



wave

# **Videoblogger Toolkit 2010**

## Chapter 1 – Ideating

You may think of an idea based on the themes suggested by WAVE (see below) or on your own. Here are the monthly themes suggested for the pilot term of 9 months in 2010:

Jan – Profile videos of WAVE participants

Feb – Indigenous Arts/ Culture/ Traditions/ Superstitions

Mar – Stories of Women and Positive Social Change

April – The Environment (including ancient wisdom, traditional approaches to sustainability)

May – India: Democracy/ Citizenship/ National Integration/History and Heritage/Future Vision

June – Health (especially reproductive/ mental health, millennium development goals or alternative holistic health)

July – Livelihood/Innovation/ Traditional Occupations/Social Entrepreneurship/ Migration /Child Labour

Aug – Education (including access, efficacy in finding jobs, teaching citizenship, morality, creativity, sex education)

Sept – Legality/ Judicial system (including access to legal help, and efficacy)/ Human Rights issues.

Oct – Identity and Change (traditional to modern or orthodox to liberal eg. in the social institution of marriage)

Once you have an idea, it must be researched either online, speaking to people on the phone or other means. This will help you reach the core message that you want to communicate through your video to your viewers. Many people choose to skip this step in a rush to get into the production of the video. However, experienced filmmakers will tell you that better pre-production (including research and planning) can make the difference between an impactful video and an ordinary one.

Then you can further develop this idea by writing a **Treatment** – which, in the WAVE context, is a couple of paragraphs that summarizes your story and the way you will tell it.

### Preparing a treatment

#### Introduction and Summary

- Make sure you include: title; length of video (preferably 2 to 4 minutes so that people with slower net speeds can watch also); style of the work (documentary, drama, experimental, etc); subject matter and intended audience.

#### The purpose of the film, the need for the film, why choose this project

Purpose can be one of these:

- To document a subject to preserve knowledge
- To reveal something about the subject
- To allow the viewer a certain experience
- To advocate for something

#### Who is your audience?

- Who is my target audience and what do I need to do to reach out to them? In other words, what is the age, gender, educational level, economic level of the typical viewer who would watch your video?
- How familiar is your audience with the subject?
- Who may benefit from this message?
- What is my responsibility to my audience?

#### Why I'm interested in this project? What's my point of view?

- Why am I making this film?
- What's my perspective on this issue?
- Who am I representing by making this film?
- What sources of information, ideas, and assertions have I chosen?
- Is my presentation of information and ideas fair?

#### How practical is it to produce a video about this subject?

- Will I get permission to shoot where I need to?
- Will people be willing to speak to me about this issue?/ Can I get both/all sides of the story?
- What resources are available to help me make this video? (NGO knowledge, references to key people, etc.)
- Will I be able to get all the essential information in time to create this video?

### Brief treatment – a description of the approach

- In the brief treatment, you don't need to tell the story. This has already been done with the purpose, your audience and why you want to make it.
- Now you have to describe the style, the method of presentation, mood and shape of the film. Make this writing as visual as possible.
- Ask these questions:
  - What is the style you are going to use?
  - Will the editing be fast paced or slow?
  - What is the tone?
  - Will the mood be serious or lighthearted?
  - What is the genre (for example, fiction, music video, documentary, etc.)? Refer to Matt Madden's website where he previews many different ways of telling a story (<http://www.exercisesinstyle.com/>)
  - Will you include music?
  - What production techniques will work best (for example, lots of close-ups to reveal emotion, or some shots in black and white)?

### Creativity in Storytelling

Remember, there are lots of videos to watch on the internet. What sets them apart are their originality and creativity. So it's a good idea to check on YouTube what videos already exist about your theme/ subject matter.

Here are some genres you can explore:

Animation - [The Story of Stuff by Annie Leonard](#)

Mukand and Riaz by Nina Sabnani

Stop Motion - Cheap and Easy 10 minute Animation

Juxtaposition of text and photos - The Role of Women in Media by Barbara Kruger, a Visual Poem

Music video - Mann ke Manjeere by Breakthrough TV

Puppets – Unsockumented

Satire/ Humour / Drama– Malegaon ke Sholay/ Deewar

Staged – A Vision of Students Today by Mike Wesch

Only Text/ Motion Graphics and Music – The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Public Service Announcement/ Promo/ Ad – Dove Pro-age

Monitoring – Hindu right-wing activist caught on tape admitting to Godhra murders

Time Lapse Photography – Dove Evolution

Archival/ found footage – Bollywood Terror

Digital Story Telling – Venisha Fernandes' profile video on the WAVE website is an example of a digital story, i.e. An autobiographical story (usually) told with pictures and narration.

Experimental – Music Video

### **Ideating Tips**

- Do not assume that the audience knows about your cause/issue. Tell them what you are talking about.
- Be very clear: use simple sentences. Do not overload with information.
- Be very precise and factual.
- To make the message strong, provide graphics, data, or personal stories.
- Tell them something they do not know or tell them things in a way they have not heard before.

- Do not be repetitive.
- It would be good if you can suggest what you would like your viewers to do with the information you have provided. For advocacy, you have to effectively communicate your message and encourage people to act.
- Highlight the key elements in your story; highlight the names of the people featured; highlight key images, locations
- Decide who tells the story (you, the interviewee, any third person, central character)
- Decide which all stakeholders appear in your story: experts, perpetrators, change-makers, victims/survivors, you (as an observer, participant)
- It's good to think about which striking visuals can tell your story.
- Why not experiment with different storytelling styles? If you prefer voiceover, try using just text to tell a story, or vice versa.