**CARE International COMWG Meeting 2009**

**General information on videography**

***2009***

A video training was held for media officers at the annual COMWG meeting in Geneva in 2009. While this is not meant to be a video tip sheet, we have highlighted the key points as they are useful to taking video in emergencies.

**Video equipment:** You can film on a flipcam, smartphone or camcorder. An HD camcorder will provide the highest quality. When buying a video camera, buy one with a mic plug to attach an external microphone. The built-in microphone will not be good enough quality for professional filming. Look for a camcorder with flash or hard drive memory, or both. Get HD.

**Types of movies:**

* + **Institutional movie:** when you use the CARE logo and focus on CARE’s activities. Good for website, but you can’t use that for the media.
  + **For the media:** show clips of the disaster, and have a short soundbyte from a CARE person, small CARE logo on the T-shirt, and header saying CARE expert, name. Like a TV news piece, with CARE as a person interviewed, but not CARE as the focus of the story. This can be used for media, i.e. Merlin in Cyclone Nargis on BBC.
* **Before filming:** 
  + **Storyboard:** Map out how you want your story to flow, so you know what clips you need to film and what interviews to do BEFORE you start filming. Example of a storyboard:
  1. Intro of the car crash (15 seconds) – 2 or 3 different clips with voice-over
  2. interview with a fireman (15 seconds)– 1 clip
  3. details, facts (30 seconds) – 4-5 different clips with voice-over
  4. interview with a witness (20 seconds) – 1 clip
  5. conclusion, you as a stand up or voice-over (20 seconds)- 2 or 3 different clips with voiceover, or a stand-up
  + **Shopping list:** After you do your storyboard, make a shopping list of clips you need to record. Be strategic. Otherwise, you will have too many clips, it will be too hard to edit, and you will be missing key clips that will help tell your story. i.e. if there is a plane crash and you are focused only on filming the firemen, but forget to get film of the plane, and the whole scene, then you can’t tell the whole story in your video.You need to have a good story to go with your photos. Until you have all the things on your shopping list, don’t stop filming.
  + In video, 50% of the job will be interviews. You need to prepare the interview subject before you start filming.
  + ALWAYS make sure you have a full battery and an extra battery and enough reserve memory BEFORE you go to the field. Some places we go to we will not have access to electricity.
* **During filming:**
  + When you film any scene, count slowly to five. When you choose a frame, keep it at least for five seconds. Don’t use the zoom while filming! Be very still. Tuck your elbows against your chest and hold the camera in front of you.
  + Pan: when you want to make a big pan, think about this as something extremely long. Move very slowly. Start with a fixed frame of 5 seconds; pan slowly; then end with a fixed frame of 5 seconds, and end on an interesting frame.
  + Zoom out shot: start with a fixed frame of 3-5 seconds; zoom slooowly out; end with 3-5 second fixed frame.
  + Use a tripod: great for taking photos in low light. Essential for interviews on video. Some camcorders have the anti-shake mode.
  + If you are using footage for internet, do close-ups so you see the detail.
  + **Audio:** Sound is extremely important. You should be listening to the sound using headphones to make sure it is loud enough, there is no background noise interfering with what you want to record, etc. If you are filming, record 1-1.5 minutes of background sound. So when it comes time to editing, you have one steady clip of sound that you can use across your sequence. i.e. filming a band: you want a broad shot and a close-up of a kid. But if you use those two clips in sequence, the music won’t match and it will be jarring. So you can replace that background sound with your long steady clip. You have to be very diligent on getting good sound; otherwise, you will see a small photo on the internet, and won’t hear anything, so people will leave your site.
  + White balance: Outdoor light is white, with a blue tinge (cool tones); your eyes correct for this. Inside, lights are yellow/orange (warm tones). So inside, if you use the white balance, it will make the colours the same as outside. Use the pre-set settings for indoor or outdoor, and the camera will automatically adjust (they will be pretty much right). To use manual white balance (i.e. in neon lighting): Press the white balance manual button (it looks like a open book logo), then put a white sheet in front of your camera, about two feet away. The camera will automatically set the white balance.
* **Doing an interview:** 
  + Prepare some questions in advance.
  + Put the camera at eye level. Use a tripod.
  + It is important to have an external mic. Or get as close as possible with your camera to the subject.
  + Get the person to state their name, position, what they are doing. This also gives you a chance to check your audio.
  + Set up the camera, and stand to the right of the camera. Have the interview subject look at you, not at the camera. Don’t centre the person in the middle of the frame. Examples of good framing shown during the training.
  + Frame your subject. Do not change the frame while the subject is talking. If you’re still fiddling with the camera, ask them to wait before answering the question. If you need to change the framing, do it while you’re asking the questions – not while they are talking. If you do an extreme up-close image of a person’s face, it makes the person more powerful, more present. Tips: Look at other professional videos, at ICRC photos/videos, TV news pieces etc. – see how they take photos, how they frame the shot, how they get the logo in the frame etc.
  + Don’t hesitate to ask a subject to simplify their answer, or say it again in 30 seconds.
  + When doing interviews, make sure the person speaks in short sentences. You can ask them several times to repeat themselves, get them to say it in two sentences or less. If you know you need to interview someone important, ask them to do a 15 second sound byte; i.e. if you know you want your CD to say something, then be blunt, and get them to say that.
* **Editing:**
  + Camtasia is a good software for editing on PCs. Other free open-source software can be used to edit video for web, but you don’t have as much flexibility in editing.
  + Time code: it’s on every system. H:M:S:frames. Watch your time code to know how long you want your clip. When filming, you can also write down the timecode of a clip or soundbyte you know you want to use.
  + Every sequence is already separated when you are recording. Each time you press record and stop, it’s a separate computer file. So when you upload that to your computer, they come up as separate files – which makes it a lot easier to coordinate and put together.
  + Upload your files to your computer.
  + Open each file and cut the part you want. This was demonstrated.
  + Drag and drop the clips you want onto your timeline. The file will appear with an audio component and a video component.
* **Uploading to websites:** 
  + First, save it in hi-res for yourself for future use on DVDs etc. Check with your webmaster what size resolution you should use for your website. Common size is 320x240. Size could be approximately 5MB.
  + For PC, save it as a windows media file.
  + Rename your video so it’s something that will be picked up by Google searches
  + Tags – these are the words that are going to be picked up by the search engines (always use the word CARE); use at least five words as tags (the more tags you put in, the more likely you are to be picked up by search engines).
* **Copyright issues:** A sample contract for photographers and videographers is on Minerva in the photos folder.
* **Sending video:** Large files will be slow to send via e-mail or upload; this will restrict the quality we can send during emergencies, for example. yousendit.com is a free platform that you can send documents of up to 100MB.
* **PALS vs. NTSC:** North America and Europe use different video formats. This doesn’t matter for the web, but you will need to convert a video shot on a North American camcorder if you want to use it for TV stations in Europe. This is expensive.