

Video Advocacy Workshop 2008

Chiang Mai, Thailand, September 15-26, 2008

Application Deadline: June 30, 2008

The 2008 Video Advocacy Workshop is presented by
International Accountability Project, WITNESS, EarthRights International & Chiang Mai University's Unit for Social and Environmental Research (USER)

Information and Guidelines

Program Overview

The International Accountability Project (IAP), WITNESS, EarthRights International and Chiang Mai University's Unit for Social and Environmental Research (USER) are convening a Video Advocacy Workshop (VAW) to equip Asian community activists, filmmakers and civil society advocates with the tools to integrate video into a broader advocacy campaign challenging unjust forced eviction in the name of development. This ten-day training will take place in Chiang Mai, Thailand and accommodate 10-15 participants. The Video Advocacy Workshop is modeled on the WITNESS Video Advocacy Institute, an innovative program that trains human rights defenders to successfully integrate video advocacy into their campaigns. *Participants must already have a video project in mind, and plan to incorporate it into an existing advocacy effort around forced displacement.*

Development-induced forced displacement occurs when people are forcibly removed from their homes or lose access to their livelihoods in order to make way for a project executed in the name of development, often a mega-project; for example a dam, mine, plantation, highway, etc. People who are displaced often do not receive adequate compensation for their losses, and displacement often occurs hand-in-hand with other human rights abuses. Please note this workshop will train activists focused on development-induced displacement, not displacement caused by conflict or environmental disasters.

Video advocacy is the process of using digital video and related online technologies in strategic and targeted campaigns to open the eyes of the world to human rights violations, and to secure changes in policy, practice or law. The VAW will provide an immersive introduction to key skills in video advocacy. The approach is intensive and practical, grounded in WITNESS' sixteen years of experience supporting human rights organizations worldwide to use video in their campaigns. NGOs and individual advocates across Asia are increasingly using video as part of their broader human rights campaigns, because images and direct testimony have an unrivaled authority to increase visibility, prompt public engagement and promote change. However, many community-based organizations and grassroots activists have expressed the need to make their video efforts much more targeted and strategic. The Video Advocacy Workshop addresses precisely this need and will strengthen existing regional initiatives to use video to complement advocacy campaigns.

Program Objectives

During the Training: To increase the capacity of development activists challenging unjust eviction to use video in their efforts to change practices, policies and laws around development-induced displacement, in this training participants will:

- Develop a practical skill-set in the strategic and technical dimensions of using video in campaigning and advocacy. Participants will learn how to strategically use video to enhance campaigns for change, tell powerful audio-visual stories and distribute videos to a range of key human rights audiences;
- Develop a plan to integrate video into a specific campaign or project that they can initiate or continue following the training and complete within 6-12 months following the VAW; and
- Co-create a collaborative environment for learning and a peer network to support video advocacy projects.

Beyond the Training: To foster a sustained regional use of video as a strategic tool in advocacy work on development-induced displacement, the workshop follow-up is designed to:

- Stimulate the development of effective video strategies specifically for displacement-related struggles and strengthen the regional movement for development justice;
- Facilitate the production of videos to support community empowerment;
- Forge working partnerships among activists and community media centers and communities threatened by forced displacement through the sharing of expertise and experiences;
- Enable greater participation of people in the processes and decisions that affect their lives and environment through the empowering use of video.

Curriculum and Content

The core objective of this highly participatory course is to provide in-depth video advocacy training and give participants the opportunity to develop a concrete plan for an advocacy video that can be implemented after the VAW. This will include advocacy training drawing on case studies, presentations, dialogues and interactive exercises, as well as technical training via supervised filming and editing activities. Participants will learn how to:

- Plan for the strategic use of video as a targeted tool for change in a human rights campaign, and apply this learning to their own work on forced displacement;
- Craft effective advocacy narratives – ‘storytelling for action’;
- Make appropriate decisions on safety, security and consent;
- Distribute their video to key audiences – including courts, tribunals, multilateral development bank inspections panels, UN bodies, local, national and regional decision-makers in government and civil society, solidarity activists and the general public;
- Use video as evidence; and
- Use online video for advocacy, including the WITNESS [Hub](http://www.hub.witness.org) ^{*}
- Conduct pre-production to plan filming, and understand the production and post-production processes;
- Shoot video, including interviews and effective short sequences; and

^{*} To learn more about the Hub, please go to <http://www.hub.witness.org>

- Edit a short video using editing software and understand the basic principles of editing.

During the course, participants will learn how to apply a video advocacy framework to their own work on displacement, and will take part in focused sessions to refine a [Video Action Plan](#)* to integrate video into their social change work, with the advice and support from peer learning teams and resource-specialists. The program’s participatory format will provide an opportunity for all participants to share their work, ideas and new skills in an open and supportive setting.

Participant Expectations

1. Prior to the workshop, each participant is expected to identify a mentor—an individual or organization—who can provide them with technical, financial and other support to complete their project. This is important for participants applying without the support of an organization, or participants whose organizations do not have the technical capacity to provide follow up in the video production process. Participants from organizations committed to advocacy on forced displacement are especially encouraged to apply. (see “Participant/Organization Profile”)

2. Participants are expected to contribute to a Displacement Video Advocacy Network following the workshop, in order to help continue the relationships cultivated with other regional activists. The Video Advocacy Network will be comprised of the participants, their mentoring organizations and individuals, and others interested in using video in regional advocacy initiatives to challenge unjust development-induced displacement. Participants are expected to be active participants in this network, by reporting progress on how their projects are moving forward, and participating in a list-serve to support their peers.

3. Participants’ videos should directly contribute to a project campaign or policy debate relevant to forced displacement. *Among other issues*, the videos may address:

- The Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) review and implementation of its policy on Involuntary Resettlement;
- Projects brought before the external accountability mechanism at the ADB;
- The increasing role of China in financing projects in Asia;
- Regional integration plans in South Asia and the Mekong.

Participant / Organization Profile

This program is designed for:

- 1) Staff members within a non-governmental organization (NGO) or a community-based organization (CBO) who advocate for the protection of human rights in the context of development projects that result in, or threaten to result in, the forced displacement of communities. We encourage staff members specifically responsible for advocacy to apply; and
- 2) A limited number of individual activists with a record of successful collaboration with human rights organizations, experience working in the field and a passion for development justice, specifically as it relates to forced displacement.

* To view a copy of the full VAP go to: <http://www.witness.org/videoactionplan>

Organizations may submit applications seeking acceptance for up to two staff members where their existing experience and roles may be complementary. For instance, if the organization has both a staff member who specializes in advocacy and works directly with a staff member that specializes in digital media, they may apply as a team (a filmmaker and advocate combination). Other complementary combinations are welcome as well. We are interested in ensuring sustainable use of video in the region, and we recognize that collaboration enhances the effectiveness of an advocacy video project. *Please note that due to capacity, we cannot guarantee that both applicants will be accepted.*

We strongly encourage organizations and/or candidates to apply even if they do not have any video experience. However, organizations nominating candidates should:

- Have the institutional capacity to integrate video into their advocacy campaign on displacement including securing access to video editing capabilities;
- Be committed to supporting their staff member(s) to develop a project during the VAW and to implement the project after the training;
- Have clearly defined and achievable advocacy goals around forced displacement;
- Have established credibility and demonstrated commitment as a non-violent human rights organization with advocacy experience around development-induced forced displacement; and
- Be willing to be part of the Displacement Video Advocacy Network and be committed to integrating video strategically in campaigns challenging development-induced forced eviction throughout the region.

Proposed participants (either with an organization or independently) should:

- Have knowledge of and experience with the issue of development-induced forced displacement, as well as general human rights principles, laws and institutions;
- Be positioned within their organization, or as an individual, to develop a project during the VAW and to implement the project by completing production, editing and strategic distribution after completing the course;
- Demonstrate understanding and imagination in the use of video in their work;
- Be sensitive to the issues which arise working in multicultural groups, and respectful of diversity;
- Be fluent in English as the VAW will be entirely in English. (Future VAWs may be held in other languages);

Selection Process

Completed applications must be submitted to the selection committee by **June 15, 2008** via the methods described on the *VAW Application*. The Selection Committee will review the applications, develop a list of finalists and notify all candidates of the status of their application by **June 30, 2008**. Coalition staff will interview finalists via telephone in order to better understand the candidates' motivation and story to be told through video, as well as assess whether the workshop can meet such needs. The phone interview will also give the candidate a forum to ask questions of coalition staff. Final assessment will be based on the criteria described above and on the coalition's capacity to support the work and provide appropriate training and guidance.

The selection process will strive for balance and diversity in terms of gender and geographical and ethnic representation. **As a general guideline, a maximum of two participants per country will be accepted.** However, should the application process bring complementary advocacy campaign(s) to our attention, the selection committee may consider this in their decision-making process.

We expect to notify all candidates of the results by **July 15, 2008.** The Coalition anticipates a large number of applications and is able to accept 15 activists to the VAW in 2008. We appreciate your understanding in this regard and encourage organizations to also review other forms of support that WITNESS offers: WITNESS' Core Partner program, Seeding Video Advocacy initiative, the Hub at <http://hub.witness.org>, and online training materials.

Course Fees / Financial Support

COURSE FEES: The subsidized cost of this course -- including all course fees, meal plan and accommodations, materials, local transport and insurance -- is \$2,860.00. VISA application fees, other visa-related expenses and travel to and from the training are not included.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: Full scholarships for the workshop are available. We encourage candidates to submit an application even if they cannot afford course fees and transportation costs. However we will take into consideration the candidate's and their organization's efforts to secure funding. Accordingly, in selecting recipients for financial support, we will consider:

- The applicant's need;
- The organization's available financial resources (if applicable) and financial commitment to the video project; and
- The individual's and/or organizational efforts to secure funding for the VAW.

In light of our efforts to equitably allocate the financial support that it can provide, we may request proof of need from the candidate and/or the nominating organization. All applicants are recommended to seek outside funding once they are admitted into VAW, as video production will add additional costs to program budgets.

Equipment

The coalition encourages participants to bring their own video equipment and/or laptop computer if they have this equipment available. This will enable participants to ask questions about their own equipment and develop strong skills on the equipment they will be using.

For participants who do not have video equipment or a computer available, we will provide all the equipment needed for the duration of the course. We will also review the need to provide participants (or, in teams from an organization, each pair) who do not have their own camera with a basic digital video camera which they may take with them after they complete the training. This review process will begin once invitations have been extended and accepted.

Program Preparation

Once accepted, participants will be expected to make preparations in advance of the course. This will maximize the benefits of the time spent at the VAW. In preparation for the course, we will ask participants to:

- Complete a **Needs Assessment** so the facilitators can tailor the course to the skills and needs of the participants;
- Complete -- in collaboration with their organizations -- a condensed and preliminary **Video Action Plan (VAP)**. The VAP is a questionnaire designed to be the starting point for thinking through a project, as well as a tool for setting realistic expectations and timelines to successfully meet goals. It is used to identify audiovisual approaches to maximize the effectiveness of communicating a message to a target audience in order to secure change;
- Participate in pre-VAW assignments that may include providing photos and additional information on their specific campaign; and
- Be in regular contact with their mentor. (see above in "Participant Expectations")

Program Follow-up

Upon completion of the course, participants will be expected to:

- Complete an evaluation of the training and follow-up questionnaires three and six months after the VAW which will gauge the effectiveness of the training and follow-up;
- Implement the advocacy video project by completing production, editing and targeted distribution within 6-12 months after course completion; and
- Participate in and contribute to the Displacement Video Advocacy Network.

Additionally, VAW alumni should offer and receive support from the coalition and members of the Video Advocacy Network; to guarantee that all alumni implement their video advocacy projects within the 6-12 month time period. This support includes:

- Review of Video Action Plans (VAP) conceived and refined during VAW;
- Review of the rough cut of the advocacy video, and concrete feedback.

Passports and Visas

PASSPORTS: Candidates must have a passport valid through **March 31, 2008**. If candidates need to obtain a new passport, we recommend that an application for one be made as soon as possible.

VISAS: Selected candidates will need to begin working on visa applications immediately upon confirmation of their acceptance, as visa applications can often be a stressful process and take a lot of time and effort. The primary responsibility to secure a visa lies with the participant. However, coalition staff will actively assist participants with this process to the full extent possible, including the provision of letters of invitation. As a general guideline, we will not cover the cost of the visa application, but will consider providing assistance to travel to the capital city or a third country if required to go to a consulate or embassy.

Venue and Accommodations

The VAW will be held at EarthRights International's Mekong School facilities and at nearby computer facilities. Participants will share rooms and bathrooms in accommodations that are clean, simple, safe and convenient. If participants do not wish to share rooms, they may pay for a room in a hotel close to the facility, at their own expense. Most meals will be provided onsite; on some days per diems will be provided to participants to cover their meals.

If you have further questions *after careful review of the Workshop Information and Guidelines*, please do not hesitate to contact the Workshop Coordinator at vaw@accountabilityproject.org or +1.415.659.0555. Thank you for your interest in the Video Advocacy Workshop.

About the Coalition

The [**International Accountability Project**](#) (IAP) challenges destructive development projects that uproot and impoverish millions of people across the Global South. Working with grassroots and international partners, IAP advocates for international policies that respect the rights and livelihoods of people threatened by unjust development, and we support communities to hold their ground and defend their homes, environment and human rights. Efforts to influence development finance institutions, corporations and governments must be accompanied by strategic interventions in the media—which in turn helps galvanize change in the political will of these institutions.

[**WITNESS**](#) uses video and online technologies to open the eyes of the world to human rights violations, empowering people to transform personal stories of abuse into powerful tools for justice, promoting public engagement and policy change. WITNESS specializes in providing video equipment and hands-on training in strategic planning for incorporating video into advocacy, camera techniques, intensive instruction in video editing, and ongoing feedback to create powerful documentaries.

[**EarthRights International**](#) combines the power of law and the power of people in the defense of human rights and the environment. It does this through its legal work, advocacy campaigns, and training of local and indigenous leaders. EarthRights has identified Video Advocacy as a critical focus area for its training, particularly in the work it is doing in the Mekong region.

The [**Unit for Social and Environmental Research**](#) (USER) is an independent research unit of Chiang Mai University in Thailand. It makes short videos and documentaries that stimulate critical social and environmental dialogues that otherwise would not happen. USER employs action research into key social and environmental issues confronting Thai society and the greater Mekong region.