OUR STORY

A PARTICIPATORY VIDEO MONITORING PROCESS USING "OUR STORY" IN INDONESIA AND NAMIBIA

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Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the authors' organizations.

Introduction

Video has proved to be a useful data collection tool to engage communities and to capture their feedback on the impact of projects and programmes. In an effort to develop an inclusive and easy to use approach to monitoring projects, IFRC's PMER Unit in Geneva, in cooperation with Newcastle University's Open Lab piloted an initiative using a mobile video application (app) called Our Story.

Coupled with the app, a Most Significant Change(1) approach was facilitated with the communities of Tumbit Melayu (Indonesia) and Blikkiesdorp (Namibia) in 2017-18. Stories were planned, collected, directed and edited by the elderly, men, women and the youth on a water, sanitation and hygiene promotion project (Indonesia), and on an HIV/AIDS Orphan and Vulnerable Children's project (Namibia).

The costs of these pilots were minimal, as the app allows video data collection to be done without the need of external consultants or expensive equipment. It therefore would offer an inexpensive and self-sustainable model for the Movement.

Through this joint collaboration, the authors wanted to look at novel approaches that would use the community's voice and the stories that they wanted to tell, to influence Movement programming. Community engagement and feedback within the context of monitoring and evaluation can be a complex process in view of the numerous stakeholders involved, organizational processes, resources available and project/programme deadlines. This report explores innovative ways to approach this dilemma by focusing on a process and a mobile app which can be easily accessed/used at no cost by different stakeholders and in different field contexts with varying wifi connectivity. Indonesia and Namibia were selected as pilot countries in order to test the approach and the tool with the communities.

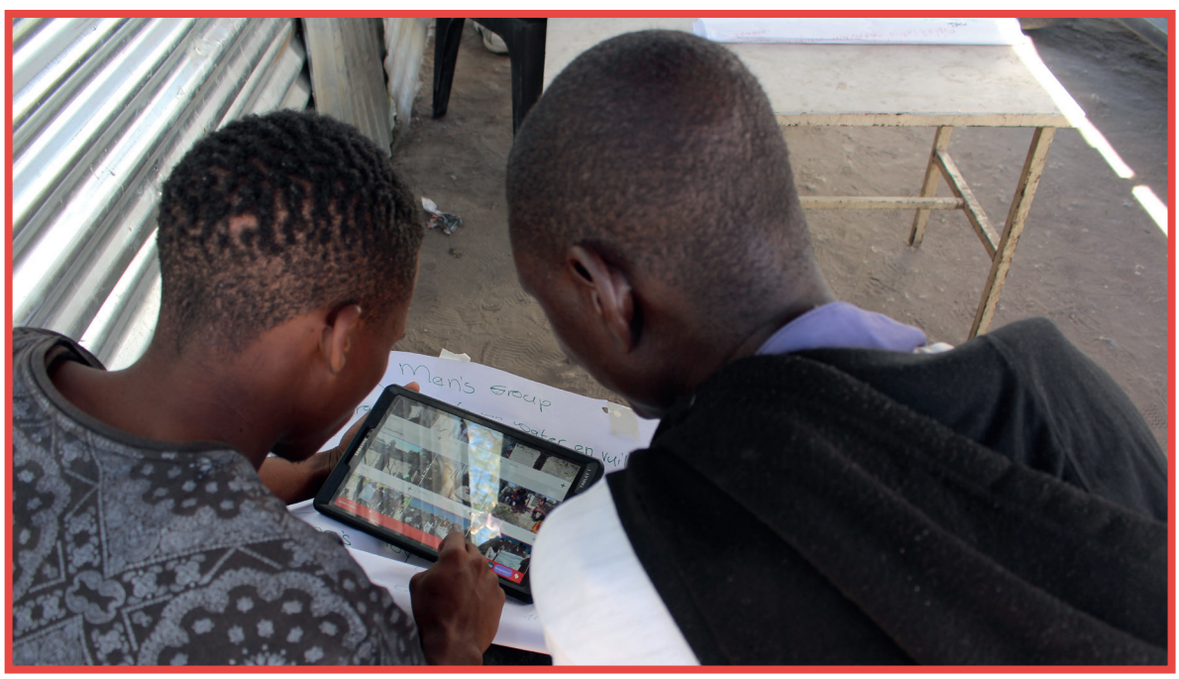
An example screenshot of how the app illustrates necessary shots for the user

To test this approach, we selected **Indonesia** and **Namibia** so as to gain an understanding of challenges that need to be overcome in designing Our Story.

The BIG Picture:
A Participatory Video Monitoring Process Using Our Story

Scoping	Community Selection Topic Selection	Identify the topic, project and the target groups about which community feedback is required and which would also contribute to learning in the region.	2 Months	Skype
Planning	Offsite planning → Onsite Planning	This stage consists of things the team planned before arriving on location. **Offsite planning:** consisted of things the team planned before arriving on location (budget, local teams, volunteer, interpreter, transport etc). **Sampling method:** used an onsite representative random sampling. **Onsite Planning:** Introduction meetings with the National Society (HQ, branch, volunteers); community leaders and at times government representatives.	3 weeks	Skype/ Face to face meetings
Story Creation	MSC → Ideation	The MSC methodology is used to help the participants identify their Most Significant Stories at both the community and individual group level. In this phase, the groups will use flipchart paper, group conversations etc. to carry out their story creations.	1-2 days	Pen/Paper
Gathering Stories	Review ↕ Capture	Participants will use their phones/tablets to capture key footage for their story. The ongoing review process helps them clarify and identify what they would like to include in their story.	1-2 days	Our Story App microphones, phones/tablets
Story editing	Group Editing Review Capture	Participants can sift through clips to identify those they would like to use. Each group can then use their device to identify, edit and put together the clips that they would want to use in their final video story.	1 day	Our Story App/ Laptop
Presentation	Reps make the video	In this stage, the representatives from each group liaise with each other and shape their final video, adding a title, soundtrack and credits.	1 day	Laptop
Presentation	Presenting videos to the community	Each participating group presents their video stories back to their community. It is an opportunity for community sharing, discussions and recommendations on the project/programme.	1 day	Laptop/ Projector
Presentation	Analysis/ feedback	Before leaving the field, the localised videos are delivered to the community and the National Society will use it to share with other communities and within the National Society. The National Society and IFRC will also use the PVM videos to inform the project and to share/inform donors and other interested stakeholders.	1 day (or more)	Social Media/ YouTube

The timeframe may at times vary slightly depending upon the context and resources available


Men's Group


95
McQueen

Case Study 1: Indonesia

Background

In Indonesia, health problems related to unsafe water, poor sanitation, and hygiene still rank very high in both rural and urban areas. Based on a report on Indonesia's Basic Health Research conducted by the Ministry of Health in 2013, only 66.8 per cent of the population has access to improved or upgraded water facilities. This means that 33.2 per cent or around 84 million people do not have access to improved water facilities. In sanitation, the percentage is higher, where some 40.2 per cent do not have access to improved sanitation facilities. Lack of knowledge in hygienic behaviour by the communities and lack of access to improved water and sanitation facilities are two of the factors that contribute to this problem.

For this Participatory Video Monitoring (PVM) initiative, the focus was on a WASH project being implemented in the district of Berau. Through this pilot, IFRC hoped to find an easy-to-use monitoring tool which could be used by the communities to feedback on this project. Mobile phones were selected as they are now more easily affordable and accessible by communities, and new features allow for use beyond simple communication between two individuals or in a group. This is also in line with current PMER efforts to promote mobile phones/tablets for data collection. Open Lab's Our Story app was selected as participants could individually engage in the directing and editing of their story/ film from beginning to end using a smart phone or a tablet.

It was expected that through the community voices collected, this PVM could contribute useful information from different community representatives to the project's Outcome 1: The risk of water, sanitation and hygiene-related diseases are prevented/reduced in the target area. The disaggregated data collected through the stories would highlight any issues which needed to be addressed not only at the community level, but also amongst the targeted groups. If successful, the project could also contribute towards Goal 6 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aims to "ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all".

"During floods, all of the plants here drown... and our cattle cannot go to the mountains" - Men

The following three priority areas received the most mentions by the community: **Floods, Access to Water and Water/Sanitation Facilities**.

There was variation among the groups in terms of what each group discussed as part of their main stories:

- The Elderly talked about the water/sanitation facilities in the village and how they struggle to use them.
- The Men talked about livelihoods and how this was affected by floods.
- The Women described their day to day life in the community and their livelihoods.
- The Youth focused on the hygiene promotion education they had received through the Red Cross.

"I don't have a good toilet. If I want to defecate, I must dig and then bring water in a bucket to wash yourself and cover the hole again, everyday if you want to defecate. I hope that PMI can help us to provide good sanitation for all the community in Nasding village, Tumbit Melayu. I really hope we can get good toilets."
- Elderly

We are really grateful to PMI, now we know the steps to wash our hands properly. Thank you. They helped us to clean, so we know where we can throw our rubbish. When the rubbish has been collected, we can recycle or burn it, so the environment is clean, healthy - Youth

Case Study 2: Namibia

Background

The HIV/AIDS Orphans and Vulnerable Children's project being conducted in Otiozondjupa region was selected for this pilot since this project is in line with, and contributes to the IFRC Plan and Budget 2016 to 2020 (Area of Focus on Health and Livelihoods), and serves as a follow up to the Mobile Data Collection training which took place in Livingstone, Zambia in October 2017.

The Otjozondjupa region is located in central Namibia, and it borders the northwest district of Botswana. According to an IFRC report, due to various factors there has been a HIV/AIDS epidemic in this region. Since 2011, the Namibia Red Cross Society has been supporting orphans and vulnerable children and people living with HIV in the country through its Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Project.

Through the community voices collected, it was intended that this PVM contribute could contribute useful monitoring information, particularly to Outcome 1: "100 OVC in Otjozondjupa and 150 OVC in Zambezi and Otjozondjupa region are provided with psychosocial material and educational support through the OVC Kids Clubs."

"Instead of putting those taps, if everyone prepared CANS for water. You cannot see anymore water running away, those kind of things I can see that the government can do." - Youth

The following three priority areas received the most mentions by the community:
Water and Sanitation, Health and Education.

The following highlight the recommendations shared by the Blikkiesdorp community:

- The Elderly requested easier accessibility of elderly with disabilities to clean water and toilets in the community.
- The Men talked about their livelihoods and their need for tools such as a welding machine.
- The Women highlighted the water and sanitation challenges in the community and the risks to the spread of diseases.
- The Youth highlighted issues related to the safe access and management of clean water.

“The only thing I need is a toilet and taps ” - Elderly

“We are suffering with hunger, sometimes we sleep next to faeces and we need help from the Red Cross. We need help.” - Women

CONCLUSION

The participatory video monitoring process was carried out over a five-day period in both Indonesia and Namibia in coordination with the National Societies present on the ground.

In order to ensure sustainability of the initiative and to build capacity of IFRC region and/or National Societies, one member from PMER and one from IT always accompanied the initiative, and at times were joined by representatives from Community Engagement and Accountability.

The team also spent full days with the communities respecting the community and/or individual group's daily schedules and religious practices.

In Indonesia, the stories shared demonstrated that the community was aware of the water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH) activities being carried out by PMI. The level of WASH knowledge varied amongst the groups as evidenced by the stories, for example, from the elderly and the youth. It was apparent also that at times culture and gender also played a role, for example, with the elderly women preferring to defecate in private near their home, rather than using the family latrines which had been built for them nearby.

In Namibia, through the stories, it was apparent that the orphans and vulnerable children in the community did receive psychosocial, material and educational support; but that more support was needed in order to address the continued and unmet needs of OVC in the community, as well as to improve the current conditions of the school in Blikkiesdorp. The stories also highlighted that the community is aware of the importance of food safety and proper hygiene in preventing infections for those people living with HIV, and overall, for maintaining good community health in general.

In both Indonesia and Namibia, the stories were further supported by the various mentions and visuals of water, sanitation and hygiene challenges by all the groups in their final video stories.

Since the initiative, the participating IFRC regions and the National Societies have shared that they have used the PVM in the following ways:

- Debriefing within the programme to see how to address community recommendations.
- Feedback to donors
- Introduction of similar initiatives to new community recipients

LESSONS LEARNT

✓ Gatekeepers: Buy in and engagement from community members and relevant stakeholders is key in ensuring the ownership and the sustainability of new methods/tools.

✓ Respecting Local Culture: Part of this step is also understanding the culture of the community. In our case, the team was working with a Muslim community, and it was important to respect their cultural practices such as daily prayer times etc. There were also different target groups that had different schedules and this was also respected (women had household duties, children had school, men had jobs etc).

✓ Awareness: The timeline exercise and the Most Significant Change method set the scene and helped communities make the link between the daily activities which were taking place on the ground and the project.

✓ Familiarisation with participatory media: Some members of the community often pick up media skills much quicker than others, but when conducting familiarisation sessions together, the community can help teach each other and learn much more quickly as a result of the peer-learning and communal feedback element that happens. Also, this way of learning is much more enjoyable.

✓ Adapting technology to the local context: The Our Story app required little media knowledge and taught good film practice on-the-fly using visual prompts and "templates," removing the requirement for facilitators and/or community participants to have media training, and facilitating the capture process for when unexpected events arose. However, the app was "synced" with the Our Story server and this created challenges in the first deployment when connectivity failed forcing the team to manually upload videos from the capture devices and to carry out a traditional "facilitated" community editing using laptops and an Adobe editing programme.

✓ Gathering stories: The team found that many of the target groups after collecting their stories, realised that they needed to capture more footage (for background and/or scenery). In future initiatives, it would be helpful to include more systematically a structured 'content review' at the beginning of each session, whereby community members would watch their own and other videos produced by the groups to inform what they will shoot next.

LESSONS LEARNT

✓ Story Editing: The team found that some community members wanted to re-shoot particular clips and utilize the cheap clip-on mics that were provided to ensure that they had good sound quality in the recordings. Length of the clip-on mics is important as it allows the groups to have more flexibility when sharing their story and carrying out their activity.

✓ Capacity Building and Sustainability: The participatory video monitoring process itself also aimed to build capacity at all levels (IFRC Geneva/Region and National Society) and to incorporate elements of sustainability in order to ensure that this method can be used post departure of PVM for monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, a member from PMER and IT accompanied the team during the process.

✓ Innovation and Creativity: Many utilised innovative techniques in their capture. For instance, the youth created scripts using the flipchart paper which one member held up behind the camera, helping the person talking to the camera have access to a DIY 'teleprompter.'

FUTURE REFLECTIONS

The IFRC (a humanitarian organization) and Open Lab (a research institute) collaborated together on these pilots in Indonesia and Namibia. They pooled their expertise together to explore and develop a new tool/methods which could better address humanitarian/programming challenges through a joint partnership, and provide an easy to access tool for communities to feedback to projects/programmes.

Deployments have been planned for 2019 to assess the suitability of this tool for varying contexts (emergency)/audience (deaf community).

The team is currently working on a training package to accompany the process which is expected to be available for distribution in mid-2019.

LINKS - NAMIBIA

PLEASE CLICK THE IMAGE TO VIEW EACH VIDEO

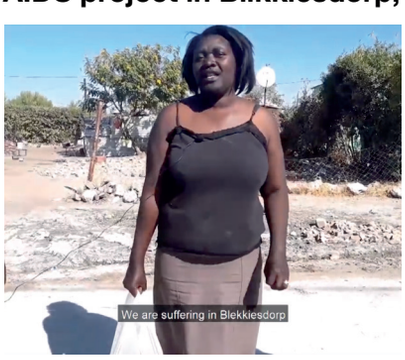
Our Story: Community's feedback on an HIV/AIDS project in Blikkiesdorp, Namibia

Our Story: Assisted Elderly's feedback on an HIV/AIDS project in Blikkiesdorp, Namibia

Our Story: Unassisted Elderly's feedback on an HIV/AIDS project in Blikkiesdorp, Namibia

Our Story: Assisted Women's feedback on an HIV/AIDS project in Blikkiesdorp, Namibia

Our Story: Unassisted Women's feedback on an HIV/AIDS project in Blikkiesdorp, Namibia



Our Story: Unassisted Men's feedback on an HIV/AIDS project in Blikkiesdorp, Namibia

Our Story: Assisted Youth's feedback on an HIV/AIDS project in Blikkiesdorp, Namibia

Our Story: Unassisted Youth's feedback on an HIV/AIDS project in Blikkiesdorp, Namibia

LINKS - INDONESIA

Our Story: Youth's feedback on a WASH project in Berau, Indonesia

Our Story: Women's feedback on a WASH project in Berau, Indonesia

Our Story: Men's feedback on a WASH project in Berau, Indonesia

Our Story: Elderly's feedback on a WASH project in Berau, Indonesia

Our Story: Community's feedback on a WASH project in Berau, Indonesia

We invite comments and feeback from our readers

Our Story is an evaluation workflow being developed in collaboration with the following international partners:

Open Lab at Newcastle University

Open Lab (openlab.ncl.ac.uk) is a research group within the School of Computing at Newcastle University. They specialize in doing Human-Computer Interaction research, with a particular emphasis on Digital Civics. Digital Civics investigates how technologies can be designed for (and by) local communities, with an emphasis on participatory and bottom-up approaches to design and innovation.

Since its founding in 2008, Open Lab has been involved in digital initiatives working with communities in the UK, India, Lebanon, Greece, Tanzania etc. and has extensive experience in designing Participatory Video frameworks and tools.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Scocieties (ifrc.org) is the world's largest humanitarian network that reaches 150 million people in 190 National Societies through the work of over 17 million volunteers. The IFRC carries out relief operations to assist victims of natural and man-made disasters, and combines this with development work to strengthen the capacities of its member National Societies.

At IFRC, monitoring and evaluation is not just a principle, but a practice. The PMER team actively strives to build PMER capacity throughout the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and works towards further increasing the voice of the communities into the organization's programmatic work through the use of innovative and participatory tools/ methods in monitoring and evaluation.

More information can be found on:
https://ifrc.ourstory.video

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