

# **Video for Change Impact Evaluation Scoping Study: A Summary of Key Research Findings**

video4change Network, January 2014.

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## Credits and Acknowledgements

During the first half of 2013, the video4change Network worked with a small team of researchers to investigate and identify the opportunities, needs, challenges and barriers for measuring the impact of Video for Change initiatives.

The primary goal of this research was to assess whether support was needed to evaluate the impact of Video for Change initiatives and to identify impact evaluation experiences and success stories.

This research process involved two core research activities:

1. A **preliminary literature** review was carried out to assess available literature relating to Video for Change and the measurement of impact. A draft literature review report was created and the video4change Network was invited to comment and discuss this literature review and take part in a follow-up Google Hangout discussion.
2. A **series of interviews** with Video for Change practitioners and organisations (8) and Video for Change project funders (2) were carried out and analysed. (See Appendix 1 for interviewee list.)

These interviews sought to investigate and report on the monitoring and evaluation experiences and needs of those working in this field and to collect their advice on what is required to support a diverse range of Video for Change practitioners to effectively evaluate impact.

These interviews were usually followed up with desk research: this involved reading organisational reports, blog posts and research documents. Summaries of these interviews (where relevant and possible) have been posted to the video4change Network blog (<https://www.v4c.org/>).

In carrying out this preliminary literature review and interviews, we found that there were no comprehensive books, videos, reports or compendiums that detailed the historical development of video use for social change and nor did we locate an agreed, commonly used definition of what Video for Change is or means. (The term itself seems to have first started gaining traction in 2000, when one of the video4change Network members, WITNESS, began to use it).

We were also unable to identify any widely shared perspectives on how to monitor and evaluate the impact of Video for Change initiatives; indeed, tracing the historical development of Video for Change evaluation approaches, processes and practices was complicated, messy and far more difficult and complex than we might have imagined.

We found that the video4change Network organisations that we interviewed all agreed that they wanted better and shared structures to help them conceive of and undertake impact evaluation, as well as to provide training/support for it. There was also a shared desire to learn from the evaluation experiences of others and to share experiences about designing for and understanding impact.

The research team and the video4change Network has agreed that this small scoping study is tentative and incomplete in terms of its contribution to supporting Video for Change organisations and projects to measure the impact of their work.

At the same time, our research and analysis has supported some preliminary findings that we believe have been and will continue to be useful in shaping the project that this research set out to inform (tentatively titled, 'Video for Change Impact Project').

Our key findings are listed and summarised in the following section. We hope that these findings might serve to open up discussions, provide avenues for new areas of research, and support the design of the Video for Change Impact Project.

We conclude each key finding by providing associated recommendation/s that may provide a pathway forward in terms of implementing the next stages of the project.

<sup>1</sup> See for example: Witness (2000) Video for Change: A Practical Guide for Activists. Witness: A project of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights; Gregory, S., Caldwell, G., Avni, R., & Harding, T. (Eds.). (2005) Video for change: A guide for advocacy and activism. London: Pluto Press.

## Key Findings

### Finding 1: There are multiple approaches to 'doing' Video for Change and each has its own priorities and values

The video4change Network currently defines Video for Change as “the use of video to support social movements, document human rights violations, raise awareness on social issues and influence social change”.

A range of other definitions were provided by the organisations we interviewed. Diverse examples include:

- “A broad banner description for all kinds of ways that people use video and related media as a tool for social justice, a tool for positive social change.”
- “Forging discourses on untold/under-represented issues”
- “A way to see a more equitable society because policymakers will have access to the needs and knowledge of communities.”
- “A practice whereby video provides the critical tool through which change-makers seek to augment the social impact of their work.”
- “An opportunity for organisations to use it as a way to look at themselves from more of a developmental perspective.”

From our interviews with Video for Change practitioners, the only unifying or shared understanding of what Video for Change is and what it can be used for was “the use of video to create social change”.

As one interviewee highlighted to us, social change might therefore be the best starting point for a shared approach to evaluating impact: how does an organisation or project decide what social change is needed and how do they work out how their video project/s can meaningfully contribute to this change? Following this, how can they best reflect on how the project/s is working and evaluate its impact.

A starting point here might be to ask: how many different ways can video directly contribute to social change? (See Appendix 2 for an initial proposed list for discussion.)

At the same time, our interviews with two Video for Change donor organisations suggested there was uncertainty about what Video for Change meant and this resulted in some hesitancy in using the term. For example:

“In some ways when I hear ‘Video for Change’ I think, ‘Oh that’s what we’re about!’ But then within the field I think it has a distinct definition and I think it’s much more about the work a WITNESS would do or a Video Volunteers, which is different than some of the work we’re funding...[It has] a definition activists are giving it.”

“It’s not a term that has huge meaning for me. I understand it to be audio visual media that highlights or is being used to campaign on a particular issue...we have a program working in India with Video Volunteers. That is something which is quite different from what we’re talking about. That’s more about reporting and mobilising.”

While the video4change Network members all use the term ‘Video for Change’, in the initial stages of our literature review it became apparent that most organisations and practitioners (past and present) who use video as a tool or approach for creating social change do not currently use this term.

This led us to broaden our thinking about what kinds of approaches might fall under this umbrella term. As we began to research the historical and current uses of video in social change initiatives or agendas, we came to see how technological, political and social developments have influenced how video is used for social change both at global and local levels.

For example, in our preliminary literature review report (unpublished) we point out that the availability of portable video and cheaper film technologies in the 1960s cultivated the development of guerrilla and participatory video practices and movements.

Most recently, the widening accessibility of video technologies (particularly through mobile phones) and internet access in the 2000s has been (very unevenly) driving broader participation in social change video actions and movements, as well contributing to new forms and practices of video-making (such as witnessing videos and human rights remix videos).

This historical review of practices highlighted that Video for Change practices are always in flux.

By examining the different approaches in using video for social change purposes, it was also possible to see that different Video for Change approaches had quite different values and practices and these often varied across time and place.

The table below (Table 1) lists what we identified as the primary, popular approaches used to design and implement Video for Change initiatives and their associated core values (though we acknowledge that these are not fixed).

Video for Change Approach	Core values/functions that are prioritised	Examples of organisations that often use this approach from the video4change Network
participatory video and community video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>providing access to media-making tools, technologies and training as well as access to targeted audiences</li> <li>addressing social inequalities</li> <li>supporting marginalised groups to tell their own stories</li> <li>empowerment and confidence-building</li> <li>critical thinking/analysis (particularly in relation to development and politics)</li> <li>project and organisational self-reflexivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>InsightShare (see their Participatory Video handbook: <a href="http://insightshare.org/resources/pv-handbook">http://insightshare.org/resources/pv-handbook</a>)</li> <li>Video Volunteers</li> <li>EngageMedia</li> <li>Small World News</li> <li>Organization for Visual Progression (OVP)</li> <li>SocialTIC</li> </ul>
social documentary video and film for change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exposing a problem/issue, often with journalistic principles and practices</li> <li>broad outreach and audience participation</li> <li>(often) has specific 'asks' of audience in strategic effort to create public pressure (usually on politicians or corporations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WITNESS</li> <li>Video Volunteers</li> <li>B'Tselem</li> </ul>
video advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>specific and targeted policy/legal change</li> <li>the ability to resonate with specific and targeted audiences and participant communities based on a strategy that sets out how policy change can come about</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WITNESS (see their Video Advocacy toolkit: <a href="http://toolkit.witness.org">http://toolkit.witness.org</a>)</li> <li>Video Volunteers</li> <li>Organization for Visual Progression (OVP)</li> <li>SocialTIC</li> <li>EngageMedia</li> <li>B'Tselem</li> </ul>
communication for development and communication for change (where video is used)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inclusive social, economic and political development</li> <li>reflective, critical discourses relating to development plans, practices and outcomes</li> <li>supporting marginalised communities to impact on development by providing access to media tools, technologies and training as well as access to targeted audiences</li> </ul>	InsightShare
citizen journalism video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supporting broader publics to report on the issues that matter to them</li> <li>supporting the production and distribution of local news and media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Video Volunteers</li> <li>Small World News</li> <li>EngageMedia</li> <li>B'Tselem</li> </ul>
witnessing video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exposing/addressing rights abuses through the collection of video evidence</li> <li>aiding/providing evidence in legal actions</li> <li>raising awareness of human rights abuses (particularly ongoing and systemic abuses)</li> <li>training communities so they are ready to document rights abuses and events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Video Volunteers</li> <li>Small World News</li> <li>EngageMedia</li> <li>B'Tselem</li> </ul>
change-focused video memes and mash-ups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engaging with new forms of media engagement</li> <li>supporting people to become storytellers and advocates</li> </ul>	None have an explicit focus on this approach
youth media (where video is used)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>youth participation and engagement</li> <li>provision of training and access to tools, technologies and platforms that will support young people's social inclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kampung Halaman</li> </ul>

Table 1: Video for Change Approaches

The key finding identified here – that there are many diverse approaches to ‘doing’ Video for Change and that most Video for Change organisations combine a number of approaches – is important for two reasons.

First, because any framework, system or structure that seeks to support a diverse range of Video for Change organisations, practitioners and projects must consider the different values, practices and objectives relating to different approaches.

Second, because while a definition can be useful for clarifying the value of a term to practitioners, and their inclusion within it, it is worth considering who may be included and excluded from the definition that is used (or perceived).

It’s important to note that although we describe the video approaches included in Table 1 as being unique, they are not fixed concepts and nor are they mutually exclusive. For example, it was clear from an interview with one video4change Network member that her organisation would firstly describe their work as advocacy video but that they also identified and drew from other approaches including participatory and community video, citizen journalism video, social documentary video and witnessing video. In this case, this mixed approach was the result of the perspectives, training, skills and experiences that the founders and employees brought to the organisation as well as shifting models, priorities and needs.

An additional interview finding was the shared desire among the video4change Network members to ensure Video for Change is accountable to the communities it is trying to support in its social change objectives. This accountability is common among many of the approaches listed in Table 1, though not all. Therefore, it may be worth considering if this kind of accountability should be integrated into either a definition of Video for Change or an impact evaluation framework. For example, core human rights principles and practices could be used as an over-arching consideration for Video for Change project design or project evaluation and indicators provided for (affected) community consultation and participation practices throughout (before, during and after) the video process.

This would emphasise the importance of accountability to the groups and communities a Video for Change initiative is trying to support through social change objectives.

### Recommendation 1

a) Reflect on the definition currently being used by the video4change Network. Does this definition represent the current network members? Is it open enough to include others who use different approaches to Video for Change from existing members? Does the definition still seem appropriate in moving forward? Should human rights considerations and ethics be added to the definition to make it more specific/accountable?

b) It may be worth agreeing on the core approaches to doing Video of Change that should be included in the video4change Network definition. Doing so would support the next stages of this project by ensuring that the project design has fully considered these diverse Video for Change approaches and their respective values and priorities.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.v4c.org/content/about-video4change-network>, accessed 26 July 2013.

## Finding 2: 'Impact Evaluation' means very different things to different social change actors

In attempting to analyse how different approaches to Video for Change prioritise, define and measure 'impact', we found very few cases of shared definitions, let alone shared approaches.

For example, even within the broad silos of international development and communication for change efforts, where you may expect some shared approaches to evaluation, the actual definition of impact remains diffuse.

The clearest common denominator we found, across multiple (but certainly not all) literature and reports, was an understanding that 'impact' refers to the long-term changes that result from a specific intervention, as opposed to immediate outputs or short-term outcomes. In these instances, impact evaluation usually takes place a significant amount of time after a project is complete and it "provides a framework sufficient to understand whether the beneficiaries are truly benefiting from the program – and not from other factors".

The fact that 'impact evaluation' is often used to specifically refer to 'long-term changes' is worth considering. For example, some practitioners may consider an ongoing assessment of impact, which is taking place while a project is being implemented, or one carried out straight after a video project as not really measuring long-term impact.

On many occasions in the literature, and this was widely mirrored in our interviews, we found that impact was a term and concept that was combined with 'monitoring and evaluation' (M&E), an established process for an ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of an organisation, campaign or project.

In discussion papers seeking to develop an M & E framework for work that covers multiple and diverse projects, the need for a flexible toolkit, which responds to the specific project design and resources, has been the common conclusion.

It was very clear that all of the video4change Network member organisations we interviewed are looking for an approach, framework and sometimes also indicators, technologies or tools to help them both design for impact and measure it.

Impact, in this instance, very often referred to outputs (we trained x women and x men; we produced x videos) as well as a combination of outcomes (x trainees were able to produce xx videos; xx people watched the video; we received x national media coverage; we had xx people comment online) as well as longer-term impacts (the government agreed to change x policy; the perpetrators of x were arrested; there was a significant increase in x).

Not once did we find that interviewees considered it important to be sure that their video (and associated communication efforts) made the impact change and not other work by their organisation, other organisations or publics (a usual focus for traditional impact evaluations). This 'direct consequence' is often emphasised in traditional impact evaluation frameworks. Very often, however, our interviewees explicitly wanted to be clear that their video had made an obvious contribution to the desired change.

At the same time, after asking eight video4change Network members what they want from an impact evaluation framework, it has become clear that such a framework may not be able to deliver all things to all organisations.

For example, some organisations we interviewed are clearly looking for support to measure the overall impact of their organisation. This usually meant they wanted to know things like:

- Is our model/models working?
- What features matter most to our success and which are problematic or need fixing?
- What social changes are we contributing to?
- How do people perceive us and our work?

At the same time, all of the organisations we interviewed were looking for an impact evaluation framework/system/tools that they (or their partners or training participants) could use to evaluate the impact of discrete and specific projects or sometimes programs.

It may be very difficult to achieve all of these aspirations in the one project (ie organisational-level impact evaluation as well as discrete project evaluation and program evaluation). It is therefore important to decide whether the next iteration of this project will focus on measuring the effectiveness of Video for Change organisations or Video for Change projects/issue-based programs. Or it is important to discuss whether both may be possible. (We would suggest not from the first stage of this research.)

Another key challenge for a Video for Change Impact Evaluation project is the massive diversity in models used by Video for Change initiatives.

For example, from among some of the video4change Network interviewees:

▪ **Video Volunteers** have a two-pronged Video for Change approach for their work in India. First, they support a network of community reporters, helping them to make local reporting sustainable so that it can address rights issues from the grassroots.

Impact, in this case, is rewarded with a financial payment and because of this it is almost always likely to be self-documented and captured by the community reporter. An impact evaluation would probably be at the level of the community reporter, since a community reporter may possibly produce 50 or more videos each year; although it could also focus on the model itself.

Second, Video Volunteers support the distribution of the community reporters' content across multiple platforms, including on their own distribution platform.

Video Volunteers have developed a structure for impact evaluation that includes some 50 indicators and staff dedicated to evaluating impact. They say they are quite capable of measuring whether a video achieves its intended outcomes; the bigger challenge is to measure cumulative change of videos over time (Read more [here](#) and a video case study [here](#).)

▪ **WITNESS** also have a two-pronged model approach for Video for Change and their focus is international. First, they focus on influencing how popular platforms, tools and environments serve people working with human rights-focused goals (what they call 'systems-level change').

This means doing things like working with YouTube to implement a face-blurring functionality tool, engaging with Google to create a witnessing functionality in their tools and working with human rights justice and criminal systems to better deal with the challenges involved in working with large volumes of video evidence.

Their second focus is called 'Video Advocacy Critical Response' and this is about scaling-up the reach of training, direct responses to human rights issues, working with targeted organisations, supporting and building video for change networks.

For Systems-level Change, they are really looking at how many people download and adopt their tools or the success they have in changing policies and practices of companies or governments in ways that favour rights advocacy. For their work supporting Video Advocacy, WITNESS have incorporated a 'Performance Dashboard' for Video Advocacy projects.

In the next stage of this project it will be important to understand what can be learnt from this dashboard approach.

WITNESS hope this Video for Change Impact project will be useful for this latter focus by providing a flexible evaluation framing tool and system for the organisations they want to support. (A summary of the WITNESS model and approach to evaluating impact can be found [here](#).)

▪ **EngageMedia** also have a two-pronged approach and their work is focused on Southeast Asia. First, they do something similar to the WITNESS 'Video Advocacy Critical Response' by providing regional level trainings and also by providing an open source software platform that hosts and distributes videos (including translation/subtitling support).

Second, they design and implement specific projects on diverse social justice and human rights issues. EngageMedia use web analytics tools to measure how many people access, translate and view content on their platform. However, they find this is very limited since it says nothing about what the content has helped achieve. They also measure impact by collecting stories, but they worry this is too anecdotal.

They would like this Video for Change Impact project to help them more systematically evaluate and learn from what works best. (Read more about this two pronged approach [here](#) and a project case study [here](#).)



▪ **InsightShare** do both capacity-building (through training and project design support) as well as participatory video projects (where the aim is to support local 'ownership' over a project) across countries. In terms of measuring impact, InsightShare uses what they call a 'learning culture' rather than discrete impact evaluations.

While they do not have a 'formal' InsightShare monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy, in every project they conduct M&E in 'small ways' – ranging from short workshop exercises to monitor progress to an end-of-workshop evaluation discussion. They take into account the context of the project in designing the M&E activities and processes.

InsightShare's M&E methodologies do not employ more 'formal' data-gathering strategies (questionnaires, surveys) as default. Instead, they use qualitative, participatory and informal methodologies and training workshop activities to document and gather data to monitor the progress of their participants.

The reasoning behind this is two-fold: (1) planning and implementing separate M&E processes takes time that they do not usually have in their projects; and (2) informal, participatory data-gathering processes are more in line with their approach to Participatory Video workshops, where suddenly implementing a questionnaire to be answered by the participants will be inappropriate to their approach.

Their M&E activities are influenced by PLA (Participatory Learning and Action), VIPP (Visualization in Participatory Programs), 'Theatre of the Oppressed', Outcome Mapping and the Theory of Change models.

▪ Like Video Volunteers, **B'Tselem** work in a single country. They are an Israeli human rights organisation, whose core goal is to change Israeli policy in the Occupied Territories.

They identify a dual focus for their Video for Change efforts: 1) to use video as legal evidence or a tool for lobbying and educating authorities in order to effect legal or policy change surrounding human rights abuses and; 2) to raise awareness of human rights violations among the Israel public by spreading videos through traditional mass media and new media.

B'Tselem's main tool for evaluation is a database that tracks videos created, outcomes and impact. "We collect the outcomes as stats, so when a video enters the database, then it is listed as 'sent to army', then 'investigation opened', then 'used by media', etc. So, we can run a query on the database, for instance, on all investigations opened this year with video, or, video items that volunteers from Hebron filmed, for example, and thus assess a certain paradigm or phenomenon."

By analysing this database, B'Tselem are also able to better answer organisational questions such as: 'Where should we spread to next?'; 'Where should we give more cameras?'; 'Which kind of videos are most effective with getting a response from the army?'

## Recommendation 2

What is meant by 'impact evaluation' needs to be explicitly defined to meet the project needs (or a different term, such as 'Monitoring and Evaluation' could instead be adopted). We would suggest that the video4change Network may want to consider defining impact as 'positive and desired changes that can be attributed in some part to the video initiative'. We think it is also important to consider if this project needs to be as much about the design of Video for Change initiatives (designing for impact) as it does about evaluation (evaluating for impact). It may be that it is futile to think only of evaluation and not about design and the importance of considering both, together, was repeatedly stressed in our interviews.

Some agreement is needed from the video4change Network on what this impact evaluation project will and will not do. Developing a system/framework to evaluate a Video for Change organization is most likely going to be very different from a system/framework to evaluate a Video for Change project.

It is worth deliberating more about what is common among the different approaches to doing the Video for Change as a way forward for finding a focus for measuring impact. If "video" and "social change" are the common elements; could these provide a focus for defining the different kinds of impact? thus, what is important about the way the video is used?; what ways can video directly support social change?

In each of the above five organisational examples, it is also true that these organisations have changed their models for doing Video for Change over time. In the case of WITNESS and Video Volunteers, these changes to their models have been very substantial in the past few years alone.

In this way, it is clear to see that while a system/framework for measuring impact needs to be specific enough to be relevant and useful, it also needs to be flexible and open enough to change with Video for Change organisations as their models change and adapt. It might also be important to be clear on what the future Video for Change Impact Evaluation project will and will not do.

We would suggest a system for organisational-level evaluation will be extremely difficult to design and implement if a project-level impact evaluation system is also required. 'System-level' technology projects, which support multiple (and usually unknown) actors to create, upload and share videos, might also be very difficult to include in a single impact evaluation system.

<sup>3</sup> Bellamy, M. (2000). Approaches to Impact Evaluation in Agricultural Information Management: Selective Review of the Issues, the Relevant Literature and some Illustrative Case Studies; Communication for Change (C-Change) Project (2012). C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC). Version 3. USAID: Washington, D.C.

<sup>4</sup> Khandker, S., Koolwal, G., and Samad H. (2010). Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices. World Bank: Washington, D.C.

### Finding 3: There is no pre-existing impact evaluation theory, model or framework that clearly fits this project’s needs

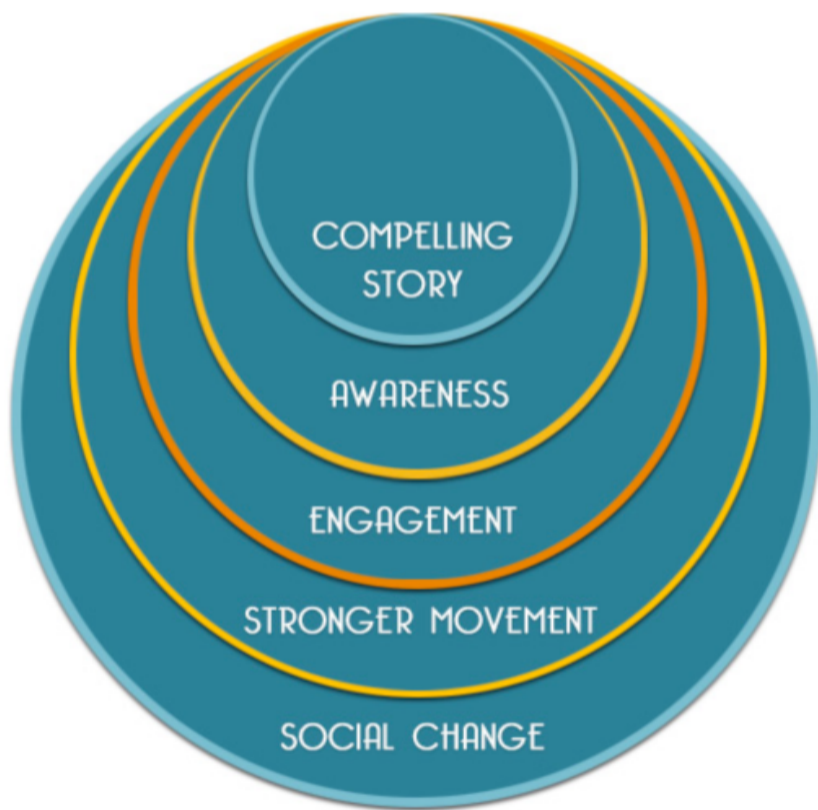
As part of our literature review, we examined dozens of Monitoring and Evaluation and Impact Evaluation theories, methodologies, frameworks and approaches. Many were complicated and obtuse; others were highly specific and did not seem relevant to Video for Change.

We did find, in particular, seven design and/or evaluation frameworks that we believe are directly relevant and useful to this Video for Change project.

The first of these is the Fledgling Fund’s guide for Assessing Creative Media’s Social Impact. Usefully, it establishes five 'creative dimensions' of impact, including;

- How compelling the story being told is to target audiences
- The level of increased public awareness
- The level of increased public engagement
- The development of a stronger social movement
- Specific social changes

#### CREATIVE MEDIA DIMENSIONS OF IMPACT



This guide by Fledgling Fund provides a list of suggested indicators for each of these five categories. For example, 'increased public awareness' can be measured by audience size, press coverage and audience diversity. 'Increased public engagement' can be measured by website hits, participation in online discussions, and commentaries and response letters. 'Stronger social movement' can be measured by the number of advocacy organisations making use of the documentary, the screenings with influential and decision-makers, and the film’s longevity.

Also useful is the Impact Playbook developed by the Fledgling Fund, Harmony Institute and Bay Area Video Coalition. This brief guide seeks to identify best practices for Impact Assessment for documentary media.

It usefully suggests that the measurement of impact should be about the measurement of change and that a project should define social change goals at the early stages of a project, setting measurable metrics for each (see Image 1). Once goals and indicators are defined, the Impact Playbook suggests that impact evaluation is then about measuring to what extent these goals and indicators are met.

Figure 1: Fledgling Fund's five dimensions of social impact

Broad Goal	Possible Metrics
"Reframe attitudes toward immigration to recognize the humanity of immigrants and awareness of a shared immigrant past"	Identifying changes in language describing immigration on social media platforms.
	Increased participation in or donations to partner or aligned nonprofit organizations.
	Content analysis of user-generated content to identify attitude shifts.

Figure 2: Goals and Metrics, from the Impact Playbook

While the Impact Playbook provides a usefully simplified impact evaluation framework for defining and measuring impact, it does not answer important questions about unintended consequences or consider baseline goals that perhaps every project should consider (or be encouraged to consider) in the design and evaluation process. (For example, using a 'do no harm approach' or 'applying core ethical principles' or 'being accountable to the communities you want to support'.)

The Impact Playbook is not a comprehensive impact evaluation toolkit; rather it is a starting guide that helps to frame how to think about and design impact when creating social documentary video. It is written and designed in a very accessible way.

A third additional useful approach to framing and measuring impact has been taken by Johanna Blakeley, who presents here her own survey technique for examining the behaviour change that can be attributed to the social documentary Food, Inc.

Blakeley's approach was designed to try and disentangle change impacts so she could identify those that specifically relate to watching the Food Inc film. Her survey asks people to respond to related issues, without focusing on the film, only asking respondents, late in the list of questions, if they had seen Food Inc. From this data, she obtained the key characteristics of the type of person with a high propensity to see Food Inc.

Blakely then examined the full data set of people with such characteristics, and compared the people who had seen the film with those individuals who had the same high-propensity characteristics but who had not seen the film. By doing this she was able to compare similar groups of people, rather than a general population, so she could compare whether there were differences in those who saw the film and those who did not, based on a pool of extremely similar people.

We had some questions regarding methodology and attempted several times to contact Blakely in the research process, but did not receive a response. In any case, this survey approach is very specific to documentary video and to an approach focused on individual behaviour change and it may therefore have limited value to most Video for Change practitioners.

Fourth, is a guide for storytelling and social change by Working Narratives , which seeks to explain 'narrative strategies' – strategies that use storytelling to advance social change. This guide is designed for grant-makers but has wider relevance. For example, the guide sets out four core uses of stories when trying to advance social change objectives (figure 3)



Figure 3: Working Narratives four uses of stories

Additionally, the Working Narratives guide provides six broad categories of change that a story may contribute to: discourse (changing the language and framing used to talk about an issue); attitudes (changing the way people think and feel); capacity (increasing people's capabilities people to create change); action (specific changes such as the way people vote, increasing donating or volunteering, attendance at a protest); policies (whether corporate, government or other entities).

This list of 'ways to create change is almost identical to that which was created by us prior to finding this resource. (See Appendix 2) The Working Narratives guide does not provide a specific framework for evaluation and it suggests that 'the mechanisms of evaluation' should depend on the type of impact.

Fifth, we believe that Video Volunteer's system and approach for tracking and measuring impact should be examined in the next stage of this project. Video Volunteers have two Impacts Managers whose job it is to identify and support impact around videos and to track, document and measure impact, and they are planning on hiring seven more this year, for each of the seven states where they are starting community video hubs.

They have developed a list of around 50 indicators that they use to capture impact (for individual videos) and to identify the possible causes for it. The Community Correspondents are also given incentives to create videos that show impact when they can identify it. This approach is very specific to Video Volunteer's model and needs, but should be more carefully examined to understand what is working well and if the approach is adaptable/replicable or if there are key lessons to be learnt.

Sixth, in 2006 WITNESS developed their own 'Performance Dashboard' to help them assess the impact of their work. The dashboard combines more traditional audience metrics – such as sales and licensing numbers, email subscriptions, blog statistics – with more nuanced data, including a timeline indicating progress of core partnerships, participant feedback and descriptive project analysis.

The dashboard reports are published twice per year on the WITNESS website. In addition to this, WITNESS created a 'Video Advocacy Toolkit' in 2009 to support the work of partners and "to help human rights defenders and activists evaluate whether video is right for their campaign" and to "help ... plan and create an effective and powerful advocacy video". This toolkit should be examined and discussed in detail with WITNESS to understand what can be learnt from the experience of designing this toolkit, testing it and from its uptake and use.

Finally, from our interview with Fledgling Fund, we have learnt that they have created a "backend for their grantees" (which is coupled with social media analytics system). This backend system is designed to track and document impact. It should be said that, in some ways, it is much 'easier' for Fledgling Fund to create such a backend because they have very distinct and clear parameters about how you move from a documentary film to impact. This means their backend really needs to focus on these limited and defined parameters. At the same time they told us that their backend does allow grantees to define their own milestones. The system then tracks these milestones and follows up with grantees to ask what happened. From our understanding, this system also generates reports that document milestone progress.

Because Video for Change is a more open and flexible concept (than is 'social documentary', which is the focus of Fledgling), doing something similar to this would likely be more challenging (and very different), but potentially very useful. It would be useful to see this Fledgling backend in the next stage of this project to better assess how it works and also to find out from grantees how useful they find it (as opposed to their donor agency).

Our understanding is that this backend system is used in tandem to Sparkwise (or potentially Sparkwise has been customised for Fledgling), a web-based metrics dashboard system that collects, aggregates and visualises online 'hits', 'views' and 'interactions' while also allowing offline metrics/impacts to be integrated. The Fledgling Fund and Sparkwise systems should also be examined to consider if it may be useful, or if aspects of the design may be useful.

One way forward, after deciding key approaches that should be included under the Video for Change umbrella, may be to map the models for change that these different approaches use or may use. (See Appendix 2 for preliminary list.) Potentially, the simple presentation of a diverse number of change agendas/models could provide an early step in an impact design and evaluation framework/toolkit.

For example, the framework could ask, do you want to: develop a group/movement; create a policy or legal change; change public discourse on an issue? Each model for change could then present a range of suggested indicators (providing flexibility for people to create their own). At the same time, some over-arching core principles could be integrated across all change models that take into account human rights do-no-harm and ethical principles.

However, this would take some extra thought and planning and analysis since there are many different theories and models for understanding social change. In the first instance, a detailed mapping of current useful frameworks/systems would be very beneficial.

### Recommendation 3

Consider a more specific and focused literature review that looks at possible approaches for designing for and measuring social change impact that would be relevant to Video for Change initiatives. It may help to be clearer first about the path forward for doing this. For example, ‘we want to start with helping organizations define their theory and or model/s for contributing to change and work from there’; ‘we want to consider pre-existing and established social change models and principles’; ‘we want the organization to define their own indicators based on their own defined goals’; ‘we want to provide options for indicators’; ‘we want to examine appropriate tools that may be useful for measuring impact online’. This clearer focus would allow for some discussion about possible routes forward and would help ensure a more specific and usable literature review is carried out in the second stage of this project.

Carry out a detailed assesment and mapping of existing evaluation frameworks and systems that may be useful/relevant, potentially drawing from and/or extending the list we have provided under this key finding.

<sup>5</sup> Barrett, D., & Leddy, S. (2008). Assessing Creative Media’s Social Impact. Fledgling Fund. Available at: <http://www.thefledglingfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Impact-Paper.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Impact Playbook: Best Practices for Understanding the Impact of Media.” Harmony Institute. 2013. Available at: [http://harmony-institute.org/docs/BI\\_BAVC\\_Impact\\_Playbook.pdf](http://harmony-institute.org/docs/BI_BAVC_Impact_Playbook.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Joanna Blakely TED talk: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pb0FZPzzWuk>

<sup>8</sup> VanDeCarr, P. (2013). Storytelling and Social Change: A Strategy Guide for Grantmakers. Working Narratives

<sup>9</sup> MediaShift. ‘Witness Creates Sophisticated Tool for Measuring Impact. 2010. Available at: <http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2010/03/witness-creates-sophisticated-evaluation-tools-for-video-impact070/>

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.witness.org/about-us/annual-reports>

<sup>11</sup> See <http://sparkwi.se/>

## Finding 4: There is a desire to share knowledge and experiences of creating impact via Video for Change initiatives

Most of the interviewees from the video4change Network told us that they wanted to learn about or learn from the experiences of other Video for Change practitioners. In many cases we were surprised that even within the video4change Network there was a lack of knowledge about the approaches/models/projects of other organisations or in-depth knowledge about the guides/toolkits they have created.

The following quote indicates a shared desire to find new ways to learn from one another, though in most cases this desire was secondary to wanting to understand what was working and what was not working in their own projects or organisations:

“We’d like greater discussion between v4c members because we’d like to learn from other organisations what is working well...the difficulty may be getting the specific context and generalising it. Video Volunteers does a lot of impact measurement, but I’d bet on the surface, it’s very related to their specific work in India. For me, how do we draw out the general maxims, the top level of what people are doing without getting into the very specifics...I do think there’s a lot of time wasted reinventing the wheel or trying to come up with something when there’s other great stuff already out there.”

“I believe that there’s a big role for standardisation and building methodologies together. I know that [name] developed our work completely alone, and that it’s a model that’s very unique and not necessarily useful in other areas - but I also know that in some aspects we could have learned tons if we were in contact with other orgs from the beginning, from the tech aspect, from the archiving aspect, from the training aspect, and in many other respects.”

A related issue noted by a number of interviewees is about the challenge of research capacity:

“Right now in our trainings we notice that research capacity is very much below average, a lot of these organisations...don’t have the capacity to do qualitative or quantitative research that respects data integrity and certain methodologies.”

“The other problem with us measuring impact as a small organisation is just capacity: there is specific knowledge involved in doing this...I feel I need a model so I can say, ‘yes I can see how we can do this [measure impact]’.”

It currently is not clear how much the video4change Network want to interact or share knowledge and experiences about designing for and measuring impact. There has been some attempt to do this through the development of v4c.org and use of the #video4change Twitter hashtag (used by around 30 different users in the past month).

If sharing knowledge about Video for Change and impact is a shared desire and is considered an appropriate way to spend future project resources, it may be worthwhile building a space (perhaps within v4c.org) that will facilitate the sharing of 'impact evaluation' experiences of the network members, or of Video for Change practitioners more broadly. This may enable the network to organically and collaboratively build resources, guides, case studies and other tools that will 'standardise' the impact evaluation work that they are doing.

At the same time, based on the first stage of this project, we would suggest the video4change Network consider which structures, methods and media for knowledge sharing are likely to be popularised, usable, sustainable and useful to the network and to reflect on what has not worked well with efforts to share knowledge to-date.

### Recommendation 4

Assess the kind/s of communication and knowledge-sharing about impact that is desired among the video4change network.

Test out different forms of communication about impact and reflect on participation, uptake and use to ensure that resources are not wasted and the most relevant and usable approaches for knowledge sharing are adopted.

<sup>12</sup> This is a very rough and quick estimate gauged only by search for the hashtag and doing a manual count; this does not include retweets.

## About this research

This research was commissioned by the video4changeNetwork (<https://www.v4c.org/>). The research was led by Tanya Notley from the University of Western Sydney. It was primarily supported by Cheekay Cinco and Andrew Lowenthal from EngageMedia and by Julie Fischer, Becky Hurwitz and Sasha Constanza-Schock from the MIT Centre for Civic Media and Open Documentary Lab. Extensive research inputs and feedback were also provided by Jessica Mayberry (Video Volunteers), Yoav Gross (B'Tselem) and Sam Gregory (WITNESS). All of the above-mentioned also provided inputs via a Google Hangout discussion about this research along with Ben Foley (The Organization for Visual Progression). This report has been authored by Tanya Notley.

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## Appendix 1: List of Interviewees

### **video4change Network organisational case studies**

01. EngageMedia
02. Video Volunteers
03. WITNESS
04. SocialTIC
05. Small World News
06. Organization for Visual Progression (OVP)
07. InsightShare
08. B'Tselem

### **Foundations that fund some V4C organisations**

07. Oak Foundation
08. Fledgling Fund

## Appendix 2: In what ways can video create change?

Below is a preliminary list of the ways video can directly contribute to creating change. Here, I have focused on desired change outcomes rather than strategic efforts toward change. Therefore, mobilising people to phone/email and politician is a means to an end (policy change) and is not included here. Instead, what is featured here is the actual change (policy change/legal change etc).

A more extended analysis may consider all the ways video can be used to achieve each 'type' of social change. I use the term target audience to refer to people who can make desired change outcomes and participant communities to refer to people who can influence target audiences or through the collection of evidence.

This list is meant for discussion purposes only and to address finding two in this report, which suggests a new approach is required to measure the impact of Video for Change initiatives; one way forward may be to develop a framework based on approaches to creating change.

### **By creating a new group or activating an existing movement:**

- This can address a change pre-condition by creating the necessary resources to track, monitor and respond to a situation

### **By creating behaviour/attitude change:**

- Change individual or collective attitudes and behaviours

### **By changing the way an issue is framed (discourse):**

- Changing the way certain groups are represented in the media and/or public sphere
- Changing discourse (real or perceived) on an issue

### **By developing capacities:**

- Providing video-production and distribution knowledge/skills capacities of participant or affected communities
- Allowing content (and this information/knowledge) to move across language barriers through translation/subtitling
- Supporting actors to collaborate on developing/implementing/evaluating their own social change agendas
- Supporting organisations to critically reflect on and further develop their models for doing Video for Change

### **By changing policies and laws:**

- Changing government, police, military or corporate policies
- Changing the law

### **By changing practices**

- Changing the practices of companies or institutions
- Changing practices in private spaces