

Histórias do Coração Verde

Stories from the Green Heart



Approaches to participatory climate action: collaborative video "Toolkit"

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ACRAMOSO
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Introduction

Stories from the Green Heart of Portugal was a project designed to stimulate and mobilise people to examine the impact of climate change on their lives. Located in the centre of Portugal, taking an intergenerational approach and using participatory methods to listen to the voices of those whose lives and livelihoods were most affected by the fires of 2017 'Green Heart' explored both causes and solutions with the intention of encouraging collective climate action initiatives to mitigate fire risk for the future.

This toolkit is designed to help other communities to use these tools to stimulate community engagement for climate action or other community-based initiatives.



What is collaborative video-making?

Collaborative video-making, sometimes known as participatory video, is a visual media tool based on facilitated techniques in which small groups of people collaborate in exploring issues that are important to them in their communities. Participatory video has evolved in settings around the world over the past 50 years, with a growing community of practice. It is recognised as a tool for positive social change and for building a sense of inclusion and confidence.

The method is 'learning by doing' and peer to peer experiential collaboration. The videos produced are not the only 'end product'. They provide the means to co-generate knowledge and potential solutions to the challenges faced in different community settings. The videos are planned, filmed and edited by participants, ensuring that they have control over the whole process and that their unfiltered voices are heard by key audiences.

Finding Partners

It is important to find the right local partners to work with so that you can reach the right participants and have access to audiences that include not only community members, but also community leaders, activists, educators and decision makers. We worked closely with the Associations of the villages of Macieira and Amioso, as well as with Sertã Município and the Freguesias of Troviscal and Sertã and the Sertã secondary school.



Presenting to camera training in Macieira

Recruiting participants

Key to recruitment of participants is gaining the trust of local people. In the case of 'Coração Verde', one of the two facilitators lived in Macieira and had experienced the impact of the 2017 fires. The year before developing this project, the two facilitators ran a voluntary pilot project to test whether there was an appetite to participate in storytelling and in video production. This made recruitment easier, although the key challenge for Coração Verde was the lack of many young people living in the villages. A core group of young people living in Macieira, but at school in Sertã really helped to mobilise other young people to take part and put the leadership of the project equally in their hands. For the production participants - mainly older people living in the villages - they were already 'warm' to the process, making it easier for the young people who would lead on the production to approach potential interviewees and storytellers.

Equipment

We used iPads with the filming app 'Filmic Pro', with fluid head tripods and a tripod mount which also facilitated hand-held filming. We also used mobile phones, which is probably the most accessible equipment. Most importantly, we used tie-clip or 'lavalier' style microphones, which can work via a cable, or via Bluetooth. Sound quality for interviews and storytelling is the most important element, as poor sound can make an otherwise visually pleasing video unwatchable.

Training workshops

Introduction

To promote sharing of knowledge amongst everyone in the group, to develop trust and a collective approach we use a combination of visualisation methods and interactive learning approaches.

By using multi-coloured paper cards or sticky notes of different shapes and sizes, participants can express their ideas in diagrams, symbols, drawings and written ideas and share them with the whole group.

The following activities take place over a three day period. The workshop should take place in a flexible space with walls that you can use for flip charts and sharing learning. As well as the production equipment, you need coloured sticky notes or cards and masking tape and a selection of marker pens.

These activities are designed to build teamwork, technical, topic exploration and storytelling skills.

We use the principle 'Each One, Teach One'. This originates from an African proverb that originated in the United States during slavery, when Africans were denied education. When someone learned how to read or write, it became their responsibility to teach someone else. The idea is to spread knowledge for the betterment of your community.



Getting to know the filming equipment
Macieira, August 2024

Day One Activities

Activity	Instructions
Welcome circle	Everyone sits in a circle. Introduce yourself (including facilitators) by saying your name, where you live, one thing you would like the group to know about you and finally, finish by doing the actions of something you like doing.
Introduction to the training	Facilitators explain the aims of the training and how it will be used. Aims of the training and how it will be used. Introduce the idea 'each one teach one'
Group agreement	Use a flip chart to make a collective agreement – a set of principles – which we will use to work together. The group suggest 'rules' such as 'show respect', 'listen deeply', 'mobile phones off during the training exercises. We also add the phrase 'mistakes are great!' as this is how we learn! Once the 'rules' are written on the flip chart, each member of the group signs and stick to the wall.
Name game	<p>This exercise introduces the filming equipment.</p> <p>The group sits in a circle. One person has the camera/phone/iPad. The person next to them is in charge of sound, so they plug in the microphone to the camera, and attach the microphone to the person sitting opposite. They also wear the headphones to monitor the sound. The facilitator shows the person with the camera how to launch the filming app and begin filming. The person wearing the microphone will wait for the camera person to tell them to begin. They say their name and answer the question "If I were an animal what would I be, and why?" Then the person with the camera stops recording and turns it off. They pass it to the next person and show them how to switch on and start recording. The person with the headphones removes the microphone and shows the person next to them what to do. Then repeat until everyone in the circle has recorded their answer and has done both production roles.</p> <p>Playback – preferably on a large screen.</p> <p>Discuss framing, audio, lighting.</p> <p>Ask: How did it feel to see yourself on camera? Anything you would do differently?</p> <p>Capture technical learning on sticky notes and stick to a flip chart on the wall.</p>



Group Agreement and sharing learning

Shot types quiz and challenge

In two or three groups draw the main shot types as you think they should be shown in the frame (Close up, mid shot, long shot etc). Present back and discuss. Choose the most accurate and put on the wall for reference. Each group prepare and film a sequence that uses every shot type at least once. Take turns in all roles.

Playback and discuss:

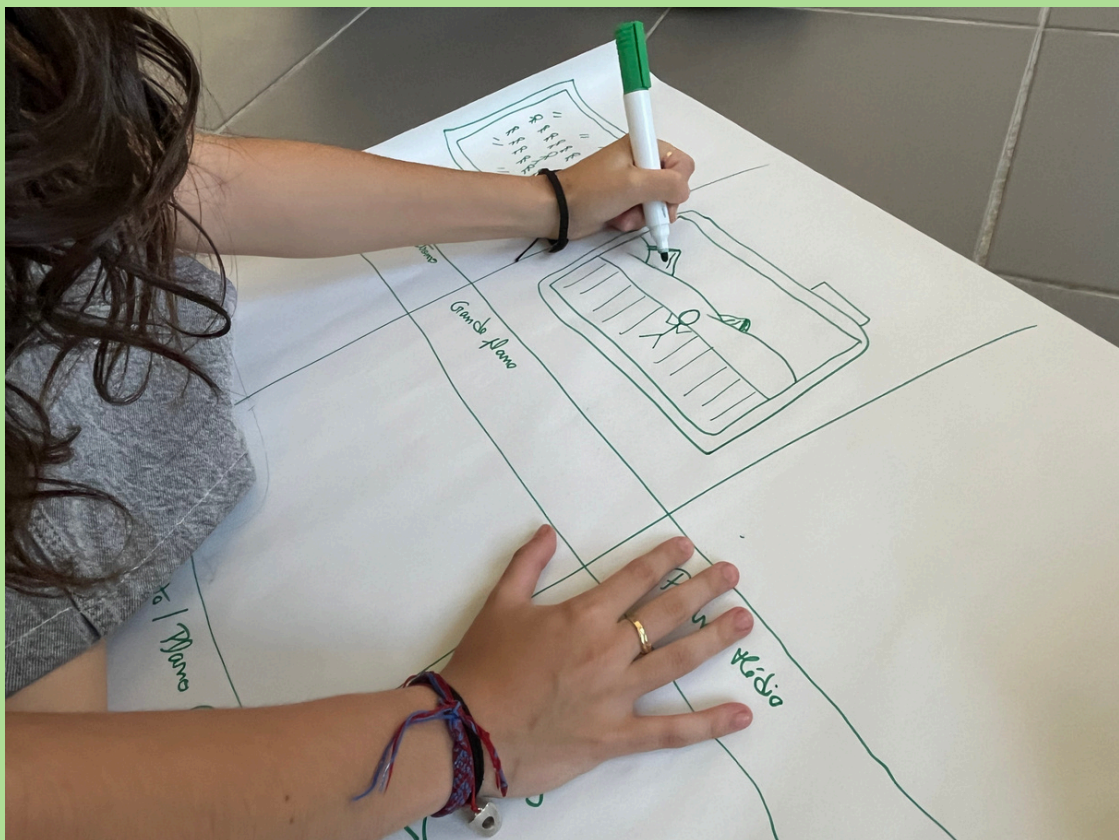
- What were you trying to show?
- Did you achieve your aims?
- How was it working together?
- Did everyone have a turn with the equipment?
- What did you like about the other team's video?
- What do you think they were trying to show/present
- What would you do differently next time?

Case Study

Watch the video made in 2018 after the 2017 wildfires. What did you like about it? What do you think could be improved? Are the issues the same in that region or different? What types of storytelling were used? Who was in the film and why were they chosen?

[Youth Voices to Prevent Wildfires](#)

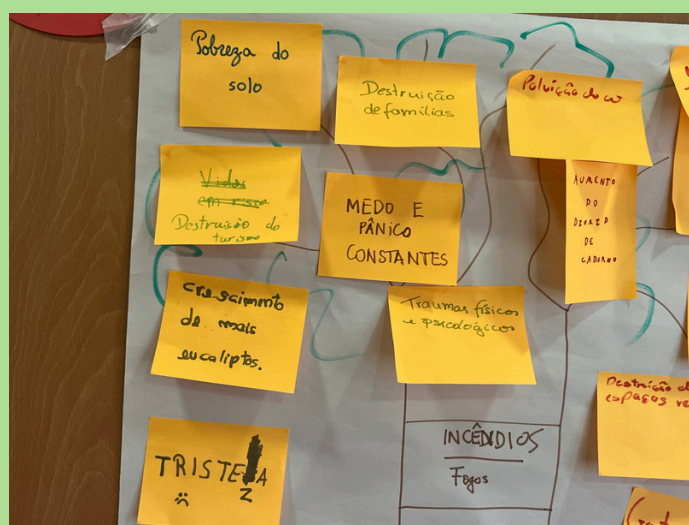
Comic Strip and Storyboarding	Use only images to tell a story without any words. Think about the different shot types. Plan using a storyboard. Use between 5 and 10 shots. Film and then review - technical quality (lighting, framing etc) Did you manage to communicate the story without any words? How could you improve?
Present your location	In 10 shots, present the key sights of the place where you are doing the training.
'Flip flash evaluation	Each person takes a moment to write on a card three things they have learned today. Read out to the group and stick to the learning wall.
Preparation for Day Two	Ask each person to bring an object to the workshop that means something special to them.



Shot Types Quiz

Day Two Activities

Activity	Instructions
Recap	Ask the group to recap the learning from the first day.
Show and Tell	Each person in the group will present their special object to camera, using tripod and mic. Playback. Reflect on technical aspects (framing, light, audio quality). Do you need additional shots? Capture learning on sticky notes and add to the learning wall.
Positive and negative storytelling	In two teams, make a short video in which one team presents the local area/environment as a wonderful and happy place to be. The other presents the area in a negative light. Use different shot types. Use up to 8 shots. Playback. Compare the two sequences. What choices were made to show positive and negative aspects? What worked? What would you do differently? Capture learning on sticky notes
Topic Exploration - Problem Tree/Solution Tree	Agree on a climate-action related topic. Draw a tree on a flip chart. Identify the problem and write this on the trunk of the tree. Then discuss the causes of the problem and write these down on the roots of the tree. Write the effects of the causes on the branches of the tree. Draw another tree on a flip chart. This time the roots are the solutions to the problem and the branches are showing the impact of the solutions.



Problem Tree

Statements to Camera	<p>Each person writes a topic related to climate action on a piece of paper and put into a box. Each person takes a topic out of the box and creates a statement. Taking turns on camera, sound and presenting, each person records their statement to camera. Playback and discuss technical issues such as framing, lighting, sound quality. Discuss the impact of making a statement to camera.</p>
Interviews	<p>Using the Problem Tree/Solution tree for inspiration, design 2 or 3 interview questions. Review the questions. Make sure you ask 'open questions'. Who are the questions aimed at?</p> <p>Practice: How would you approach a person to ask them to be interviewed?</p> <p>One member of the group is the interviewer, another the interviewee and the remaining are operating the camera and monitoring the sound. Where should the interviewer stand for good eye position of interviewee in the frame.</p> <p>Review technical and content and capture learning on sticky notes.</p>
Practice Interviews	<p>Decide two or three interview questions - or re-use the questions from the interview exercise.</p> <p>In 2 or 3 teams if possible, approach 3 different community members on location to be interviewed. Take turns in the different roles. Check your framing, check the height of your camera - are your interviewees sitting or standing - so where should you position your tripod and camera?</p> <p>Playback - discuss technical quality of the interviews and the effectiveness of the questions to get interesting answers.</p> <p>Capture learning on sticky notes.</p>
Cutaways	<p>Review the interviews again. What illustrative shots ('cutaways') would enhance the interviews to make them clearer and more visually interesting? Decide 3-6 cutaways per interview. Film them and review. Keep them for editing workshop.</p>

Day Three Activities

Activity	Instructions
Recap	Ask the group to recap the learning from the first day.
Vox Pops	Vox populi' - voice of the people. Asking members of the public for their opinions. Short interviews using only one question to get different responses to the same question on climate change/climate action based on problem/solution trees.. Make sure to get consent from everyone interviewed, either written or video consent. How will you approach members of the public? Where would be the best place to gather diverse perspectives? How will you explain what you are doing to those you're approaching? Review for content and for technical quality.
Audience pathway	How will we take our audience through the 'story' behind the video. How will the video begin? Presenter? Shots of the city with voice over? Any material available (photos/newspapers etc) perhaps in the local library? How will you link the sections of the video? One presenter, or all of you taking turns? Who will you interview? Will you use vox pops?
Plan the story circles and the collaborative community video production	When you have decided the 'audience pathway', decide who you will interview and how you will get in touch with them to organise appointments for filming. Plan the Story Circle events, the production days and the logistics (locations, availability of participants, refreshments for participants, etc).



Practicing Statements to Camera

Story Circle



Story Circle in Amioso - September 2024

The Story Circle brings the newly trained participatory video team together with community members to share their experiences and tell their stories. We ran story circles in Macieira at the village cafe and in Amioso at the Associação. The team asked two questions:

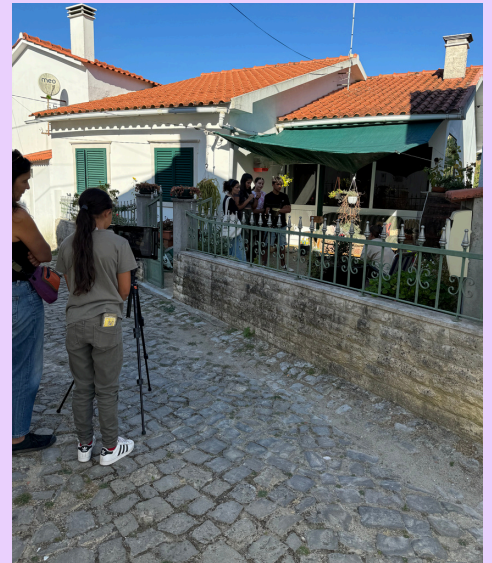
What is your experience of the wild fires?
What solutions would you suggest for preventing the wild fires?

We recorded each person's testimony to understand what stories there were to tell. A convivial lunch followed and arrangements were made to record interviews in the village.

The footage from the story circles was not used in the final films but valuable insights were captured.

Production

Interviews and cutaways in
Macieira, Amioso and Sertã



Editing Workshops



The first step is to review and log all of the clips taken in each of the three locations.

Make a note of technical quality:

- How is the framing?
- How is the lighting?
- Sound quality - voices are clear? Are there background noises that could be distracting.
- Discard any clips that are not useable.
- Review original 'Audience Pathway' and decide on the order of the main elements of the video.
- Identify cutaways to illustrate interview or other spoken material - do you have enough cutaway material? Do you need to film more?
- How will you begin and end your film? We recorded community members singing songs to use as an 'intro' and 'outro' sound-track.
- Use an editing programme - we used iMovie, but there are many others available for computers, tablets or mobile phones - to assemble a 'rough cut'
- Review rough cut together - decide on any final changes.

Community Screenings

Community screenings were hosted by the Associação Macieira and Acramioso Amioso - the cultural and social association of Amioso. The young people rehearsed introducing the screening sessions at each location, explaining the project, their experience and presenting the rough cuts for discussion with the audience. They explained that the films were not the final version - but that they were presenting them for feedback and to discuss the content so that suggestions could be included in the final versions.

Once the films had been shown, the group invited feedback from the audience and enabled a discussion to take place about the topic - the effects of wildfire, the causes and what could be done to address this annual problem.

After the screening refreshments were provided for all - very important!

This screening is an important part of the process, as it involves not only the participants, but a wider audience from the community, family, friends, local decision makers, to take part in discussion and engage in future potential activities to effect positive change.

It is important to try to secure wider coverage of these events, sharing with local media (radio, press) and other digital means such as the local authority website.

We were fortunate to gain coverage from the national news broadcaster, RTP, at the Macieira screening.



Final Screening Event

After the community screenings the rough cuts were re-edited to produce the final three films and a public event organised at the Casa de Espectáculos e da Cultura in Sertã. Everyone who took part in the making of the films was invited, plus wider audiences from the community, other local groups and activists with an interest in climate action and the prevention of wildfires, forestry and environmental experts and local decision-makers including the president of the Municipality. The event was introduced with a presentation by the Municipality and the films and a description of their experience of the process were presented by the young people. Following the films a panel including the two facilitators, the President of the Associação Macieira and a forestry engineer who had participated in one of the films. The discussion with the audience following the screenings and presentations provided a rich space in which communities could connect with each other and with decision makers and policy makers providing a great opportunity to foster future partnerships and collaborations as well as motivating collaboration for positive change.



**This toolkit was created by
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