



**Participatory Video for marginalized,
disadvantaged or otherwise
vulnerable groups**

Short guide for facilitators and trainers

VISTA - participatory Video and social Skills for Training disadvantaged Adults
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PART I – Participatory Video in VISTA project

1. The use of Participatory Video for disadvantaged adults

During these last years, the didactic methodologies with the support of the video have been diffused in several European countries but, even if 40 years of technology allows the video-didactic to be affordable for all, for sure it has not reach the status of standardized discipline/method.

Despite this, video is clearly confirmed to be a novel and expanding technology for positive behavioural strategies in teaching and learning.

It has been demonstrated that a human being remembers 10% of what he/she sees, 20% of what he/she hears, 50% of what he/she sees and hears and 80% of what he/she sees, hears and does. Therefore, a video, especially if combined with a certain level of interaction, allows a more quick and efficient memorization.

Furthermore, studies on human perception show that 83% of what we feel travels to the brain through sight, while all the other senses (smell, hearing, touch and taste) transport only 17% of what we perceive. Therefore, sight is the most powerful sense.

Other than this, because video is acceptable and widely used by adults and children for leisure, educational, and business activities, it has considerable potential as an effective, socially acceptable form of support.

For all those reasons the use of video and of the non-verbal language as a therapeutical support for disadvantaged adults and people with problems of social inclusion is a growing phenomenon.

In recent years video applications are seen as dynamic and effective methods of working with marginalized, disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable groups for a wide range of purposes: video is becoming more common even if it's practiced mainly in the vast field of expressive form of therapies (art therapy, video therapy, film therapy, video drama...).

In order to favour social and work integration of subjects with different levels of disadvantages (social hardship, marginalization, physical and mental disabilities...), VISTA project foresees a **method which uses the video as a storytelling and which is based on the Participatory Video (PV) technique.**

We say that it's based on the PV because Participatory Video still has no shared definition or theorization to mould its concept in a coherent experience.

This limitation is understandable since PV is a set of operational, situational and idiosyncratic practices. This field is not wholly codified also in sociological terms. The many types of PV, the difference in theories (in most cases though, implicit), the number of professional competences involved and the impact with other fields (educational science and methodology; international cooperation, psychotherapy; anthropological research; political and social activism) design a wide and fragmented field with uncertain boundaries. The field is even more elusive owing to the fact that experiences related to the intertwining between participation and video were carried out at different times and in different places in a way which may be called "kaleidoscopic" (White, 2003), often without any reciprocal information (Huber, 1998).

In this framework PV can be used and applied in many different situations, without a fixed way in which it has to be done. Other than that it involves the authorship of the group itself and that it's carried out in a truly participative and democratic way. This quality of flexibility enables PV to be applied to many different situations.

From a practical point of view a PV project can be described as:

a scriptless video process, directed by a group of grassroots people, moving forward in iterative cycles of shooting–reviewing. This process aims at creating video narratives that communicate what those who participate in the process really want to communicate, in a way they think is appropriate. (Johansson *et al.* 1999, 35)

In VISTA project, the PV is seen as a collective storytelling and as the narration of expressive, narrative and identity needs through shared audio-visual production which emphasizes the use of video as a social collective process with strong social, cultural and symbolic interaction traits.

It is also the common building and rebuilding of narrations which can spur social and individual change with the aim of strengthening the subject's personality in interpersonal relations and of helping to adapt or re-adapt to a social/economical context, discovering new intellectual opportunities and new abilities to increase self-esteem.

The emphasis of participatory video practice is placed on process rather than product: PV is directed more towards reflection than towards the actual production since the whole process is centred on participation (Johansson, 1999b). That's why the social impact of a video is not given by its "social" subject but by the social and collective participation (Bery, 2003).

The use of PV has however a manifold impact: it disseminates technological knowledge, it allows collective realization and action; develops creativity; it processes and disseminates unforeseen and unaccounted for visions originated by a collective process of self-comprehension and narration.

The idea behind this is that making a video is easy and accessible, and is a great way of bringing people together to explore issues, voice concerns or simply to be creative and tell stories. It is therefore primarily about process, though high quality and accessible films (products) can be created using these methods if that is a desired outcome. This process can be very empowering, enabling a group or community to take their own action to solve their own problems, and also to communicate their needs and ideas to decision-makers and/or other groups and communities. As such, PV can be a highly effective tool to engage and mobilize marginalized people, and to help them to implement their own forms of sustainable development.

Through this method it's possible to enhance personal and social skills and the value of communication in the age of media and communication tools.

The beneficiaries will be the authors of the story they will tell and, at the same time, they will be subject of the therapeutical work about them: they will be actors and directors of the film and finally and audience to themselves (lingering over the fact of being an audience to ourselves means lingering over observing, reflecting and *monitoring ourselves* in relation with the world, with others, with objects, with ourselves, with the social performance we give life to).

The spontaneity of the interventions, the symmetry and the relaxed spontaneity in answering (which characterizes the PV) reduce the feeling of anxiety and the difficulty of expression.

As a derivative of an art form, the PV invites the expression of novel or original ideas, it's an instrument of group dynamics that tends to validate individuality. As a consequence, the most important way that PV fosters consciousness is that the process involves a periodic option to review the action. This represents an exercise of the phenomenon of role distance, a dis-identifying with the performance and a shift to a "meta-role" stance: from this pausing and reflecting, it's possible to develop the capacity and even the habit of shifting viewpoints, gradually building an inner "observing manager".

Thus beneficiaries can be able to see themselves and their emotional reactions in ways that they have never experienced before, which help them to identify and more deeply delve into personal problems.

In Vista the video narration gives rise to a dialogue between the person and the self/image (represented in the video), which facilitates the development of one's own personal resources, also re-examining and correcting oneself.

It is also a path along which emotional and cognitive aspects intersect: new emotions surfacing bring about the acquisition of new cognitive competences.

PV carried out in this way becomes a powerful means of documenting people's experiences, needs and hopes from their own perspectives. It can initiate a process of analysis and change that celebrates knowledge and practice, whilst stimulating creativity both within and beyond the community. PV gives a voice and a face to those who are normally not heard or seen.

In fact PV (that has in itself many other languages such as irony, narrative, body and music) is a valid approach for adults with different degrees and levels of disability, disadvantage and social exclusion as a way to overcome social barriers and at the same time to acquire new relational and professional competences. It can favor the engagement (video is an attractive tool, which gives immediate results), the empowerment (a rigorous but fun process giving participants control over a project), the clarification (participants find their voices and focus on local issues of concern),

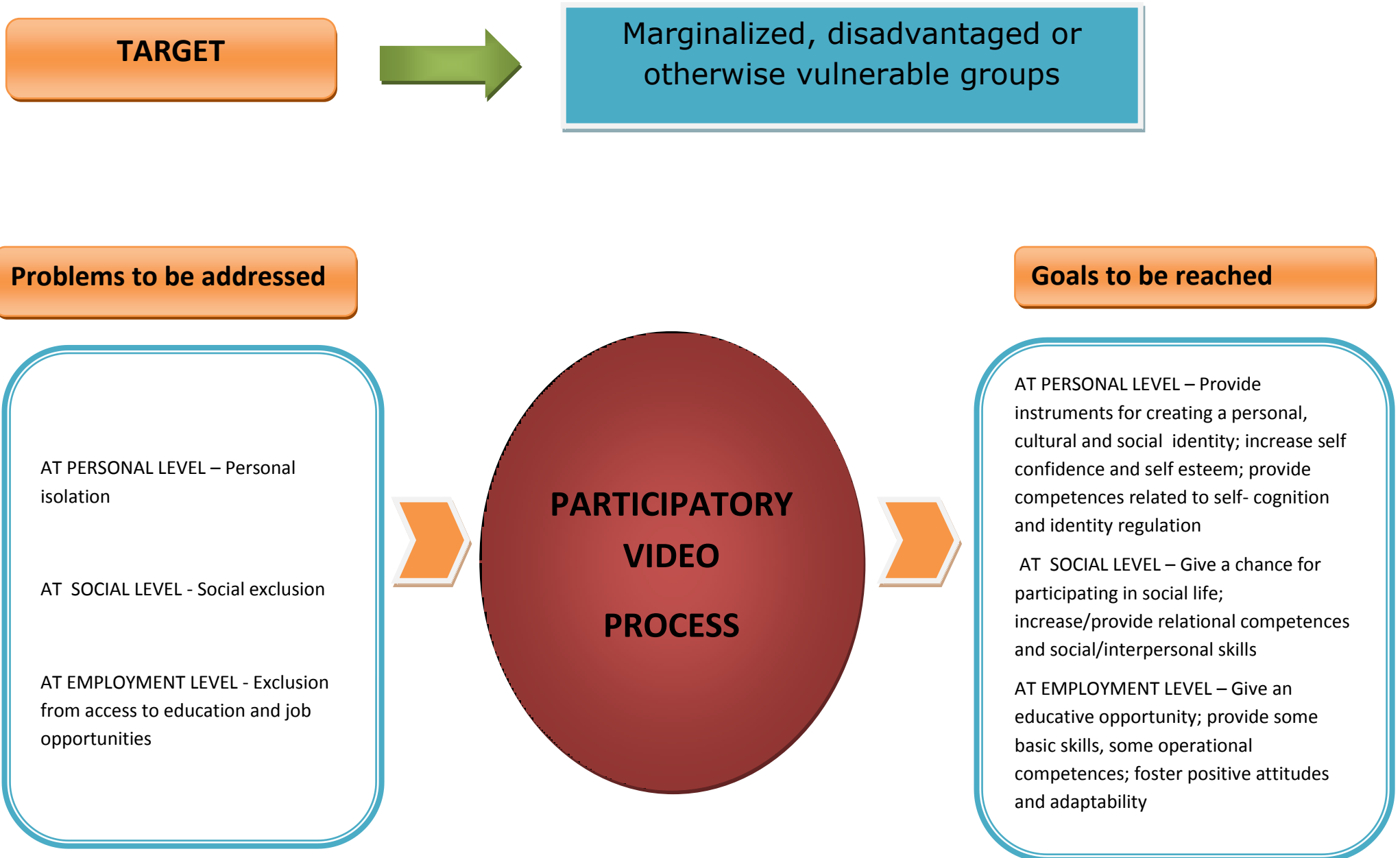
the amplification (participants share their voices with other groups or communities, including decision-makers, donors and general public), the catalyzing (participants become a community, which takes further action), the accessibility (living stories are captured by communities themselves; projects can be documented and evaluated; policy information and decisions can also be transferred back to the community level through PV), the possibility to equip disadvantaged adults with basic skills and positive attitudes (group-working and listening skills, self-esteem building and motivation techniques; PV develops an active role for participants in improving their inner capacities).

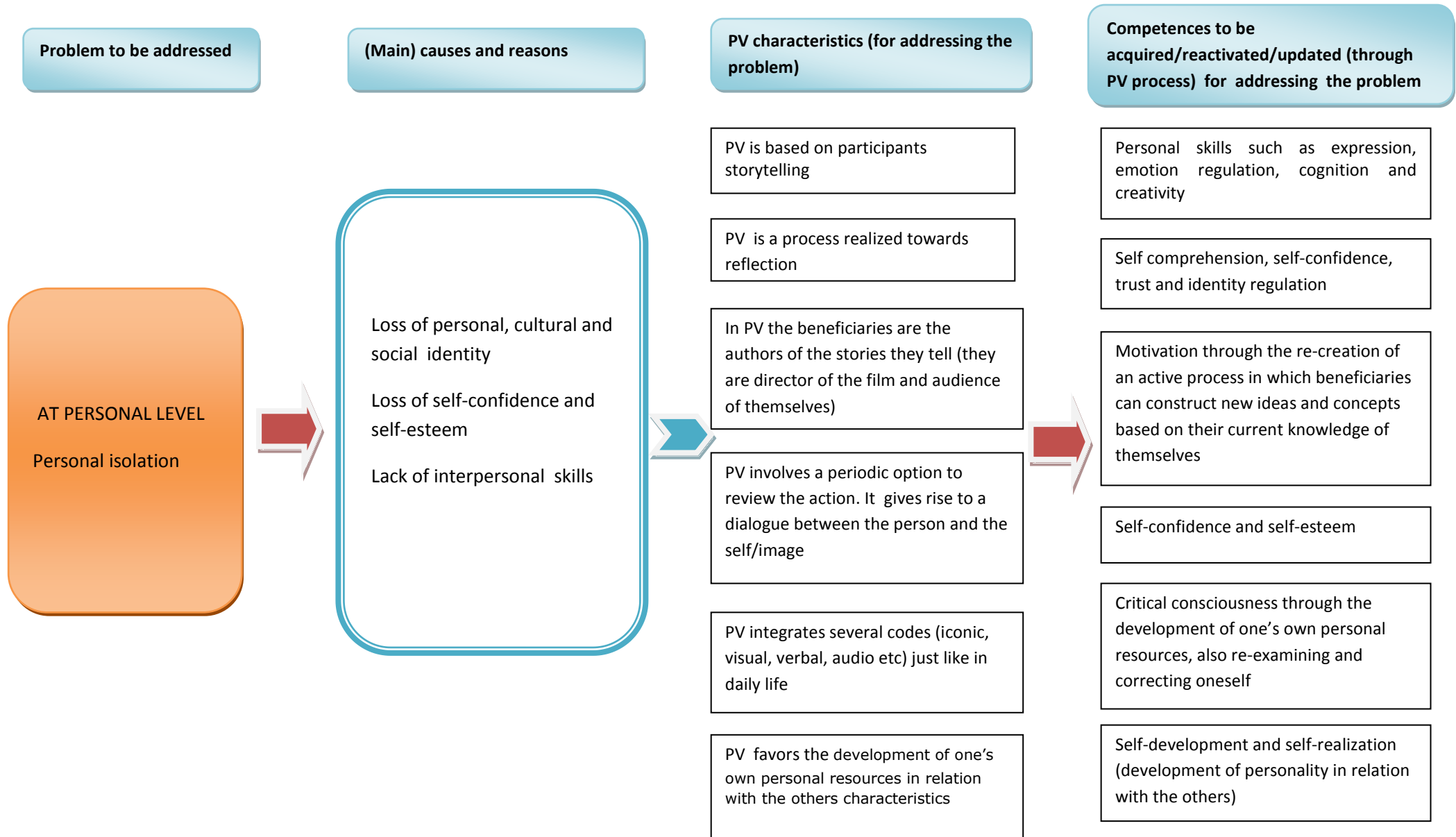
Therefore, the methodology proposed leads to the acquisition, the re-discovery and the consolidation of relational and communication competences indispensable for interpersonal relations which help people to adapt or re-adapt to both a social and work context:

- ♦ Self-development and self-realization – development of personality (cognition, emotion, behaviour)
- ♦ Acquisition of operational and technical competences – use of the camera, video editing...
- ♦ Promotion of integration – support of instatement/re-instatement in society and in the labour market.
- ♦ Personal development, social integration, thus favoring social instatement and active citizenship



2. Model of the PV process in VISTA





Problem to be addressed

(Main) causes and reasons

PV characteristics (for addressing the problem)

**Competences to be acquired
acquired/reactivated/updated (through
PV process) for addressing the problem**

AT SOCIAL LEVEL
Social exclusion

Lack of relational competences and social skills
Limited chances for individual participation in social life
Loss of relation with the world, with the others, with the social context

- PV is a participative experience based on spontaneity and the free expression of ideas and feelings
- PV is based on social and collective participation and sharing
- PV brings people together to explore issues and voice concerns
- PV is an empowering collective action based on interpersonal relations
- PV allows different understanding
- PV gives a voice and a face to those who are normally not heard or seen and these voices can be widespread in the word outside

- Confidence, socialization and relational skills for and effective interaction with each other
- Listening skills; strengthening the personalities in interpersonal relationships
- Cooperation and communication
- Intimacy and negotiation
- Relationship style and interpersonal skills
- Trust formation within and outside the group

Problem to be addressed

(Main) causes and reasons

PV characteristics (for addressing the problem)

Competences to be acquired to be acquired/updated (through PV process) for addressing the

AT EMPLOYMENT LEVEL

Exclusion from access to education and job opportunities

Lack of consciousness about the personal characteristics, abilities, faculties, capabilities

Lack of participation in learning processes or of any other educative resources

Lack of basic skills and positive attitudes

Lack of operational competences and adaptability

PV is a learning process in action

In PV the learning program is shared with the group in order to empower and motivate the participants

The PV process is based on group dynamics

PV develops an active role for participants in improving their inner capacities

PV is a rigorous but fun process giving participants control over a project

PV gives some technical and operational competences

Listening and learning skills

Sharing, fostering understanding and awareness

Staying and working in group

Problem solving

Cognitive competence, control and empowerment

Goal setting

Use of the camera, video editing

3. The PV actors

a. Beneficiaries

In Vista project the beneficiaries of the PV laboratories are marginalized, disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable groups.

Because marginalization is at the core of exclusion from fulfilling and full social lives at individual, interpersonal and societal levels, the beneficiaries are people who have relatively little control over their lives and over the resources available to them.

Marginalization is a slippery and multi-layered concept. Peter Leonard (1984, p.180) defines social marginality as "*being outside the mainstream of productive activity and/or social life*".

The project foresees adults with different experiences of marginality: from people with typically life-long marginality (i.e. people severely impaired from birth or those born into particularly marginal groupings that suffer discrimination like the Roma) to people for whom the marginality is acquired, by later disablement, or by changes in the social and economic system (i.e long term unemployed, adult with psychic disabilities..).

Whatever is the origins and processes of marginalization, these groups have limited opportunities to make social contributions, miss social attitudes, loose self-confidence and self esteem.

The situation of oppressed people is also characterized by resistance and resilience. In resilience there is the potential for an enhanced, reclaimed and re-invented identity. The very fact of being oppressed, of having fundamental rights denied or diminished, may elicit attempts to remediate the situation.

PV, as already said, is a collective action that can help people respond to the challenge of their marginalization in constructive ways, opening up new possibilities for action.

It can provide an opportunity to document their own experiences and to express their wants and hopes from their own viewpoints, allowing them to record and tell their own story, and to get their voice heard.

b. Facilitators/trainers/video makers

Teaching methods based on videos are complex and use a particular narrative language which touches cognition, symbolism and emotions. Other than this it must

be underlined that the users have particular life situations, so the facilitator must value the disadvantaged experiences of the participants.

This means valuing life and insights gained, as well as the level and main reasons of their personal isolation, social exclusion and exclusion from access to education and job opportunities.

A trainer who works in a participatory way has to communicate to the group that **everyone is able to learn and that everyone has something to share.**

He needs to be sensitive and responsive to issues that emerge from the individuals and the group.

At general level, a trainer/facilitator in PV has to possess important qualities and skills that can include:

- A warm personality and the ability to show approval and acceptance of participants
- Enthusiasm for the chosen subjects, and the ability to share them
- Social skills, with the ability to bring the group together and guide it
- Facilitation skills that invite participants' involvement and actively build on their ideas and their capabilities
- Skill in noticing and resolving problems or challenges that participants might be having and
- Flexibility in responding to participants' changing needs, adjusting the speed of work according to the circumstances and try to work at the participants' pace.

(Adapted from Pretty, Guijt et al., IIED 1995: Participatory Learning and Action: A Trainer's Guide)

Other than this, the facilitator has to:

Be an helper

Participants should see the facilitator/trainer as a helper, not as an "expert" with special abilities. The whole point of participatory video is that anyone can learn the necessary steps and skill: the role/actions/manner of the trainer should help convey this message. For instance, the facilitator has to limit the time in handling the equipment. The demonstrations has to be as brief as possible.

Enable others to share their strengths

In any group, some people will become confident with the video equipment more quickly than others. Others will be good at conducting interviews or preparing storyboards. Encourage these individuals to help others during exercises, always checking to make sure they do this in a supportive way. Enabling participants to share their strengths can help build confidence and a sense of mutual support.

Give motivation to the group

The facilitator has to be ready with ideas that can stimulate the group at low-energy points; has to invite ideas from participants, helping people to express what they feel, to empower them and to increase the awareness about the possibility to re-take control of their own destinies.

Provide support and feedback

Offer positive input and supportive feedback during the course of each activity. Appreciative feedback helps build participants' skills and confidence. It also provides them a model for supporting one another within the team.



PART II – Guide for the PV process

4. Stage 1 - Group forming through narration

The starting point of the PV laboratory is the creation of a welcoming and stimulating group environment.

Based on participation, collaboration and co-operation, the PV activities have to engage the participants physically, mentally and emotionally in a multisensory experience.

The “getting to know each other” can be the first step for the group forming. Other activities (simulation; visualization; role play; free discussion; verbalization of thoughts, questions or experiences; physical movements), based on the different stories of the participants, can give **emotional stimulation both individually and within the group.**

Members can bring their own commitment, their lived experiences and knowledge about what life is like from their perspective, sharing their perceptions and identify, prioritize and appraise their issues.

The more comfortable participants are the more effective this laboratory will be.

Safety and wellbeing of participating individuals and communities is paramount at all times.

Some activities can be suggested in order to form the group, such as :

Activity profile

Asking different people about their daily activities.

Approach members constructively

Rewarding members either verbally or through privilege for taking initiative and for actions of any kind. Everyone needs to know their contributions are appreciated. Even if their comments are not practical, a reply can begin with "That's a good point but what about... ", or "That's an interesting point, what do others think?"

Brainstorming

Asking members to think of any ideas that come to mind and listing all the ideas without evaluation or judgment.

Good, bad or in-between

Showing participants pictures, each with a scene that could be interpreted as good, bad or in-between, depending on the point of view. Then discussing the different alternatives within the group.

Making something together

Providing materials and objects and asking participants to make something. The facilitator has to use the results to discuss communication and cooperation.

Participation game

Giving five sticks to each participant and starting a discussion. Every- body who speaks has to give away one of her/his sticks. No one may speak without sticks. Topics of interest, that the participants would like to share, has to be discussed.

Presentation of experiences

Asking participants to describe personal experiences related to their daily life .

Problem-solving

Making a table with four columns. Listing main problems of participants in the first column, possible solutions in the second column, what prevents them from solving the problem in the third column, and what will help them solve the problem in the fourth column. Discussion.

Song composing

Asking members to make up a song about something the participants would like to tell and share with the others (e.g. how to increase group cooperation).

The activities of the stage 1:

- *help build trust, self comprehension, self-confidence and intimacy among the group members*
- *develop personal reflection*
- *favor the understanding of the participants "inside view"*
- *because all the voices are expressed and heard, they help the mutual understanding and socialization*
- *develop empathy - the ability to identify with and understand another person's feelings or difficulties.*
- *favor the listening skills and communication skills*



5. Stage 2 – From the Storytelling to the drawing up of a Storyboard

Once reached a good cohesion within the group members, one of the main phases of the VISTA PV process has to start.

As already stated, in this project the PV is seen as a collective storytelling and as the narration of expressive, narrative and identity needs. PV is directed more towards reflection than towards the actual production since the whole process is centred on narration and participation.

Through the building and rebuilding of the participants narrations and talks, it must be found out what story/stories the group would like to tell and film.

Creative activities have to be organized in order to stimulate ideas, to build the group confidence, to encourage and praise the stories of the members of the group. The facilitator has to stress the group underlining that everyone has a story to tell and a right to be listened to.

Some tools and cross-sensory exercises that stimulate creativity can be used as, for instance, using role-play, games and group exercises as well as hands-on facilitation experiences, body movement, drawings.... in order to spur the imagination of people to create original stories that go beyond existing themes and narratives they experience everyday.

Sharing these narratives is important not only for their sense of identity, understanding and recognition by others, but as a form of creative expression and advocacy of issues in their lives.

Group members can be able to move beyond their everyday lived experiences to reveal poetic and imaginative renderings of their inner voices interpreting, reflecting, and artfully re-engaging in their world.

This can be seen as the starting point for the creation of a group storytelling, in which group members, starting from their own narration, can put some elements together

thus creating a shared story. The process starts with a germ of some shared ideas. The facilitator has the task to help the participants to bring together different ideas, viewpoints, methods, experiences in one story around a common theme.

The conceptualization of the personal narratives for the creation of a script, a sort of storyboard for the PV project, is in general up to the facilitator, if participants are not confident, but ensuring that participants lead this activity and letting the group own the story (better not to instruct or suggest but encourage participants to think about what exactly they want to communicate). The better solution is to create a scenario by using all the ideas of the participants, so they feel that the final scenario is a part of their own story and has points of their own lives, thus letting the group own the final storyboard.

It can be seen as a jazz song, with a deep structure (the overall storyboard) interspersed with free improvisation (the talks/narrations/ideas of the participants). This process of working together to create a story is stimulating and can be very empowering.

Indeed, planning tools such as storyboards are also helpful ways to ensure equal and meaningful engagement of all participants.

The activities of the stage 2:

- *help to identify and analyze important issues, setting in motion a dynamic process of sharing and exchange*
- *bringing together different ideas, viewpoints, methods, experiences in one story around a common theme, enable participants to creatively imagine and to help in building consensus*
- *communicate one's experience clearly and communicate ideas and feelings in a visually interesting way, with different locations and presenters*
- *sharing ideas and perspectives, organizing something together*
- *stimulate community members to "visualize" what they are currently doing and to consider jointly how they can do things better*
- *develop skills in how to work constructively as a group*
- *help to understand how to tell a story as a visual piece (with a beginning, middle and end)*
- *form a collective vision for the community, building consensus*

6. Stage 3 – Shooting the story/stories

Participants need to start to think about creating a story using the camera. This is the stage in the process in which the participants undertake the production of whatever video they have planned.

It's the core phase of the method: until now the team has presented themselves, their ideas and their final scenario for the video project; from now on the creative part of the work has to start.

Through the lens they have the opportunity to choose what to focus on, to reveal their environment and to reach out to an outside audience through the development of a coherent moving image project.

This way, PV method enables people to become creators and as such is a great catalyst for empowerment and change. The video becomes a tool to both reflect the participants' reality and highlight their potential to improve their personal and social skills.

This stage has to be divided into four phases.

Phase 1 - How to use the camera

It's the first contact of the participants with the video camera and the aim is to give them the opportunity to handle equipment for video recording. It must be underlined that participant has to enjoy themselves, without being afraid of handling and using the camera. Thus it has to be explained as a simple tool, also through practical demonstrations of the basic features of the digital video camera.

The participant have to understand that making mistakes is a part of learning and of staying and working together: no matter if anyone use it or will use it in a wrong way. Everything can be re-done, adjusted, re-organized.

In general the "name game" exercise is used, because it's very simple in presenting the camera functions, friendly and practical. It's described in the following table:

- 1. Everyone sits in a circle; all present should take part in the exercise. The facilitator also takes part.*
- 2. The Facilitator hands over camera in its bag and lets the group unpack it. He must not take camera back until it comes around for their turn to film.*
- 3. The facilitator has to instruct Person A (whoever is sitting next to him) how to: hold the camera; switch camera on/off; where the record/pause button is. It is important they do this themselves. The facilitator has to keep looking around the group to make sure everyone is attentive.*
- 4. While the group touch the camera, the facilitator explains that sound is captured as well as the picture. He can ask someone to plug in microphone (mic) and demonstrate how to hold it level with the stomach and pointing to mouth.*
- 5. The facilitator then asks someone else to open the screen and to take off the lens cap, thus to press the play button and start filming, also telling that the most delicate parts of a camera are the lens and the screen (maybe explaining that they are like the human eye and can be damaged by fingers and dirt), and so the lens cap must be put back on and screen closed when the camera is not in use.*

During this explanation all the participants have to handle the camera. If some participants are shy, the facilitator has to encourage them, saying that they are able to do it and that doesn't matter if they make mistakes.
- 6. The facilitator asks a person to try zooming in and out. (Note that giving instructions should not take long – get quickly to the filming part, the action!). A person can film another one. They hold the mic, say their name and a sentence or two about themselves, e.g. something they are passionate about, or something humorous or banal like what she ate for breakfast...Then all the others try. The participant hands the camera to the person sitting next to her or him (e.g. in a clockwise direction) and the person talking also hands the mic to the person next to her - the process is repeated until everyone in the circle has had a chance to both film and talk, including the facilitator.*
- 7. When handing over the camera the participant (rather than the facilitator) explains how to use it.*

8. When everyone has filmed (including the facilitator) one of the participants will have the task (helped by the facilitator), to rewind the tape and to plug wires into the monitor and then play back footage immediately to the group.

Each participant, in turn, is interviewed, films an interview, interviews another participant on-camera

(Adapted from "Insights into Participatory Video: a Handbook for the Field by Nick and Chris Lunch)

The activities of the stage 3 – phase 1:

- give confidence with the video camera and some basic skills about how to use it - on/off; record/pause; how to hold; how to frame a shot; how to record sound;.

- learning by experience (e.g. we all get to feel what it's like to be in front of the camera..) help to become more sensitive.

- learn about each other as a group, because all are focused on a shared task and experience similar emotions as the game progresses

- increase relationship and group dynamics between the facilitator and group (the relations are equalized in terms of power)

- all important technical skills are learned by the group members themselves

It is remarkable how much can be learned and achieved with this simple game, in terms of both technical learning and in building group dynamics.

Phase 2 - The roles within the group: casting the crew

This phase is related to the allocation of crew roles for the video realization. The roles can be allocated on a flexible basis.

After having illustrate the main roles (cameraman, camera assistant, person, sound/monitor assistant, interviewer, production coordinator, editing assistant. . .) of the crew (who they are, what they do, what are their responsibilities....), each one of the participants can announce in which part of the video making he/she would like to be involved in: it would be easier to focus on the video project as everyone knows exactly what he/she has to do.

What is important to underline is that all the participants will participate as an actor or actress for this video project. But if someone does not desire to act in front of the camera, he/she could be helpful by doing other film work behind the camera.

Planning tools such as storyboards are also helpful ways to ensure equal and meaningful engagement of all participants. Ideally all participants should have equal opportunities to undertake all roles during the production phase. Roles such as 'camera operator' and 'director' are particularly powerful (they make the decisions about what is filmed and what is excluded) and can therefore be attractive to those who might otherwise dominate the process.

Participants should be encouraged to rotate roles on a regular basis to prevent any individuals from appropriating particular roles.

However, if it will be difficult for every participant to be involved in all positions during the video shooting, they can be organized in small groups. For instance:

- A small group of people will take the responsibility of the editing process expressing their opinion on the final visual style of the video.
- Another small group will be in charge of the camera as camera assistants during the video shooting.
- A small group can be the interviewers.
- Because attention must also be paid to identifying and selecting locations in which the story will be told. Therefore, another small group will have to do that.

Then the group can be interchanged.

In this sense the PV brings everyone to the same level. Hierarchies that exist outside the workshop space tend to disintegrate. The participants are constantly changing roles, from camera operator to subject, from director to actor, and the dynamics of power are constantly shifting.

The activities of the stage 3 – phase 2:

- *make the participants understand that everyone in the group has something unique and value to offer.*
- *increase positive attitudes*
- *develop group-working skills, listening skills, self-esteem building*
- *improve motivation, encourage better awareness and develop an active role for participants*
- *build trust and respect among the group*
- *help to create a "sacred space" where all people know they can be themselves and be respected.*



Phase 3 – Work on field: videos are directed and filmed by participants

From now on the script of the team becomes reality. The participants are the directors, the audience, the protagonists.... the PV's method takes its final form.

This is the time to start the video product by filming the story and giving to it faces and voices.

The participants has to film in relation with the storyboard that, in our case, is a sort of basic narrative structure organized in shooting schedule that divides the script into separate scenes.

While filming, the storyboard is a point of reference, but the participants can be flexible. It's not a script that must be looked constantly when filming, it's just a basic line that helps the process.

In this phase the facilitator must take care that all the participants have their own role and has to help the group ensuring progresses of the film and encouraging all the participants.

Without the pressure of producing predefined outcomes, the facilitator of this creative project can open up to the unexpected. Once one experiences feeling vulnerable when being filmed, one develops a heightened sensitivity when using the camera to film others. As both personal confidence and trust in the group grow, perceptions can alter drastically. The impossible becomes possible. A new experience of feeling powerful, of "empowerment", can lead to the group. This phase enables people to become creators and as such is a great catalyst for action, for change.

The video can become a tool to both reflect the participants' reality and highlight their potential to change this reality. Through the lens they have the opportunity to choose what to focus on, to reveal their environment and to reach out to an outside audience.

Of course the best results occur when we focus on the process, not the product.

Concerning the process, the facilitator has not to film, until the participants have started using the camera. This gives a clear message that PV is different from traditional filming and that the facilitator is a member of the film crew, not the director. As work progresses the divide between facilitator and participant rapidly diminishes even more: all are members of the same team. At this stage it becomes

natural for the facilitator to also use the camera occasionally (e.g. short shots of community members using the camera to show the PV process in action, or cut away shots or log tapes which is important in order to keep track of what has filmed on every tape).

Obviously the focus should always be to help develop participants' confidence in using the equipment, and ultimately, their control over the process.

Participants improve filming and interviewing techniques rapidly through regularly playing back the footage they film. This reflective, self-appraisal method is at the heart of PV (see next phase).

This process of filming can be very fun for the participants and develops pride in their achievements. It can build confidence and self-esteem and, of course, enable the group to develop control over the project.

The activities of the stage 3 – phase 3:

- make participants understand the we all make mistakes - that's how we learn.*
- develop flexibility and creativity*
- building self-confidence and confidence with the other group members*
- increase empowerment and control over the process of filming*
- develop self-esteem and capacity building.*
- make participants learn how to be self-critical*
- . take a sense of pride for their achievement*
- nurture the sense of ownership*

Phase 4 – Screening back footage

PV method invites the expression of novel or original ideas, it's an instrument of group dynamics that tends to validate individuality.

As a consequence, the most important way that PV fosters consciousness is that the process involves a periodic option to review the action.

The ability of the video format to replay footage instantaneously using the playback function creates a lively feedback loop and serves to reflect back "our reality".

The pattern of **film - screen - discuss** is one that lies at the very heart of the participatory video process and is integral throughout the various stages involved.

Screening back footage and reflecting upon successes, challenges, mistakes made and lessons learned is an essential part of each stage. Participants will rapidly learn by noticing and responding to issues identified and will be able to make informed decisions about what to film next and how. It's important to set a pattern of screening back and to consider logging footage as part of the PV process.

The need to playback and reflect upon footage that is built into the games and exercises undertaken during the initial stages does not end once production has started, in fact its importance to the process increases. Screenings (either directly to those filmed or to larger audiences) should be undertaken each time footage is recorded, thereby providing opportunities for everyone involved to take part in the discussions and decision-making processes.

The reflection upon footage represents an exercise of the phenomenon of role distance, a dis-identifying with the performance and a shift to a meta role stance in which the role player joins with the director and, from this position also considers the performance from the points of view of the audience.

From this pausing and reflecting, it's possible to develop the capacity and even the habit of shifting viewpoints, gradually building an inner observing manager.

This process encourages and supports participants to take part in all other aspects of the process including setting up the equipment, introducing the project, presenting videos, facilitating discussions and recording feedback. The participants are fully

engaged in the process and they also can understand, step by step, their development and proficiency. The willingness and confidence of the facilitator to handover responsibility is also likely to be noticed and appreciated.

In this transversal phase the facilitator has to plan the structure and content of the screening carefully, giving consideration to each participant's role in the process and planning some key questions to stimulate feedback and discussion. A very good exercise is also to focus on what they think is missing or could be improved.

The activities of the stage 3 – phase 4 strengthen:

- the capacity and even the habit of shifting viewpoints*
- the critical consciousness through the development of one's own personal resources, also re-examining and correcting oneself*
- the development of personality in relation with the others*
- confidence, socialization and relational/interpersonal skills for and effective interaction with each other*
- cooperation and communication*
- trust formation within and outside the group*
- goal setting*
- cognitive competence, control and empowerment*
- problem solving*
- the habit of sharing, fostering understanding and awareness*

7. Stage 4 – The editing process

In this phase the facilitator plays a key role in supporting participants to shape videos, even if the group is the actor also of this phase.

PV is at its best as a collective exercise, so that through an ongoing cycle of filming and reviewing as a group, the participants make all decisions together about what is included and what is left out. Through forming consensus a truer, more balanced picture can emerge.

Working this way, the images are selected for filming by participants themselves, who choose what and who to show.

The technical editing process can be made by the facilitator himself (once the group has selected the images), by the facilitator with some members of the group (the ones who want to take part also in the technical realization of the video), by all the participants (if all of them want to be actors also of this process). It's not possible to get everyone involved in editing and many people won't be interested or have time anyway, but having a small group of advisors really helps to take some of the power away from the editor.

It has to be remembered that nowadays editing is no longer the domain of professionals, most modern computers can immediately become editing studios and modern editing software are relatively easy to use, allowing to produce short films relatively quickly and simply.

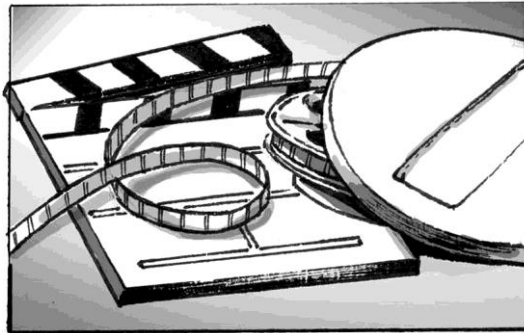
Anyway it can be a great challenge to maintain the ethos of participation at this stage of the process, also in order to obtain feedback and agreement from the group. Even the smallest manipulation of filmed material, such as putting titles at the start and end and adding some music into the background in some of the shots can make for a very professional looking product.

Finally, because the ability to edit films means that short, snappy participatory videos can have a wide "spread" potential, the participants have to participate also in the organization of the dissemination of the realized final product, deciding together who

gets to see the final product and organizing events with the public, stakeholders as well as with policymakers, donors, students, other experts.....

This is also, for the group, an important time to review agreements made at the start of the project and to talk about the experience.

It may only be at this point that some participants realize the true power of what they have created and it is useful to discuss with them again about all the process and the experienced PV in action.



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