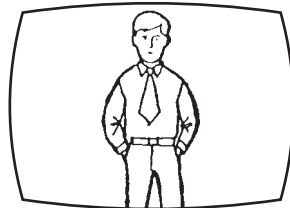
Big close-up
BCU



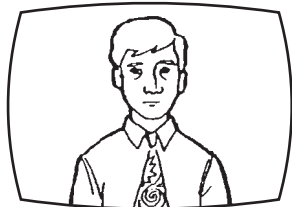
Mid-shot
MS



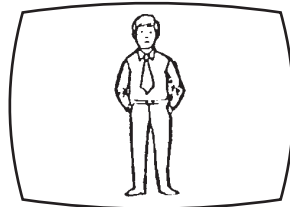
Close-up
CU



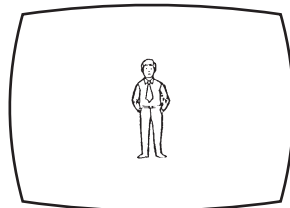
Medium long shot
MLS



Medium close-up
MCU



Long shot
LS



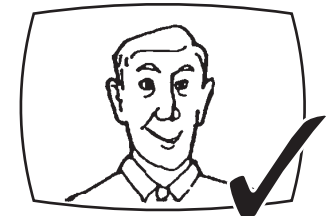
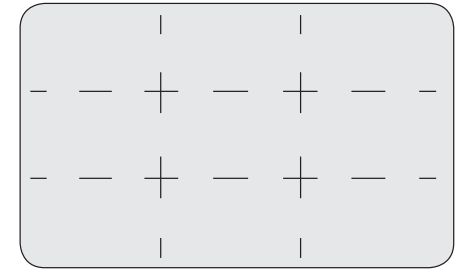
Very long shot
VLS
Or
General view
GV

Framing

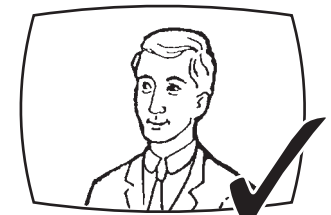
A rule of thirds . . .

The rule of thirds is a guideline to help compose visual images.

The screen should be imagined as divided into nine equal parts by two equally spaced horizontal lines and two equally spaced vertical lines, and that important compositional elements should be placed along these lines or their intersections.



Always leave a space in the direction in which the interviewee is looking





Filming

- 1 The cameraman dictates when action starts and stops, to ensure the camera is recording before the action happens
- 2 For activity shots, if there is the time you may need to ask the farmer or other person to do an action 2 or 3 times so that you can get different angles, but always be aware that people may have busy schedules
- 3 The main rules for activity shots are to try and get a wide shot, close ups of action and a face shot
- 4 Everyone must be checking for continuity and that things are said and done correctly
- 5 DO NOT leave the camera on the tripod unattended, it can easily get knocked over
- 6 Always wear headphones for good sound recording. Listen for sound in the background, stop people in the background talking or using mobile phones when filming – ask them politely to be quiet!
- 7 Be careful of light reflecting off very bright surfaces (e.g. white shirts, flipchart sheets or even tin roofs) into the camera, especially at midday
- 8 What you see in the viewfinder is what you record! This also applies for audio
- 9 Don't go out filming without an advanced script - and prepare your shot list before filming to make sure you get all the shots you need
- 10 Practice, practice, practice... you learn and become confident by using the equipment. The camera is your friend, do not be afraid of it!

Remember... If the sun is hot, the best time for filming is early morning and late afternoon

Filming

Do's and Don'ts

 Do	 Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Check the equipment is working BEFORE you leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Don't forget to take all the equipment ... who is responsible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Check you have reformatted any memory cards, and have spare ones with you	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Don't forget to charge the batteries
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Use a tripod!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Do not wander aimlessly with the camera
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Film action from different positions with different shot sizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Don't just take one shot of an action
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Explain beforehand why an action will need to be repeated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Avoid filming in the middle of the day, the pictures are likely to appear 'burnt out'
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Frame the pictures before pressing record, remember the rule of thirds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Don't start filming a sequence if the tape is nearly finished
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Let the action happen in front of the camera	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Don't forget to check the format you are recording
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Transfer and backup footage regularly	

The Editing Process

Transfer footage into the computer	<p>Remove the SD card from the camera and insert into the card reader of the computer</p> <hr/> <p>Create a folder in your PROJECT FOOTAGE folder for that days filming, copy the files into that folder.</p> <hr/> <p>It is good practice for files from each day (or half day) to be copied into a separate folders</p> <hr/> <p>Ensure you make a copy of this folder on an external drive</p> <hr/> <p>Open your editing project</p> <hr/> <p>Import the footage</p>
If you can, Log the clips	<p>Put descriptions for each shot – ensure you write in the description column and that you are not accidentally changing the filename</p> <hr/> <p>Be critical of what has been filmed... how can you improve?</p> <hr/> <p>Delete shots which are of no use at all, do not delete something that COULD be used</p> <hr/> <p>If your software allows, create sub bins and put groups of relevant shots in these bins, this will make editing faster</p>
Select Interview answers	<p>Create a sequence for each person interviewed</p> <hr/> <p>Put on the sequence all the answers the person gave</p> <hr/> <p>Export each interview sequence in a suitable format</p> <hr/> <p>Transcribe each interview (word for word) – and translate if necessary</p> <hr/> <p>Select the sections for interview for your video and put those words in your script</p>
Voice Over	<p>Record and transfer the voice files, make sure you rename the files before importing them into your edit</p> <hr/> <p>Create a sequence for your main edit</p> <hr/> <p>Space the voice as necessary</p>
Insert Interviews	<p>Place the sections of interview you want to use in position on your sequence</p>
Now you can start editing!	<p>Place your cutaway pictures and sound</p> <hr/> <p>Use another video track for captions</p>

Editing

Do's and Don'ts



Do

- ▶ Create a folder for each camera card you are transferring

- ▶ If your software allows, write a description for each shot that you can use

- ▶ Always backup your project



Don't

- ▶ Don't have a pan or zoom followed by another pan or zoom, it does not make a good programme

- ▶ Don't rush when you are deleting unusable clips from the bins, or you will make mistakes

Practice, practice and practice, you only learn editing by doing it

This document has been made possible by collaboration between



AccessAgriculture

www.accessagriculture.org

natural resource management
food security
market development

AGRO insight

communicating agriculture

Countrywise
• COMMUNICATION •