We’ve raised their voice. Is anyone listening?
Participatory video practitioners and valued citizen voice in international development contexts

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Abstract

Scholars have long argued that all citizens raising their voices to participate in decision-making as well as challenging injustice, enhances democracy. In turn, governments who are more accountable to their citizens and able to respond to multiple voices, foster civil, equitable societies. With this ethos, strengthening the voice of people living in poverty and marginalisation has become a vital part of global poverty-reduction goals. In this environment, international development institutions are increasingly seeking ways to use participatory media processes to raise citizen voice. Here, participatory video (PV) stands out as an attractive communication for development (C4D) approach. Practitioners who facilitate PV processes often promote the methodology as intrinsically empowering as it amplifies the voice of citizens often excluded from mainstream decision-making spaces. In this way, PV practice embodies both the glamour of filmmaking and a compelling narrative as a community-driven process.

Through an often-evangelised discourse, a predominant assumption is that the grassroots, collaborative filmmaking process naturally leads to transformative social and/or political change. The non-critical conclusion, however, is on a slippery slope in its ideological claim. In practice, transformative change with PV is far from absolute—especially when seeking significant response to the systemic injustices PV participants often face. Accordingly, more research is required into how PV practice might sufficiently raise citizen voice when situated in international development contexts. The resulting knowledge can help PV practitioners navigate complex development environments that hold potential to either enable or diminish the voices of society’s most vulnerable citizens.

This thesis offers a study on the nuanced understandings of and the interplay between PV, citizen voice and international development. The study investigates contemporary PV practitioners’ conceptualisations of the phenomenon of using PV to raise citizen voice in international development contexts. The study participants were 25 global PV practitioners who had experience on more than 650 PV projects. Of those projects, approximately 250 specifically aimed to raise the voice of excluded groups in international development contexts. Through investigating the PV practitioners’ perceptions of the phenomenon, the study identified three distinct epistemologies relevant to PV practice and raising citizen voice. The study called these the amplified, engaged and equitable voice pathways.
Making the three categories explicit is of critical value to the PV field. They provide a language and theoretical grounding for why certain PV approaches may be more effective than others for social and/or political change. Of the three pathways, the research ultimately deemed equitable voice as the most viable for citizen voice to be both authentically representative and respectively valued in decision-making spaces.

Accordingly, the study drew from scholarship and the characteristics within the equitable voice pathway to develop a conceptual framework for raising valued citizen voice with PV. The framework offers five key principles; named as personal recognition, collective representation, social and political recognition, responsive listening and empathic relationships. While having a framework is valuable for PV practice, the study also recognised that a conceptual framework in itself is often insufficient. Its viability requires an enabling environment for meaningful application. Thus, the research also identified six institutional views of PV practice in international development contexts with potential to diminish voice. It named them as the output-focused, voice opportunity, apolitical, agenda-led, harmless and uncomplicated views. These were views the PV practitioners in the study described as constraining their ideals in practice. The views ranged from institutions prioritising PV film outputs over political dialogue to institutions setting agendas with potential to suppress authentic citizen voice. The study interrogated the identified institutional views to discover their differing possibilities for legitimising or limiting citizen voice.

The thesis concludes by encouraging three areas of consideration for participatory video to enhance citizen voice in democratic decision-making processes. First, it proposes deliberate attention on strengthening voice representation and voice receptivity in PV activities to reduce social and political inequity. Second, it promotes recognition of how political and institutional environments influence PV’s ability to raise citizen voice sufficiently. Third, it suggests greater reflection on how PV practitioners’ conceptualisations of voice affect citizen voice outcomes; and how practitioners might use their own agency to ensure meaningful change. Such forethought and action expands possibilities for PV practice to support citizen voice in being heard, valued and influential.
Declaration by author

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

I have clearly stated the contribution of others to my thesis as a whole, including statistical assistance, survey design, data analysis, significant technical procedures, professional editorial advice, and any other original research work used or reported in my thesis. The content of my thesis is the result of work I have carried out since the commencement of my research higher degree candidature and does not include a substantial part of work that has been submitted to qualify for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. I have clearly stated which parts of my thesis, if any, have been submitted to qualify for another award.

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None.
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Keywords

participatory video, development, citizen, voice, listening, communication, social change, phenomenography

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200103 International and Development Communication, 60%
160805 Social change, 25%

Fields of Research (FoR) Classification

FoR code: 2001 Communication and Media Studies, 75%
FoR code: 1608, Sociology, 25%
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community-Based Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Climate Change Adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Culture-Centred Approach (to social change communication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4D</td>
<td>Communication for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFC</td>
<td>Challenge for Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CfSC</td>
<td>Communication for Social Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVU</td>
<td>Community Video Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRR</td>
<td>Disaster Risk Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GB</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDS</td>
<td>Institute of Development Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Government Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Public Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PV</td>
<td>Participatory Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEWA</td>
<td>Self-Employed Women’s Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UQ</td>
<td>The University of Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCCD</td>
<td>World Congress on Communication for Development</td>
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Participatory video: A definition

Participatory video for raising voice is a creative, transformative learning methodology that can, through reflexive filmmaking processes, raise awareness; develop and empower individuals and groups; amplify voice for engaged dialogue and listening; socially and politically mobilise; foster equitable relationships; and accelerate social change and justice.¹

¹ Definition developed through the research supporting the thesis, as described in Section 4.1.2.
Prologue: Reflections

In 2009, a research institute hired me for my first paid participatory video consultancy in a developing country. My job was to facilitate a collective filmmaking process that would raise children’s voice on the vulnerabilities they face from a changing climate. I worked in partnership with an international non-government organisation (NGO) based in the country. On the third day of training, we had the children take the video camera to their hotel room in the evening to practice their skills. On their own initiative, they wrote, filmed and acted in a short, fervent play about violence at home affecting their lives. The film ended with one of the children singing passionately about the change he wanted to see in his village. When the NGO staff and I watched the crudely made video, it was clear that the movie was the children’s unfiltered voice and the story they most wanted to share when given the means to do so. Yet I could do little to bring this story to life on film as it required knowledge and sensitivity to the context that I had little time to build. My role was to work with the children on a film about climate change in a very short workshop, and we still had much to do.

On one hand, as a Western consultant I wielded immense power in designing and facilitating the PV activity we were frantically trying to complete. On the other hand, I shared the same constraints as the organisation’s staff obligated to a pre-determined NGO mission to build the climate change resilience of a particular rural community. Hence, my role was limited, and time was running short. I had a flight to catch and another PV project on the horizon. Professionally, the organisation deemed the PV activity a success as it raised the children’s voices on the topic at hand. Yet for me, when I watch their final climate change film, I see an “incomplete narrative” (Lutunatabua, 2015). In one way, the narrative exemplifies the empowering potential of children’s ability to voice to their concerns in a society that rarely values young people’s opinions. However, this is not the full story.

2 I had recently completed my MA at the Institute of Development Studies in Participation, Power and Social Change. For my MA research, I lived in Nepal for a year and worked with local NGO partners to explore: How can participatory video support marginalised groups in their efforts to adapt to a changing climate? (Plush, 2009b).
As the PV facilitator, I worked with the children to support their right to engage with local and national policy decisions that typically exclude their voice. To this end, I was confident we were making a positive difference in their lives as they ultimately engaged with their parents, peers and community members on the climate impacts and solutions they had identified in their films. The organisation also used the films for national child rights advocacy in the area of climate change. Yet, when I thought about the children’s self-made movie on domestic violence, my stomach clenched. I wondered: Did my solidarity ideals for the children’s right to speak blind me to PV’s potential to diminish voice as well as raise it? By working through a prescribed development agenda, was I complicit in a misguided notion of voice? What was my role and responsibility in international development contexts as a facilitator of stories?

It is in these dilemmatic tensions of PV practice that my PhD exploration began. Through the investigative journey, my aim is that a more complete narrative can emerge for using participatory video with people whose voices most need to be heard and responded to. This is the story this thesis tells; and the practice it aims to re-imagine through the telling.
1. Introduction

We know of course there's really no such thing as the “voiceless.”
There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard.

1.1 Why raise citizen voice?
The international development sector recognises that strengthening the voice of citizens living in poverty is vital for reducing inequity. In support, participatory video (PV) is increasingly being utilised as communicative method that can stimulate community engagement and amplify the voice of groups often excluded from decision-making spaces. However, implementing PV processes in such environments is an immensely complex proposal. To delve into the complexities, the research in this thesis explores how PV practitioners can enable valued citizen voice in international development contexts. To begin, the chapter summarises why raising citizen voice with PV is valuable for democratic decision-making. It then presents different uses of PV to raise voice. It continues by positioning PV practitioners as powerful actors worthy of study in relation to raising citizen voice. The chapter concludes by offering the research objectives, key terminology and an overview of the thesis structure.

International development institutions have long placed priority on enhancing democratic governance through underrepresented people being able to raise their voices to challenge the injustices they face (Cornwall, Robins, & Von Lieres, 2011, p. 8). The intention is to address the poverty trap of “limited citizenship,” where people lack “political voice and effective representation” (Hulme & Lawson, 2010, p. 264). Through this lens, development institutions often regard raising citizen voice as foundational for holding the state accountable to its political obligations (Gaventa & McGee, 2013, p. 9; O'Neil, Foresti, Hudson, & Britain, 2007, p. V). Such obligations include equal and equitable distribution of resources and services. Consequently, strengthening the voice of people living in poverty towards greater government accountability has become a vital part of wider poverty-reduction goals (Klugman et al., 2014, p. 156; Migliorisi & Wescott, 2011, p. 3). Here, social accountability as a process of “citizen engagement and the public responsiveness of states and corporations” has moved to the forefront of good governance pursuits.
In this way, citizen voice operates as a catalyst for “public institutions more responsive” to ordinary people’s needs and demands and therefore “more accountable to their actions” (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010, p. 12). Similarly, contemporary communication for development (C4D)\(^3\) scholars insist that historically erased voices must be privileged in “discursive spaces” to evoke inequitable structural transformation (Dutta, 2011, p. 169; Servaes, 2008, p. 21). To this end, interest is growing in how participatory media can encourage citizenship and responsive governance (Askanius, 2014, p. 453; High, Singh, Petheram, & Nemes, 2012, p. 39; Tremblay, 2013, p. 177).

C4D and media scholars argue that participatory communicative approaches should achieve more than mere access to media for ordinary citizens to create their own messages for government response (Carpentier, 2014, p. 1002; Gumucio-Dagron, 2001, p. 25; Jenkins & Carpentier, 2013, p. 271). Rather, reducing poverty and inequity requires C4D approaches that prioritise transformative politics, equitable power relations, human rights and social justice (Askanius, 2014, p. 138; Dutta, 2011, pp. 7, 8; Servaes, 2013, p. 369). For raising citizen voice, people who work in international development contexts have been especially keen to adopt PV processes that can strengthen, amplify and legitimise the voice of people living in poverty (Khamis, Plush, & Zelaya, 2009, p. 130; Wheeler, 2011, p. 55). The PV methodology differs from documentary filmmaking and even advocacy or activism video. This is where external filmmakers work closely with community members to construct a film about their situation for education or mobilisation purposes (Gregory & Gábridel, 2005, p. 11). PV has similar goals for experiential learning and collective action. However, PV also prioritises iterative, reflexive processes of filmmaking, viewings and dialogue to support citizens in representing themselves privately and publically (Braden, 1999, p. 1; Milne, Mitchell, & de Lange, 2012b, p. 1; Plush, 2012, p. 77).

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\(^3\) In this field, various terminologies are used: Communication for Development (C4D), Communication for Social Change (CSC or CiSC), Development Communication (DevCom), Communication for Development and Social Change (C4DSC), participatory communication, etc. (Thomas & Van de Fliert, 2015, p. 20). For consistency in the thesis, I have adopted Communication for Development (C4D) as representative of the field.
The discourse surrounding participatory video is especially compelling for strengthening citizenship and good governance (Corneil, 2012, p. 32; Low, Rose, Salvio, & Palacios, 2012, p. 61). The methodology is known for instigating local knowledge-gathering, prompting rich discussions, mobilising citizens around harmful policies and making governments more accountable in their work (Khamis et al., 2009, p. 131; Plush, 2009b, p. 22; Wheeler, 2011, p. 48). To such ends, the underlying motivation for using PV is to achieve social and political change outcomes (Milne et al., 2012b, p. 2; Plush, 2012, p. 67). PV has potential to fulfil Mohan Dutta’s (2012a) arguments for using C4D activities to open up “policy spaces and spaces of interventions to the voices of subaltern communities” (p. 63). It can also “co-construct alternative rationalities of knowledge claims” (Dutta, 2011, p. 95).

A prevailing argument is that PV aimed at raising citizen voice can be transformative. Change occurs as people gain knowledge and skills for navigating situations of power that often diminish or deny their voice (Teitelbaum, 2012, p. 412; White, 2003, p. 63). Such a claim, however, necessitates both caution and scrutiny. This especially the case when PV operates within a development sector that tends to locate its work within a neoliberal reality (Bernal & Grewal, 2014, p. 115; Klak et al., 2011, p. 46). Of concern is that neoliberalism can diminish or shut out the voices of the least powerful in society through agendas that privilege “economically powerful actors” (Dutta, 2014, p. 68). Another worry is that PV practitioners themselves are often naïve to the influences of development institutions’ agendas and frameworks on PV practice (LaFlamme, Singleton, & Muir, 2012, p. 297; Shaw, 2012, p. 226; Walsh, 2014, p. 2). Seeing such connections requires further study; starting with the relationship between PV and raising citizen voice.

1.2 Using participatory video to raise voice

As video technology has popularised in developing countries through lower costs and higher access, the use of participatory video has increased. Its popularity could be due to its positive discourse. PV practitioners have historically offered an evangelised combination of filmmaking glamour and the promise of an empowering community-driven process (Low et al., 2012, p. 2; Milne et al., 2012b, p. 2). The term participatory video itself is expansive, incorporating a dizzying array of practices. For example, the recent Handbook of participatory video uses 17 different terms in its description of PV scholarship.
This includes “citizen journalism,” “democratic media,” “community media,” “video diaries” and “autonomous video” (pp. 51-53). The diversity implies that participatory video has become an inclusive term for a myriad of community-partnered, collaborative and participatory media-making processes (Askanius, 2014, p. 453). The cooption is similar to other broad terms like participatory media or digital storytelling (Lambert, 2013, p. 1; Spurgeon & Edmond, 2015, p. 53). Put another way, PV practice is far from homogeneous (Milne et al., 2012b, p. 3). Therefore, to clarify, the study in this thesis deliberately positions PV as a facilitated process. In application, PV activities may embed “community video units” (CVUs) in institutions or communities for continued use (High et al., 2012, p. 36). However, it is more likely in the international development sector that activities are run as project-based endeavours that result in community-driven films (pp. 36-41).

The theoretical foundation of PV practice is often linked to Paulo Freire (Olivier, de Lange, Creswell, & Wood, 2012, p. 133; Shaw & Robertson, 1997, p. 171). Especially relevant are Freire’s radical 1980s arguments for people's rights to “individually and collectively speak their world” as a means to transform oppressive structures (as cited in Servaes, 2008, p. 21). To raise citizen voice, PV works through “self-determining,” collaborative filmmaking processes (Low et al., 2012, p. 51). The aim is to foster learning and bring about social change for disadvantaged citizens through the creation and dissemination of their own films (Plush, 2012, p. 82; PV-NET, 2008, p. 1). Participatory video helps to legitimise collective concerns and demands through people's own voice and language, regardless of their levels of literacy (Askanius, 2014, p. 457; Khamis et al., 2009, p. 130; White, 2003, p. 20). The political intention for PV is to strengthen a group’s understanding, cohesion and representational influence on a particular issue (Low et al., 2012, p. 49; Wheeler, 2009, p. 10; White, 2003, p. 9). The process often does so by creating new citizen engagement pathways for those often unheard in mainstream decision-making.

Citizen engagement and action evolves through internal and external dialogues that build on reflexive processes (Braden, 1998, p. 416; Shaw, 2012b, p. 241). Dialogues serve to enhance mutual understanding through people engaging with other perspectives (Kindon, 2003, p. 143; Westoby & Dowling, 2013, p. 22). Reflexive processes serve to compel people to examine, situate and address their concerns within wider social contexts.
(Khamis et al., 2009, p. 134; Yang, 2012, p. 113). Ideally, PV participants’ concerns are satisfied and their lives improve through PV processes. The intention is to achieve this through first using PV to develop awareness of an issue in ways that strengthen a group’s collective self-worth and agency (Colom, 2009, p. 9; Dudley, 2003, p. 286; Zoettl, 2013, p. 2). The group then engages in external forums with their film(s) to amplify their concerns and promote social or political action (Shaw, 2012, p. 232; Wheeler, 2012, p. 365). As facilitators, practitioners from outside the participating communities often lead the PV activities in solidarity with the PV participants (Hraňová & Blazek, 2012, p. 151; Montero & Domínguez, 2015, p. 3; White, 2003, p. 51).

Participatory video in this study is distinguishable from collaborative filmmaking approaches where local practitioners sustain the PV activities from within the country. These are practices that primarily train community members as citizen journalists, educators or documentary filmmakers who engage in long-term video use. Examples include Digital Green, SEWA Video, and Video Volunteers (Capila & Sachdev, 2010, p. 1; Gandhi, Veeraraghavan, Toyama, & Ramprasad, 2007, p. 1; Rodrigues, 2010, p. 37). The research in this thesis does not focus on such practices or local PV practitioners. Rather, it places attention on PV practitioners working globally to raise citizen voice. It does so through the observation that PV practice in mainstream international development is commonly facilitated by people working in countries outside of their own. These are PV expert consultants from developed countries, contracted development workers trained in PV, and/or academics incorporating PV into research (Braden, 2003, p. 7; Mistry, Bignante, & Berardi, 2014, p. 6; Tremblay, 2013, p. 177). In such cases, the implementing development organisation tends to invite citizens to participate in predesigned PV activities (Plush, 2009a, p. 119; Suarez et al., 2008, p. 96; Tanner & Haynes, 2015, p. 361). Hence, decisions for why and how to use participatory video are often instigated well before citizens engage in activities at the community level (Mistry et al., 2014, p. 4). As a result, how development institutions and practitioners conceptualise PV’s utility in design, funding and implementation has direct impact on the lives of participating citizens (Booker, 2003, pp. 336-337). This is the key area the study explores further, as described in the next section.
1.3 Thesis research rationale

Of foundational concern for the research in this thesis is the assumption that grassroots, collaborative filmmaking processes intrinsically foster transformative social and political change for participants (Baù, 2015, p. 132; Lemaire & Lunch, 2012, p. 303; Walker, 2012, p. 105). Dutta (2011) for example, promotes PV’s potential for social change (p. 187). He says PV can “utilise the epistemological tools of mainstream spaces in order to disrupt dominant structures and meaningfully influence policy” (p. 187). He argues that PV can provide often-silenced groups the communicative capacity and agency to disrupt, challenge and transform “dominant discourses” of power that foster inequality and inequity (p. 3). In practical utilisation however, transformative social or political change with PV is far from absolute (Mistry et al., 2014, p. 1). Meaningful and significant responses to the systemic injustices PV participants face are often elusive in PV activities, especially those that take little heed of political contexts (Walsh, 2014, p. 5). In the C4D field, multiple scholars have written of the barriers facing participatory communicative approaches (Enghel, 2015, p. 7; Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 5; Waisbord, 2008, p. 505). However, few studies focus on practitioners themselves as “catalyst communicators” tasked with creating conditions for “dialogue, learning and transformation” with PV (White, 1999, p. 39).

It is rare that marginalised community members themselves instigate PV as a means to influence decision-makers (Mistry et al., 2014, p. 2). Rather, the decision often starts in places outside their communities. For instance, PV activities are often conceived by experienced PV practitioners hired to oversee activities by donors and/or development institutions (Montero & Domínguez, 2015, p. 6). Thus, the perceptions of PV practitioners matter. On one hand, they are the drivers of PV practice. Thus, they have historically been the first ones to embrace and evangelise progressive visions for achieving transformative outcomes with the methodology (Lunch & Lunch, 2006, p. 10; White, 1999, p. 63). On the other, PV practitioners are becoming more critically reflexive on their own role within the wider environment of praxis (Mistry et al., 2014, p. 1; Montero & Domínguez, 2015, p. 1; Shaw, 2012, p. 225). What this implies is a growing interest in understanding the PV field from the viewpoint of those entrenched in its experience.
PV practice itself is often regarded as multi-faceted in its application and intent (Milne, Mitchell, & de Lange, 2012a, p. 3). Of concern, however, is that its long-standing emphasis on empowerment and social change creates the illusion of a homogenous ideal (Low et al., 2012, pp. 50, 55; PV-NET, 2008, p. 1). Through promotions of PV as viable for political representation, a conclusion might be that all PV practitioners share a similar approach for and viewpoint on raising citizen voice (Braden, 1999, p. 117; Low et al., 2012, p. 55; Plush, 2009a, p. 119; Snowden, 1984, p. 2). Yet, this is highly unlikely in practice. To understand differing perspectives, the study presented here examined PV practitioners’ ideologies for raising citizen voice and their descriptions of practice. It specifically explored how PV practitioners conceptualised the phenomenon of using PV to raise citizen voice in international development contexts. It linked the differing PV practitioner views to theoretical discussions on voice representation and receptivity. The exploration touched on development studies and communication for development arguments on citizen voice, inclusive citizenship and social accountability (Grandvoinnet, Aslam, & Raha, 2015, p. 4; Migliorisi & Wescott, 2011, p. 3). It also prioritised scholarship on deliberative democracy and listening (Dobson, 2014, p. 21; Dreher, 2009, p. 10; Tacchi, 2010, pp. 6, 7). The underpinning intention was to make explicit how PV practitioner perceptions might affect their efforts. For through their PV practices, their ideologies no doubt directly affect the citizens whose voices most need to matter (Eyben, 2014, p. 20; Hoggett, Mayo, & Miller, 2009, p. 108).

Scholars recognise that PV practitioners themselves come from multiple disciplines and hold diverse perceptions of PV (Milne et al., 2012b, p. 3). Such diversity has prompted calls for greater critical reflection on the principles and theories driving PV practice (p. 10). Here, in academia and grey literature, practitioners often respond through presenting specific examples of practice (Lunch & Lunch, 2006, pp. 83-99; Menter, Roa, Beccera, & Roa, 2006, p. 107; Taylor & Johansson, 1997, p. 1; Underwood & Jabre, 2003, p. 237; Walker & Arrighi, 2013, p. 409). However, specific case studies can be difficult to translate in wider practice due to their contextual nature. In counterpoint, the research underpinning this thesis took a broader view of practice. It interrogated the ideals and experiences of new and highly experienced PV practitioners for raising citizen voice with PV in international development contexts. To be clear, the research was not intended as an evaluation of individual PV practitioner practices. Rather, through presenting multiple
practitioners’ ideals, experiences and tensions, the research aimed for rich insight into a field more often celebrated than critiqued in international development circles.

1.4 Main research question and study objectives

In exploring PV practitioners and valued citizen voice, the research in this thesis focuses on the following question:

**How can participatory video practitioners enable valued citizen voice in international development contexts?**

To such ends, the study set three objectives:

1) To explore the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts from PV practitioner perspectives;

2) To develop a principle-driven, conceptual framing for participatory video practice for valuing citizen voice; and

3) To offer insight on enabling environments for participatory video praxis to raise valued citizen voice in international development contexts.

Researching participatory video through the motivation for valued citizen voice, the thesis offers an original contribution to knowledge in international development and communication for development studies. It does so by positioning PV practice to contribute more readily to the root drivers of social injustice and inequity keeping people’s voices from being articulated and heard (Enghel & Wilkins, 2012, p. 10; Sinha, 2013, p. 44). The specific exploration into PV practitioners’ ideologies and described experiences is an under-theorised area of scholarship. Thus, presenting knowledge in this area provides PV practitioners with a deeper understanding of personal and institutional conditions for sufficiently raising citizen voice. Here, having key principles for practice supports the diverse contexts into which PV activities are applied. Through providing principled guidance over best practice techniques, PV practice is thus better positioned to live up to its transformational aspirations for valued citizen voice (High et al., 2012, p. 45; Low et al., 2012, p. 51; Wheeler, 2012, p. 375).
1.5 Whose voice matters?

Within the research, it is important to explain whose voice the study is considering. As mentioned, scholars often analyse PV practice through case studies. In discussion, these studies tend to emphasise the benefits and limitations for PV to positively affect the PV participants involved in making the films (Bery, 2003, p. 157; Brickell, 2015, p. 510; Menter et al., 2006, p. 107; Tanner & Haynes, 2015, p. 357). Yet those who engage in the technical filmmaking of PV are not always the people whose views are ultimately represented on camera. For instance, when practitioners apply PV in a journalistic style, community members trained in technical filmmaking might gather opinions from the wider community for their final film (Baú, 2015, p. 123; Cullen, Duncan, Snyder, & Ballantyne, 2011, p. 1). Development institutions often present these recorded interviews, with the people’s opinions, as the authentic voice of the community. This thesis explains how such notions can be problematic when they ignore power dynamics of who is voicing how and, more importantly, why. Of concern is that the final PV films exist as the representational artefact of citizen voice, especially in their digital form. Thus, whose voice is being referred to when discussing raising citizen voice is of ultimate importance.

Accordingly, in this thesis, citizen voice refers to the citizens whose views are being represented in the final PV films. As such, the question of how to ensure their voice is more valued through a PV activity is central to the investigation in this thesis. To present an example, a PV activity trains a group of activists in filmmaking skills. The activists videotape the opinions of community members on a specific topic and edit the film. For citizen voice, the study is concerned about the people sharing their views, as their voice is ultimately representative of the community in digital form. Does the PV process improve their capacity (the citizens on camera) to influence decision-making as informed, active citizens? In contrast, if the activists produce their own PV film by either acting in it or asking people to take part as actors, citizen voice relates to them. That is, as long as it is clear the film represents the activist’s collective perspective, and thus their unfiltered voice. The question remains the same: Does the PV process improve their capacity (the activists) to influence decision-making as informed, active citizens?
In its attention to citizen voice, the research uses the term **citizen** through a development studies lens. Citizen promotes inclusive citizenship for people living in poverty and marginalisation (Gaventa & Tandon, 2010a, p. 27; Kabeer, 2005, p. 1; Mohanty & Tandon, 2006, p. 10). Citizens through this frame play an active role in developing equitable societies as a result of enacting their rights (Burns, Howard, Lopez-Franco, Shahrokh, & Wheeler, 2013, p. 2; Shahrokh, Lopez Franco, & Burns, 2015, p. 6). In other words, citizen is used not as a legal term, but rather through a focus on participation, engagement and mobilised citizen action (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010, p. 9).

Additionally, the research situates citizen voice in international development contexts. Thus, it is important to note that **development institutions** are recognised as:

- Large, mainstream non-government organisations;
- Research bodies, such as academic institutions and universities;
- Corporations funding development;
- Global banking systems;
- Donors, such as governmental departments or international foundations;
- United Nations agencies; and/or
- National governments.

### 1.6 Who should be listening?

For citizen voice to influence decisions that affect them, voice needs to be heard; but by whom? Here, the thesis argument positions listeners as people with the power to both respect local citizen voice in decision-making, or to diminish or deny it through their actions. The attention on decision-makers aligns with how the international development industry views the concept of voice. In the sector, citizen voice most often links to efforts to hold responsible individuals and parties to account as a process of social accountability for good governance (Gaventa & McGee, 2013, p. 6; Kabeer, 2005, p. 5; Mohanty & Tandon, 2006, p. 1). The push for **social accountability** can be understood through its aspirations:

Social accountability strategies try to improve institutional performance by bolstering both citizen engagement and the public responsiveness of states and corporations. In practice, the concept includes a wide range of institutional innovations that both encourage and project voice. Insofar as social accountability builds citizen power vis-à-vis the state, it is a political process—yet it is distinct from political accountability, which focuses specifically on
elected officials and where citizen voice is often delegated to representatives in between elections. This distinction makes social accountability an especially relevant approach for societies in which representative government is weak, unresponsive or non-existent (Fox, 2015, p. 9).

In addition to “state and corporations” (p. 9), the thesis also relates social accountability to development institutions and service providers. This is because both development programming and service provision at community and country-levels often enforce a governance structure in their design, fund, staffing, implementation procedures and evaluation demands. Hence, the attention on social accountability applies to people and institutions with the power to make decisions that affect the lives of citizens living with disadvantage. In this way, the research specifically aims for knowledge that can increase the weight of citizen voice in decision-making spaces.

In reference to voice influence, the thesis argument uses the term valued citizen voice to indicate the study’s underlying aspiration for underrepresented voices to attain equal and equitable status by decision-makers. This emphasis specifically positions PV as inherently political. It does so respectful of PV’s genesis as a methodology for citizen engagement; a history related to the Fogo Process described in Section 2.1 (Corneil, 2012, p. 24). Interrogating whether this political conceptualisation for citizen voice reflects PV practitioners’ ideals and experiences was part of the study’s interest. The answer to which is shared in the key findings chapters of the thesis.

1.7 Thesis overall structure
To explore PV practitioners and valued citizen voice, the thesis offers seven chapters. Chapter 1 starts by describing the value of researching enablers and constraints for PV to enable valued citizen voice in international development contexts. It also highlights the key research question and objectives in the thesis; and provides the rationale for the focus on PV practitioners as powerful actors and influencers in PV’s application. The chapter elaborates on terminology used in the thesis, including citizen, citizen voice, development institutions, social accountability and valued citizen voice. The chapter concludes with this overview of how the thesis is structured.
Chapter 2 provides historical insight and theories that link citizen voice to the fields of international development, communication for development and participatory video. It specifically highlights two critical influences on PV practice, namely the Fogo Process in the 1960s and Paolo Freire’s scholarly arguments on conscientisation in the 1970s. Based on a review of academic scholarship, the chapter offers an analytical framework to apply in researching PV and citizen voice, as described in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 describes the research, as positioned in the phenomenographic tradition. Phenomenography is a research approach focused on understanding multiple meanings of a phenomenon based on varying perceptions of its essence. The research defined the phenomenon of study as using PV to raise citizen voice in international development contexts. The chapter details the study’s design, including the use of the analytical framework. Additionally, the chapter provides details on the study participants, the use of visual methods, the poetic interpretive method of analysis and the underpinning ethical approach. It also offers an overview of why the thesis applies gender neutrality in response to PV being a small field of practice. This is, where the study identifies each participant through a gender-neutral pseudonym and uses female-gendered pronouns—such as she, her and herself—for all participants regardless of their gender.

Following the methodology overview, Chapter 4 provides findings that address the first objective of the study, which is to explore the phenomenon of raising citizen voice with participatory video in international development contexts from a PV practitioner perspective. The chapter does so by making explicit research findings on three differing conceptualisations of raising citizen voice, as expressed by the PV practitioners in the study. The study identifies these as voice pathways, and consequentially explores how each pathway may hold differing possibilities for legitimising citizen voice.

Building on the discussion in the previous chapter, Chapter 5 presents an analysis of the voice pathways. The analysis aims to determine which of the three voice pathways holds the most viable characteristics for a conceptual framework for PV. It also helps to satisfy the second objective in the study, which is to develop a principle-driven, conceptual framing for PV practice for valuing citizen voice. To this end, the chapter offers a
conceptual framework with five guiding principles for PV practice, as based on the literature review in Chapter 2 and the study findings from Chapter 4.

After presenting the conceptual framework, Chapter 6 presents the argument that a principled framing on its own is often insufficient for transformative change. Thus, the chapter presents findings that address the third objective of the study, which is to offer insight on enabling environments for PV praxis to raise valued citizen voice in international development contexts. It does so by describing study findings on six institutional views in development that might hinder principled approaches to PV practice, such as those presented in the conceptual framework in Chapter 5. The study identified the six key views through analysing tensions PV practitioners in the study said constrained their ideals for raising citizen voice with PV. The chapter presents the most concerning institutional views, as well as a critical discussion on the underlying characteristics of each view.

The conclusion chapter, Chapter 7, summarises how PV practice might sufficiently enable valued citizen voice in international development contexts; thus aiming to answer the overarching research question in the thesis. In doing so, the chapter offers an argument on three areas of consideration for PV practice to enhance equitable citizen voice in democratic decision-making processes. It advocates strengthening voice representation and voice receptivity in PV activities to reduce social and political inequity. It encourages more attention on how political and institutional environments might influence PV in being able to raise valued citizen voice. It promotes increased understanding of how PV practitioners’ can use their own agency to influence meaningful change. The chapter culminates by arguing that greater forethought and action is required in PV practice to expand possibilities for the methodology to support citizen voice to be sufficiently heard, valued and influential.
2. Valuing citizen voice

Defending voice as value simply means defending the potential of voices anywhere to matter.
—Nick Couldry (2010, p. 9)

2.1 Participatory video and citizen voice

2.1.1 Representing PV through literature

Based on an academic literature review, this chapter presents the history and aspirations of PV practice, international development and C4D approaches to attain social and political change through raising citizen voice. It specifically describes how the different areas of practice conceptualise raising citizen voice, and have applied their understandings. In particular, the chapter offers a historical look at using PV to raise citizen voice, including a focus on the Fogo Process in the 1960s and Paolo Freire’s scholarly arguments on “conscientisation” in the 1970s. It also explains contemporary arguments on the concepts of voice, citizenship and democracy in international development contexts. As a conclusion, the chapter presents an analytical framework to shape research on PV practitioners and valued citizen voice.

The rest of this section focuses on participatory video, with the subsequent sections highlighting literature related to international development, communication in development and citizen voice. In the international development sector, participatory video aimed at raising underrepresented citizen voice is an expanding practice. Yet, as PV grows in popularity, so does scrutiny. Contemporary scholars argue that PV practice often lacks strong theoretical grounding or has been oversimplified (Milne et al., 2012b, p. 5; Shaw, 2012, p. 225; 2013, p. 1). The most critical voices tend to come through academia as

researchers are increasingly using PV as a visual methodology in their studies (Milne, 2012, p. 257; Thomas & Britton, 2012, p. 220; Walsh, 2012, p. 242). In international development contexts, PV is often used in research activities alongside organisational efforts to reduce global poverty and marginalisation (Braden, 1999, p. 117; Braden & Than Thi, 1998, p. 13; Mistry et al., 2014, p. 4; Shahrokh, 2014, p. 5). Here, through an analytical frame, PV’s benefits and constraints for advancing citizen voice emerge. As an example, scholar Joanna Wheeler (2009) used PV for “challenging patterns of power and control” in a research project focused on reducing violence in Brazil (p. 10). In discussing the experience, she recognises key benefits from PV processes in helping citizens overcome social exclusion due to the impacts of violence (p. 10). However, she is also notably critical of PV practice about its potential for harm. For instance, she explains that harm can occur through participatory processes that “exacerbate exploitation and existing exclusions within the community, a risk heightened by the nature of the technology involved in videoing” (p. 15).

The critical gaze on PV practice is less common outside academic literature. Rather, in the international development sector, analysis often defaults to best-practice recommendations for PV, such as the need for more time or resources in future activities (Asadullah, 2012, p. 47; Goodsmith & Acosta, 2011, p. 83; Plan International, 2004, p. 2). Mainstream publications seem less likely to criticise structural powers that might have constrained PV’s potential to support transformative change (Low et al., 2012, p. 61). One reason behind the positive discourse could be increasing pressure on organisations to highlight positive results from their development programmes (Roche, 2015, p. 79). Another reason might be the stress on development institutions to craft “images of poverty and social need” that can motivate or satisfy funders (Dempsey, 2009, p. 338).

The scarcity of critical scholarship on using PV in mainstream development contexts is especially noticeable in communication for development and social change literature (Melkote, 2012; Servaes, 2008; Thomas & Van de Fliert, 2015). Here, critique covers a range of communicative media approaches from community radio to online platforms to citizen journalism (Carpentier, 2009, p. 408; Gumucio-Dagron, 2001, p. 177; Spurgeon & Edmond, 2015, p. 54). And, certainly, many video activities can be categorised in the participatory communication paradigm of C4D scholarship (Askanius, 2014, p. 453).
However, scrutiny of PV use specifically in international development contexts is rare, and thus remains an under-theorised area in C4D literature. The lack of critique is noteworthy considering the most-cited genesis of PV, the Fogo Process, is rooted in poverty-reduction goals and livelihoods development (Crocker, 2003, p. 125; Hume-Cook et al., 2007, p. 161). The chapter now turns to an exploration of PV’s history in relation to contemporary ideals for PV and raising citizen voice.

2.1.2 Freire and Fogo Island influences

Through its intention for strengthening the voice of unheard populations, PV’s history is most often linked to Freire’s “pedagogy of the oppressed” and the policy-focused Fogo Process (Corneil, 2012, pp. 24, 26; Freire, 1972, p. 1; Low et al., 2012, p. 51). In this way, participatory video’s roots are natively political. At PV’s core are Freire’s ideals that speaking to one’s own oppression is an inherent right and means to transform oppressive structures (Servaes, 2008, p. 21). In international development, Freire’s arguments were highly influential in the 1990s through the rise of participatory development approaches (Chambers, 1994b, p. 954; Cornwall & Scoones, 2011, p. 4; Robb, 1998, p. 9). Similarly, for PV practice, Freire’s emphasis on locally emergent “critical thinking, collective action and empowerment” served as guidance (High et al., 2012, p. 44). For instance, in the late 1990s, Jackie Shaw and Clive Robertson (1997b) linked PV, community development and Freire’s work on tackling illiteracy in Brazil through a process he called “conscientisation” (p. 171). Duly, PV as practice encouraged citizens from the margins to critically examine their own situations through “dialogical encounter” and collaborative reflection (p. 171). As they explain:

This results in an awareness of inherent contradictions and the causes of injustice. The fresh perception of reality, combined with the strength [PV participants] gain from collective achievement, motivates them to take action to change the condition of their lives. (p. 171)

Even today, PV theoretically rests on Freirean arguments for “self-determination” (Low et al., 2012, p. 51). Nevertheless, PV’s most-cited origin for practice is a particular case study from the 1960s on Fogo Island, Newfoundland, Canada (Kindon, Hume-Cook, & Woods, 2012, p. 350). This is where filmmakers embarked on a collaborative approach to filmmaking through the National Film Board of Canada’s Challenge for Change (CFC) programme (Crocker, 2003, p. 125; Hume-Cook et al., 2007, p. 161). In a project on Fogo
Island, filmmakers, scholars and development workers worked in disparate fishing communities where the livelihoods of 5,000 people were under threat. Here, the “forces of modernity at home and abroad were pushing its ten scattered communities to the edge of social and economic collapse” (Newhook, 2009, p. 5). As a poverty-reduction measure, government officials were advocating to relocate the population to the mainland (Corneil, 2012, pp. 24-27; Crocker, 2003, p. 125). To counter this proposal, the National Film Board of Canada and Memorial University of Newfoundland’s Extension Service conceived of using filmmaking for community mobilisation and advocacy (Newhook, 2009, p. 1).

The filmmaking process, now called the “Fogo Method” or “Fogo Process,” prioritised collaborating with community members to determine how they wanted to represent their lives on camera. It also strategically linked their concerns to government officials promoting their relocation (Corneil, 2012, pp. 24-27; Crocker, 2003, p. 125; Quarry & Ramirez, 2009, pp. 71-75). In simplified terms, the process was threefold. First, it collectively captured the lived experiences and opinions of concerned citizens on film to share with targeted stakeholders—i.e. dispersed community members, local and national government officials, academics and activists concerned with poverty reduction on the island. Second, it recorded and shared responses through feedback loops between government officials and citizens. Third, the films supported community networks focused on finding political solutions other than relocation (Crocker, 2003, p. 125).

The underlying intention of the Fogo Method was to infuse community member concerns from Fogo Island into the decision-making spaces of those “stuck in bureaucratic halls” (Corneil, 2012, p. 27). Through this process, government screenings and dialogical communication loops proved “innovative, provocative and effective” for enhancing community engagement on the island (Newhook, 2009, p. 9). They provided insight into the concerns and lived experiences of people on Fogo Island in a forum that offered government officials space to reflect on and respond meaningfully to what they had seen (Corneil, 2012, p. 26; Crocker, 2003, p. 128). The filmmaking process fed into wider advocacy, academic and community mobilisation efforts against relocation. Through such efforts, the resettlement plans were ultimately abandoned (Corneil, 2012, p. 27).
Important to PV’s legacy, filmmaking came to be seen as a medium that could locally build the knowledge and self-confidence of community members so they could advocate for their own interests and needs (Quarry & Ramirez, 2009, p. 75). The CFC experience legitimated collaborative filmmaking as a method for community engagement and social action (Corneil, 2012, pp. 19, 24-26). The Fogo Method’s innovative reversal of traditional filmmaking roles forever changed the idea of video communication in that the prior “‘object audience’ became ‘subject participants’ in the message” (Lewis, 1977, p. 2). In doing so, the project’s facilitators moved the power to control the message away from themselves as media producers towards a process that “encourages people to attempt the control of their lives as a whole” (p. 71).

The juxtaposition of participants as subjects rather than objects of video communication mirrors the international development sector’s evolution in the 1980s and 1990s. This is where development workers begin to embrace participatory approaches, as inspired by Freirean ideals for transformative change (Underwood & Jabre, 2003, p. 237; Walker & Arrighi, 2013, p. 409). Historically, the 1960s Fogo Island project pre-empts Freire’s arguments that citizens speaking to power can transform oppressive structures (see Servaes, 2008, p. 21). However, the values expounded by Freire seem to underpin the Fogo Process. Don Snowden (1984), a researcher from Memorial University, Canada, and key driver of the Fogo programme, provides a reflection reminiscent of Freire’s later arguments for conscientisation:

Today few people on Fogo speak often about the filming, yet many believe their lives were changed enormously by it. This can never be accurately measured. But it is certain that the fishermen formed an island-wide producer’s cooperative which handled and processed large catches, enabling them to keep the profits on their island. Unemployment of able-bodied men disappeared, and government directed their efforts to helping people stay… Films did not do these things: people did them. There is little doubt, however, that film created an awareness and self-confidence that was needed for people-advocated development to occur (p. 1).

Despite the professed development gains, there is also criticism of the Canadian CFC filmmaking experiments in “side-stepping power” through a “self-reflexive gaze” (Marchessault, 1995, p. 134). Shannon Walsh (2014), for example, described the CFC programme as offering a valuable platform for ordinary citizens to represent themselves in
ways of their choosing (p. 3). However, she argued that the participatory filmmaking approach often failed to address the wider power dynamics at play:

While the CFC projects were unique and innovative ways to create dialogue with marginalised groups, even in these early attempts to get communities making videos of their own lives revealed a particular vision of what the ‘community’ might need, and the role of filmmakers in facilitating this change. Filmmakers going to communities took on an almost missionary-like tone, entangling ideas of ‘voice,’ ‘speaking for oneself’ and ‘upliftment,’ while situating the work in the language of service… Within the CFC films, participatory video placed the onus on the individual or local community to make social change. (p. 3)

Walsh’s observation suggests many of the CFC projects were heavily weighted towards its citizen participants having to monitor and correct their own misfortunes; a problem she sees as still occurring in contemporary PV approaches (p. 3). This is in lieu of supporting strategic efforts that might meaningfully examine and transform the “actual institutional relations of production and knowledge” (Marchessault, 1995, p. 134). The critique also implies that citizens vocalising injustice can be valuable through PV activities. However, such PV endeavours are considered worthy only if the implementing process also helps citizens to recognise and change marginalising structures. Snowden might argue that this did happen on Fogo Island as filmmaking was embedded into on-going community development efforts focused on improving local livelihoods and influencing policy change on resettlement (Snowden, 1984). However, Walsh’s concerns are important to note. They imply that contemporary practice should not merely replicate the operational techniques promoted in the Fogo Method and CFC programme. Rather, considered actions are required that build on both the principles espoused by the Fogo Process, and its particular efforts to challenge and reconfigure inequitable decision-making power.

2.1.3 Video, development and social change

Undoubtedly, the Fogo Island project inspired alternative processes of using video for development and social change in the late 1960s. However, on the whole, traditional video practices dominated the international development sector in the following decades (Braden, 1998, p. 428). For instance, experiments in using video for development from the 1950s to the 1980s by UNESCO tended towards the traditional (Bessette & Tighe, 1988, p. 43). Video here is primarily used for animation, training, project monitoring and
evaluation, and facilitating information between organisations and communities (p. 43). In other words, people participate through receiving video messages or sharing opinions on film with no input into the editing (1988, p. 44). Development workers pay more attention to non-traditional, collaborative filmmaking in the 1980s. This is when aid organisations’ interest increases in how video technologies can support the rise of participatory development approaches (Quarry & Ramirez, 2009, p. 71).

During this time, the Village Video Network’s PV work forms in India. The Network is ground-breaking as members of the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) make films to support their own development (Crocker, 2003, p. 138). Here, SEWA set up a community video hub that is still active today. Since the 1980s, rural women have made more than 400 films for awareness-raising, visual evidence for legal issues, education, and other uses on topics “ranging from sanitation and health to labour organisations” (p. 138). Today, interest is increasing for organisations to support locally generated content through community video units and journalistic approaches to filmmaking (High et al., 2012, p. 36). India’s growing PV practice can be seen through numerous contemporary examples such as Roopala Kendro, a Calcutta media production centre committed to training filmmakers in the processes and philosophy of participatory video (Crocker, 2003, p. 138); Video Volunteers, an organisation that uses community video units to “enable community members in bringing out their issues and mobilising communities to take action” (Singh, 2014, p. 116) and Digital Green, which disseminates “targeted agricultural information to small and marginal farmers in India using digital video” (Gandhi et al., 2007, p. 1).

Despite today’s popularity for participatory media, in the development sector in the 1980s and 1990s, the expense, resources and skills required for filmmaking as a social process often puts PV out of reach. Hence, evidence of facilitated PV activities in development programming is rare. One well-known exception is Su Braden’s and Thien Huong Than Thi’s experience using video for development with Oxfam UK in Vietnam (Braden & Than Thi, 1998, p. 13). The NGO project built on Braden’s (1998) academic study of

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“representation for using participatory video in community development” (p. 1). Braden and Than Thi saw potential for video in development to showcase the experiences of underrepresented citizens through a process of reflecting back their voices on film (Braden & Than Thi, 1998, p. 13). However, even then, they had foresight that PV could easily succumb to the same fate as other participatory development methods. This is where Samuel Hickey and Giles Mohan (2005) later argue that such methods are unable to “achieve meaningful social change, largely due to a failure to engage with issues of power and politics” (p. 237). Similarly, in the 1980s, Braden’s and Than Thi’s (1988) concern is that PV could easily, “in the hands of development workers who fail to appreciate its real purpose, be used in a very mechanical way” (p. 21). They argued this might limit PV’s potential for participants to “access power, negotiate representation and initiate communication” (p. 21).

In the international development sector, Braden also understood that governments and decision-makers holding power over programming often prefer dominant media to PV activities. She said they believed it to be less threatening than participatory approaches that might raise “critical voices amongst the poorer populations” (Braden, 1998, p. 428). Braden’s argument is particularly relevant today:

For poor people, critical awareness and communication/representation are further complicated by the power structures; oppressive, benevolent or patriarchal; that operate in the macro contexts between governments, and between government and people. At issue is the degree to which governments will tolerate re-presentation [sic] from within civil society, as well as the degree to which individual governments see themselves as able to respond. International debt and structural adjustment play their part in formulating and reinforcing the attitudes of governments, and their desire to listen to the less powerful voices within civil society. The ‘new participatory orthodoxy,’ comes in a period when the philosophies of modernisation still form the *sine qua non* of the thinking and economic strategies of the governments of poor people. (p. 428)

Despite apparent challenges for using PV for development, interest in the methodology for development continues to grow. From the late 1990s to the early 2010s, books and manuals on how to use PV flow into the mainstream. Key texts published in English include:
• Participatory video: A practical approach to using video creatively in group development work, which functions as a theoretical and practical guide for using participatory video with communities (Shaw & Robertson, 1997); 

• Video for development: A casebook from Vietnam, which provides a case study example from an Oxfam participatory media project (Braden, S., & Than Thi, T. H., 1998).

• Participatory video: Images that transform and empower, which focuses primarily on case studies showing PV as a process and product (White, 2003); 

• Insights into participatory video: A handbook for the field, which provides practice-focused PV guidance (Lunch & Lunch, 2006); 

• Inclusion through media, which provides an overview of various types of participatory media, including participatory video (Dowmunt, Dunford, Hemert & Fountain, 2007); and 

• The handbook of participatory video, which offers a critical overview of PV use in research and practice (Milne et al., 2012a).

In the midst of PV’s promises in literature for catalysing social change, Shirley White (2003) argues that a stronger theoretical foundation is still needed:

Most would agree that participatory video is destined to become an even more powerful and useful tool in articulating the needs and visions of the poor in the future. The power of video to transform behaviours is not adequately theorised nor explored. Additionally it is not adequately theorised nor are informed links made between theory and practice. In fact, participatory communication as a practice is clearly lacking in meaningful conceptualisations and useful theory. (p. 29)

White’s observations seem to resonate with other PV practitioners, even today. Through their experiences, contemporary scholars construct arguments about how PV’s celebrated claims often fail to materialise in practice (Milne et al., 2012b, p. 2; Mistry et al., 2014, p. 1; Walsh, 2014, p. 1). For instance, Shaw (2013)—one of the first people to publish and popularise the term “participatory video” with Robertson (1997b)—urges practitioners to be more cognisant of the realities of PV practice:
Ongoing critical dialogue is needed about the reality of practice to open the eyes of participatory film and video practitioners to both what helps and hinders achievement of the wider social purpose. Knowledge of the key balances negotiated in practice assists this by providing a map to the territory to keep us alert in each new situation to the opportunities and threats that are faced in maximising the possibilities against the constraints. (Shaw, 2013, p. 12)

Shaw’s comments reflect a discussion at the Second International Visual Methods Conference in 2011 about the need for more critical scholarship on PV. This meeting inspired the Handbook of participatory video. The handbook attempts to answer the demand for more theoretical grounding in the field by interrogating “assumptions about [PV’s] emancipatory nature and potential for social change” (Milne et al., 2012b, p. 2). In the book’s introduction, Low et al. (2012) identify a gap where academic practitioners are encouraged to “locate the debate on both the theory and the politics of PV research firmly within the discourses and experiences of neoliberal globalisation” (p. 61). The book in particular challenges PV practitioners to reflect on a myriad of concepts such as “power, agency, process and empowerment” (Milne et al., 2012b, p. 2).

Walsh (2014) takes up this call in her argument that PV requires negotiating repressive “technocratic, liberal presumptions” surrounding its use (p. 1). She advocates PV practitioners to rise above altruistic, romantic notions of working in solidarity with community members (p. 1). Rather, she says, for long-term social justice for citizens, PV practice requires critically engaging with the “political underpinnings of empowerment and voice” (p. 4). Such actions seem especially necessary today. For instance, Shaw (2013) argues the radical politics that inspired PV’s popularity in the United Kingdom in the 1990s have been sidelined (p. 6). Participation, rather, has been adapted into status quo, consultative models of citizen representation (p. 6). This results in a clear “mismatch between the state agenda and the PV practice intention to transform iniquitous dynamics” (p. 6). In comparable arguments, communication for development scholars are also calling for more politically disruptive, yet potentially impactful, practices considerate of “power, human rights and social justice” (Enghel & Wilkins, 2012, p. 9; Thomas & Van de Fliert, 2015, p. 52). In emphasising this point, Florencia Enghel and Karin Wilkins (2012) argue that the development sector’s focus on “demonstrating results” can stifle C4D’s value for supporting more transparent and accountable governance (p. 9). Similarly, Pradip Thomas and Elske van de Fliert argue (2015) that the institutionalism of C4D practices, as...
influenced by neoliberalism, is neutralising critically needed efforts to transform inequitable power structures (p. 52). The following section explores both the difficulties of raising citizen voice in international development environments, as well as the value of doing so.

2.2 International development and voice

2.2.1 Voice as claiming rights

Within development studies, scholars argue that citizens have the right to demand accountability, equal and equitable social change, and distributive justice from the state (Kabeer, 2005, p. 18; Nyamu-Musembi, 2005, p. 44). The arguments promote development as needing to function beyond mere efforts to redress economic inequity. Rather, poverty is recognised as a “condition deeply embedded in existing relations of power and social control” (Chaudhry, 2010, p. 177). Thus, ensuring more valued citizen voice is paramount for poverty reduction, and is a notion Freire historically promoted. Freire argued that one way citizens can overcome their oppression is through individually, collectively and proactively claiming the rights to their own words (Freire, 1972; Servaes, 2008, p. 21). In the 1980s and 1990s, Freire’s theories inspired a multitude of grassroots, participatory development methodologies and tools (Cornwall & Scoones, 2011, p. 4). These supported ideals that beneficiaries of aid have valuable knowledge to contribute on issues that affect them (Chambers, 1997, p. 1). Soon, engaging the voice of citizens was seen as imperative to good development (Chambers, 2007, p. 300). As a result, development workers mainstreamed the participatory development approach around the world (Chambers, 1994b, p. 954; Cornwall & Scoones, 2011, p. 4; Robb, 1998, p. 9). It became so popular that by the 2000s, participatory practices were recognised by development institutions in more than 100 countries (Cornwall & Scoones, 2011, p. 8).

However as participatory approaches proliferated, so did criticism, organisational challenges, and examples of bad practice in development and C4D activities (Cornwall & Pratt, 2011, p. 263; Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 6; Waisbord, 2008, p. 505). Many scholars soon recognised that participation alone was insufficient in practice. Efforts also required a focus on shifting power disparities that created or reinforced injustice (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2006, p. 122; Gumucio-Dagron, 2009, p. 457; Hickey & Mohan, 2005, p. 237; Melkote, 2012, p. 25). Consequently, arguments increased for viewing inclusive citizen engagement and networking as vital for strengthening active, influential citizen voice in

2.2.2 Voice as expressing opinions

The World Bank popularised the view of voice as expressing opinion more than 15 years ago when it released its influential study Consultations with the poor (Narayan, 2000a, p. xi). The study conducted research in 60 countries with more than 60,000 men and women that the World Bank identified as living in poverty. The study summarised people’s “hopes, aspirations and realities” into three books in the Voices of the poor book series (Narayan, 2000a, 2000b; Narayan & Petesch, 2002). With the publications, development workers in decision-making roles were encouraged to listen and respond directly to the identified concerns. The authors of the study argued that the voices of people living in poverty were more “direct, vivid, powerful and authentic” for identifying solutions than their own; and, presumably, the readers (Narayan, 2000a, p. xi; 2000b, p. 18). The study set a long-running precedent in development for voice to be recognised as a process to obtain, in the Bank’s words, the “perspective of the poor” (2000a, p. 3). In this way, the World Bank study defined a particular model of voice prevalent even today: voice as consultation. Critics, however, say it did so by providing “narrative form and moral legitimacy for the neoliberal empowerment policies pursued by the Bank and other mainstream development agencies over the coming decade” (Cornwall & Fujita, 2012, p. 1752). In particular, Cornwall and Mamoru Fujita (2012) argue that the World Bank’s study served to “ventriloquise ‘the poor’” (p. 1751).

Cornwall and Fujita (2012) explain that by presenting poor people as an unidentified group, the World Bank filtered citizens’ voices into a neoliberal rhetoric that prioritised supported Bank themes such as “community-driven programmes” and “local ownership” (pp. 1752, 1758). They argue this neoliberal frame influenced the study’s narrative of people living in poverty as being both disenfranchised and in control of their own recovery (p. 1752). This viewpoint is similar to the argument Walsh makes in Section 2.1.2 about PV practice positioning people as both oppressed and individually responsible for rising
above their oppression. For Cornwall and Fujita (2012), the World Bank’s reinterpreted narrative meant that the authentic meanings related to more complex social, political or economic structural causes of “the poor’s” poverty were often dislocated from their source. As a result, those who took part in the study were denied their unfiltered voice and individual agency to provide their own contextual solutions (p. 1751). Nick Couldry (2010) defines such actions as a crisis for citizen voice:

A system that provides formal voice for its citizens but *fails so markedly to listen* exhibits a crisis of political voice of the sort [where]… it offers voice (having no choice to do so) yet retracts it as a reality, so engineering what Manuel Castells has recently called ‘a systemic dissociation between communicative power and representative power’ (as cited p. 50).

The consultative approach is similar to what Couldry calls “voice as process,” where everyone is given the opportunity to narrate their own lives (p. 3). Clearly, sharing personal narratives can be highly beneficial for people and groups experiencing disadvantage or marginalisation (Brickell, 2015, p. 510; Cavarero, 2000, p. 30; Gill, 2014, p. 176). However, sharing can also be problematic when process notions of voice fail to create conditions for the type of engagement, listening and response often promised to those telling their stories (Cornwall & Fujita, 2012, p. 1753). Put another way, consultative approaches hold potential to diminish voice if decision-makers fail to respectfully value and respond to citizens’ authentic concerns (Dutta, 2011, p. 3; Servaes & Liu, 2007, p. 2).

Although consultations with citizens still occur in international development endeavours, the overall conceptualisation of voice is changing. Indicative of this shift, the World Bank recently published a report: *Voice and agency: Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity* (Klugman et al., 2014). The report defines *voice* as individuals having the “capacity to speak up and be heard, from homes to houses of parliament, and to shape and share in discussions, discourse and decisions that affect them” (p. xv). The report suggests that voice expression not only builds individual confidence to participate in decision-making, but can instigate and shape policy discussions (p. 163). In theory, the capacity for an individual or a group to express voice in policy spaces helps to shift citizen influence and power (p. 9). The practice of doing so, however, is more difficult.
A recent analysis on a collection of case studies on “feminism activism in transitional contexts” concluded that the “development discourse about the positive relation between voice, constituency building and positive change are too simplistic” (Nazneen & Sultan, 2014, p. 25). The study highlighted that the “complex relationship between feminist voice, constituency building and empowered agency” requires a multifaceted mix of transnational alliances, advancing opportunities for political negotiation, and practical yet often compromised choices (p. 25). Similarly, communication for development scholarship points out that agency is often misconstrued as being unaffected by powers that might curtail its realisation (Carpentier, 2014, p. 1006). As such, C4D efforts can fail due to repressive conditions and structures in the development industry that stifle rather than advance influential citizen voice (Carpentier, 2014, p. 1004; Dutta & Dutta, 2013, p. 24). What the argument implies is that bringing participatory video into a complex international development environment cannot be construed as a simple act. PV practices require similar scrutiny as to whether their proposal for voice, agency-building and social change advance more than a romanticised rhetoric. Put another way, PV practice requires full attention on how it might sufficiently raise valued citizen voice as a communication for development methodology. The following section explores this in more depth by providing an overview of C4D’s history and linkage to citizen voice.

2.3 Communication, development and voice

2.3.1 Modernisation and participatory paradigms

Historically since the 1940s, international development practices promoting modernisation and growth have long affected communication efforts to raise citizen voice, especially in the areas of agriculture, education and health (Servaes, 2008, p. 17; Thomas, 2010, p. 24). Here, development communication most often supported behaviourism (Thomas, 2010, p. 27). That is, a belief that top-down communication flows through “traditional, mass and interpersonal communication” can influence behaviour, which makes people modern (p. 25). In the 1960s and 1970s, communication scholars began to challenge the modernisation paradigm in development (Servaes, 2008, p. 22). As one example, many argued that media technologies, values and content exported from the “First World” through the modernisation paradigm were being used as a form of imperialism and a reinforcement of neo-colonialism (Thomas, 2010, p. 27). There was a growing concern that development communication through modernisation negatively influenced the values
of developing countries (p. 28). Scholars and practitioners called for a new paradigm that supported grassroots participation in development decision-making, both in development and for development communication.

Around this time, Freire’s arguments for oppressed people to actively participate in generating their own knowledge began to influence the international development sector (Servaes, 2008, p. 21). Of critical interest to development workers was Freire’s argument for using dialogue as a mechanism for strengthening literacy and citizen voice (Freire, 1972). This caused a shift in the international development sector from instructional ways of working to more participatory approaches in practice. Communication efforts supporting development practice followed suit, which gave rise to the approach to practice commonly known as communication for development (Servaes, 2008, p. 21). Through this historical lineage to Freirian theories, Emile G. McAnany (2012a) explains that C4D practice often considers Freire as its “true source of thinking” (p. 91). Thomas (2010), for example, summarises Freire’s beliefs that the modernisation paradigm failed to support oppressed people as it created dependencies (p. 29). In contrast, the evolving participatory paradigm promoted reciprocal decision-making in development communicative processes through shared knowledge, mutual trust and flattened hierarchies (Servaes, 2008, p. 21; Servaes & Lie, 2013, p. 11). The paradigm thus reflected Freire arguments that the “objective of communication should be to extend human freedoms, strengthen and empower people’s voices and that people should be responsible for their own development” (as cited by Thomas, 2010, p. 29).

In support of participatory development approaches, development communication theories began to shift away from promoting elitist, top-down practices that historically supported one-way information diffusion from sender to the receiver (Melkote, 2012, p. 23). Rather, scholars argued for development communication to value culture, democracy and participation from the community level upwards (Servaes, 2008, p. 21). The arguments placed increased attention on the value of raising citizen voice through a participatory communication paradigm. In this way, Freire’s theories influenced the linkage of participatory development programming and communication practices as foundational for C4D praxis (Chambers, 1994a, p. 1253; Servaes, 2008, p. 21). Interest grew in the international development sector for providing people historically silenced in decision-
making spaces with local access to communication processes (Gumucio-Dagron, 2009, p. 461). Such ideals valued grassroots knowledge, and echoed Freire’s arguments for citizens to individually, collectively and proactively claim the rights to their own words (Servaes, 2008, p. 21). Freire's (1972) “conscientisation” theories continued to influence C4D practice into the 2000s. This was apparent in Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron's (2009) definition of communication for development and social change:

People taking in their own hands the communication processes that will allow them to make their voices heard, to establish horizontal dialogues with planners and development specialists, to take decisions on the development issues that affect their lives, and to ultimately achieve social changes for the benefit of their community. (p. 453)

Globally today, participatory approaches are mainstreamed in international development (Cornwall & Scoones, 2011, p. 4). Thus, a natural assumption might be that the participatory communication is the dominant paradigm in the development sector. One might expect that the “main protagonists of processes of social change” now predominantly lead communicative efforts (Waisbord, 2008, p. 507). Indeed, the 2006 World Congress on Communication for Development (WCCD) in Paris promoted such ideals, as described in the Rome consensus (Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 6):

The 2006 WCCD produced a set of recommendations to policymakers based on an understanding that communication is a ‘major pillar’ for development and social change... [with a] strategic requirement for access to communication tools so that people can communicate amongst themselves and with decision-makers; recognition of the need for different approaches depending on different contexts; and support to those most affected by development issues to enable them to have a say. (p. 6)

Nevertheless, despite the global recommendations, modernisation and diffusion theories continue to influence the use of C4D in practice (p. 5). This is where communication is used to transmit messages rather than to meaningfully support participatory development processes (p. 5). Modernisation theories, for example, are widespread through behaviour change communication and new communicative technologies, including ICTs and social media (McAnany, 2012, pp. 2, 27; Thomas, 2010, p. 25). A United Nations study on evaluating C4D activities points to the reason why (Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 5). The study highlighted that a tension exists for C4D between participatory communication and
one-way communication flows most commonly deployed in well-established international development institutions (p. 5). The logic is that “full and direct participation is incompatible with dominant organisational cultures and practice” (p. 5). As a result, participatory communication is often dismissed in practice through a high-level lack of understanding and/or support of C4D’s value for meaningful change (p. 13). Here, the participatory aspect of social change communication becomes “mere rhetoric, not practiced or implemented in top-down ways” (p. 6). Even when participatory communication is promoted at the organisational level in development, its political potential is often minimised (Enghel, 2015, p. 21), as described in the next section.

2.3.2 C4D and the push for new paradigms
Wendy Quarry and Ricardo Ramirez (2009) argue that development institutions are, overall, risk-adverse and struggle with uncertainty (p. 134). This is why most organisations prefer, in their words, a “telling” style of communication over dialogue-based approaches that might challenge structural inequities (p. 134). Their views mirror similar concerns that the political undertones of C4D approaches—with their emphasis on mobilised citizen participation—are incompatible with the results-based agendas of development institutions (Enghel, 2015, p. 7; Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 5). Accordingly, there is a call for a shift from participatory communication to more political-leaning paradigms that can transform societies (Enghel, 2015, p. 21). Here, scholars argue that communicative approaches must tackle the political barriers silencing citizen voice and keeping people in poverty (Dutta, 2011; McAnany, 2012; Servaes, 2008). For instance, Dutta (2011) argues for a culture-centred approach (CCA) to social change communication to counter “neoliberal hegemony” (p. 2). His approach is one of the more progressive theories for addressing social injustice in contemporary C4D scholarship. CCA is an organisational framework that “envisions communicative processes that interrupt the erasures in mainstream discourses of development, and engages with subaltern voices in seeking spaces for transformative politics and redistributive justice” (p. 8).

The culture-centred approach promotes communicative efforts that can transform people’s oppressive conditions through transforming inequitable local, national and global power structures (p. intro). In this way, social change communication supports the “agency of individuals and collectives in determining their choices” while “interrogating the taken-for-
granted assumptions that constitute the rules, roles and organising principles of the status quo” (Dutta, 2011, p. 32; 2012b, pp. 57-61). Social change is thus tied to the communicative capacity for citizens living in disadvantage to disrupt, challenge and transform structures and powerful, prominent discourses that foster or sustain inequity (Dutta, 2012a, p. 3). PV activities, it would seem, can support citizens from the margins in overcoming their oppression conditions. However, as Dutta (2012b) argues, only if PV actions help “transform the political, economic and social configurations that have excluded them” (p. 1). The next section addresses how this notion of citizen voice and PV as a political act translates in international development contexts.

2.4 Arguments for raising valued citizen voice
2.4.1 Holding decision-makers to account
The literature review thus far has defined the underpinning argument for valuing citizen voice. That is, for enhancing ordinary citizens’ active role not only in the decisions that affect their lives, but in holding powerful decision-makers to account (Grandvoinnet et al., 2015, p. 12). Participatory video can play an integral part in enhancing such goals. As Dutta (2011) argues, PV activities can influence policy through disrupting status quo structures (p. 187). Dutta refers to structures as “ways of organising institutional processes and resources that enable or constrain access to resources” (p. 3). The view is consistent with social accountability arguments in development studies. For example, Irene Guijt (2008) sees social change as a “conscious effort to counterbalance the impact of economic, social and political injustices on the vulnerable, marginalised and the poor, including imbalanced access to resources, goods and services” (p. 4). Here, PV holds potential to build citizen awareness, self-confidence and organising capacity in ways that rebalance deficiencies in public voice (Sparks, 2007, p. 226).

Nevertheless, PV can only tackle inequity if the expressed citizen concerns are valued in decision-making circles. The argument implies that raising citizen voice with PV requires more than giving citizens access to communicative resources to articulate their concerns. PV practices also require acknowledging and responding to, as Shaw (2013) argues, “how social power is constructed and perpetuated” (p. 10). This way, PV activities can strategically be designed to “tip the power balance favourably” so participants’ voice is more weighted in decision-making spaces (p. 10). The aspiration for more equitable
exchange between citizens and policymakers is central to broader arguments concerned with “voice as a value” and “listening for democracy”—two theoretical areas discussed in depth throughout the thesis (Couldry, 2010, p. 7; Dobson, 2014, p. 17).

### 2.4.2 Advancing voice that can matter

The concept of voice has multiple meanings. As a general term, voice is often viewed as an auditory exchange between the speaker and listener (Ihde, 2007, p. 189). In politics and development, voice is often metaphorically promoted as “powerful speech” that can influence public arguments and debates (Goetz & Nyamu, 2008, p. 5). In communication and democracy studies, voice is often described as a valued proposal where social, political and economic barriers to voice are considered in its capacity for expression (Couldry, 2010, p. 1). The latter understanding considers voice beyond active participation in its creation where “having a voice is never enough” (p. 1). People must know their voice matters (Couldry 2010). The argument moves voice towards a requirement for recognition and response through listening processes that ensure the “value of voice can be mutually registered” (Tacchi, 2012, p. 655). Mutually registered voice, Couldry (2010) argues, is necessary to treat “voice as a value” (p. 1). This is where, in practice, “multiple interlinked processes of voice” are respected and sustained rather than undermined or denied (pp. 1-2). Couldry (2010) grounds his argument for “voice as a value” through five principles:

- Voice is socially grounded... a form of reflexive agency... and an embodied process. Voice requires a material form that may be individual, collective or distributed. Voice is undermined by rationalities which take no account of voice and by practices that exclude voice or undermine forms for its expression and as such needs supportive social relations. (pp. 7-11)

Through the concept, voice as value looks beyond the process understanding of voice for excluded groups to be able to “give an account of the world in which they act” (p. 7). Rather, valued voice includes identifying and striving to overcome social and economic conditions that might undermine voice so it can matter (p. 2). C4D scholar Jo Tacchi (2010) argues that this valued understanding of voice can be difficult as “models or paradigms of development, and ICT4D, still tend to position people living in poverty—overwhelmingly, and in practice—as potential 'listeners,' receivers of information and aid” (p. 9). In linking voice and development, she observes:
Voice has been used in various ways to support a general consensus that participatory development is the only way to proceed, but often with specific reference to voice as process, rather than voice as value (for example, the multi-country Voices of the poor and the Poverty reduction strategy papers) and so far its considerations have been limited to an interest in the basic act of voice, not the wider reasons for valuing voice. This connects with acknowledged problems with the notion of participation in development. When participation is considered an end rather than a means, it can also be understood as a value rather than a process. (pp. 7-8)

In international development, voice poverty is often considered as the inability of people to influence the decisions that affect their lives, and the right to participate in that decision making (Tacchi, 2009, pp. 2-3). Here, C4D for social change can serve as a voice-affirming process on a pathway to poverty reduction (Thomas, 2010, p. 24). This is where valuing citizen voice requires C4D activities that prioritise transformative politics, equitable power relations, human rights and social justice (Askanius, 2014, p. 138; Dutta, 2011, pp. 7, 8; Servaes, 2013, p. 369). To infuse such theories into PV practice, scholars are encouraging more reflexive and critical views of particular development frameworks and approaches that might erase rather than enable voice (Couldry, 2009, p. 580; 2010, p. 7; Thomas, 2010, p. 24). The actions are especially relevant for countering celebratory claims that through PV “anyone can express ideas, articulate their viewpoints or voice opinions of importance with no barrier to status or consequence” (White, 2003, p. 64). Such views tend to ignore power dynamics within communities. They can also dismiss wider contextual political conditions that might, in fact, override any possibilities for such voice to be expressed or meaningfully heard (Kindon et al., 2012, p. 362; Walsh, 2014, p. 1).

Couldry (2010) points to a looming “crisis of voice” that he attributes to an erasure caused by neoliberal practices that focus on economics and politics through a competitive market approach (p. 4). He argues these practices are devaluing and diminishing spaces for alternative narratives that threaten this system (p. 4). The crisis occurs when voice is “continuously offered and yet retracted, endorsed but then made empty” (Couldry, 2014, p. 15). As Couldry (2010) argues, challenging this “neoliberal rationality” so all voices matter necessitates a modified understanding of voice that focuses on the “long-entrenched inequalities of representation that need to be addressed” (p. 1). Such a view goes beyond
an understanding of process notions of voice as both a means of expression and having the capacity to engage in such expression (p. 7). This is the view commonly seen in the participatory paradigm of communication, as Colin Sparks (2007) describes:

The strand of thinking that we have labelled the participatory paradigm is, in its radical versions, the analysis that comes closest to grasping the essence of the matter. This line of thought begins, correctly, from the perception that it is only when the poor and the oppressed find their own voices that they will have the power and the confidence to resolve their own problems. The starting point for any better understanding of the way ahead is this fundamental insight. The task is not to replace it but to develop its logical implications. (p. 225)

Sparks (2007) argues for media, as an inclusive term, to find spaces where voice can be located toward politically charged action to fully address poverty. This is where Couldry’s (2010) “second order value” of voice seems to fit comfortably, for it not only focuses on voice processes, but necessitates “reflexive concern with the conditions for voice” (p. 7). The following section addresses this further in developing an analytical framework for research. The framework not only concerns itself with voice expression, but also its reception for greater responsiveness.

2.5 An analytical framework for research

So far, the literature review has made clear the goal of embedding participatory video into international development contexts to meaningfully raise citizen voice. However, to achieve this scholars argue that C4D approaches must start by acknowledging inequitable communicative processes keeping voice marginalised (Dutta, 2012a, p. 22). This includes PV practice as a C4D methodology. For example, Sourayan Mookerjea (as cited in Low et al., 2012) argues that a contextual approach is necessary for meaningful PV to occur (p. 60). He says this helps avoid situations where the political history and context of PV implementation are shunned in favour of “middle-class, pseudo-therapeutic ideas of transformation taken from the self-help manuals as taken-for-granted natural categories of cultural-political analysis” (p. 60). Mookerjea’s observation indicates that tokenistic participation with PV is not just bound to happen, but already occurring as PV practice grows around the world (High et al., 2012, p. 45). Any attempt to alter this trajectory ultimately requires a more critical frame. To pursue such a proposal, this chapter concludes by proposing an analytical framework for researching PV practitioners and
When the Challenge for Change programme used video on Fogo Island, the filmmaking approach the team applied was revolutionary in espousing values now commonplace in PV discourse. Such values include using PV to strengthen grassroots knowledge and awareness; build community confidence and capacity; motivate citizen action through reflexive, dialogical activities; and affect political change at multiple decision-making levels (Hume-Cook et al., 2007, p. 161). Yet, despite such aspirations, PV practice today is still struggling to realise its ideals fully and meaningfully (Shaw, 2012, p. 225; Walsh, 2014, p. 5). Because of this, there is value in identifying key principles apparent in the Fogo Method applicable for an analytical framework for further study on PV practice and citizen voice. Here, three principles seem to encapsulate the practice. First, the filmmaking activity flipped responsibility to community members as they determined how to make their own meaning and represent themselves through film (Quarry & Ramirez, 2009, p. 75). For the framework, this translates into the principle of representation. Second, the films became a catalyst for the participants and community field-workers to create dialogical spaces where community voice could be recognised as having value to both bureaucrats and peers (Cornell, 2012, p. 27). For the framework, this translates into the principle of recognition. Third, PV helped strengthen existing efforts for political response, such as building community networks across the island and supporting on-going academic research on social and economic change (Crocker, 2003, p. 126). For the framework, this translates into the principle of response. The principles of representation, recognition and response also closely align with development scholarship that values both voice expression and its receptivity as a pathway for change (Fox, 2015; Grandvinnet et al., 2015; Oswald, 2014, p. 3). The thesis offers a discussion on these principles, and other theoretical linkages for valuing citizen voice, in the following three sections.

2.5.1 The principle of representation

For the analytical framework, the principle of representation suggests PV processes that can fully engage citizens in how they conceptualise, express, visualise and share their concerns on decisions that affect their lives (Shaw, 2015, p. 8; White, 2003, p. 20). Core to the representation principle is that PV participants gain the knowledge, confidence and...
skills necessary to meaningfully engage in and potentially influence decision-making spaces long after creating and showing their PV films. The principle conceptually aligns with C4D and development studies arguments that a lack of voice, power and accountability exacerbates poverty (Lister, 2007, p. 51; Tacchi, 2009, pp. 2; Thomas, 2010, p. 24). It does so by distancing people from the policies that affect their lives (O'Neil et al., 2007, p. V). Too often, however, institutions assume that if excluded groups have the capacity to express their opinions, they are able to hold the state to account (Gaventa & McGee, 2013, p. 510). Such views, however, unrealistically position opinioned voice as highly influential on policy reform regardless of wider contexts or power dynamics. The views minimise the reality of what Akshay Khanna (2012) calls an “unruly” political environment (p. 165). This is where the language and practicalities of influence are often dictated, conducted and sanctioned by those holding the most power (p. 165). The principle of representation thus suggests that PV practice must be cognisant of conditions and factors that might limit citizen’s representational capacity. Only then can PV activity facilitators strategically circumvent such barriers in practice.

2.5.2 The principle of recognition

For the analytical framework, the principle of recognition suggests PV processes that can increase respect for participants’ voice, as well as its value for influencing the concerning issues (Khamis et al., 2009, p. 130; Kindon, 2003, p. 143). As Wheeler (2011) has argued, PV can act as a “lens through which the power relationships, identities and perspectives of the people involved are projected” (p. 48). However, one cannot assume that decision-makers always appreciate and respect their vision. The pragmatic reality of having PV participants’ voice recognised as valuable is a more nuanced and often politically charged proposition (Lister, 2002, p. 40; Wheeler, 2011, p. 48). Considered action with PV is thus necessary beyond participants having the communicative tools and capacity to represent themselves in public (Sparks, 2007, p. 226). Couldry’s (2010) “voice as value” concept, described in Section 2.4.2, can inspire PV practice (p. 7). This is where voice is more than speech, expression and alternative opinions (p. 7). Rather, citizen voice is a social process that involves, from the start, an attention on both speaking and listening as critical (pp. 8-9). For PV practice, the heightened focus on listening can help shift inequitable, “institutionalised hierarchies of attention” (Dreher, 2009, p. 10). Put another way, the focus
can advance the argument that recognition requires active listening, whereby receivers of alternative voices are “open to the possibility of hearing them” (Dobson, 2014, p. 21).

In reviewing arguments on listening, Dreher (2009) identifies recognition as a way to think about how a listener responds to voice; tying the two principles of recognition and response together (p. 454). Doing so, however, negates the valuable process of advancing recognition as a precursor to responsiveness. For decision-makers merely being present to hear voice is an insufficient indicator of them respecting its value. Thus, targeted efforts are necessary with PV processes to explicitly and strategically nurture the quality of voice reception. Such actions are imperative within development spaces that can be, at times, compliant in voice erasure (Tacchi, 2010, p. 15).

2.5.3 The principle of response
For the analytical framework, the principle of response suggests PV processes that can rebalance inequitable decision-making spaces through deliberative, dialogical encounters, increasing responsiveness potential (Low et al., 2012, p. 49; Wheeler, 2012, p. 365). The response principle positions PV as a viable approach to help shift inequitable conditions and structures that preserve the status-quo and keep voice marginalised (Dutta, 2011, p. 187). To do so, PV processes require alignment with development efforts advancing equitable social, cultural, political and/or structural conditions for voice (Couldry, 2014, p. 15). In today’s international development environment, generating meaningful responses to marginalised citizen concerns is complex. It is certainly a more difficult proposition than the celebratory rhetoric for raising voice with C4D methods might imply (Dutta, 2012b, p. 4; Kindon et al., 2012, p. 349; Tufte, 2013, p. 26). Accordingly, for PV processes that aim for transformative social and political change, the principle of response promotes multiple strategies for citizen engagement, mobilisation and action. Thus, the response principle compels PV practice to scrutinise its activities. For instance, PV practitioners might question if commonly deployed public screenings alone are sufficient to provoke responsiveness to citizen voice. For the interplay between citizen recognition, recognition and receptive response is an intricate proposal (Kindon et al., 2012, p. 349). As Wheeler (2011) explains:
Digital technology through participatory video can lead to a strong sense of seeing like a citizen—seeing yourself and your ideas reflected through film and acknowledged by the wider community or even representatives of the state. At the same time, digital video technology can lead to a sense of alienation and seeing like a subject—when your ideas are erased or omitted from the film or the results you hope for fail to materialise. (p. 57)

Wheeler’s reflection on PV practice implies that considered approaches to PV are necessary for response. That is, approaches acknowledging powerful influences that are bound to affect the reception of voice from the margins. The principle of response, in other words, accepts that PV activities can foster greater recognition of citizens and their concerns. However, it also accepts that not every PV process automatically generates social or political action and response (p. 57). Additional efforts may be required alongside PV endeavours. As Johan Bastiaensen and Tom De Herdt (2004) assert, “expecting a package of simple participatory planning techniques to make the ‘voices of the poor’ heard and guarantee their participation in the real world magically assumes away the deep-rooted social causes of poverty itself” (p. 882).

2.5.4 The study: PV practitioners and citizen voice
Deploying participatory video in development contexts is complex, which brings up multiple concerns for citizen voice. How might PV practitioners’ notions of raising citizen voice fit within the differing views of voice? Such views range from giving opinion to transforming voice-denying situations. What effects might differing conceptualisations of voice have on citizens whose voice PV practitioners are trying to raise? How can practitioners recognise enabling development environments for applying the ideals in practice? Within the development sector, calls for strengthening voice are gaining prominence as critical for citizen engagement and social accountability (Fox, 2015; Grandvoinnet et al., 2015; Klugman et al., 2014). This has led to an increased interest in how communication for development approaches can advance meaningful citizen voice (Askanius, 2014; Tacchi, 2009). However, less attention has focused on the practitioner actors who design participatory media solutions in development spaces. For their perception, knowledge and actions undoubtedly contribute to whether valued citizen voice can be sufficiently realised. That is, where the “opinions, desires and goals of human beings might matter in the organisation of social and economic resources” (Couldry, 2010, p. 15).
For interrogating PV practitioners and valued citizen voice, this chapter has presented an analytical framework to support further study. It includes the principles of representation, recognition and response. The research will use the three principles to guide semi-structured interview questions as part of its methodology, as described in the next chapter. The principles, alongside findings from the research, also inform a conceptual framework for PV practice and raising citizen voice, as presented in Chapter 5. The next chapter explains the study’s phenomenographical research approach into the phenomenon of using PV to raise citizen voice in international development contexts. It also describes the study’s epistemology, research design, participants, analytical approach and ethical framing.
3. Methodology

Sometimes the problem isn’t the method, but the way the industry is using the method.
—Kai

3.1 Research overview

3.1.1 Research objectives and questions

This chapter describes the main study in the thesis by presenting its objectives, key questions and approach to the research. It details the study’s epistemology, phenomenographic methodological design, data collection methods and researcher positionality. The chapter incorporates how the study selected the PV practitioner participants, and provides their backgrounds. It also explains how the research approach is positioned through an ethical frame of care. The chapter concludes by describing the analytical approach used to meet the study objectives.

The research for this thesis investigated: **How can participatory video practitioners enable valued citizen voice in international development contexts?** To this end, the study set three objectives for the research, as presented in Chapter 1. For each objective, the study relied on a key question or questions to guide the research:

- **Objective 1:** To explore the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts from PV practitioner perspectives.
  - How do PV practitioners in the study conceptualise the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts?

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6 Kai is a research participant in the PhD study (see Section 3.2).
• **Objective 2**: To develop a principle-driven, conceptual framing for participatory video practice for valuing citizen voice.
  
o Building on the findings of how PV practitioners conceptualise the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts, what key principles emerge for a conceptual framework for practice?

• **Objective 3**: To offer insight on enabling environments for participatory video praxis to raise valued citizen voice in international development contexts.
  
o What key institutional views cause PV practitioners tension when raising citizen voice in international development contexts?
  
o What potential do these key institutional views hold for enabling or constraining efforts to raise citizen voice through PV activities?

This chapter describes the research methodology in depth before presenting the findings and analysis to address each research objective in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

### 3.1.2 Social constructivism epistemology

The research in this thesis is grounded in a social constructivism epistemology, which focuses on the “unique experience of the individual” in relationship with “social and natural systems” (Ireland, Tambyah, Neofa, & Harding, 2008, p. 6). The epistemology supported the study’s focus on PV practitioner conceptualisations of raising citizen voice with PV. As described in Chapter 1, PV practitioners overall embrace a common goal of using filmmaking for social change. Therefore, on one hand the study assumed they would share similar storylines from working in “Aidland,” a term coined by David Mosse (2011) for the international development field (p. 1). On the other hand, the study also expected compelling differences since practitioners apply PV through varying conceptual lenses across practice (Low et al., 2012, p. 50). In this way, their particular ideals and frames of seeing likely evolved through experiential learning with others (Hales & Walkins, 2004, p. 3). Because participatory video is a practice influenced by understandings of its meaning and application, the description of social constructivism by Robert Hales and Mike Watkins (2004) is fitting to describe this epistemological choice for the study:
Social constructivism posits that communities, institutions and groups play a major role in the making of knowledge. In particular, the interaction of people within social situations mediates the construction of knowledge through participation in social practices that convey meaning. In this view of learning, interaction is related to the desire to fit in with socially appropriate forms of practice. (p. 3)

The research interprets constructivism through Kenneth Gergen’s (1999) definition as a “view in which an individual mind constructs reality but within a systematic relationship to the external world” (as cited in Talja, Tuominen, & Savolainen, 2005, p. 81). Social constructivism is a cognitive process that explains the way people develop meaning and ways of knowing (Young & Collin, 2004, p. 375). The construction of knowledge evolves through a “social process involving collaboration and negotiation among groups of learners” (Richardson, 1999, p. 65). For this study, the group of learners were the individual PV practitioners selected as the key informants, as described in Section 3.2. Social constructivism fits with how and where the PV practitioners are likely to apply their knowledge in practice. That is, in complex development contexts where they are constantly navigating their altruistic intentions (Hoggett et al., 2009, pp. 1, 78). This resonates with how Rosalind Eyben (2014) described her career in international development (p. 164). She explained that the theories she often worked through were—from moment-to-moment in differing contexts— influenced by her “relationships, observations, ideology, values and feasibility for realisation” (p. 164). Her description related to PV in that practice is often both fluid and pragmatic. PV practitioners’ knowledge and meaning are thus ever evolving through social constructs.

The design paradigm for this study was based on phenomenography, which complements the view that learning emerges through an individual’s “relational awareness of being in the world” (Hales & Watkins, 2004, p. 6). The phenomenography research methodology guided the study to understand better perceptions of a phenomenon. In this case, the phenomenon of using PV to raise citizen voice in international development contexts. Phenomenography linked to the social constructivism epistemology through the study’s interpretive lens (Ireland et al., 2008, p. 4). Here, individual PV practitioners gain knowledge and meaning about raising citizen voice through their aspirations for, and experiences of using PV in international development contexts. What this means is that the study, through constructivism, aimed to better understand how their “ideas, concepts
and experiences result in a common understanding of a construct” (Sullivan, 2009, p. 107). To such ends, exploring and analysing PV practitioner perceptions through a phenomenographic approach connected with social constructivism. It did so in how the process illuminated the “unique understanding and experience of the research participants in relation to a phenomenon” (Ireland et al., 2008, p. 6). The following section provides more detail on the phenomenographic approach guiding the research design.

3.1.3 Phenomenographic design framework
Phenomenography is a “relational, experiential, content-oriented and qualitative” research methodology that originated through the Department of Education at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden in the 1970s (see Richardson, 1999, p. 59). It was founded on the argument that people “learn to conceptualise their own reality” and that one cannot “separate the structure and the content of experience from one another” (Marton, 1981, p. 177). Phenomenography is often confused with the more commonly known methodology of phenomenology. However, they are inherently distinct. The critical difference is that phenomenology aims to make explicit a phenomenon’s essential structure and meaning (Larsson & Holmström, 2007, p. 55). Phenomenography, in contrast, aims to describe differing ways people conceptualise a particular phenomenon as a way to discover multiple meanings (p. 55). To this end, phenomenography prioritises the collective categorical description of a particular phenomenon over the thick description of personal occurrence (Svensson, 1997, p. 161; Trigwell, 2006, p. 367). In essence, rather than focus on individual experience—that in itself is inherently messy—the categorical process of description and analysis helps identify “critical qualitative similarities and differences” through discriminating categories (Akerlind, Bowden, & Green, 2005, p. 77).

The basis for creating “hierarchical categories of description of the variation” in the phenomenon is through a secondary perspective of reality (Lamb, Sandberg, & Liesch, 2011, p. 688; Trigwell, 2006, p. 368). Here, a researcher examines a phenomenon through the description of others; i.e. a “second-order” approach (Trigwell, 2006, p. 370). This is in contrast to a description of how the researcher perceives the phenomenon; i.e. a “first-order” approach (p. 370). In doing so, phenomenographic research ultimately aims to describe “multiple realities...as existing in the relationship between the perceiver and the phenomenon perceived, between the research and the data analysed” (Akerlind et al.,

With an interest in PV practitioners’ conceptualisations of PV praxis, phenomenography fitted the research design and implementation in four ways. First, the phenomenographic approach provided qualitative insight into the differing ways PV practitioners perceive raising citizen voice, and how such assumptions might link to behaviour (Lucas & Ashworth, 1998, p. 415; Marton, 1981, p. 180; Pherali, 2011, p. 7). Second, the methodology made explicit the “relation between the experiences of individuals” (Ireland et al., 2008, p. 7). This was the study’s intention over gaining knowledge from specific PV case studies. Third, the phenomenographic analysis, as described in Section 3.4, identified categories as a means to address the study objectives. It did so by interpreting and sorting the research data’s meaning into manageable, representative forms of the greater, organisational whole (Svensson, 1997, p. 168). Fourth, it used the collective categorisation of meanings for developing the principle-driven conceptual framework for PV practice described in Chapter 5.

3.1.4 Researcher positionality
The overall research design was driven by the ethos of development studies, a branch of social science that often prioritises a “commitment to social justice and the prevailing levels of global poverty and inequality” (see Sumner & Tribe, 2008, p. 31). Through development studies, generating knowledge is rarely in itself an endpoint, but rather a process that focuses on solving troubling contemporary problems (Molteberg, Haug, & Bergstrøm, 2000, p. 7). Based on this active relationship between knowledge and impact, scholars argue that development studies researchers should acknowledge their own positionality in relation to the research (Sumner & Tribe, 2008, p. 117). Accordingly, as the thesis author and researcher, I note that my personal views align with the ethical frame of social justice in development studies. I ascribe to the view that PV practice holds an emancipative potential for raising diminished or denied citizen voice. I developed this axiology through my professional background as a PV practitioner international development (Plush, 2009a, 2012, 2013, 2015b).
I also acknowledge that my experience in the PV field benefitted the research process. I could empathically relate and respond to the “life world” being conveyed by the participants in the study (Hales & Watkins, 2004, p. 8). Nevertheless, such actions also required caution. Being an experienced PV practitioner meant I had my own unique conceptualisation of the phenomenon of using PV to raise citizen voice in international development contexts. The background created potential for bias in regards to the complex relation between the “processes of knowledge” and the “involvement of the knowledge producer” (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 8). Hence, I approached the study through the principle of critical reflection, which is a reflexive process aimed to filter out personal bias and assumptions throughout the research process (Eyben, 2014, p. 20). The approach was especially valuable when data from the findings confronted or conflicted with my own experiences. The principle of reflexivity in such cases supported Eyben’s meaning of “being alert to different perspectives, giving such differences the space to show themselves, and in the process of paying attention, gaining pragmatic clarity about action” (p. 20).

I specifically addressed potential bias in the data-gathering process. For example, I asked the study participants to engage with the visual method of storyboarding for sharing their ideal practice, as described in Section 3.3.2. The fact that the drawings occurred prior to each interview helped address any taken-for-granted assumptions I might have had during the interview process. In this way, the visual data fostered what Dawn Manny (2014) calls “subject-led dialogue,” which helped to “limit the propensity for participant’s accounts to be overshadowed by the enclosed, self-contained world of common understanding” (p. 138). Through maintaining an awareness of my positionality, I drew on my subjectivity in the PV field to constructive ends. For example, I was able to locate a diverse and experienced group of study participants through my personal knowledge of and connections in the field. Section 3.2 describes the recruitment process. Additionally, my background in PV practice provided pragmatic knowledge to draw from when exploring the links between theory and practice through Norman Long’s concept of an “encounter at the interface” (see Bastiaensen & De Herdt, 2004, p. 879). The concept promotes the value of understanding the “critical point of intersection between life worlds, social fields, or levels of social organisation, where social discontinuities, based on discrepancies in values, interests, knowledge and power are most likely to be located” (p. 879). As a researcher, my intention
in the study was thus to act as an “interface expert” in gathering and analysing the research data (p. 879). Doing so aligned with the intentionality of a development studies pathway to evoke positive change through influencing policy or practice (Sumner & Tribe, 2008, p. 117). To such ends, this chapter now turns to an overview of who was involved in the study, and why.

3.2 Research participants

3.2.1 Selection through purposive sampling

Because phenomenography is grounded in the “lived experiences” of the participants (Lucas & Ashworth, 1998, p. 417), the methodology often uses purposive sampling where the researcher chooses participants who meet a pre-determined selection criteria (Akerlind et al., 2005, p. 79). Hence, to ensure a purposive yet representative sampling of PV practitioners, the study set the following criteria:

- They had used PV in international development contexts to raise citizen voice.
- They had used PV as a participatory development communication approach where the PV participants are “enacting some form of social or political transformation” (Low et al., 2012, p. 53). Or, they had used PV as research for development to gain “rich and complex qualitative data [for] real and positive impact” on PV participants (p. 53). The criterion did not include practitioners who had used PV primarily as a targeted educational process and tool.
- They were from or had lived in countries outside of where they have used PV to raise citizen voice, as this tends to be a common form of PV practice in development contexts. Multiple PV case studies by practitioners and researchers reinforce this observation (Asadullah, 2012; Baú, 2015, p. 121; Brickell, 2015, p. 510; Mistry & Berardi, 2012, p. 110; Tanner & Haynes, 2015, p. 357).
- They held potential to influence the PV discourse through writing journal articles and other publications; producing PV how-to manuals and toolkits; conducting PV facilitator trainings; sharing instructional and/or explanatory PV content on the internet; speaking about PV at meetings and conferences; and/or participating in PV communities of practice.
There was rationale for why the study's criteria required that practitioners live, or were from outside the community and/or country where they had used PV to raise citizen voice. It does so to explore this common practice found in international development contexts. The researcher deemed the practice common from a review of academic literature (as mentioned in bullet point three above) and through personal experience working as a participatory media practitioner in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nepal, South Africa and Vietnam (Plush 2009b, p. 1; 2012, p. 67; 2013, p. 25; 2015b, p. 12). This is relevant to valued citizen voice as PV activities often begin when practitioners write and/or respond to development institutions’ proposals from their home countries. Thus, even though distanced from where they eventually practice, PV practitioners have an early influence over project design and budgeting. For example, the study's practitioner participants said they had designed or negotiated the terms of reference in more than 90 percent of the PV activities they had implemented. Here, knowing how practitioners influence PV from afar was not to hypothesise whether such distance affects citizen voice. Rather, the criterion responded to common practice in PV project design in the development sector, and was of particular value for the study. The intention was not to diminish the learning that can be gained from more socially embedded, local practices facilitated by people in their own countries and communities. For even from the 25 practitioners selected for the study, fewer than half of their projects, approximately 40 percent, occurred in countries other than where they were from or lived.

In selecting the sample size of research participants, the study applied the standards of phenomenographic design, which promotes small sample sizes; usually 20-30 people (Akerlind et al., 2005, p. 79; Trigwell, 2006, p. 371). Through this guidance and the pre-set criteria, the study identified 30 potential key participants. The study located the participants through the researcher’s personal network and an internet search for PV practitioners. Of the 30 PV practitioners contacted, 25 people agreed to be part of the study. Of the 25 PV practitioners, three-quarters of the participants are individuals who primarily had used PV for development practice; the other fourth are individuals who had used PV primarily as a research method in development contexts. Fourteen of the 25 participants are female. This is representational of the higher population of female global PV practitioners observed in development contexts.
Because the criteria focused on people working in international development contexts from outside their own countries, participants are from Australia, Europe and the Americas. However, at the time of the interviews in 2014, the practitioners were currently residing on every continent but Antarctica. That said, nearly half of the study participants either originated from or lived in the United Kingdom. This high number is not coincidental as PV practice has a long history in the country. In the past 20 years, UK-produced academic and grey literature has dominated the English-speaking discourse on PV practice. For example, all the key PV publications listed in Section 2.1.3 have ties to the United Kingdom.

3.2.2 Research participant data

The PV practitioners in the study represented a range of experience in practice. The participant group included individuals who had facilitated one or two PV projects; as well as individuals who had practiced participatory media for more than 25 years, as shown in Table 3.1. Their combined knowledge was vast. In the study, the practitioners related to their experiences on more than 650 PV projects, nearly 400 of which they identified as motivated by the goal of raising voice. Of that number, nearly 250 PV projects were in countries or cultures outside of their own.

It is important to note that the participant data presented is subjective, as the PV practitioners in the study provided it. What this means is that the statistical data in Table 3.1 represents how the practitioners themselves defined their practice. As one example, a practitioner said she worked on one PV project for more than two decades. She determined if she wanted to represent the project in the statistical data as one project or multiple projects. Table 3.1 highlights the practitioner data as provided on a participant survey, and includes the practitioners’ years and levels of local and global experience with PV. For PV practitioner anonymity, the table provides the pseudonyms for the participants and lists people’s experience as a range. The chapter describes anonymity further in Section 2.5.2.
Table 3.1: Description of participants’ PV experience at the time of data collection (Feb-May 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Years practiced</th>
<th>PV projects</th>
<th>PV projects for raising voice</th>
<th>PV projects in countries outside one’s own</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>20+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katulpa</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>20+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misha</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sal</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nic</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinn</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>40+</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>20+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toni</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhenya</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>20+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addison</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kai</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendall</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>20+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikita</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gustl</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sasha</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seri</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Data collection methods

3.3.1 Phenomenographic data collection

As standard practice, phenomenography researchers often capture data through one round of semi-structured interviews with participants (Marton, 1986, p. 38; Trigwell, 2006, p. 371). Ference Marton, a founding theorist of phenomenography research, said he primarily prioritised semi-structured, individual interviews as a means to describe the phenomenon from the “reports or inferences of their subjects” (as cited in Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 125). However, he and his colleague Shirley Booth (1997) were also open to alternative sources of data in exploring conceptualisations of a phenomenon (p. 132). For instance, they discussed the viability of “group interviews, observations, drawings, written
responses and historical documents” (p. 132). Accordingly, in addition to semi-structured interviewing for textual data, the study used storyboarding as a visual method. Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 describe the two methods, starting with the study’s first research activity of storyboarding.

3.3.2 Storyboarding as a visual method
Based on the argument that experience is more than one modality of expression (Bagnoli, 2009, p. 547), the research included storyboarding by the participants as a visual method. The intention of storyboarding was to provide greater insight into the phenomenon that words alone might be insufficient to convey (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001, p. 4). In producing a film, a storyboard serves as a hand- or computer-drawn visual representation of the scenes a filmmaker intends to capture. It shows the intended camera angles, the actors involved, and/or the story’s narration. Storyboarding is a common activity in PV application. It supports a planning process for PV participants to define the intention for their film, and its overall focus (Labacher, Mitchell, de Lange, Moletsane, & Geldenhuys, 2012, p. 150). Storyboarding was thus a familiar visualisation method for the PV practitioners in the study.

Of the 25 practitioners interviewed for the study, 18 completed storyboards, as exemplified in Figure 3.1 and shown in large-form in Appendix 2. These participants drew their storyboards prior to the study interviews. For the storyboard task, the PV practitioners received email instructions to draw their ideal scenario for raising citizen voice with PV in international development contexts. They also received an electronic template that they could print and use if they desired. Twelve of the 18 practitioners used the template. Others used alternative materials, including markers on cardboard, crayons on flipchart paper and pen drawings on A4 paper. The practitioners sent their final storyboards electronically. In a few cases, the storyboard panels were difficult to read.
electronically. Thus, the researcher modified them for print readability using photography enhancement software, but did not alter the storyboard content. The storyboard process aimed to draw the practitioners away from having to explain specific PV projects, which they might have been unwilling to do with another PV practitioner or for critical research. Anna Bagnoli’s (2009) description of the value of visual methods to illicit alternative knowledge aptly describes the benefit seen from storyboarding in the study:

Focusing on the visual level allows people to go beyond a verbal mode of thinking, and this may help include wider dimensions of experience, which one would perhaps neglect otherwise. A creative task may encourage thinking in non-standard ways, avoiding the clichés and ‘readymade’ answers which could be easily replied. In this way, an arts-based method or graphic elicitation tool may encourage a holistic narration of self, and also help overcoming silences, including those aspects of one’s life that might for some reason be sensitive and difficult to be related in words (pp. 565-566).

Storyboarding served multiple functions within the research. First, the storyboard drawings elicited an alternative construction and interpretation of PV practice that interviews alone did not provide (Rose, 2012, p. 2). Their metaphorical nature prompted deeper insight into the “human consciousness” (Bagnoli, 2009, p. 548). Second, the storyboards offered an additional “viewpoint on human circumstances” and concepts difficult to articulate in words (Bagnoli, 2009, p. 548; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001, p. 36). Because the practitioners drew the storyboards before their interviews, the drawing process created an unbiased space for them to reflect on their ideologies for PV practice prior to the researcher-participant discussion. Third, similar to photos or video as a visual method, the storyboards helped “informants to make explicit links between visual and verbal knowledge that they wish to convey” (Pink, 2007, p. 366). To this end, they provided focus to the interviews, and prompted in-depth questions that may not have arisen through discussion alone. Fourth, the storyboards provided data, in addition to the interview text, for phenomenographic analysis (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 132). In doing so, the visuals helped the research analysis to “access and represent different levels of experience” for analysis (Bagnoli, 2009, p. 547), as described in Section 3.4.1.

Using storyboarding as visual method in the study is consistent with the phenomenographic approach, as the method specifically aims to draw out idealised PV practice over factual account of specific experiences or events (Collier-Reed & Ingerman,
That said, regardless of the intent to focus primarily on practitioner ideals, discussions of specific case studies did occur. At times, practitioners related their storyboards and interview descriptions to specific PV activities. Although the study included the case study descriptions as part of the findings, it was not through targeted analysis of specific PV events. Rather, the data was analysed broadly to illustrate variations in practitioner perceptions and responses to the phenomenon. This is an important distinction as PV activities are, by nature, applied within specific situations in development contexts. As such, the study acknowledges that a full understanding of each PV activity discussed by the practitioners would require an alternative research approach or rigorous analysis of the specific event. This could be through an ethnographic or case study research approach, which was not the intention of or approach taken in this study.

3.3.3 Semi-structured interviews
As mentioned in Section 3.3.1, semi-structured interviews are the most commonly used data collection method in phenomenography research (Marton, 1986, p. 38; Trigwell, 2006, p. 371), and the second method deployed in the study. For phenomenography study, there is a recommended structure for collecting data through interviews:

The purpose of the interview is to explore the interviewee’s experience of the phenomenon in depth. This normally entails having a list of trigger questions that might, for example, focus on the background to the phenomenon, how the interviewee dealt with it, why he/she did it that way, what she/he was trying to achieve and what the outcome was. The interviewee’s response to each question is interrogated using sub-questions derived directly from that response. In this way, the meanings behind words used are clarified. (Trigwell, 2006, p. 371)

Using this approach, the study conducted 25 semi-structured interviews for the research. Here, 24 interviews occurred by Skype and one in person. The interviews ranged from 60 to 150 minutes, with the majority lasting about an hour. In the semi-structured interviews, the research collected data through open-ended questions and follow-up questions (Svensson, 1997, p. 161). The study developed the interview trigger questions through the analytical framework identified in Chapter 2, as based on the principles of representation, recognition and response. The reasoning built on the argument in Section 2.5 that PV practice can strengthen representation by excluded groups in decision-making spaces through the catalyst of filmmaking; cultivate recognition for valuing marginalised voice
through creating spaces and conditions conducive for active listening; and foster significant response through confronting and destabilising conditions complicit in voice denial and erasure.

Table 3.2 offers a sample of the trigger questions. Although the questions guided the semi-structured interviews, the individual exchanges were fluid as the researcher and participant responded to the unique discussion direction and storyboard drawings.

Table 3.2: Sample of semi-structured interview trigger questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Sample of trigger questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| General | • How can PV raise the voice of excluded groups in international development? Why is this valuable?  
         | • What key factors in PV design and facilitation enable / constrain citizen voice? |
|         | • How can you ensure authentic citizen voice?  
         | • What influences power have you seen in people being able to represent their concerns? |
|         | • How can the PV process create spaces for listening? How does it shut down listening?  
         | • How have you experienced other ways for increasing respect for people’s concerns? |
|         | • How can PV be used for political action and response to the issues raised in the films?  
         | • Whose role is this within PV activities conducted in development contexts, and the related implication? |

Additionally, the interview questioning considered Couldry’s (2010) concern that structures and particular world views can also subtly diminish and devalue voice (p. 7). In this way, the questions and discussion explored not only how practitioners conceptualise raising citizen voice; but also their perceptions of development institutional views that might help or hinder such aspirations. After the interviews, the researcher transcribed the discussions verbatim, and presented them to the PV participants for their review and any changes. The quotes used in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 draw from these verbatim transcripts, and thus tend to have a more informal tone than quotes taken from literature and presented in the thesis.
3.4 Rigour and data analysis

Based on the phenomenography tradition, rigour within the study was derived through the collective interpretation of the data as a holistic “pool of meanings” (Akerlind et al., 2005, p. 76). The categorised meanings aimed to capture the greater essence of the phenomenon, rather than provide individualistic analysis of individual interviews (p. 76). In this way, while individual quotes and visuals support the finding descriptions, they did so as descriptors of the categorical meanings that emerged through iterative processes of interpretation (Marton, 1981, p. 177; 1986, p. 34). The individual descriptors acted as evidence and form the backbone of what is known as the “outcome space” (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 125). This was where the resulting “ways of experiencing” the phenomena are categorised and described in detail as to how they are differentially perceived in their variation (p. 125). Lennart Svensson (1997) described how this process helps ascertain deeper meaning from the data as a rigorous process:

The aim is to give summary descriptions of parts of data corresponding to conceptions of phenomena. Thus such parts of data will be abstracted from the rest and condensed as to their meaning and grouped under categories. The category is a description of what is the common meaning of the meanings of a phenomena grouped together. The categories are based on comparison and grouping of data representing expressions of conceptions (p. 168).

In this study, after initially identifying a set of descriptive categories, the analysis turned to defining the structural relationship between the categories. This was a process independent of the transcripts (Trigwell, 2006, p. 371). The analysis continued in an iterative fashion between the transcripts and the structural relationship, until it constituted a stable set of categories (p. 371). For the analysis, the researcher drew on the interview texts and the storyboard drawings as visual artefacts of the phenomenon. The storyboard data was specifically useful for addressing objective one in the study, which was to explore the phenomenon of using PV to raise citizen voice in international development contexts from PV practitioner perspectives. Additionally, the research applied the findings on the phenomenon to address objective two. That was, to develop a principle-driven, conceptual framing for participatory video practice for valuing citizen voice. The data collected from the semi-structured interviews was particularly useful for addressing the third research objective. That was, to offer insight on enabling environments for PV praxis to raise valued...
citizen voice in international development contexts. Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 provide a detailed overview of the analysis methods used in the study.

3.4.1 Analysis to address the first objective
This section describes the phenomenographic analysis undertaken to address the study’s first objective: To explore the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts from PV practitioner perspectives. Here, the analysis aimed to answer a specific question: How do PV practitioners in the study conceptualise the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts? To begin the analysis, the researcher reviewed the PV practitioner’s storyboard visual data to identify similarities and variations. The visuals allowed a “more nuanced understanding” of the phenomenon to emerge than through text alone (Mannay, 2014, p. 136). This occurred by using the “participants’ own metaphors” to “lead in constructing interpretations” (Bagnoli, 2009, p. 568). The researcher also reviewed the accompanying interview text that described the action in the 18 storyboards, and the seven other text transcripts that did not have supportive storyboards. The process helped to determine similarities and variations in the interpretations. It also helped to iteratively develop “categories of description” in how PV practitioners conceptualised the concept of raising citizen voice (Hales & Watkins, 2004, p. 6), which were categorised using NVivo software. This information informed the research findings.

As an example, the act of interviewing can demonstrate how the storyboards added value for the analysis. Interviewing is a common filmmaking technique in PV practice. It appeared in multiple storyboards, as shown in the storyboard panels in Figures 3.2-3.5. In merely looking at the storyboard panel drawings, the act of interviewing seemed quite similar across the four panels. However, when partnered with the study’s textual data, differing intentions for interviewing emerged. In applying phenomenographic analysis, these differing intentions represented categories of meanings; and thus were descriptively named (Svensson, 1997, p. 168). Here, for example, the researcher chose three categories to describe the panels through their actions: 1) to collect voice; 2) for a group to research how to represent themselves in their film; and 3) as a process for shifting decision-making power, as shown in Table 3.3. The sections after the table describe the categories, and offer examples of storyboard panels related to each category.
Table 3.3: Interviewing used in three different ways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collect voice</th>
<th>Research for self-representation</th>
<th>Shift decision-making power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PV included interviews to collect multiple opinions on a particular topic from a targeted group of people living with disadvantage.</td>
<td>PV included interviews as local research so PV participants could better determine how best to represent their own concerns on a particular issue.</td>
<td>PV included interviews as a strategic way to shift decision-making power so citizens have stronger social or political influence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collect voice

Illustrative of the first category, Figure 3.2 shows a storyboard panel with multiple people answering pre-determined questions *(Kendall)*. Interviewing here was classified in the collect voice category as it visualised a PV activity where newly trained PV participants collected multiple citizen views through an interviewing process. The on-camera recording occurred after an hour-long community focus group meeting on a specific topic of interest.

Similarly, Figure 3.3 also seemed to fit best in the collect voice category. Here, the practitioner drew PV participants collecting multiple citizen concerns as part of a development programme evaluation *(Kai)*. The drawing shows PV participants going into the community to gather responses on video from people who took part in an international development activity. The drawing appeared indicative of newly trained PV participants collecting the voice of others.

Figure 3.2: Example of “collect voice” *(Kendall)*

Figure 3.3: Example of “collect voice” *(Kai)*
Research for self-representation

In the second category, research for self-representation, interviewing appeared to build group confidence and capacity so participants’ could more readily participate in decision-making spaces. The storyboard panel in Figure 3.4 shows:

The ideal participants aren’t only exploring their own reality… Within this kind of process, they need to be able to explore the position of others, of those who are perhaps in opposition to them; or who they need to influence; or whose needs or requirements are in conflict with their own (Quinn).

Shift decision-making power

In the third category, shift decision-making power, interviewing served a strategic purpose in tackling power inequities. For example, PV participants who have historically struggled to identify themselves as citizens, PV participants might interview people in higher positions of power. A practitioner illustrated this use of interviewing in her storyboard, as shown in Figure 3.5. In the scene, PV is “external (policy) focused” to flip traditional hierarchical structures (Jessie). Here, interviewing aimed to build people’s confidence and position them more equally in relation to power.

In applying the iterative, phenomenographic analysis methodology, the researcher used the same analytical technique with other storyboard visuals and interview data. This included topics such as participant selection, film screenings and ideal timeframes for working with groups. Through this process, logical and relational categories emerged as the outcome of the analysis (Bowden & Green, 2005, p. 70). The researcher then developed key categories of description to be presented in what phenomenographic researchers call the “outcome space,” which is where the categories are described in depth (Bowden & Green, 2005, p. 71; Hales & Watkins, 2004, p. 6).
The findings from the analysis are presented in Chapter 4 as three voice pathway that reflect “differences in the meanings of experience” (Hales & Watkins, 2004, p. 6). Here, the researcher named the three voice pathways amplified voice, with the characteristics of visibility, communication and evidence; engaged voice, with the characteristics of participation, dialogue and capacity; and equitable voice with the characteristics of agency, receptivity and relationships.

3.4.2 Analysis to address the third objective
This section describes the analysis undertaken to address the study’s third objective: To offer insight on enabling environments for PV praxis to raise valued citizen voice in international development contexts. Here, the researcher asked a specific question to answer through the analysis: What key institutional views cause PV practitioners tension when raising citizen voice with PV in international development contexts? For the analysis, the researcher used NVivo software coding and a process of interpreting meaning through poems created from the interview text. The first step included coding descriptors in the interview data text where practitioners described constraints for implementing their idealised PV processes. The descriptors allowed the researcher to employ a “poetic interpretive method” to distil the data into multiple categories of expression to represent meaning (Langer & Furman, 2004, p. 2; Woods, 2005, p. 50). For each practitioner in the study, the researcher used their own words and phrases to develop poems as representative of their tensions. Excerpts from the practitioner poems are included in Appendix 1. Because poetry can act as the “clarification and magnification of being,” conveying the data as poetry helped the researcher identify the essence of meaning behind the practitioners’ words for analysis (Hirshfield, 1997, p. 5). As sociologist Laurel Richardson (1993) argues, a poetic form of data helps to convey:

…emotions, feelings and moods in a way that shows another person how it is to feel something. Even if the mind resists, the body responds to poetry. It is felt. To paraphrase [Robert] Frost, ‘poetry is the shortest emotional path between two people’ (p. 9).

Putting the coded content into poems thus served to isolate the core emotive words and phrases conveyed by the individuals in the study. It clarified how the practitioners’ tensions related to their PV experiences and visions of ideal practice. The process of extracting descriptors of the phenomenon also helped make the data easier to “consume and utilise”
for analysis (Langer & Furman, 2004, p. 3). It did so through creating an interactive, “alternative experience” of the data that stripped the bare “emotions, feelings and moods” out of the text (Woods, 2005, p. 50). The analysis process was similar to how Carol L. Langer and Rich Furman (2004) interpreted female Native American experiences where they used the women’s exact words, but removed parts “unimportant to the meaning” of the text through an “economy of words” (p. 3). The approach also reflected how Richardson (1993) created poetry from the content of life-narrative interviews with unwed mothers to communicate their lived experiences using their own words (p. 5). Of significance in the study is that the poetic forms do not represent the data as findings. Rather, the analysis served as a methodological process for the researcher to more deeply interpret and interact with the emotive core concepts within the data. Thus, due to the interpretive nature of the poems, particular phrases from the poems are not included as data evidence in the thesis.

For the poetic interpretive analysis, the researcher first broadly identified where PV practitioners described areas of tension. She coded those sections of data into broad categories, such as the institutional influences of agendas, sustainability, resource investment, result-based outcomes, time, political risk, scope and scale, marketing and branding, simple system thinking, etc. Through this coding cycle, more than 650 phrases of tensions were categorised, ranging from 24 phrases from one practitioner to 95 from another. The larger number of tensions tended to coincide with longer interviews. From the coded phrases from each practitioner, the researcher identified the most emotive and descriptive words and phrases that described their tensions in PV practice. She then used these to develop poems for categorical meaning making.

As an example, Table 3.4 shows an excerpt from a practitioner’s interpreted poem. The poem helped the researcher identify tensions in the PV field that relate to the structural dominance of powerful institutional agendas. The poem also highlighted tensions that come into play when working with communities. To show how the researcher developed this poem, following are two phrases of identified tensions coded from the practitioner’s interview. The bolded phrases are the ones selected during the poem-creation process from the practitioner’s verbatim transcript. These same words are bolded in the poem excerpt in Table 3.4 to show how they were used in developing the poem.
They have a choice as to how they want to represent themselves. And I think it is the element of that choice that is very often missed out because there’s already an agenda. It takes time; it takes time for all of us to represent ourselves publically. *(Katulpa)*

What alternative ways can video be used to enable communities to express and campaign their own needs? I think we need to look at some of the other models. *(Katulpa)*

In the following poem excerpt, the chosen phrases highlighted in bold exist alongside words and phrases taken from other tensions identified in the interview text. The researcher’s formulated categories of meaning in column two in Table 3.4 led to identifying and ultimately categorising the institutional tensions practitioners in the study face in their practice, as described after the poem excerpt. Appendix 1 provides excerpts from the 25 practitioner poems.

Table 3.4: Example of poetic form and formulated meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poetic Form</th>
<th>Formulated Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The unconscious collusion:</td>
<td>Agendas and power can constrain PV practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships of power and policy and funding</td>
<td>PV rarely incorporating hearing and response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We’re talking about raising voice</td>
<td>PV driven by powerful agendas and status quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not talking about hearing voices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voices that don’t fit the agenda:</td>
<td>PV assumption that people can immediately, publically express and represent self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who’s prepared to listen?</td>
<td>PV rarely seen as slow, empowering process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>It takes time. It takes time.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As to how they want to represent themselves</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To represent. Publically. To express</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign their own needs</td>
<td><strong>PV understood as filmmaking process that needs to be sustainable</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The slow kind of empowerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That raises people’s voices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once they’ve got that message</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t really need to go on making videos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the 25 resulting practitioner poems, the researcher sorted more than 650 of the formulated meanings into 20 overall categories that broadly represented practitioner tensions. The 20 categories included the themes *agenda/project, context,*
communications/marketing, expectations/claims, funding, political listening/response, one-off activity, outsider, platform for voice, power, practitioner agency, PV practice, PV as film, risk/harm, rigor/ethics, simple/complex systems, social/relational, training/learning, understanding of participation, and workshops. For the sake of analysis and scholarly discussion, the researcher further clustered the key institutional views influencing practitioner’s ideals for raising citizen voice. Here, the 20 themes were categorised into two key areas of influence as they related to tensions practitioners described concerning the purpose of participatory video (why use PV) and the experience of using participatory video (how use PV) with three sub-categories each. The sub-categories—designated as key views of participatory video practice that hold potential to enable or constrain citizen voice in international development contexts—were named as the output-focused, voice opportunity, apolitical, agenda-led, harmless and uncomplicated views (see Chapter 6). More specifically, in the analysis process, discussions about communications/marketing and PV as film were clustered as the output-focused view, platform for voice, social/relational, one-off activity and PV practice evolved into the voice opportunity view political listening/response and outsider led to the apolitical view, risk/harm, power and rigor/ethics were clustered as the harmless view, agenda/project, understanding of participation, expectations/claims and context led to the agenda-led view and simple/complex systems, practitioner agency, training/learning, workshops, and funding became the uncomplicated view.

This analytical process not only deployed the poetic interpretive method, but also fit with phenomenography through being deeply engaged in the interpretation of meaning as described:

It must be stressed here that the mapping of meanings and the ordering of the meanings by the researcher represent the relationship between the researcher and the data. This relationship need not be the only relationship between the researcher and the data. As such the findings cannot be empirically proven but the outcomes can be ‘argued for’ by the researcher. (Hales & Watkins, 2004, p. 8)
3.5 Research ethics
3.5.1 An ethics of care approach
The research applied an “ethics of care approach” in the study (Wiles, 2012, p. 5). This particular method for ethical decision-making was identified by Carol Gilligan in 1980s and expanded upon by other feminist scholars (p. 5). This approach works through a lens of compassion, where ethical decisions aim to ensure people benefit from the research (p. 13). Foundationally, an ethics of care approach focuses on “meeting the needs of others; recognising emotions; recognising people’s rationality and interdependence; and respecting and seeking the views of others and their moral claims” (p. 13). Accordingly, the study approached the PV participants’ involvement with respect to each person’s experiences and reputation in the field. Through this intention, the study built rapport with the participants prior to the interviews, as promoted by Lamb et al. (2011, p. 679). It did so through email, Skype sessions or in person to familiarise them with the research context. It additionally provided space for them to describe the phenomenon through the storyboard and interview processes, sent them their verbatim transcripts for review and updates, and presented journal article drafts if requested prior to publication. In response, most practitioners updated their transcripts for clarity and/or to improve how they had articulated a particular answer. They also answered questions in text form in the transcript if asked for clarification on a particular point they had made in their interviews. As well, two practitioners asked to review any academic publications prior to publication. In their review responses to the draft of the one article published during the thesis writing (Plush, 2015a), they made minor updates to articulate their views more clearly. They did not alter the meaning of included the quotes.

This personal attention supported a moral obligation for “attending to and meeting the needs of the particular others for whom we take responsibility” (Held, 2006, p. 10). On a broader scale, the approach supported the study’s development studies ideology through its commitment to finding policy- or practice-geared solutions to development concerns (Molteberg et al., 2000, p. 7).
3.5.2 Participant anonymity

In the study, the majority of PV practitioner participants said they were comfortable linking their ideals and experiences of practice to their personal identities. However, through the ethics of care approach, the study deliberately presented participant data and findings anonymously for multiple reasons, including:

- Anonymity allowed practitioners to reflect honestly on PV practice in a safe environment. For instance, several practitioners in the study said being anonymous allowed them to turn a critical gaze on their work. They said they felt more comfortable being anonymous in relation to their reputation with peers, and/or because their livelihoods were tied to the celebratory promotion of PV practice.

- Applying anonymity to all participants regardless of their preference further protected the people desiring anonymity.

- Choosing to make all participants anonymous related to the intent of the thesis to provide a broad understanding of PV practice. It was thus critical to present a variety of voices and experiences as impartially as possible. Due to PV being a small field of practice in development, anonymity helped avoid privileging certain voices over others due to an individual’s history or reputation in the field.

The study took multiple actions to protect practitioners’ identities. For example, 22 of the 25 practitioners picked their own pseudonyms from a list of gender-neutral names provided in the study. The other three asked the researcher to choose their gender-neutral names. As well, any organisations, cities or country names mentioned by practitioners were changed to generic terms, as shown in [brackets] in the findings chapters. The study also assumed that in a small global community of PV practitioners, readers might identify individuals by how many years they had practiced. As such, the study classified practitioners’ experiences into wider categories to represent early to late stages of their careers in the practice, as shown in Table 3.1. Additionally, although some practitioners had implemented multiple projects over multiple years, the study capped their experience and years of practice to protect their identities. For instance, as shown in Table 3.1, the study capped PV projects at 50+, the category for projects raising citizen voice at 30+ and PV projects outside of one’s own culture at 20+.
3.5.3 Data storage and anonymity

In the research process, another ethical priority was to ensure that “well-being and rights of research participants, informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity” (Wiles, 2012, p. 15). To this end, attention was paid to the storage of participant data. For instance, the researcher recorded participant interviews through Skype on a voice recorder and using Evaer software on a PC. After the interviews, the researcher copied all data to a password-protected hard drive under the participants’ pseudonyms, and removed the practitioners’ actual names and digital files from Skype and Evaer. As other example, the researcher copied all digital participant data and storyboard files to the same hard drive under the practitioners’ assigned pseudonyms. The hard drives were stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Queensland; and the data backed up on a second password-protected drive stored at the researcher’s residence. In this way, the study made every attempt to keep the participants anonymous. Nevertheless, during the research process, the researcher received information that a couple practitioners had chosen to reveal their participation in the study during discussions at an international conference. As well, a couple participants used their storyboard drawings in public forums, including a webinar-broadcasted presentation and a PV activity report. The decision to share such information publically occurred without the researcher’s prior knowledge. Despite this, through the ethics of care approach, the researcher continued, and will continue, to protect the participants’ identities in the research process, in resulting publications, and in private and public encounters.

The thesis now turns from the methodology towards a deeper exploration of the study findings. It does so by presenting the findings that emerged through analysis, as well as how the findings link to academic theories on inclusive citizenship, valued voice and listening.
4. PV practitioners and citizen voice

You would really have to ask them. 
Just because we showed their films 
doesn’t mean that they’ve had a voice. 
—Devon

4.1 Conceptualising raising citizen voice with PV

4.1.1 Exploring the phenomenon

This chapter presents findings from the research described in Chapter 3 by addressing its first objective: To explore the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts from practitioner perspectives. In doing so, the chapter offers a broad definition for participatory video that evolved from the study. It also makes explicit three unique viewpoints PV practitioners in the study conceptualise raising citizen voice. The study categorises the differing viewpoints as the amplified, engaged and equitable voice pathways. This chapter describes the three pathways’ most prominent characteristics. Making the findings explicit allows further analysis to inform a conceptual framework for raising citizen voice with PV, as presented in Chapter 5.

To address objective one, this chapter offers findings that specifically answer the question posed in Section 3.1.1: How do PV practitioners in the study conceptualise the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts? It presents findings derived through the phenomenographic research design described in Section 3.1.3. For the analysis, the study used two data sets, namely the PV practitioners’ hand-drawn storyboards and the verbatim semi-structured interview texts. This chapter presents storyboard panel drawings and quotes from the practitioner interviews as evidence of the findings. Here, it is valuable to note two points. First, the chapter includes individual storyboard panels to support the findings. Each panel is one of many drawn by the practitioners. Appendix 2 offers the PV practitioners’ full storyboards to show how each panel fits into its overall context. Second, the chapter presents PV practitioner quotes from the verbatim interview transcripts as part of its findings. Notably, the tone of the quotes is more casual than quotations used in the thesis from more considered and structured academic literature. This is due to the informal discussion style
between the researcher and study participants in the semi-structured interview process. As detailed in Section 3.4, the phenomenographic analytical approach aimed at discovering multiple meanings of a phenomenon based on the differing ways people conceptualise its essence. This iterative analytical process helped identify categories of description based on similarities and variations found in the data. This resulted in knowledge about three unique pathways for raising citizen voice, as discussed later in the chapter.

In its introduction, the thesis presented PV practitioners as powerful actors in mediated processes of raising citizen voice. The data in the methodology chapter reinforced this argument by noting that PV practitioners in the study had designed more than 90 per cent of their facilitated projects, as described in Section 3.2. Hence, how they perceive and approach PV practice matters. Epistemologies are incredibly powerful in that the “way we see the world affects the way we act in it” (Ledwith & Springett, 2010, p. 59). Often, as Margaret Ledwith and Jane Springett (2010) argue, development workers “look at the world through a prism of habitually established meanings rather than engaging with the experience itself” (p. 71). The action implies that PV practitioners themselves may be unaware that multiple rationales for PV praxis exist. If practitioners’ exposure to PV is only through a celebratory discourse, their PV activities may lack an understanding of its limitations (Shaw, 2012, p. 227). Before delving into different ways the PV practitioners in the study conceptualised raising citizen voice, it is thus valuable to make explicit aspirations practitioners may hold for PV practice. The next section does this through presenting research findings on how the PV practitioners in the study described their passions for PV practice. This data leads to the offering of a broad definition for PV practice that aims to raise citizen voice.

4.1.2 Aspirations in PV practice

In the research, it was clear that the 25 PV practitioners in the study are dedicated to using PV to tackle injustice. They primarily described themselves as working in solidarity with ordinary citizens whose voice is often absent in policy circles. In their work, they highlighted using PV activities to advance the rights of children vulnerable to abuse, women struggling to overcome poverty, youth living in refugee camps, indigenous populations fighting to control local forests, communities threatened by a changing climate,
homosexuals facing discrimination, people marginalised by systemic and physical violence, and other underrepresented groups. During their interviews, each practitioner described their deep commitment for using PV to raise underrepresented citizen voice. They also specifically answered a research question about why they were passionate about PV practice. Through analysing and synthesising their answers, the study developed a broad definition of PV practice for raising citizen voice that is inclusive of the values expressed in their answers. The definition provides insight into the claims often made for PV practice:

Participatory video for raising voice is a creative, transformative learning methodology that can, through reflexive filmmaking processes, raise awareness; develop and empower individuals and groups; amplify voice for engaged dialogue and listening; socially and politically mobilise; foster equitable relationships; and accelerate social change and justice.

Admittedly, this definition is broad as it incorporates the multiple viewpoints the practitioners in the study expressed about the value of PV. That is, no one person articulated every value when describing her dedication to PV practice. Nevertheless, when the values are grouped together as a representative whole, the definition becomes useful in understanding PV practitioner aspirations. The definition serves as foundational for the ideal PV practice the study in this thesis is interrogating. In this way, the definition does not pragmatically describe the expected result of every PV activity in practice. Rather, it exemplifies actions practitioners perceive as worthy of consideration, critique, refinement and effort. To reach these aspirations for raising citizen voice with PV, this chapter now turns to describing the exploration of practitioners’ conceptualisations of voice. The research findings ultimately provide insight into how aspirations for raising citizen voice with PV in international development contexts align with possibilities for doing so in practice.

4.2 Three pathways for voice
4.2.1 Practitioners and the pathways
In development studies, Andrea Cornwall (2008) argues that aid workers possess differing motivations towards the same development goal, such as aspiration for citizen participation (p. 271). She explained that these individual differences directly influence the impact of participatory development initiatives on citizens (p. 271). Markedly, the research
found that a similar relationship exists between PV practitioners, their motivations for raising citizen voice and potential impact. For while practitioners share similar, altruistic aspirations for their PV praxis, as Section 4.1.2 explained, the study revealed critical differences in their perceptions of raising citizen voice. Through analysing the data from the PV practitioners’ storyboards and interview texts, three clear approaches to voice emerged, which the study classified as the amplified voice, engaged voice and equitable voice pathways. Table 4.1 distinguishes key differences between the voice pathways by showing the type of questions PV practitioners might ask as a starting point within each view.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voice pathway</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amplified voice</td>
<td>Which citizen voices are not represented in this decision-making process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can PV activities help to include them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged voice</td>
<td>Which citizens are not represented in democratic deliberation? How can PV activities help them actively participate in decision-making spaces?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equitable voice</td>
<td>Why are certain citizens not represented or participating in decision-making processes? How can PV transform conditions to improve this situation?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questions highlight key differences in the pathways for citizen engagement and voice. For example, through amplified voice, PV’s intention primarily focused on citizens’ representational right to speak on issues that affect them, as described in Section 4.3. Within engaged voice, PV primarily focused on ensuring people’s right to participate as informed citizens in public decision-making spaces, as described in Section 4.4. Through the equitable voice pathway, PV’s main attention primarily focused on citizens claiming their right to influence decisions core to their marginalisation, as described in Section 4.5.

PV practitioners in the study were engaged in multiple PV activities, each possessing different conditions for practice. Hence, a practitioner may work through an amplified voice pathway on one project, and an engaged or equitable voice pathway in another. However, for the sake of analysis and scholarly discussion, the study linked each practitioner to one of the three identified categories. It did so by putting them into the category that seemed most fitting to how they described their ideals for PV practice in the study interviews. In this way, the classification process was interpretive. What this means is that the exercise
was not to categorise individual practitioners as adhering to a particular voice pathway in their everyday practice. Rather, the categorisation supported the storyboard and interview data analysis as a means to inform discussion. Important to reiterate here is that while practitioners’ experiences no doubt influenced their ideals, they were not the focus of the categorical analysis process. Through the interpretive analytical approach, the study categorised ten practitioners as primarily orienting towards amplified voice, nine as expressing PV characteristics most fitting to engaged voice, and six aligning their experiences and ideals most closely to equitable voice. Noticeably, as shown in Table 4.2, practitioners with the most PV experience tended to hold equitable or engaged voice views of idealised PV practice, and those with the least experience to hold engaged or amplified voice perspectives. For the group of practitioners in the study, this data implies that an evolution in perception correlates with time and experience.

**Table 4.2: Analysis of PV practitioner responses to idealised PV practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Years practiced</th>
<th>Voice pathway</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Years practiced</th>
<th>Voice pathway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>Equitable</td>
<td>Shane</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katulpa</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>Equitable</td>
<td>Addison</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misha</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>Equitable</td>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sal</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Juno</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>Equitable</td>
<td>Kai</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nic</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>Equitable</td>
<td>Kendall</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>Equitable</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinn</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toni</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhenya</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Sasha</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
<td>Gustl</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cass</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Seri</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Amplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikita</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.2.2 Characteristics of the voice pathways

Through the process of categorising differing conceptualisations of raising citizen voice, the research identified specific characteristics that seemed to motivate each voice pathway. For instance, practitioners aligned with the **amplified voice** pathway mainly
described PV efforts as enhancing visibility, communication and evidence. Practitioners categorised in the engaged voice pathway primarily talked about advancing participation, dialogue and capacity with PV. Practitioners placed in the equitable voice pathway tended to prioritise PV processes that strengthened agency, receptivity and relationships. Table 4.3 highlights these key epistemological differences through linking the characteristics to PV actions.

Table 4.3: Key characteristics of the three voice pathways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voice pathway</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amplified voice</td>
<td>Visibility</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Evidence capture locally generated knowledge, concerns and lived experiences of citizens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PV activities create opportunities for citizens to express and amplify their opinions and concerns in decision-making spaces where they have previously been absent.</td>
<td>PV activities provide access to communicative PV activities and technologies for citizens to create their own messaging.</td>
<td>PV activities capture locally generated knowledge, concerns and lived experiences of citizens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged voice</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PV activities foster new possibilities for citizens to enter into previously closed decision-making spaces, participate in formal governance spaces or to create new spaces for engagement.</td>
<td>PV activities build mutual understanding between citizens and decision-makers through engaging with each other’s perspectives.</td>
<td>PV activities ensure citizens can better understand and reflect on their marginalisation so they are more equipped to try to change it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equitable voice</td>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Receptivity</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PV activities help citizens recognise and socially and/or politically act using their own knowledge, capabilities and power.</td>
<td>PV activities generate possibilities for more responsive listening by decision-makers to its citizens.</td>
<td>PV activities cultivate equitable exchange between citizens and decision-makers through greater connectedness, empathy and mutual trust.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Naming and describing the characteristics helped distinguish the uniqueness of the three voice pathways. Admittedly, however, these characteristics were not the only ones identified in each pathway. Certain characteristics were apparent in multiple pathways, such as the value of making citizen concerns more visible. Nonetheless, for the sake of scholarly debate, the study narrowed the findings to the three most prominent
characteristics discussed by the study’s practitioners in each voice pathway, as described in the subsequent sections.

4.3 Amplified voice pathway
4.3.1 Prioritising the right to speak
The study findings revealed that the practitioners in the amplified voice pathway tended to prioritise PV activities that support opportunities for citizens to generate and share their own evidence, information and knowledge. In this way, the amplified voice pathway promoted the right to speak in its efforts to infuse underrepresented voice into social and political debates. PV practitioners illustrated this by describing PV activities as primarily supporting citizens to “voice some of their issues,” “share their hopes and dreams” and “give opinions” (Gustl; Kendall; Mel). To such ends, practitioners in this pathway often spoke about PV in opportune terms as a way to express citizens’ concerns in decision-making spaces where they previously had been missing. As one practitioner explained, “We were using it as a tool to get people to speak about certain issues, which was great. But it’s not more than that” (Gustl). Within this pathway, the research identified two distinct sub-categories for amplifying voice with PV. It named them amplified-collected voice, where PV participants collected the opinions of others for their final film; and amplified-collective voice, where the voice of the people on camera was that of the PV participants themselves. The study considers the sub-categories as part of the overall amplified voice pathway as they share the same motivation for raising citizen voice.

Illustrative of amplified-collected voice, Figure 4.1 shows a practitioner’s storyboard panel with three actions. First, the PV participants learned basic filmmaking skills. Second, they made a storyboard of the film they want to create. Third, they were in their community “interviewing those with more knowledge on the topic” (Seri). The storyboard panel highlights a key aspect of the amplified-collected voice pathway: PV participants collect the views of other people who are representing themselves on camera. Notably, the people on camera were not involved in...
determining the topic, questions or storyline. This, and editing the final film, was the role of the PV participant group trained in filmmaking. In other words, amplified-collected voice is external facing since PV participants target people outside their group to represent community concerns in the final PV films.

In contrast, the **amplified-collective voice** pathway is a collaborative, internal-facing PV process. PV participants collectively explore and create their own stories on film in PV activities. In such cases, PV participants tend to come together as representative of a wider group. For instance, practitioners discussed working with children with disabilities, female farmers living in poverty, fishermen and fisherwomen, unemployed youth, etc. As an example, the storyboard panel in Figure 4.2 shows an initial meeting with PV participants who will tell their story (**River**). The drawing represents a key aspect of amplified-collective voice. That is, PV participants themselves are both directly involved in developing the story’s content and representing themselves in the final film(s). Here, the PV participants might not always be the ones on camera if they decided to create a drama or fictionalised account of an event. However, the final film would still be clearly representative of the group’s collective views, as mediated through PV efforts.

Through its focus on voice expression, practitioners in the amplified voice pathway tended to promote PV’s utility as satisfying participants’ right to speak. This viewpoint was unsurprising considering that voice expression is a common interpretation of voice in international development contexts, as described Section 2.2.2. For example, one practitioner called PV an “incredible way to give an opportunity” for people to speak to their “own experience, and hopefully to elevate it beyond that” (**Ash**). Here, as another stated, PV can act as a way to capture citizens’ “ideas and their messages” so decision-makers “know what they actually want and need” (**Seri**). Through this interpretation, PV helped people facing injustice to be “heard honestly for their reality of their situation at some level” (**River**). This expectation of a receptive audience as a natural corollary to the right to speak...
was common in the amplified voice pathway, as illustrated in a practitioner’s description of a PV activity:

We worked our asses off to do the project in eight or nine days. It really raised voice because in the local viewing there were 8-10 stakeholders who, for the first time, got the impression of what this organisation did for the last four or five years. So there, it raised voice. (Kai)

The right to speak focus in the amplified voice pathway appeared more supportive of short-term PV activities, more so than in the other two pathways. For example, practitioners in this pathway described PV activities that gathered multiple local opinions in a short timeframe (see Figure 4.9 and related text), as through the amplified-collected voice pathway; or concerns from a targeted marginalised group (see Figure 4.6 and related text), as through the amplified-collective voice pathway. Arguably, the right to speak is inherently valuable for political representation. People have long considered the act of ordinary citizens voicing their opinions as a necessary right and cornerstone of democracy (Gaventa & Barrett 2010, p. 9; Gaventa & McGee, 2013, p. 1). Thus, using PV to confront and redress voice inequity through voice amplification can be beneficial. The question for the research in this thesis however is, does it raise valued citizen voice, as defined in Section 1.5. To explore this further, the next few sections interrogate three key common characteristics found in the amplified voice pathway: visibility, communication and evidence.

4.3.2 The characteristic of visibility
In the amplified-voice pathway, practitioners described visibility in terms of PV activities that help citizen concerns gain presence in spaces where they have previously been absent. To such ends, practitioners described either engaging directly with community members to create films, or training national or local development organisation staff and community members to facilitate PV activities. In both cases in this pathway, citizens often responded to pre-determined topics such as climate change, maternal health or the evaluation of an NGO programme that PV participants engaged in. With a focus on visibility, finished productions were often on display at large film-screening events. Additionally institutions prioritised distributing the films widely. This might be on the Internet, at institutional meetings or at global conferences. In this way, as one practitioner described, the biggest “win” for PV was an increase in the representation and “visibility of
the group” through film (Ash). As an example, a practitioner described a PV film screening where lower-status citizens received equal time to share their opinions in a film alongside more powerful people in a community. As she explained:

[The experience] gives them a feeling that they are recognised. And, if they express that, it is already a big step in raising citizen voice. Because they feel recognised and feel listened to; they feel seen; they get a position in the community… Of course, the hierarchy remains; and that’s probably in the culture. But, at least people get the opportunity to share and speak up equally. (Kendall)

The observation exemplified an optimistic view that seemed to motivate practitioners in the amplified voice pathway. That is, that the act of speaking inherently yields social or political influence. For instance, the practitioner above reflected this view when she said that people get an “elevated position in the community” after being on film with those in power. Yet, the practitioner contradicted herself in the following sentence when observing, “of course the hierarchy remains” (Kendall). The conflicting statements appear to reinforce the arguments made in Section 2.2.2 that merely having an opportunity for voice expression is often insufficient to shift entrenched hierarchies of power.

As another example of visibility as a key motivator, a practitioner described a month-long PV project in an island community that targeted community members with livelihoods threatened by environmental degradation. The activity’s intention was to use PV specifically to “get their messages, their stories, out to the world” (Seri). Accordingly, after completing a PV film, the villagers and the implementing NGO invited politicians from a neighbouring island to attend a screening, as the practitioner described:

[The policymakers] came over to the island. We had a feast and dancing and then we did a screening in the meeting hut. We set up the generator and the big screen; and we showed it to them. That was really, really valuable. It really got the message across to who they really wanted to get it to. (Seri)

In this scenario, the practitioner described that the successful outcome was in making community concerns visible. She added that supporting NGO staff members were tasked with following up on specific response to the issues raised. While such action might have occurred, this assumption for follow-up could also have been a naive assumption. As the
practitioner explained, the PV project did not include specific or resourced plans after the film screening to respond to the topics raised in the PV process:

No, no plan. I did suggest that that [the community members] can share [the film] around; that they can get it out to as many people as they can. This is their video and they can take pride in it, which they did anyway. But, no plan as such. It was more quite loose. (Seri)

Clearly, history shows that film screenings themselves can open new policy spaces for awareness and conversation, as evidenced by the Fogo Island experience description in Section 2.1.2. Of concern, however, is when PV activities assume that voice visibility alone can transform historic social, economic, gendered or cultural inequities, which is an issue explored in more depth in Section 5.1.2. For example, in the case previously described, continuing to show the film in its digital form as suggested by the practitioner may have been difficult for poorer community members lacking the electronic technology, mobility, confidence and/or social capital to do so effectively. Thus, without additional support or strategic activities, the film’s use as a catalyst for dialogue, listening and response could be limited beyond its creation.

Nevertheless, this is not to say that visibility has no role to play in raising citizen voice, or even a limited role. For instance, a practitioner explained that voice visibility embodies potential to “elevate the participants as experts in the community” through screening the film (Ash). She said visibility could lead to “institutional policy shifts” within an “organisation or institution around how they are going to fund something because they now have this new information” (Ash). No doubt, such actions might occur when decision-makers watching the films are open to listening and responding to the raised concerns. Conversely, visibility alone may not evoke response if PV activities naively assume that those hearing marginalised concerns are always responsible and responsive listeners. Ensuring such response, in other words, may require strategic planning and resources beyond merely making citizen voice visible.
The assumption of responsive listener was also apparent when practitioners described PV practice as a consultative process, as shown in Figure 4.3. Here, a practitioner drew policymakers at the international level saying, “We need to hear communities. First, let’s do a PV.” Local policymakers reply, “Yes, absolutely. We will work with grassroots or organisations to make this consultation” (Mel).

In the same practitioner’s storyboard of idealised PV practice, she showed the PV participants who participated in the consultation process gaining improved livelihoods due to new policies, as Figure 4.4 shows. In the storyboard panel, the sun is shining and the partner NGO staff members shout, “Bravo!” (Mel). The practitioner described the concluding panel as “basically the policy change. The End. Cinderella.” When asked why she used the term “Cinderella” in describing the end of her ideal practice, the practitioner explained that she had never seen policy change happen in the 16 PV activities she has facilitated. This begs the question: Why might policy change be so elusive? Perhaps, the answer lies in the consultancy-type PV activity promoted in her storyboard as ideal PV practice for raising citizen voice. At face value, Figure 4.3 seems to prioritise voice expression and visibility from the start as indicative of success. However, as described in the literature review in Section 2.2.2, PV implementation through this view might make policy change ultimately difficult to achieve in practice.

Practitioners who emphasised voice visibility in the amplified voice pathway also tended to promote PV activities that could easily scale. As an example, one practitioner said she promoted quick-to-learn, turnkey PV activities as a strategic choice (Kendall). She explained that standardised PV activities allowed development institutions to collect
multiple opinions on a specific topic, a process practitioners could readily deploy through the consultancy approach model described previously.

As an illustration, Figure 4.5 shows a drawing by the practitioner of the villagers who will engage with PV coming together to start the filmmaking process. In the scalable PV activity held in multiple villages, newly trained PV facilitators lead community-level focus group meetings lasting 45-60 minutes each.

After each village-level discussion, facilitators videotape 3-5 individuals giving their opinions on the topic discussed in the focus group, as depicted in Figure 4.6. The facilitators then edit the numerous opinions into a film to spark conversations at community meetings between local residents and government officials. The practitioner explained how the streamlined PV process helped to raise citizen voice:

If you train 8-10 organisations with PV facilitators… [they] can work in 25-40 communities… If the numbers of citizens raising their voice is increasing, it has a bigger influence on decision-makers. The bigger the numbers who raise their voice, the more serious it is taken by decision-makers. (Kendall)

The example highlighted a common perception in the amplified pathway that a greater diversity of voices automatically influences decision-making. This was often coupled with a discussion that the opinions gathered in the streamlined PV process authentically represented the community. Both perceptions seemed to promote an illusion that creating opportunities for citizen voice naturally leads to inclusiveness and impact, even for citizens historically denied voice in decision-making spaces. However, as Section 2.4.2 argued for valuing citizen voice, wider conditions of voice denial must be addressed to ensure this can occur—which may be difficult when timelines are short. For example, even in the practitioner’s story above, the PV process she designed only allowed a certain number of
people to share their opinions on camera due to the time limitations set for PV implementation. As such, the approach held potential to diminish further the voice of citizens least heard in the village, as the practitioner herself described:

What I’ve experienced so far is that my PV facilitators, they just do [the focus group discussion] with the group of 10 or 15 people in a plenary. Then, the disadvantage is that some of the marginalised people, they may not speak up in this train-the-trainer model I am using. But, my group of 20 facilitators, PV facilitators, they at least can ask the questions they want to ask. (Kendall)

4.3.3 The characteristic of communication

Within the amplified voice pathway, practitioners also prioritised PV for communication. The characteristic of communication suggests PV activities where citizens control the messaging, as opposed to top-down communication processes described in Section 2.3.1. As one practitioner explained, PV’s primary function is to “expose people to a new tool for them to communicate” (Morgan). The storyboard panel in Figure 4.7 illustrates this point. Here, a PV practitioner drew herself as the filmmaker helping tribal community members increase their communicative capacity. As the practitioner explained, the PV activity served as a “good opportunity for using this kind of communication” (Addison). In describing her storyboard, the practitioner defined two types of raising citizen voice:

[1] a programme to educate and build capacity for people to communicate their own voice; [or, 2] direct A-to-B communication where you are raising voice where someone obviously has a voice; there’s nobody to hear it or no way to get that voice heard. Video can come in and fill that gap. (Addison)

The practitioner labelled these two differing approaches as process verses product, which is a duality often discussed in PV practice, and an argument explored in more depth in Section 5.1.2. In her storyboard, the practitioner said she decided to draw her ideal practice for raising voice a “product” for A-to-B communication. This allowed her to “act as a camera person” rather than the PV participants, as shown in Figure 4.7. This role was
important to her through a view that a “higher quality product will be more influential in this scenario” of raising citizen voice in international development contexts, as she explained:

The process approach is better from my personal point of voice... But, I think that what’s easier is a technocratic approach for sure. I think that’s why so many organisations go for this technocratic stuff. It’s just easier for them. There’s outcomes. They need to have outcomes. They have their inputs, their outputs, their outcomes, their impacts, etc. etc. They need to fit everything into their matrices. To have a process that is open-ended; you don’t know what the outcome is going to be…It’s difficult to even try to imagine what the outcome might be in some ways. It just doesn’t fit into the timelines and goals of development. (Addison)

The emphasis on communities creating their own messaging underpinned the communication characteristic of the amplified voice pathway. Access and control of the technical aspects were often presented as secondary to the opportunity to communicate. This was apparent, for example in Figure 4.8, where a PV practitioner drew herself in the editing role as part of her ideal practice. The practitioner said professional editing support was often necessary to produce a quality film product due to the limited time often afforded to PV in NGO-driven projects. As an aside, none of the practitioners in the engaged or equitable voice pathways drew themselves into the technical roles in their storyboards.

Additionally in the amplified voice pathway, with its priority on PV for communication, a few PV participants described setting parameters for how PV participants might tell their stories. For instance, in situations where “there could be repercussions for you to be speaking your mind,” one practitioner described guiding PV participants to create films specifically promoting their “hopes and dreams” (Kendall). Another practitioner described leading films in conflict areas “towards visioning; towards the positive; towards the optimistic view of the future” (River). Of concern here is that such dictates could leave little space for PV participants to honestly or critically address conditions related to their marginalisation, which could in turn diminish voice (Cornwall & Fujita, 2012, p. 1763). In
this way, the communicative expectations of the PV implementers seemed to receive and retain priority over the pursuit of authentic citizen voice.

4.3.4 The characteristic of evidence

Within the amplified voice pathway, practitioners also prioritised using PV to provide evidence of citizen concerns as a means to influence decision-making. With such motivation, practitioners described PV activities as a mechanism to satisfy development goals. For example, one practitioner described PV as a “scientific tool” that could cultivate community-driven and localised data (Ash). Another practitioner described PV as a monitoring and evaluation process to “listen to those voices” rather “than to raise the voices” (Kai). Here, she pointed out that the “beneficiaries” of development interventions already have a voice. Thus, PV served a more utilitarian function:

Most of the time, people have an opinion, have a voice, but there isn’t space for these opinions. You can say that it can be raised, but I also think there has to be a space. Because otherwise you can raise it and you can yell and shout and it wouldn’t make any difference (Kai).

Accordingly, the same practitioner said evaluation-focused PV primarily offered citizens space to share their opinions on how development institutions could better deliver services or improve community interventions. Another practitioner promoted PV for evaluation as one of its best uses in the development sector because, in her view, the processes were more “honest and good” than capacity development activities (Morgan). She explained that as a PV consultant, the activities of “capacity building were always hard to pull off because…you can’t build capacity in two weeks.” In contrast, using PV for evaluation was better because “you don’t promise capacity, you promise a snapshot. And that’s what it is” (Morgan). The practitioner’s view of PV as a valuable “snapshot” was compelling, as the perspective implied that the picture captured through PV activities used for evaluation represented an unbiased, fixed view of reality—a view countered in PV scholarship (Thomas and Britton, 2012, p. 214).
As an example of using PV for evaluation, a practitioner drew the panel in Figure 4.9. Here, PV participants asked different community members their opinions. The questions related to evaluation indicators the PV participants generated about a development programme in which they participated. Reflecting on the information from the wider community, the PV participants storyboarded, videotaped, scripted and created their final film.

Figure 4.10 shows the storyboarding process. The practitioner's example of using PV for evaluation illustrated how a process of amplifying local voices with PV might work to strengthen development programming effectiveness. A question, however, is whether the citizen voices expressed in the film(s) ultimately lead to positive change. For example, the practitioner herself questioned the assumed positive outcome of evaluative processes with PV: “In my experience, a lot of times evaluation is donor-driven. They just want to make sure the procedures are done well. But, sometimes I am questioning or curious if these results also actually make any change for the programme” (Kai).

Here, the significance for PV seemed to be that unless the power dynamics of voice reception are understood and managed sufficiently, efforts to raise citizen voice may be ineffective through voice amplification alone. This is an argument raised in Section 2.4.2 in the pursuit of understanding how to raise voice that can matter with PV (Kindon et al., 2012, p. 362; Walsh, 2014, p. 1). Perhaps, as the next section describes, a more engaged pathway for raising citizen voice better positions PV for decision-making responsiveness.
4.4 Engaged voice pathway

4.4.1 Prioritising the right to participate

In the engaged voice pathway, the second voice pathway identified in the study, practitioners primarily described PV activities that build people’s capacity to engage in formal and claimed dialogical decision-making spaces. In this way, it prioritises citizens’ right to participate. With such intention, PV practitioners described activities that tended to require longer community engagement times than those in the amplified voice pathway. This may be due to needing more time to strengthen local PV participant knowledge and confidence, and to mobilise appropriate conversational spaces.

Figure 4.11, for example, offers a good illustration of engaged voice. The storyboard panel shows a PV activity fostering dialogue between PV participants and various “advisors or stakeholders” and/or “representatives of other organisations” who are connected to the issues raised in the PV films (Quinn). The practitioner explained that wide engagement with multiple audiences was crucial for helping citizens to “achieve what they are trying to bring about” (Quinn). While this particular panel showed one-on-one discussions, practitioners in the engaged voice pathway most often linked PV actions for raising citizen voice to public, dialogue-driven film screenings. Here, discussions on distributing the films in the media, on the internet or at global events (as commonly mentioned in the amplified voice pathway) were often described as secondary to increasing citizen participation in the public sphere.

With its focus on deliberative democracy, practitioners in the engaged voice pathway often related PV use to advancing citizens’ right to participate. Accordingly, PV activities often supported development efforts that helped citizens understand and claim their rights to government resources and services. For example, PV practitioners described working on PV projects related to clean water rights, climate change adaptation, maternal health services, agriculture livelihoods, environmental degradation, unpaid care and other development programming areas. Illustrative of a focus on the right to participate, one practitioner compared PV for raising citizen voice to a lobbying tool for “demand-side
accountability” (Nikita). This was where practitioners utilise PV activities for “making people aware of their rights [and] giving them spaces for them to have their voice heard” by those responsible for “supply-side accountability, [namely] government and institutions” (Nikita). To such ends in the engaged voice pathway, the study identified three prominent characteristics: participation, dialogue and capacity. The chapter now explores these characteristics in more detail.

4.4.2 The characteristic of participation

In talking about citizen voice and engagement with PV activities, practitioners in the study discussed how filmmaking creates opportunities for often-unheard groups to participate in decision-making. This might be in formal policy discussion spaces, or in meetings created through the PV activity, as one practitioner described:

Sometimes they’ll be forums that are, let’s say, opened by the UN; opened by donors; opened by themselves. [They] might be workshops; they might be forums; they might be UN hearings on rights. And then, the videos can go into that. (Nic)

Participation here, practitioners explained, framed the filmmakers as active citizens to accompany their videos into decision-making spaces. However, practitioners said this was often a difficult proposal, which was unsurprising for practitioners working in the development sector. As discussed in Section 2.2, participation in international development is a contested and debated approach. Hence, it is valuable to make explicit the type of political participation PV practitioners in the study described to determine its sufficiency for voice to be valued and influential.

Towards engaged citizen voice, practitioners tended to promote the public sphere as being inherently valuable for social change. Figure 4.12, for example, illustrates a common scenario idealised by practitioners where the PV participants themselves show their films in public and lead discussions. In the engaged voice pathway, seven of the eight practitioners who drew

Figure 4.12: Public PV screening (Shane)
storyboards incorporated public film screenings as part of their ideal practice for raising citizen voice, as shown in Appendix 2. (The eighth practitioner promoted showing the final film through mainstream media.) This PV activity is interesting given that none of the practitioners in the equitable voice pathway included a specific screening event in their idealised PV practice in their storyboards. This prevalence of film screenings in the engaged voice storyboards seemed to illustrate the significance PV practitioners in the study placed on public deliberation over other forms of citizen engagement with the PV films.

As a second example of participation with PV, Figure 4.13 shows a one-day stakeholder workshop. The practitioner who drew the panel said the event ideally incorporates activities for building empathy, fostering dialogue through reflection circles and developing action plans (Zhenya). The panel seemed to illustrate the notion that consensus can emerge through public dialogue, as evidenced by the inclusion of an “action plan” emerging from the one-day process. Certainly, such actions could advance citizen participation in spaces previously closed to their involvement. However, the benefit of public deliberation and engagement cannot be assumed, as negotiating the outcomes of public meetings is complicated in practice, as described in more detail in Section 5.1.3.

The practitioner who drew Figure 4.13, for example, illustrated this point about difficulties in practice through a detailed story about a public meeting. Here, the practitioner discussed the challenges she faced in organising a public screening during a PV project with women living in a patriarchal society (Zhenya). In the PV activity, the women had decided to comment negatively on film about the local governance of a development programme in their village. Through small, village-level film screenings, other community members and the women’s husbands supported the film’s strong message. This built the group’s confidence for a public film screening. Of concern, the practitioner explained, was whether to insist that the local politicians had a chance to see the film before showing it
publically. On one hand, the practitioner said government involvement could be “amazing” as “it doesn’t actually restrict things that much” (Zhenya). On the other hand, she said government review before a screening could affect the authenticity of the message. For that reason, the practitioner hoped to “protect the participants.” She wanted them to “feel really open and free and be able to have a big open dialogue without the restrictions that having one of these guys present” might bring. The practitioner expressed conflicting ideals when she described what happened during the PV activity:

We could have asked [the politicians] to each screening. That would have been interesting possibly. It would have been less of a shock to them afterwards and their concerns would have been heard by the community. But, it could have shut the whole bloody thing down. That was my fear. But then, probably I’m not trusting enough in thinking like that; not trusting in the strength of the community to say, “Fuck you” or “We will say what we want”… In the end, the process showed they were in fact very strong and were willing and able to stand up to these politicians even publicly, which I hadn’t expected So it probably would have been good. That’s one side of it. On the other side, we could have let the politicians be part of the whole process and then could have shown the films to the politicians individually before doing a big screening. But, that again could have fucked up the whole process. They could have blocked us doing a big stakeholder screening where there were some of their peers and some of the people that they want to look good to; the heads of banks and so on. They were all present. The local politicians wouldn’t have probably wanted them to see that film if they had seen it ahead. They might have blocked it; and they could have. If they’d have said, ‘No we don’t want you to organise that high profile screening.’ it wouldn’t have happened. We couldn’t have pushed ahead with that with them saying, ‘No.’ It would have been politically impossible.

So, maybe we did it the right way because they didn’t have that opportunity. We kept it open. We went to see them. We invited them [to a review session]. But, they didn’t turn up, which I was quite happy about. But, the invitation was there. If they had come, we would have dealt with it. The fact they didn’t come meant it was their choice. Then, they got a bit of a shock when they saw the final films [in public], which they found to be excessively negative and which they criticised for not representing the development projects and initiatives carried out by the government locally over the years… When they saw the film in front of an audience of 120 people, they were shocked… They picked up a microphone and said all sorts of shit in front of everyone, which made them look worse, even worse, because they were denying the problems that everyone knew were there. They were really quite aggressive, so they looked bad; which you know: Is that good or bad? It’s really hard to know.” (Zhenya)
The practitioner’s dilemma in whether she made the right choice raises a serious question for PV practice: Is the act of public participation always beneficial and necessary for raising citizen voice? In the story above, the view of a screening’s advantageous nature appeared to underpin decisions. For instance, the notion of cancelling the screening due to government involvement seemed to indicate the PV activity would have failed. The practitioner did not mention if she, the women’s’ group or the NGO considered other activities, such one-on-one actions or small focus groups, as a better pathway in the long-term for addressing the women’s concerns. Arguably, knowing such answers requires deep knowledge of local relationships and context, which is a luxury rarely afforded PV practitioners working on short-term consultancies, as described in Section 6.3.2. As well, even if working with local partners who do know the context, the ability to shift a PV activity mid-stream in reaction to political realities can be complicated. For in many PV activities in development contexts, practitioners described being bound to pre-determined schedules that dictate their engagement time in a specific community, as described in Section 6.3.4. Thus, time can be particularly restrictive on practitioners who are facilitating PV projects in countries outside their own for advancing meaningful citizen participation. Additionally, the ability to shift the scope of a PV activity can be difficult, especially when a development institution is funding a particular outcome such as a public film screening, as described in Section 6.2.2. The implication of such pressures seemed evident in the practitioners’ story. Unless flexibility has been planned for and agreed upon in PV design, activities may be unable to respond to local realities in implementation. This includes the decision of whether or not to hold a public film screening.

As an alternative interpretation of citizen participation, another practitioner promoted public debates with the PV films (Sasha). This is where the PV films prompt a wider discussion on the topics raised, as shown in Figure 4.14. As the practitioner explained, the process may or may not include the films’ creators. She illustrated this intention in her storyboard title: “Connecting voices and faces in public debates” and explained:
I feel that you need to raise other voices as well. The film is just a way to help to raise all kinds of different voices around the issues. In the film, there are some voices raised, but it is not sufficient. I think that these voices help to raises other voices. That’s the idea of public debates, and showing the film to policymakers, and showing it to other local communities who might see the film and say, ‘Yeah, we also face this problem. We also want to raise our voice about this.’ And, to use the media to raise these other voices; through the radio, through the print and other media. Then perhaps something can happen. (Sasha)

The practitioner’s promotion of public debates was compelling in its assumption for action. However, as pointed out in Section 2.2.2, expressive voice can offer little guarantee of responsiveness. The practitioner herself ultimately illustrated this point through describing a PV activity she coordinated. She said her institution linked PV films made by a rural community to local and national media to spread the villagers’ concerns (Sasha). Although she aspired for the PV participants to engage in a wider debate on their own terms using the videos, the reality of doing so was challenging:

It is difficult for them to have control because they are not connected themselves to the media or other government organisations. So, once their film product has been re-appropriated by the external organisation that started this process, the film will be used by the external organisation. And, since the local people don’t have any connection, they don’t have any influence on how this film is going to be used. (Sasha)

This story seemed to indicate the gap that can exist between PV participants’ intentions for personal change, and their lack of supported involvement in the response. In this case, for example, while citizens participated in the content creation, the possibility for further engagement appeared limited by a PV project design unable to support the strengthening of community-government and/or media relationships. This meant that by others taking control of how the films were presented in their name, the PV participants themselves were unable to interact in the films’ interpretation or participate in finding solutions to the problems raised. Of concern for citizen voice is that act of limiting PV participants’ personal engagement in dialogue after the film’s creation could reinforce views that their opinions have little value for decision-making (Cornwall and Althea-Maria Rivas, 2015, p. 409). As such, the seemingly extractive nature of public debates with PV films holds
potential for further marginalising citizen voice over supportively strengthening its value. Section 5.1.3 discusses this argument in more detail.

4.4.3 The characteristic of dialogue

In the engaged voice pathway, practitioners often prioritised dialogue as foundational for PV processes to advance mutual understanding between citizens and decision-makers in spaces where their perspectives have routinely been marginalised or absent. One person explained the PV practitioner’s role with PV participants in fostering dialogue:

You are there as a facilitator to make their ambitions, if they are realistic, to frame their ambitions and to make them possible. That comes back to that unique skill set. It means you’ve got to be able to help them communicate; you’ve got to be able to help them tell a story; to reach the audience and to communicate and impact and to influence to action that audience that they are trying to reach… You have to be able to work with them to record a testimony that is going to have the desired effect on themselves that they intend to have… And, building in those opportunities for dialogue with the people who can help them achieve the outcome they are trying to achieve. (Quinn)

Through prioritising dialogue, practitioners in the engaged voice pathway often described PV as holding valuable potential for not only sharing perspectives, but also in having them heard. As a practitioner explained, PV needs to “feel meaningful after it has taken place… You have actually found a way to facilitate communication. There’s been a call and a response; and there’s now consideration and contemplation about how to continue and go forward” (Toni). She said the emphasis here was to use “digital platforms to find new audiences or to find different reach and access for those who might be involved.” The practitioner explained that technology access expanded PV participants’ engagement in dialogue, which might not otherwise have occurred. Her storyboard panel in Figure 4.15 illustrates this point. It shows dialogue facilitated through community screenings between peers, between peers and community-based organisations (CBOs), and between CBOs and other CBOs. She explained the value for PV for widening conversation:

Figure 4.15: Multiple conversations with PV (Toni)
The more PV has to do with communities and local dialogue, and empowerment of local communities to speak on the same platform or similar levels of technical capacity, the more effective it is... The disadvantage of marginalised communities who are using other participatory methods to engage with the centre of their cultures or societies has been that not only have they not had the technology to do this, but they’ve lacked the technologies to continue the conversation and to hear from others as well... So the conversation is really key. (Toni)

As the comment implies, every dialogical encounter takes place within its historical context of cultural and gendered norms influenced by hierarchies of power, which seemed to create difficulties for realising idealised PV practice. The same practitioner said that while she aspires for powerful, dialogue-driven PV practice, “finding a way to value the conversation no matter the means of delivery is a challenge for PV and for any of this kind of work” (Toni). To meet such challenges and enhance dialogue, practitioners said they used multiple tactics in their PV activities. For example, a practitioner described how PV participants in a project used their PV films to generate dialogue through targeted focus groups in different municipalities, as shown in Figure 4.16:

We talked about how are we going to use these [focus groups] now: Who do we want there? What type of questions do we ask? Who’s going to be asking the questions? We had a full-day discussion on this and we developed all the research questions. We’d asked the groups for one or two representatives to be involved in those focus groups, so they were the ones who decided who would be in the focus group... We ended up having three focus groups with government using three of the videos... And, we tried to get as many different government representatives there (Cass).

Another practitioner described deploying theories and activities from restorative justice practice in her PV work. She did so by introducing “talking sticks” into film screenings as a means to foster “equitable dialogue” (Zhenya). The practitioner explained how she and female PV participants led group discussions after showing the women’s film:
I was able to say that we are going to hear from every single one of you; and everyone is going to have a voice. And, we did achieve that as we had four circles; with 20-25 people in each circle, each with a different theme that was chosen by the women and everyone got to hold the talking stick and share (Zhenya).

The practitioners’ experience implies that citizens’ publically narrating their own lives has inherent value for citizen voice as democratic process, as described in Section 2.4.1. However, the statement “everyone is going to have a voice” highlights scholarly concerns about idealistic notions of equality and equity in deliberative public spaces (Askanius & Østergaard, 2014, p. 4; Levin, 1989, p. 111). The assumption of voice equality appears to miss issues of power that inevitably come into play in who is listened to and why (Cornwall & Rivas, 2015, p. 409). As highlighted in Section 2.2.2, attention alone on equitable speech is likely insufficient to achieve citizens’ desire for positive change. The implication for PV practice might be that deliberate efforts are required to ensure the receptive value of citizen voice in dialogical encounters (Waller, Dreher, & McCallum, 2015, p. 63).

### 4.4.4 The characteristic of capacity

In the engaged voice pathway, PV practitioners discussed strengthening people’s capacity. That is, so citizens living with disadvantage could fully realise their situation, and be better equipped to change it. To such ends, PV practitioners often described capacity-strengthening activities with PV as “action-learning” processes (Zhenya). Such processes, they said, needed time for PV participants to create multiple iterations of their film for reflection, discussion and refinement.

The storyboard panel in Figure 4.17 illustrates this. It shows the iterative nature of citizens’ developing video content, filming their stories and reviewing them for any changes (Zhenya). This “learning process for the participants,” is necessary in PV activities, another practitioner explained (Shane). It allows PV participants to “unpack what those issues mean to them and their personal experiences with the issue, instead of talking in abstract in a way that is not related to their personal lives” (Shane). In describing using PV to
strengthen capacity, a practitioner related it to creating safe spaces where “you can think about how you are represented” (Sal). This is where “voice equals yourself; a sense of self in society” where “people are being listened to and they are able to engage with their wider society” when they may not have been able to do that before (Sal).

For building capacity, practitioners envisioned scenarios in their storyboards where PV participants debate the emergent knowledge. As Figure 4.18 illustrates, “The group initiated dialogical and reflexive processes through which they assess the causes of their ‘oppression’ and ‘powerlessness’ and discuss and agree on potential solutions” (Nikita). These reflexive processes aimed to “take the group through a zone where they are comfortable to be talking about these issues” in private and eventually in public (Nikita).

In the engaged voice pathway, the promotion of enhancing citizen capacity was evident as one practitioner advocated for developing group members’ “confidence and ability to represent their own case” (Alex). Another said PV helped citizens “strengthen themselves internally” so they could more authentically represent their own thoughts in the collaborative filmmaking process (Zhenya). In Figure 4.19, for example, a practitioner promotes the value of raising “critical consciousness” within a closed-group setting (Quinn). She also described the potential for group cohesion to be lost though wider community engagement:

The raising of critical consciousness happens throughout the process because we are not only exploring, ‘What is my personal experience of this; but what are the personal experiences of the…others? What are our shared experiences and what are our points of tension? How do I articulate it?’…By reflecting back
about it; by talking about it and by seeing myself talk about it releases those things… I then feel that the participants ought to be in a reasonable position to start making decisions about what they want to say, how they want to say it, and who they want to say it to… By going out and videoing others, in a way we are losing so much of what we have already built. Because the people who are being asked to articulate, the people who are being asked to contribute, don’t have all of that; even if the video makers do. (Quinn)

The practitioner’s comment seemed to imply that the motivation for PV practice in the engaged voice pathway is twofold. First, PV aims to tackle voice inequality by shifting who is represented in decision-making spaces. Second, it aims to strengthen PV participants’ capacity to participate in public decision-making as engaged citizens. As another practitioner explained, the emphasis for PV must be on fully supporting “communities to express and campaign for their own needs” (Alex). Illustrating this point, in Figure 4.20, the practitioner drew a storyboard panel where women living in poverty were “sharing their content and their demands” with policymakers. The practitioner explained the value of using PV to build capacity:

It's about having the ability to actually not just understand the predicament and the forces that may be broader than your community; that are around you, that impact you. But, also actually developing the confidence and the ability to represent your own case, and make your own demands without depending on some outside agency to do it. (Alex)

PV participants gaining the capacity to convey marginalising situations in decision-making spaces appeared as serving a valuable purpose for raising citizen voice, as described in Section 2.4.1 on holding decision-makers to account. However, a more challenging proposal practitioners identified was how to ensure policymakers are listening. One practitioner highlighted the challenge when she described PV as a lobbying tool:

You can make sure that people who maybe didn’t have this lobbying power and political space now have some political space and can participate in these discussions and negotiations and feel they can play a role and trying to demand
their rights and putting some pressure. But I don’t know if this government official will do something… I think the response is not guaranteed. (Nikita)

Of particular interest in the study was that practitioners sometimes drew barriers to citizen voice rather than more idealistic scenarios where PV could raise citizen voice sufficiently without any constraints. For instance, in the storyboard panel in Figure 4.21, the practitioner drew the problem of political listening (Nikita). Here, the storyboard visualises the PV participants having gained the capacity to articulate and fight for their concerns. The practitioner explained that the film that represents their views is circulating through the media, as shown on the TV screen. However, the decision-maker the group wants to influence focuses on his business interests over their concerns. He has shut his door in a deliberate act of non-listening. Hence, the PV participants are pursuing alternative means to gain attention in the form of a protest (Nikita). The implication of such a scenario seemed to be that PV efforts cannot solely focus on the filmmaking process for raising citizen voice. They must also ensure that participants gain the capacity to take appropriate citizenship action and focus on how the receiver of the media can be better positioned to recognise and listen to citizen voice, a point articulated in Sections 5.4.3 and 5.4.4. Figure 4.2.1 highlights this point of focus on voice reception. The panel drawing seemed to assume that policymakers are prone not to listen, even in idealised PV practice. The scenario was thus void of any targeted efforts to increase potential for the government official to respond. Additionally, the storyboard alluded to the notion that policymakers are the key people responsible for citizens’ marginalised situations.

A similar viewpoint was apparent when a different practitioner discussed whether to include government policymakers in capacity development exercises, as shown in Figure 4.22.
So we are not only getting community members and NGO staff; but we’re bringing an activist as well; and someone from even maybe the government. You know...that’s something you think, ‘No way. Let’s keep them out.’ But it’s been amazing sometimes to work with them right from the beginning. And they send off not high level, but a low-level civil servant guy who is just going to have a journey of a lifetime, a lot of mind-bending. But, it’s incredible sometimes what happens to those guys and how they shift; and how they can become incredibly strong advocates. So it’s not to be ruled out. You have to get the right kind; because they can totally trash it as well. You have to be incredibly selective in choosing these partners. Of course, we need to work with them, but we need to know when to work with the different groups. And, it depends a lot on personalities of the people you are working with, and many different things. (Zhenya)

In this story, the practitioner’s initial reluctance for including government officials is noteworthy; and is a position she eventually turns into a positive. The comment, however, highlights a wider concern for PV practice. If PV practitioners enter a community to build people’s capacity to mobilise people against a presumed oppressor, the assumption might be that directly challenging opposing views is sufficient for social change. Such an approach could, even unintentionally, blind PV practitioners to other factors that are diminishing voice. These might include dynamic cultural, religious or gendered norms; local power dynamics; structural influences; economic biases; or government staff members’ ability to respond sufficiently to citizen concerns (Waisbord, 2008, p. 508). The assumption could also be problematic if it ignores the way in which people can be simultaneously in multiple positions—victims of oppression in one moment or perpetrators of oppression in the next, as gender, race, class and other operations of power are exercised (Castells, 2009, p. 6). It thus could set PV practice up to merely address an easily identifiable, static oppressor, rather than tackle the root causes of voice denial due to multiple, complex systems (Couldry, 2014, p. 23). The implication appears to be that PV practice might require more considered attention on the underpinnings of power involved in voice receptivity for political influence, as discussed in Sections 5.4.3, 5.4.4 and 7.1.2. Such attention for raising citizen voice with PV seemed most pronounced in the equitable voice pathway, as described in the following section.
4.5 Equitable voice pathway

4.5.1 Prioritising the right to influence

**Equitable voice** is the third voice pathway identified through the study data. PV practitioners here primarily discussed strategically using PV activities to strengthen citizens’ agency, relationships and voice legitimacy as a means to transform unjust conditions core to their marginalisation. Markedly, in the equitable voice category, there was a particular focus on participants’ individual, group and networked power through an emphasis on people’s *right to influence* decisions that affect them. To this end, practitioners often promoted formal approaches to enhancing social accountability, such as film screenings in the public sphere. However, seemingly in contrast to the engaged voice pathway, such activities were not assumed as inherently beneficial, or always their first choice. For example, one practitioner explained that it is “really difficult to get to the platforms that policy makers receive or listen to or respect” (*Nic*). As such, they used multiple platforms:

> Sometimes they'll be forums [that] are opened by the UN; opened by donors; opened by themselves [the community participants], which might be workshops; they might be forums; they might be UN hearings on rights... and then the videos can go into that. (*Nic*)

In seeking contextual ways to reach decision-makers, the practitioners in the equitable voice pathway tended to promote informal channels of citizen engagement more readily than the practitioners in the amplified or engaged voice pathways did. Here, they discussed using PV for strengthening activist positions among individuals; organising in-person, dialogical encounters between community members and public officials; encouraging village field visits by civil servants; showing videos at community workshops; creating networks; and/or building group cohesiveness in support of social movements. Supporting long-term strategies for social change and justice seemed often to dictate practitioners’ PV activity designs. The practitioners in the equitable voice pathway described supporting citizens’ right to influence through efforts to transform unjust power at the root of people’s marginalisation. This was clear in how they discussed PV practice as needing focus on both voice articulation and its receptivity.
Illustratively, Figure 4.23 shows that citizens first need to acquire the knowledge, skills and confidence to express their own views (Devon). Then, the personal merges into collective voice, as represented by the swirl of concerns in Figure 4.23. (See a colour version of the storyboard in Appendix 2.) The view supports similar efforts described by another practitioner:

The insight that shifts understanding is between different perspectives. That’s why I think it’s important to incorporate the exchange of ideas, not just within the groups, but across groups at a peer level first, and then maybe later between the community and the decision-makers. (Jessie)

Practitioners in the equitable voice pathway often discussed the importance of building strong relationships between citizens and decision-makers to support those in power in being more open to alternative views. Accordingly, shifting people’s understanding as a means to transform power seemed to be a reoccurring and important theme, as one practitioner emphasised:

This work, it is always about power. You always have to think about the power; what is going on in relationship to power within the process; and, if you are interested in empowerment or in shifting those kinds of relationships—which is part of what is needed to strengthen voice—then you have to think about how what you are doing relates to power. There’s no option. (Devon)

The practitioners in this pathway related power to PV participant groups, communities, donors, development institutions, governments, global frameworks and their own power as practitioners in how, where and with whom they practice. Most often, they tended to locate their practice through social justice and activist framings, as one person explained:

Human rights and a civic action have to be an element of these things…and there has to be an ‘action agenda. And, in missing that agenda, it becomes a project simply about making video and film and not about why. (Misha)
For the practitioners, the question of why was often at the forefront of discussions on how they applied their PV practice. As one practitioner expressed, “This is not neutral what we are doing. It has a very political with a small p, nature” (Devon). She illustrated this point in describing voice:

Fine; go and do something in three days, but don’t call it voice. Call it something else... That’s data collection. The data is people speaking themselves about the film on a topic; and they learn some technical skills. But, that’s not empowerment. That’s not what I define as voice. Voice is much more. It’s a personal as well as a political process. In that sense, it’s quite profound. It’s very easy to skim along the surface of these things and that often happens. (Devon)

Based on the practitioners’ observations on how to use PV to influence change, political considerations and notions of power seemed necessary for equitable voice. This view of politics and power is often argued in academic literature as essential if people are to realise and act on their rights (Hearn, Tacchi, Foth, & Lennie, 2009, p. 154). The next section focuses on such issues, and offers findings on the three characteristics identified as most dominant in the equitable voice pathway: agency, receptivity and relationships.

4.5.2 The characteristic of agency
In the equitable voice pathway, practitioners often prioritised PV as a means to build citizen agency. To such end, they explained that PV processes could help citizens socially and/or politically act using their own knowledge, capabilities and power. Here, PV practitioners described wanting to know the contextual barriers to people being able to participate and act as a first step; then designing PV activities aimed at raising citizen voice in response. A practitioner discussed how this might look in practice:

The ideal is that you start with the social processes. So, we would go to a community with community organisers and just talk to people; offer them the opportunity to be able to articulate their lives to others; initially to other communities... A political process follows social processes. If your social processes are working well, people have a voice in the political sphere as well. It doesn’t necessarily need the media to be the tool for policy change. But, media can be a tool for assisting people on their social cohesion and social organisation, which then they can use the media as an output themselves in the advocacy; or, they use other tools. (Nic)
Through this lens, PV practitioners promoted an emergent-style of “personal praxis of action and reflection” for citizens to locate their narratives (Tyler). In Figure 4.24, a practitioner illustrates how PV engaged and mobilised citizens through them asking for and owning the media themselves. Here, stories emerged from citizens’ desires to tell them. The practitioner explained that the emergence strengthened awareness, self-confidence, relationships and an interest in people-centred advocacy:

For me, there will never be a stand-alone participatory video programme. So, this is the PV nugget. But, it doesn’t sit in and of itself; there is probably something else that is growing off it: all these other creative engagements. Because, there’s a low capacity in being able to make partnerships within the community; or a lack of confidence. So, there is that higher-power distance. Maybe there is just poverty and they cannot afford to spend their time in order to make those connections and organise themselves. Maybe there are rifts in the community. Maybe, they’ve got more pressing needs, like for example, the stairs are falling down. They’ve got no water; the electricity is being turned off; the government is bringing in developers to access the site. They’ve got no legal title to the homes. So you start to see, all of the sudden, there’s a whole lots of other connected issues. There’s a lot of connected people; connected issues. But, for some goddamn reason, they still go: ‘Hey, telling stories is going to be an efficient way for us to negotiate these core issues, and to be able to connect to specific people and partners that we would like to engage with more deeply. You know, we see this as an opportunity for community organising and mobilisation in and of itself. We see this as an opportunity for advocacy; we see it as an opportunity for education and engagement with external people so we are remediating our own identity. We can see a whole heap of diversity of outcomes that this stuff can achieve, within our community and outside; building the technical capacity of people; increasing their confidence. (Tyler)

As another example of how PV can build citizen agency, another practitioner in the study promoted PV for “taking action with people” as a means of “disrupting the status quo and power dynamics” keeping people’s voice marginalised (Jessie). As discussed in Section 4.5.1, the power dynamics practitioners in this pathway recognised might be local or with
government. Alternatively, they might exist within the agendas of development institutions themselves. Overcoming such barriers seemed at the heart of the practitioners’ intentions for shifting power structures that marginalise citizen voice. Accordingly, practitioners in the equitable voice pathway emphasised strengthening citizens’ capacity to mobilise and act. To this end, they often advocated for sufficient time to conduct intensely personal empowering processes with PV. As an illustration, one practitioner explained that the rush for political engagement with PV could be inappropriate in some contexts. She explained, “You can go far too fast and jump in and say: ‘We’re going to give you an opportunity to raise your voice with parliamentarians; decision-makers’” (Nic). Rather, she said, raising voice should start with the most appropriate approach.

In some cases, knowledge emergence itself was prioritised as meaningful for more equitable voice, as one practitioner’s story highlighted. She explained that at the start of a development project incorporating PV, community members were advocating for the government to build them a bridge over a local river (Katulpa). Through providing time for people to gather their own evidence on video and reflect on it, the group chose an alternative, more locally appropriate solution:

What is going to change things? The power of all those voices coming together and working it out. Because eventually they realised that a bridge is going to be much too expensive. They changed the emphasis over time themselves and thought of alternatives like having a boat. They became much more real about it because they were networking as well. They were going to the hospital and talking to people about the problems from their aspect. They were informing themselves really about how the world works, and what the difficulties were from both sides. That is really important if you are going to be able to speak in public… At the local level, it’s about understanding how to speak and representing yourself and seeing yourself as someone who can speak. (Katulpa)

The story implies that for building agency, citizens need time to locate their own solutions on their own terms before engaging in the public sphere with PV, as discussed in more depth in Section 5.4.1 and 5.4.2. Going through this reflexive process, the practitioner said, enables “poor people to gain a voice and some degree of autonomy” (Katulpa). Another practitioner echoed the sentiment. As she explained, “You need the space in the PV programme to first deal with the concerns around the personal sphere and then grow from that to the larger concerns” (Misha). Creating space for multiple concerns, however,
was not always easy. Another practitioner talked about the complexity of navigating power within PV participant groups. The process required PV facilitators having time to become “aware to some extent…whose voice is voicing how” (Jessie).

The practitioner explained that navigating local power often required an “accompanied process [of] building the group context.” For example, as Figure 4.25 illustrates, certain activities may be required to help less vocal people feel confident to express their opinions as a way to overcome marginalising power. Here, she noted that activities with and without the video camera could “build expressive confidence; to establish a more equitable dynamic in the group so that the process isn’t taken over by one or two group members” (Jessie). The process seemed to signify that building agency through PV requires considered, mediated and skilled attention.

4.5.3 The characteristic of receptivity
In the study, PV participants in the equitable voice pathway also discussed the necessity for attention on voice receptivity where PV can generate more responsive listening by decision-makers. For instance, one practitioner explained that raising citizen voice with PV was more than just creating spaces for dialogue. Rather, PV she promoted PV as a catalyst for decision-makers to be “really hearing” people from the margins, so they commit to “acting with people at a more equal level” (Jessie). She promoted PV as a fully engaged process for:

...telling stories or expressing perspectives—voice if you like—in a wider framework. [That is] what’s it for; who’s going to listen and why; and what happens next so it becomes a process of expression and listening and dialogue and so on. (Jessie).

The practitioner highlighted political listening through her storyboard entitled: “Beyond voice. Building the context for collaboration.”
The practitioner’s first storyboard panel in Figure 4.26, for instance, shows how unheard citizens are located on one side of a gap with their “disembodied” voices floating away from them. On the other side, there is a policy cloud around people with power at a conference table. As the practitioner explained, the “arrows coming down from that is the policy pushing down or the agenda pushing down.” In the middle of the panel, a “tiny rickety little bridge over the gap” serves as the starting place for PV activities (Jessie).

In closing the gap identified in the practitioner’s first panel in Figure 4.26, the last panel in the practitioner’s storyboard promotes “equitable partnerships,” as Figure 4.27 shows. The storyboard seemed to imply that PV activities, from the start, require strategies to close a persistent voice-listening gap. In this way, the practitioner explained, PV can help “disembodied voices” more influentially connect to and influence the policy decisions affecting their lives. Illustratively, the same practitioner described a PV process she deployed where technical filmmaking strategically aimed to “position the people involved more powerfully than usual:”

[We] were using the video-making context to bring decision-makers into people’s communities with the people involved in the project organising the filmmaking so they could communicate particular messages to the decision-makers at particular stages in the filmmaking—not through the video; but through the fact that they were video-making enabled them to direct where people stood, what they said, what they should do. It didn’t even have to be a video they made. They actually used that context to change relationships. I think we could do more work using the participatory video context to shift the relations, the dynamics between people. (Jessie)
With its focus on receptivity, PV practitioners in the equitable voice pathway often discussed strategies for challenging structures that can limit “voices that don’t fit the agenda” (*Katulpa*). Through activist notions, practitioners were adamant about PV working both in partnership with mainstream development or outside of it as necessary for a response to citizen voice. A practitioner illustrated this choice in describing how she approached PV and raising citizen voice:

For people facing dispossession, eviction, their best option may be just not making their video, but getting really active and active non-violent protest and triggering the mechanisms that exist within mainstream media; learning how to use that. How to make your voice so that it attracts the mainstream media in a productive way... If people are facing eviction now, they don’t have the time to start doing the actual full process of articulation for media production. So don’t come in and start talking participatory video. Start talking active non-violence and how to use the media systems that are available to people now. *(Nic)*

The comment echoed critical observations by practitioners in this pathway about how powerful decision-makers often received alternative citizen voice. As the practitioner further explained, “It’s really difficult to get to the platforms that policymakers receive or listen to or respect” *(Nic)*. Another practitioner visualised the difficulty of citizens being heard in her storyboard, as Figure 4.28 shows. Even in her idealised scenario, she drew decision-makers (represented by the person in black) shutting down citizen voice articulated through PV activities *(Devon)*. The image, the practitioner explained, evolved from recent work to influence global policymakers with PV:

These policymakers, if you are talking about international development policymakers, they are information saturated. They get hundreds of emails a day. They have zillions of reports being sent to them. They are totally overloaded with information. So why would they stop to listen to a participatory video? What is it that is going to make them stop to listen to a participatory video? I’m talking about people who spend most of their time manoeuvring in the halls of power. That’s what they do. You need something that connects to them in a different way. You can’t compete with all that information. You need to connect with them on a different level. *(Devon)*

*Figure 4.28: Shutting down voice *(Devon)*
Not all hope for policy influence, however, was lost in the practitioner’s PV ideal. In her imagining of how PV might affect political change, the practitioner drew a burst of colour in the heart area of policymakers, as shown in Figure 4.29 and in colour in Appendix 2. The image, she said, shows that the PV process has created “a spark of empathy in them” [the policymakers] that gets them out of their power-driven role so they can “relate to people as a human.” In addition, she said the circles in Figure 4.29 represent that the policymakers’ response is only one part of social and political change:

The important thing is the interlinked circles… Because that’s what’s really sustainable. That policymaker may decide or not decide to do something—it could be good; it could be disastrous. That’s a whole other question, right? But, if the circles are interlinked, then you have possibilities in the future. You can try again; you can try again; you can try again; you can try again. A one-off thing is not going to solve the problem anyway. (Devon)

Another storyboard panel illustrates a similar viewpoint, as Figure 4.30 shows. Here, the practitioner highlighted the “ah-ha” moment that comes when mutual understanding occurred through PV (Jessie). She described how PV activities could foster stronger voice receptivity:

These kinds of processes can help structure a more equal playing field, not only at the group level but also between stakeholders. Because video making can position the people involved more powerfully than usual; because of the conventions of making videos and showing them…people have to sit down and listen. (Jessie)

The practitioner observations seemed to imply that multiple, strategic actions are required with PV that focus on both agency and voice receptivity as a pathway for citizens to navigate and shift marginalising power (Dobson, 2014, p. 130; Dutta, 2011, p. 40).
4.5.4 The characteristic of relationships

Practitioners in the equitable voice pathway also tended to prioritise relationships through PV activities, primarily as a means to cultivate more equitable exchange between individuals, citizens, groups and decision-makers. As one practitioner said, “We [as practitioners] need to do more to raise awareness of participatory video as a relational practice” (Jessie). Such an approach, practitioners explained, often results in stronger connectedness, empathy and mutual trust, elements that can help to rebalance inequitable power. One practitioner attempted to visualised how such a process might begin for PV, as shown in Figure 4.31 and described here:

In the circles, some people are asking questions; and other people are kind of on their own, not really asking anything. Some people are kind of agreeing with the direction of things. In each of the circles, there is someone who has more power than someone else, or maybe more than the one person who has the power; and some people are isolated on their own. So that’s why there are some circles that have just one person in. And there are ages and different kind of groups and so on. What I was trying to think about for what an ideal…what might be a very ambitious way of thinking about voice in participatory video in international development is that those people who are in those situations of marginalisation who are unable to ask questions: How can you connect? How can you help them to articulate those questions and as part of a process of what voice means; and then how do they connect to one another? (Devon)

Another practitioner described relationships as foundational for PV practice, especially the “dialogical relationships” fostered in the process (Tyler):

The core of any good participatory process is the dialogical relationships that are really grounded in the core values, which [Paulo] Freire always termed as love, faith in the capacity and ability of others; trust. I’d almost add commitment to that as well. Hope is another one, as is critical thinking as part of that process. So to have a relationship or a net of relationships with different people, which embodies those values, means that inevitably there’s this participatory process which is based on trust and commitment; love and respect, as cheesy as it sounds. These are the pre-conditions for making it good. It doesn’t mean necessarily that it will be good; but at least you have the strong foundations for it. (Tyler)
In the equitable voice pathway, practitioners tended to discuss two types of relationships often found in PV activities: institutional and community-based relationships. In talking about institutional partnerships, for example, practitioners in the equitable voice pathway said they might run short PV activities. However, they would typically only do so when PV could advance the long-term development strategies of an engaged organisation. This was evident in how one practitioner described approaching a PV activity by first “looking at the ecology around it:”

I never just introduce PV into a community without working out a lot of other issues with them. So, I always go to a context where there is already an organisation that is doing deep transformational work in those places. It’s already community-centred. It already has relationships with young people there. There’s already some actors. And, what we do with PV is simply reinforce that; give them another set of tools… One, I want to build capacity for this organisation so that it can do what it does better; two, we are building on trusting relationships; and, three we are designing curriculum with them so it’s something they can introduce and embed in their work. We are reinforcing some of their programmes around gender and equity and reintegration work with PV. So PV doesn’t hold by itself. (Misha)

Despite their aspirations for connection, PV practitioners in this pathway described struggling at times in their practice to convey the value for developing and supporting institutional relationships with PV. As an example, one practitioner described how an organisation she worked with perceived PV’s utility and the practitioner’s role: “Sometimes, they were treating me like a workshop whore, you know: ‘Oh, you’ll just go and run this workshop. Can you just do this in two days? Just go teach this in two days’” (Devon). The view contradicted her desire to “be doing things that are much longer-term which have a meaningful engagement beyond just being brought into a run a workshop with a technologically cool process.” As she explained, “Even though I love doing these workshops, that’s true, I do love them, it’s not interesting to stay at that level” (Devon). As such, she explained that she often rejected the pressure for facilitating isolated PV activities. Instead, she sought out situations and institutional partnerships where she could strategically align PV activities with long-term advocacy and/or activism efforts. Section 6.3.4 further explores the tensions practitioners experience in conducting short-form PV projects verses longer-term, more relational PV activities.
Practitioners in the equitable voice pathway also discussed the value of developing community relationships. As an example, a practitioner described PV practice as a flexible process where “community” was considered a “key partner” (Tyler). Through this lens, the practitioner’s idealised use of digital media technologies responded directly to community members’ particular concerns and needs. The PV practitioner described her view of participatory video as a “nugget” within a wider set of “creative engagements.” As written next to the storyboard panel shown in Figure 4.32, the practitioner role was to:

Work closely with [the community members] and each respect the others’ experience and independence. Work through ethics, privacy and consent with the community and adapt accordingly. If appropriate, local content production is encouraged through training, mentoring, community screenings, exhibitions and ongoing support. (Tyler)

In doing so, the practitioner advocated for adaptive, flexible approaches to PV that respond to the surrounding context and culture. This was in lieu of stepwise or standardised approaches to PV practice, which were most commonly discussed by practitioners in the amplified voice pathway. For example, the practitioner emphasised creating “Nets, not lines,” as the title of her storyboard. Here, through a mutually respectful process, the “community of interest identifies a policy issue they are interested to engage with” (Tyler). They then built a “net of relationships with a variety of stakeholders engaged in the issue,” as Figure 4.33 shows. The facilitator’s role, the practitioner explained, is to conduct PV activities within and supporting of this space:
If it’s a collaboration, that co-creation, then we’ve got to flatten the power as much as possible, and base it on the relationship that exists between us in order to have that lovely dialogue; and that kind of personal praxis of action and reflection. *(Tyler)*

Practitioners in the equitable voice pathway described worries that short-form activities for raising citizen voice miss PV’s deeper, theoretical value for relationship development. As a practitioner explained, “You need time to build the trusting relationships with the community. That you cannot compromise on” *(Misha)*. Such observations seemed to imply that relationships, in their multiple forms, require environments that allow empowering processes to occur, a point discussed further in Section 7.1.3.

### 4.6 A brief summary

This chapter has made explicit study findings on the phenomenon of using PV to raise citizen voice in international development contexts from PV practitioner perspectives. The chapter presented research on three epistemologies of citizen voice; designated as the amplified, engaged and equitable voice pathways. It also presented the key characteristics identified as most prevalent within each of the categories: communication, visibility and evidence in the amplified voice pathway; participation, dialogue and capacity in the engaged voice pathway; and agency, receptivity and relationships in the equitable voice pathway. Examples provided by the PV practitioners in the study showed that each pathway consequently holds differing possibilities for legitimising citizen voice. As such, further investigation is required. This is necessary to address the second study objective, which is to develop a principle-driven, conceptual framing for PV practice. The next chapter describes this effort as it links the voice pathways to theory—including Couldry’s “voice as value” principles discussed in Section 2.4.2. The chapter also describes the study analysis process to identify which voice pathway and characteristics are most viable for a framework. The chapter concludes by offering a principle-driven conceptual framework for raising valued citizen voice with PV.
5. A conceptual framework for PV

It’s not just about extracting voice and decision-makers saying, ‘Well, great, we’ve heard from people.’ It’s about really hearing, and partners having a commitment to acting with people at a more equal level.
—Jessie

5.1 Analysing amplified, engaged and equitable voice

5.1.1 The process to develop a framework
As highlighted in previous chapters, participatory video is a C4D approach that utilises filmmaking as a means to cultivate and strengthen the knowledge, confidence and agency of people living in poverty or marginalisation. Practitioners implement PV activities to help citizens influence decisions affecting their lives. Chapter 4 described how the 25 PV practitioners in this study share similar, altruistic aspirations for raising citizen voice in international development contexts as a process of transformative social and political change. It also revealed the study findings on practitioners’ differing epistemologies for raising citizen voice with PV; named as the amplified, engaged and equitable voice pathways. Chapter 4 presented the argument that because PV practitioners are in the mediating position between citizens and institutions, their perceptions matter. Their viewpoints are critical in PV activity design and implementation, and ultimately for catalysing citizen voice influence.

This chapter further describes the findings on practitioners’ differing conceptualisations of citizen voice and PV. It presents a theoretical discussion of the voice pathways’ enabling or constraining potential for valued citizen voice. It does so by first explaining how the three voice pathways identified in the study link to theory, including Nick Couldry’s (2010) argument for “voice as a value” (p. 1). It then offers the argument that equitable voice is the most viable pathway for raising valued citizen voice with PV. The chapter also addresses the second objective of the research, which was to develop a principle-driven, conceptual framing for PV practice for valuing citizen voice. Here, the study’s proposed framework is presented with the five principles of personal recognition, collective representation, social and political recognition, responsive listening and empathic
relationships. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the conceptual framework’s applicability in international development contexts. To begin, the following sections turn their attention to the three voice pathways.

5.1.2 Exploring amplified voice

As described in Section 4.3, PV practitioners in the amplified voice pathway tended to prioritise three motivating characteristics: visibility, communication and evidence. First, the methodology served to make underrepresented concerns more visible to people in power. Second, PV application aimed to increase communication possibilities in decision-making spaces for disadvantaged citizens to express their concerns. Third, PV activities aspired for people to generate their own knowledge and evidence on issues affecting their lives. The described PV efforts to amplify marginalised voices contrast the top-down, one-way communicative messaging that dominates the international development sector (Tacchi & Lennie, 2014, p. 4). They support the ethical importance of voice where each citizen is able to give “account of oneself” (Butler, 2005, p. 5). The expressive acts become vital through the concept of voice as the “narratable-self” that recognises people as human (Cavarero, 2000, p. 33). Opportunities for self-narration can also serve as significant political mechanisms of representation (Couldry, 2010, p. 2). In this way, acts of guaranteeing voicing processes are critical through the “first order” acts of voice of speaking and listening (p. 101). The acts also satisfy Freirian ideals for citizens to “reflect on the complex nature of oppression [to] negotiate their own well-being” (Braden, 1998, p. 118).

A recent study with community activists in the north of England reinforces the arguments for valuing processes of voice expression for underrepresented groups (Pearce, 2012, p. 198). The study found that citizens’ sense of power builds through acts of being listened to (p. 198). Similarly, Jamil Zaki (2012) described a study by neuroscientist Emile Bruneau, from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on the psychology of intergroup conflicts (p. 20). The research found that “non-dominant people’s attitudes about disputes improved not only after perspective taking but after ‘perspective giving’—that is, describing their own experiences to attentive members of higher-ranking groups” (p. 21). One reason for the effect, the study highlighted, is that non-dominant groups are “always perspective taking.” Thus, flipping the dynamic can be incredibly powerful for rarely-heard individuals and
groups (p. 21). The two studies highlight that voice amplification holds an innate value for underrepresented and often-unheard citizens.

Amplification alone, however, is not a panacea for valued voice—especially when PV processes solely increase communicative opportunities for alternative perspectives without attention to who is listening and how. Scholars argue that believing so is to feed into the notion that people in power are both “listening out for” alternative voices, and open and able to respond to them (Dobson, 2014, p. 130). Such belief ignores the fact that voice intensity has little impact if decision-makers withhold their attention or response (Waller, Dreher, & McCallum, 2015, p. 63). In this way, the view tends to miss the deeper questions of whose voice is heard and how voice is being represented (Cornwall & Rivas, 2015, p. 409). Both questions are necessary to respond to development institutional agendas and the communicative “politics of organisational representation” (Dempsey, 2009, p. 340). Failing to consider them can lead to naïve assumptions of poor communities as “harmonious and internally equitable collective” units where anyone can represent marginalised citizen voice (Guijt & Shah, 1998, p. 1).

Another concern within the amplified voice pathway for citizen voice is where practitioners promoted views that creating opportunities for multiple opinions through scalable PV equates to inclusiveness, as described in Section 4.3.2. Scholars argue this is rarely the case. For instance, a tendency exists for participatory development activities to minimise potential for local power influences. This can allow “elite capture” to occur where “locally based individuals with disproportionate access to social, political or economic power” seize control of given participation opportunities (Dasgupta & Beard, 2007, p. 229). When elite capture happens, it can reinforce entrenched power imbalances in the community to the further exclusion of those most marginalised (Guijt & Shah, 1998, p. 3). For instance, this was seen in the PV example in Section 4.3.2 where a quick-turn PV activity captured the concerns of villagers most comfortable expressing themselves on film after a local community meeting. There seemed little time to explore if their voice was truly representative of citizens most adversely affected by the topic of discussion, as even the practitioner herself noted.
The implication of this story—and indeed scholarly literature on voice amplification with PV—is that of voice **visibility** as a sole focus. Of greatest concern is the emphasis on the *right to speak* over efforts to tackle pervasive “hardships, injustices and inequalities” marginalising voice in society (Cornwall & Fujita, 2012, p. 1763). For solely promoting voice visibility is often insufficient to shift the complex social and political structures influential on people’s marginalisation (Kindon et al., 2012, p. 362; Wheeler, 2011, p. 57). This might explain the difficulties PV practitioners in the study experienced in attaining policy influence through consultancy-based models of PV practice, as discussed in Section 4.3.2. The approach is reminiscent of Shirley R. Arnstein (1969) description of consultation as participation:

> When they are proffered by power-holders as the total extent of participation, citizens may indeed hear and be heard. But under these conditions they lack the power to insure that their views will be *heeded* by the powerful. When participation is restricted to these levels, there is no follow through, no ‘muscle,’ hence no assurance of changing the status quo. (p. 217)

Although Cornwall (2008) argues that participation through consultation is certainly better than manipulated or tokenistic participation (p. 272), consultation is rarely the best model for influencing decisions through citizen engagement. Cornwall and Fujita (2012) confirm this by highlighting that instigators of consultative processes can use the collected voices to create an illusion of participation, empowerment and listening to “the poor” (p. 1751). However, in practice, the institution is instead co-opting citizen voices into their own narrative of what they wanted to hear or convey, as detailed in Section 2.2.2 (p. 1751). In Jules Pretty’s (1995) typography of participation, consultation is low ranked for “how people participate in development programmes and projects” (p. 1252). Consultation is ranked fourth out of seven types, with the highest being “self-mobilisation” followed by “interactive participation, functional participation, participation for material incentives” and then consultation. Only “passive” and “manipulative participation” rank lower. Pretty describes “participation by consultation” as:

> People participate by being consulted or by answering questions. External agents define problems and information gathering processes, and so control analysis. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making, and professional are under no obligation to take on board people’s views. (p. 1252)
Another concern for the amplified pathway is its focus on using PV primarily for **communication** products. This is where PV activities provide citizens with opportunities to create their own communication products. They are often on specific topics or through a pre-designed filmmaking style, as described in Section 4.3.3. Scholars explain that such expectations with PV can obstruct the authenticity, potentially empowering processes and culturally appropriate modalities of local expression (Thomas and Britton, 2012, p. 214). The communication characteristic also highlighted the either-or debate in PV practice between product and process. That is, the dilemma PV practitioners face in balancing social change processes of “critical consciousness” and the art of creating an aesthetic film product (p. 214). Here, scholars argue that the dualistic view of PV practice is unhelpful (Gidley, 2007, p. 42; Shaw, 2007, p. 186; Thomas & Britton, 2012, p. 215). For instance, Shaw (2007) explains that the debate between process and product initially stemmed from a need to lift PV out of traditional production thinking where the “product is everything” (p. 186). However, she sees them both as integral. She argues that the film production process itself creates “direction and meaning” for the group as PV participants gain knowledge and confidence through the greater responsibilities required. As well, the film output needs to be aesthetically watchable for the audience participants want to reach (p. 186).

Similarly, Ben Gidley (2007) advocates that the “developmental and non-authoritarian approach to participatory media” requires working with people holistically in response to their personal and collective contexts (p. 42). The viewpoint gets at the heart of Verena Thomas’ and Kate Britton’s (2012) argument that understanding “relational aesthetics” in PV activities moves the praxis away from product-process debate (p. 208). They contend that PV praxis could benefit by responding to contextual “social group relationships” that have their own dictates for a film’s success (p. 220). The challenge for PV in international development contexts is that these standards set by the citizens themselves may or may not share the same technical and/or aesthetic expectations as the PV practitioner, donor or implementing institution. In such cases, often, the communicative expectations of the PV implementers receive and retain priority over authentic citizen voice. David MacDougall (1987) illustrates this point in reflecting on Aboriginal Australian filmmaking (p. 54). He explains that outside-driven, collaborative media activities hold potential to generate content with “restricted, ersatz styles, neither truly representative of indigenous
perspectives nor demanding that non-indigenous filmmakers use their own cultural codes effectively” (p. 54).

**Evidence** is the third amplified voice characteristic practitioners in the amplified voice pathway prioritised when describing PV and raising citizen voice. This is where PV supports the development sector’s growing evidence and results-driven agenda, as illustrated in Section 4.3.4. Certainly, evaluation processes can be valuable for strengthening programming effectiveness in international development contexts (Eyben, 2015, p. 23). Of concern is when institutions co-opt their utility to prove and promote their work. When this happens, rather than improving development interventions through inclusive citizenship processes, efforts reinforce institutions’ “hierarchical ways of working [and] block communications and dialogue” (Eyben, 2013, p. 1). The challenge here is that development institutions often have to both “prove” which strategies work, while also investigating how to “improve” strategic applications (Guijt & Roche, 2014, p. 47). The actions can create a restrictive “politics of knowledge” (Gaventa & Tandon, 2010a, p. 22). Citizenship efforts become tokenistic gestures, where local knowledge claims are underprivileged in decision-making.

In an era of ‘soft’ power, with often loose accountabilities, the ability to gain political legitimacy depends in turn on whose knowledge is seen as most legitimate in how an issue is framed… How issues are framed, and around whose views, often depends on the source of mobilisations and the direction of travel. (p. 22)

Development evaluation processes, in other words, are rarely free from “diffuse power dynamics” that may affect whose voice is captured and its influence; even at the household level (Eyben & Guijt, 2015, p. 5). Wider attention is thus necessary on the actors who are influential in its reception. To such ends, Guijt and Roche (2014) advocate that evaluation processes not only explore “whose views and perspectives” are considered, but “whose learning counts” (p. 47). For PV practice, the argument applies both to evaluation activities and to the amplified voice pathway in general. It is similar to observations by Wheeler (2011) and her research on citizenship in the *favelas* of Brazil (p. 57):
Seeing yourself as a citizen is not only about a sense of recognition and belonging, but also about a sense that citizens should be heard by their governments and more broadly by other groups in the societies where they live. Entering into a participatory video project that has the objective of influencing policies and bringing about positive social change implies that participants see themselves as citizens who have a right to be ‘seen’ by their government and society. So participatory video can help citizens amplify their voices beyond themselves to others in their community, village, city, country and world… Yet this mode of learning citizenship can also lead to disillusionment when the results of the process do not match expectations. This shows how learning a mode of citizenship through digital technology can lead to moments of enchantment as a citizen and moments of alienation as a subject. (p. 57)

In this example, voice amplification holds potential to enhance “a sense of self-recognition and belonging” with people often disenfranchised from decision-making processes (p. 57). The efforts rebalance the “long-entrenched inequalities of representation” in social and political spaces through raising citizen voice (Couldry, 2010, p. 1). Here, the significance for PV practice is that amplified voice can satisfy “first order” acts of voice. That is, “acts of speaking with, and listening to, each other” (p. 101). However, based on the described limitations of visibility, communication and evidence found in this chapter, the amplified voice pathway is unlikely to advance “second order” acts of voice. That is, where actions to raise voice meaningfully consider and try to change any conditions that may be diminishing or denying citizen voice (p. 101). In other words, while voice amplification can potentially benefit the speaker(s), opportunities alone for voice expression are rarely sufficient to shift entrenched hierarchies of power (Nazneen & Sultan, 2014, p. 2).

A red flag for amplified voice is its emphasis on the right to speak over efforts to tackle pervasive “hardships, injustices and inequalities” marginalising citizen voice (Cornwall & Fujita, 2012, p. 1763) Consequently, amplified voice might be better conceptualised as a necessary starting point for people to recognise their own power, rather than as a principle outcome for PV. This would take into account arguments that expressed voice can further marginalise PV participants if their raised concerns are not meaningfully valued in the longer-term (Wheeler, 2011, p. 57). With this conclusion, the chapter now turns attention to the engaged voice and equitable voice pathways to explore their differing possibilities for raising valued citizen voice with PV.
5.1.3 Exploring engaged voice

In the engaged voice pathway described in Section 4.4, PV practitioners prioritised activities to increase government responsiveness to the citizens they aim to serve. The actions support development studies arguments that democracy is strengthened, and apt to be pro-poor, when all citizens can lay claims to their rights through their active engagement (Gaventa & Barrett 2010, p. 9; Gaventa & McGee, 2013, p. 1). In the engaged voice pathway, the practitioners’ views mirrored scholarly arguments for raising citizen voice through participation, dialogue and developing citizens’ capacity. For participation, practitioners supported active citizen engagement in “decision-making processes where different actors share power and set agendas jointly” (Miller, VeneKlasen, & Clark, 2005, p. 32). For dialogue, practitioners shared views with scholars who see it as a positive disruptor that can build “shared understanding, meaning and creative action” (Westoby & Dowling, 2013, p. 5). For capacity, PV practitioners promoted actions that strengthen PV participants’ internal sense of self-worth and self-knowledge (VeneKlasen & Miller, 2007, p. 45).

Within the positive possibilities for valued citizen voice, however, there are also potential theoretical challenges for each of the characteristics that require greater consideration. For instance, as Section 4.4.2 described, PV practitioners in the engaged voice pathway often uncritically prioritised participation in the public sphere. The focus supported Jürgen Habermas’ (1993) argument that decision-making consensus emerges through public, deliberative, democratic processes (p. 56). Habermas argues that public sphere allows “freedom of access, equal rights to participate, truthfulness on part of the participants, absence of coercion in taking positions, and so forth” (p. 56). The prioritisation of public deliberation also aligns with development studies discourse. For example, Ruth Lister advocates for strengthening voice, defining it as the “right to participate in decision-making across social, economic, cultural and political spheres, and as a crucial human and citizenship right, and a critical component in our understanding of what constitutes poverty” (as cited in Tacchi, 2010, p. 7). PV scholarship also readily supports the public sphere through arguments that film screenings and dialogue sessions hold potential to “shift the imagination” of people in positions of power (Harris, 2009, p. 546; Kindon et al., 2012, p. 349).
The challenge for valued citizen voice through public participation lies in development and C4D literature. Here, participation is a contested and debated approach for deliberative democracy (Carpentier, 2011b, p. 35; Cooke & Kothari, 2001, p. 3; Cornwall & Brock, 2005, p. 1043). This is especially true in the public sphere (Askanius & Østergaard, 2014, p. 4; Levin, 1989, p. 111). For example, Tina Askanius and Liv Østergaard, (2014) argue that expecting “consensus and communicative rationality” in the public sphere can sideline efforts to transform the political underpinnings of power that might be keeping voice silenced (p. 3). Similarly, Wheeler (2012) explains that a political discussion with PV can serve as an empowering “new mode of citizenship” as PV participants formulate and amplify their views (p. 50). However, she cautions that it is rare that a single, public debate with PV sufficiently influences long-term social or political change:

Generating information and knowledge at the community level is an important first step, but it is insufficient for significant policy changes without further pressure the shift the modes of citizen-state relations, which allow the state to see its citizen and citizens to make claims on the state. This involves state recognition of the legitimacy of the forms of knowledge that can be expressed through participatory processes. (p. 376)

Where public events with PV may be most inadequate, it would seem, is when instigators assume that the mere act of assembling “the poor” to represent their realities and negotiate plans of action is sufficient for meaningful transformative change (Cornwall, 2004, p. 79). Such actions would require, as Levin (1989) argues, “an unproblematic hearing” where the “listener hears all there is to be heard” (p. 111). Such hearing is often difficult in practice. For example, the United Nations report People matter: Civic engagement in public governance positivity promotes civic engagement as an “important governance norm that can strengthen the decision-making arrangements of the state and produce outcomes that favour the poor and the disadvantaged” (United Nations, 2008, p. 23). However, it also cautions that citizens engaging public government cannot be considered a panacea for reducing social inequities (p. 23). Scholars argue that public meetings’ pre-set institutional agendas, or lack attention on “issues of representation and power” can diminish voice (Cornwall, 2004, pp. 77, 79; Enghel, 2015, p. 7).

Practitioners in the engaged voice pathway also prioritised dialogue as ultimately beneficial for valued citizen voice. The focus supports Freirian pedagogy that dialogical
encounters allow disadvantaged groups to better understand their own oppression (Singh, 2008, p. 702). Then, citizens can more equally enter and transform democratic politics through their own representational narratives (p. 702). Dialogue’s intention with PV is to cultivate mutual understanding between citizens and decision-makers in discursive spaces where marginalised perspectives have routinely been absent (Dutta, 2011, p. 169; Westoby & Dowling, 2013, p. 22). Voice through dialogue thus becomes, as Dutta (2012a) argues, a “key theoretical construct” that embodies possibilities for social and political change:

Rather than depicting the subaltern as bodies to be targeted in large-scale campaigns and interventions that focus on top-down logics of individual behaviour change, the dialogic approach centres itself on the role of listening to subaltern voices, making note of problem configurations as seen through subaltern perspectives and creating spaces of change through the voices of subaltern agendas. (pp. 169, 170)

Voice through dialogue also reflects Couldry’s (2010) principle of an “embodied process” (p. 9). The principle implies both speech and listening in ways that register the “uniqueness of the other’s narrative” (p. 9). In this way, dialogue holds value as a negotiation of meanings that can foster shared understandings and help to dissolve problems (Isaacs, 1999, p. 19). In prioritising dialogue, however, scholars also urge caution as the endeavour is rarely neutral, despite its aspiring potential for “inclusivity, representation and political transformation” (Browne, 2013, p. 1). Couldry (2014), for example, argues that the impact of dialogue can be constrained without wider attention on “voice-denying” frameworks, conditions and factors that keep local knowledge from being valued (p. 16). This can include the power of listening and, importantly, any deliberate non-listening that might occur during political exchange (Dobson, 2014, p. 80). Non-listening is where participants in public spaces do not really listen to each other but rather, as Martin Bubar (as cited in Dobson, 2014) argues, “talk past one another” in a “speechifying” manner (p. 52).

In Listening for democracy, Dobson (2014) recognises the problem of non-listening by making a distinction between conversation and dialogue (p. 52). He contends that conversation is often akin to the act of participating in discussion, rather than true dialogue. This is similar to Habermasian’ (1993) ideal that having an “equal right to
participate” in democratic spaces through speech automatically leads to consensual decision-making (p. 56). Through such a view, actions prioritise speaking (i.e. “talking”) as a pathway for citizen voice; with listening regarded as an inevitable response (p. 52). Of concern, is that listening often has its own political agenda in whether it is given or withheld—especially in democratic spaces that have historically privileged certain voices over others (Dobson, 2014, p. 177). To counter potential exclusion, Cornwall and Althea-Maria Rivas (2015) argue:

Genuine inclusiveness is not only about giving people chances to have a say, it is also about creating the conditions of mutual respect in which people can not only give voice but also be heard. (p. 409).

Here, they say development efforts need to “invite hard questions to be asked about who is at the table, who decides, who acts, who strategises and who benefits” (p. 409). Similarly, Dobson (2014) argues that “listening can act as a solvent of power” but only “if those who are dominant listen to those who are not” (p. 96). The argument compliments development studies thinking that citizen engagement programming in development must reach beyond voice articulation to voice actions that wield meaningful influence (Gaventa & McGee, 2010, p. 2).

In the engaged voice pathway, as described in Section 4.4.4, practitioners also emphasised using PV for enhancing people’s capacity. That is, strengthening the ability for groups to mobilise and collectively act on their concerns in policy spaces as informed citizens (VeneKlasen & Miller, 2007, p. 45). While such actions can be beneficial, development studies scholars expressed concern when the sole focus is on increasing citizens’ ability to engage in deliberative democracy (Wheeler, 2012, p. 376). They argue that actions are also required for advancing decision-makers’ capacity to respond (Grandvoinnet et al., 2015, p. 4). This argument is reflected in a recent study on the effectiveness of social accountability efforts in international development (Fox, 2015, p. 15). The study found that social accountability is likely to have greater impact on good governance when interventions focus both on developing citizens’ capacity for voice and the responsive capacity of those holding decision-making power over institutional management and budgets (p. 15). The implication is that engaging in dialogue alone is often insufficient for political influence without considered attention on the complexity of policymaking (Grandvoinnet et al., 2015, p. 4):
Most observers and practitioners of social accountability emphasise the fact that social accountability interventions will only achieve their aims if equal attention is paid to improving the state’s capacity and willingness to respond as it paid to enhancing the role of citizens (p. 3).

The preceding argument about strengthening capacity—as well as those on participation and dialogue—highlight the need for critical reflection on whether the engaged voice characteristics are sufficient for citizen voice to be heard, valued and influential. Based on the troubling tension between the characteristics’ claims and constraints, it is likely that PV practice requires actions beyond participation, dialogue and strengthening capacity with PV. Such alternative actions are necessary to shift the powers controlling not only who participates, but also who listens and how they listen. Here, Dreher’s (2009) argument for improving dialogical encounters seems relevant (p. 451). She argues that often-unheard citizens could benefit from greater attention to “listening across difference” (p. 451). This action shifts dialogical focus from merely seeking a “better understanding of an ‘other’ to listening for better understanding of relationships and complicities, issues and the workings of privilege” (p. 451). Accordingly, citizen engagement enacted through this lens would need to both acknowledge and address Dobson’s (2014) argument that the “currency of political power is not speech but listening: it is aural not oral. Listening is, at one and the same time, an expression of power and a means of redistributing it” (p. 58). Valuing citizen voice with PV through political engagement, in other words, requires a re-imagining of multiple possibilities for participatory democracy (Tacchi, 2010, p. 7).

The engaged voice characteristics offer various options to satisfy citizens’ right to participate in decision-making spaces through dialogue and capacity enhancement. However, the pathway’s focus on public deliberation for raising citizen voice may render some efforts insufficient unless power dynamics are recognised and managed. Another concern with engaged voice is its focus on strengthening citizens’ capacity to participate in decision-making, over simultaneous and equally valued efforts to ensure decision-maker responsiveness. As an alternative, a quarter of the PV practitioners in the study promoted activities focused on equitable voice. This pathway supports multiple, long-term strategic efforts for balancing voice inequity. To examine its characteristics further, the chapter now turns to presenting an exploration of the key characteristics in the equitable voice pathway.
5.1.4 Exploring equitable voice

PV practitioners in the equitable voice pathway primarily discussed using PV processes towards three overarching priorities, as Section 4.5 describes. First, they discussed strengthening agency for citizens to recognise, negotiate and overcome marginalising conditions and structures diminishing or silencing voice. Second, they emphasised actions that might boost voice receptivity as a motivator for more responsive governance. Third, they promoted respectful relationships as pivotal for long-term, transformative change. This included relationships between citizens, decision-makers, PV practitioners, organisations, communities, government officials, donors, CBOs, NGOs and/or others actors involved in raising citizen voice. In this way—in contrast to amplified voice—the equitable voice characteristics advance a “second order” value for voice (Tacchi, 2010, p. 659). This is where, for voice to matter, “simply providing the technologies and opportunities to participate is not enough” (p. 659). Rather, conditions for voice are also considered (Couldry, 2010, p. 7). The view echoes arguments in communication for development studies:

Access [to media] does not automatically equate to the equal participation that is a precondition of voice. The notion of voice as inclusion and participation in social, political and economic processes, meaning-making, autonomy and expression is seen as central to development and the realisation of rights. (Hearn, Tacchi, Foth, & Lennie, 2009, p. 154)

An attention to conditions of voice, for example, was apparent in Section 4.5.2. This is where practitioners discussed having sufficient time with or without specific PV activities to address what Couldry (2007) calls the “hidden injuries” of people’s marginalisation (p. 256). These are latent, internal traumas resulting from injustices historically inflicted on disadvantaged people and groups that damage “self-esteem and self-recognition” (p. 256). Hidden injuries can come through local power dynamics as well as wider organisational frameworks (Couldry, 2007, p. 256; 2010, p. 3; 2014, p. 16). For instance, a neoliberal frame can privilege a level of individual agency that may be unattainable for certain citizens due to structures that maintain or reinforce their marginalisation (Walsh, 2014, p. 2). Injuries might also come through cultural, or, in particular, gendered norms that systemically diminish or devalue certain voices (Couldry, 2010, p. 119).
To counter hidden injuries through the equitable voice pathway, practitioners focused attention on agency—especially strengthening individual agency prior to collective agency. Doing so builds on Freirian arguments that until people claim their voice as worthy of expression, they lack the capacity necessary to critically investigate and act on their own imaginings for changing their oppression (Freire, 1972, p. 95). To this end, practitioners in the equitable voice pathway suggested PV efforts that often went beyond citizens making “themselves more intelligible to those in power” (Low et al., 2012, p. 57). Rather, they promoted multiple actions to strengthen citizens’ power to act on their agency. Here Dutta’s (2011) definition of agency seems fitting for PV practice. He describes agency as the “capacity of individuals and collectives to enact their choices as they negotiate structures” (p. 40).

For equitable voice, practitioners’ emphasis on shifting oppressive structures set agency apart from the capacity characteristic in engaged voice. As described in Section 4.4.4, developing citizens’ capacity focuses on strengthening their participation in democratic governance spaces, such as stakeholder meetings or focus group discussions with policymakers. The emphasis is on using dialogical processes to hold governments to account. In the equitable voice pathway, agency, as described in Section 4.5.2, incorporates both developing citizens’ capacity to participate in decision-making spaces and ensuring their influence on policies adversely affecting their lives (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010, p. 27; Lister, 2004, p. 124). An example of this is how PV practitioners in the equitable voice pathway talked about PV as a social organising catalyst in Section 4.5.2, where the aim of PV was to strengthen networks for more confidence, informed and unified voice in political spaces. In this way, agency links to an “actor-oriented approach” where people gain potential to more influentially claim their rights as social and political actors in partnership with or in opposition to government (Nyamu-Musembi, 2005, p. 1). The viewpoints are similar to Walsh’s arguments that PV requires a “reflexive approach to power and agency [as a] a bare essential for the method to effect change and not merely manage social conflict” (Walsh, 2014, p. 1). Agency, in other words, is active, strategic and political. Its pursuit is vital to combat institutional assumptions that victimise community members through valuing top-down knowledge, as Walsh (2012) argues:
We should be critical of an analysis that sees subjects as victims, with power flowing in only one direction, rather than part of a more complex, malleable, and changing grid of power relations and frictions. Power is created and recreated by the everyday actions of people. (p. 252)

Power, as mentioned in the Section 4.4.4, can come through both listening and not listening to citizen concerns. Recognising this seemed to bring out concerns by PV practitioners in the equitable voice pathway, as described in Section 4.5.3. Practitioners here prioritised voice receptivity as necessary to challenge “hierarchies of listening” that privilege particular voices and knowledge over others (Dreher, 2009, p. 446). The focus on voice receptivity is similar to Couldry’s (2010) argument that greater attention on listening can transform the “long process of misrecognition” in politics of underrepresented voice (p. 107). To such ends, as described in Section 4.5.2 and similar to engaged voice, practitioners promoted PV through formal political channels; such as community meetings, policy-focused film screenings, national forums or international policy conferences. They also more readily promoted informal channels for PV interactions than practitioners in the amplified or engaged voice pathways did. This included using PV in one-on-one encounters, film-driven field visits, focus group discussions, visioning meetings, social movements or peer-to-peer network gatherings.

Through multiple strategies for equitable voice, PV practitioners placed particular attention on voice representation and receptivity as a form of “dialogic democracy” (Dobson, 2014, p. 116). Dobson (2014) describes dialogic democracy as stressing the “reciprocal nature of democratic conversation in which speaking and listening are of equal value and importance; and in which equal attention is paid to them both theoretically and in practice” (pp. 116-117). The attention on voice receptivity means that valuing voice in policy development requires more than increasing the participation of “new voices” in political conversations (Couldry, 2010, p. 140). It also necessitates “new intensities of listening” between respectful parties. This is where people and institutions “take account of a vastly increased range of public voices” and “governments cannot any longer say they don’t hear” (p. 140).
Practitioners pursuing equitable voice also described difficulties in using PV to connect the concerns of ordinary citizens to people in positions of power. As a response, they often prioritised relationships as critical for bolstering mutual understanding and citizen influence on decision-making, as discussed in Section 4.5.4. This is similar to Eyben’s (2004) argument that relationships are imperative for “influencing processes in favour of economic, political and social change” (p. 5). In thinking about participatory video as an instrument within development aid contexts, her observation could apply to PV praxis:

Understanding the policy context and investing in relationships are the two interconnected and iterative activities that are the primary means for supporting these processes. Aid instruments should be understood as appropriate mixes of financial and human resources. As such they should derive from, and not drive, our understanding of the context and the investment in relationships. (p. 5)

Eyben and other scholars reached a similar conclusion on a development studies case study with Oxfam GB:

Making explicit our assumptions about change helped us to understand that even among Oxfam GB staff and its counterpart organisations the world is seen in different ways. This helped us to realise how much more that would be the case in dialogue with a more diverse group of development actors. This can be uncomfortable and difficult. The process requires investing in relationships, taking time, and practising empathy. (Eyben, Kidder, Rowlands, & Bronstein, 2008, p. 208)

Although the NGO case study focused on interactions within a development organisation, the recommended principles in the observation are valuable to consider for encounters between multiple actors in PV activities. Critical here is not only the value of investing in relationships to widen worldviews, but on empathy as a driver for change. Consequentially, this chapter highlights the pairing of relationships and empathy in Section 5.4.5. It does so by elaborating on an argument that both principles as being necessary for valued citizen voice. Prior, in Section 5.2, the chapter offers a research analysis of how the differing voice pathways compare to Couldry’s (2010) “voice as a value” principles (p. 7). Section 2.4.2 describes Couldry’s principles as offering guidance for advancing voice that matters. The analysis of the three voice pathways through Couldry’s principles helps in determining the most viable characteristics for a conceptual framework for PV for raising citizen voice, as the next section describes.
5.2 The pathways and “voice as a value”

This section links the three voice pathways to Couldry’s (2010) “voice as value” principles. To revisit, the five principles are that voice is:

- An adaptable “material form” controlled by the speaker(s) that requires society to be open to influence by all voices (p. 9);
- “Socially grounded” where voice is understood as a social process whereby the speaker has the resources to sustain narrative exchange (p. 7);
- A “form of reflexive agency” where the expression of voice is an interactive, aware exchange between self and others (p. 8);
- An “embodied process” that recognises and respects the uniqueness of individual and multiple narratives (p. 9); and
- An act that is responsive to voice-denying rationalities, taking into account conditions that may be complicit in silencing voice, even inadvertently (p. 10-11).

By linking Couldry’s principles to the voice pathways, the research suggests that equitable voice offers the greatest possibility for valuing citizen voice. Table 5.1 provides a visual representation of how the voice pathways, and their characteristics, relate to Couldry’s principles. The shaded boxes indicate if a principle presents itself in a particular voice pathway, as defined through the study. For example, the study determined that the socially grounded principle is apparent in all voice pathways. However, the embodied process principle is only visible in engaged and equitable voice. The section describes the relationship between the voice pathways and Couldry’s principles in more detail after Table 5.1.
Table 5.1: Voice pathways and Couldry’s “voice as a value” principles

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In the **material form** principle, Couldry (2010) argues that voice exists as interplay of emergence and form (p. 9). This is where an individual’s voice can be raised in isolation or as part of a wider, distributed collective (p. 9). With PV’s foundational emphasis on representing alternative viewpoints, PV activities by nature aim to translate unheard voice into a communicative form greater than the sum of its parts. PV used this way supports voice in attaining material form as a usable commodity for social and political change. This is why Table 5.1 shows, as represented by the shaded boxes, that this principle connects to all the pathways—though it does so with a caveat. Material form can be threatened when the form fails to fit with experience, as Couldry (2010) explains:

Voice can be undermined at the collective or social level… When collective voices or institutional decisions fail to register individual experience; when institutions ignore collective views; when distributed voice is not reflected in opportunities to redeem voice in specific encounters; or when societies become organised on the basis that individual, collective and distributed voice is not reflected in opportunities to redeem voice in specific encounters…because a higher value or rationality trumps them. (p. 10)

Couldy’s argument is of particular concern for amplified voice. That is, when PV activities solely collect underrepresented views on pre-determined topics without further civic engagement. This could happen when institutions request PV films for national or global meetings. It could happen when institutions post PV films on the Internet without concurrent “feedback loops” to address citizens’ concerns (Grandvoinnet et al., 2015,
p. 95). In other words, even though PV might translate citizen voice into material form, a lack of response could render citizen voice worthless for influencing decisions that affect their lives.

Voice through the **socially grounded** principle operates in conditions that “enable and sustain practices of narrative,” including language and resources (p. 7). Narratives differ from stories. Arthur Frank (2010) describes narratives as the “resources from which people construct the stories they tell and in the intelligibility of the stories they hear” (p. 14). Narratives drive the social interplay between storytelling, reflexivity and dialogue central to PV practice (Low et al., 2012, p. 51). PV activities, however, cannot be assumed to always be socially grounded. For instance, the principle is noticeably absent when PV activities deny citizens opportunities for unprejudiced narrative creation, reflection or control. This could happen when institutions dictate PV films’ messaging, or when they only fund using video to conduct short interviews with community members. Accordingly, the research deemed the amplified-collected voice pathway as not being socially grounded, as Table 5.1 shows. The rationale relates to the voice-gathering approach in the amplified-collected voice pathway. The process does not allow citizens to engage in the action Couldry (2010) promotes for “ongoing narrative exchange with others” in ways under their control (p. 8). Rather, the amplified-collected voice PV process mainly collects multiple voices on pre-determined topics, with little opportunity for the citizens on camera to fully develop and share their authentic, narratable selves. Additionally, the process seemed to lack on-going exchanges between speakers and listeners that could meaningfully build recognition of voice as having value (p. 8).

Voice as a value, Couldry argues, also operates through the principle of **reflexive agency**. This is where the “act of voice involves taking responsibility for the stories one tells” through a process of deliberate democracy (p. 8). As Table 5.1 shows, the principle is also absent in the amplified-collected voice pathway. The reasoning is because the citizens, who provide their opinions on film, have little opportunity to reflect, discuss or redefine their views as part of the representational process. Here, in the amplified-collected voice pathway, PV serves to gather citizens’ perspectives quickly. It does so without developing any capacity for citizens’ wider civic engagement. As such, the citizens on camera often have little incentive to take responsibility for their voiced concerns, or to engage in further
action. The PV process contrasts with how Couldry views agency. In Couldry’s reflexive agency principle, agency manifests through the “ongoing process of reflection, exchanging narratives back and forth between our past and present selves, and between us and others” (p. 8). As Table 5.1 shows, reflexive agency is present in the amplified-collective, engaged and equitable voice pathways. This is because PV practitioners described reflexive activities in collaborative group filmmaking processes in these pathways. Nevertheless, Couldry’s principle could be threatened if short timelines or institutional demands for communicative products diminish possibilities for authentic citizen voice to emerge in the reflexive process.

As Table 5.1 also shows, the study deemed the principle of **embodied process** as being absent from both sub-categories of the amplified voice pathway. An embodied process of voice implies being able to connect the uniqueness of one’s own experience to other experiences, within an environment respectful of its multiple dimensions (p. 9). In amplified voice, this seems unattainable due to typically short timeframes and a focus on fulfilling people’s right to speak, as described in Section 4.3.1. As a consequence, PV participants’ were rarely afforded the time or emphasis to sufficiently link the plural nature of personal stories to the collective PV output (p. 8). As Couldry argues:

> To block someone’s capacity to bring one part of their lives to bear on another part—for example, by discounting the relevance of their work experience to their trajectory as a citizen—is, again, to deny a dimension of voice itself. (p. 9)

The emphasis of an embodied process thus requires strengthening an individual’s “power within” as a means for greater citizen engagement in collective action (VeneKlasen & Miller, 2007, p. 45). This internal, individual power is necessary to develop citizens’ collective power, called the “power with,” so they can sufficiently manifest their “power to” influence social and political change (p. 45). In the voice pathways, such actions appeared most visible through the characteristics of **capacity** in engaged voice, as described in Section 4.4.4; and **agency** in equitable voice, as described in Section 4.5.2.

The final principle Couldry (2010) offers is that of circumventing **voice-denying rationalities** (p. 10). Here, “voice is undermined by rationalities that take no account of voice and by practices that exclude voice or undermine forms for its expression” (p. 10). Couldry argues that most “models for organising life” are not scheming for voice denial,
and may even celebrate its value (p. 10). However, their modalities of operation could make them complicit in diminishing voice (p. 11). Through this lens, the research identified the amplified and engaged voice pathways as lacking this voice-denying rationalities principle, as Figure 5.1 shows. The choice to do so was twofold. First, the two pathways tended to focus primarily on citizen representation and dialogical encounters to influence change. Such actions were more common than efforts aimed at shifting entrenched political power or marginalising conditions that might be keeping citizen voice silenced. Second, in the two pathways, PV practice tended to operate within the boundaries of the mainstream development sector. As Chapter 2 explained, the sector holds potential to diminish or deny voice through its organising structures.

Collaborating with mainstream development institutions in no way presumes voice denial in the absolute. However, the research showed that such alliances heavily influence how people describe, and potentially approach their PV practice, as detailed in Chapter 6. For instance, most practitioners closely aligned with the amplified and engaged voice pathways tended to limit their critique on how development institutions’ operational structures might constrain citizen voice. This contrasted with a prevalence of critical views in the equitable voice pathway about the interplay between institutions, voice and power. Illustratively, a practitioner explained how the development sector could undermine voice:

One of the problems about PV practitioners being very closely aligned to NGOs is that it can lead to the colonising of local voices in support of what are actually NGO agendas: programmes, policies and fundraising. It is the unspoken collusion, or maybe it is the unconscious collusion that takes hold of professional bodies and institutions as they struggle with their own internal management and financial matters. (Katulpa)

Related to this observation, in development studies scholarship Eyben and Guijt (2015) argue that influential power in the sector is multifaceted (p. 4). Here they mention informal power, such as ministers, staff, consultants and others; and formal power, such as donors, INGOs, NGOs, governments and CBOs (p. 4). The study in this thesis has looked at informal power, with a research focus on PV practitioners operating as consultants, staff and/or researchers. It has shown how PV practitioners and their conceptualisations of ideal PV practice play a significant role in citizens’ lives in international development contexts. When deploying PV in this environment, their views have direct consequences...
for both advancing citizen voice and social accountability. As such, PV practitioners’ epistemologies matter—especially in whether they perceive raising citizen voice with PV through an amplified, engaged or equitable voice pathway.

In exploring the three pathways, the study analyses concluded that equitable voice is the most viable pathway for enabling valued citizen voice. The study based the decision on the theoretical limitations identified in the amplified and engaged voice pathways, as Sections 5.1.2, 5.1.3 and 5.1.4 described. It also made the conclusion through the voice pathway’s linkages to Couldry’s (2010) “voice as value” principles (p. 10), which highlighted the equitable voice pathway as the most aligned in its offering. The next section elaborates on this knowledge by presenting equitable voice as foundational for a new conceptual framework for PV, as related to its identified characteristics of agency, receptivity and relationships.

5.3 The proposed conceptual framework

5.3.1 The framework’s objectives

In asking PV practitioners to conceptualise their vision for raising citizen voice, this thesis might imply that an ideal practice exists. However, as revealed in Chapter 4, ideologies are subjective. Dynamic contexts, contradictory assumptions, powerful actors, diverse working environments, personal values and other factors influence their conceptualisation. A practitioner in the study described the complexity of an ideal for PV practice:

"If you were to do the most perfect [PV] practice in terms of framing and construction and whatever process, you’d still do it and think: ‘Next time I need to do this differently’… There’s not an ideal, really. There’s definitely principles that need to be respected and should be at the forefront of how to do the process. But, my experience is that no two processes like this are the same. They are all unique because they all involve negotiation between the actors involved in the process. Part of what you have to do as the facilitator, the researcher, the trainer, is work out how to negotiate that particular situation, that context, those people—who they are, and those things. In a way, if you come in with an ideal, you are bound to end up in trouble. Because what you need [to know is]…what are the things that you can’t compromise; what are the things that you can; and how is the best way to do that methodologically to get from A to B or A to Z? (Devon)"
The practitioner’s comment signifies that PV practice could benefit from key principles to aspire to for raising citizen voice with PV. Her call fits with part of the reasoning behind the design of the conceptual framework proposed here, which set the following three objectives for its use:

- To make explicit key principles for citizen voice to be heard, valued and influential;
- To inform participatory video design for raising valued citizen voice; and
- To advance meaningful voice expression and decision-making response with PV.

To meet these objectives, the conceptual framework provides principled guidance for instigating and supporting strategic discussions from PV project design through to implementation. In its application, the framework aims to strengthen citizen voice articulation and ensure its reception. In this way, the framework promotes both developing citizens’ personal and collective agency so they can sufficiently voice their concerns, and bolstering decision-makers’ capacity to respectfully listen and respond. To develop the conceptual framework, the study first looked to the principles identified in the literature review for the study’s analytical framework, as described in Section 2.5:

- Representation as a means for citizens to fully engage in the conceptualisation, expression and actions on decisions that impact their lives;
- Recognition as a means for increasing the respect for participants’ voice for more influential decision-making; and
- Response as a means to rebalance inequitable decision-making through deliberative, dialogical encounters.

The study then merged these principles through the characteristics the PV practitioners promoted for equitable voice, as presented in Section 4.5:

- Strengthening PV participants’ agency so they can socially and/or politically act using their own knowledge, capabilities and power;
- Focusing on voice receptivity to generate possibilities for more responsive listening by decision-makers; and
- Fostering relationships to cultivate more equitable exchange between citizens and decision-makers through greater connectedness, empathy and mutual trust.
Through this analytical process, five key principles emerged. First, the value for strengthening personal and collective agency evolved into the principles of **personal recognition** and **collective representation**. Second, the focus on voice receptivity evolved into the principles of **social and political recognition** and **responsive listening**. Third, the value of relationships became **empathic relationships** as an underpinning principle. The following sections describe the principles in detail through a discussion on their value for raising citizen voice with PV.

### 5.3.2 A principle-driven conceptual framework

This section presents the conceptual framework for raising citizen voice with PV that evolved from the research. As Figure 5.1 shows, the study visualises the framework as a pinwheel. The pinwheel shape serves as a metaphor for how the five principles might enable valued citizen voice, as described later in this section. Core to the framework is its emphasis on principles over prescriptive PV practices. In this way, the principles complement rather than replace other frameworks aimed at advancing citizen voice with participatory media (Plush, 2012, p. 69; Shahrokh, 2014, p. 60; Shaw, 2015, p. 7; Sitter, 2012, p. 550). Table 5.2 summarises each principle by describing how PV might support different actions aimed at raising citizen voice.

![Figure 5.1: Conceptual framework for raising citizen voice with participatory video](image)
Table 5.2: Five principles in the conceptual framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual framework principles</th>
<th>Supportive actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal recognition</td>
<td>PV supports actions that help citizens recognise their own knowledge, capacities and power so they can confidently act with agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective representation</td>
<td>PV supports actions that fully engage a group in determining how they frame and express their concerns publically in decision-making spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and political recognition</td>
<td>PV supports actions that increase the respect for and influential value of citizen voice at the community and/or policy level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsive listening</td>
<td>PV supports actions that advance equitable decision-making and considered responsiveness to citizen voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathic relationships</td>
<td>PV supports actions that foster mutual understanding and build stronger connections between citizens and decision-makers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 5.2 shows, each principle supports different aspects of raising citizen voice related to voice expression and voice receptivity. The five interrelated principles are also purposely visualised as a pinwheel, as Figure 5.1 shows. Four principles are on the pinwheel blades: personal recognition, collective representation, social and political recognition, and responsive listening. Their separateness indicates their individual functions for raising citizen voice, as described in Sections 5.4.1-5.4.4. The fifth principle, empathic relationships, is in the centre as it underpins the other four principles as a driver of citizen voice, as described in Section 5.4.5.

The pinwheel serves as a metaphor for how the principles might enable valued citizen voice. Functionally, as a pinwheel, the blades require a balanced amount of air pressure for the pinwheel to spin. Similarly, each of the five principles requires balanced attention for raising the value of citizen voice through PV practice. By visualising the conceptual framework as a pinwheel, it is important to recognise how the principles fit into social and political processes of change. Realistically at times, in efforts to raise citizen voice, more focus might be on one principle over the other in practice. For example, a practitioner might be working on a project where individuals have low self-confidence. Hence, PV engagement may need to place greater attention on activities that build self-recognition. When this occurs—in a literal sense with a pinwheel—it might seem that the self-recognition blade would grow; or that disproportionate attention on one blade would affect the pinwheel’s spin as similar to if wind blew on only one blade. However, this is not what
the metaphor implies by promoting balanced attention on the five principles. Rather, it is more useful to see the pinwheel as symbolic, where the principles are the underlying mechanics for raising citizen voice. Therefore, while all principles are arguably necessary, they may operate at different intensities as appropriate to stimulate movement. This means that balanced attention is not about actual effort through each principle, but about an intention for harmony. Thus, each of the five principles requires strategically proportional consideration (i.e. attention) to inform where actions in one principle might relate to and support the other four. In this way, the principles are both individual and interdependent.

To give an example, as described in Section 5.1.2, scholars have argued that being listened to can strengthen people’s power, especially citizens whose perspectives have been historically ignored (Dobson, 2014, p. 96). Accordingly, when focusing on strengthening self-recognition with participatory video, a PV practitioner might include activities that connect citizens living with disadvantage to people in power. For instance, several PV participants described scenarios where ordinary citizens interviewed powerful government officials as part of the PV filmmaking process. In doing so, such PV activities aimed to “shift the relations, the dynamics between people” so PV participants could personally recognise their own agency when speaking to power (Jessie). Here, such action supported theoretical arguments that when people of lower-status are listened to by people with more power, it can strengthen their confidence and internal resolve for action (Pearce, 2012, p. 198).

The citizen-led interviews also simultaneously aimed to build empathic relationships between the actors, as well as strengthen the potential for social and political recognition of the citizen concerns by the decision-makers. The implication is that each PV action holds potential to enact multiple principles in the framework. Thus, the conceptual framework encourages PV practitioners to give balanced attention to all five principles when designing PV activities aimed at raising citizen voice. To explore the principles further, the chapter now explores them in more detail for theoretical discussion.
5.4 The framework’s five principles
5.4.1 The principle of personal recognition

Through the principle of personal recognition, PV supports actions that help citizens recognise their own knowledge, capacities and power so they can confidently act with agency. Agency is more than increasing the volume of citizen concerns. For active citizenship, speakers must first recognise their own voice as valuable to be able to challenge unjust structures at home, in society or with the state (Dutta, 2011, p. 32; Klugman et al., 2014, p. 3). In PV practice, agency starts to build when people feel that their concerns and opinions matter (Shahrokh & Wheeler, 2014, p. 6; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2007, p. 45). In this way, personal recognition plays an essential role for wider citizen action:

Self-confidence and trust between those involved in a participatory engagement is essential for equality, inclusion and empowerment in the process. We have learned that people need the time to develop a collective understanding of their situation and to construct a sense of agency and pride that counteracts the stigma and isolation of extreme poverty. (Shahrokh, 2014, p. 56)

Supporting citizens who have historically faced disadvantage act with agency is essential for tackling low self-confidence that has normalised in their lives (Couldry, 2007, p. 256). A practitioner illuminated the value of personal recognition through a story:

When I was little, I was really disappointed to find out that essentially as a collection of statistics on paper, my experience didn’t exist. That my family design, my family unit [didn’t exist]… I didn’t feel like I was represented…That’s why I’m interested in PV. I feel like it’s an opportunity to dig deeper…this incredible way to give people an opportunity to speak their own experience; and hopefully to elevate it beyond that. PV gives the possibility of having more options. (Ash)

The practitioner’s story emphasised the importance for PV activities to include time for people to deconstruct assumptions about themselves. Only then, can they both recognise and “speak to their own experience” (Ash). Another practitioner talked about strengthening agency when reflecting on a PV activity with young people (River). The practitioner described personal recognition as the greatest outcome of the PV project:
I saw how much it changed things for them. Not just making videos, but how much it changed them as people: That participatory video process. These kids, who were so disenfranchised; who some of them were bullies; some of them were completely withdrawn. The withdrawn ones were in leadership roles. The bullies were helping and teaching kids outside of their groups… That’s where I feel like I did my job. That’s where I feel like something happened that really meant something… What you see out of that in terms of citizen voice is oblique. What you see out of it is that it infiltrates in this unusual way. In the direct product, maybe you don’t feel was as successful as you had hoped. But, there’s a long-term impact that’s very hard to measure; very hard to predict. (River)

The story exemplifies how personal recognition builds individual agency. Yet, for valued citizen voice, the principle is only one part of a larger whole (Gumucio-Dagron, 2001, p. 26; Walsh, 2012, p. 251). Personal recognition helps citizens claim their rights to hold decision-makers to account (Shahrokh & Wheeler, 2014, p. 4). However, doing so publically and having their voice valued is complicated, as a practitioner in the study observed:

It takes time for all of us to represent ourselves publically. And, we all have different feelings about it. But, that is the process that I think is really exciting; and has the greatest potential for participatory video. However, it does mean that we’ve got to take the time for people to go through those processes. It means a lot of show-backs in the field. It means a lot of control in the field by the people themselves; and to allow participants to collaborate in editing through frequent reviews and show-backs, including the right to veto. (Katulpa)

The principle of personal recognition, in other words, supports efforts that tackle systemic privilege as a starting point. Such actions are often necessary to overturn internalised beliefs by people with limited social, economic or political power that they are unworthy of influential speech as citizens (Couldry, 2007, p. 257). Here, personal recognition addresses “constrained agency” where “what is publically voiced may not necessarily represent the underlying agenda of the actor” (Nazneen & Sultan, 2014, p. 4). In doing so, the principle promotes concerted measures with PV to address people’s “hidden injuries” before their stories are shared publically for debate (Couldry, 2007, p. 257). As mentioned in Section 5.1.4, these are injuries that stem from years of “symbolic inequities” that stunt citizen’s abilities to confidently represent and narrate their own lives (p. 257). Such feelings of inequity might relate to experiences of racism, religious bias, classism, gender
discrimination, violence or other social issues (p. 257). In this way, personal responsibility supports PV practices that place deliberate attention on addressing hidden injuries and advancing people’s individual agency. Through such actions, citizens can more confidently understand, narrate and take control of their oppressive situations.

5.4.2 The principle of collective representation

Through the collective representation principle, PV supports actions that fully engage a group in determining how they frame and express their concerns publically in decision-making spaces. Of the five proposed principles in the framework for raising citizen voice with PV, representation is the most historically theorised (Braden, 1998, p. 1; 1999, p. 117; Gadihoke, 2003, p. 276; Marchessault, 1995, p. 137). More than 15 years ago, Braden—an early adopter of video for development practices (Braden & Than Thi, 1998, p. 13)—identified the value of hearing from underrepresented citizens living in poverty:

> When development is understood as a pedagogical process concerned with the causes and characteristics of poverty, the need for the poor to be heard becomes crucial. Their right to gain opportunities to reflect on the complex nature of oppression within their specific social structures and cultural contexts, as well as those imposed from without, gains priority. Their right to negotiate their own well-being is a natural corollary. (Braden, 1999, p. 118)

In Braden’s argument, people in poverty use PV to fulfil their “right to negotiate their own well-being” (p. 118). Supportively, the principle of collective representation promotes citizens as actors fully engaged in their own development (Khamis et al., 2009, p. 132; Melkote, 2012, p. 32; Plush, 2012, p. 79). Here representation has been expanded to collective representation to emphasise the social capital that can build through participatory processes that strengthen citizens’ “capacity for self-reliance and collective action” (Mansuri & Rao, 2012, p. 16). Thus, through the collective representation principle, PV activities not only promote citizen groups having control over how their voice is portrayed (Askanius, 2014, p. 457; Tacchi, 2010, p. 6). They also seek ways for citizens to actively address Couldry’s (2010) “second order value” of voice to challenge wider contexts of its erasure (p. 7). Such emphasis in the framework encourages PV processes to explore strategies for transforming inequitable power. For instance, Shaw (2015) has argued that using PV to strengthen social engagement and group cohesion helps citizens speak with a strong, unified voice for influencing change (p. 8). Similarly, recent research
on citizen engagement effectiveness found that the most positive outcomes came through supporting citizens’ “capacities for collective agency,” fostering “new forms of participation” and “deepening of networks and solidarities” (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010, p. 25). Through its focus on the collective representation principle, PV could be well poised to support such efforts.

For mobilising citizen action, Wheeler (2011) promotes PV activities where participants can identify, reflect on and confront their own situations. The reflexive interactions between self, group, community and public expands participants’ “boundaries of knowledge” (p. 53). The actions evolve their vision of selves as citizens, as well as their “capacity for action” as a group (Plush, 2012, p. 69). In this way, PV activities through the collective representation principle support strengthening a group’s capacity to engage confidently with power as informed citizens, and to build peer alliances (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010, p. 4; Gaventa & Tandon, 2010b, p. 3). To such ends, for social accountability, PV activities can thus cultivate a group’s agency to act on their own behalf in ensuring their rights to resources and services (Dutta, 2011, p. 3; Servaes & Liu, 2007, p. 2). Illustrative of collective representation in practice, a practitioner described fostering social unity with PV through photo slideshows and video:

It’s not forcing, it’s just reordering. It’s providing opportunity for people to come back together and talk about what’s important to them; what makes them proud, what are their assets… So it’s allowing people to discuss those things again; or coming back to them. But, it also gives them an output that they feel happy with because you can have a whole lot of discussion that leads nowhere… In this, what I’m saying is that social process first. Don’t worry about the technical outputs. Allow people to shift in their mind that they are not people who receive media; that they can make it as well. (Nic)

The key sentence in the practitioner’s story is “to allow people to shift in their mind that they are not people who receive media; they can make it as well” (Nic). This sentence signifies that PV processes can build a group’s confidence and agency. In this way, the principle of collective representation is more nuanced than the popular notion of a “participatory culture” may imply (Jenkins, 2006, p. 305). This is a culture where citizens participating and representing themselves through digital media is often seen as the most celebrated outcome (p. 305). In counterpoint, the principle of collective representation prioritises achieving wider citizen engagement goals beyond mere acts of participation and
representation. The principle rather views participatory video as a methodology for strengthening group determination and identity, fostering trust, building and strengthening relationships, shifting power dynamics and motivating collective action (Gidley, 2007, p. 42; Shaw, 2015, p. 7).

5.4.3 The principle of social and political recognition
The third principle in the framework is social and political recognition, which focuses on voice receptivity. Through this principle, PV supports actions that increase the respect for and influential value of citizen voice at the community and/or policy level. Just as voice first needs personal recognition of its worthiness, important too is that those listening to voice recognise its merit. In this way, considerable attention is also required on mitigating voice receptivity through attention on how it is socially and politically received (Dutta, 2014, p. 67; Oswald, 2014, p. 5; Waller et al., 2015, p. 57). In contemporary society, raising voice is often understood as a process of creating media for it to be consumed by others (Couldry et al., 2014, p. 3). However, for citizens facing disadvantage, they can be further marginalised if the significance of their words is not recognised as having value (Wheeler, 2011, p. 57). Gauatri Chakravorty Spivak (1990) argued this point more than 25 years ago in conversation with Sarah Harasym. She said the question is not who can speak, but rather “who will listen?” (pp. 59-60). Spivak’s reflections on voice are as relevant today as then for valuing citizen voice:

> For me, the question ‘Who should speak?’ is less crucial than ‘Who will listen?’ ‘I will speak for myself as a Third World person’ is an important position for political mobilisation today. But the real demand is that, when I speak from that position, I should be listened to seriously; not with that kind of benevolent imperialism, really, which simply says that because I happen to be an Indian or whatever.’… And they choose what parts they want to hear, and they choose what they then do with this material. (pp. 59-60)

In respect of such arguments, the principle of social and political recognition focuses its efforts on the receptivity of underrepresented voices on decision-making (Couldry, 2006, p. 1). Doing so aims to transform discursive privilege in communities that has historically, and often deliberately, kept certain voices silenced (Wilkins, 2014b, p. 49). As one practitioner in the study explained, raising voice with PV does not guarantee listening. Sometimes, she said, “you can raise voice and you can yell and shout and it wouldn’t make any difference” (Kai). Thus, for understanding social and political recognition, it is
important to debunk illusions that “participatory video products travel unproblematically” from citizens to public listeners to “affect constructive change for those involved in their production” (Kindon et al., 2012, p. 350). Rather, receptivity in public spaces requires strategic “negotiations of power” (Askanius & Østergaard, 2014, p. 2). Only then can potential emerge for the concerns of disadvantaged groups to be recognised, legitimised and respected (p. 2).

John S. Dryzek (2000) argues that the “most effective and insidious way to silence others in politics is a refusal to listen” (p. 149). Therefore, the action of non-hearing is as political as active listening (Waller et al., 2015, p. 58). The implication for PV practice is that citizens cannot assume an audience watching a PV film is predisposed towards or even properly equipped to listen. For no matter how persuasive the message, positive change cannot occur if those in power choose to divert attention elsewhere. Here, Tonja Dreher’s (2009) focus on the “politics of recognition” may offer guidance for using PV through the social and political representation principle:

In the context of the media and communications, justice becomes a question not simply of quantity of airtime or access to the means of production but also the quality of relationships between speakers and listeners mediated by institutions. To put it another way, the politics of recognition suggests that a redistribution of material resources for speaking is inadequate unless there is also a shift in the hierarchies of value and esteem accorded different identities and cultural production. (p. 454)

The idea of “shifting hierarchies of attention” implies that social and political recognition is actionable for PV as a mediated process (p. 454). For example, PV practice might include various strategic activities to boost voice receptivity. As described by PV practitioners in the study, such actions could be citizens collaborating with policymakers in the filmmaking process (Cass); PV participants interviewing high-ranking government officials in their own communities (Jessie); or participant-led listening circles as part of a workshop (Zhenya).

The focus on voice receptivity in the conceptual framework was also influenced by recent research into effective social accountability in development programmes (Fox, 2015, p. 30). Here, a study found that the most beneficial outcomes came from social accountability efforts that both intensified citizen engagement and enhanced the “governmental capacity to respond to voice” (pp. 10, 30). The significance for PV practice is apparent in its
promotion of strengthening social and political recognition of citizen voice as critical for responsive governance.

5.4.4 The principle of responsive listening

The framework also addresses voice receptivity through the responsive listening principle. This is where PV supports actions that advance equitable decision-making and considered responsiveness to citizen voice. Here, attention to listening is paramount for response. A practitioner in the study explained that an imbalance often exists in society between voice expression, hearing and response (Alex). She said she hears community members exclaiming, “I've got a voice, you know! Nobody can deny me my voice. It's your hearing that's faulty, not my voice!” To counter the inequity, the practitioner promoted connection for meaningful participation and dialogue: “It's people feeling empowered and having the channels to be able to raise what they are saying and be heard. So it's connecting the person with the voice to the person they're speaking to” (Alex). Another practitioner described the importance of an equitable exchange in PV practice:

   It's bad enough having people in an extractive process [or] in a top-down process coming and just communicating monologues in one direction. But, it's probably equally as bad to create lots of PV films and just shouting at people saying, 'look at me.' So, the conversation is really key. (Toni)

For greater voice receptivity, Dutta (2011) argues that social change communication approaches must start from a place of listening to “transform global, national and local structures of power that create and sustain oppressive conditions” (p. intro). Such ethos positions responsive listening in the conceptual framework as a catalyst for change. What this means in practice is that that PV activities prioritise meaningful acts of listening over outcomes expecting a particular policy response. The rationale for such intent is based on development studies arguments that policy change is a complex, long-term process, as John Gaventa and Rosemary McGee (2010) articulate:

   Citizens can engage with states to create policy reforms which are important to the lives of poor people and for achieving social justice, but that intensive, long-term, organised collective action and coalition-building are required to do so. When this ensues, the results can be significant. (p. 2)
For policy change, Wheeler (2012) argues that PV can infuse alternative views into political spaces for greater dialogue. However, “it is unclear how much weight this knowledge will have in terms of shifting entrenched politics” especially as “a single space for debate is not enough” (p. 376). Prioritising responsive listening thus shifts PV practice away from celebratory expectations that solitary PV events, such as film screenings or public debates, automatically lead to significant change. Rather, the principle encourages multiple strategies to improve decision-maker responsiveness to citizen voice through attentive listening. This requires PV practice to take a two-prong approach. On one hand, PV activities would strengthen collective voice and alliances for greater political influence in listening spaces (Gaventa & McGee, 2010, p. 2). On the other, they would advance opportunities and capacities for decision-makers to respond (Fox, 2015, p. 25). The responsive listening principle also resonates with arguments that C4D approaches can alter status-quo politics. Dutta (2011), for example, promotes “listening” as a means to transform the “institutional roles, rules, practices and ways of organising that constrain and enable access to resources” (p. 40).

Listening offers an opening for interrogating the inequalities in the global landscape of distribution of power, by attending to the unvoiced assumptions and principles underlying the logics of concentration of power of the transnational elite. (Dutta, 2014, p. 68)

Scholars argue that listening in participatory media processes can be the “key” that unlocks possibilities for “collaborative responses to stories and the issues and claims” made by underrepresented groups (Waller et al., 2015, p. 63). Eliciting response, however, requires more than merely improving prospects for dialogue between citizens and policymakers. It requires attention on “listening across difference” (Dreher, 2009, p. 446), which is defined as a “subtle shift, from seeking better understanding of an ‘other’ to listening for better understanding of relationships and complicities, issues and the workings of privilege” (p. 451). Dreher argues that such listening is necessary to challenge and undo unequal “hierarchies of attention” rampant in political spaces (p. 446). Similarly, Susan Bickford (1993) argues for political listening (p. 144). This is where the listener is open to possibilities of “learning and connection” as well as possibilities of “challenge, conflict, dissonance and persuasion” (p. 144).
For equalising power, responsive listening suggests PV activities that engage in the mutual relationship between speaking and listening, a process fraught with complexity and little theorised (Couldry 2009, 580). The principle supports actions with PV that improve chances for citizens’ collective voice to be valued, such as strengthening coalitions and networks. It also encourages efforts that might advance both opportunities and capacity for decision-makers to respectively engage with and respond to citizen voice (Couldry et al., 2014, p. 3).

5.4.5 The principle of empathic relationships

The fifth and final principle in the framework is empathic relationships. Through this principle, PV supports actions that foster mutual understanding and build stronger connections between citizens and decision-makers. The principle underpins the other four principles in the framework, as illustrated in Figure 5.1. Its key emotive driver is empathy, a sentiment long promoted in political thought. For example, in the 18th century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote *The social contract* with his vision for a democratic society (Mansuri & Rao, 2012, p. 21). Here scholars highlight that Rousseau saw citizen participation as “more than a method of decision making” through a focus on empathy:

> [Participation] was a process by which an individual developed empathy for another’s point of view and learned to take account of the public interest in order to gain cooperation. Participation therefore served an important educative function: the individual learned how to become a public citizen, and community members developed a sense of belonging. (p. 21)

With this focus on nurturing mutual understanding—and based on the findings for equitable voice in Section 4.5.4—the conceptual framework combines empathy with relationships as a foundational principle. This section presents the principle of empathic relationships, as defined by how it relates to the other four principles to support efforts between:

- Self and citizens to strengthen personal recognition and collective representation;
- Citizens and peers to forge alliances for greater social and political recognition; and
- Citizens/networks and decision-makers to influence policy through responsive listening.
A practitioner who described how she viewed relationships and PV, as follows, demonstrated this in the study:

What we can do through participatory video is create relationships. That’s what I’m interested in doing; creating relationships and openings to wider support networks. So, this is the role of the other stakeholders. They do have another role in sharing their perspectives. But, how do you do this in a way that keeps the original marginalised voices at the forefront really; that keeps that high up? So they are not being preached to. They are not being told, ‘Why don’t you do this; and why don’t you do that.’ Making it so that the original group that you worked with have a choice; and they are able to select from the ideas being proposed. You know, keeping them active and in a position of power. (Zhenya)

The pairing of relationships and empathy is deliberate in the conceptual framework. The combination promotes empathy as being more active than a singular reactive or sympathetic response to citizen concerns. Rather, empathic relationships suggests PV activities that can cultivate respect for alternative perspectives through emotive and relational connectedness (Garrison, 1996, p. 437; Krznaric, 2014, p. x). The intention for PV in this principle is thus to shift the “inner libraries” of people engaged in PV activities (see Frank, 2010, p. 54). Arthur Frank borrows the concept of “inner libraries” from Pierre Bayard to describe the deeply-formed wiring of how people hear and interpret stories (p. 54). Frank warns that when “two inner libraries do not overlap, ‘the dialogue of the deaf arises’” (Bayard, 2007, p. 73; Frank, 2010, p. 58). In societies, this might be due to differing experiences of gender norms, class, caste, race and religion; histories of oppression or violence; or even how a culture responds to reserved verses authoritative speech. The significance for PV practice is to place deliberate attention on strategies that can increase people’s receptivity to unfamiliar stories. Actions may be necessary within a PV participant group, between peer networks or in the dialogues between citizens and government. In this way, the principle of empathic relationships serves as a catalyst for greater compassion and response to others’ stories.

When listeners are open to being influenced by citizen voice, empathy can enable dialogue that allows co-created meanings to emerge (Dobson, 2014, p. 69). For example, in contexts of extreme violence, truth and reconciliation processes encourage empathy and compassion through the humanising process of story exchange, listening and acknowledgement (Gill, 2014, p. 176). The processes pull people closer as the “distance
between individuals shifts in the narrative and dialogical exchange” (p. 177). In the respectful spaces of listening, the empathic relationships principle thus encourages silence as a “precious medium in which reflection is nurtured and empathy can grow” (Barber, 2003, p. 175). The conceptual framework considers the empathic relationships principle as foundational to the other four principles. This is evidenced in the interplay between empathy and the other principles:

- For building personal recognition, empathy for individual stories can foster safe spaces for their telling. Being able to openly articulate injustice is often a first step for individuals to gain the agency required for them to address their concerns (Krznaric, 2014, p. 169). Such processes with PV can allow individuals to take responsibility for their narratives, and own how they want them to evolve (Couldry, 2010, p. 8).

- For collective representation, iterative, reflexive PV processes can evoke empathy and help move narratives from personal articulation to collective citizen action. This is where the action of “re-storying” can allow people to connect more empathically with others through a process of “personal reconstruction” to “social reconstruction” (Gill, 2014, p. 191). In this way, respectful relationships can be forged between individuals and groups (Shahrokh, 2014, p. 31).

- For social and political recognition, empathy can humanise another’s experience. Such actions with PV can help decision-makers recognise ordinary citizens as legitimate actors in their own development (Khamis et al., 2009, p. 130; Nyamu-Musembi, 2005, p. 31). In this way, marginalised groups are not solely victims of their oppression, but rather citizens with their own demands, strengths and solutions for change (Shahrrokh, 2014, p. 31).

- For responsive listening, empathic encounters can advance the “prospect of people’s minds being changed as discussion takes place” (Dobson, 2014, p. 116). Deliberate listening actions can foster empathy and understanding as prerequisites for response. As Shelia D. Shipley (2010) argues in a discussion on nursing care:

The act of listening involves the use of empathy to understand the patient’s lived experience. The listener attends to verbal and nonverbal communication, and constantly strives to understand the spoken message as well as perceive the underlying meanings and tones of the encounter. The listener utilises reflection and feedback to clarify
information and communicate that the message has been heard and understood. (p. 133)

A practitioner in the study explained empathy’s role in policy-focused PV activities for connecting speakers and potential listeners:

If you are talking about international development policymakers, they are information saturated. They get hundreds of emails a day. They have billions of reports being sent to them. They are totally overloaded with information. So why would they stop to listen to a participatory video? What is it that is going to make them stop to listen to a participatory video?… You need something that connects to them in a different way. You can’t compete with all that information. You need to connect with them on a different level. You need to create a spark of empathy in them. You need to reach them as a person, not as ‘I am this, that or the other representative of blah, blah.’ And that’s why the voice element, but also the creative and the expressive part of how films can be, is so important. You’re not just trying to make what they could have read in a report done a little bit nicer with some images. You have to do something else all-together. You are trying to get them out of their role, and relate to people as a human. And that’s the big risk for them. They don’t want to do that. Then they might have to actually do something about it. (Devon)

The practitioner’s comment about “getting them out of their role” aligns with Dutta’s (2014) notion of disrupting the status quo with participatory video to form new relationships:

Listening as imagination nurtures alternative visions and forms of organising that bring about other possibilities of political and economic organising. Communicatively constituted meanings at the intersections of culture, structure and agency, and inequitable structures can be transformed through the expressions of cultural agency in imaginations. (p. 79)

Respective of this viewpoint, the principle of empathic relationships aims for connection between people enacting their agency, and those listening to previously marginalised concerns. It does so through actions aimed at motivating people in power to recognise the value of all citizen voices in decision-making for greater social accountability. These actions within empathic relationships, as well as the other four principles in the conceptual framework, might not always be easy to implement. Yet, they are ambitiously worthy as guiding principles. The next section discusses possibilities for their application in practice.
5.5 Possibilities for the framework in development

A recent think piece for the global development initiative *Making All Voices Count* articulates the complexity of legitimising citizen voice through mediated interventions with underrepresented groups (Oswald, 2014, p. 5). It also highlights the barriers to having voice heard with “openness and respect” (p. 5). The “grand challenge for development,” the piece highlights, is facilitating and ensuring both qualities of voice: its articulation and reception (p. 3). For PV practice, this thesis has responded to such a challenge by offering an aspiring frame. The conceptual framework supports the argument that valued citizen voice requires equal attention on voice expression and its receptivity, especially for societies’ most marginalised populations.

Through this argument, the conceptual framework supports the notion that PV practice is best applied when integrated into a greater social change process. This is where PV is not always the only tool in the toolbox for raising citizen voice (Milne, 2012, p. 257; Plush, 2009b, p. 27). With this view, several practitioners described strategically applying PV in one of two ways: as on-going practice; or embedded into wider development iterative, long-term development processes over one-off events. One practitioner described how a long-term PV project for advocacy might evolve through collaborative design. “We have to be somehow sensitive about how we craft and design a PV programme; where maybe it doesn’t start out with the heavy advocacy goal, but gets there in concert with the community group you are working with” (*Misha*). Another discussed how she might use PV as a short-term activity, as long it supports wider efforts for citizen engagement and action:

> Video is the process that can help you to reach your opinion. And, I think it’s important that it’s moving pictures, because people understand that better in a way because they are living people, and they can see themselves speaking and doing. That’s really important. But, once they’ve got that message, they don’t really need to go on making videos; and it may be too complicated in many poorer communities and not justifiable. (*Katulpa*)
Another practitioner visualised her strategic approach for using PV to raise citizen voice, as shown in Figure 5.2. The visual shows how citizen voice could filter through various visual storytelling methods for voice amplification, depending on which is the most appropriate in practice. In some cases, PV is best choice. In other cases, it may not be. She promoted PV processes designed in response to their wider contexts:

In participatory video there is too much of a focus on video for my liking. It not just about video anyway… You might use analogue things, not only digital forms of expression. There are a lot of things involved in how I conceive those processes that are not explained as participatory video as a label… It is very important to consider technology in relation to the group you are working with. What are the forms of technology that they are going to be able to use? What is needed for them to be able to embrace the technology? Then how do you use the technology when you work with them? You can’t assume there is a one-size-fits-all solution. You can’t assume there is going to be one kit list that you will use. (Devon)

Along these same lines, another practitioner said that both PV practitioners and organisations need to be asking, what “alternative ways can video be used to enable communities to express and campaign for their own needs?” (Katulpa). As an example, the practitioner described a development activity where “once you had done the video for a bit, you didn’t really need video anymore.” The impetus for PV’s use, rather, supported people in being able to advocate for their needs in public decision-making spaces. As she explained, “If you are going to advocate for something, you are thinking about the best way to advocate. That’s what part of the training is about. Video is simply a tool within that” (Katulpa).

In response to such views for equitable and valued voice, the study considers the conceptual framework strategically supportive of multiple C4D activities as it promotes principles over best practice. Additionally, for PV practice specifically, the principles support the flexibility needed in the diverse international development contexts into which practitioners are deploying PV. Such flexibility in a framework is necessary, as each
environment where PV practice takes place is unique and complex. For example, in the study, one practitioner noted that the “theoretical framework [for PV] always seems, when you put it in a real-world setting, to get continually tested and found to be wanting” (Sal). Similarly, it is likely that the conceptual framework presented in this chapter for valued citizen voice will face its own challenges in implementation. These might be especially acute in a development environments bogged down by shifting political priorities and results-driven agendas (Enghel & Wilkins, 2012, p. 9; Eyben & Guijt, 2015, p. 1; Waisbord, 2008, p. 508).

Recognising institutional strengths and limitations for C4D is at the heart of the argument Quarry and Ramirez (2009) make in Communication for another development (p. 140). They acknowledge the difficulty for C4D approaches in conflicting international development contexts. For instance, institutions may “use the language of pro-poor development” while simultaneously placing their “convictions on economic-driven ideas of development that fail to protect poor people” (p. 132). The authors describe facing a paradox as C4D practitioners. Does participatory communication need the right development environment to be effective, or can good participatory communication lead to better development (p. 141)? Their conclusion is that principled C4D practice can be a mechanism that shapes better development. However, in the end, they ultimately advocate to locate their C4D activities mainly within “organisations where participatory communication can survive” (p. 140). The practical implication for this study is that any principled framework for C4D approaches is likely meaningless unless its users both understand its value and are able to mobilise an enabling environment for its utility.

No doubt, suitable conditions exist that would make it feasible to apply the conceptual framework for raising citizen voice with PV. Accordingly, the next chapter describes the study’s exploration into the institutional development environments where PV practitioners apply their trade. Here, the chapter presents findings related to the tensions PV practitioners in the study described from institutional pressures on their idealised PV practices. The intention for doing so is to help PV practitioners understand potential enablers and constraints for using PV to raise citizen voice in development contexts. The resulting knowledge might lead to workable strategies for applying, in practice, the principles highlighted in this chapter’s conceptual framework.
6. Institutional views of PV practice

It fell into the machine, you know, the international NGO machine.
—Alex

6.1 Locating an enabling environment for PV
6.1.1 Conceptualised tensions in practice

This chapter presents research findings that address the third objective in the study, which is to offer insight on enabling environments for PV praxis to raise valued citizen voice in international development contexts. It does so by offering findings that specifically respond to two questions. First, what key institutional views cause PV practitioners tension when raising citizen voice in international development contexts? Second, what potential do these key institutional views hold for enabling or constraining efforts to raise citizen voice with PV? This chapter describes the categorised findings as six key institutional views; named as the output-led, voice opportunity, apolitical, agenda-led, harmless and uncomplicated views. It then presents a scholarly discussion on the implication of these views for PV and valued citizen voice. The chapter concludes by encouraging practitioners to use their personal agency in their PV practice to negotiate and navigate limiting institutional views.

The previous chapter, Chapter 5, offered a conceptual framework for PV praxis that aspires for equitable voice. The framework identified key principles for PV to raise citizen voice so it can be valued and influential in decision-making circles. The chapter specifically raised the argument that implementing C4D principles—like those in the conceptual framework—often requires practitioners to recognise and relocate their practices into enabling development environments (Quarry & Ramirez, 2009, p. 141). As Quarry and Ramirez (2009) explain, “Relocating our efforts means anchoring our work with organisations where participatory communications can thrive” (p. 140). The significance of this choice for PV practice is that where practitioners locate their PV activities matters for valued citizen voice. However, how can PV practitioners know which institutions might sufficiently value the benefits PV can offer for social and political change? This chapter makes such knowledge explicit. It does so by presenting the research that examined the
tensions between practitioners’ ideals for PV practice and institutional views that constrain their realisation. By presenting potentially constraining institutional views through the perspectives of PV practitioners, the intention is to ignite a conversation about how to negotiate and navigate them in practice.

The barriers facing communication for development practices within international development are rarely the result of “underhanded, malevolent intentions” (Waisbord, 2008, p. 508). However, tensions can arise for PV practitioners due to institutional, political and relational interests that often interact in contradictory ways in policy and practice (Gumucio-Dagron, 2008, p. 229; Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 6; Waisbord, 2008, p. 508). Because of this, it is vital for practitioners to consider particular expectations for PV that institutions may hold. This can provide insight into how PV practice may be influenced, co-opted or even devalued by these institutional assumptions. Such considerations are imperative if PV praxis is to live up to its potential for enabling citizen voice so it can be respected and sustained rather than undermined or denied (Couldry, 2010, pp. 1-2; Tacchi, 2010, p. 7).

6.1.2 Exploring tensions through poetry
As described in Section 3.5, the study explored PV practitioners’ tensions through analysing their interview transcripts. It did so through a phenomenographic analytical approach that segmented the differing views into usable categories for scholarly discussion. In the process, it specifically utilised the poetic interpretive method, as explained in detail in Section 3.4.2. In summary, the study extracted key terms and phrases verbatim from the practitioners’ interview transcripts to form emotive poems. The poems articulated tensions the practitioners described in raising citizen voice in international development contexts. The tensions related to both idealised practice, as drawn in their storyboards, and in describing lived experiences. Appendix 1 includes excerpts from the study poems. Through the poetic interpretive analysis, the research identified more than 650 formulated meanings, and clustered them into 20 overall themes. The study counted and analysed the themes to identify two key areas of influence on PV practice, named as purpose and experience, with six particular views named as the output-focused, voice opportunity, apolitical, agenda-led, harmless and uncomplicated institutional views (see Section 3.4.2 for specific details on the analysis).
The purpose section highlights views of why institutions might desire to implement PV activities. Here, as Figure 6.1 shows, the study categorised the following key views as most concerning for PV practitioners in the study to realise their ideal PV practice for raising citizen voice:

- The **output-focused** view, where PV is a filmmaking process that creates a video output primarily for organisational gain;

- The **voice opportunity** view, where PV primarily offers a chance for often excluded groups to infuse their voice into mainstream decision-making; and

- The **apolitical** view, where PV primarily supports non-political activities community members engage in.

The experience section highlights three views that influence the experience of how institutions desire to implement PV activities. Here, as Figure 6.1 shows, the study categorised the following key views as most concerning for PV practitioners in the study to realise their ideal PV practice for raising citizen voice:

- The **agenda-led** view, where PV operates through the dictates of the funding or implementing institution;

- The **harmless** view, where any harm that might occur through PV processes is assumed to be limited or non-existent; and

- The **uncomplicated** view where PV participants quickly master filmmaking and PV facilitation skills, and where PV activities are inherently sustainable.
Certainly, the institutional views, individually and collectively, do not represent an absolute or normative understanding of PV praxis by all organisations. Rather, they represent the most influential institutional views that the practitioners in the study identified as having the greatest potential for diminishing PV’s intention of raising citizen voice. They are the key views the 25 practitioners described as having to consistently respond to and negotiate with non-government organisations, research institutions, government departments and/or funding agencies. As such, the views are not necessarily universal. However, based on the extensive experience of the practitioners in the study described in Section 3.2.2, the views necessitate mindful consideration by a wider field of PV practitioners and organisations. That is, those who work in development contexts on efforts aimed at raising the voice of people who most need to be heard. The rest of the chapter offers an interrogation of the six institutional views, provides a scholarly discussion on their implications for citizen voice, and presents an argument for how practitioners might respond through utilising their own agency.

6.2 Institutional views: Purpose

6.2.1 Why institutions implement PV

In exploring the key tensions for practitioners in the purpose section, a central concern was the reasons why institutions might use PV. Here, many organisations instigated PV through celebratory notions of PV being “sexy and adventurous,” “super cool,” “innovative” or “something that is new” (Katulpa; Nikita; Quinn; Alex). PV conceived through an evangelised lens, practitioners worried, misses its strategic purpose, as one practitioner noted:

What may be problematic is if we over think the utility of PV to the point whereby we venerate it and make it a process above any other. Then we run the risk of people serving the process, rather than serving each other. (Toni)

Through a non-critical lens, practitioners said PV practice was becoming “trivialised,” “a buzzword” or “anecdotal,” as has happened to other participatory development approaches (Toni; Nikita; Shane). They expressed concern that institutions were “depoliticising the process” through their subtle requests for branded and/or marketable citizen voice (Nikita). As one practitioner explained, the “video part of it is part of the problem in a way.” PV’s focus on media making can lead to “misconceptions” about its purpose (Zhenya). The institutional views caused tension for PV practitioners trying to
raise citizen voice with PV. In examining the motivations of institutions for employing PV activities, three pervasive views emerged, which have been categorised as output-focused, voice opportunity and apolitical views. The following three sections explore the views in depth.

6.2.2 The output-focused view

In the output-focused view, practitioners said institutions often regarded PV as a communication or public relations activity that resulted in a video product. Here, institutions prioritised the PV film for “self-promotion,” as “another form of report,” to “beef up a PowerPoint presentation” (Toni; Kai; Ash), or for the organisations’ websites or social media. One practitioner called this “cheerleader versions of participatory video. Rah Rah! Make us a film! Rah Rah Rah!” (Devon). Through such views, another practitioner observed, rarely were institutions thinking, “‘I want to deeply empower and enable a group. I want to create a place for people where they can reflect back on their experiences,’ and for that sort of personal development and transformation” (Quinn). The practitioner said that every organisation she had worked with held a “slightly different but nevertheless, predictable relationship or sort of preconceived notions of what video is, and what it can do, of how it can fit, and how they can use it.” As she explained:

Because it has video, people tend to get very interested. And the fact that it’s ‘participatory’ video and often has a development agenda, or ought to, attached to it, gets lost in ‘Oh, it’s video.’ Suddenly everyone wants to have something to do it; or wants to influence it: communications; advocacy; policy; media teams; campaigns teams. Everybody understands it; wants it; needs it. (Quinn)

One practitioner reflected on why institutions might take an output-focused view: “In any use of media, automatically people who know nothing about that will associate it with traditional ways of using videos. So, that’s the ghost that we have to fight” (Shane). The practitioner’s use of “ghost” was telling. It implies that the output-focused view is pervasive in the development sector. Hence, communicating the value of non-traditional video approaches is difficult in practice. Of concern, practitioners explained, was that institutions often perceive participatory video as traditional video. In the study, 19 of the 25 practitioners described tensions from the view that PV’s main objective is for disadvantaged citizens to make their own films. For example, one practitioner noted that the NGO sector often sees PV facilitators as “semi-documentary makers, with a bit of
community thrown in“ (*Katulpa*). Another practitioner explained, “People get swept up in the technology” and the lure of the cinematic event over more social practices (*River*). When this happens, a practitioner said, PV’s value as part of on-going conversation with “a call and a response” could be lost (*Toni*). The comments highlighted particular worries for when institutions gauged PV’s success by the film output, rather than the quality of the dialogical exchange on the film’s issues. Dialogue, a practitioner noted, was critical to generate valuable “consideration and contemplation about how to continue and go forward” on community concerns (*Toni*). A focus on the film output could also sideline PV’s social process, as described by a practitioner working as a media educator:

Participatory video by design wants to create a process of engaging people in transformational change. So, the end result isn’t always the point of it. The product, the film or the video is not necessarily the only goal one goes for. It’s the ethos, the process, the transformational element that matters a lot; and should matter a lot… I’ve been trying to get my team to recognise that; to come to grips with that: That the final screening isn’t all what we should be worried about. We should be worried about how we are affecting social change; how are we affecting the lives of these young people? How are they making decisions with us about what matters to them in using media? That’s a very hard bullet for a lot of artists and filmmakers and educators to really come to grips with; because they have a particular pedagogical or a particular product-based mindset. (*Misha*)

With the film output as priority, institutions also tended to link PV to journalistic newsgathering processes. For instance, a practitioner described her frustration with colleagues who equated PV to collecting opinions on pre-determined topics (*Devon*). Her colleagues would say, “Oh, just go and do this thing for two days. Can’t you just do this and get some stories?” (*Devon*). The comment highlighted another concern for practitioners. That was, when institutions viewed PV through a traditional media lens, they tended to fund short-term activities with specific film outputs rather than longer social processes with PV. A practitioner described how longer processes were ultimately needed to enable citizen voice:

‘Citizens’ means some sort of social organising; and, without that, I don’t think you can have citizens’ voice. To me, citizens’ voice means social organisation, which then, in the final stages, has a voice. When I say final stages, there is that to-and-from where you can actually use media as a way of assisting the process of social organising. So doing things together, people organise. That’s the process as opposed to the output. (*Nic*)
In mainstream development institutions, a practitioner explained that programming staff rarely saw PV as a political process. This affected how they might integrate PV into development projects and programmes:

People in the policy areas...often it's not their strength. Imagery, visual imagery is mostly something that you illustrate a report with, or if you're trying to reach out to the media or something. They are just not thinking in visual terms; and that filters through into programme design. So, there is a gap in thinking. (Alex)

In this way, the practitioner explained, PV was “still being seen as a fairly niche thing that some communications people might be interested in, rather than a part of programming” or as an “empowerment process” (Alex). Here, institutions expected PV to generate film outputs for communication, marketing, fundraising, branding or campaigns. As another practitioner explained, the “organisation or donor takes these videos and uses them as a tool for their own lobby. The involvement of the citizens is not there anymore, other than the product in the video” (Nikita). This primary focus on the film output appeared to create stress for everyone involved, as a practitioner described, “When external [PV] facilitators are hired to assist or train, or when there's more money, it's really difficult not to come up with a good end product. The pressure is on, also for the participants” (Juno). The same practitioner described frustrations with client discussions that tended to focus on PV “more in terms of a really interesting tool for purchase of participation or for communication, rather than starting with the sort of political underlying notion of citizen voice.” In essence, she noted, they thought it would be “cool to add something that's innovative or which carries an ICT component” (Juno). Another practitioner faced a similar institutional view on a PV project that resulted in multiple films by youth living in poverty. The practitioner reflected:

I don’t know if any of [the institution staff members] actually watched the videos. In the end, it was more like they could put it up that they ‘did this.' They wanted it for that, for PR or whatever... For them, they now have this ‘thing’... Look at what we did! And, that was enough for them (River).

The observation linked to another concern by practitioners that PV activities through the output-focused view could exploit community members, even inadvertently. As one practitioner noted: “It’s not intended to be as such, but it ends up being cheap labour to make communicative documents for people who have the opportunity to use them and show them” (Toni). She said, institutions might think:
Do we have a marketing plan; or do we just do lots of PV? We don’t need to hire people. They just make all the films for us. We just clap a lot and we get all these films. Really, there is that danger. *(Toni)*

A practitioner expressed a similar concern: “It’s too easy to fall into the trap of using these communities and their pain and their struggles as part of supporting a larger cause. That sometimes can work; and sometimes can be very disenfranchising” *(Misha)*. This view reflected another practitioner’s call for deeper reflexivity in PV practice:

> It is important that we look at how that colonisation of local voices happens within NGOs. So much of what you can see, even in what are called PV tapes, is of a genre where the refugee kid provokes the response, ‘How sweet!’ Or, the peasant woman operating the camera provokes exclamations, ‘Amazing!’ All of which produces what [Gilles] Deleuze would call schizo-cultural distance. *(Katulpa)*

Another practitioner demonstrated this distance when describing practitioners, institutions and PV participants who promoted the novelty of people using the technology for the first time *(Morgan)*. She said, “Great, you’ve never touched a camera. Of course, it’s very impressive. But, maybe that’s the downside as well of the tool. People get hooked on that more than the listening to each other” *(Morgan)*. When institutions sidelined local dialogue and listening, a practitioner labelled the practice “total lip-service” PV *(Addison)*. This was where PV supported “for-show exercises where you get a villager to hold a camera and take a photo of that to include in the brochure” *(Addison)*. Along these lines, another practitioner described a five-day PV activity she facilitated with a development programme targeting girls’ empowerment *(Ash)*. When she entered the village where the PV would take place, she found that the participants had been “preened” by the funding institution prior to the activity:

> Essentially, [the girls are] functioning as adults in their society. They have adult responsibilities. They are heads of households. They are young, granted, some of them are 18, 19, 20. But, they are being treated as ‘little girls’ in the context of this programme because of this funding; because they are in a girls’ programme. But, the reality is that if you talk to them about their lives, they are more difficult because they assume the roles as heads of household as younger women and girls. But, their actual identity is not as a ‘girl.’ It’s only as a ‘girl’ within the context of the organisation. *(Ash)*
With the institution focused on displaying the development programme’s success, the practitioner said there was little “time to think about [the PV activity] as a new culture; a new way of doing something. It was more super-imposed on the work that they were already doing” (Ash). Consequently, she explained, the final film output ultimately translated into the type of “five-line” PV film commonly made in five days. This was a film that “starts with: ‘This is so-and-so. This is her age. This is her bad experience that happened. Then the organisation stepped in and everything is better.’” With an expectation for specific messaging from the institution, the PV process served as a mirror to the organisation’s vision of its empowerment work. In doing so, she said, possibilities were limited for exploring how the women might wish to represent themselves (Ash). The story raises important questions for PV practice about whose identities are PV films truly portraying through activities that focus primarily on the film product through the output-focused view.

### 6.2.3 The voice opportunity view

In the voice opportunity view, practitioners discussed tensions arising from institutions viewing PV as a means to give voice—like a gift or a commodity. They described this as institutions prioritising the opportunity for citizens to share their opinions over more engaged civic actions. Practitioners worried that the emphasis failed to address cultural, political and economic structures marginalising participants’ voice. For instance, a practitioner described her key concern when citizen voice was on offer:

> Just that concept [of voice] is for me is emblematic of the subject-object dichotomy that I see in development that I find problematic. That is where someone, A, is a subject and they enact something on an object. So ‘giving voice to someone else’ or ‘raising voice for someone else.’ For me, for it to be real citizen voice, it would have to be generated among the citizens themselves. (Addison)

The voice opportunity view appeared similar to the amplified voice pathway, as described in Chapter 4, in its emphasis on providing a platform for underrepresented voice. This was where PV activities fulfilled participant’s right to speak through citizens expressing their opinions on film. Practitioner tensions seemed most acute when platforms for voice reaped little local benefit. They described this happening when voice opportunities consisted of
global or national conferences, campaigns or advocacy efforts, as one practitioner explained:

As soon as you start to set an international or outside target, it can just be orientated about really just getting their voice and their thoughts; and, there you go. The action happens out there. It may kind of filter back. There may or may not be impacts directly felt by the target community. It is often how it tends to be seen in the development world… That’s one of the organisational constraints with donors internationally. (Zhenya)

In the study, all practitioners promoted efforts to help underrepresented groups to amplify their voice with PV. Where many practitioners expressed concern, however, was when actions for voice amplification alone constituted the totality of how institutions understood raising citizen voice. Here, they highlighted that institutions often held naïve assumptions that solely creating opportunities for voice with PV inherently leads to social change. Subsequently practitioners were frustrated when institutions only funded PV activities to make and publically disseminate PV films, rather than also including the resources and time for wider citizenship efforts. A practitioner illustrates the problematic nature of the voice opportunity view: “It’s a really false idea that you give this video to a decision-maker and they’re actually going to go, ‘Oh, I never thought about it like that’ and change policy” (Tyler). She observed that while PV can be a tool to “inform people about new ideas,” it takes on-going, long-term efforts to influence “decision-makers who aren’t prepared to directly engage with these people” (Tyler).

Another practitioner described the challenges for PV to influence politics. She explained that policymakers often “listen to a different format of media; and they listen to different channels. They do everything differently. So, it’s really difficult for people to access that” (Nic). One approach she suggested was to create or join events that “give space for the voice.” Such forums might be “opened by the UN; opened by donors; opened by themselves. They might be workshops; they might be forums; they might be UN hearings on rights” (Nic). The suggestion implies that political change requires more than the opportunity to voice. It also requires attention on who is listening and how they listen. Several practitioners noted such attention is rare in PV practice. For example, a practitioner said few organisations she had worked with meaningfully linked PV to the surrounding political environment (Juno). Instead, they often focused on “just making a video in a cool participatory process in a location; and then showing it without connecting it.
to opportunities for policymaking.” She added, “Policymakers also find this very difficult” (Juno).

The influence of the voice opportunity view was apparent in several PV activities described by practitioners that primarily focused on collecting citizen concerns with video. This was where, in short workshops, practitioners trained NGO staff members, local government officials or community leaders in filmmaking skills. The PV trainees then videotaped the opinions of targeted citizens in their communities. Through this approach, the PV activities provided often-unheard citizens with opportunities to express their concerns on film. The actions acted as “consultations with a community” where local voices were “taken to the decision-makers” (Mel). Practitioners noted that such practices could be valuable for infusing rarely heard concerns into wider debates. However, many worried the approach offered little time and support for people to “have a choice as to how they want to represent themselves” publically (Katulpa).

As a specific example of the voice opportunity view, a practitioner described an NGO-led PV activity. Its intention was to infuse alternative voices into national and international debates. It also hoped to improve relations between tribal village members and the local government. In the activity, the practitioner trained government officials over two days in filmmaking and PV facilitation (Gustl). The newly trained facilitators travelled to a rural community to gather local concerns on a specific topic. During the half-day activity, the government facilitators worked with interested community members to share their opinions on film. The practitioner’s description of the results demonstrated how PV processes focused on voice opportunity might affect authentic local voice:

In theory, [PV] provides an opportunity for the people on the ground, community members in some of the poorest places, to say what are their needs; what are some of the issues. But, on the flip side, if you watch some of the videos we have, it's basically a wish list of ‘these are the things we want.’ (Gustl)

As another example, a PV practitioner discussed a PV activity funded by an international development institution enthusiastic to amplify indigenous community voices at a global policy conference. After community members made the videos, the practitioner promoted holding dialogue sessions between dispersed villages. The PV participants wanted to discuss the issues raised in the films and find local solutions. The donor said, “Oh why?
What’s the point in that?’ They couldn’t quite see it. But we pushed that through and they did see value in that eventually” (Zhenya). The practitioners’ frustration with the institution was apparent:

They were all about voice on the international stage. And that was, for them, that was most important. But, for us that is the least important. That is the most frustrating, the last area you are likely to make any real impact: more bullshit; more noise in an over-crowded context. Well, it’s not bullshit, but people don’t listen to it. It’s not enough. We can wait 10, 15, 20 years for that to have impact. But, that’s not actually fulfilling for us. And, also we believe it is not enough for the communities that take part. We want to have impact right now and we know that we can do that by making things happen on the local context... We often have to push for that, unfortunately. (Zhenya)

Practitioners also raised concerns that the voice opportunity view misses the value PV holds for “changing the power dynamics between people living in poverty and decision-makers” (Jessie). They specifically worried that PV could easily give a microphone to people who already have power. This could be problematic if those already holding power ignore or misrepresent the concerns of less advantaged, less vocal citizens in the community. A practitioner described a PV project where newly trained facilitators used a focus-group approach to capture citizen opinions on film (Kendall). She described how she designed the focus-group process so it could be replicable in multiple communities:

Let’s say that they have a discussion of 45-60 minutes. After the 60 minutes, [the facilitators] interview the people who want to say something; or the most interesting people; or who the group feels are the right representatives to share their hopes and dreams. It is also easy for the editing if you first do a discussion of 45 to 60 minutes, and after that you do some short interviews of 3-4 minutes each with the four different questions. (Kendall)

The description highlights concerns raised by other practitioners that PV focused on voice opportunity could unintentionally reinforce the status quo. For instance, such potential seemed to exist in the practitioner’s comment that the PV facilitators “interview the people who want to say something; or the most interesting people; or who the group feels are the right representatives to share their hopes and dreams” (Kendall). With such prompting, the most privileged people in the community are apt to step forward and share their views. Hence, in some cases, the voice opportunity process could further entrench inequitable power dynamics that diminish or silence certain voices in a community.
6.2.4 The apolitical view

In identifying the apolitical view, the study found that 21 of the 25 practitioners expressed tension that institutions often placed little value for PV to address the “political underlying notions of citizen voice” (Juno). Through a non-political emphasis, one practitioner said, the resulting PV films were often the type with “light bulbs over the people’s heads” (Alex). These films mainly shared PV participants’ opinions, with an expectation that others would do something about their concerns. The apolitical view conflicted with the same practitioner’s intention for building citizens’ capacity to connect their PV films to “something that’s bubbling along on the political agenda.” In this way, the citizens themselves could demand of their government, “What are you doing about this?” (Alex). Practitioners attributed the apolitical view of PV to a development sector often unwilling to take political risks. This is despite, as one practitioner noted, the reality that PV rarely exists in a neutral or apolitical space:

If we are doing a project and people are being listened to and they are able to engage with their wider society; and they’re developing a voice and their thoughts; and they are addressing us in the first instance, or a slightly wider audience, that’s a political act. For some of the groups we work with, they just don’t expect anyone to listen to them or take notice of them… But, in terms of whether that’s embedded in the funding or whether that’s what other people want to get from it… I find that a lot of the groups I work with, we don’t talk about that. (Sal)

As another practitioner explained, mainstream development organisations are “quite invested in their professional identities” in how they are viewed or in what they can say (Devon). In such environments, a practitioner said, PV practice often focuses on “raising voice” without “talking about hearing voices;” especially those voices that “don’t fit the agenda” (Katulpa). In this way, institutions could misappropriate PV activities, as a practitioner noted, “People can tick boxes and say, ‘Well, we’ve consulted. We’ve heard people.’ Then that’s it. Nothing ever changes” (Jessie).

Through the apolitical view, practitioners also worried that PV activities could minimise citizen engagement. They said this could occur when institutions paid more attention to improving development programming over challenging marginalising structures through advocacy or activism. The rising focus on using PV for development programme improvement was one example given. A practitioner who often used PV processes with
Western NGOs for programme evaluation said the activity “where the video is shown to the policymakers is not part of the participatory video process” (Kai). This was even when discussion topics were inherently political. Similarly, another practitioner noted that the “more activist and the more civic-driven processes” that raise citizen voice were often sidelined in practice (Juno). She offered this observation:

What I see is that quite often the word participation is being stimulated by a lot of actors, with really good results; but quite often within boundaries of what professional organisations deem interesting or necessary. There seems to be a very wide gap between citizen activism and structural participation in organisations. (Juno)

To this point, a practitioner explained that institutions often misinterpreted the political roots of participatory development approaches:

There are a lot of organisations who think they know what participatory methods are and have dabbled with them; and are applying them, but have not really gone through the shift—the internal shift; the attitude shift that needs to come clear to make it really authentic. And so, in terms of power and who is holding that power, and in design and implementation, and organisation and projects, [institutions] haven’t shared that fully. (Zhenya)

PV practitioners with activist leanings were especially concerned about how apolitical views could devalue citizen voice. As one practitioner explained, “At the moment, so many NGOs are actually calling it empowerment, but [they] are disempowering peoples. They come in and say, ‘Now we are making a video.’ That’s not participatory, because decisions have been made already” (Nic). The disempowering potential was apparent in another practitioner’s story about using PV with rural farmers through a corporate-funded activity. Here, the company had a history of using video in traditional ways where the message was “directed. It’s scripted. It’s within the framework that they want to show” (Mel). Although PV was a new concept, the corporation was interested in the “completely different” approach. Therefore, the practitioner facilitated a weeklong PV process to gather farmer opinions about new practices introduced by the company. The collaborative filmmaking training and video recording went smoothly. Problems, however, arose for the local screening where the PV participants intended to share a rough version of their film for community discussion. The event caused a great deal of anxiety at the corporate headquarters. The company had failed to grasp fully the “participatory” nature of the
process. They worried that a farmer-led discussion about the regulated changes in their work might insight “a revolution kind of thing.” In the end, the PV practitioner was able to negotiate the value of the screening so it could occur. However, she was unable to broker any on-going dialogue between the farmers and the corporation on the issues raised. As well, the practitioner was frustrated that the institution did not share the film publically after a conference showing, despite the farmers’ interest in doing so (Mel).

The story highlights key concerns PV practitioners expressed in that apolitical views could lead to institutions treating PV flippantly, trying to control the local discussion, or not viewing the process as a legitimate development methodology for personal and political change. As one practitioner explained, apolitical views often lead to PV to being “diluted and co-opted” under the guise of participation. This is where “just the fact that people are taking part is enough” (Jessie).

6.3 Institutional views: Experience
6.3.1 How institutions implement PV
In addition to the three institutional views related to PV’s purpose, practitioners also expressed concern about views that influence the experience of how they implement PV. Practitioners worried specifically about institutional agendas and their inequitable “relationships to power;” the limited recognition by institutions that “PV can do harm to the most excluded” citizens; and institutions’ “naïve politics” around how people learn (Katulpa; Cass; Jessie). The technical how often minimised the role PV practitioners described playing in the overall PV experience:

Donors perceive our role as outside experts providing technical or instrumental training in production skills or formulaic processes, rather than facilitators or partners working alongside or accompanying people along a journey towards understanding, dialogue, communication and action for change. (Jessie)

In analysing practitioner tensions related to the PV experience, the study identified and categorised three institutional perspectives, named as agenda-led, harmless and uncomplicated views. The following three sections explore these institutional views in detail.
6.3.2 The agenda-led view

In the agenda-led view, all 25 practitioners expressed concern about organisational expectations, agendas and operational procedures. They worried about the view constraining the “creative,” “flexible and responsive,” “slow kind of empowerment” processes needed for raising voice with PV (Addison; Tyler; Katulpa). Their concerns related to institutions that were, as a practitioner explained, only “interested in using people’s voices to communicate directly; to capture them, broadcast them and to relay them within the parameters and the terms that they dictate” (Quinn). In the agenda-led view, practitioners expressed concerns about institutional agenda priorities. Here, practitioners noted that institutions often aspired for PV to support empowerment, participation and grassroots ownership. However, time-bound programming requirements, pre-defined success indicators, and specific deliverables often conflicted with the ideals in practice. A practitioner called such agendas “projectising” the PV process:

You put it within the framework of trying to deliver a particular kind of outcome or output within a timeframe. You know if this is being done in relation to money that has been granted, that there are certain agendas involved in allocating those funds. And it tends to bring a whole series of other things around how you conceive power relations between commissioning, and who’s doing the work, and all those things. Obviously all of that has an effect on any participatory process, not just participatory video. (Devon)

Practitioners using PV as a research method faced similar constraints from agenda-led views in academic institutions. One practitioner noted that she often had to battle expectations to deliver “certain types of outputs” related to quantitative rather than qualitative indicators. Here, she worried about the authenticity of citizen voice, especially when PV participants’ interests fell outside the scope of the research:

When you write proposal and development projects, you always have to outline the outcomes and the outputs; and have a clear idea of what you want to achieve… If you want to gather knowledge, then you always have expectations of type of knowledge you want. So there can be a tension because you will want to direct more about what they will say; how they will say it; who they will interview; and how they will tell stories. (Sasha)

Similarly, another practitioner described the influence institutions yield through pre-determining the topic of PV activities:
In most cases, [the topic's] broad enough. But it’s so different when you go to a community and you are looking at maternal health; and that is what you’ve come to do. What you are going to find is so different if you are going to look at women’s rights or local innovators. Whatever you go looking for is definitely what you find. It’s just remarkable. And so, it doesn’t even feel like you are creating it, but you obviously are; even when you are not explicit. (Zhenya)

Strict agendas, another practitioner noted, could shut down rather than raise citizen voice (Misha). She was especially concerned in vulnerable environments like refugee camps. She said, “It can give harm if you go into a place like that and go in with a heavy hand. You create expectations and you disempower instead of create a space for transformation and dialogue” (Misha). Institutional agendas seemed especially troubling for one practitioner, who pointed out that community concerns are “actually quite different at the grassroots than the policy concerns of many NGOs are” (Katulpa). As such, NGO’s operational agendas, she noted, should be scrutinised to ensure they do not negate “all this talk about hearing the voices of the people; about empowerment” (Katulpa). Another practitioner described how this might happen:

When people are focused on managing costs rather than managing the value of these outcomes, there’s a tendency towards trying to co-opt the process; and having to have certain outcomes rather than listening to what the real discussion is about. (Toni)

Illustrative of this point, a practitioner shared a story about a PV activity embedded in a development programme (Alex). In this project, a women’s group engaged in PV activities to highlight safety problems arising from a mismanaged waste dump. The women used the PV process for social accountability by gathering visual evidence to “hold power to account.” They wanted to “be able to say to people, ‘This is the consequences of your actions or your inactions and you have a responsibility to do something about it’” (Alex). Through the PV activity, the women’s group successfully engaged with decision-makers at a municipality meeting using their filmed evidence. However, a greater challenge came in addressing the waste dump problem over the long-term. Here, the women’s topic choice was of particular concern. Many local staff members did not perceive the waste issue as fitting within the NGO programme’s particular agenda on unpaid care, despite the women believing it did. As a consequence, the practitioner said, the “most vital element of the whole thing: that the women were using this project to achieve change, tangible change
for their own communities, that wasn't as clear at times as what it should be” to the NGO staff (Alex). Another obstacle the practitioner identified was that “when this project was first being thought about, nobody thought about PV being part of it.” As she explained:

A big flaw with the whole project is that the focus, I felt, was in the wrong direction. It was in reporting and delivering a programme rather than achieving change within the community. In some ways, it was great to find a pilot project that I felt PV absolutely fitted into. On the other hand, there was the downside that it then had to work within the framework of this project with all the problems that that project brought with it. (Alex)

People higher in the international organisation saw “enormous value” in having the women set the agenda. The stronger resistance for supporting the community-led agenda, however, happened at the “intermediate level.” This was “where people in country offices often are trapped into a cycle of the whole monitoring-evaluation thing, which can become a tyranny they're working to fulfil” (Alex). Another practitioner expressed a similar frustration with the prevalence of linear planning tools in mainstream development. She explained that such tools often contradicted the “creative, action-based” ways communities operate, and are difficult for transformative PV processes to fit into (Nic). She explained, “log-frames are not good at coping or placing priority on non-quantifiable indicators such as the level of ownership of the work. So these things tend to be dropped off.” Ownership here was not only about local control of the PV film content and messaging. It also referred to how PV processes might build social cohesion and stronger citizen voice, as she explained:

[In a community], when we start to get to the stage of thinking about say social media and social change, that means we’ve shifted. We’ve shifted in the stage of… rebuilding to complexity systems. But, what doesn’t change is the management processes attached to it by the development industry... What they’re trying to do now, or at least they are starting to recognise, is ‘hey, we need to do the social side of things.’ Good, they are recognising that. But, the tools they’ve got actually create problems. (Nic)

In particular, PV practitioners worried that PV through linear agendas minimised focus on the complex contexts, histories and power dynamics surrounding the concerning issues. One practitioner described the idea that PV can catalyse instantaneous political change as institutionally naïve (Devon). She did so through a story about a PV activity with sexual minority activists. The activists were all being “targeted by the government, and the
government was sending thugs to beat people up and snooping on their data. There were all kinds of things going on.” In that context, the practitioner said, if you are showing a PV film the participants have made at a press conference where they are “now standing side-by-side with the anti-Fascists who are also equally involved in the corruption of the government… well the political situation is so complex; so, so, so, so complex.” As she said:

To think that I could come in and say, ‘We’re going to make a participatory video about the rights of gay people and we’re going to show it to the government; and they will pass a law that says you can be gay.’ How mad. You know you can’t. These are really political issues that we are talking about here. I mean, yes, there are laws that need to be changed; there definitely are. But, that’s not the problem of them standing next to someone who a few weeks ago who was threatening to kill them because they are gay. Do you know what I mean? It’s really complicated. And, you can only approach [a PV activity] by thinking about that particular situation. (Devon)

Such calls for addressing complexity through PV activities seemed the antithesis of the agenda-led view. For example, PV practitioners expressed concern that the growing results-based focus in development opened the floodgates for “technocratic,” “machine-based” or “simplistic” PV approaches (Kai; Addison; Tyler). Several practitioners, for example, described an increase in development institution requests for procedural manuals and videos as part of PV activities. The emphasis here tended towards the technical filmmaking aspects of PV. One practitioner explained how this growing desire for “formulaic” PV approaches could overshadow PV’s effectiveness as a social process:

[When institutions] frame participatory video as being a way of making [film] programmes, there isn’t any finance to do what is the more important work. You get the funding to write your how-to manual, but not to ensure that what is done is used appropriately. (Jessie)

The practitioner’s comment seems to highlight the crux of practitioner tensions with the agenda-led view. That is, participatory video is complex. Of concern here, was that simplistic, methodised processes downplayed the complexity of practice in varying contexts, cultures, political economies, religions and/or gendered situations. Another practitioner worry in the study was that the proliferation of web-based, how-to PV manuals and stepwise PV promotional videos could lead to a focus on filmmaking over facilitation. This technical focus conflicts with how PV practitioners often described their multifaceted
role as skilled facilitators of social change. A practitioner demonstrated this perspective when describing PV facilitation training:

You are creating a kind of a superman or woman; because to be a great facilitator, you need many, many skills and attributes. And, it’s very hard to find that in one human being. So, whilst it’s good to focus on and think about, it’s important to recognise it’s a journey. It’s a life’s journey. (Zhenya)

A practitioner in describing her storyboarding process reiterated this viewpoint:

In attempting to draw the ideal, I realised that it was quite complex. I couldn’t quite place my ideal without the specific context. It is more of a balance... If I include this, then something else goes... There are always compromises and there are always constraints; and where you place yourself in terms of that balance depends on the specific situation and how it unfolds. That was an interesting realisation in trying to draw it. (Jessie)

Several PV practitioners expressed that prescriptive approaches also could affect how participants feel their voice was valued in the PV process. As one explained: “I don’t think people respond to formulas as they know that you are going by the recipe rather than actually responding to them and who they are” (Tyler). The observation highlighted a particular concern for citizen voice. That is, standardised PV approaches through institutional agendas could hinder sufficient actions for meaningful social change, as a practitioner noted:

When you are talking about social change, it’s not a linear process. It’s not like you make an advance and there’s no backtracking. We know that policies don’t get enacted in the same way they were intended a lot of the time. We know that the kinds of changes that need to happen and the kind of level of which that change needs to happen is not very connected to the policies that are available. There are a lot of questions about that; and if you are using PV in an instrumental way, you are merely going to reinforce all of those powers. You’re not necessarily going to challenge them. You are still within a system, that development system, unless you can find a way to challenge it. (Devon)

6.3.3 The harmless view
In describing the harmless view, practitioners noted that institutions often regarded PV as an intrinsically positive C4D approach. Institutional staff, they said, often seem unaware that PV processes can “go wrong,” “be threatening or risky,” “endanger the safety of people,” “result in repressing voice,” “position people in a worse way,” “exclude the most
excluded,” “cause conflict within a group,” and/or “unwittingly add to a sensitive situation” (Morgan; Kendall; Addison; Jessie; Cass; Gustl). Here, practitioners described concerns that PV activities could increase people’s marginalisation or vulnerability if institutions failed to recognise and respond accordingly to the risky and sometimes delicate nature of the process. They worried about their PV participants both in the process of them creating their films and in public screenings.

As an example in the PV process, practitioners worried when institutions failed to understand, take account of, or plan for risks—especially when working with marginalised or disadvantaged populations. For example, PV practitioners strongly promoted the therapeutic and confidence-building nature of PV processes for personal and group development work. However, they also were keenly aware of PV’s potentially negative consequences. They described heightened concerns for PV participants who shared deeply personal situations, often for the first time; who criticised inequitable power structures; and who provided evidence of undelivered government services or exposed human rights atrocities. A practitioner who often used PV to advance child rights said she sometimes saw child-led, PV films and wondered:

Is this really the interest of the child? If they made this, isn’t that child going to get in trouble? How is follow-up being organised? Have they at all thought about this? Is ethics even a part of the process? (Juno)

To combat institutional views of PV as harmless, practitioners promoted better assessment and planning for “potential risks” in PV activities (Nikita). They wanted to ensure citizens “are being cared for or being supported” after they share their stories in private and public ways (Ash). Their concerns were especially acute in describing public screenings as having both positive and negative consequences. Practitioners said they recognised that showing PV films in public could be an affirming act for underrepresented citizens. However, several practitioners also indicated that public screenings required greater care. This was to avoid embarrassing, intimidating or even emotionally scarring situations. A practitioner explained that PV can sometimes “give harm if the work that comes out is misunderstood, misrepresented or poorly tackles issues that are very delicate. It can agonise some of those issues in ways that were unintended” (Misha). As an example, another practitioner shared a story about a film screening with female PV participant youth:
I’ve had deceptions. People told the young girls that their film sucked. Yea! Because they watch a lot of TV right? The elders went ape shit on the girls. It was awful. So, it can go wrong, I can testify. *(Morgan)*

Practitioners also expressed concern for when PV participants were not part of the film’s dissemination; especially for groups already quite marginalised. As a practitioner explained:

If you are asking someone to make media or you are engaging them in a media process and they are not engaged in the next stage in the civic action around it, then you have disempowered them. You’ve patronised that work rather than actually making them part of that process of that response. *(Misha)*

Another key area practitioners said institutions often saw as harmless was working at the community level; a view that caused tension for 19 of the 25 practitioners. They worried that without proper awareness and planning, PV activities could easily reinforce inequitable and/or unjust local power. As one example, a practitioner observed that “bringing technology to marginalised people can be seen as something threatening to this community because, in a way, this technology is representative of a new form of power that is given to these marginalised people” *(Sasha).* The process could also fortify existing power imbalances, as another practitioner described.

I noticed that some of the participants, they just automatically gravitated towards holding the camera, and some of them maybe didn’t get a chance at all. Some of the other participants who were maybe a bit more shy; or there was already power [within the organisation]. *(Cass)*

As another example, a practitioner noted PV’s potential to reinforce marginalising hierarchies in describing an activity:

We wanted to integrate Dalits7 into the group; but in the end it didn’t work out. They came to the training. I don’t know if they were not accepted by others or

7 “The caste system as a societal order of social, economic, and religious governance for Hindus is based on the principle of inequality and unequal rights. The *Dalits* or the *untouchables*...stand at the bottom of the caste hierarchy, and were historically denied equal rights to property, education, and business, as well as civil, cultural, and religious rights.” *(Darity, 2008, p. 221)*

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not. After the training other participants told us that the Dalit participants are not serious and are not interested to work towards making a film. But it’s very difficult for me to know the reality. \textit{(Sasha)}

PV’s potential for harm was also visible in a story by a practitioner who worked on a PV project in a remote tribal village \textit{(Gustl)}. For the PV activity, the process promoted conversation between the tribe, an NGO and local government on environmental issues. The organisation trained local government officials in using PV. The trainees facilitated a half-day process of local filmmaking at the village level through focus groups. The practitioner explained how tension arose during one community gathering:

\begin{quote}
When we arrived, they were very suspicious. They were like, ‘Why are you coming to film us?’ We said, ‘No, you’re going to film each other.’ Once they started doing it, they were very open to it. But then, at the end, there was a group of women who had been involved in the process. Their group had been so big, [a few women] ended up not being so involved. They started making accusations and riling people up. So that caused a problem. Obviously, I didn’t understand what was going on. So maybe, if your staff don’t necessarily know how to dissipate those tensions; or maybe, in some cases, they may exacerbate those tensions. So if you don’t know what’s going on you might be just unwittingly adding to a sensitive situation. \textit{(Gustl)}
\end{quote}

This story demonstrated two key aspects of the harmless view. First, the NGO-initiated PV processes may have reinforced local power dynamics, even inadvertently. Second, the activity may have caused further marginalisation, as evidenced by the women feeling constrained in being able to participate sufficiently. Admittedly, the local conflict could have grown from historical tensions in the politically sensitive area. However, the PV activity’s short-form, consultative approach might also have played a direct role in instigating or exacerbating conflict.

PV practitioners in the study also described an institutional naivety in how people at the local level select PV participants. A PV activity’s selection process determines which citizens receive the PV training and equipment; and is often conducted prior to PV practitioners arriving in a community. Practitioners said this is rarely an unbiased process, and thus needs greater attention to manage local power dynamics to minimise potential harm, as a practitioner explained:
If you only involve those people who push themselves forward, then you are essentially amplifying, in a way, the most powerful voices in that setting, rather than opening up the chance for a wider range of perspectives to come through... You [may] think you are teaching people to run a process, but people get power through having control of the kit. So, you end up rather than spreading skills and breaking down power dynamics, you end up supporting the existing power dynamics within a community. *(Jessie)*

Practitioners in the study described multiple reasons for why certain community members might become participants over others, for example:

- People in power wanted their relatives or friends to gain from any skills or financial resources offered in the PV activities;
- The most outspoken people often volunteered, which reinforced local privilege and power;
- Local leaders promoted articulate community members, often through prejudicial views that they better represented the community; and/or
- Particular individuals or groups were favoured over others due to cultural or contextual norms related to gender, class, age, education, religion, caste, and/or physical or mental ability.

The greatest concern seemed to be for when PV activities ended up supporting high-status people, to the detriment of currently disadvantaged community members. This was where people with existing power in a community advanced their social or political power through their involvement. A PV practitioner referred to Frierian theories in discussing how to address this potential for PV to reinforce marginalising power dynamics:

> Paulo Freire, and many anthropologists, talk about the value of participatory work of 'working alongside.' We just need to introduce that into everything we write really. Don't go there and shoot! And that the camera doesn't become the major thing before you've gotten to know who's who, what the power structures are within the villages... Because there certainly are lots of power structures; and the danger of handing over the cameras is that it will naturally go to the most powerful people—mostly men; and you'll never get it back into the hands of the least powerful, or the poorest people—mostly women and children. *(Katulpa)*
Another practitioner, who described local power dynamics in a PV activity in rural villages, illustrated the practitioner’s concern. She said the implementing NGO left video equipment in a few villages for a yearlong PV activity focused on improving the lives of poor women. Here, the cameras “became a status object and got stuck with the facilitators” or were controlled by those with more power who only “let a small group of women use it” (Alex). Similarly, another practitioner described how local cultural norms could subtly, or even openly, influence PV processes aimed at raising citizen voice:

Quite often in the village situation, not everyone feels like they can express themselves because there are those hierarchies and the culture factor as well. The women are usually seen as looking after the children and cooking; and the men are the decision-makers and the ones who do the talking. (Seri)

For instance, the practitioner worked in a village for a month on a community film (Seri). Each evening, the PV participants screened the day’s video recordings for comments. At the community screenings, the practitioner said, people only shared positive views. Here, in public, the villagers were not as “forthcoming in front of everyone else. It may have come out behind the scenes or after the day’s discussion. There may have been discussions back at the houses” (Seri). The comments seemed to signify that without safe discussion spaces, there is a high likelihood for the most powerful community members to influence a final film’s content. In such cases, local power dynamics might be indiscernible to NGO staff or outside PV practitioners. Thus, they cannot simply presume whether PV activities have emboldened or further marginalised citizen voice. Rather, PV activities require concerted efforts to acknowledge and minimise PV potential for harm.

6.3.4 The uncomplicated view

In the uncomplicated view, 17 of the 25 practitioners in the study described tensions around how institutions viewed PV as quick-to-learn and inherently sustainable. With this view, they said, institutions often failed to realise that meaningful PV processes require multiple skills. As they explained, these include facilitation, community development, technical filmmaking, media dissemination, project management, research and/or C4D skills. PV activities also require knowledge on the particular topic the PV process is addressing. As such, practitioners expressed concern that the appropriate resources and training to continue PV’s use was often insufficient after an initial PV workshop or activity. Institutions, practitioners said, often undervalued their PV facilitation skills through their
expectations. That is, about PV’s empowering potential and the time needed to produce
well-made and articulated stories. Through uncomplicated views of PV practice,
practitioners expressed concerns about how to achieve institutions’ demands on their
activities due to unrealistic requirements.

As an example, a practitioner explained that development institutions often wanted her to
be “facilitating and accompanying” PV participants through an empowering PV process for
group development. At the same time, they wanted her to train the local participants to
“take other groups through that process” (Jessie). Her tension related to institutional
expectations that these two very different outcomes needed to happen seamlessly in the
short period funded for the activity. The tension, the practitioner explained, was that “it’s
unrealistic to expect local practitioners to do a five-day course; and then to be able to
facilitate the same kind of social processes” that a skilled PV professional with years of
experience is able to achieve (Jessie). As another practitioner explained, often the
“difficulty is facilitation… Half the time we are not making movies at all” (Katulpa). A
practitioner similarly described experiencing tension first-hand during a PV activity. The
initial aim for using PV, she said, was to build a PV “legacy” by empowering the NGO staff
as PV facilitators (Sal). However, this proved difficult:

The challenge for me was wanting to go out there and engage with local people
and this NGO; to teach the NGO members some PV skills that they could use
after we went; but also to make a film in less than three weeks, which I thought
was a bit ambitious really. (Sal)

For the practitioner, she quickly realised that sustainable PV would require practitioners to:

…go along for much longer. And there would be elements of documentary; and
there would be elements of sharing these skills… [In the project], there wasn’t
that kind of time for that and really, in my mind, that wasn’t the brief. (Sal)

Practitioners in the study said they could teach basic technical skills in videography,
editing and storytelling in five days. Of concern, however, was that such trainings miss the
bigger picture value of PV as a “social and relational process” (Jessie). The practitioner
explained that by not valuing the facilitation skills necessary in PV practice and only
“seeing only the technical, we feed the assumption that you can train people to do this in
five days.” And “I don’t think it’s possible to train people quickly.” She explained that an
uncomplicated view of PV practice represents a contradiction, especially for community development:

It is understood that to learn how to make films, professionals should do long-term college courses, or to become social, community workers or researchers the same. But, somehow people in the community are supposed to be able to build skills overnight, even though they are much less well-placed due to life constraints to do so. *(Jessie)*

Based on such experiences, practitioners worried about PV’s future for advancing dialogue and exchange through skilled facilitation. A practitioner demonstrated this in her frustration with short-form models of PV practice. She challenged the notion that they are sufficient to pass on the skills required to tackle the complexity of using PV for social change:

Running people through a five-day, train-the-trainer workshop is not going to do it. It doesn’t churn people out as trainers unless, in some exceptional circumstances, they already have a high level of facilitation skills; lots of experience doing participatory work and that kind of thing. And, the danger with it, is that they will then say, ‘Oh, I’m a trainer of this’. *(Devon)*

Similarly, for the technical aspect of PV, practitioners expressed concern that many of the train-the-trainer approaches were insufficient for developing long-term filmmaking competency. The main challenge, one practitioner described, was that institutions often expected trainees to go straight from being participants in a PV workshop to being PV trainers that hand the camera over to others *(Quinn)*. As she explained:

There isn’t a fertile space for [PV participants] to learn to make films that make stories... It doesn’t have to be a craft, but to be able to get some confidence to be able to support others to tell a story through video; or to communicate; or just simply put together a sequence. The technical side is often lacking. Because even if they are coming as very experienced facilitators, that’s great and they may have a lot of other participatory practice to draw upon and that makes it a lot easier. But still, the technique of participatory video takes time to learn and practice. *(Quinn)*

A practitioner explained that the uncomplicated view of PV was particularly troubling because “people's expectations were that ‘now that I have a video camera, I can make a series of videos.’ But it's not that simple” *(Gustl)*. Another practitioner observed that a “15-day workshop was barely enough to support practitioners with basic editing skills” *(Shane).*
Similarly, a practitioner explained that PV activity designs often lacked the scope for more refined or aesthetic filmmaking:

Part of the basic video skills training is analysing some pictures and video to look at what happened, and to evaluate what we like... But, most of the time there isn’t enough time to do such a thing, and I just let go. (Kai)

With such pressures, PV practitioners described fighting institutions’ expectations for them to train a high numbers of citizens as PV trainers. This was in lieu of their preference to train a small number of people sufficiently as PV trainers with strong technical and facilitation skills. Institutions often believed, practitioners said, that having many trainers invariably led to greater impact from PV processes. One practitioner called the viewpoint “capacity-building tyranny” (Quinn). This was where donors and organisations saw the low number of citizens being trained and exclaimed, “Only 12 people for this amount of money!?... We want to reach 200 or 2,000 people.” The practitioners said she saw little value in “training more and more and more facilitators and making sure that hundreds and thousands of people get to participate.” Rather, the practitioner explained, “It just has to be the right people participating in the right process” (Quinn). The significance for citizen voice, it seemed, was that PV practice requires deeper reflection on its local use, as another practitioner illuminated:

If you can find reasons for why the community should continue to talk to itself as well as have the vertical communications, you have a much better chance of these things surviving despite the lack of budget of an NGO afterwards. (Toni)

In the uncomplicated view, practitioners also expressed concerns about institutions providing insufficient support for long-term PV use. They said institutions often struggled to resource PV activities focused on on-going learning, strengthening agency, forming networks and/or other citizen mobilisation efforts. Rather, there seemed a tendency for institutions to support what one practitioner called “parachuting development” to make PV films (Shane). This was where PV consultants would drop into development programmes to provide their PV services through short-term, community-based workshops. Working in this way was often unsettling for practitioners, as one person described, “If you don’t know the people; if you do not have a relation with them and suddenly you come with cameras and you go to make videos; it gives me a bad feeling” (Kendall). In describing why institutions might promote short-form PV activities, practitioners pointed to growing budget
pressures in the development sector. Institutions, they said, often had limited resources to spare on activities they deemed more similar to communications and marketing than community-engaged development programming. A practitioner explained that she had to accept in her PV practice that “if you only have five days, it’s just an experience” rather than a meaningful process of long-term change for the participants (Ash).

A key challenge for sustainable PV seemed to be that few organisations were, as a practitioner described, “significantly investing in participatory video beyond one or two times: beyond doing a project; dipping their toe in” (Quinn). Rather, through uncomplicated views of PV practice that undervalued the time and resources required for meaningful activities, PV was often unsustainable at organisational levels. As the practitioner explained:

I’ve trained enough organisations and people to know that people love it and want to do it. But, how many people are given the space and opportunity to do it within their pre-existing work load; because it’s often not built in sufficiently at a programmatic level. So, unless it is; unless it’s part of your job description or part of your programming operation, then it is not given the space and opportunity to be done properly. That’s for me the one of the problems in terms of building capacity. (Quinn)

Even in institutions where PV continued after initial trainings, practitioners explained that its underlying principles often dropped off and traditional filmmaking processes remained. When this occurred, practitioners said, decision-making power and filmmaking control was often co-opted by the most technically savvy or influential PV participants. A practitioner who worked on a yearlong PV project illustrated this possibility. She explained that the young people she trained in PV skills were now struggling to make their own films due to a lack of organisational support (River). In their context, she expected that powerful community members would either push the youth to more closely align their skills with traditional “income generation” activities, or that the youth would be coerced into “filming political campaigns for local politicians, for probably no pay.” As a result, she lamented, “what you see out of that [outcome] in terms of citizen voice is oblique” (River).

One reason that PV failed to take hold for long-term use, practitioners said, was that institutions often added PV activities to development projects long after the initial design. Thus, there seemed little institutional understanding of how they might strategically
advance development goals. This affected potential funding. As one practitioner noted, "Participatory video is quite an investment. So far as I have seen, not so many projects are budgeting for that; or are not yet ready for that" (Kendall). Noticeable in the study, about half the practitioners said they primarily facilitated PV projects through timelines ranging from five days to four weeks. Only a few practitioners described revisiting communities after an initial PV training to support on-going engagement. That said, one practitioner explained that time itself was not a good measure of PV’s effectiveness for raising valued citizen voice:

It isn’t just for me about having more time. It’s using the time in the most effective way in terms of the aims of the work, which for me are about bridging the gap between ground level and decision-making. But, also about what that means for the people we work with. That’s why I think it’s a balance of time and structure. It’s just not a case of saying: ‘Here’s a video camera, off you go and you have two years to make something. That’s not what it’s about. It’s about structuring that time in a way that makes it possible for people who are marginalised in one way or another to express their perspectives. That isn’t necessarily about them having to be involved for a long period of time because the time costs are too great for people living difficult lives. They haven’t got that. It’s how that time is structured to make it possible for them to express their opinions, to take part, and to take action. (Jessie)

The comment implies that PV is complicated in practice. Accordingly, the practice requires more attention by PV practitioners on how to use PV appropriately to strengthen citizens’ agency. That is, so people can act on decisions affecting their lives—with or without PV.

6.4 Reflections on PV and the institutional views
6.4.1 Implications for citizen voice
Contemporary scholars have highlighted multiple challenges for sufficiently deploying C4D approaches in the international development sector (Enghel, 2015, p. 7; Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 5; Thomas & Van de Fliert, 2015, p. 52). However, rarely has C4D research as explicitly identified key areas of concern for PV practice in this context. This research in this thesis has done so through its categorisation of six potentially restrictive institutional views, named as output-focused, voice opportunity, apolitical, agenda-led, harmless and uncomplicated views. As presented in the preceding sections, the PV practitioners in the study articulated specific ways the differing institutional views adversely affect their aspirations for raising citizen voice with PV. This section provides an argument that links
the views to theory to describe key implications of the views for advancing valued citizen voice with PV.

As Section 6.2.2 highlighted, the output-focused view supports PV activities that prioritise the output over PV’s holistic process of personal and collective development (Gidley, 2007, p. 42). Of greatest concern with this view is that it could minimise possibilities for how citizens represent themselves. For the actions described within the output-focused view hold significance for “who speaks for whom” when raising citizen voice (Low et al., 2012, p. 55). The implication with this view is that PV film outputs could end up representing institutional viewpoints, rather than authentically representing PV participant identities (Castells, 2009, p. 6). Similarly, as Section 6.2.3 described, the voice opportunity view could lead to, what Couldry (2014) calls, a “crisis of voice” (p. 15). This is where opportunities for voice articulation are prioritised over serious efforts to address why citizen voice is being denied or diminished. Of particular concern for valued citizen voice is that institutions holding the voice opportunity view often do so on their own terms. This is where they provide platforms for voice expression while simultaneously devaluing the spaces for alternative narratives that might threaten the status-quo (Couldry, 2014, p. 15).

PV practitioners in the study also identified the apolitical view as causing tension for PV praxis and citizen voice, as detailed in Section 6.2.4. The view is reminiscent of Cornwall’s (2004) discussion of participatory development approaches for deliberative democracy (p. 79). She argues that too often participatory activities reinforce exclusionary practices as policy decisions are already made prior to citizen engagement (pp. 79-80). In this way, the apolitical view supports a development industry often “antithetical to politics” due to mandated project outcomes and operational restrictions from hosting governments (Enghel, 2015, p. 21; Waisbord, 2008, p. 512). By insisting on project predictability, participatory “approaches concerned with power, human rights and social justice” are limited (Enghel & Wilkins, 2012, p. 9). As well, through its avoidance of risk, the apolitical view ignores critical arguments that citizen empowerment cannot be achieved without attention to politics (Waisbord, 2008, p. 515). The implication for valued citizen voice from apolitical views is that PV practices may be unable to support the activities needed for “citizens to engage meaningfully in shaping public policy” (Cornwall, 2004, p. 79).
PV practitioners in the study also worried about the *agenda-led view*, as described in Section 6.3.2. Through this view, it could be difficult for PV practice to support alternative viewpoints and actions that challenge the entrenched power of development institutions’ agendas (Dutta, 2012b, p. 4; Enghel, 2015, p. 16; Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 6). One particular area of concern in the view was the rise in the development sector of results-based management procedures and linear planning processes (Eyben, Guijt, Roche, & Shutt, 2015). The implication for valued citizen voice is that such agendas tended to affect PV practice adversely as institutions prioritised short-term outcomes over long-term impacts. Another identified tension for practitioners was the institutional *harmless view*, as Section 6.3.3 described. Here, practitioners expressed tension that institutions rarely considered how PV activities might cause harm to PV participants. They gave examples where PV fostered “elite capture” by “locally based individuals with disproportionate access to social, political or economic power” (Dasgupta & Beard, 2007, p. 229). The implication for valued citizen voice is that elite capture could reinforce entrenched power imbalances in the community to the further exclusion of those most marginalised (Guijt & Shah, 1998, p. 3).

As Section 6.3.4 detailed, the institutional *uncomplicated view* was also problematic for advancing valued citizen voice. The view in particular highlighted the difficulty institutions have with complexity (Burns, 2007, p. 1). They tend to envision PV implementation through simple and/or inflexible development processes. This flags a concern for valued citizen voice. For while societies operate in self-adaptive, complex systems, many of the tools being deployed in the development sector are based on simple systems thinking (Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 45; Shutt, 2015, p. 70). The implication of the uncomplicated view is that PV activities could become instrumental to serve the targeted needs of the implementing institution, rather than the PV participants themselves. In this way, it could minimise or shut down possibilities for using PV as a mobilising social process for citizen engagement and action.

Making explicit the six institutional views and their implications provides insight into potentially limiting—and conversely enabling—environments for principled PV practice. The knowledge aims to help practitioners determine potential development contexts in which the principle-based conceptual framework presented in Chapter 5 might thrive.
Operationalising the framework, however, is a complex proposal in practice. The following section explores how PV practitioners in the study might approach the complexity through utilising their practitioner agency.

**6.4.2 Negotiating and navigating the views**

In international development, not every non-government organisation, research institute, government department and/or funding agency fully personifies the six institutional views described in this chapter. Rather, they likely hold and express the different views to various degrees depending on the situation and context. Likewise, individual PV practitioners also likely experience differing levels of tension to the six institutional views in international development. Indeed, the study itself identified varying practitioner responses to the categorised views in its findings. For instance, all 25 practitioners described tensions resulting from the influence of the agenda-led institutional view. However, fewer practitioners, 16 of 25, expressed tensions related to the voice opportunity view. The later data point is unsurprising since 11 of the 25 practitioners were categorised in the study in the amplified voice pathway (see Section 4.1.1), which shares a *right to speak* ethos similar to the voice opportunity view. The variations within and reactions to the institutional views illustrates that PV practice operates through a complex web of organisational perceptions and practitioner responses. To navigate the complexity, a few study participants said that PV practitioners themselves needed a stronger sense of their own agency to apply in practice. This includes practitioners’ own powers in mediated PV processes, as one practitioner highlighted:

> There is confusion in ‘I let them make exactly the film they wanted to make; in the way they wanted to make it…and yeah, it’s crude, and yeah it’s bad and no one wants to watch it. And it doesn’t do what they wanted. But *they* did it themselves.’ That’s not good enough for me. It’s absolutely not good enough for me and really frustrates me. And I’ve seen it a lot. *(Quinn)*

In discussing agency, another practitioner described both its value and difficulty in application. She shared a particular frustration she experienced when using PV in international development contexts *(Jessie)*. She explained that influencing local power dynamics during a PV activity had “become like the emperor’s new clothes… Because it confronts the ideal somehow, it is taboo to talk about.” She added:
We [practitioners] have a role in opening up space between top-down and bottom-up, and mediating interactions within this. But, until the need is perceived, and it is understood what we can offer in this respect, we don’t get the opportunity to influence positively... We need to be able to assert what we offer that is different—what our experience in what our expertise offers as practitioners. By not valuing it and not seeing it, and seeing only the technical, we feed the assumption that you can train people to do this in five days. I found that more extreme in the international development work I’ve done over the years than in community development work where what the facilitator brings is understood and valued, which enables us to use our agency. (Jessie)

The study revealed that PV practitioners themselves could be unaware of how institutional influences on PV praxis restrict valued citizen voice, even unwittingly. This was apparent in how several practitioners appeared to align with many of the institutional views, as described in the voice opportunity view example provided at the start of this section. As a result, they might see little reason to apply their agency to challenge the institutional views.

A practitioner drew a cartoon in her study interview that seemed to illustrate this situation, as Figure 6.2 shows. As she explained:

My favourite cartoon is you’ve got this cage with its people in it. And they are all going: ‘Let me out!’ ‘Let me out!’ and then all of the sudden, emancipation comes along. ‘Yea!!!’ And they run. He’s running this way and this way; and they run into this nice, so much bigger cage. And, that’s it. That seems to be what often happens. (Tyler)

In a sense, the humorous depiction of emancipation links to situations where development institutions offer opportunities for citizen voice, but ultimately enforce agendas that keep voice restrained (i.e. as in the agenda-led and voice opportunity views). Of significance for valued citizen voice is that practitioners using PV in these development spaces are working within the cage of these constraints. The implication is that PV practice requires considered efforts by practitioners to recognise and break free of institutional barriers by applying their agency. This active role for practitioner agency seems necessary given how the institutional views potentially limit realising valued citizen voice with PV, as noted
previously in this chapter. A practitioner in the study illustrated this view. She advocated for PV practitioners to be more forthcoming and honest with institutions, and themselves, to navigate potentially limiting institutional influences:

What I think is important it is that we are more up-front about the risks, and we share experiences on how to negotiate those risks. Because trying to pretend, in the idealistic discourse that has been around participatory video doesn’t acknowledge that… [It’s about] being realistic about the dangers, difficulties, challenges and compromises; and knowing that there’s not one easy answer. Knowing what the potential tensions might be, I think, puts us in a better position for making tricky decisions for when we are out in the field. *(Jessie)*

Evoking practitioner agency, it would seem, requires both reflectivity by PV practitioners on the influential role they play in advancing citizen voice, and claiming responsibility for their actions. Such actions appeared a difficult proposal for a few practitioners in the study. For example, one practitioner described facilitating PV activities as a global consultant. She lived in a developed country and flew into developing countries to implement PV activities. She explained that she decided to stop using PV in her work, in part, because even though she regarded PV as “cool” and “magic,” she eventually came to feel like “it was fake…like glittery powder into your eyes” *(Morgan)*. As she said:

The way we practiced is probably the most mercantile way of practicing PV. We made a career out of it… I’m not ashamed of it. I know there are some problems with it; a bit neo-colonialist… It’s okay. I’m not selling arms. *(Morgan)*

The practitioners’ statement illustrates why greater attention on practitioner agency might be necessary to advance citizen voice. On one hand, the practitioner recognised her own power as a PV consultant flying into developing countries. On the other hand, she seemed to minimise personal responsibility for problems arising from the “neo-colonialist” approach through the dismissive comment of “it’s okay. I’m not selling arms” *(Morgan)*. Similarly, another practitioner appeared to downplay her agency in her PV practice. She did so through a story about her idealised neutral role in PV application, as told through how she engaged community members in an activity:

I introduced myself as an independent consultant and facilitator with a background in journalism; neutral. I was not there representing [the company], even though I was hired by them. I was going to get paid by the company, but I was neutral. I was there to facilitate the communication process by them in the community. I stated very clearly that I was not there to promise any change in
I am just here to facilitate this process and to do all my best to take all your voices to them and from there onwards it’s on their [the company’s] hands. It’s not in mine right. So, this is something that I usually do, depending on the context of course, each time I go in and facilitate. (Mel)

The significance of the story is that despite her idealised neutral stance, the story’s PV practitioner is noticeably part of a political process. Power inequity, for instance, was apparent in her comment that the response to participant concerns lay in her hiring company’s hands. Her hired role fed into the company’s power as she provided community concerns to the institution through a consultative PV process, an approach described as problematic in Section 5.1.2. In contrast to the two previous examples, another practitioner in the study described embracing her agency and mediated role in her PV work:

I’m skilled enough in this area to be able to say that unless this is about communicating and stimulating dialogue, I’m not involved... [I want to go] where I am really transferring the expertise and helping people wherever they want help to continue that conversation in that way... This enabling and ennobling process, for it to be effective, really requires more receptacles on my part in listening rather than just directing and asking people to do what I think is right. It’s a position of supplication and putting myself at service of groups rather than the other way around. (Toni)

The comment highlights that agency is actionable, where practitioners make choices in how they engage with institutions and in communities. The comment also highlights that while PV practitioners might recognise their agency, they are not always able to realise their ideals in practice. This is one reason the study explored both practitioner ideals and potentially limiting institutional views often beyond practitioners’ control. The practitioner’s comment underpins the argument that PV for raising citizen voice requires an enabling environment for principled practice. Many practitioners in the study made similar observations when describing certain contexts in the mainstream development sector that could constrain PV’s potential to raise citizen voice. Nonetheless, despite this knowledge, only a handful of PV practitioners in the study actively sought alternative environments in which to locate their work. The choice likely reflects the difficulty of navigating a career with PV in the development sector, as one practitioner described:
We can’t both challenge [the sector] and want to work within it. It’s contradictory. I don’t think it can actually happen. Well, it may happen… You really have to suss out where the NGOs can come in and negotiate terms, and not just want a job. And that’s the difficulty isn’t it. That people do just want a job, and it’s quite understandable that they do. (Katulpa)

Due to the practitioner’s belief that contemporary PV practice positions itself too closely “inside the development box,” she encouraged “other ways of organising:”

If the struggle is to be seen as establishing PV practitioners as professional consultants in what may be seen as an already fairly dubious world of development charity, all well and good. But, if the struggle is really to enable poor people to gain a voice and some degree of autonomy, then that is surely quite a different discussion… I think we’re just being so tame about thinking that we have to go in through a Western NGO. I don’t think you have to. (Katulpa)

The observation indicates that PV practitioners have a choice in where they work and with whom. Such choices, however, are not always straightforward or easy. For example, the practitioners in the study who relocated their practice outside the mainstream development sector described particular challenges in practice. As one practitioner noted, “I’ve been working entirely outside of institutional contexts, which does make things difficult for funding” (Tyler). Similarly, to avoid voice-denying institutional influences, other practitioners described seeking grants, foundational support, crowd-sourcing, self-funding, non-PV jobs, or working alongside funded activist and/or research-driven activities to support their PV practice. To forge non-traditional PV pathways, PV practitioners described relying on self-confidence in their abilities, their industry reputation and/or an enabling organisational position. In doing so, their experience and academic background seemed to afford them certain privileges in practice to apply their practitioner agency. The significance of which appears to be that active practitioner agency holds potential for practitioners to more skilfully negotiate the institutional views. Doing so could ultimately ensure citizen voice is in a better position to be respected and influential through PV activities.

The aspects of agency and choice hold value for PV praxis overall. For participatory video as a socially embedded practice has much wider history and application than the international development context described in this study (Askanius, 2014; Halleck, D.,
2002; Milne, Mitchell & Lange 2012; Salazar, J. F., & Gauthier, J., 2008). As an example, practitioners can draw lessons from community-based engagement and activism-focused PV practices to inform their PV activities in community and international contexts (Chiu, 2009, p. 5; Gregory & Gáeshire, 2005; Nemes, High, Shafer & Goldsmith, 2007, p. 7; Sitter, 2015, p. 910; Smith, 2006, p. 113). Indeed, most practitioners in the study combined their international work with local practices, as mentioned in Section 3.2.1. A few practitioners as well promoted PV through local connection and relationships as the way forward for more equitable citizen voice. One practitioner illustrated this point as she voiced her concerns about working with NGOs:

I think working in your own country...I mean really in your own country, where you are taking the same risks as people in creating alliances in moving forward in campaigning; it gives you that experience of not being tied to someone else’s policy: i.e. an NGO policy. I mean the problem with NGOs is that they are so tied to fundraising that it almost takes over. (Katula)

There are multiple, contemporary examples of PV practice outside the consultancy model prevalent in international development where practitioners are working locally in their own countries and contexts (De Lange, Olivier & Wood, 2008, p. 109; Evans & Foster, 2009, p. 87; Lomax, Fink, Singh & High, 2011, p. 231; Martin, 2015, p. 93). Such practices may hold potential to circumvent many of the pressures described in this chapter, or at least offer alternative viewpoints for comparison on the issues raised. For example, working in a local context could reduce institutional pressures related to short timelines for training due to having to fly in and out of a country, little funding for follow-up visits, or the lack of appreciation for the skills facilitators bring to the practice. This is a point a practitioner described in this section as more problematic her international PV consultancies than her community development work with PV (Jessie). Perhaps—as practitioners have discussed here and in Section 4.5—valued citizen voice is pragmatically unattainable within traditional international development contexts. Or, as Shaw (2012) has argued, PV at the very least can only operate as a compromised practice that must accept its own limitations as foundational (p. 227). This is an argument worthy of further discussion and debate in PV praxis.

Of course, locally based PV projects outside international development contexts cannot be considered a panacea. For they can also be influenced by the views raised in this chapter
that cause practitioners tension, such as funding and other pressures (Kindon et al., 2012, p. 349; Shaw 2007, p. 181). The implication is that whether PV practice occurs in one’s own community, or through an international development model, a reflective awareness is necessary of the enablers and constraints for valued citizen voice, the environmental influences on PV’s application, and how best to use one’s own agency to negotiate and navigate meaningful practice. The next chapter will highlight these three areas in a discussion on the significance of the study findings presented in the thesis. The chapter will also offer a summary of how the knowledge gained from the study might fit into a wider understanding of PV practitioners and valued citizen voice.
7. Conclusions for valuing citizen voice with PV

What right? Give somebody a voice.
Just ridiculous. Totally counter-intuitive.
They’ve got a voice already.
What are you doing with it?
—Tyler

7.1 Enabling valued citizen voice with PV

7.1.1 Significance of the thesis

This chapter provides a synthesis of the key learning in the thesis addressing the overarching question: **How can participatory video practitioners enable valued citizen voice in international development contexts?** It offers significance to PV practice through an argument for greater attention on voice receptivity, enabling institutional development environments and practitioner agency. The chapter also presents critical areas identified for valuing citizen voice with PV that could benefit from further research. It concludes by offering PV praxis a challenge to bypass its celebratory claims and embrace the strategies required to support citizens whose voices most need to be heard, valued and responded to.

The preceding chapters highlighted that PV practice plays an important role in legitimising underrepresented voice in international development contexts. PV activities hold potential to bring about new possibilities for voice to generate political responsiveness for more inclusive and participatory citizenship (Cornwall, 2002, p. 50; Mohanty & Tandon, 2006, p. 10). PV can support transformative efforts to improve governance and advance development outcomes through active citizen involvement (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010, p. 347). Realising such claims to sufficiently raise valued citizen voice however, is a more nuanced and often-compromising proposal in practice than PV’s evangelised rhetoric might imply. To interrogate this complexity, the study explored global PV practitioners’

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8 Excerpt from Tyler's poem from the poetic interpretive analysis. See Section 3.4.2 and Appendix 1.
aspirations for and experience with raising citizen voice in international development contexts with PV. It did so by addressing three objectives:

1) To explore the phenomenon of using participatory video to raise citizen voice in international development contexts from PV practitioner perspectives;

2) To develop a principle-driven, conceptual framing for participatory video practice for valuing citizen voice; and

3) To offer insight on enabling environments for participatory video praxis to raise valued citizen voice in international development contexts.

To address the first objective, the study first analysed PV practitioners’ conceptualisations of the phenomenon, as described in Chapter 4. This resulted in the identification and classification of three voice pathways for raising citizen voice with PV; named as amplified, engaged and equitable voice. Chapter 5 presented an argument that the characteristics of the equitable voice pathway were the most applicable for addressing objective two of the research in this thesis to develop a conceptual framework for PV practice. Drawing from the equitable voice pathway characteristics of agency, receptivity and relationships (see Section 4.5) and the literature review (see Section 2.5), a conceptual framework emerged. As described in Section 5.3 and 5.4, the framework included the principles of personal recognition, collective representation, social and political recognition, responsive listening and empathic relationships. To address the third objective in the study, the research explored potentially enabling environments for PV praxis to raise valued citizen voice. As Chapter 6 described, the research resulted in the identification of six potentially constraining institutional views; named as the output-led, voice opportunity, apolitical, agenda-led, harmless and uncomplicated views. In this thesis, it is argued that these institutional views require negotiation when raising citizen voice with PV. This is necessary to ensure a viable context for PV practice to enable valued citizen voice; especially PV activities that are deployed through the conceptual framework principles offered in Chapter 5.

Through addressing the three research objectives, the study reached the following conclusion. That is, for PV practitioners to enable valued citizen voice in international development contexts, PV practice requires:
- Strategic consideration of how PV might advance voice receptivity as well as its expression and amplification;
- Recognition of the enabling and limiting factors of the environments where PV is applied; and
- Acknowledgement that practitioners’ own conceptualisations of voice and active use of their personal agency affects its potential.

This rest of the chapter describes the significance of these three key requirements prior to offering areas for further study on PV practitioners and valued citizen voice.

7.1.2 Conclusion 1: Prioritise voice receptivity

In Chapter 5, a critical discussion of the voice pathway findings highlighted the importance of voice articulation, amplification and receptivity for increasing its value and influence on decision-making. Here, it determined that the equitable voice pathway characteristics of agency, receptivity and relationships, as identified in the study findings, were favourable for valuing citizen voice with PV. They were also influential on the conceptual framework offered in this thesis, especially the receptivity characteristic. For example, the framework pays particular attention to voice receptivity through three of its five principles—namely social and political recognition, responsive listening and empathic relationships. The other two principles—namely personal recognition and collective representation—focus more on voice articulation and amplification.

Historically, much of PV literature has focused on the representational importance of raising citizen voice for people living with disadvantage (Anderson, 1988; Braden, 1998; White, 2003). Here, multiple scholars have researched, debated and argued the value of underrepresented citizens narrating their own lives (Low et al., 2012, p. 49; Shaw, 2015, p. 8; White, 2003, p. 20). As such, this section defers further theoretical discussion of PV’s empowering potential for participants to that history. Instead, it turns attention to the less-theorised area of voice receptivity as a conclusion that this actionable area requires greater attention in contemporary PV practice. Doing so aims to combat political manoeuvrings that keep disadvantaged citizens “voice blind” (Couldry, 2014, p. 23).
If governments and most citizens remain blind to the fact that these new processes of democratic voice are going on and require a political response, then they will not progress very far. That is the risk of us remaining ‘voice blind’: that is, blind to the wider conditions needed to sustain new and effective forms of voice. (p. 23)

Promoting PV as a process to tackle such blindness requires attention beyond voice articulation and amplification. Here, scholars offer *listening* as motivator of political influence and socially accountability (Dreher, 2009, p. 10; Dutta, 2014, p. 67; Thill, 2009, p. 537). As Dobson (2014) argues, “To think that politics begins and ends with talk is to misunderstand its nature and undermine its potential” (p. 196). His rationale is that:

> Listening, as a solvent of power, works best when the powerful are obliged to listen—without interruption—to the voices of the powerless. Power lies in being listened to… A more mature stage of the process would be represented by dialogical listening, in which citizens would listen—as far as possible without cynicism or prejudice—to politicians as well as vice versa. (p. 10)

Participatory video can help citizens more assuredly, emotively and powerfully represent their concerns. However, unless listeners are open to hear and respectfully respond, necessary power shifts are unlikely (p. 11). Thus, as the conceptual framework offered in this thesis suggests, it is imperative PV activities enhance both voice representation and its reception. In development studies scholarship, multiple arguments exist for increasing input from ordinary citizens in political spaces where they are absent or ignored (Gaventa & Tandon, 2010a, p. 27; Kabeer, 2005, p. 1; Mohanty & Tandon, 2006, p. 10). Often however, less attention is paid on how to legitimise citizen voice through mediated listening (Oswald, 2014, p. 6). This is unsurprising, for in the digital-driven culture of communication, there is an overwhelming focus on creating media for consumption by others (Couldry et al., 2014, p. 3). Hence, it is likely that a natural assumption exists about participatory media that raising citizen voice equates to the act of people from the margins accessing and creating media. This is in contrast to seeing it as a “pedagogical instrument to generate better citizens and increase societal happiness” (as quoted by Carpentier in Jenkins & Carpentier, 2013, p. 281).
In international development programming, a similar imbalance exists with greater attention often on raising community voice, rather than equal attention on improving institutional listening (Fox, 2015, p. 16). The report *Social accountability: What does the evidence really say?* found that development institutions often prioritise tactical activities that raise community voice, over strategic efforts that might ensure government responsiveness to community concerns (p. 16). The report stressed that a greater impact for voice requires enabling, democratic environments *plus* encouragement from within institutions (p. 16). This is where organisational staff and partners recognise and promote the value of voices often marginalised due to “gender, ethnic or class bias” (p. 16). As the report author, Jonathan Fox (2015), noted:

> Action that has the backing of government allies who are both willing and able to get involved, or that has forged links with other citizen counterparts to build countervailing power, has a much greater chance of addressing impunity. (p. 25)

Fox (2015) described such action as “voice” plus “teeth” where citizen voice is “coordinated with government reforms that bolster public sector responsiveness” (p. 25). This “state-society synergy” is necessary to improve institutional performance and thus, social accountability (pp. 7, 25). When viewed through this lens, the injustice of marginalised citizen voice is not only limited access to media to vocalise opinion, it also acknowledges an “injustice of recognition” by decision-makers tasked to listen (Couldry, 2007, p. 258; Fraser, 2000, p. 109). The implication for PV practice is that influential, valued voice requires attention to creating and sustaining responsive listening. Accordingly, for citizen voice to have *teeth*, it would seem that more attention is required on cultivating “courageous listening” by decision-makers to participatory media (Thill, 2009, p. 537).

The significance of voice receptivity is the argument that PV can do more than merely advance citizen engagement in decision-making conversations. Rather, PV practice holds potential to transform the “lack of recognition of that engagement by governments” (Couldry, 2007, p. 255). By acknowledging and responding to this reality, PV practitioners are better positioned to “see connections” rather than produce “existing boundaries” for valuing voice (Couldry, 2010, p. 147). In the study, it seemed that PV practitioners who prioritised citizen voice receptivity often did so with intention to shift listening dynamics and
hierarchies for more equitable voice. Such actions respond directly to Dobson’s argument that “power lies in being listened to” (Dobson, 2014, p. 10). The linkage implies that citizens who engage in PV processes could benefit from PV activities that transform political listening. PV’s value, in other words, lies in responding to the historic reality where divisions of class, caste, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. have elevated certain voices in society over others (Young, 1996, p. 122). The challenge for PV practice is in how to utilise the PV methodology to help listeners “embrace, accept and gradually let go [of their] inner clamouring” so they might able to respond to alternative voice (Isaacs, 1999, p. 83). Admittedly, this could be challenging in a development sector that often positions people living in poverty as “listeners rather than vice versa” (Tacchi, 2012, p. 662). There is little doubt that prioritising listening takes concerted effort (Dobson, 2014, p. 177). Here, Dobson (2014) offers advice that could be applied to PV practice:

The chance of deliberative democracy realising its inclusionary intentions could be enhanced by a more systematic attention to listening. This is a matter of listening (out) for as well as listening to. Once again, listening out for previously unheard voices requires a particular sort of attention, rooted often in silence, and the structuration of this form of dialogue is so unlike ordinary conversation that it requires learning and practice. (p. 177)

7.1.3 Conclusion 2: Seek enabling environments

The second conclusion offered in this thesis relates to the key institutional tensions PV practitioners in the study faced for raising citizen voice. That is, using PV to ensure valued citizen voice requires locating activities in enabling environments that can support voice-mobilising principles—such as those offered in the conceptual framework developed in the study. This conclusion is a response to the complicated and contradictory contexts where PV is applied. As argued in development studies scholarship, “Political opportunities are opened and closed through historic, dynamic and iterative processes. While political opportunities create possibilities for collective action for policy change, these openings themselves may have been created by prior mobilisation” (Gaventa & McGee, 2010, p. 15). In other words, political change relies on history and place. The implication of this argument is that rarely can one PV activity evoke dramatic and transformative change for its participants. Rather, PV is best utilised in enabling environments that are already deploying multiple strategies for citizen engagement and action. PV can provide additional weight to efforts aimed at rebalancing voice inequities in decision-making—even if ever so

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slightly—in on-going process of social and political change. Such efforts are necessary to recognise the influence of top-down communicative models and “voice-denying” global frameworks in international development (Couldry, 2010, p. 3; 2014, p. 16). They also recognise the key institutional views with potential to constrain PV praxis and citizen voice. The significance of such knowledge is that it allows PV practitioners to negotiate their practices by knowing where and with whom to collaborate when raising citizen voice.

Participatory media aspires for often-unheard citizens in a society to engage with, disrupt, confront and shift oppressive policies through partnerships or resistance (Dutta, 2012b, p. 229). But it cannot do so without PV practice first acknowledging powers that privilege the participation and voice of certain people and institutions (Carpentier, 2011b, p. 139). Moreover, it is naïve to expect PV activities to reverse historical disadvantage without attention to systemic power. To do so ignores the reality that oppressive systems often benefit from the silence of others, or in withholding response (Dobson, 2014, p. 80). In promoting voice that matters, Couldry (2014) argues that “it is not just governments but all citizens who need to see clearly before them the new possibilities of voice now emerging and the tough preconditions that must be met if these possibilities are to be sustained.” (p. 24). Valued citizen voice, in other words, requires asking the “awkward question of how it was those voices were silenced in the first place” (Barrera, 2011, p. 5). Attention on power is necessary for PV to challenge, and potentially reform, the politics of why societies privilege certain voices over others (Cornwall & Rivas, 2015, p. 409; Walsh, 2012, p. 242).

In securing valued voice, however, it can be counterproductive to think in opposing terms of the silent passive oppressed and the vocal powerful oppressors. Rather, political change operates through multiple “actors and factors that influence the way change does or does not emerge over time” (Burns, Harvey, & Aragón, 2012, p. 5). In the study, this nuanced understanding seemed lacking at times. Of concern is that a binary mindset of oppressed verses oppressor contradicts arguments for inclusive citizenship (Kabeer, 2005, p. 23). This is where responsive governance is motivated not only by recognising the gaps between citizens and duty holders, but the likely bridges (p. 23). Arguably, building bridges in today’s global society is multi-faceted in the transnational process of how ordinary citizens engage in political spaces (Gaventa & Tandon, 2010b, p. 4). For on one hand, PV’s digital nature creates scenarios where national and global audiences can
offer solidarity on citizens’ concerns. Yet on the other, if PV merely extracts citizens’ concerns for national or global engagement, such actions might curtail local motivation for citizen engagement (p. 4). The significance for PV is that effective practice requires respect for the complexity of social and political change when raising citizen voice, as argued in development studies scholarship:

Complexity theory posits that it is not possible to predict with any confidence the relation between cause and effect. Change is emergent. History is largely unpredictable. Organised efforts to direct change confront the impossibility of our ever having a total understanding of all the sets of societal relationships that generate change and are in constant flux. New interrelational processes are constantly being generated, which in turn may affect and change those already existing. Small ‘butterfly’ actions may have a major impact, and big ones may have very little impact (Eyben et al., 2008, p. 203).

The observation implies that recognising complexity is imperative for practicing PV if long-term development and social change is to be achieved. As an implication for PV practice, it seems that PV endeavours can no longer prioritise public, government-citizen meetings as the main pathway to influence change. Complexity theory opens possibilities that valued voice might be attainable through alternative and complementary activities. These might include using PV activities to strengthen local relationships, expand community connections, build collaborative networks, or cultivate responsive listening between citizens and government in on-on-one meetings, focus groups or on-site visits. The possibilities in other words must respond to aspirations for long-term voice influence, rather than merely assume voice responsiveness to citizen representation in the public sphere.

7.1.4 Conclusion 3: Apply practitioner agency
The importance of how practitioners apply their own agency while using PV in international development environments is the third conclusion in this chapter. For rarely can practitioners working in development claim neutrality (Eyben, 2014, p. 164). Their views, roles, experiences, principles and actions matter for valued citizen voice. Here, Shaw (2012) explains that PV practitioners must embrace the “real world” (p. 238). That is, an environment where PV practice is laden with contradictory conditions that cause practitioners tension (p. 238). For only then can they sufficiently address the “complex reality of project application” (p. 225). In this way, PV practice requires greater attention on
how PV practitioners’ perceptions and use of their own agency affects citizen voice. This conclusion is in response to the study findings that PV practitioners conceptualise voice and respond to institutional influences on praxis in unique ways.

The focus on practitioner agency situates practitioners as political actors in development, rather than neutral bystanders. In this way, practitioner agency embodies the capacity to recognise and utilise one’s own power in negotiating complex and political structures (Dutta, 2011, p. 9; Shahrokh & Wheeler, 2014, p. 6). For PV practice, structures are both the political and institutional contexts into which PV is applied. As Walsh (2012) argues, PV is never as easy as “hitting the record button and understanding a clear truth about the world” (p. 243) PV activities are also influenced by the historical, social and political powers at play (Walsh, 2012, p. 243). The argument for PV practitioner agency counteracts a “hopeful naivety” that exists in practice (Walsh, 2014, p. 3). Here, the study interprets practitioner agency through the following definition:

Agency...is taken to mean that people play an active role in shaping their own lives and the relationships that they have with others. Agency reflects how people recognise the power that they hold, their capacity to use this power in order to make their own decisions, and take their own actions within their complex social and political environment. (Shahrokh and Wheeler, 2014a, p. 4)

Negotiating complex development environments is no easy task. Paul Hoggett, Marjorie Mayo and Chris Miller (2009), the authors of The dilemmas of development work, describe the challenge:

Developing such strategies to tackle these fundamental problems—to make a real difference in the here and now while having an eye to longer-term social transformation—is immensely difficult... Part of the ‘project of the self’ becomes the negotiation of such tensions, tensions that find expression in the dilemmas of everyday life. (pp. 29-30)

Similarly, Margaret Ludwith and Jane Springett (2010) argue that “engaging in participatory practice is engaging in our own transformation where we must challenge ourselves to change alongside those on a similar journey” (p. 201). Knowing PV practitioners wrestle deeply with tensions in practice offers a starting place for reflection. Through embracing a self-defining process, PV practitioners can embark on a “deliberate process of becoming unsettled about what is normal” (Eyben, 2014, p. 1). For people
working in development contexts are rarely ineffectual influencers (Eyben & Guijt, 2015, p. 5), including PV practitioners. Development efforts unfold through multiple actors’ values, interests, knowledge, power, relationships, and perceptions of how to bring about change for people living in poverty or marginalisation (Eyben, 2014, p. 20; Hoggett et al., 2009, p. 108). In *International aid and the making of a better world*, Eyben’s (2014) reflexive comment on her work resonates with this argument:

> There is no perfect way to do aid. Nevertheless, I was learning that if I gave priority to the type of relationships that offer challenging perspective and honest appraisal, I could recognise myself as a political actor and become aware of the contradictions and challenges of power and voice I confronted when managing aid programmes that sought to influence policy (p. 30).

The conclusion to apply practitioner agency suggest that PV practitioners can make “a better world” as powerful actors working in development contexts (Eyben, 2014, p. 154). They hold potential to do so through recognising and appropriately modifying their responses to the “systemic power that decides whose knowledge and ideas count” (p. 154). Deciphering and transforming self to enact practitioner agency sufficiently with PV no doubt necessitates a holistic approach. This is especially the case in a development sector often more comfortable with top-down agendas than participatory C4D approaches (Enghel, 2015, p. 7; Lennie & Tacchi, 2013, p. 5; Waisbord, 2008, p. 505). This means that PV practice requires practitioners to fully embrace the contradictory and often conflicted development environment if they have any desire to work within it (Hoggett et al., 2009, p. 74). Doing so can help them determine whether to work from within conventional development institutions or relocate their PV practice into alternative spaces. It is important to note with such a choice that institutional partnerships in international development do not always constrain citizen voice. Organisational power can certainly be used to positive ends. Rather, the focus on practitioner agency raises the concern that voice-diminishing potential exists within certain institutional views and environments. What this means is that advancing valued citizen voice requires skilful navigation by PV practitioners who work in international development contexts. Once acknowledged, practitioners can better understand and claim their associated role as powerful actors in processes of raising valued citizen voice with PV.
7.2 Possibilities for PV and citizen voice

7.2.1 Ideas for further research

In summary, this chapter has offered an argument for three overarching actions for enabling valued citizen voice with PV in international development contexts. First, it promoted the benefit of implementing PV activities where citizen voice is not only equal in decision-making spaces, but also influentially equitable for response. Second, it encouraged PV practice to mindfully consider and challenge structures restricting citizen voice equity, including institutional conditions. Third, it promoted PV practitioners claiming and responsibly enacting their own agency as powerful actors in catalysing social and political change. The aspirations served as an answer to the overall research question of how PV practitioners might enable valued citizen voice in international development contexts. Nonetheless, more research that builds on the study findings could be beneficial for PV practice.

The study focused on 25 contemporary PV practitioners with experience in international development contexts. In doing so, it provided an intimate portrait of how they conceptualised raising citizen voice with PV. It also highlighted potential consequences for PV participants through differing voice pathways for PV praxis. The findings, alongside C4D and development studies theories, provided guidance for the principle-driven conceptual framework offered in Chapter 5. The research, however, was unable to implement the conceptual framework in a community setting due to limitations of time and funding. As such, PV practice could benefit from applied research using the conceptual framework. The research could relate to how the framework’s principles influence PV design, as well as if and how its application is able to change citizens’ lives. PV praxis might also benefit from further study on how the six identified institutional views presented in Chapter 6 relate to particular PV case studies or PV activity design. Potential also exists to research practitioner responses to the voice pathways presented in Chapter 4. For instance, how might the three identified voice pathways affect PV design by new and seasoned professionals? Finally, additional research could expand the three conclusive areas highlighted in this final chapter for enabling valued citizen voice—namely voice receptivity, enabling environments and practitioner agency.
Overall, the intention of this thesis has been to impact PV practice and ultimately disadvantaged citizens through a commitment to social justice and political change. Where the knowledge builds from here is ultimately up to those who value citizen voice as a cornerstone of more inclusive, democratic societies. As Couldry (2010) argues, “making voice matter is hard; it is even harder, amid a proliferation of new voices, to challenge the hidden forces and dislocations that prevent them mattering when it counts” (p. 150). Hence, PV activities can only shift voice-denying forces when its mediators understand and fully embrace the challenge of doing so. Such considered action is necessary for PV participants’ voice to truly matter.

7.2.2 My concluding PV story: A brief epilogue

At the start of the thesis, I shared a story about my own tensions as a PV practitioner in raising the voice of others. This was where the NGO chose the topic of climate change, but the children wanted to make a film about domestic violence. On one hand in the PV activity, I saw how easily non-flexible, institutional agendas driven by pre-determined outcomes and donor requirements could diminish the authentic voice of PV participants. On the other, I understood the value of amplifying children’s concerns about a changing climate in formal decision-making spaces. The power imbalance, however, in the PV film’s content decision struck an unsettling chord. For future practice, I wondered how I might better navigate such dilemmas of narrative disparity, institutional agendas and advancing citizen voice. The questioning led to my study of PV practice from PV practitioners’ perspectives. Here, I explored the value of PV as a communication for development methodology through the ideals and actions of 25 experienced, global PV practitioners. The findings led to a proposed conceptual framework for raising valued citizen voice with PV. It also revealed barriers in international development contexts that required negotiation and navigation to circumvent. Through the study’s focus on PV practitioners as powerful actors in raising citizen voice, agency emerged as a bold and necessary enabler that I could embrace in my practice—alongside seeking enabling environments and prioritising voice receptivity in practice.

The study revealed multiple ways to use my practitioner agency in international development contexts. I could adapt my practice to the identified institutional views, and thus accept the limitations they offer in their promotion of amplified voice. I could expand
PV praxis by pushing the boundaries of how mainstream development institutions use PV in their efforts for more engaged citizen voice in public spaces. Alternatively, I could choose a more political, activist route outside traditional development in pursuit of equitable voice. The study offered me principles and a conceptual framework to use to spark meaningful discussions with potential partners such as non-government organisations, research institutions, government departments, funding agencies or community groups. The finding also provided me insight into institutional views that held varying implications for principled PV practice. The knowledge made explicit how PV's limitations and possibilities might be realised in theory and practice to support citizen voices to be head and valued.

In the thesis prologue, I talked about the children’s story being an “incomplete narrative” (Lutunatabua, 2015). Similarly, the narrative of how PV practitioners apply the knowledge gained through this thesis is also unfinished. Completing the story is the challenge this thesis offers to PV practitioners who aspire to raise valued citizen voice in international development contexts. It is a story of PV that will passionately unfold individually and collectively in praxis. The narrative's true impact lies in whether participating citizens can tell their own stories of social and political change through their PV experience; and how those stories catalyse significant social and political change. This is the story this thesis has re-imagined for participatory video. This is the story ultimately worth telling for enabling valued citizen voice.
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Appendix 1: PV practitioner poem excerpts

Following are excerpts from the 25 poems developed and used in the research for the poetic interpretive analysis of practitioner tensions for raising citizen voice with PV.

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**Appendix Figure 1: Poem excerpt – Addison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development: Suitable for people to just be passive recipients</th>
<th>That’s the goal of this ideal project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depends on the way it’s implemented; given serious attention</td>
<td>Easier. To create an ideal to make it product-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rather than just lip-service. Part of this ‘machine-based’</td>
<td>I’m just trying to get tribes people’s needs met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approach. An NGO saying: “Raise citizen voice?” See scope</td>
<td>Not to raise money for the future. A nice reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for that. Is it simple? I don’t think so. Scepticism. Often</td>
<td>These people have a demand. They are Rights-holders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the narrative for these videos is provided. Inputs. Outputs.</td>
<td>There are people who have the duty to provide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes. Impacts. Fit everything into their metrics. It’s</td>
<td>In the ideal scenario. I want their voice to be heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>just easier for them. To have a process that is open-ended</td>
<td>Want that to be met in a way that satisfies them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot more time for that creative space. Doesn’t fit into the</td>
<td>How do I facilitate that process as a PV facilitator? Filmmaker?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>timelines. Goals of development. The process approach is much</td>
<td>Ignoring, Manuals. Photo ops. Theories of “Let’s do this. Let’s do that”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more difficult. It is better. Something in the creative process</td>
<td>I’m trying to get a result for them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that we as humans love. But I doubt that there are many</td>
<td>The facilitator is basically. A skilled button pusher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participatory videos. At the end of the process. The NGO will</td>
<td>A support person to fill the technical gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bury the film. Say “We didn’t need that because it was all</td>
<td>This is all driven by money, right?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about the process.” So many structures within the current</td>
<td>Without money, this sort of stuff would not happen at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development paradigm. “Giving voice to someone else.”</td>
<td>They have to make these projects look somewhat interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embiracing of the subject-object dichotomy. The film is</td>
<td>Charismatic. I acknowledge the value in that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>completed. It’s ready to go. It’s their film. Government</td>
<td>I don’t think. People have to end up becoming filmmakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people; or whoever needs to respond. Who’s going to listen to</td>
<td>To benefit from the creative process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them?. Is it raising citizen voice as a programme to educate?</td>
<td>They’re farmers. Not filmmakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build capacity for people to communicate their own voice?</td>
<td>The criticism is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or is it. Direct A-to-B communication. You are raising voice. Someone obviously has a voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody to hear or no way to get that voice heard. Video can</td>
<td>“What is the point of making these participatory films?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>come in and fill that gap. These are two different things:</td>
<td>People. See it as sort of a facile treatment of the issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process verses product. The process-based. It’s difficult to</td>
<td>Not because of participatory video itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assign outcomes. Even. A broad outcome like raising voice. An</td>
<td>A lot of consultants. Sharkish. A nice hefty constancy fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introduced goal. Who’s to say, A participatory video process</td>
<td>Completely glossing over things. Total lip-service. Total PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>results in raising voice? Might result in repressing voice</td>
<td>Raise the expectations and hopes in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>somehow. ‘Raising voice’ for an organization. Not necessarily.</td>
<td>Increasing this type of communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The same sort of meaning in a community in the context of</td>
<td>So many barriers. Problems. Banana skins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insiders. It’s something different.</td>
<td>What if. An issue. Unfavourable to the organization?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government? Divisive in the community itself? The</td>
<td>The majority of people don’t want? What do you do then?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>majority of people don’t want? What do you do then? The</td>
<td>The silver bullet approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silver bullet approach. This sort of celebratory style. “It’s</td>
<td>This is going to do all those things”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>going to do all those things” There’s always potential for</td>
<td>There’s always potential for problems along the way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do this in a real ideal way. I wouldn’t be entering this</td>
<td>If. Someone local who has those skills. That’s great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>narrative. If. Someone local who has those skills. That’s</td>
<td>Train-the-trainers is a really great approach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It fell into the machine. The international NGO machine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The process as an empowerment process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not just about light bulbs over the people’s heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s about citizens exercising their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to represent your own case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make your own demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having the channels: saying and being heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’ve got a voice! You know? It’s your hearing that’s faulty”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was an organised group of women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using this project to achieve change, tangible change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a way that would never have happened otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is what the women are showing us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A powerful piece of testimony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘We can talk and we can talk, and we can talk’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But these corners are (evidence)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was there and they could use it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They could bring that reality to power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using this as a tool to hold power to account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You have a responsibility to do something about it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There just wasn’t enough time or enough understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The focus, I felt, was in the wrong direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is this going? Why are we doing this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s an organisational problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designed by somebody far away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken down to the communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are they monitoring? What are they evaluating?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering a program rather than achieving change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing everything</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not understanding anything at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There just wasn’t enough time or enough understanding</td>
</tr>
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<td>The focus, I felt, was in the wrong direction</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designed by somebody far away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken down to the communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are they monitoring? What are they evaluating?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering a program rather than achieving change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing everything. Not understanding anything at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s what we should be doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t feel I’ve won that argument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix Figure 2: Poem excerpt – Alex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We’d like to do something participatory And really, no idea. It’s a mess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is not. Straight communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence to beef up your case study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To beef up your PowerPoint presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To only contribute their voice in one specific way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s the same thing as a traditional approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PV as a means as a way to engage people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As experts in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a full circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intersection between communication, work and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those things can be used in advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a communication tool rather on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We’ve forgotten what the point is actually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming overly reliant on quantitative data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are not taking a risk in what people are going to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what you are going to get</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large philanthropies: They aren’t as flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The idea of stories as data. Really powerful stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s considered anecdotal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get young girls to engage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A video of that five-line story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is so-so-so. Her age. Her bad experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The organisation stepped in. Everything is better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s what you would get in five days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s just an ‘experience.’ Limitations of funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time. Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We need a real rigor to this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are supposed to be able to maintain privacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information that comes up can be incredibly sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have the public screening. There isn’t the anonymity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s a question. That’s a question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had far too little input. I’m not a professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even when I am working in my own country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I come in as a consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust, right? What happens afterwards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure that this makes sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That this is actually the right way to do this work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being the other is exhausting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I may feel I’m part of something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m having a great experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are really nice to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is not where the centre of my identity is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know if I’m a strong enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To put myself out of work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix Figure 3: Poem excerpt – Ash**
Still on the margins. Status-quo is still very top down

Doing a traditional, top-down research process
More of a fly-in and fly-out
Groups wouldn't necessarily have any ownership
In the process. In the implementation of any changes
Wouldn't be the community's project
Participatory research. Groups working collaboratively
I wouldn't want to go in anywhere where
No want or need from the community
There has to be a big desire and excitement

We got some funding to do this PV project. I was the only outsider
Rather than coming into a community with a pre-conceived project
All of it was really coming from the community itself

Important. Governments are involved from the beginning
Rather. Coming in right at the end to try to make change
Not just government. Other stakeholders
Those who are having any type of decision
Part of the whole process. Builds relationships.
Understanding
Different knowledge. Experiences. Perceptions
Not all the government representatives wanted to be involved
Unsupportive. Didn't want to be interviewed. Very much both ways

Some of the participants. Gravitated towards holding the camera
Some of them maybe didn't get a chance at all
Shy. Or there was already power. Dominant types taking control
It could further exclude the most excluded
If it's not done in a way. Very inclusive. Some kind of structure:

Everyone has the opportunity to use the video camera
Be the director. Be the actor. I'm not sure how that looks
If only going into the community for a day or two
Doesn't seem to have the time. To even find those people
Depends on the community. How. Mobilized
Which leaders are initiating

There is a lack of critical literature on PV
People would rather talk about the benefits. The ‘wow’ of PV
Not. Enough time for real critical reflection. Discussion
You can go into a community, give them all video cameras
Participants perhaps are “participating.” Not really driving the project
It could exclude the most excluded. It has potential for that

I try not to use empowerment anymore. I'm just cautious.
Realizing the capacity and agency within oneself to make change
Empowerment. Can be misinterpreted as giving power to someone else
I like. Providing tools to become better leaders
In your community through video
The NGO understands it this way? I would say “no”
Only. In terms of if someone has more power than another

We weren't sure what we were going to do with the videos
We ended up with over 100 hours of footage
The groups wanted to do something with it
I spent almost a year doing all the editing. It was not ideal
I would have preferred. Regular connections with the community
The community involved in each step of the way
Full ownership of the research design

It's hard to pinpoint “Yes. This PV project changed this policy”
There are so many elements at play, right?
Probably in combination with the whole project. It helped.
But by no means is it a “Golden egg. Stand alone”

Appendix Figure 4: Poem excerpt – Cass
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being a workshop where. It's not my thing</th>
<th>Appendix Figure 5: Poem excerpt – Devon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don't want to be. A workshop where</td>
<td>If they don't feel that they matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get their opinions onto video in 2-3 days</td>
<td>Just because we showed their films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do this and get some stories</td>
<td>Doesn't mean that they've had a voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's data collection. A technologically</td>
<td>All of that stuff inside of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cool process</td>
<td>What to do with that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a legitimate form of research</td>
<td>People having deep questions for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's not interesting to stay at that level</td>
<td>themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finding where it is that they can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>work together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some common purpose in coming together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengthens an individual voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengthens the voice of a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meaningful for the people involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go and do something in 3 days, but don't</td>
<td>When do you use it? What technology?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call it voice</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is not neutral what we are doing</td>
<td>You can't learn that from reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has a very political with a small p,</td>
<td>steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nature</td>
<td>People can adopt them simplistically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles that need to be respected</td>
<td>7 Steps to PV. Like 750 steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you are committed to social justice</td>
<td>Intimidating: 750 things you need to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As part of a process of what voice means</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's a completely different thing, you</td>
<td>It rests on who you are and how you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td>relate to people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The nature of the process</td>
<td>It's always about power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Things that can change the relations of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It wasn't just a one-off thing.</td>
<td>power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence this global debate</td>
<td>I'm not sure that there is an ideal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get them out of their role</td>
<td>To negotiate that particular situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relate to people as human</td>
<td>That context, those people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They might have to actually do something</td>
<td>Facilitation is not learned in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange between the different groups</td>
<td>classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives people an opening later</td>
<td>That is quite a delicate part of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitutes giving people voice. We hope</td>
<td>process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You would really have to ask them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's hard for people to have a voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Figure 6: Poem excerpt – Gustl

I felt like: We go in. We make a video. We go out

When I started putting it in projects it was to produce a video. We were thinking “How are we going to communicate to donors, to the people. Funding the project?” Communication capacity. We simply didn’t have that. Studied Water Resources Management, Engineering, Biology. “Yes, you’re going to show it to international conferences. But what about the community?” “How. Use it?”

Using it as a tool to get people to speak. About certain issues. Community members, in some of the poorest places. An opportunity. To say what are their needs. Issues. But it’s not more than that. On the flip side. It’s basically a wish list. “These are the things we want.”

I didn’t quite grasp. How people managed to get people. To engage over five or six days. No way we could do that. There’s no way a community is going to give you six, eight hours of time. Four hours was a maximum. They’ve got other things to do. We had one day that was it. Really, like half a day. They’ll only stick around if they saw it as worthwhile.

It’s all very well to give people cameras. To get people to go through the process of making videos. How on earth do you get community people to be involved in editing? Even people who were involved directly in the training of trainers. Some of the things are quite technical. It’s not that simple. If you write it in your project: They will make x amount of videos. You’re going to have to put a lot more effort into it. A lot more time and maybe money. We didn’t have that.

That’s going to create a dialogue or conversation. Between certain people. That’s probably an easier outcome to achieve.

Some people were shy to talk on video. One or two people. Tend to dominate. Unless I or the other people had a chance to intervene. In one situation. The community said: “Oh no, we don’t need to divide up into men and women.” I was like “Oh no, how is this going to work?” It was very difficult. We managed to eventually get the women to participate. It was one or two women. The other ones lost interest.

There are many challenges. You don’t always grasp what I never was the one working directly with the community. I would be there as a resource person. As an outsider. You’re not understanding everything that’s happening. If you don’t know what’s going on you might be just unwittingly adding to a sensitive situation.

Influencing, advising, engaging with the government. We didn’t use it actively in that way. It was more about scale. Being able to have more people using this tool. Training people in government or NGOs. More opportunity to use the PV in different places. Could have been used. Make a statement to influence policies. And government and so on.

I don’t think we were sophisticated enough to get to that stage.

We added it into projects rather than having it initially. We would have made sure that there was follow up. “What is your feedback? Now what are you going to do? Are you applying it? Do you need any support?” Providing that support. Pushing people or identifying a champion to take it forward. Responding is a bit more complicated. Maybe. Linked to space. Where there can be response to the messages coming out within a project you need to include that. To think that through. The role that communications can play. Not just in promoting what the project does. Also in implementing what the project does. In the regional offices. There was not that understanding.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participatory video. Has become filmmaking on the cheap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm in it because I intend to make an intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To tip the dynamics of the situation to some degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the participatory video context to shift the relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics between people, building partnerships for action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not just about voices. But a desire to hear, and act together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A commitment to acting with people at a more equal level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real problems with the concept of voice: extracted. Gone up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy-makers, decision-makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can tick boxes and say they've consulted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is similar to the problematic concept of participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diluted and co-opted. &quot;Participation&quot; as a concept functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To close down opportunities rather than open them up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied with the external agenda, thrown from the policy cloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operates to prevent change from happening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are reasons that is happening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When participation is applied &quot;top down&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are taking part is enough. Nothing ever changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsiders. Can build relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote ground-level agendas and priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help people maximise the potential. What can be achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have a role in opening up space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between top-down and bottom-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediating interactions within this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Until the need is perceived. What we can offer in this respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don't get the opportunity of influence positively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PV. There's a political trickiness. In the development context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrealistic to expect local practitioners. Five-day course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then to facilitate the same kind of social processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As the outside expert. An implicit assumption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside influence: Assumed. Negative. Controlling. To be avoided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities should do it all themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often sets people up to fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not just that the technical and production aspects are hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes in context amongst conflicting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social interests are very complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider power dynamics. The local relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We end up with the most powerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In any context becoming more empowered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The least powerful further marginalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have smaller budgets to produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yet it is much harder to deliver films. Made by community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We actually need more money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make videos using participatory video, not less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We get the funding to make the &quot;one video&quot; and that's it. Stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely the funding to facilitate the dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The exchange and the rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are outsiders, differently positioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We can intervene to challenge iniquitous dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But. There's also the possibility of doing harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important not to stir up dynamics inappropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving people to face the consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's tricky. There's a risk attached. Isn't there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are always compromises. There are always constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where you place yourself in terms of that balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depends on the specific situation and how it unfolds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You think you are teaching people to run a process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But people get power through having control of the kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you only involve those people who push themselves forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are essentially amplifying. Most powerful voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rather than opening up the chance for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A wider range of perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need a period of time before you start recording</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To build expressive confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a more equitable dynamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't think it's possible to train people quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals should do long-term college courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social, Community workers. And researchers the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhere people in the community. Build skills overnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much less well placed. Due to life constraints to do so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is little written about how uncomfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How difficult it can be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are not used to seeing themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not all airbrushed and perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often the people who thought they couldn't do it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain the most. Need. Time to give them the opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To see what's involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiming to be representative. An impossible ideal anyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can end up reproducing unequal power dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From the outside world. To the disadvantage of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The least powerful and most marginalised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix Figure 7: Poem excerpt – Jessie
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love-hate relationship with the development sector</th>
<th>Appendix Figure 8: Poem excerpt – Juno</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political underlying notion of citizen voice</td>
<td>Children and youth. The other 90% need their voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients. They discuss it much more</td>
<td>Is ethics even a part of the process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting tool for purchase of participation</td>
<td>Raising their voices they're being put at risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For communication. Used in marketing</td>
<td>Video is so visible. Once it's out there, it's out there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without connecting it. For policy making</td>
<td>If it is politically interesting, it will spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is this going to change? How sustainable?</td>
<td>In the best interest of the child. For which I have doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It also depends</td>
<td>Should be part of the whole toolkit. Debating,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly not my own design</td>
<td>Gathering information. It's quite complicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External facilitators are hired</td>
<td>You shouldn't take away the ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very intensive participatory video trainings</td>
<td>Participants who have something to say...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At that moment in time</td>
<td>Unless you doom it unsafe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very enthusiastic and raise their skills</td>
<td>Angry. Kids and youth. Put themselves at risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come up with a good end product</td>
<td>We have the responsibility to shelter them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure is on also for the participant</td>
<td>Let them also search for alternatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participate in it myself. Enjoy being out there in the field</td>
<td>Very long timeframe. For emergence to allow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struggle to bring such a great tool into practice</td>
<td>Raising citizen voice. From what they find important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'd really like to follow-up</td>
<td>You need something completely different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organise trainings for organisations</td>
<td>Structural participation in organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who already have the media outlets</td>
<td>Topic being selected by the donor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are local organisations who can do this work</td>
<td>This does not have enough impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send me out to countries. It's really expensive</td>
<td>Every wide gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who's going to fund that, right?</td>
<td>Video as a tool for activism could really make a difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanting to do this in a development context is not realistic</td>
<td>You should be there. Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You should be there. Context</td>
<td>Project-oriented participatory video work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation is being stimulated. Is passé</td>
<td>Participation is being stimulated. Is passé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural. Organisations. Still very top-down</td>
<td>Structural. Organisations. Still very top-down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are telling them things are wrong. How right is that?</td>
<td>We are telling them things are wrong. How right is that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think: ‘Well, no, we should stand up for their rights’</td>
<td>I think: ‘Well, no, we should stand up for their rights’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sometimes the problem isn’t the method
But the way the industry is using the method

It starts with: ‘We want an evaluator’
Donor comes with some expectations
Often has to do with procedures
Controlling or monitoring what’s actually happening
More than really evaluating what could be done better
It’s my impression in a way
That’s actually the result I don’t want:
A direct link with the funding
Show how great this organization is

That’s also the thing you have to fight
When beneficiaries are filming
Thankful for the changes in their lives
Not so keen in criticizing the people they need
When it just raises expectations from the side of the donor
Like sharing a wish list

It’s also really vulnerable
Working with policymakers or the chiefs
Sometimes they are part of the problem
The power of the NGO and their objectives
Can’t say ‘we want to keep your money but you can go now’
These are the consequences of being poor
Issues are so much broader and complex than I thought

I come in with the training
The end product is what the community made
I’m not there at the site of the policy makers
That’s a pity. Needs to be facilitated
To really implement the results within the new programme plans
Most of the time, they just want another form of report
Curious if these results also actually make any change

You can listen. When nothing changes
It is also frustrating to raise your voice
Or to have the space to raise the voice
When you do that and you go away and do nothing
It would be a bad method
In Africa, nine days was too short
Voice raised with the local stakeholders
I promised them that it would be shown to policy makers

That’s the problem when we are doing it only one time
People are so excited. So tired
You’ve already worked six days and nights
They are not so keen on adapting it
What film is. There isn’t enough time
To explain and show some examples.
Problem is not technology. Problem is storytelling
Planning what you want to tell
Images. Also supporting the message
What you actually mean

This started for me with a way of money making
My expectations. My limitations. Questioning the legitimacy
When I’m just earning money. I’m not really helping
Need to be sure that it’s effective. And benefits
I actually want to be a filmmaker more
They ask. I think “yes, yea let’s do it”
When people listen to each other, we get a slightly better world
This is still such a beautiful method

Appendix Figure 9: Poem excerpt – Kai
Appendix Figure 10: Poem excerpt – Katulpa

The unconscious collusion: 
Relationships of power and policy and funding

We’re talking about raising voice
Not talking about hearing voices
Voices that don’t fit the agenda: Who’s prepared to listen?
It takes time. It takes time.
As to how they want to represent themselves
To represent. Publicly. To express
Campaign their own needs
The slow kind of empowerment. That raises people’s voices
Once they’ve got that message
Don’t really need to go on making videos

In the long term:
Video workers from outside is counterproductive
So tied to fundraising that it almost takes over
In what are called PV tapes. The refugee kid
Provokes the response “How sweet”
The peasant woman operating the camera
Provokes exclamations “Amazing!”
Deleuze. Schizo-cultural distance

Over the last 10-20 years. The colonizing of local voices
PV Practitioners. Closely aligned to NGOs
NGO positions into UN positions
Agenda setting from management downwards
Programmes, policies and fundraising
It tells its own story really. It is perhaps inevitable

Some PV people. Are literally dropping in.
Because it’s sexy and adventurous and very interesting
Not even handing the cameras over
Not. Spending time alongside the communities
As if it’s completely separate from this whole history

Going back to the Canadian stuff in the 1960s
Of working with communities. Working for social change
That’s our real history actually. Much more risk-taking
Not. Government-to-government agreements

I’ve met people who call themselves participatory video workers
What they mean is filmmakers really
A bit of participation thrown in
A lot of NGOs see us as sort of semi-documentary makers
With a bit of community thrown in
I’m not sure that I’ve ever nominated myself
As one of the PV fraternity
It’s difficult to make a movie. But we are not making movies
Half the time we are not making movies at all

We’re not seeing ‘communities’ as the career path
The development of communities
How one community can really grow or change
As a result of these experiences
We don’t have a way of monitoring that

We’re just being so tame. So constrained
Thinking we have to go in through A Western NGO
Grassroots. Concerns are actually quite different
Than the policy concerns of many NGOs
We can’t both challenge that and want to work within it
Its contradictory. Well, it may happen…
You really have to suss out where the NGOs can come in
Negotiate terms. Not just want a job
That’s the difficulty isn’t it?
This work will never be. About job security
Unless. Absorbed into the jargon and rigmarole of
development
We need to step out of that and initiate
Appendix Figure 11: Poem excerpt – Kendall

They can speak out. Contribute something about a
certain issue

Raising citizen voice? I call it ‘equitable participation’
To participate at all different levels in society
Share their views and perspectives on a certain issue
Of course, the hierarchy remains. That’s probably in the
But. People get the opportunity to share and speak up
equally
It already gives them a feeling that they are recognised
A big step in raising citizen voice. They feel listened to
They feel seen. They get a position in the community

International development organisations
Need their feet in the communities
Where people. Know the different stakeholders
If. Do not have a relation. Starting immediately with a
community
Participatory video would be threatening or risky

It should always be an open process
I would not like to work with a participatory video project
Majority of the community or the people are resistant to video
I would not compromise. If. Result is already pre-determined
I’d call it ‘assapilation’...
A result. Already formulated even before the intervention
But. I am often given the topic. Because I’m an outsider
I’m not too much in the community dynamic
PV. It’s not just a quick fix for just one intervention
Ideas that they do it themselves after the training
Get inspiration. Enthusiastic to do it regularly
Whole idea. Is that it should sustain more

What worked quite well was a five-day training
A train-the-trainers model. The 20 people
They have been selected through an intake
In the community. The focus group discussion
Normally. Do the discussion in a group of 10-15 people
If I was facilitating. Structure the group discussions in a way
More voice for people who do not dare to speak up

Deadvantage. Some of the marginalised people
May not speak up in this train-the-trainer model I am using
You would need some extra time
I do not have so much influence on that
I leave that up to the PV facilitators
For me, it’s a bit more monitoring or checking
Most of the time I do not know exactly what is going on
But I trust the process. I trust what is going on
Idea? Training into two parts: 2 times, 4 days. Not sure. Idea
 Becomes unrealistic. Too expensive. Takes a lot of time

I observed. Participatory video. When they do the editing
They watch with 10-15 people. 50% lose attention
I have a different opinion
My philosophy is that the group themselves
Need to do the editing. In small groups
If you have a group of 4 or 5 people
They are more busy with the power struggles. Hierarchy
Instead of the content they really want to discuss

It should be locally based and empowering based
I don’t like to use expensive equipment
It raises expectations. Or. They expect money
It’s fairly intimidating to my beliefs

Participatory video is quite an investment:
Not so many projects are budgeting for that
Need projects that have quite a big geographical outreach
Lot of stakeholder groups and municipalities are involved
If you limit the participatory video just to one community
The dissemination effects are limited. Will cost. Double amount
You have not yet developed sustainable capacity in PV
If you multiply the model
Apply participatory video in a bigger region
Number of people raising their voice. Is increasing
It has a bigger influence on decision makers
The more serious it is taken by decision makers

Sometimes participatory video. Not be the appropriate tool
In unsafe environments. Countries with dictatorships
Too critical in video. Can endanger the safety of people
Inpressive cultures where people cannot criticise
I try to do the participatory video in a positive way
### Appendix Figure 12: Poem excerpt – Mel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideally: Policy makers. Want to hear. Communities’ perspectives</th>
<th>Do you want to be realistic? Flexible? Or do you want to push your idea. Then the project can’t happen?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The wish to listen to communities starts from above We read: “We need to hear and involve communities This is more than being open. Crucial. For efficient policy” Huge gap about what these reports write. Reality How the voices. Break through the level of decision makers We are dealing with dinosaurs. In [Europe], for example They hold referendums for every single thing In our international development world it is almost inexistent Rare The corporate communications. They were a big constraint My client. Pressed by the top guys and the owners Called: “They need to be sitting in the editing session” Worried about if the farmers. Going to use this for a revolution They were quite scared about how powerful it is This new approach: PV. Not Directed. Not Scripted I wanted to get the feedback. How was the video perceived? To publish the video. As. I included in the contract They said: “No, we don’t want to release it” I had to think again. Do I to fight with this or not? Might be a sign. Maybe they are not using it just for the cause We go in. We do all these things. We don’t get feedback How this reflects really on the policy making. On the corporation side? There is a weak point in that part of the process You need to get back to the farmers If those in power. Don’t push it forward. Block it The impact will be smaller. In terms of outreach. Feedback We would like to think that we can influence the client It depends. Corporate clients: Your voice is probably quite weak</td>
<td>I operate on very limited budgets and projects I’m not training trainers. I’m not leaving the equipment behind Not that I don’t think it’s good. Just. Not been able to do that Sometimes we stop and watch. But not in a sitting down group format We usually do this way due to logistic reasons. Time Depends. It’s all very organic. Stop. Watching. Viewing. Discussing “Was this good? Do we need to repeat?” This process always happens before the community screening I have not had any community screenings with policy makers For me. As of today. Rarely. I don’t focus on that too much But maybe that’s a mistake. I don’t know It can be your role or not. Depends on the facilitator profile Maybe some of the PV’s I have facilitated. Have already helped Helped change some views. I don’t know. It doesn’t come back to me I don’t think that it means that it doesn’t happen I operate on a basic daily consultancy too It’s a consultancy process the same way as any other The difference is that PV’s is not mainstreamed yet The quantity of requests for proposals. Work is not the same My career. Not mature yet to be able to live just off it PV. I am passionate and infatuated, but I cannot let this love kill me You can be a great facilitator. At the same time do other things Because you need living</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are so many ways PV can be harmful

| A lot of us who work on PV believe that the media |
| Cinematic. Representing issues can actually be very powerful |
| But, how media can make a difference |
| SHouldn't marginalise what it takes |
| Takes a great deal of hard work to see change. |
| It may be many years before we see the outcome. |
| One short film is not going to change people's minds |
| It's the whole process. Giving tools. Follow up work |
| People ask me: Give me a curriculum |
| I'm a little ambivalent to the medium itself: |
| Video, isn't always the place to start |
| Part of that package for transformative change |
| Can't celebrate it on its own. Look at the ecology around it |
| Explicitly try and co-design curricula with participants |
| Community-based groups. Not Prescriptive approach |
| Need. Space in the PV program to first deal with |
| Concerns around the personal sphere. Grow from that |

| The end result isn't always the point of it: |
| Trying to get my team. To recognise. Come to grips with that |
| The final screening isn't all what we should be worried about |
| Worried about how we are affecting social change. Lives |
| Hard bullet for a lot of artists. Filmmakers. Educators |
| They have a particular pedagogical. Product-based mindset |

| If it's too easy. Using these communities. Their pain |
| Their struggles as part of supporting a larger cause |
| Sometimes can work. Sometimes. Very disenfranchising |
| It can't be patronising. Needs. Action agenda |
| Perceived globally. Missing that agenda: it becomes a project |
| About making video and film and not about why |

| Large. Top-down project with a lot of funding |
| Outsiders coming in. Not grassroots-based PV for me |
| Where I get my funding? If I say USAID. Groups will refuse |
| You are compromising your integrity |
| "What's in it for us; and where's the money we get?" |
| Large NGO grants can create an atmosphere that's not productive |

| Thematic approach. It can be disempowering |
| It can be directive. Top-down. I'm not a believer in that at all |
| Participants who need to come up with that. Not the NGO |
| NGOs have particular programmatic concerns |
| Like. Participants to focus on that because they are funded |
| Yet. Have to craft based on. Constraints you are dealing with |
| Thunder-resource contexts. No access to very good cameras |
| Or technical material or capacity |

| Go back to the basics of storytelling. Storyboarding. Theatre |
| Have to be careful. Not. Make advocacy front. Centre. |
| May well be: PV, first as trust-building and relationship-building |
| Working out a lot of issues of personal change |
| Kind of small transformations that are important |
| Rather than the big A. The big advocacy work |
| Maybe it doesn't start out with the heavy advocacy goal |
| Maybe gets there in concert with the community group |

| Need time to build the trusting relationships with. Community |
| Cannot compromise. Need. TOT. Capacity-building |
| Trainers themselves to be leading the workshop |
| Need. Good training. Good trust-building |
| Good reflective debriefing and assessment |

| Can give harm if you go into a place like that |
| Go in with a heavy hand. Create expectations. Disempower |
| Instead of create a space for transformation and dialog. |
| Can give harm if the work that comes out is misunderstood |
| Misrepresented. Poorly tackles issues that are very delicate |
| Can agonise. Issus in ways that were unintended |

| Responsibility: Figure out how the agency. Co-shared |
| Everyone should have a stake in the project |
| If the NGO. Community Centre doesn't have agency |
| Problem. They must also have agency and ownership |
| Media makers. Ought. Have agency in. Work that gets produced |

| Want to make sure that there's a space |
| An open exchange and dialog about things |
| It needs to be guided around the work because |
| Can be in a situation where it can also be very embarrassing |
| Or intimidating. To show their work in public |
| Then to be criticised or to be befuddled by it |

Appendix Figure 13: Poem excerpt – Misha
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glittery powder into your eyes: Misconception that you are going to go and help someone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to travel. See the world. Discovering. Meeting new people. I worked with people who didn’t have a lot of luck in very vulnerable situations. I taught them to make films. They would take to try and change their situation. People go back to being children. It. Kept me going back. It’s awesome. It’s so much fun. It’s just so much fun! I was definitely fed by it. I was definitely amazed by it. It’s magic. It’s really magic. It’s cool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PV. Where you are travelling as a consultant. Whole glamour to that: “Where are you going this week?” You’re meant to be doing this great social change. Yet you are emptying yourself out. It didn’t do great harm, so it’s fine.” But. I got really tired of it. But. I stopped. In part. I felt that it was take. The cost-value of it is not enough for me to sanction it. People cut it out to be this ‘magic wand’. A lot of pretension that we are doing more than we are. Laden with good intentions that are completely ill-placed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can a white man. Woman parachute into a small community in the middle of Africa* With fucking $15,000 of kit. Think: Equipping People with a camera. To. make films after you’re gone. These guys are starving. or. not starving: They are very poor. What? No! No! Of course that doesn’t make sense. The pretence of the long-term. Why? Why do we even go there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see a problem with this capacity-building stuff in 2 weeks. It’s a taster. To produce a communications product. For the funder. I’ve accepted that. I always promoted it as such. Why not? It’s a reflection tool. Can be mobilizing around an issue. That’s good. It has a shelf-life though, once the issue is solved. The transformative aspect of PV. We often get confused. That will make long-term change. In a two-week workshop. Empowering people with a video camera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Equip them with a power line so they can charge the damn thing. Or a box so it doesn’t get stolen. They don’t even have enough food. Why don’t they just sell the camera? Often. You don’t have time to infuse the community. With collaborative mechanisms that would make sense for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community. Their first contact was through a workshop. Often. They were selected because they were friends. With people who worked for the NGO. They get paid. It’s hard to make somebody give up control. I can’t change that dynamic in two weeks. Just because I believe. It’s important that everyone participates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PV. Just doesn’t mean anything to me. Why not “ethical video”? What is it. Other than I hand the camera over to someone else? Why the slavery to a tool? I don’t get it. It’s a bloody tool. Why does it have to be a thing of itself? Why can’t it be a PRA tool? It’s like an artist being obsessed with his brush, bloody hell! You are going to build a house. And you are only taking a hammer. What are you claiming? What? No! It’s nonsensical. Narrow-minded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s a methodology. Whoa… It’s a career all of the sudden? Because it’s complicated? No longer. It’s not hard to edit a film. What the fuck? No. no. It’s a tool to do social change. Having the idea of doing social change, for me is funny. They say: “I’m going to change the world.” It’s very ego-centric. I don’t think I’m big enough, intelligent enough to say I’m going to affect social change. It’s a big bite to chew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhaps. The way we. Made a career out of it Is. The most mercantile way out of practicing PV. I’m not ashamed of it. I know there are some problems. A bit of a neo-colonialist. It’s okay. I’m not selling arms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix Figure 14: Poem excerpt – Morgan
### You can’t do social media in a log frame. Impossible

You’ve decided. You’re going to make a film
You’ve set what you’re trying to achieve from the outside
And people are involved in that
Disempowerment. As opposed to an empowerment tool
The word “Participatory.” Is very contentious. Misunderstood
A lot of the development industry. Twisted the meaning
Retain the decision-making. Doing it in. Tokenistic form

Shouldn’t just have Indigenous people holding cameras
That’s. One small part.
Who’s saying what is to be done. How people are being presented.
That’s when it starts getting participatory
Not. Where the Producer role is controlled from outside
Citizens’ voice means social organisation
Which then – in the final stages – has a voice
Participatory media has a process. Also has an output
What gets missed? The process. Inherent in citizen’s voice
By doing things together, people organise
Unless you’ve got that social organising, you can’t have voice

You can go too fast. Jump in and say
“We’re going to give you an opportunity
To raise your voice with parliamentarians. Decision-makers”
Those things go fast. But if they’re put too fast. Things go slow

For influencing policy. Wouldn’t also underestimate
Using media as a process whereby people link together
Use. Other forms of influencing policy

Difficult to get to the platforms
That policymakers receive or listen to or respect
Sometimes they’ll be forums. Opened by the UN
Opened by donors. Opened by themselves
If someone just gets up and explains. It’s not very effective
“Here’s the video. It’s got pictures. A personal voice”
Been. The most successful avenue

So much depends on the initiation of the project
The first start needs to be. A social process. Cultural process
It’s an organisng tool. A collective voice tool
How do you fit within that? Don’t it’s counter-constructive
Unless. Really involved in the process. Which is empowering
Unless. People locally. Are framing things. Having ownership
Unless. Involved in as part of a broader process

### Appendix Figure 15: Poem excerpt – Nic

| People from outside setting the agenda is against participation |
| Without understanding that context. It’s just misplaced. |
| By coming in and saying “we’re solving. Your problems” |
| It means they are their problems. The outsiders’ problems |
| You’ve removed ownership. Dropping in from above |
| Maybe. Technical people. Are not coming from that perspective |

| What you’re seeing now. People from outside: |
| They fly in. They do this. They do that. They need to be told |
| Very assertively. They are a tool not a driver |
| They have to be managed not to allow them to take over |
| If they do not respond. Group needs to chuck them out |

| There’s so much dependent upon context |
| If social organising has been happening. It can move very quickly |
| If. A process. Has eroded community organising or cohesion |
| Whereas the root causes are social. Political. Cultural change |
| There’s a lot more complexity. So. You’re not dealing with media |
| You’re dealing with the participatory first and foremost |
| Slowly it would transition more to media |
| That’s hard work. That takes a lot of time |
| If you came in with media production. Coming in. Wrong end |

| To have the budget. That’s always a difficult one |
| You’ve got to be able to clearly articulate the social side |
| To have social funding organisations come on board |
| Development. Ad. The mechanisms are very good |
| But the systems we have are dysfunctional |
| They’re linear planning processes. Archaic. Dinosaurs |
| Elaborate or simple science. They’re counter-intuitive |
| And. A bit deadly when it comes to supporting social change |
| If. Resources through. Standard channels. Not going to work |

| The development industry. They are starting to recognise: |
| “We need to do the social side of things” |
| But the tools they’ve got actually create problems |
| Linear planning tools are not suited to fostering creativity |
| They’re still on results-based management. On log frames |
| You need those complexity systems and management systems |
| To do participatory media and video production |
| To. Do it well with actual participation |
| Then it can call in outsiders |
Appendix Figure 16: Poem excerpt – Nikita
When all else fails, do PV

Within this realm, People:
Using people’s voices to communicate directly
To capture them. Broadcast them. Relay them
Within the parameters and the terms they dictate

Participatory video. A process. A tool. Among many others
That’s. Where perhaps it often goes wrong
Not often selected judiciously. It’s. Applied opportunistically
People. Interested in the methodology
Interested communications and in video as an output
Want to do something: New or innovative or sexy
Rarely. They have made a very informed decision
“Really: No other option but to use participatory video”
For Group action. Group decision-making

PV. Often driven by funders. Need to increase the impact.
Measurable “Where’s the legacy? Where’s the spread?
Only 12 people for this amount of money?
We want to reach 200 or 2,000 people.”
Capacity-building tyranny!
Training more and more and more facilitators.
I don’t understand that
Has to be the right people participating in the right process
Often not sufficient time built in. To see it through

Rare that the ambitions and expectations. Clearly mapped
“We’d like to do ALL of those:
Empowering, Therapeutic, Transformative process
Reach decision-makers and influence policy
And communicate with the whole world”
Not just the partner and the funder
Participants. Want to reach a bewildering array of audiences

Video is an extremely powerful medium
Completely loaded with baggage
Preconceived notions of what video is. What it can do
A predictable relationship of how it can fit. How. Can use it
Everybody understands it. Wants it. Needs it
It’s very rarely that. They are thinking:
“I want to deeply empower. Enable a group. Create a place
Where they can reflect back on their experiences”
That sort of personal development and transformation
The fact that its ‘participatory’ video gets lost

I don’t think you can learn this in a weekend. In a week
It’s like running a health post and saying:
“You’ll be able to immunise children after we’ve left”
Unless you have a particular, pre-existing set of skills
Not one particular set of skill sets
Dependent wholly on the type of practice. Outcomes

Technique of participatory video takes time to learn. Practice
Trainees don’t have the opportunities themselves to make films
To be able to get some confidence
To support others to tell a story through video
Or simply put together a sequence
Before. Go out and hand the camera over to others

Facilitators. There is confusion “I let them make exactly the film
They wanted to make. In the way they wanted to make it
It’s crude. It’s bad and no one wants to watch it
It doesn’t do what they wanted. But they did it themselves”
That’s not good enough. It really frustrates me. I’ve seen it a lot

Participatory video. Largely failed to live up to its expectations
Each organisation. Gets interested. Tries it
Gets burnt to some degree. Doesn’t continue significantly
What is it? What’s holding it back?
Not because. Anything fundamentally at fault. With the process
Probably there’s a fault with us. How we’re doing it

Maybe. To get it right, you need a situation which doesn’t exist
Organisations. Rarely. Invest in participatory video beyond:
One or two times. Doing a project. Dipping their toe in
How many build units? How many build long-term capacity?
How many people. Given the space and opportunity to do it.
Need. Investment in individuals who actually deliver it to do it
The skill set: Built sufficiently at a programmatic level

Someone needs to prove the efficacy of this approach
An agreement among principal practitioners
To. Principles and standards
Some benchmark to which we aspire. Which outsiders can understand
As. An example of what makes participatory video special

Appendix Figure 17: Poem excerpt – Quinn
Appendix Figure 18: Poem excerpt – River

The most ideal situation is so very very difficult to do

How do you define what you are doing:
People's expectations. Meet what you think is achievable?
When no one knows what a participatory video would be
They thought of me more as a technician
A lot of pressure. For you as the professional to take over
Here for a limited amount of time. They want a "good job"

What I read. People. Working in a participatory way
How-To Manual. Two-week workshop
The person who taught the workshop usually edits
With the input of the local people. Everyone. Empowered.
Hopefully there is another workshop down the road
You still do something. Do some good work
Seems the antithesis of what I would like to do:
Give Tools to keep producing. Without outside intervention
To make a long-term commitment. More complicated

PV. Training. I brought up. Sensitive ethical issues
Kind of barred over me. They were intrepid
Getting it out there. That was the whole point
"You just go in there. You do it. I have that tool. All this stuff"
They were real. The people who knew. I was inexperienced
I was. Different. I didn't fit neatly into that methodology

I believe. To be a participatory facilitator
You have to know what it is. Practiced already in your country
Facilitators need to be humble. If they don't
They can be like these "Cowboys." Do interesting work
But. Don't know if they've considered all the ethics of it

I found some great stuff in South America. Latin America
It was ongoing. All going on by local people
It wasn't coming in from the outside. That's my ideal
Where time and relationships are much more primary
At least a 6-month commitment
That's. Why it's harder to do unless you are local
I'm a little bit heartbroken over how hard it is
To actually have that function given all the constraints

Constraints on me were the constraints of [Country]
Super slow. Waiting on them for answers. In the end:
I don't know if any of them actually watched the videos
It's status quo. Success stories. To keep the funding going
That's kind of what they are there to do. Pictures get painted
That aren't the real picture of what's going on

Tension around words like "accountability. "Community-based"
When you are working in the field. It's still parent-child
We have the funds and you are accountable to us

You can come in with a topic. 100% clear from a distance
Then you get in there. All of the sudden it gets muddy
All this tension needs to be worked out. Should be worked out
Before Cameras. People get swept up in the technology

Important: Organisation. Already practicing participatory work
You come in gung-ho, and say "OK, we're all equal!"
From zero to sixty in the very beginning
It can create a weird tension between people
Because. Hierarchies. A lot of issues. Respect
Great to have everyone sit down and work together
The chief is learning how to work the camera
He's being taught by a woman how to use the camera
It's nice if that ground work has already been laid
To incorporate this novel. Maybe. maybe not. Concept of video

Everybody in a way is putting themselves in your hands
There are just too many variables. Cultural deciphering
It took me until almost when I was leaving
For people to talk to me about the political process
That can be a dangerous thing to do. To tell your story
So how are you going to get the citizen voice across
In a situation that isn't so free?
Repercussions for you to be speaking your mind?
Depending on the country and the situation

You don't feel. As successful as you had hoped
They made beautiful work. But who is going to see that work?
I organised screenings. People didn't come. It was difficult
What do you come away with? The direct product
Skills. Income generation. You can film weddings
For other people. Get co-opted for filming political campaigns
Probably no pay. A long-term impact?
That's very hard to measure. Very hard to predict
What you see out of that in terms of citizen voice is oblique

I was at. Discussion. Everything that PV does in 'positive terms'
I was. Deflated. "Come on. That's not reality though"
We need to talk about that it's really complicated
If you're having. Difficulties. You can feel isolated
You are betraying the movement if you say what is problematic
That's a shame as I put my heart into that work
I still believe in it
### The thing about PV is that you need time
### Time to work with a group properly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>poem excerpt</th>
<th>Their brief was so loose. We were bringing the whole participatory approach to the project more than the funders.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are doing a project. People are being listened to. They are able to engage with their wider society. They are developing a voice and their thoughts. I think that’s a political act. One of the key reasons I do this kind of work. For some of the groups we work with, they just don’t expect anyone to listen to them or take notice of them. That’s not always the brief of the project. You get these people who’ve got an agenda quite often. They want the findings of the research. Or they want a video that promotes this, that or the other. All of these power structures. You were constantly dealing with. Very difficult if you strongly misrepresented something that had come out in a PV process. That’s the bottom line for me. We managed to get some money for us to go out to [Asia]. The challenge for me was wanting to go out there and engage with local people and this NGO. Empower potentially more people. By passing. Media skills onto other facilitators. That they could use in the future. A legacy. But also to make a film in less than 3 weeks. Which I thought was a bit ambitious really. It was very hard for us to decipher. If we were speaking to the right people. About the right thing. Really the demands of the project too. We would spend an afternoon somewhere which isn’t a sort of normal PV practice in a way. Whether the funders got what they thought they were getting. Maybe not in the shape or form they are expecting. I don’t really think they had thought about it enough.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inevitably: “So it is not like this. Or this or this.” They half expected the video to be shot by villagers or at least to feel as if it had been shot by villagers. There would be there testimonies and numerous things. One would commonly associate with PV or community video. And it wasn’t. It wasn’t like that. There wasn’t time for that. To engage with these concepts to a certain degree. Whenever I’ve been thinking about PV. The theoretical framework. When you put it in a real-world setting. It seems to get continually tested. And found to be wanting. Always needing constant re-jigging or re-aligning. Every occasion presents a unique set of challenges.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s difficult: participation. Some people pay lip service to it. And some people think: “Oh, we could have gone much further.” Can be a very creative release of energy and pent-up thoughts and feelings that happens on occasions. People say: “Oh, I didn’t realise you meant this participatory.” Naively I used to think this project is going to change. This community or do this. And you’d be very impatient. It can take a huge amount of time. For the penny to drop in people’s minds. For or the fruition of some of these ideas. We don’t get to go and revisit the people we worked with to be able to go back a little while after: “Is there anything else? Are there other things. We can help facilitate?” It would be nice to have a longer-term relationship.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Appendix Figure 19: Poem excerpt – Sal*
| We were not just gathering knowledge | Intention. Should be made very clear |
| Also trying to build skills to raise voices | Maybe it’s not something to disseminate |
| Proposal and development projects | If the intention is to raise their voices |
| In our research. Same constraints | Doesn’t mean that all their problems will be solved |
| Outputs; monitoring. Quantitative indicators. Results. | Connect them with local policy makers |
| Expectations of type of knowledge | Dialog and the debates |
| A tension. You will want to direct | A way to solve this problem. On their own after the project |
| What they will say and how they will say it | Marginalised people who produce the film |
| Who they will interview. How they will tell stories | Difficult for them to have any control |
| Building a different type of relationship | Their stories, their lives are very personal |
| Selecting the people whose voices will be raised | Policy-makers raise: |
| You want to be open. To let them to direct this process | Why is this important? Why talk about that? |
| Potentially creates conflicts | Establishing connection is probably not enough |
| Threatening. Representative of a new form of power | Power relationships are still very imbalanced |
| Representativeness: We wanted to integrate Dalits | Facilitator: Establish more balanced relationships |
| They came to the training | Facilitator is connected |
| Other participants: “Dalit participants are not serious” | Take the film. To the stakeholders |
| Difficult for me to know the reality. I have to accept that | Media or other government organisations |
| Understanding of local contexts | That is what is missing. This connection |
| Problems of cultural differences | Once their film product has been re-appropriated |
| There are our own expectations and our ideas | They don’t have any influence |
| There is the reality of local people | A pity they couldn’t watch on TV |
| The local persons involved | |
| Come up with questions on the topic | I was also thinking about giving another training |
| Sometimes difficult. Difficult: | On journalism. Around two months |
| “We already know the answer to these questions” | Can still use the camera to document |
| Not have time to actually engage | A way for income-generating activities |
| | That would be very difficult. You have to be less ambitious |

**Appendix Figure 20: Poem excerpt – Sasha**
I wish I could go back to these places and follow up

Usually an NGO or an outside organisation will suggest
"Would you like this to get your message heard?"
PV. Can really define what sort of development
People on the ground want. And need
PV can be. Therapeutic. But it wasn't too relevant for us

I was contracted by the NGO to do this
I wanted to spend more time. Rather than fly-by-night
They don't really get to know you, it's not as fun
Four weeks in each community. I'd love to stay. Longer

You need to really have unlimited time. Almost. Adaptable.
It's not often ideal because there are always time limits
You can't rush things. Time for them to develop. Confidence
To express themselves honestly. For discussions to come out
We are there expecting their full attention on this PV
That they didn't really request but they were keen to do
We didn't want to take them away from. Families too much

We wanted about 12 people: Men. Women. Children.
Fishermen. Gardeners
A whole spectrum of people from the community
The Chief had chosen mainly young people
Family members, Favoured friends
Maybe. Wanted to give them more skills or education
Help them progress themselves. I'm not sure
Older people might find it harder to learn the technology
Even though I made it quite simple and basic

When they were filming their storyboard
I encouraged them: "Go out into the wider community"
Interview. More marginalised people
Who weren't necessarily connected to the community leaders
Quite often in the village situation. It's really hard
You can't force anyone to be involved
These people are often quite shy
Most of the time they may be unsure and busy
And there were culture barriers as well

We'd have a daily screening with everyone in the village
Generally they didn't like discussing

There are those hierarchies and the culture factor
Women. Seen as looking after the children and cooking
Men are the decision-makers and the ones who do the talking
It may have come out behind the scenes
May have been discussions back at the houses
People. Listening to each other without us knowing

They really wanted to share their experience
They requested that the equipment stay there
But we needed the equipment for future PV projects
With. Still cameras. They are wanting to take photos
But. They don't have a computer to edit the photos
To make a slide show or anything like that

I'd like to see them achieving what they want.
This is their video. They can take pride in it, which they did.
I did suggest. That they can share it around
Get it out to many more people as they can
But no plan as such. No, no plan. It was more like loose

There needs to be a follow up with the community.
I think it is the PV facilitator's role
They are the one who has contact with the community
They have built that trust with the community
It is their role to come back. Continue. Response to their voice
What's happened? What do they want to happen next?
The politicians. Are they doing anything to help the community
Are they making any policy changes?
Are they giving more funding?

I haven't really been in touch with the community
To know what's happening. The NGO.
I think they are working with them
I just haven't gotten their feedback myself
That's probably where I haven't done my job properly.
Due to lack of funds
It doesn't really finish in reality. It's an ongoing thing

PV. It would be very hard to make a career in it
It's not something that you can really make money from
It shouldn't be looked at as an income-generating thing at all
Because you are there to help them. To help the people really
It is not about filmmaking. That’s the ghost that we have to fight.

I don’t see the value of doing this process:
Time-consuming, expensive. Raising expectations of people
If you will only put it on your website. A nice PR video
Just hire a filmmaker. Do the content through a consultation
So it’s not completely dumbfounded down

Ideal: Projects would really be about people
A really transparent agenda. People really own it
Not only about international interests
NGO staff writing an application for funding
Tokenistic or small amount of consultation
“We ticked all the boxes. Things are done. That’s it”

PV: Not. A magic bullet. Not just a one-off thing
But has a specific power that other methods do not have:
How genuine voices come out from a participatory process
Transformational change: NGOs are serving citizens’ needs
Citizens. Choosing if they want to be part
Choosing the agenda. Really essential to their lives
People really own it from the beginning
Not only once as part of one international campaign

If 100% buy in from community. An issue they care about
It’s a need. Right, they need to fulfill. All. Partners involved:
The ones that give you money to the ones that are delivering
People are correctly selected. You’re bringing the expertise
Then it is going to be a magic bullet in a way
But. Limitations you cannot overcome being a facilitator

Many times. “One off” or parachuting development
Non-strategic. Based on what they feel the donor wants
Makes a difference on the ownership. In the longer term
How much. Will support real change or transformation?

Should: Build local capacity. Skills for future projects. Local campaigns. Supporting something
Someone else at local level has been thinking about
Not. Just perpetuating themselves. That can easily happen
A project may not go well
Not necessarily related to participatory video
Bigger issues. The complexity of the system

Things are not clear between all the partners
Because of all the agendas. Lack of clarity. Miscommunication
As much as you study and prepare. There are limits
You never grasp it 100% like a local person
Can take time. Aware of the power dynamics. You generate
To. Counterculture. Time. Gives you the space where people
Don’t feel constrained to do certain things

Every project. Really unique. The dynamics of the context
How much you can adapt to people’s schedules
How much you have to artificially create a schedule
In an international context
Not just the participants: The NGOs. The facilitators
It’s not. Always resources. Budget to keep someone in country
Sometimes it’s time. For the participants. From the NGO staff

Better to have more time. In these interactive processes
In a short space. Issues may be too shallowly discussed
Or. Video quality may not be as good
You need some time. To unpack the issue. A learning process
Not. Always possible. Resources. Other reasons

Just to leave equipment behind is not good enough
Thinking how they can use it. Sustainability. Legacy
What’s going to happen next beyond this video?
It can end up in the cupboard of an NGO
Equipment is good to keep. But. That’s related to time

After they watch the film. Discuss any safety problems
Then. Have a screening with the target audience
They can watch. Share responses. Closing the feedback loop
Instead of just. Being in the event. Listen to it
Ideally. One screening. Facilitator. Help certain dynamics
Not be an event that is taken over by other agendas

This cannot be done in isolation
If it’s not part of a bigger program then
People will not have the resources and the time to follow up
If people who are leading this programme. Are not on board
Obviously you can have a lot of problems in small ways
Even if you have a lot of caucuses in your contract
At the end of the day. They can do what they want.
You don’t have a lot of control
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPV: “Me Participatory Video.” That’s not really PV</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raising voice and PV. “Why?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“For what reason? What purpose?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>The more it has to do with communities, local dialog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment of local communities: to speak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Or the same platform: similar levels of technical capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The more effective it is</td>
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<tr>
<td>The disadvantage of marginalized communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not only have they not had the technology to do this</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lacked the technologies to continue the conversation</td>
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<tr>
<td>To hear from others as well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating monologues in one direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad enough. Extractive process in a top-down process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equally as bad to create lots of PV films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just shouting at people saying “look at me”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whereby we venerate it. Make it a process above any other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run the risk of people serving the process rather than the other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultures that tend to be donating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery and control as means to self-actualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the individual and organizational level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domineering activities. Domineering behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People look at a process like PV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try and bend it towards a certain purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overload the vehicle of PV with too many outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss out on opportunities to discover something new</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| When people are focused on managing costs         |
| Rather than managing the value of these outcomes  |
| Tendency towards trying to co-opt the process     |
| Rather than listening to what the real discussion is about |
| Trivialize. Not accord the proper weight to raising voice |
| Disregard the importance of the messages          |

| We look at high-end products. Made by large companies |
| Our visual knowledge is based on that.               |
| When we look at things                                |
| Where they may have been a struggle to get created   |
| Which does share the same production values          |
| Presume that the messages should also be degraded    |
| Danger: Extremely well produced are not worth listening to |
| Prejudice that perhaps, unless it looks rough and ready |
| Not really authentic. You should not take it seriously |

| If you can find reasons for why the community       |
| Should continue to talk to itself. Continue the conversation |
| And: Have the vertical communications               |
| Better chance of these things surviving             |
| Despite the lack of budget of an NGO afterwards     |

| You need to talk to see if there is utility to them  |
| That doesn’t impinge on the process of PV and raising voice |
| Giving them long notice of your plans                |
| Ideas about what you’d like to do                    |
| You have to respect what they are doing              |
| As well as enable your work                          |
| Time and access. Realistic environments              |
| Platforms or mechanisms in which this can work       |
| Require a certain type of celestial arrangement      |
| To make sure that everything is in place at the right time |

| NGO-led or CSO-led or otherwise top-down            |
| I have to let people know that it is an imperfect world |
| You have to work with the logistics within these agencies |
| You may not have the choice                          |
| Everybody has bills to pay. I’m not denying that     |
| But I’m comfortable that I’m balanced                |
| This is not. Self-promotion either of myself         |
| Or an enabling agency that has the funds to do       |

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Appendix Figure 23: Poem excerpt – Toni
### Bureaucracy eats participation

| Voice. Often that means a lot of noise | Scalability. Replicability. It's that thing of mechanising |
| Everybody's talking but nobody's listening | A lot of this stuff doesn't need to be or want to be scaled |
| Institutions. Need to be participatory. Plastic | People think it is a step-by-step process. Linear. It's not |
| You can't introduce a participatory model into it | It's based on nets of relationships |
| They don't get it. They won't understand: Integrity | In a complex web of inter-reations |
| The necessary values embodied in a dialogical relationship | Good relationships. Centred around dialogue |
| | Stakeholders. Participants. Facilitators. Everybody in between |

| “What right do I have to give somebody a voice?” | Doesn't matter who holds the camera. It's the authorial control |
| It's just ridiculous. It's totally counter-intuitive | The difference between 'look at me' and 'look at me see' |
| They've got a voice already. 'What are you doing with it? | Encouraging people to move from the one: look at me |
| Working in service to others | To the other: look at me see. A key part of the facilitator's role |
| Have a good technical capacity. You have to be humble | |
| Removing. Perception: You're working down here | I think it's a problem. To segregate it into a specific model |
| I'm working up here. At the high end of power | Embedded into this idea of participatory development |

Sometimes. Arriving at a coherent idea
Challenging a dominant paradigm
Through this story or these stories
Just the process of doing it is great
I've found most of the time. A moment
The actual thing that people make has incredible value

### Addressing policy issues using participatory video

This is a long, long tradition. Inspired by the Fogo Process
Where the Canadian government were very open. Receptive
But. A really false idea that you give this to a decision-maker
A video and: 'Oh, I never thought about it like that'
If somebody doesn't want to listen.
It's very hard to make them listen
To have the capacity to do that. In a very sustained way
From the community up to the policy makers:
Not. Top to bottom. Great integration inside the institution

The PV nugget. A more holistic way of doing it
Your work in the context of what's happened before
Something else that is growing off it
A small cog in the wheel in like a big machine
Every part knows what the other parts are doing
All these other creative engagements. Never. A stand-alone
This alien thing that comes in out of nowhere
It lacks relevance for everybody

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**Appendix Figure 24: Poem excerpt – Tyler**
It is quite radical: We are always shifting organisations

Motivates us. Social change. For a more equitable world
To help. To be part of that change. Locally-led
Organic and natural and right. Otherwise you can do harm
Participatory video. Has a very wide, broad potential
When you communicate. You have to be careful
The old question of “What is PV?” We are still debating

The NGO. Donor. The one who has the money
One of the big misconceptions: You are making a video
Wherever that means to them is totally off mark
The deal? Request would come direct from the community
It would start there. No NGO or client or anything

The organisational constraints are more. Structured
No one really understands what other people are doing
Pigeon-holed in their own sections. Development
Organised from the top to the bottom
Communications departments: “No way”
They are not at all the right people to work with
They don’t have the right approach. In terms of
Reaching the communities. Hearing their voice
Helping them to communicate

When we are building capacity with organisations
Making sure that the community members are supported
That kind of dynamic is a challenge. Some organisations:
Bashing your head against the wall. Very frustrating
The NGO or CBO that we are going to work with locally
In the current system. Play too much of a gatekeeper role
Usually they have their partners. Want you to work with them
You just have to make the best fit sometimes
I’d like to see much more of a bridge role
Between the communities and the development world

Lot of organisations. Think they know. Participatory methods
Have not really gone through. The internal shift. Attitude shift
That needs to come clear to make it really authentic
When you just talk about. Raising citizen voice
It was a bit limited. Doesn’t mean action
Want to make sure they are thinking like that
Push them in that way

When. Set an international or outside target
Just getting their voice and their thoughts

Often how it tends to be soon in the development world
Action happens out there. It may filter back
May. May not be impacts directly felt by the target community

Big shifts happening: Change in individuals. Communities
But. Without a systemic shift in the way
NGOs. Development. Government are organised
Those shifts. Won’t be as long-lived. Be reversed. Isolated
You’re not going to achieve what can be done
But. We didn’t feel like we could sell the idea
Been doing it implicitly. A little bit sneakily
We are going to shift your way of thinking. Doing stuff
“We don’t want that. That’s not why we signed up
We just want to hear community voices”
Now. It’s just about shifting intention. Being much more clear

Often the topic or the framework is chosen by the donor
Defined by the local partners who have listened a bit
Know what are the big issues in their areas of work there
Whatever you go looking for is definitely what you find
It’s quite complicated what you are trying to do
It’s different. A lot of barriers. People are expecting something
Community. See you as an outsider. Will make assumptions
“We are not here to build infrastructure or give any funding
We are here to help you share your ideas”

It’s quite complicated what you are trying to do
It’s different. A lot of barriers. People are expecting something
Community. See you as an outsider. Will make assumptions
“We are not here to build infrastructure or give any funding
We are here to help you share your ideas”

I’ve been part of that celebratory dialog
In how I express and share PV with the world
Inline with that need to get people to understand
This is actually. Fucking amazing. And it is. you know
On the other hand. Difficult. A much deeper approach to PV
“It’s not just pass the camera around. It’s all going to be great”
Important to see what can go wrong. To focus more on. That
How. PV currently has quite a high entry barrier in a way
It’s quite complex. There’s a hell of a lot going on

People have a voice and people are being listened to
In most cases. That’s not happening. In the community
Want to. Try and initiate that kind of process. Listening

Appendix Figure 25: Poem excerpt – Zhenya
Appendix 2: PV practitioner storyboards

Appendix Figure 26: Storyboard – Addison
Appendix Figure 28: Storyboard – Cass
Appendix Figure 30: Storyboard – Jessie
Appendix Figure 31: Storyboard – Juno
Appendix Figure 33: Storyboard – Kendall
Appendix Figure 34: Storyboard – Mel
Appendix Figure 35: Storyboard – Nikita
Appendix Figure 36: Storyboard – Quinn
Appendix Figure 37: Storyboard – River
Appendix Figure 38: Storyboard – Sasha

The relationship between the external organisation and the film-maker is based on trust, non-domination, respect and sharing experience.
Appendix Figure 39: Storyboard – Seri
FROM CITIZEN TO ACTOR

A CLEAR AGREEMENT IS IN PLACE BETWEEN THE DIVERSE PARTIES: DONOR, NGO, EXTERNAL FACILITATOR (IF REQUIRED).

THERE IS A CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT MECHANISM TO INVITE COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO TAKE PART IN THE ACTIVITY.

THE FACILITATOR CHARTERS THE AGENDAS AND PARTICIPANTS START THE PROCESS OF EXPERIMENTAL LEARNING.

THE PARTICIPANTS CREATE A STORYBOARD TO PLAN THEIR VIDEO.

PARTICIPANTS FILM EACH SCENE, SHOT TAKING TURNS AND ROLES.

PARTICIPANT EDITING TAKES PLACE SECURING CONTENT CONTROL BY PARTICIPANTS.

SCREENING WITH TARGET AUDIENCES: PARTICIPANTS LEAD DISCUSSIONS POST SCREENING AND FILM RESPONSE.

CONTEXT (if needed): THIS IS A GENERAL PROCESS. EACH CONTEXT MAY NEED A DIFFERENT APPROACH. THE ITERATION AND AMOUNT OF SCREENINGS IS AN EXAMPLE.

Appendix Figure 40: Storyboard – Shane
Appendix Figure 41: Storyboard – Toni
KEY GOALS: to visualize and convey the ideal sequence of a participatory video project that raises citizen voice for policy engagement and action within the international development sector that takes place in a country that is not your own.

This is an ideal, although somewhat general sequence...

**TITLE: Nets, not Lines**

**ROLE:** program design and implementation

A community of interest identifies a policy issue that they are interested to engage with.

They build out of relationships with a variety of stakeholders who are engaged in the issue. Other community of interest, discussion, citizens, organizational, community and individual partners.

Due to a variety of forces (e.g., distance (physical or power), need for feedback from a community to a community to make sure that the video to reach the community) community video is seen as the most effective way to organize and transmit particular visions.

Stakeholders support envisioning a participatory video program—community-based planning development phase through distribution.

Professional video makers are commissioned to engage with stakeholders, design a process and video production that reflects ambitions of the stakeholders. It is a facilitator mapping due to specific technical skill requirements they work with a facilitator from the country.

The model of production follows a classic client-driven model—the facilitator outlines steps of the production process from pre-production through to completion.

Stakeholders support the facilitator.

Make beautiful, engaging, insightful and engaging stories with the community.

It’s not simply a process; it’s also a product that helps as a tool to start. The video is the most powerful tool of critical thinking.

Who holds the camera is not necessarily the most important thing—marketing or technical skills may not be of interest or relevant. What is overall is participation and ownership—this is the participatory vision the client model is a useful reference for facilitators.

Help make the process and results and spend time to start what has been learnt with all stakeholders, with multiple communication and in many ways—outside, in the community and across different media.

Facilitators support continued reflection, discussions and N/A of the program (program = process and product). Also ongoing distribution outreach if possible.

Appendix Figure 42: Storyboard – Tyler
Appendix Figure 43: Storyboard – Zhenya