

Sustainable Mystery Tour 2012

Media-Making Manual

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Introduction

This Media-Making Manual is aimed at people who are eager to bring the all-too-rarely heard voices from Europe's rural areas to a wider audience. It is part of a series of documents to support Forum Synergies' Sustainable Mystery Tour 2012 (SMT 2012).

It gives budding media makers among Forum Synergies' members, partners and friends all the tools they need to bring rural people's stories alive. The manual will help them showcase the success stories dotting Europe's landscape and to share the ideas and experiences behind them. SMT 2012's purpose is to inspire the Forum Synergies network and bring real rural voices to national and EU policy makers as they deliberate over reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy through into 2013.

The guide is pitched both at more-seasoned media makers and those who are less so, aiming to give people the help they might need without overwhelming them. Assistance is always at hand from Forum Synergies staff should the techniques seem too challenging or perplexing.

With all the options available to 21st century media makers, we have to make some choices. For SMT 2012, Forum Synergies has opted for all the benefits of cheap video

making and distribution in order to bring rural people's stories to life. This is possible thanks to new smartphone technologies and the techniques and templates developed by London video activists at visionOntv. Its people have decades of collective experience in video and documentary making and training, their expertise making it possible to sidestep the many potentially costly and time-consuming difficulties that arise in making films short or long.

If that all seems too challenging to digest, remember this: the generation below you does all this stuff and more in its sleep. This is your chance to put them back in their boxes, at least for a moment.

This approach does not imply that there's no place for success stories illustrated with text, photos, audio or a mix of different media. These ones all have different attractions and advantages and are certainly welcome as contributions to SMT 2012. The focus in this manual, however, is to guide people through tips and tricks that help to plan, execute and publish short video reports that make for compelling, convincing communications tools.

The key to making such reports is preparation. That means knowing what you're trying to get out of the exercise from the start. Forum Synergies staff have made this much easier for people by distilling out the main areas of interest for SMT 2012. They have chosen keywords to populate a planned "mosaic" of stories that together will form an eventual chorus from the countryside. By using these keywords to choose suitable success stories, and to base interviewee questions around them, media makers will both save themselves time and effort and maximise the impact of their work.

1.0 Forum Synergies messages for SMT 2012

The two main goals of SMT 2012 are as follows:

- 1) To revitalise FS:
 - a. Re-connect FS members and friends
 - b. Share success stories and collect new ones
 - c. Re-gain enthusiasm to work together for sustainable rural development
- 2) To promote Sustainable Rural Development
 - a. By empowering civil society, regional and local actors through the sharing of success stories
 - b. By showing the value/benefits of pillar II of the CAP to specific target audiences including:
 - EU level: MEPs, Members of the Council of ministers, Perm reps

- Regional level: regional authorities
- National level: farm ministers, finance ministers, heads of state, national parliaments.

From its inception, FS decided not to try to define Sustainable Rural Development (SRD) but rather to allow a definition to arise organically from real-life examples of success. The only criteria agreed were that initiatives should include a minimum of two elements, for example farming alongside nature conservation, farming coupled with on farm production, grass roots empowerment alongside job creation in rural areas, and so on.

To provide some structure to the SMT 2012, it was agreed that FS should highlight success stories from a range of thematic topics creating a “mosaic” of inspiring SRD examples. These were selected to show what is unique and typical of rural development successes. They are politically relevant in arguing for the maintenance and strengthening of pillar II (the rural development element of the CAP) and because FS felt they would be of interest to members. Success stories are needed from as many EU countries as possible. The process of assembling and sharing them will help strengthen and invigorate old FS contacts and create new ones.

This then is your challenge as media makers for SMT 2012. Your task is to gather examples that illustrate the different elements of the “mosaic”, particularly those that are most relevant politically at this stage of the CAP reform process. These include ones related to food, to economies, the environment, to ecosystems, the broad topic of energy and carbon, and finally, to decision- and policy-making processes. More detail about the mosaic and some key messages relating to each element is provided in Appendix 1.

2.0 SMT 2012 audiences

There are two main audiences for Forum Synergies SMT 2012 success stories - rural people themselves and national and European policymakers. Others will undoubtedly be intrigued to learn more of the realities of country life, and we should bear them in mind in this work, but they are secondary targets.

This dual audience means media makers might produce two or more video reports from the same case study or individual. One might look at best-practice elements, so as to share them with people in other rural communities. The other could tackle more policy-focused issues, perhaps with an interview making clear what works or doesn't for interviewees under current rules and how they hope the new CAP might help them.

For all the audiences, it is important to avoid or at least minimise, jargon-heavy language. Remember you want your fellow human beings to watch these videos, so make them as engaging as you can. A good test is whether you would watch them if you

hadn't made them.

3.0 Why the smartphone videos?

Our recommendation is to do short video reports following the visionOtv model of using smartphones video cameras. Smartphones are mobile phones (usually with 3G capacity) that have decent quality still digital cameras and video cameras (ideally with resolution of 640 x 480). Although they are expensive relative to conventional mobile phones, the up-front cost is soon offset by the opportunity to produce abundant, high-quality video with relatively little training or extra kit.

That approach produces reports that can be rapidly uploaded to the internet ([this one](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4q7w4v1rheA&feature=youtu.be) - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4q7w4v1rheA&feature=youtu.be> - is an example of what can be done with an iPhone).

The reason for using this approach is that it greatly increases the chances that a video gets made and gets published, something that is very often not the case with other sorts of video-making approaches. You could do a similar thing by using a standard DV or HD camera to film short, as-live interviews in the same way but there would be additional work involved to capture the footage to a computer and then to process it. All of that stands in the way of an interview getting done.

The smartphone approach also means shooting video reports "as live", as if they are going straight out on air. It helps interviewers and interviewees focus on delivering genuine, natural responses without the idea that there will be subsequent editing out of responses. It changes the nature of an interview and livens people up. That means reports are more likely to be viewed and shared, which increases their impact.

Aside from their practical advantages, smartphone videos are more sympathetic to non-native speakers of the interview language. Audiences accept people's language levels more readily when they can see and hear the speakers, being less forgiving of the same thing in written text. This is a huge benefit of using this medium for the SMT 2012.

One constraint that people raise is that smartphone interviews require a two-person team, one putting the questions and another working the camera, which makes them more complicated to arrange. This is true but then it is also usually the case for conventional video. You can turn this apparent constraint into a positive by engaging in a bit of media-making capacity building when you do your report. Use the people around you to operate the smartphone camera while you do the interviews. Most people have decent visual skills, perhaps honed from watching TV, cinema and taking pictures, even though they might not know it.

All that introductory talk won't have answered the most critical questions though. These include how on Earth do you do these reports and what equipment might you need?

For the how to, visionOntv uses simple templates that explain how to do various different types of smartphone report. The two-person template we recommend is available in basic form from <http://visionon.tv/wiki/-/wiki/Main/Votv01.5> or [here](#). For short, let's call it the VOTV 1.5 template.

Others that maybe of interest include one for short, single-person video reports and another for picture animations. The latter uses still pictures, with or without accompanying audio, to make what can be an engaging alternative to video reports:

One-person:

<http://visionon.tv/mobile>

Picture animation:

<http://visionon.tv/photo>

The next sections flesh out the interview process using the two-person, or VOTV 1.5, template. It explains how to select interview subjects, prepare for interviews, to execute them and then publish the results.

4.0 How to identify suitable interview targets

Starting with FS mosaic, media makers should consider what rural development success stories they could illustrate as part of SMT 2012, starting with the place in which they live. FS foresee three main sources of material - their own events, external ones that feature people and projects that demonstrate SRD success stories that fit the SMT 2012 mosaic and own-initiative visits by media makers to selected people and projects.

Having identified those people and projects, as featured in any of the three event types, media makers might want to check in with FS staff to signal their intentions. They might want more tips or advice on questions to those outlined in Appendix 2. Choosing what to highlight will determine whether there could be different interviews for different audiences, and also perhaps different interview languages, so as to make for the richest possible media content.

5.0 Interview preparation

The VOTV 1.5 template is for a two-person production team, comprising the smartphone camera operator and an interviewer. You, as the SMT 2012 media maker, can choose to be either the camera operator or interviewer and you will have to "recruit" the second person if you haven't brought them along with you.

This is certainly a challenge but in no way an impossible one. It is one worth overcoming for all the advantages offered by this way of producing video reports. It's also an opportunity to have some fun - to capacity build video-making skills in others and to engage people in the SMT 2012 process. It is best to embrace this challenge head on

from the start - which means becoming an emissary for citizen journalism and grassroots media making.

Preparing as the interviewer

The advantage of being the interviewer is that you know about the SMT 2012 objectives, target audiences and the areas of coverage we hope to communicate with our media making. These determine the interview questions and focus.

You might shoot a couple of interviews with the same person, one for rural audiences and one for policy makers. It helps to picture your intended audience that is local, national, EU or even global. That has implications for both the language used and the technical policy terms employed. Those choices depend on the knowledge and language skills of the interviewer and interviewee (less so of the camera operator, though it does have implications for the operator if they don't understand a word of the language being used in an interview).

Tips for the interviewer (see also Appendix XX on interview questions)

1. This is not a strictly journalistic exercise - we have clear objectives about the messages that we want to communicate from the countryside and how they relate to sustainable rural development (SRD). That means interviewers should plan the ideas and questions for what will be a fairly short interview.
 - what is the interview focus? (renewable energy, local food, grassroots decision-making etc.)
 - what do you need to get across in this self-contained package (where are you, who are you talking to, what do they do, why is it interesting, where can the viewer go for more information - more about this later)
 - what level of knowledge are you assuming among your audience/audiences (if you're doing several versions of the same interview, this can of course vary)
2. Keep the questions simple - remember that even technically minded audience members, policy makers and so on, are human. Talk to your interviewee in simple, non-technical language where possible and encourage them to do the same. Have a picture of your target audience in your mind and encourage your interviewee to do the same. Create the idea that you are a communications team - distinct from the conventional, often-more-adversarial approach used in journalistic interviews. Keep questions simple!
3. Help interviewees develop their answers - your objective is to communicate the essence of their example. Are there useful or relevant facts and figures that nail the story they are telling? How many cows per hectare? How many households fed? What sort of species are they trying to encourage? How are things different from the way things are done elsewhere? What choices did they make to arrive

at this stage?

4. It bears repeating - emphasise simplicity of language. If ordinary non-technical people don't get it, you're probably being too technical. Countryside stories are about food, energy, housing, local culture, local plants and wildlife, the quality of the habitat, clean water - keep this in mind while holding the SMT 2012 objectives in the back of your mind. You don't need to use technical terms unless there are a specific policy issue to address.

Buoy up the interviewee - put them at their ease, make them forget the camera and remind them that they know tonnes about this subject.

5. Plan a visual backdrop to the interview that helps to communicate what you're talking about (this is also the responsibility of the camera operator). If it's about renewable energy - think about a "word picture" that communicates that. If it's about food production - same thing. It's simple to incorporate this into the backdrop in a way that reinforces the message to be communicated and which also enlivens the audience experience (which means they don't lose interest and click away elsewhere).
6. Switch any mobile phones to flight mode as they always go off during interviews, which spoils the sound and stops the interview.
7. Keep in mind the interview length - the shorter the better for audience attention span and for file size. You could run to 10 minutes but ask yourself the question: would you watch this film if you hadn't made it? People are busy. You can communicate an awful lot in five minutes, even three. Keep the target time in mind during the interview, limit yourself to three questions, shoot a second interview if there is another subject that you want to tackle with the same person rather than shooting one long interview.

The good thing about shooting "as-live" and shooting short, and telling your interviewee in advance that this is the plan, is that you keep things simple. It also means you can warn the interviewee you may interrupt an answer if it's running too long. Remind the interviewee that you can always shoot it again.

8. Do as many takes as you need - don't be embarrassed and don't make the interviewee embarrassed. If you make a mistake - have another go. Don't worry.
9. If you get an OK take - don't delete from the phone even if you plan to shoot another. It's great to have a satisfactory one "in the can" even if it's not perfect.
10. Ask the interviewee to keep silent for a couple of seconds at the end of the sign off to allow the piece to conclude.

Preparing the interviewee

Putting interviewees at their ease and explaining to them the aim and scope of an interview will do wonders for chances of success. This is where the ultimate quality of the report is determined, so it's a key part of the process.

1. Once you've identified who you want to interview, and have an idea of what element of the SMT 2012 mosaic their story illustrates, sit them down to prepare.
2. **Scope the topic:** ask the interviewee some simple questions about who they are and what they do. This gives you a better understanding of what they are talking about. If you already know them well, go straight to the more specific, interview-related topics.
3. Lay out the basic questions you will ask during the interview to clarify the topic and to be more specific. This will help the interviewee structure their thinking and identify more clearly their key messages. Make it clear who they are addressing, whether they are talking to other FS members, a rural audience or decision-makers.
4. **Seek to better understand:** paraphrase of their answers to get a better understanding of what they are saying. It is helpful for interviewees to hear what they have just said. So tell them what you understand them to have said: "if I understand you correctly this means that.....". This helps ensure messages are clear and, if you are working with non-native language speakers, you can just check that you are fully understanding them.
5. **Bottom-line their message:** this means you summarise back to the interviewee what you understand as their key message. Some people find it hard, especially when nervous, to be brief and to get to the key point, so help them. Summarise what you think is/are their key points: "So what you're saying is that we need more support for rural areas through the rural development pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy?" or "So what you're saying is that civil society needs to be engaged in planning from the start?" Try to extract, with them, their key messages.
6. **Champion the interviewee:** this is just a big term to help the interviewee feel more enthusiastic and relaxed about the interview. It involves telling them what you think is great about what they are about to tell you. You have to feel genuinely that what they will tell you is great to do this, as doing it mechanically will just be fake. So tell them why you think their project's so good, why its message is so important for rural areas or helpful to communicate to Brussels-based decision-makers. You could say things like: "What you have to say about helping civil society engage in rural development is so important, and something that decision-makers really need to hear. I am so excited about being able to help you communicate this." This will make both of you feel more relaxed.

7. **Explain what comes next:** outline the interview format, how you will introduce the interview, put your questions and then conclude with a short summary to the camera (see below for the specifics).

Tips for the camera operator (see also Appendix XX on smartphone equipment)

1. Check sound levels for the interviewer and interviewee and remind the interviewer to direct the microphone at the speaker. Are the microphone batteries working? (Always have spares in your pocket/bag).
2. Check smartphone battery - is it charged? Video interviews can be power hungry.
3. Check the visual backdrop for the interview for visual content. Does the backdrop help illustrate the subject or at least not distract from the subject?
4. Don't shoot straight into the light but also be careful to avoid the interviewer or interviewee being blinded by strong light. Avoid colours being all washed out by strong light and avoid strong contrasts between sun and shade in single shots.
5. Choose a video resolution setting of around 640 x 480. This is a compromise between image quality (higher resolution = higher quality) and file size (higher resolution = larger files).
6. Switch all mobile phones to flight mode.
7. Think about interviewer/interviewee clothing - no checked shirts/strong stripes if you can avoid them.
8. Check the smartphone memory capacity available for shooting by deleting old files before interviews.

6.0 Doing the interview

For the interviewer

You've prepared your questions, you've briefed your interviewee and run through all the necessary checks. Now it's time to shoot the interview.

Sticking to the VOTV1.5 template helps maximise your chances of producing a useable interview.

For the interviewer, that means starting the interview with a short introduction about

the place, the person and the subject matter - no more than one or two sentences. Your aim with the video is to produce a self-contained package of information that stands on its own, without the need for any other explanation.

To do this, you need to bring your audience to the place you're talking about (We're here in X, in country Y), the person you're interviewing (I'm talking to Z) and why you're talking to them (who's going to tell us about ABC). All of this serves as a brief introduction. It's what's technically called a "piece to camera" (PTC) in which the interviewer talks directly to the camera.

So in summary say:

- where you are (geography and nature of the place)
- who you are talking to (name, what they do)
- about what

You then turn to the interview for your questions:

Q1

Answer 1

Q2

Answer

Q3

Answer

Interviewing is an inexact practice - you have to be flexible and prepared to take things as they come. That might mean having to adapt your questions as the interview proceeds, interrupting the interviewee or adding another question, even repeating one already asked, depending on how things run. Keep an eye to the time and be prepared to shoot the piece again if it doesn't work.

Once the interviewee has answered the last question, the interviewer concludes with a second piece to camera, this one a short summary and sign off. The exact format is up to the interviewer but try to incorporate the following elements:

- so that was who
- they were speaking as part of the Forum Synergies Sustainable Mystery Tour 2012
- if you want to learn more, you can go to (FS website, forum-synergies.eu or somesuch - to be decided)

Other things to remember for the interviewer

- move the microphone from self to interviewee depending on the speaker
- keep questions brief
- keep idea of interview time/length

- be prepared to interrupt
- relax, smile, breathe
- encourage the interviewee with your attention
- keep a couple of seconds silence at the end of the signoff

Once it's done:

- did the interview work?
- do you need to reshoot it?
- if yes, do it straight away if you can.

For the camera operator

There are **five** basic shot types to use during the course of an interview using the VOTV1.5 template. They are interspersed with switching between shots using "rapid pans" - moving the camera from one shot to another in a single, smooth, quick transition. The effect of this is to replace the traditional edits used in video reports - momentary fades to black and so on.

By sticking to the template's five shots, at least for the first few attempts and ideally longer, you improve the chances of getting a viewable video report.

Remember to tuck in your elbows to stop your arms getting tired, keep your fingers away from the smartphone camera aperture and always shoot in "landscape" (Remember: no one ever watches TVs on their sides).

You need to get in closer to interview subjects than a normal camera would be - don't be shy about that but also try to be as discreet as possible so as not to disturb the interview. You also need to get the interviewer and interviewee to stand **CLOSE TOGETHER**.

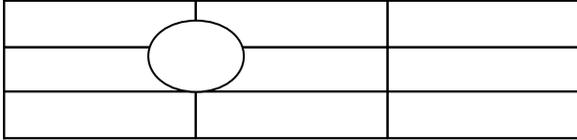
These are the template's five shots:

Shot 1 - PTC central shot of the interview addressing the camera. Tight in on interviewer - get close up!

Shot 2 - Shoot over the interviewer's shoulder to the interviewee, this joins the two people together. The interviewer puts the first question and the interviewee responds.

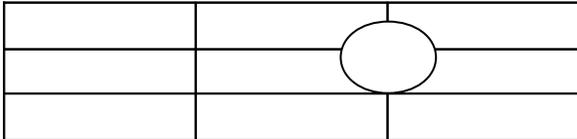
Shot 3 - Close up of the interviewee. This is a full-face shot, not one shot from the side, so that you can see both eyes in the shot. Think of framing the subject so as to split the screen 2/3rds to 1/3rd (horizontally and vertically) putting the interviewee at the intersection of the lines and looking into the frame.

Either:



Interviewee/r needs to look this way →

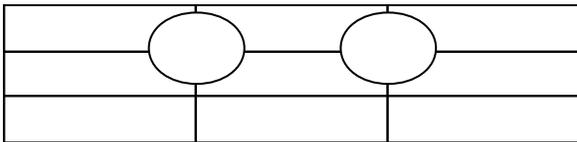
Or:



Interviewee/r needs to look this way ←

Shot 4 - Close up of the interviewer. As for Shot 3

Shot 5 - Two-shot of the interviewer and the interviewee - both in picture. Get them to stand close together



Interviewer/interviewee looking at one another → ←

Remember to pause for two seconds or so at the end of the interviewer's sign-off piece to camera - hold steady then hit the stop button.

Before moving on - you need to check is the picture OK, is the sound OK and did the camera record the interview (Really, it does happen that they don't get recorded). Yes to all of these means it's a wrap, as they say.

7.0 Interview publication - code and upload

After the interview, transfer the video files to a laptop or desktop computer. As of May 2012, the exact procedure for titling reports, writing short descriptive texts and the "tags" or keywords used by internet search engines to locate material, has yet to be settled.

More details will be posted in due course on the Forum Synergies website. This will explain how people can do the coding and uploading, perhaps through a dedicated FS YouTube or Dailymotion video account on the internet. There might also be a common

Gmail account and use of Google docs and/or Dropbox to share files and information.

Leaving those details aside, there are jobs that all media makers will need to do to complete each of their videos. Writing the report title is perhaps the trickiest part - condensing several minutes of interview into 50 or so characters is not easy. Doing the text description is a little easier, though again, it should exceed 250-300 characters. The challenge is to get across the essence of the interview in a way that will draw a potential viewer to click on the video and watch it.

The “tags” are easier to do though no less important to the video’s dissemination. They should include the place the interview highlights, the names of the interviewee, the interviewer, the camera operator and the mosaic keyword or words. Others should include: CAP, Common Agricultural Policy, CAP reform, European Union, SMT 2012, Forum Synergies. Don’t forget to include your own name and organisation too, if you wish.

8.0 Interview promotion

As for the publication section, the exact plan for video promotion has set to be finalised at the time of writing. The sorts of questions due to be addressed in the coming weeks include whether Forum Synergies should create a Twitter account or Facebook page for the SMT 2012.

What all media makers can do to help is to draw up a list of relevant local, national or rural specialist media to whom they can send details of the interviews and the SMT 2012 more generally. Both the initiative itself and the materials should be of interest to them and could serve as media content when they do stories on the CAP reform process or related meetings of farm ministers or others working on rural policy at the national or EU levels.

Another approach media makers might like to consider is to organise local screenings of SMT 2012 materials, perhaps in association with screenings of relevant documentaries on rural issues, ones such as Bettina Borgfeld’s Raising Resistance or countless others. Forum Synergies might draw up a list of suitable ones in the coming months to help inspire regular screenings.

Conclusions

Making video reports can all seem a bit of a mystery if you haven’t done one before but they’re not as hard as all that. For those who are familiar with regular video making, the advantages of the smartphone approach in terms of time and energy saved for a very satisfactory result are nothing short of revelatory.

Using sound and moving pictures to communicate a message can bring messages alive, infusing arguments with a life and energy that is rarely possible with the printed word. Decent-quality video reports, as those produced with smartphones can certainly be, can

transcend or at least step past potential barriers of culture and language between different parts of Europe. They offer great promise for bringing rural voices, and broader understanding of the challenges rural people face, to far wider voices than has previously been possible.

For anyone passionate about rural issues, this approach holds great promise for improving the status quo using a reasoned and reasonable approach. Combining video reports with the ever-spreading impact of the internet presents wonderful opportunities for having enormous, positive influence on the reformed Common Agricultural Policy.

Not before time, as many would say.

Appendix 1: SMT 2012 mosaic

The “mosaic” will be composed of the following elements, with those marked ** being the SMT 2012 priorities for highlighting issues related to the ongoing CAP reform process:

****Food**

- Production
- Cost
- Local food systems (local marketing stories/short supply chains)

****Economy**

- Diversification
- Marketing
- Supply chain

****Process**

- Top down vs bottom up approaches to decision-making
- Innovation
- Participation

****Ecosystem/habitat/ biodiversity******Environment:**

- Landscape preservation
- Water, soil and air

****Energy:**

- Carbon rich soils (sequestration)
- Biogas
- Renewable energy

Policy**Tourism****Services****Health****Transport****Green services and IT****Space/Places****Culture****Education****Social aspects****Population****New forms of agriculture****Knowledge**

Appendix 2: visionOntv templates**VOTV template 1.5 (from <http://visionon.tv/wiki/-/wiki/Main/Votv01.5>)**

The "Shoot and Go" interview news report#

On the right half of the front page: box at the bottom

For this template, you need a smart phone, a microphone, and a special adapter. Get help [http://visionon.tv/wiki/-/wiki/Main/Smart phone tech](http://visionon.tv/wiki/-/wiki/Main/Smart_phone_tech)

Recording and uploading video will really drain your battery. Make sure your phone is fully charged!

Run a test.

Plug in the adapter, mike and headphones. Record a test by speaking into the mike and tapping it. Can you hear the mike when you play back through headphones?

On the inside left page:

BUDDY UP

You and a mate can use a mobile phone camera to make and distribute a news report in just 20 minutes. One of you does the filming while the other does the interview.

THE PREP

Find a quiet space.

Interviewer should have an informal chat with your interviewee to find out the most interesting / funny / outrageous thing they have to say.

The camera guy should practice framing her shots during this.

THE INTERVIEW

Stand as close as you can to the interviewee and tell them to talk to you, NOT the camera.

Middle of left-hand page PIC of interviewer and interviewee: the interviewer has her arm around the interviewee

1. Intro to camera - where and who
2. The interview (get the interviewee to tell one story and keep it short!)
3. Sign off to camera - your name and organisation

SHORTER THE BETTER. 2 to 3 mins is good! Split longer interviews into separate shows.

THE SHOOTING

There are ONLY 5 shots.

1. DIRECT TO CAMERA interviewer does intro at the beginning and sign-off at the end.
Optional extra: PAN ROUND from the scene to interviewer's intro (ESTABLISHER) - this is small box text.

2. OVER-THE-SHOULDER interviewer looking at the interviewee

3. CLOSE-UP interviewee (avoid the one-eye profile shot)

4. CLOSE-UP interviewer

5. 2-SHOT of both

Change your shot every 5 to 20 seconds, following the flow of the conversation.

Make your transitions fast and smooth, this takes practice.

For reliable upload go to your local coffee shop and use wifi. For more uploading advice go to <http://visionon.tv/wiki/-/wiki/Main/Upload> from mobile

"Stick to the template, please!"

Appendix 3: Interview questions

Use the mosaic (Appendix 1) to narrow the interview focus and provide a background context for interviews. Having done that, then make sure to use everyday language as much as possible for the element chosen. Remember you have to capture and keep your audience's attention - that means talking about interesting topics in an interesting way - not being some sort of policy robot. You can talk about policy, of course, but remember to keep it as jargon free as possible, always relating it back to the reality of the example or success story being covered.

Regardless of the mosaic element chosen, interviewers need to bring audience members to the place of the interview with a brief word picture at the start of the piece. Answer the questions where, who and what to get the ball rolling. Once questions are done, briefly summarise and signoff, taking the audience back out to a bigger picture and the place they can go to find more such stories and their wider context.

There are no hard rules for what questions to ask during interviews. Imposing them would create false-sounding interviews in any case and would also tend to produce a whole series of proforma reports following the exact same format. You need to plan for interviews but then also to adapt to the way they unfold, just as you would in a conversation. That said, there is no escaping the fact that all interviews are ultimately theatre pieces with an element of performance.

For guidance sake, the following is an example of the interview preparation process used during the May 2012 FS training in Estonia, for a piece done with a representative of the Estonian village association Kodukant.

Kodukant was chosen to illustrate the "process" element of the SMT mosaic - how rural development benefits from a bottom-up approach that empowers local actors. Two target audiences were to be addressed in two separate interviews. The following questions were brainstormed for the two interviews as part of the training, an illustration of how to plan questions.

Interview 1:

Target audience: this was aimed at other FS members and rural actors.

Preparatory questions to discuss with interviewee:

- What is the value of a rural parliament?
- What is Kodukant?
- Where did the idea of a rural parliament come from?
- How did Kodukant become part of the government's decision-making process on CAP?

- How do you implement a bottom-up approach?
- How does the rural parliament work?
- How does Kodukant work at different levels?
- What is Kodukant's greatest achievement?
- How could where I live benefit from rural parliament? What is the benefit of a rural parliament to other rural areas, like where I live?

Final questions selected:

1. What is Kodukant? (what does it mean)
2. Explain how Kodukant evolved?
3. What are the main achievements as Kodukant?
4. What are the benefits of this structure for a rural community?

Interview 2:

Target audience: this interview was aimed at decision-makers at a European or national level.

Preparatory questions to discuss with interviewee:

- What is happening in rural life in Estonia and what role does Kodukant play?
- What do you want need from Brussels / from a new Common Agricultural Policy?
- What do you want to tell policy makers in Brussels or nationally?
- How has the CAP helped you? What is the best and worst thing that has come out of the CAP for you in Estonia?

Final questions asked:

5. What is happening in rural areas in Estonia?
6. What is the best and the worst thing that came from the old cap
7. What do you need or want from the new cap.

Appendix 4: smartphone interview equipment basics

There are numerous makes of smartphones, each with multiple models, so this section is in no way an attempt to draw up a comprehensive list. In broad terms, there are iPhones and there are android phones.

For iPhones, there is a microphone called iRig which sets up phones for video interview reports with good sound quality. The standard would certainly meet all our needs for SMT 2012. In the UK, the iRig would cost about £40 if bought online via this link (<http://amzn.to/JdbPgQ>). There are some issues for using iPhones to do with compressing what are HD files to less than 100 MB. The following are tips from the independent journalist [Glenn McMahon](http://glennmcmahon470.wordpress.com/) (<http://glennmcmahon470.wordpress.com/>).

You can send the uncompressed file direct to youtube from the iPhone but this is slow and unnecessary. Instead, open the file in the iMovie app on the phone (only costs a few pounds and is worth it for many reasons) then send it back to the iPhone camera roll (where all pics/videos are stored). This offers the option of making it medium, large or HD - choose large.

The new file will be one half to one third the size it was before and may now be less than 100MB, which can be sent direct to youtube from the phone or download it to a PC and upload from there.

If the file still exceeds 100MB then I pass it through avidemux (free to download) where you open the video clip, set the video dropdown box to MPEG4-ASP, set the dropdown audio box to AAC (Faac) and set the dropdown format box to MP4 before saving the video and as a .MP4 file. This will further compress it.

For android phones, such as the Samsung Galaxy II, what you need is a basic microphone, such as this one (<http://amzn.to/LagfSD>) and something called an audio "splitter" (<http://bit.ly/wOXBsW>). You can then use these to record decent-quality audio and video.

Though the upfront investment might seem high, of the order of several hundred pounds or maybe 500 euros, that should be seen in the context of conventional video and sound equipment with accompanying video edit software. Combine that with the time and energy saving benefits of the smartphone approach and it starts to look much, much cheaper.

If cost is an issue, consider buying smartphones collectively or using an organisation's equipment or outreach budget. It will be money well spent.

Ends