

# Recording Verbal Art Performances with Handheld Equipment

The Preparatory Phase in Africa

Presentation by Henri Aalders  
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# This is about hand held equipment

The experience  
obtained by the  
Voices of Africa

Advantages and  
disadvantages

How does it affect  
your project





The voices of Africa Media Foundation has three years experience with the use of mobile phones and pocket video cameras in citizen journalism:

- Much less intrusive than big video camera's
- Sufficient quality for internet and HD available
- Standard data format (MOV, MP4)
- Sufficient data storage (Two hours or more)

# Mobile phones are less intrusive



# Present day HD pocket cameras



## Pocket video Camera

Quality: HD 1080p video

Time: 10 hours of HD video

Card: SD/SDHC card slot

Storage: Up to 32 GB

Audio: Build in microphone  
Extra microphone jack

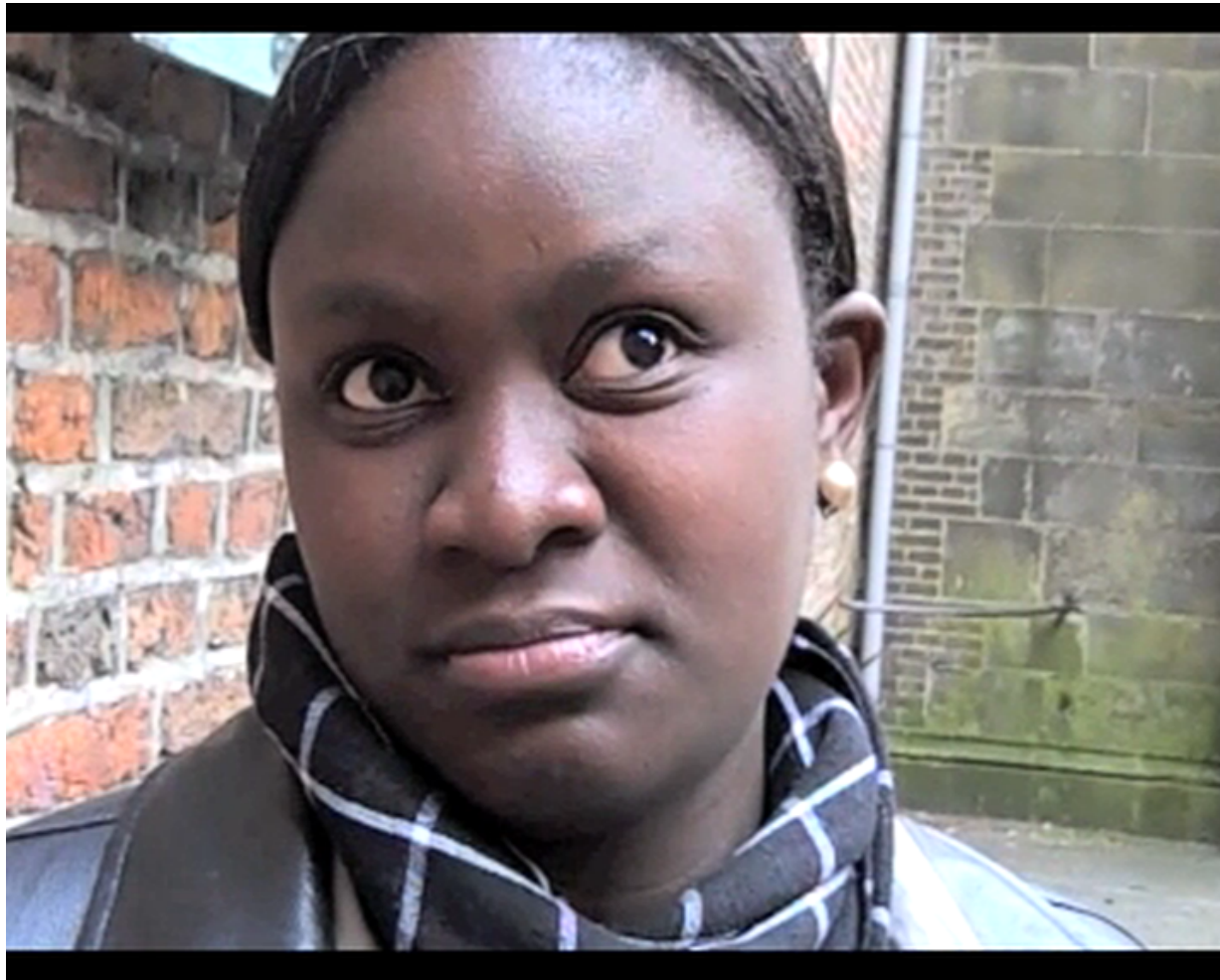
Storage: Standard formats

Size: Mobile phone

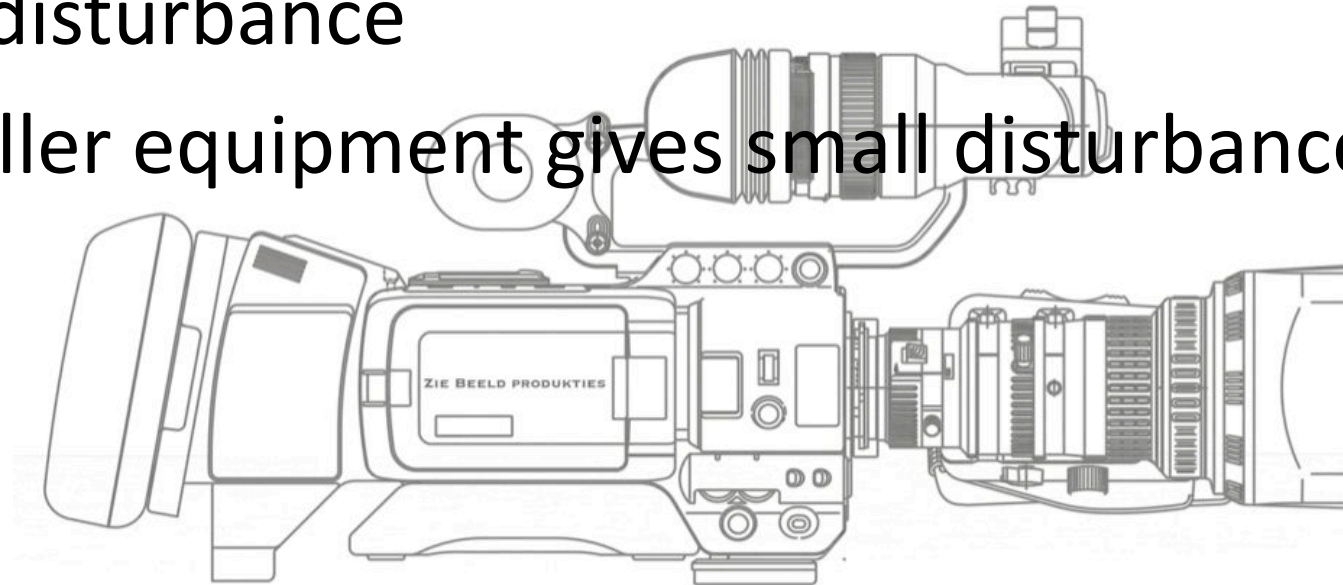
look: Mobile like



# Quality dramatically improved



- A mobile telephone is inconspicuous; everybody has a mobile.
- Pocket video cameras should therefore preferably look like a mobile phone
- The larger the technical equipment, the larger the disturbance
- Smaller equipment gives small disturbances



# The recording of a Verbal Art Performance

- Video registers a performance in full
- Video registers the kinesics of the performer
- Video can be highly intrusive



- Words are the carrier of content
- Gestures and kinetics complete the message
- Without sound, a verbal art recording is useless.



# The different requirements of different objectives

## **A verbal art recording**

- The full and complete recording of a verbal art performance
- Sufficient quality for full scientific analysis

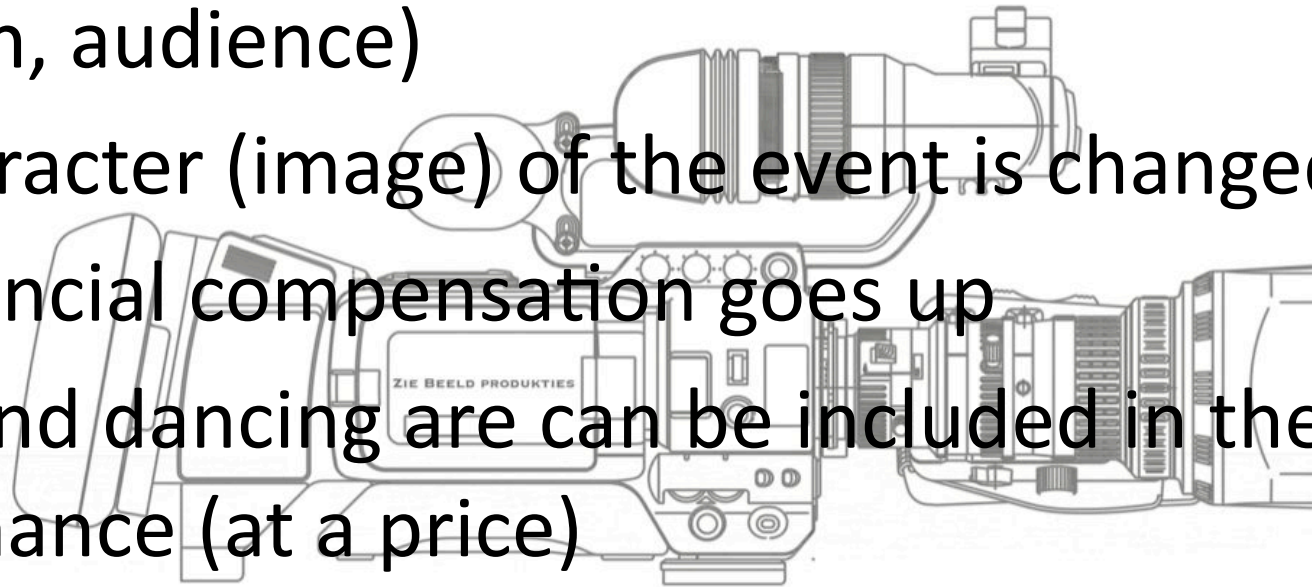
## **A documentary:**

- Studio/theatre quality
- Images carry messages on different levels
- No full registration necessary

# The Impact of Filming on the event

A request for special conditions (décor, lighting etc) will influence the negotiations in several ways:

- The setting of the performance is changed (location, audience)
- The character (image) of the event is changed
- The financial compensation goes up
- Music and dancing are can be included in the performance (at a price)



# You want to record Verbal art ! This is not a verbal art performance



# The effects of the pocket camera



- A less staged performance
- Performer and audience are not dressed up.
- No overacted interactions with the performer

The smaller the intrusion, the more chance that the performance reflects what should be a performance of verbal art without filming

# Factors that affect your project

The local conditions

Your budget

The consultant, his skills his reliability

The power structure within the clan

Religion, culture and customs

The storytellers

The competition

Political situation

Objectives of the research

The authorities

How to store and where

What to analyze?

Guidelines of your sponsor

What do you want to record?

# Managing the uncertainties: The basic steps of the project

The powerstructure within the clan

The authorities

The consultant, skills,  
reliability

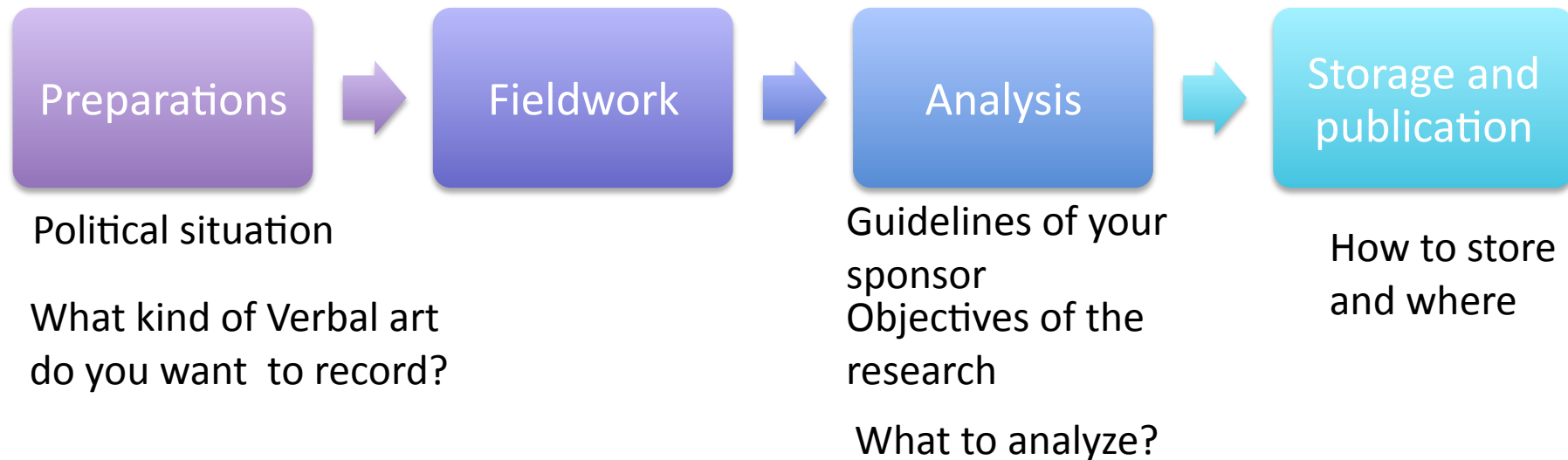
The storytellers

Your budget

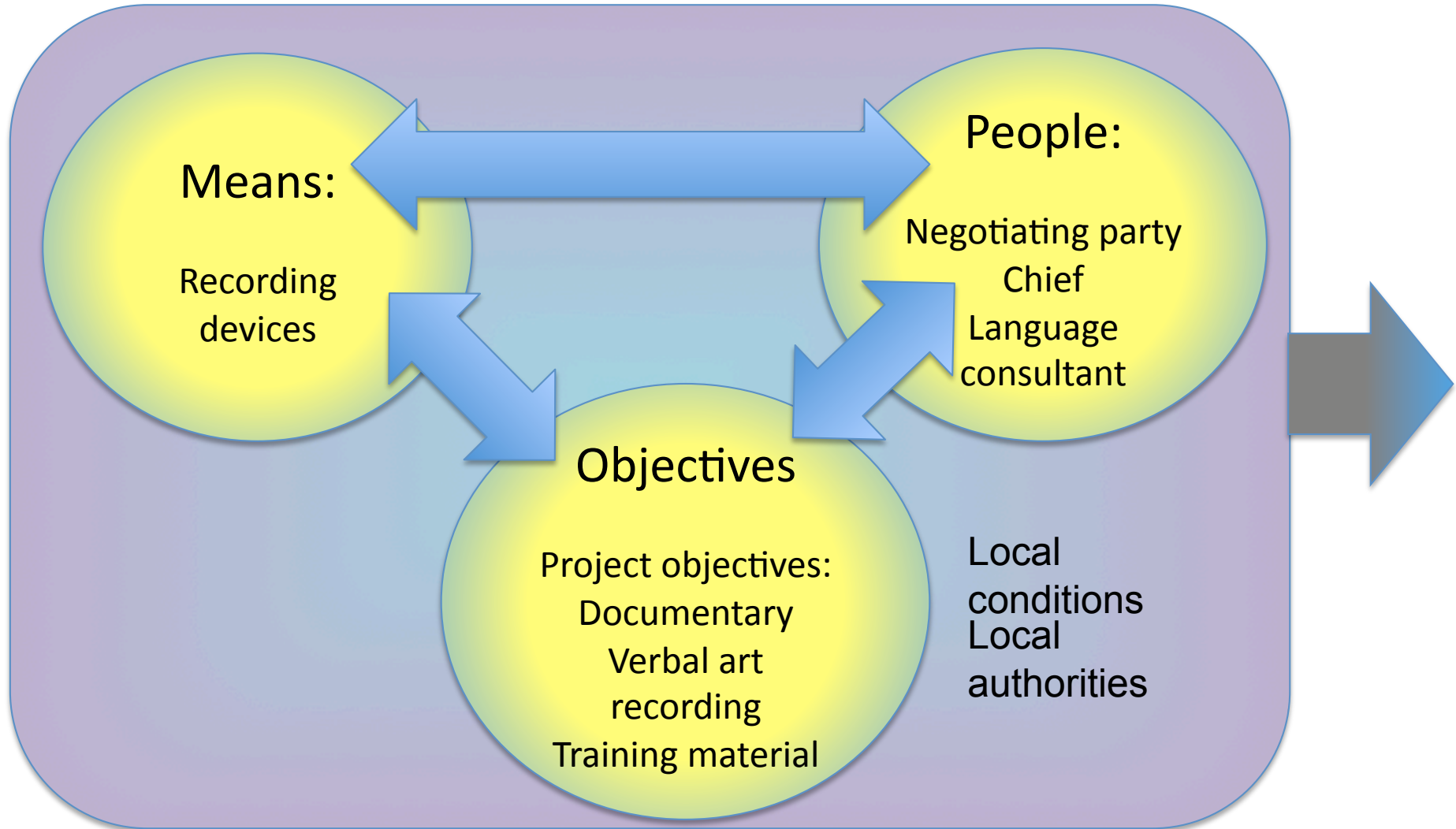
The local conditions

Religion, culture and customs

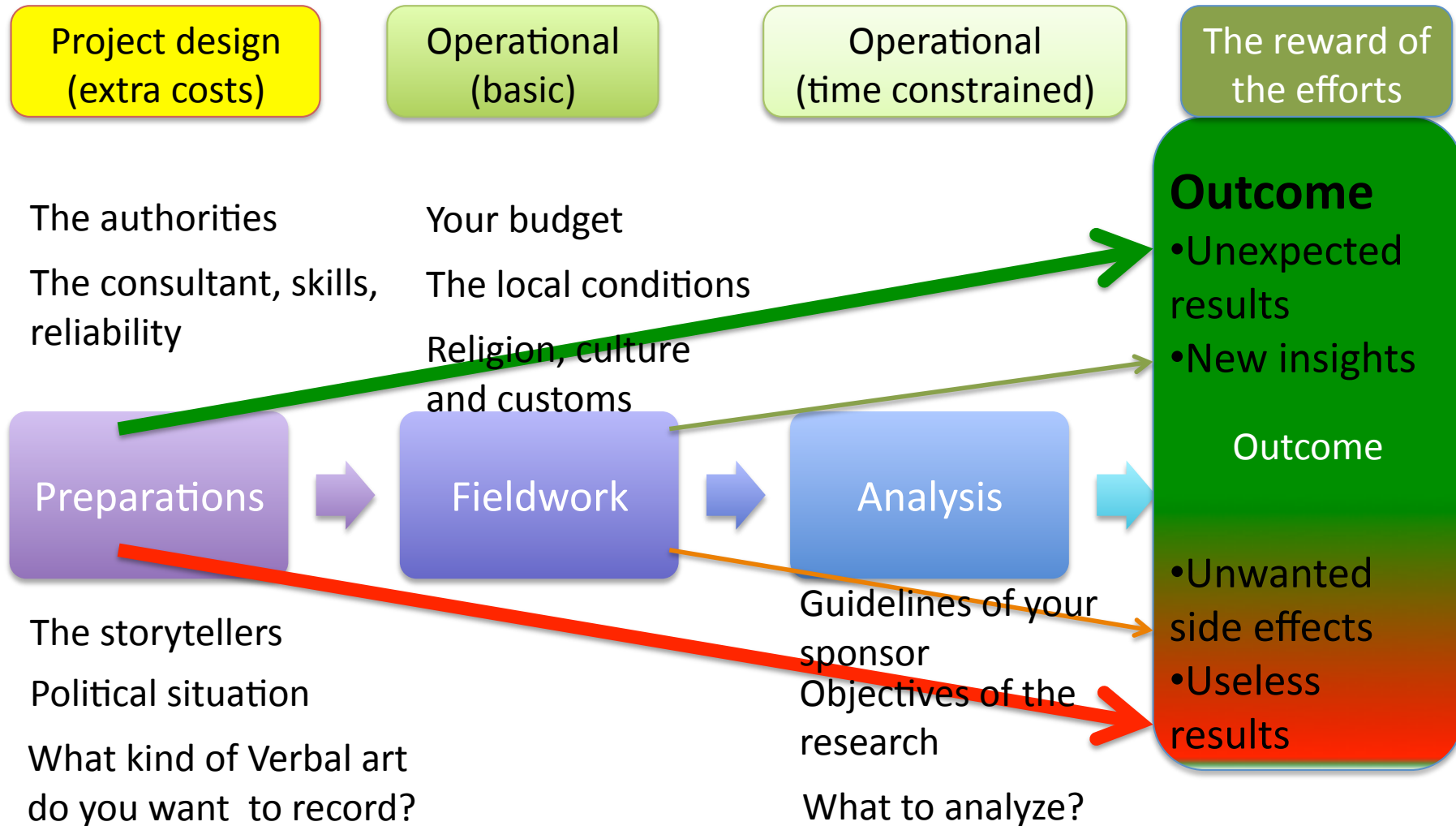
The competition



# The inter-relations in the preparatory phase



# The importance of early decisions





## Handheld equipment

- LCD screen quality images
- Price (Euro 250-500)
- Easy to edit
- Unobtrusive
- Computer screen size
- Need of Microphone
- One man show

## HD Film camera

- Top quality images
- Shown on large screen
- Highly Light sensitive
- Intrusive
- Bulky
- professional editing
- Expensive (Euro 10.000)
- Need of additional technicians

# Conclusions

- The preparatory phase is a key success factor
- The preparatory phase is neglected too often
- Do not mix verbal art recording with documentary making
- Verbal art recording requires minimal intrusion - Use mini equipment when possible
- Sound is the most important carrier of verbal art

## Outcome for Verbal art recording

- Useless results
- Unwanted side effects
- Unexpected results
- New insights

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**T H E V E R B A L A R T F O U N D A T I O N**