FOLLOW A HERO

I don’t think people are born as human rights activist, people walk into it because you’re left with no option

Benson Olugburo, Nigeria

TRUEHEROESFILMS DIGITAL HANDHOUT

MAKING FILMS ON AND WITH HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

True Heroes Films digital workshop developed with financial support of Ville de Genevè
WHY A FILM WORKSHOP?

To raise **AWARENESS** and have an **IMPACT** in defending Human Rights
To make your voice **HEARD**
To learn professional **FILMMAKING** skills
To meet people who are **TRUE HEROES**

I don’t consider myself a human rights defender, just a citizen who is concerned about the future generation

Han Hui Hui, Singapore
THE POWER OF FILM

With a film you have the power to **EXPRESS** yourself with more impact.

With film you give people **VISIBILITY** to **PROTECT** them.

With film you can create **INSPIRING** role models.

Human rights defenders are angels of social change.
Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, Sudan
THE INTERVIEW SETTING

Create a safe space
Be sure the background is far away from the interviewee and not busy
Don’t have many people around
Don’t sit far away from interviewee and keep contact

CAMERA
Keep the camera horizontal and at the same height as the eyes of the interviewee
Put the camera on a tripod or something stable so it doesn’t shake

You have to find the strength not to buckle down to intimidation and repression
Joanna Cariño, Philippines
THE LIGHT AND 2/3 RULE

Don’t place someone in front of a window but let some light shine on them from the side and try to create some shadow as it gives depth to a face.

2/3 rule: if you divide horizontal and vertical an image in 3 parts then the main point of focus (the eyes) should be at 2/3 from the bottom and at 2/3 vertically.

On which side of the 2/3 vertical (left or right) the main focus is depends to which side the interviewee is watching. In the example here the interviewer is on the left side of the camera so the interviewee should be on the right side.

No one can say: 'I'm not afraid'
But every time you feel a bit stronger as well
Nedhal Al Salman, Bahrain
SOUND

Sound quality is often underestimated, but you better have a simple image with good sound than a great image with bad sound.

- Reduce all background noises like fans, refrigerators, open windows etc
- Be silent yourself, but nod your head to show you listen and understand
- If you can try for an interview to use a separate microphone or one of your phone headset
- Always listen to the sound recording through a headset

I attack corruption and impunity. It’s what my mother did before she was assassinated last year.

Matthew Caruana Galizia, Malta
HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS

- Start with easy questions
- Be open minded: show people that you are interested, create a conversation and do not fire questions!
- Ask open ended questions: this way they can answer with more than yes or no, ask “how” and “why”
- Be a good listener: listen so you can understand them and ask more questions
- Show the human side of the human rights defender: they are not a threat, they want the best for their community and country
- Use encouraging body language: nod your head, smile etc.
- Do not rush: allow people to think and wait some times before asking the next question

To stop doing this work would mean turning my back on people and to those without a voice
Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, Burundi
EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

• Can you tell a bit about yourself
• What does Human Rights mean to you?
• What drives you?
• What/Who helps you?
• Who inspires you?
• What keeps you going?
• Why is it important for youth to speak up?
• Is Geneva important in the struggle for human rights
• What mechanisms or laws help to protect you in your activities as defender?
• Have you faced any restrictions in your action as a human rights defender?
• What is an important lesson you learned you want to share with us?

I had to get rid of the lawyer in me, but to hold people’s hands firmly

Henri Tiphagne, India
Be respectful: the aim is to capture the human side of a human rights defender.
The most important is that someone feels empowered and inspired after an interview.

To learn more about technical elements from the great organisation WITNESS and video platform Vimeo:

INTERVIEW
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE AND SETUP
INSIDE INTERVIEW LIGHT

CAMERA
ON CAMERA ANGLES
SHALLOW DEPTH OF FIELD
LENSES AND MOVEMENT
LIGHT SETTING

SOUND
SOUND RECORDING
SOUND AMBIENCE

EDITING AND STORYTELLING
EDITING WORKFLOW
STORYTELLING

GENERAL:
WITNESS https://library.witness.org/product-category/guide/
VIMEO https://vimeo.com/blog/category/video-school

We need to go to war with all the weapons we have: a pen, a voice, a piece of paper
Mariana Katzarova, Bulgaria