The Voice of the Visual

Visual Learning Strategies for Problem Analysis, Social Dialogue and Mediated Participation

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARV	Anti Retro Viral (Drug)
CD-ROM	Compact Disc Read-Only Memory
CIT	Critical Incidents Theory
CRZ	Coastal Regulation Zone
CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
CUSAT	Cochin University of Science and Technology
DHL	International Express and Logistics Company
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DVD	Digital Versatile Disc
EAIE	European Association for International Education
ECREA	European Communication Research and Education Association
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GES	Ghana Education Service
GSM	Global System for Mobile communications
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	Headquarters
IAIA	International Association for Impact Assessment
IAMCR	International Association for Media and Communication Research
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
ISAGA	International Association for Gaming and Simulation
JAEE	Journal of Agricultural Extension and Education
LAPNARD	Larenstein and Wageningen Alumni Professional Network on AIDS and Rural Development
MACO	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MoD	Management of Development
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MSc	Master of Science
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRDC	Natural Resource Development College
NSS	National Service Scheme
NUFFIC	Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PBL	Problem-Based Learning
PCR	Participatory Communication Research
PDA	Personal Digital Assistant

PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PLWHA	People Living with HIV/AIDS
PP	Public Participation
PPP	Panchayathi Raj Nagarapalika Legislation (Peoples Participatory Programme)
PV	Participatory Video
Q&A	Questions & Answers
RA	Rapid Appraisal
RDP	Rural Development Professional
REEDS	Research in Environment Education and Development Society
RIO	Réseau d'Innovation Organisationelle
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SIA	Strategic Impact Assessment
SEND	Interdenominational Faith Mission Agency
TREAT	Training Rural Extension And Transformation
VCD	Video Compact Disc
VHL	Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences
VHS	Video Home System
VPA	Visual Problem Appraisal
VPA A&RD	Visual Problem Appraisal AIDS & Rural Development
VPA KC	Visual Problem Appraisal Kerala's Coast
WCCD	World Congress on Communication for Development

Acknowledgements

Gillian Rose (2007:136) [1] promotes autobiographical reflexivity as he states *"reflexivity is an attempt to resist the universalizing claims of academic knowledge and to insist that academic knowledge, like all other knowledges is situated and partial."* Based on this definition he encourages *"that before the results of a piece of research can be presented, the author must explain how their social position has affected what they found."*

Following Rose, I'd like to sketch how this research project started decades ago yet only revealed itself more recently. My experience with participatory filming started in Colmschate, The Netherlands, in 1984, as a graduation project from the School of the Arts. After directing a community play on unemployment, members of the same community theatre group asked me to stay on to do a film project for local broadcaster Kabel Omroep Deventer. I directed a series of four short films portraying distinctive community members who were interviewed and filmed by members of the theatre group. It was only in 1993 that I learned of the wider interest in these films. In Nicaragua, while filming the water sanitation film 'Fuente de Amor,' we discovered that the members of the film crew had watched the Colmschate films as an example of early community-based television productions. I was amazed and surprised to learn about the long lifespan and interest for these films. I also felt somehow annoyed as I did not have copies of the films and with the exception of some sketches that made up the script and crumbling newspaper clippings, no tangible memories were left of the project.

Working as a researcher in the department of Agricultural Education at Wageningen University awakened my ambition to document and further research my experiences with theatre and film projects on community art and participatory development. I was convinced of the use that was made of these powerful strategies for social change as I knew no other means to combine all the emotions associated with development in a more vital, colourful, poetic, confusing and delightful way. Yet I realised that I had not contributed anything to its academic understanding. Starting to work on the Visual Problem Appraisal 'Kerala's Coast' in Kerala, India, brought the world-famous-to-the-crew interview with Mrs Shakuntala. That interview's production and impact provided clear and irrefutable evidence of the potential of film to make the invisible visible in a most aesthetic way. The convincing encouragements of colleagues in that endeavour underlined that it was time to broaden my focus from education and art to research. I had worked in many corners of the world, I felt at ease in a variety of communities and institutions and yet I needed to

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[1] Rose, G. (2007). *Visual Methodologies. An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, London: SAGE Publications.

engage more with the culture of the academic world. It sometimes felt like a journey to the moon to feel at home in the text-based culture of academic research. Fortunately, others joined me on those travels to the moon and elsewhere in this research.

resources available for the research activities and helped to sort out the project's complex logistics. Kleis is a dear friend to me and, above all, is committed to issues of social learning and change. Geartsje Oosterhof, our VHL director in Wageningen, provided a critical look, balancing education and research activities yet recognizing academic and societal relevance.

I would like to share stories about my colleagues because we make up an inspiring community. I'd like to thank Ivonne de Moor for the opera activities and everything else and Annemarie Westendorp because the three of us share a sword, roses and many life stories. With Ivonne, Sonja Scheffers, Marcel Put, Adnan Koucher and Rien van der Velde, we manage and enjoy the Rural Development and Communication course. I'd like to mention Greta van Beek, Martine van Tilburg, Robert Baars, Marco Verschuur, Piet Looise, Pierre van Rijn, Eddy Hesselink, Hiske Ridder, Sigrid Wevers, Marja de Jong and Ingrid de Vries who represent many other appreciated colleagues.

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The research project only recently received a more pronounced place in the private sphere. Milán, Camilo and Diego grew up with the research as can be seen from their school projects linked with countries and issues involved in my study and from Diego's early pastel crayon drawings. Their openness and communication in any language or otherwise with friends and colleagues from any corner of the world visiting our home represents a rich source of inspiration. My mother, Joke, Andre, Els, Alfred, Bert, Zoila, Ine and Gerard form an important and cherished background to my life, and friends like Loes and King, Simone, Lieke, Heleen, Marcel and Regina are also part of my wider family. I'd like to acknowledge all who shared the research experiences or were otherwise inspiring, but this is not the place; therefore with Rico, Milán, Camilo, Diego, Casper and Jorik, I would like to invite colleagues, relatives and friends to receive our words of thanks and friendship in personal encounters.

I dedicate this work to my mother and my late father as they established the foundation of my work.

1. The Voice of the Visual

Introduction

In the Netherlands, as in many other countries, the number of international and intercultural study programmes increased substantially since the nineties. More and more students are coming from a variety of backgrounds and consequently the diversity in learning styles and learning experiences is growing and change the face of the classroom. Another trend influencing higher education is to achieve competence-based curricula, requiring that learning situations offered to students should reflect more of the complex reality in which professionals tend to work. A consequence of these challenging trends is the necessity to improve the quality of international education and to enhance professionalism in this sector. A study carried out at Wageningen University and Larenstein University of Applied Sciences entitled 'Exploring Heterogeneity' (Brinkman and Witteveen, 1998), aimed to obtain an overview of the most important problems affecting effectiveness and efficiency in international and intercultural education. It coincided with several of the above described issues and recommended to design methodologies and materials matching with the heterogeneous learning styles of the student population and responding to the complexity of their future professional activities. As a follow up on this recommendation the Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) was designed and the 'VPA Rice from the Guyana's' produced. This film based learning environment consisting of fourteen films, one documentary and two manuals was published in 1999. Since then it was successfully used in formal education.

With the ambition to do something along both lines of improving staff competence and developing appropriate educational materials, staff and students from Larenstein University of Applied Sciences produced in 2003 the film 'Cef Tes Cef Tes' to provide a training tool for lecturers engaged in international and intercultural education. The film shows a Dutch lecturer and a group of African and Asian students who face characteristic frictions and problems in the international classroom. Each situation is followed by three options portraying alternative approaches to the presented problem. The situations and the characters in the film provide trainees strong and controversial metaphors inducing the analysis of international and intercultural education and stimulating the audience to explore their own teaching practice. Humour, hilarity and exaggeration are used to articulate cultural sensitive aspects that could be perceived as impolite, rude or otherwise have conflictive connotations if visualised in a more realistic style.

The 'Cef Tes Cef Tes'-project was a bit of a frivolous student production yet grounded and inspired by the research outcomes of 'Exploring Heterogeneity.' It coincided with the design and production of a second VPA set: 'VPA Kerala's Coast.' From the strong emotions generated during the production and use of both learning strategies using film, emerged the ambition to further explore using films in education. When the 'VPA Kerala's Coast' was used in a series of workshops in India in the context of community based policy design a glimpse of the potential of using films for strategic learning outside formal education was observed. The idea emerged to explore visual learning and more specifically films, as an answer to cater for learning on diverse stakeholder perspectives and for learning on complex issues. The India experience added to this the assumption that visual learning strategies would be an option to consent with Robb (2002:104) that "*the moral imperative for giving the poor a voice in the poverty debate is self-evident.*" Robb formulates this thought in a context that focuses on practices, practitioners and policies transcending the level of project and community initiatives. The challenge of designing visual learning strategies in a context of complex, multi stakeholder setting articulated the need to have a better academic understanding of the potential of visual learning in relation to complex problems.

Setting the Scene

Complex Problems

The changing needs for innovative learning environments can be positioned as a consequence of complex societal issues subject of the professional and scientific domain of the life sciences. Nowadays, this type of complex problems is also called 'wicked problems.' Wicked problems are problems that do not have one single solution that is right or wrong, good or bad or true or false. These are problems in which many stakeholders are involved, all of them

framing the problems and issues in a different way. Suggested solutions to wicked problems can therefore often be contradictory; what might seem a solution to one stakeholder could be seen as a deepening of the problem by another one. We follow here the distinction between complex and wicked problems by Ker Rault (2008:23) who qualifies 'wicked' problems as complex problems related to social systems and values. Reflecting on the consequent changing role of scientists, Giller et al. (2008:14) state:

> *"For science to contribute to enabling the poor and/or marginalized to gain a voice in their future use of natural resources, emphasis needs to move away from providing solutions and plans for stakeholders to the support of negotiation between stakeholders based on negotiated shared understandings of the problems and opportunities for change."*

Such types of negotiating or 'social dialogue' are promoted for concrete purposes such as reclaiming indigenous knowledge or monitoring and evaluation but increasingly also from a right based perspective that all people have a right to be heard, especially when "*the main debates take place in documents which they do not write, or in meetings which they do not attend*" (Slim et al., 1993:4). Dominique Hounkonnou (2001:232) in his dissertation also elaborates on connecting to local dynamics when pursuing sustainable development:

> *"Sustainable development – the one which can keep going at the end of an intervention – is only possible if we can connect to the people, listen to their cradle and understand what they are doing, in order to act with them in the same direction. Listening to the cradle does not cost more. On the contrary, linking effectively with the local dynamics helps to improve the efficiency of development action, allowing adequate use of the available resources. The most difficult, however, will be to deconstruct and reconstruct our frames and mentalities, and to help local people regain their confidence they have lost in their own capacities and creativity due to the 'expert culture'."*

Hounkonnou highlights here that 'listening to the cradle' may initiate a quest for new 'expert' procedures and operations as new strategies are required and most probably new conflicts will be created as well. Hermans (2005:204) in his dissertation on actor analysis for water management complements to this line of thinking where he suggests that actor analysis has not the direct effect of re-framing problem analysis by water experts but that it "*facilitates learning and that provides a channel for interaction between experts and actors.*" Hermans further elaborates on relations between water experts, policy makers and 'actors' assigning each a different yet complementary role and indicating needs to change expert minds in a way that goes beyond "*a positive attitude*" towards actor analysis (2005:205).

These thoughts provide initial guidance to the PhD project. They outline a background of wicked multi stakeholder problems in a context of sustainable development and links up with challenges for learning, participation and dialogue by professionals, experts, policy makers and other social actors concerned.

Visual Learning

Visual learning is grounded in the existence and relevance of information encapsulated in images. After Georg (1989:11) I take as a point of departure that:

"pictorial systems of information, through signs has, since time immemorial, remained a privileged mode of discourse."

Long before writing, ideas and information were recorded and shared with figurative and non-figurative images. Functions attributed to archaeological images are to help people concentrate on their prayers or to remind them of the holy stories, for reasons of decoration or symbolic value. It is generally assumed that the function of symbolic value evolved into sign language and eventually into writing (Fuglesang, 1982). Semiotics is the study of signs, or of the social production of meaning by sign systems, of how things come to have significance. Semiotics argues that verbal language is just one of many systems of meaning. Branston and Stafford (2006) further elaborates to this definition by stating that these systems of meaning also include clothing, gesture, haircuts etc. which can be studied like verbal languages. Following this argument, considering pictorial systems as a language system allows that the elements and the grammar needed for constructing an agreed meaning can be studied to comprehend the language. Accordingly, Pratish (2006:13) states that visual literacy refers to the competency to:

- understand the subject matter of images,
- analyze and interpret images to gain meaning within the cultural context the image was created and exists,
- analyze the syntax of images including style and composition,
- analyze the techniques used to produce the image,
- evaluate the aesthetic merit of the work,
- evaluate the merit of the work in terms of purpose and audience, and,
- grasp the synergy, interaction, innovation, affective impact and/or 'feel' of an image.

Pratish claims that visual literacy *"involves problem solving and critical thinking and these can be applied to all areas of learning"* (2006:15) yet he also limits this potential by warning for a lack of visual literacy and he elaborates in detail on the inclusion of visual literacy training in the classroom at young ages.

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Roaming around in the field of visual anthropology we come across Leslie Deveraux (1995:2-3) who states that:

> *"Among the realist disciplines of humanities, anthropology,*
> *ethnographic films has perhaps made the greatest excursion into filmic*
> *representation and yet ethnographic film has still not been regarded*
> *with much intellectual rigour or trust. Despite promising beginnings*
> *anthropologists have not yet inquired very deeply into the reasons for*
> *their mistrust of visual representation. It is still the case that most*
> *scholars are far more practiced at critically reading a written text than*
> *they are at understanding the discursive impact of a documentary film*
> *or television show. Visual literacy, outside of cinema studies courses, is*
> *not taught to university students, and yet they will certainly come to*
> *know their world and to decide their place in it through the*
> *representation of the visual media to which written text and books will*
> *be at most a specialist corrective."*

This quote supports the idea that although visual representation and visual 'texts' are frequently used as a means by which the outside world enters the academia, the analysis and understanding is scarcely addressed or studied. In a later chapter Deveraux (1995:61) looks at this gap from a different angle as he elaborates on issues of abstraction and analysis, stating that *"The human life world is not at home in the* discourse *of the academy; what belongs there is analytical abstraction. Outside the academy people stick closer to experience."* Following this statement, it can be questioned what aspects of abstraction and analysis can be contributed by visual learning. Roberston (2005:44) describes her experience at the Granada Training Centre:

> *"Visual Anthropology, I discovered, was as much about learning new*
> *ways of seeing as it was about harnessing a new form of technology.*
> *Ethnographic film-making was not only about showing other people's*
> *worlds (as we perceived them) but also about using the camera to*
> *explore those worlds, encouraging the viewer to engage with the subject,*
> *to empathize and feel something what it might be like to be there. It*
> *seemed to me that what was crucial in developing a visual approach to*
> *anthropology was a return to the discipline's central theme, participant*
> *observation. Making anthropology relevant, I discovered, was also*
> *about issues of representation. The two were inextricably linked."*

In this quote, visual learning is defined broader than a visual way of dealing with descriptive knowledge. Robertson gives an indication for the potential of using film to generate learning outcomes like identification, reflection and mediation in a strategic way.

Another consideration that promotes using visual learning strategies is respecting diverse learning and teaching styles. In intercultural and international

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educational settings catering for all diverse learning and teaching styles may be supported by strong and guiding instructional materials and methodologies (Brinkman and Witteveen, 1998:73). Moreover, visual learning styles do overcome certain language barriers and used in combination with text based learning styles accommodates a broad spectrum of experiential learning styles.

In the underlying research project the quest for visual learning strategies and new representational forms of people and events, in a mode that allows audience interpretation for learning, the focus is on film. It is supposed that films have particular qualities to unravel and further enquire into 'wicked multi stakeholder problems.' The opportunities and interest for using film in the social (research) domain is growing but not yet very much in the focus and I agree with Braden (1998:18) as she states:

> *"The failure of those involved in participatory development to engage with the spread of mass media must be seen as a lost opportunity (…). It has led to a lack of imagination in the use of the technological by-products of mass media, such as audio and video recorders by development practitioners. The development of 'good practices' in relation to the participatory uses of recorded media has been neglected."*

I think it is not only a lack of imagination but also a lack of expertise on the development of visual learning strategies by those having interest in the potential impact. The images (still images or a moving image) do not emerge spontaneously; they are designed and produced deliberately. Cassin (1994:2) elaborates on the misconception of spontaneous art production as he exemplifies:

> *"Many people have a very romantic idea of how artists work. They imagine them for inspiration to strike, like some kind of benign lighting bolt. When this happens they are supposed to rush out to their studios and paint feverishly until the mood passes or the work is finished. The composition of a painting may sometimes appear fully formed in an artist imagination, but more often it has to be thought out and designed. A painter may do this before he touches a brush or canvas or he may rely on his experience and allow the composition to develop as he works. In either case, the process is more complex than we might suppose from looking at the end result."*

Although Cassin uses the slightly different perspective of an art painter, his comment explains that the production of images is not always recognized for its craftsmanship. Producing film encompasses a variety of cinematographic practices, skills, and competences but in addition it implies an array of technical, managerial and financial issues. Equally it might be easily overlooked or underestimated that producing visual learning strategies is dealing with deliberate design. It is about a particular learning strategy that has to be

elaborated according to set objectives. Added to this there is always a sense of composition, editing, selection involved. Even a distant and neutral way of filming – if ever possible – is the result of a long series of decision making over issues such as camera perspectives, framing and timing. Whereas technicalities might be overlooked there is often ample attention for the assumption that filming might be too intrusive to the 'subjects' of the filming as compared to conventional research techniques of observation and interviewing. Mentioning this common 'ignorance' of production and ethical issues in filming is not meant to discourage the realization of the potentials of visual learning, it is meant to provide arguments for a critical analysis of filming and using of film for learning. Roberge (2005:25) states that limitations on classifying (documentary) film "*shows both the complexity of the subject as the poverty of our theories.*" He adds on this in a kind of reversed mode by stating that "*we can expect that if our films are not satisfactory our film theory is likely not to be satisfactory either*" (Roberge, 2005:26). Yet to further complicate the issue of understanding film (and visual learning strategies) he writes: "*when a political film is a fictional narrative film, then in order to convey its message that film must have a certain degree of perfection. That perfection in many instances is that of art*" (Roberge, 2005:112).

The Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal, famous for his 'Theatre of the Oppressed,' published his explicit vision on the relevance of quality images and stories in his 'Aesthetics of the Oppressed': "*In our societies with the end of better oppressing the oppressed, the oppressor seeks to reduce the symbolic life of the oppressed, their imagination consigning them to mechanised work in which they are replaceable by any other – their names become numbers*" and continues "*The Aesthetics of the Oppressed aims at the liberation and fortification of metaphoric activity, of symbolic languages, of intelligence and sensitivity. It aims at the expansion of the perception that we have of the world. This is done through the Word, the Image, and the Sound, guided by Humanist Ethic*" (Boal, 2006:43).

Interpreting Boal, his focus on 'aesthetics' is appreciated yet further complicates the process of design and production of visual learning strategies as a broad set of competences are required. When the artistic and creative qualities are combined in the scientist and film maker this may create new problems. Henny (1986:55) illustrates role conflicts as almost inevitable from his perspective as a sociologist cameraman:

> "*Conflicts between the moralist and the scientist, the academician and the journalist, the 'hard' empiricist and the 'weak' ethno methodologist, etc. It can be assumed, however that the sociologist who is a morally conscientious ethno methodologist with a knack for journalism will be more likely to find a humanizing use for audio-visual media than will his alter ego. His alter ego may, however, by the same token find cameras and monitors extremely useful for observing crowds, analyzing*

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crowd behaviour and subsequently deriving recommendations on crowd control to the Police department."

To conclude we define in visual learning 'visual' as a rich language that uses pictures or images of any type – even mental pictures included – that creates a look to the world, brings people and issues on stage, alters time, distances, places and spaces in a language that is metaphorical and narrative. The visual language analysed in this study calls upon the audience to listen, to experience and to become engaged in a mental process of reframing and reconsidering the representation and meaning of issues at stake. Visual learning strategies provide opportunities for learning which are not possible with traditional written/printed means as films extend human experiences; they overcome physical limitations (Pinnington, 1991) and provide specific tools for reflection and mediation. The ability of visual media to alter distances of time and space can support the changing role of the audience from neutral observer, experts and researchers to engaged co-constructors of knowledge as it may provide tools for observation, reflexivity and mirroring that are not catered for similarly in traditional text based learning environments.

We also conclude that the current absence of expertise and understanding of designing and producing visual learning strategies requires consideration for the various disciplines involved. Taking into account that educational design, art design, film making are contributing fields we may claim a focus on multidisciplinary aspects. The mentioned lack of good practices may also constitute then a reason to combine conventional academic research activities with design activities. In other words; to research new visual learning strategies they need to be designed and produced.

The PhD Project

Research Aims and Questions

This PhD project explores visual learning strategies for problem analysis and formulation of alternatives, focussing on dialogue and participation by social actors, (future) practitioners and decision makers involved in wicked problem settings. The project has the twofold aim of exploring the potential of visual learning and defining conditions for the design and production process of visual learning strategies or films in the social domain. The project materialised in a design and research perspective on the production and use of visual learning strategies. In this project 'using film by an audience' is interpreted from a learning perspective and refers to a film based learning space. At the start of the project this learning space was framed in a formal setting of adult education at master level. As the project advanced, the attention on using films in the public domain increased with a focus on public participation by silenced or overlooked social actors.

Figure 1 visualises the dual character of the PhD project and process. A research track and a design track are discerned both building on the production and use of visual learning strategies. In this model, the production of accompanying graphic materials such as a workbook or facilitators' guide are considered to be part of 'production'.
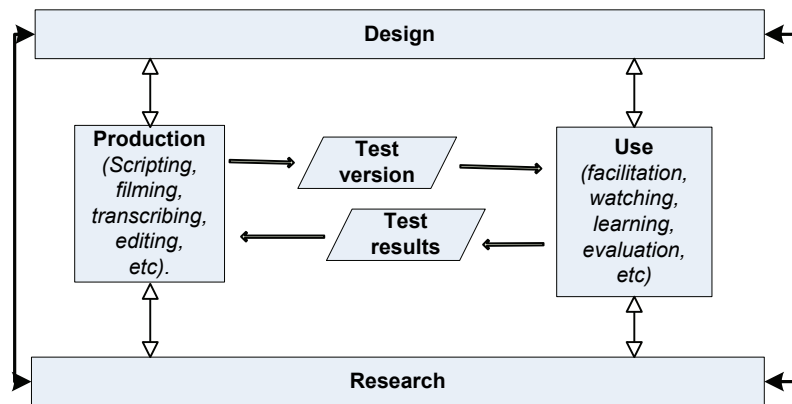
Figure 1: Visualization of the PhD Research and Design Process

The main questions guiding the PhD project focus on the design of visual learning strategies and the evaluation of visual learning strategies with specific groups of stakeholders in particular settings:

1. How can film-based visual learning strategies be designed to achieve learning about problem analysis and formulation of alternatives in relation to wicked problems, multi stakeholder settings and sustainable development?
   a. What theoretical notions contribute to the design, production and use of films in visual learning strategies?
   b. What are critical conditions and processes influencing the design, production and use of films in visual learning strategies?
   c. What are the cultural dimensions of producing visual learning strategies?

2. What is the value of visual learning strategies using film, for learning about problem analysis and formulation of alternatives in relation to wicked problems, multi stakeholder settings and sustainable development;
   a. for the user group of future practitioners and policy makers in a setting of capacity building and education,
   b. for the user group of secondary stakeholders such as practitioners, policy makers, and decision-makers in settings in the public domain,

     c.   for the user group of primary stakeholders in settings in the public domain?

Proceeding from these questions the research advanced in the dynamic practice of education, research, consultancy, film making and editing, facilitation and evaluations of workshops. From this iterative research and design process the articles emerged that are reprinted in the following chapters.

Chapter two 'Visual Problem Appraisal—Kerala's Coast: A Simulation for Social Learning about Integrated Coastal Zone Management' gives an initial theoretical positioning of the VPA. It describes VPA design and concretises this in the production of the 'VPA Kerala's Coast.' It positions VPA in relation to serious gaming and simulation. It describes objectives and impact of using the VPA and questions what elements of reality are traceable in the events.

The impact of VPA in capacity building of future professionals is presented in Chapter three: 'Learning on Complex Multi Stakeholder Issues: Assessing the Visual Problem Appraisal.' This chapter positions VPA in the field of education and learning theories and it presents an assessment based on the evaluation of student experiences with VPA in international master courses. It gives a deeper insight into the learning process induced by VPA and into the level of achievement of the various projected learning outcomes.

The production of a VPA is analysed in Chapter four: 'Cultural Issues in Making and Using the Visual Problem Appraisal "Kerala's Coast".' The chapter considers the production of a VPA as a space of intercultural communication. Using the critical incident approach potential conflicts and critical events occurring during the production of the 'VPA Kerala's Coast' are presented and analysed. The chapter provides an insight into the endeavour of filming VPA interviews with stakeholders who are ignored or overlooked and on locations that are difficult to access.

Chapter five 'Embedded Filming for Social Change. Learning about HIV/AIDS and Rural Development Professionalism' focuses on the filming of processes of learning for social change as it analyses the series of Embedded Filming. The production and use of the series of five films on AIDS and rural development professionalism is described and analysed as tools for social learning and change. This chapter elaborates on the interconnectedness of the filming and the learning processes.

The value of VPA as a tool for mediated participation is evaluated in Chapter six: 'Mediated Participation'. Using filmed interviews to bring 'distanced' or otherwise excluded stakeholders in a mediated way to the doorstep of decision makers carries the ambition to facilitate the consideration of their stories, concerns and proposals. This chapter questions if this form of 'mediated participation' creates new spaces of governance as it allows practitioners and policy makers to 'meet' with direct stakeholders.

Research Strategy

Combining Design and Research

The point of departure in defining the research strategy was to explore visual learning strategies in the context of enhancing the potential and production of visual learning strategies. The combined aims of the PhD project to study the potential and the design and production of visual learning were converted into a strategy to design visual learning strategies and study the processes of production and use (see Figure 1). To make the results meaningful, the design track could not materialise in simulated or experimental settings. It was therefore mandatory that the visual learning strategies, providing the empirical context of the PhD project, were commissioned and located in concrete activities such as projects, education and consultancy assignments. This implied that some long acquisition trajectories took place in the research project as commissioned (and funded) film based projects were required. Project activities were further delineated by the international orientation of the research, the ambition to realise (broadcast) quality films and the explicit need to produce films that had a guaranteed use. As in real life, a relevant number of projected activities remained well prepared but filed for another day, due to financial constraints and other reasons beyond the influence of the author and participating colleagues. It was however realised that research and development also took place in the preparation of projects and proposals for not (yet) realised activities such as the VPA Colombia (rural livelihoods in Colombia), the VPA Kadogo (socio-economic reintegration of former child soldiers in DR Congo) and the VPA Water board Hunze & Aa (The Netherlands).

Visual Problem Appraisal and Embedded Filming

Visual Problem Appraisal and Embedded Filming are the two visual learning strategies, which are developed and analysed in this PhD project. Both visual learning strategies constitute the empirical context to explore production and use related issues. The research project initially focussed on exploring the production and use of the VPA in formal education. Recognising the VPA potential in the public domain, the project also studies how the VPA might contribute to enhanced social dialogue, stakeholder consultation and mediated participation. The first VPA design was developed for the 'VPA Rice from the Guyana's' and made by Witteveen in 1996 and developed in this PhD project with the 'VPA Kerala's Coast' and the 'VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa.' Before further elaborating on the challenges of a project that designs and researches visual learning strategies, the Visual Problem Appraisal is shortly introduced.

Visual Problem Appraisal

The VPA was initially designed to be used in formal education at master level, for training international masters' students in policy analysis and management. It is a realistic open simulation constructed as a consultancy assignment. The VPA has elements of a competition game as each team selects different films and therefore obtains different information. The VPA consists of documentaries and filmed stakeholder interviews. The documentaries represent two different perspectives on the same situation. A modernist reflection of reality is presented at the start of the VPA. The filmed interviews are individual stakeholders' portraits filmed on location. The second documentary, presents towards the end of the learning process clustered stakeholder perceptions on actual and controversial issues.

In a classroom situation, students typically go through a three-tier VPA programme: scoping, stakeholder consultation and action. The student is expected to analyse, organise and structure the information encapsulated in the films. During the simulated stakeholder consultation, students select a limited number of interviews. This selection is to simulate conditions that might be met in doing fieldwork with limited time, resources and access to respondents. 'Meeting' a number of stakeholders in such filmed interviews allows students to learn about the different perspectives of these interviewees and the way they frame their problems. Moreover, the filmed interviews allow the student to experience the dynamics of eye-to-eye contact with real life persons, which generates a kind of interpersonal relation with the interviewee. Even though the interview is simulated, psychologically the observer can align and associate; feel sympathy or antipathy with the interviewee, just like in a real-life encounter. This becomes apparent during presentations when students reveal their identification with their filmed informants by talking in terms of 'we': "we first went to see Mr. Reza" or whilst debating with another group of students: "but during the interview with us he told us […]."

The VPA design was first applied in the production of the 'VPA Rice from the Guyana's' produced in 1996/1997. The 'VPA Kerala's Coast' was produced in 2003/2004 and the 'VPA AIDS & Rural Development' from 2006 to 2008. All VPA sets are used and still in use in formal education at bachelor and master level. The latter two have been used outside formal education with promising effects (Witteveen and Enserink, 2007).

As the PhD project advanced with the study of the VPA, a comparative study subject came on stage with the design, production and use of Embedded Filming. The Embedded Filming design developed with a series of five films produced on the issue of AIDS and Rural Development Professionalism.

Embedded Filming

In June 2002, in Arusha, Tanzania, a meeting was organised to establish the Larenstein and Wageningen Alumni Professional Network on AIDS and Rural Development (LAPNARD). The network meeting was based on exchange of expertise and engagement in a field study. It was envisaged that the meeting

would result in a film production in line with the activities that led to the start of LAPNARD. Students of the master programme 'Training Rural Extension and Transformation' (TREAT) of Larenstein University of Applied Sciences from the cohorts 00/01 and 01/02 had worked on the AIDS prevention campaign packages producing the short films 'An Exciting Story' and 'True Romance.' Both packages proved to be successful for prevention purposes and supportive to the public debate about the issue of AIDS and rural development (Witteveen et al., 2001). The film production 'Kilio-The Cry. AIDS and Rural Development in East Africa' was envisioned to be a strategic and informative tool for members of the network and related institutions by visualising the actual debate of rural development professionals engaged in HIV/AIDS related activities, as well as portraying the impact of HIV/AIDS on the daily activities of rural development professionals. 'Kilio-The Cry' was the first film in a series of five on HIV/AIDS and rural development professionalism in Africa and Asia produced in an embedded way. 'Embedded Filming' seeks participation in the production phase by combining action research with being embedded in a learning process. The courses and workshops that were filmed took place in Tanzania, Zambia, India and Ghana. The films – as end-products received unexpected audiences and screenings, inducing further design of the film prototype and research on the production and use of this visual learning strategy (Witteveen and Lie, 2009).

Critical Distance and Articulated Subjectivism

The strategy to combine a design, production track and a research track (see Figure 1) was an option as the researcher combined expertise in the field of educational design and facilitation, art design and film making. Combining activities in these domains with research implicated that attention had to be paid to careful role division to make the research results matching academic standards.

Assessment of the combined focus on design and research that features in this project borrowed from a discussion on criteria for academic design that is taking place at technical universities in the Netherlands. Departments of architecture experienced a need to balance between art and science yet responding to academic criteria. As a result a debate is taking place on the evaluation of academic design processes that may results in other outcomes such as drawings. Van der Voordt and De Jong (2008) indicate that conventional criteria such as reliability, validity, verification and desirability are equally applicable in design as in academic research. A difference is that design focuses on a higher degree of realisation. He elaborates on this stating that academic research indicates probabilities whereas academic design focuses on possibilities. Van der Voordt and De Jong also relate this to the different focus; as research focuses on analysis and design on synthesis. Also subjectivity plays a different role; in research it is preferably overtaken by objectivity whereas design requires articulated and reasoned subjectivity to reach originality and innovation. Almost

between the lines he comments that contrary to a research process, a design process incorporates new ideas and experiences that cannot always be captured in words. The main critique however, according to Van der Voordt and De Jong, on applying conventional academic research criteria to scientific design is that they are mainly formulated and defined by scientists without a background or expertise in designing and consequently pay insufficient justice to the level of invention or creation.

In this research project mechanisms for enhancing critical distance and strategies for articulated subjectivism were applied to keep the project in line with academic practices for interpretive research.

The design and production processes were documented in project proposals and evaluations, in production notes and diaries, minutes of meetings, design models, scripts, transcripts, field notes, evaluations and also by photographs and video recordings. For each production, compilations of these data were made in chronological and thematic order including informal data and collage techniques by including photographs, sketches and newspaper cuttings (see Figure 2). This deliberately documenting of all events and incidents of the various phases in the process - conceptualised as 'articulated subjectivism' - aimed to achieve a critical distance. Throughout the process space was provided for exchange and reflection with concerned crew or team members before narrowing down to the more limited or specific research perspective. This was also done to respect the strong emotions affecting crew members involved in the filming of delicate stories of vulnerable stakeholders. Chapter four: 'Cultural Issues in Making and Using the Visual Problem Appraisal "Kerala's Coast"' elaborates in detail on the analysis of the VPA production as a space of intercultural communication. Here we used the critical incident approach to articulate subjective issues that potentially or concretely induced conflicts.

'Finality', a mechanism that contributes to separation of roles is described by Deveraux (1995:61) stating that "print, far more, than mere writing, completes the separation of the knower from the known and creates finality and closure in the manufacture and discourse of the text." This mechanism counts similarly for film production; finalising the editing of the film and sending it out for reproduction and distribution creates finality. This induces critical distance as it transfers the results from the personal sphere to the public sphere. Though the film remains the 'baby' of the filmmakers it is handed over to the world, to an audience which is mainly anonymous and unknown to the film makers. This distancing mechanism facilitates role division of filmmaker and evaluator.

The varied settings of the production, use and research activities also contributed to enhanced role divisions. The different locations, dynamics and colleagues participating in the various project activities generate distinctiveness as a film crew pertains to a different professional culture as a group of lecturing colleagues or fellow researchers. Crossing the boundaries of one sub culture to the other raises questions on issues, discourse and norms and creates a permanent iterative feedback system.

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മേഖലയെപ്പറ്റി ദൃശ്യപ്രശ്ന
വിലയിരുത്തൽ

കൊച്ചി: കൊച്ചി ശാസ്ത്ര സാങ്കേതിക സർവകലാശാല കേരളതീരത്തെ മത്സ്യബന്ധന മേഖലയ്ക്ക് ഊന്നൽ നൽകിക്കൊണ്ടുള്ള ഒരു ദൃശ്യപ്രശ്ന വിലയിരുത്തൽ (വി.പി.എ) കിറ്റ് തയ്യാറാക്കുന്നു. അന്താരാഷ്ട തൊഴിലധിഷ്ഠിത കോഴ്സുകളുടെ ഉപയോഗത്തിന് വേണ്ടി പുതുതായി രൂപകല്പന ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ള ഒരു വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ പരിശീലന പരിപാടി യാണ് ഇത്. നെതർലാന്റ്സി ലെ ഡെവെന്ററിലുള്ള ലാറിൻ സ്റ്റീൻ യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി ഓഫ് പ്രൊഫഷണൽ എഡ്യൂക്കേഷൻ, ലീവാർഡനിലുള്ള വാൻ ഹാം ഇൻസ്റ്റിറ്റ്യൂട്ട്, ഡെൽഫ്ടിലെ ഡെൽഫ്ട്സ് സാങ്കേതിക സർവക ലാശാല എന്നീ സ്ഥാപനങ്ങളുടെ സംയുക്ത സഹകരണത്തോടെയാ ണ് പരിപാടി തയ്യാറാക്കുന്നത്.

Figure 2: Mathrubhumi, February 21, 2003[1]

Another approach for safeguarding critical distance was the reporting and sharing of the preliminary research results throughout the research process. Earlier and partial versions of articles have been presented and discussed at annual conferences and workshops with colleagues of the Public Participation (PP) section of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), the Participatory Communication Research (PCR) section of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), the International and Intercultural Communication section of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA), the International Association for Gaming and Simulation (ISAGA), and the European Association for International Education (EAIE).

External quality control mechanism resulted from the professional setting of the various project activities. As the study advanced in projects and educational activities, financial accountancy reports, project evaluations and students' and participants' evaluations had to be submitted to donors and commissioners and were reviewed accordingly.

More methodological details and conceptual frameworks are reported in the articles reprinted in the chapters to follow.

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[1] Translation from Malayalam: VISUAL PROBLEM APPRAISAL ON FISHERIES SECTOR, Kochi: Cochin University of Science and Technology is preparing a kit aiming at the Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) of Kerala's fisheries sector. It is developed for the use of educational training programmes framed for international vocational courses. This programme is done in cooperation with Larenstein University of Professional Education in Deventer, the Netherlands, Van Hall Institute in Leeuwarden and Delft Technical University in Delft.

Research Activities

The overview presented in Figure 3 indicates how the main study subjects relate to each other. It indicates how first the 'VPA Kerala's Coast' was used and produced and how in a later stage the 'VPA AIDS & Rural Development' generated data to study the VPA learning strategy. The series of Embedded Filming was the second learning and comparative strategy studied.
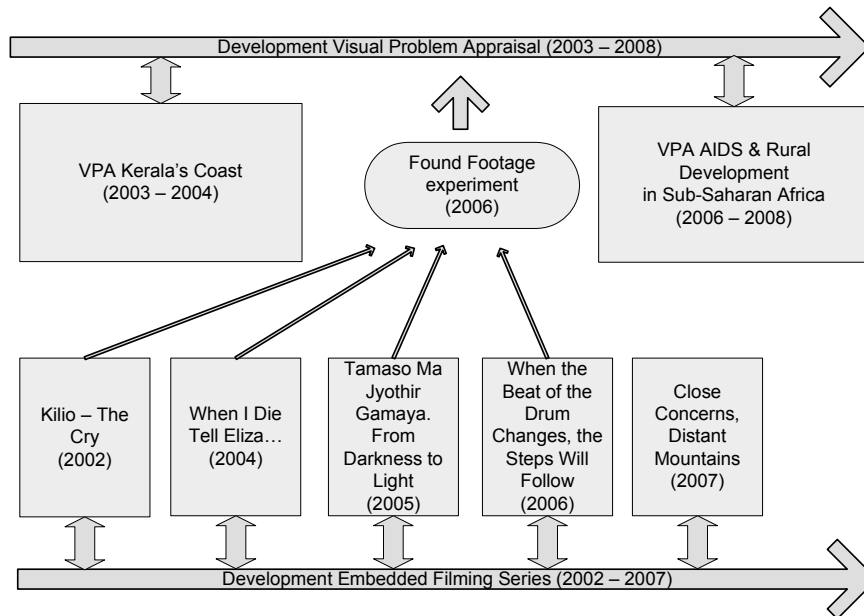
Figure 3: Relations between the Development of the Two Visual Learning Strategies in the PhD project

Four films of the Embedded Filming series influenced the design and production of the VPA A&RD through the 'Found Footage'-experiment. It was assumed by potential donors and users that footage from the Embedded Filming series could be re-used for the production of the VPA A&RD. This 'Found Footage'-experiment did not yield a tangible result for the VPA A&RD as the seven interviews that were edited, re-using the footage, were withdrawn after evaluating the results of using the test-version. The technical quality was insufficient and did not match criteria for VPA interviews. Although the experiment was not productive in the sense of contributing tangibly to the VPA A&RD it revealed distinctive qualities of the film style of both the VPA and Embedded Filming. The 'Found Footage'-experiment provided therefore evidence to claim that optimising the potential of film in the social domain requires specific film based learning designs.

The international orientation of the research project is reflected in the research locations in DR Congo, Ghana, India, the Netherlands, Tanzania, and

Zambia. Table 1 gives an overview of the research activities, their location, funding and the date.

Activity	Location	Funding	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Production of the VPA Kerala's Coast (VPA KC)	The Netherlands, India	Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education and Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands; Cochin University of Science and Technology, India	X	X					
Using the VPA KC in the public domain	India, the Netherlands	Cochin University of Science and Technology, India; Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands	X	X					
Using the VPA KC in formal education	Master courses Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences, Wageningen University, Delft University of Technology, and the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands and others.	Institutional			X	X	X	X	X
Production of the VPA AIDS & Rural Develop-ment (VPA A&RD)	The Netherlands, Ghana, India, Tanzania, Zambia	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education, Van Hall Larenstein University of Professional Education, the Netherlands; Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania; Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Zambia					X	X	X

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Activity	Location	Funding	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Using the VPA A&RD in education and training	The Netherlands, Tanzania	Wageningen University, Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education, the Netherlands				X	X	X	
Using the VPA A&RD in the public domain	Zambia, Congo, Ghana	Evangelische Entwicklungs Dienst, Germany; Réseau d'Innovation Organisationnelle, DR Congo				X	X	X	X
Production of the Embedded Filming series	Tanzania, Zambia, India, Ghana, the Netherlands	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education, Van Hall Larenstein University of Professional Education, Wageningen University, the Netherlands	X	X	X	X	X		

Table 1: Overview of the Research Activities

Research Outcomes

The designed visual learning strategies, the VPA sets, the series of Embedded Filming and the articles and papers constitute the academic output of the research project. The corresponding filmographies are presented in Table 2 and the bibliography in Table 3 The combined presentation of films and articles is an indication of the very nature of this research project as explained previously.

Filmography Visual Problem Appraisal
Loes Witteveen (2003). *Visual Problem Appraisal Kerala's Coast*, Cochin, India: Aurora Visual Media; Wageningen, The Netherlands: Larenstein University of Applied Sciences; Delft, The Netherlands: Delft University of Technology; Cochin, India: Cochin University of Science and Technology (25 DVDs, 1 CD-ROM with facilitators' guide and workbook).
Loes Witteveen, Rico Lie and Prasanth Thachapuzha (2008). *Visual Problem Appraisal AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Cochin, India: Aurora Visual Media; Wageningen, The Netherlands: Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (14 DVDs, 1 CD-ROM with facilitators' guide and workbook).

Filmography Embedded Filming

Samuel Taye and Loes Witteveen (2002). *Kilio-The Cry. AIDS and Rural Development in East Africa* (VHS, DVD), The Hague, The Netherlands: DIALOOG Produkties; Wageningen, The Netherlands: Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (250 copies).

Elizabeth Chintu, Machona Kasambala and Loes Witteveen (2004). *When I Die, Tell Eliza… AIDS, Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Rural Zambia* (VHS, DVD), The Hague, The Netherlands: DIALOOG Produkties; Wageningen, The Netherlands: Larenstein University of Applied Sciences. (280 copies)

Loes Witteveen and Prasanth Thachapuzha (2005). *Tamaso Ma Jyothir Gamaya – From Darkness to Light* (DVD, VCD), Cochin, India: Aurora Visual Media; Wageningen, The Netherlands: Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (500 copies).

Loes Witteveen and Prasanth Thachapuzha (2006). *When the Beat of the Drum Changes, the Steps Will Follow* (DVD, VCD), Cochin, India: Aurora Visual Media; Wageningen, The Netherlands: Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (450 copies).

Loes Witteveen and Prasanth Thachapuzha (2007). *Close Concerns, Distant Mountains. A Space of Intercultural Learning on AIDS & Rural Development* (DVD, VCD), Cochin, India: Aurora Visual Media; Wageningen, The Netherlands: Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (500 copies).

Table 2: Filmographies, Output of the Research Project

Beyond the user settings that formed part of the empirical context of the project we have only a partial insight into distribution and use of the film productions. It is known that two films were accepted for screening at the Northampton International Community Film Festival (2006). We also came to know that broadcasting of the embedded films occurred in Tanzania (Morogoro TV), Zambia (Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation by the Ministry of Cooperatives and Agriculture). This autonomous use of the films outside a setting of learning and reflection in education or the public domain is ascribed to an existing or perceived scarcity of visual learning strategies. For that reason this autonomous use is not further analysed in this study.

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Witteveen, L.M., Enserink, B. and Lie, R. (2009). Mediated Participation: Using Filmed Narratives in Complex Multi-stakeholder Settings, *International Journal of Public Participation*, 3(1):32-62.

Table 3: Bibliography, Output of the Research Project

The following chapters reflect the journey undertaken during the research project with the articles as landmarks articulating the route. The results are brought together and discussed in Chapter seven: 'Unravelled Patterns, New Scenarios.'

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2. Visual Problem Appraisal—Kerala's Coast: A Simulation for Social Learning about Integrated Coastal Zone Management[1]

Abstract

Integrated management of coastal zones is crucial for the sustainable use of scarce and vulnerable natural resources and the economic survival of local and indigenous people. Conflicts of interest in coastal zones are manifold, especially in regions with high population pressure, such as Kerala (in southwest India). The simulation of a consultancy mission to Kerala described in this article was designed for a classroom situation but it can also be applied in settings with local stakeholders as a tool for social learning. Filmed interviews with real stakeholders contributed largely to the realism of the simulation and stimulated learning: students aligned with local stakeholders and acquired professional skills as future analysts; local people learned about their own situation and the frames of other stakeholders.

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Introduction

Visual problem appraisal (VPA) is a film-based methodology that aims to encourage and support professionals engaged in the facilitation of processes of change to sharpen their analytical competencies by actively observing the explicit articulation of the various problem perceptions encapsulated in filmed interviews. Disagreement not only about solutions but also about the nature of problems is typical for the kind of "wicked problems" (Mason & Mitroff, 1981; Radford, 1977) today's analysts face in contemporary networked societies. As a consequence, traditional methods of dealing with problems (i.e., where complex issues are often considered an intellectual design question and are approached by giving research and science a central role) no longer suffice (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Confronting students and professionals with the various forms of uncertainty and providing them with tools to discuss and analyze these situations therefore could be considered a first step in coping with complexity. This complexity, which is inherent in multiactor settings and embedded in VPA, can either be substantive, where actors do not agree on the character and cause of the problem; strategic, where actors do not agree on the delineation of the problem; institutional, where they do not agree on who is responsible for solving the problem; or any combination of the three. Consequently, VPA guides students through a three-tiered program, from problem reconnaissance through a simulated field trip to proposed action (Witteveen, 1999).

VPA was originally developed for accommodating different learning styles in the international classroom (Brinkman & Witteveen, 1998). Using filmed stakeholder interviews allowed for visual appraisal and semi-interaction with real stakeholders without discomforting or harassing these stakeholders. The first VPA set, "Rice from The Guyanas," focused on issues of international agribusiness and rural development in The Guyanas (Witteveen, 1999). The second VPA set, "Kerala's Coast," was developed for classroom training in 2002-2004 in a joint project of Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), India; Larenstein University–Deventer, the Netherlands; and Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands. "Kerala's Coast" consists of two documentaries and 23 interviews filmed on location. A student's workbook and a facilitator's guide provide guidance to both teacher and trainee (Witteveen, Enserink, & Ramachandran, 2003b, 2003c). Interviewees form a representative cross-section of society ranging from policy makers to traditional fishermen and paddy farmers, and students make a justified selection of whom they would like to "meet."

VPA in formal higher education has proved to be a strong and motivating learning environment that enhances students' personal learning orientation and generates enthusiasm. Complex competencies in the domain of policy analysis, stakeholder analysis, and strategy development were attained from the result of postcourse evaluations and from references made by students long after finishing the VPA (e.g., during their thesis project). An example that illustrates the magic of the simulation is the way students talk about the filmed interviews

as if they had visited the person in real life and on location: "We started looking for informants who could eventually elaborate on our problem statements . . ." and "We started with a desk study, then we did field research, and on this map you [find] where our informants are situated."

Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) especially in tropical regions is a highly complex issue. It is a typical example of a wicked problem that according to Dryzek (1997, p. 8) is often found at the boundaries of natural and social systems. Government policies for the sustainable management of natural resources, if present, conflict with the need for economic development and the high demands of the local population on the natural environment. Technology and policy variables and the wider context of power, equity, and access to resources contribute to an unlevel playing field. In interpreting this complex issue as a challenge for realizing multistakeholder dialogue, the filmed interviews that lie at the heart of the VPA are the explicit articulation of the various problem perceptions of the stakeholders.

According to Bueren, van Klijn, and Koppenjan (2003, p. 194), because of the three types of uncertainty involved in such wicked problems, decisions can only adequately be handled by enhancing and intensifying interaction between stakeholders. Leeuwis (2004, pp. 170-172) adds to this, suggesting that for starting integrative negotiations in such conflicts stakeholders must feel mutually interdependent and must be able to communicate with each other. Previous research has showed that these preconditions were absent in Kerala (Ramachandran, Balchand, & Enserink, 2002; Ramachandran, Enserink, & Balchand, 2005). Positive engagement with the issue of coastal zone management during the production of Kerala's Coast by the Indian university partners, the related institutions, the people from the film crew, and by the interviewees themselves led to the hypothesis that VPA might enhance interaction between stakeholders in coastal zone issues and eventually be an effective tool for social learning and stakeholder communication. For instance, when discussing their favorite takes with the local Indian film team members, the filmmakers explained they liked the interviews with the primary stakeholders most as it was exciting to go to places and to meet people you had never met before: "These stories are new for us." In addition, other experiences and discrepancies, like the denial of the existence of sand mining by the experts we met (although having filmed this activity extensively), confirmed the lack of interaction between the various stakeholder groups and their lack of knowledge about other people living and working in the coastal zone, let alone about their ideas and ambitions. This knowledge gap, particularly in relation to the ideas and ambitions of other residents, resulted in a series of workshops with local stakeholders in Kerala in 2004 to test the above hypothesis. Outcomes of these workshops will be presented in this article.

ICZM in Kerala

Kerala in the southwestern tip of the Indian peninsula is a good example of a tropical coastal area stressed by high population pressure and developmental activities. All types of coastal zone problems typical of developing nations are present: over-exploitation, degradation, deforestation, pollution, erosion, salination, and a plethora of human activities affecting the natural environment impinge on the livelihood of the coastal inhabitants (Ramachandran et al., 2002). Rapid political and cultural changes and extreme social stratification add to the complexity of the issue. Kerala is a narrow 560-km strip of land along the Arabian Sea and has one of the most populated coastal zones in the world with an average population density of 1,800 persons per square kilometer. This high population pressure and the accompanying changes in land-use patterns have resulted in accelerated destruction of the coastal resources in this region and have increased multiuser conflicts. The introduction of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification in 1991 has helped to slow down the pace of environmental degradation but has in turn caused social unrest and economic slowdown in the coastal area. Strict CRZ legislation has inhibited development, as even the construction of latrines at existing houses and public schools has been forbidden.
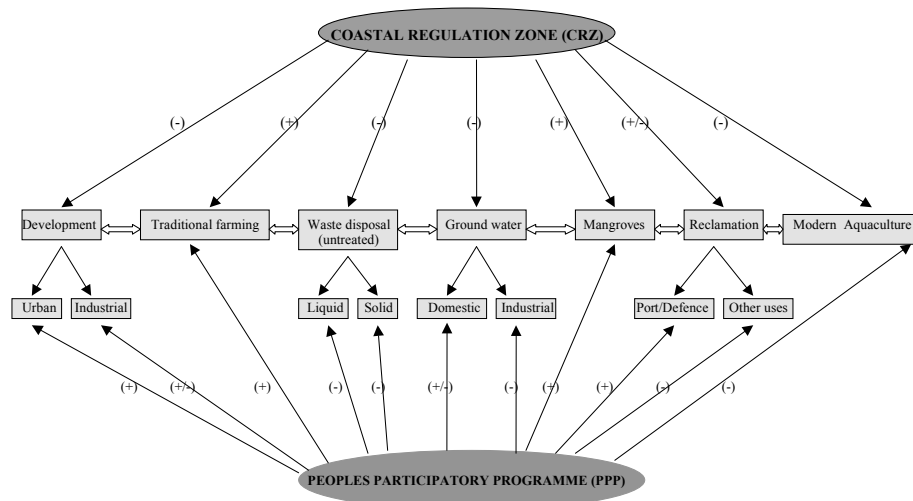
Figure 1: Interrelated Activities in Coastal Zone Management and Public Planning
Source: Ramachandran, Balchand, & Enserink (2002).

In stark contrast to the top-down–instituted CRZ legislation are the Panchayathi Raj Nagarapalika Legislation (PPP) and the subsequent administrative reforms that have led to decentralization of powers and empowerment of local bodies in Kerala (Ramachandran et al., 2005). PPP

allows the grassroot-level panchayaths (communities) to make decisions for more than 40% of the state budget and focuses on local development projects such as infrastructure construction (roads, bridges latrines, schools) and income-generation activities like loans for fisherwomen, farmers, and craftsmen.

Clearly these projects are responsive to actual and local needs and little attention is being paid to the background and causes of problems, to long-term needs, and/or to the sustainability of the chosen solutions. For example, the greater the availability of motorized pumps for irrigation purposes the faster the shallow freshwater table diminishes. Figure 1 shows the mutually interactive activities in the coastal villages and their positive and negative impacts on the various activities going on in this region. From Figure 1 it can be seen that, at times, there are conflicting interests.

The above characteristics and inherent conflicts make Kerala a perfect example of coastal issues that do occur worldwide; consequently we realized that contributing to a problem-solving approach in Kerala could be meaningful elsewhere.

Designing a Simulated Consultancy Mission

The need for a simulation tool like VPA evolved from a study on the successes and failures of accommodating different learning styles in the international classroom (Brinkman & Witteveen, 1998). Film was selected to be a carrier of the simulation as it provides an opportunity for an intense experiential learning experience that is difficult to achieve with traditional written and/or printed means. Inspired by Jan Vermunt (1992), the VPA was designed with the aim of consistently using insight into learning processes as the input for instructional design. A reflective journal, obliging the student to reflect on his or her learning strategies, was integrated into the student's workbook, positioning the student (after Schön, 1983, 1987) as a "reflective practitioner."

The Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach was another source of inspiration, as it was clear from the very beginning that real-world problems would provide the context of the simulation (Maxwell, Mergendoller, & Bellissimo, 2004, pp. 488-489). In "Kerala's Coast" the metaphor used positions the student as a consultant executing a knotty assignment of sorting out the complexity of coastal zone–management issues through meetings with real stakeholders. The VPA as a form of PBL ought to help students to frame such a complex situation in an interactive learning environment and to build their analytical and problem-solving skills as they confront a realistic dilemma with multiple solutions (Boud & Feletti, 1997).

The multiple solutions possible and the variety of ways to reach an outcome imply that the VPA can be characterized as a realistic open-simulation game (Mayer & Veeneman, 2002, p. 30), as there is no undisputed best practice.

By defining Kerala's coastal zone as a complex, multistakeholder conflictive issue that needs increasingly institutional attention, we felt justified to elaborate this tool to train students undertaking the master's course on ICZM at CUSAT. Additionally it was believed that Dutch and international students of coastal zone management, policy analysis, and rural development, studying at the authors' institutes, would profit from the availability of the VPA: As VPA would be used in the classroom to train future analysts and advisors, current students should also become aware of their own technician biases and limited perspective on the problem and of the consequences of the choices they make in analyzing the problem. For that reason it was important to create the opportunity to make a selection as biased or objective as possible, implying that a broad set of interviews, fully representative of the field under study, should be provided. Representativity—getting a good cross-section of society—therefore was a primary requirement for selecting interviewees. In preparing these interviews and in selecting the interviewees we worked along the lines and procedures of participatory rural appraisal (Conway, McCracken, & Pretty, 1987; Enserink, 2000). The process of selecting interviewees and countering biases is described in Witteveen, Enserink, and Ramachandran (2003a). For the VPA Kerala's Coast these are fishermen, shrimp farmers, coir manufacturers, paddy farmers, and staff members of nongovernmental organizations and authorities, amongst others. Doing the fieldwork ourselves, traveling to meet stakeholders at distant locations, having to overcome language problems, and breaking through social and gender barriers gave us a feel for the complexity of the case. In designing the second module we profited greatly from this "power of experience" (Kamimura, 2002), as we knew that our expectations of informants often did not come true and that other interviewees, who we first considered as "additional," could turn out in reality to be highly informative.

Following Kriz (2003, p. 496), it can be argued that simulation games and related design methodologies like VPA offer an effective approach to produce a more holistic understanding of systems to generate ideas for change. During the production we realized that developing a VPA set on Kerala's Coast might thus be of interest to many others, be it people or programs, who wish to learn about ICZM issues and about stakeholder perspectives on coastal zone issues.

Film as Dialectic Theatre

Combining the visual-learning strategies with PBL resulted in what is the core of the VPA: stakeholder interviews that are filmed on location. The interviews are made in the observational mode (Nichols, 2001), portraying individual stakeholders telling the story of their lives and that of the group they represent. Theatrical notions and rapid-appraisal techniques provide the basis for formulating the generative open-style questions that stimulate the interviewees to tell their stories. The interviews are not rehearsed or otherwise acted; it is not

a trained performance according to Stanislavski's (1980) acting approach often performed on stage.[2]

This semistructured interview style, with generative questions in the manner of Freire (1971), stimulated respondents to express their own concerns and issues—including contentious issues such as poverty, drunken brawls, suicide, and the like—but only if the interviewees brought them up themselves. Along with Bourdieu (1993), we could describe these interviews as accompanied self-analysis, because

> *the interviewees seemed to grasp the situation as an opportunity to testify . . . to construct their viewpoint on themselves and on the world and to identify the point, within this world, from which they see themselves and see the world, and become comprehensible, justified, and primarily for themselves. Bourdieu, cited in Hamel (1997, p. 102)*

In addition to Bourdieu's self-analysis we used the notion of the Brazilian theatre maker Augusto Boal in his "theatre of the oppressed" that actors are not mono-faceted. As he states (1980, p. 16):

> *A worker could play in his family the role of oppressor of his wife and children, even while, by the nature of all his social activities and by his working-class status, he is inherently defined as oppressed by society. Therefore, I believe that this specific condition, the own oppression, will reveal the nature of the shift from oppressed to oppressor.*[3]

Following Boal, another theatrical element in the design of the VPA as a simulation relates to the role of the audience. Boal (1980) states that in case a performance induces real emotions, the boundary between reality and fiction is challenged: Although the actors and the script are not "real," the commitment or engagement of the audience is real. Boal then elaborates further on the active role of the audience as a necessary element of dialogue, as not all the actors involved (considering the audience another actor) can continuously talk or act at the same time. In fact, this builds on ideas of dialectic theatre introduced by Brecht in 1928. Desuché (1968, p. 78) explains Brecht's perspective on the analytical and active role of the audience, stating that,

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[2] Tribute is paid to Stanislavski (1863-1938) as the creator of "The Method," an approach toward the training of actors focusing on the representation of realistic characters and natural emotions. Trained actors would be able to convey complex human beings with multiple and contradictory feelings. Today's theatre and film acting is for the most part based on his work.
[3] "Un ouvrier peut très bien être en famille l'oppresseur de sa femme et de ses enfants, tout en se définissant surtout par l'ensemble de ses activités sociales, par sa condition d'ouvrier, d'opprimé de la société. Et, c'est sa propre condition d'oppression qui, je crois, révélera son caractère d'opprimé–oppresseur" (Boal, 1980).

the observer can reflect while the actor talks, smokes, eats peanuts or dreams. Above all he should stay on track and not get lost, he is not shown people face to face but a social structure that dominates, conducts, imprisons or liberates man.[4]

Both Boal's and Brecht's theatrical notions contributed to the design of the VPA in general and influenced the interview style and the editing style of the interview rushes.

The filmed stakeholder interviews present a diverse and colorful picture, constructing in bits and pieces the lives of the coastal population, their worries and concerns, and their expectations and wishes for the future. In the interview on tape the interviewer is not visible; the audience only sees the interviewee telling the story of his or her life. In this way the observer is invited to listen carefully to the interviewee and to actively construct and analyze the interviewee's situation; the semineutral voice of a narrator who explains and provides a frame of reference, as in many documentaries, is absent. In listening to each interviewee and comparing one story with another, the close observer tends to sympathize with each of the interviewees individually and to believe his or her full story. But upon the consequent observation of more interviews the observers will come to realize that the stories told complement and overlap. Yet more revealing is the sensation that equally they contradict or even conflict with each other or within themselves. The audience cannot sit back to "consume" the information wrapped in the filmed interview. They need to actively engage to exploit the information provided. Motivated by the simulation they should feel prompted to unravel the issue at stake.

The Narrative Metaphor and the Simulation

The simulation is constructed as a consultancy assignment: Trainees are put in the role of a consultant before and during traveling to Kerala to explore the local situation in the context of a tendering procedure for a project on coastal zone management. The simulation is enhanced by localized information in the workbook, in the narrative metaphor, and in the film style, which brings the trainees into the homes, offices, and workplaces of the interviewees. The entry point (Maxwell et al., 2004, p. 491) is a simulated correspondence with "Headquarters (HQ)" to grab students' attention and to lead them into the PBL simulation and their role (see Textbox 1). The narrative metaphor is presented in the course book or in the virtual-learning environment and positions the trainee as a consultant who has to explore an unknown situation, resulting in personal

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[4] Desuché, 1968 "El espectador puede reflexionar mientras el actor, habla, fuma, come cacahuetes o sueña. Pero sobre todo que no pierda el hilo: no se le muestran hombres cara a cara., sino una estructura social que domina, conduce, aprisiona o libera a los hombres" (Desuché, 1968).

identification and motivation. The metaphor connects with the consultancy tasks, and these professional issues find a metaphor in the personal sphere of the simulated consultant; the preparations for the daughter's birthday party follow the same patterns as the preparations for the trip to Kerala. The metaphor is present in each stage of the simulation (see Textbox 2), and through addressing the facilitator or web manager[5] as the "HQ" a professional distance is suggested between the consultant in the field and the facilitator at a distant HQ.

Imagine you are organizing a birthday party for your youngest daughter. You love your daughter very much and you really want her to have a great day. You think about presents, a cake, and the party. Then the telephone rings; head office calls you. In a fortnight you have to depart to Kerala, in southwest India in anticipation of a EU tender for coastal zone projects. Your manager selected you to make a success out of this consultant assignment and he promises to send some information by DHL.

Textbox 1: Part of First Narrative Metaphor: Imagine

The tourist guide for Kerala looks most attractive but you decide to take the fisheries book to your daughter's birthday boat trip. While seated comfortably on deck, you listen to the voices of your daughter and her friends talking about mermaids, wreckages full of gold and uninhabited islands to discover. While they stare over the blue water in their fairy tale mood you try to imagine what's all under the shining water surface that you could read about in the book you brought along.

Textbox 2: Part of Second Narrative Metaphor: Mermaids

To enhance an active-learning orientation a so-called "reflective journal" allows the trainee to assess the information gained to monitor progress and his or her own learning activities. These reflective journals are a form of cyclical or iterative debriefing (Peters & Vissers, 2004), as after each step the trainee has to make up his or her mind before taking a conscious decision about the next step. The form supports the trainee's analysis and critical reflection on his or her actions.

The simulation is made up of three modules, each addressing a particular stage of the consultancy mission: orientation, the field research or stakeholder analysis, and the elaboration of solution-oriented approaches. Each stage has a particular set of materials such as films and reflective journals that guides trainees through the VPA process. Table 1 gives an overview of VPA materials for each stage. An overview of the process activities and decisions are reflected in the flowchart of Figure 2.

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[5] The VPA has been used with the workbook and other instructional material in hard copies as well as in the virtual-learning-environment blackboard.

Starting with a self-assessment ("What do I know about India and coastal zones?") the trainees are activated to realize and capitalize upon existing knowledge. Consequently the situation is framed through a classical "Discovery Channel style" documentary, with a positivistic tone, an overrepresentation of panoramic sceneries, sunsets, and otherwise pictorial information, and a neutral voice-over that guides the observers' impressions from the beginning to the end. This poetic documentary (Nichols, 2001) presents Kerala as a land full of natural beauty and resources and its coastal zone issues as technical problems that can be solved. The documentary leads to a desk study focused on mastering subject-matter knowledge. At the end of this stage participants carry out a self-assessment of their level of expertise.

After this second self-assessment (reflection on desk study; see Figure 2) the actual field research is undertaken by the consultant. In a multidisciplinary team he or she has to select an informant from the list of available (filmed) interviewees. This procedure contributes to positioning of the trainee as a foreign consultant confronted with an overwhelming palette of confusing, contrasting, and opposing information that he or she has to interpret, organize, and transform into a research proposal or plan of action. For the student this also can be a first, relatively safe, confrontation with working in a different culture (see also, Morgan, 2000). In this phase the safe, well-structured world of the desk study breaks up into splinters; truth and loyalty are not longer simple and one dimensional.

Part	Consultancy Stage	VPA Films	Reflective Journal	Narrative Metaphor	Workbook
1	Orientation	Documentary 1	Individual	Imagine Mermaids	Instructions The tourist guide Self test
2	Field research stakeholder analysis	Actor interviews	Individual and group	Photographs	Instructions Tools for analysis
3	Elaboration of solution approaches	Documentary 2	Individual and group	Colours and patterns	Instructions

Table 1: Overview of Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) Materials

This growing identification with the consultancy role induces careful selection of the interviewees. Realizing the impact of their choice and the different patterns followed by peer groups brings a sense of competition into the simulation that enhances the participants' identification with their own team decisions. The VPA thus has a limited element of being a competition game, as each team selects different films, in a specific order, and therefore obtains different information. On the basis of the quality of the subsequent analysis and the proposed plan of action one team will win the tender procedure.

In contrast to the diverging character of the previous module, the third module focuses on conversion; each team elaborates alternatives or solution-oriented approaches. The final documentary is shown during this module and confronts the teams with an outsider view. Because this outsider view is presented on film, the audience attributes quite some authority to it; hence it simulates strict feedback from "HQ" regarding the procedures and results of the field research. A major reason for designing and producing this documentary was to release the facilitator from the task of providing site-specific and subject-matter comments on the students' results. The neutral and/or outsider commentary in the film is complemented with conflictive arguments and actions of the interviewees. Because the audience feels as though it is being directly addressed with well-supported arguments and expositions, this film can be classified as having been made in the expository mode. Elements of the performative mode are then added, where it sets out to demonstrate the relevance of stakeholder perspectives (Nichols, 2001).

The VPA as a Tool for Social Learning

Although developed for the international classroom, we believe the richness of the method—the different frames, the conflicting views and objectives, the opportunities for engagement and cooperation present in the films—would allow for a wider application. From the filming and production processes in India, and before that in The Guyanas, the notion emerged that the VPA might also work as a tool for communication and social learning for involved stakeholders; evidenced by the high personal engagement with the project and problems at stake that we found with the Indian film crew and our Indian scientist colleagues. New insights were gained through meeting stakeholders they too had never met before and whose stories had been so far untold. Witnessing the work of the clam pickers and sand miners and actually speaking to them was a new experience for all those involved in the production. It was this experience that led to the hypothesis that VPA might enhance the interaction between stakeholders in coastal zone issues and eventually be an effective tool for social learning and enhancing stakeholders' feelings of interdependency.

The VPA in that respect already showed that the direct observation of stakeholders on location and by having people tell their own stories gives new insights even for those who considered themselves to be experts in the field. For primary stakeholders, especially in developing countries with relatively high numbers of illiterate or semiliterate stakeholders, the use of video may enhance access to information and increase the involvement of primary stakeholders in their own development. Selecting video as a source of information allows semi-illiterate stakeholders to actively participate in learning that would be prohibited in the case of written sources of information.
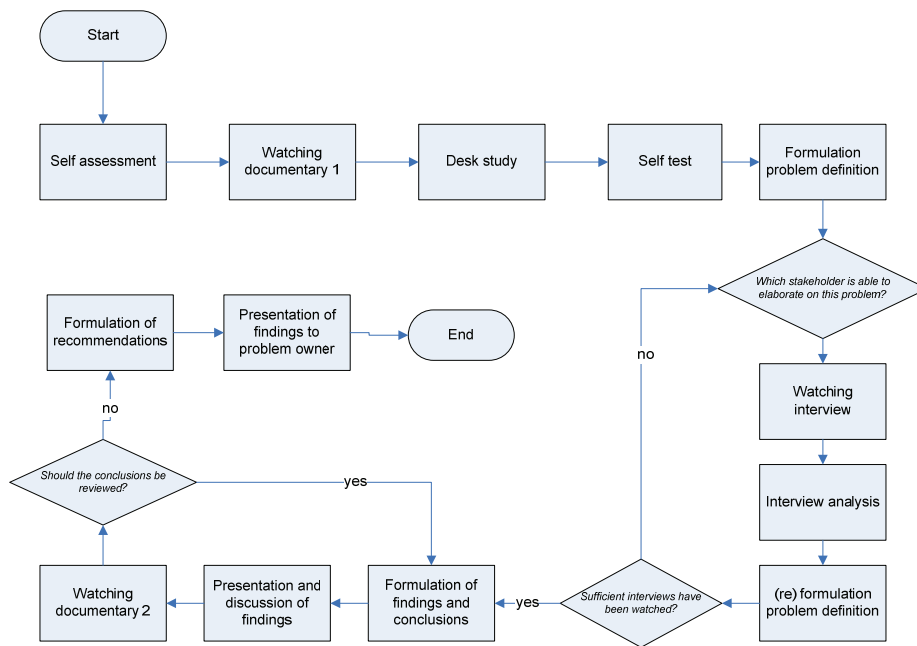
Figure 2: Flowchart of the Visual Problem Appraisal Process

Using the VPA with an audience of stakeholders might accommodate social learning, referring (along with Craps et al., 2003, p. 5) to the capacity of a multiple-stakeholder system to reflect on its own functioning and outcomes. Trainees should not only procure new knowledge and competencies on existing norms—the more instrumental single-loop learning looked for in formal education—but also foster better understanding of any changed convictions, judgments, and rules as in double-loop learning systems (Kriz, 2003, p. 502). Braden and Huong (1998) even argued that people learning together in informal groups may become more aware of themselves in relation to others, which can have an energizing effect on the trainees. When learners recognize that they have choices, they begin to develop what Freire (1971) has called "critical consciousness," which breaks through the passivity engendered by seeing the present merely as an acquisition from the past. VPA might even contribute to the creation of new attitudes and opinions as described by Senge (1990) and might be a tool for realizing stakeholder dialogue and stimulating agency. Social learning fosters intersubjective consensus, as real listening to the stories of others like in the VPA makes explicit what people have in common, their interdependencies, and their conflicts of interest. These assumptions were articulated during the filming when crew members expressed that "these stories are new for us" or got engaged in passionate debates about coastal zone management while traveling from one location to another.

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As this article is trying to find evidence for using the VPA for public participation in natural resources management, the impact of the VPA "Kerala's Coast" on the various audiences is presented in Table 2.

Primary stakeholders, the people and organizations directly confronted with a problematic situation or affected by proposed solutions, and the secondary stakeholders, those involved in problem solving and policy making, are expected to profit from VPA as their analytical capacity increases and because consensus on the problem definition and delineation might be acquired. Their analytical capacity can grow through acquiring information on stakeholder knowledge about the problematic situation, on stakeholder perceptions of the problem, and through confrontation of different perceptions of stakeholders that may lead to enhanced respect for diverging interest and increased realization of mutual interdependency (after Leeuwis, 2004, p. 172).

VPA Audience	Expected Result	Learning	Additional Expected Results for VPA Kerala's Coast
Students	Enhanced professional and policy analysis competencies	Content learning on ICZM	Introduction to Kerala
Primary stakeholders	Enhanced problem and policy analysis Reduced self-referentiality	Social learning	Enhanced participation in PPP CZR activities
Secondary stakeholders	Enhanced problem and policy analysis Increased commitment for concerned stakeholders	Social learning	Enhanced Coastal Zone Regulation Act

Table 2: Impact of Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) for Various Groups
Source: Witteveen, Enserink, & Ramachandran (2003a)

Self-referentiality (van Woerkum, 2000) refers to the characteristic of people and organizations to perceive the environment (and themselves) from their own perspective, from their own concept of relevance, and from a completely obvious idea of what is important or not. In this respect, Rein and Schön (1993) speak about the way people "frame" the world. Reducing self-referentiality—changing the frames of reference of people through opening their minds to the ideas of (other) stakeholders— is one of the intended effects of watching VPA interviews.

This effect has been observed by us many times in the classroom; for example, when engineering students were confronted with the seemingly heavily biased and at times nonrational arguments of stakeholders, which obliged them to think over their own assumptions and biases.

The Kerala Workshops

The opportunity to test the hypothesis that the VPA serves as a tool for realizing stakeholder dialogue and social learning was offered by the CUSAT authorities. As an element of CUSAT's National Service Scheme, and with the active participation of our Indian colleagues, we organized four 2-day workshops with different audiences in January and February, 2004, in Kerala. Twenty-five regular CUSAT students in industrial fisheries, atmospheric sciences, and coastal zone management attended the first workshop. Fifteen principals and lecturers at Colleges of Engineering and some representatives of the Forestry Department attended the second workshop, held in Munnar. The third workshop was held at the Thycattussery Block Panchayat Office with 25 local primary and secondary stakeholders. The Department of Fisheries organized the fourth workshop in Ernakulam and invited 20 professionals working in the field of fisheries and coastal zone management.

The course of the workshops followed the three phases of the VPA, starting off with a self-assessment. On average, four interviewees were observed and their information analyzed by each group. Consequently at the final stage the groups had to present a "plan of action." Debriefing took place in a plenary session in which the groups reported on their learning experience and got feedback on their learning strategy, and each trainee filled in his or her private evaluation form in the reflective journal.

All participants—student, expert, or primary stakeholder—were expected to learn about the content and relations of the problems and factors in the coastal zone. In addition to that the VPA should allow them to learn about the different perspectives of the various stakeholders, considered a first step in social learning; whereas learning about how you learned and learning how to act on the knowledge gained is considered the highest objective.

From Table 3 one can discern that from the 64 personal evaluation forms collected, 90% to 95% of the trainees indicated that they learned about the content (rows a, b, and c). In their personal evaluation forms (see, e.g., Textbox 3, #3/4, form 8) many expressed that they learned about the interrelatedness of the various issues in the coastal zone. Seventy-five percent of the trainees indicated they learned about the perspectives of the different stakeholders. For instance, one of the trainees (#II, 3) stated, "Actually I have learned how people all look into a particular issue in different ways."

In some cases I got an insight into the problem which I have not imagined.
The scarcity of drinking water problems can be solved only by the combined effort of many agencies, so many factors are connected with it, most of them are man made. I have got more confidence in analysing and solving the problem. #3/4, form 8

Real problems are found by the inhabitants in the coastal zone, they are entirely different from that we identified earlier.
First we interviewed government officials for getting information on the different schemes implemented for the well being of the fishermen folk and then we thought of identify the real problems directly from the grass root level. #10/4,form 8

Textbox 3: Personal Statements from Reflective Journal

Ninety percent of the trainees support, and of these one third of them even strongly support, the statement that they now understand better why people in the coastal zone act and work the way they do. As can be read from comment #10/4, form 8 in Textbox 3, trainees changed their behavior and strategy. Two thirds of the 64 respondents, who all were in some way or another related or involved in coastal zone issues, indicated that participating in the VPA workshops changed their perspective on coastal zone problems, which we consider to be an indication of reaching the third learning objective.

Evaluation (N=64)	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Support*	*Strongly Support*	*Total*
a) I learned a lot about coastal zone issues	0	6	75	19	100
b) I learned about relations between various problems in the coastal zone	0	5	80	15	100
c) I learned new things about the problems and causes in the coastal zone	0	10	74	16	100
d) I learned a lot about the various stakeholders	6	16	67	11	101
e) I learned about the different perspectives of the stakeholders in the coastal zone	2	23	62	13	100
f) I 'met' and 'saw' people I had never spoken to before	13	7	43	38	101
g) After the interviews I do better understand why people act and work the way they do	3	8	61	28	100
h) My problem understanding has grown	2	2	50	47	101
i) My own perspective on coastal zone problems has changed	10	25	42	22	99
j) I am content about my own role and contribution to the group result	0	7	58	35	100
k) I learned a lot form my group mates	0	3	52	45	100

Table 3: Evaluation (in percentages)

We consider the above figures, supported by numerous personal statements in the reflective journals, to be an indication of reaching the third learning objective—where trainees might take action. (See also Textbox 4, with excerpts

of the answers to the question: "What do you think you can contribute to solving the problems you have been discussing these days?")

The stakeholders can be made aware of the ground realities and encouraged to find an alternative way to solve their problems with community participation and local self government. #4,2 form 8

We can solve problems and develop solutions through group discussion. #2,1 form 8

First of all give the awareness about the situation going around the coastal people. Then only these people effect the changes… #2,3form 8

Textbox 4: Personal Statements from Reflective Journal

These figures seem to indicate that the realization and confrontation of the opposing views of the various stakeholders do lead to adjustment of the trainees' problem perception and to self-reflection: a growing awareness of one's own biases. As such, showing the interviews was a sociological intervention as defined by Touraine (2000, p. 905) as it introduced actors who in some way question institutionalized norms by claiming rights that must command social behavior. The results of the pilot in India show the authenticity of the stories being told and are proof of the value of VPA as a potential change agent that might be used to prepare grassroots people for more effective participation in (coastal zone) policy making.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this article we described the VPA "Kerala's Coast" and argued that VPA has proven itself in classroom situations. We hypothesized that VPA enhances communication between stakeholders in "wicked problems" and can be a tool for social learning and enhanced comprehension of mutual interdependence. The empirical indications to formulate this hypothesis—such as the engagement of the Indian crew and the openness of the interviewees in expressing their views—can be supported with theoretical notions. The presence of details of the context provided in the films, from the testimonies given by men and women concerning their lives and their existential difficulties as read in the full transcripts made during production, form a precondition for sociological intervention (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 7).

On the basis of these observations (recorded on video and in personal reports) and the formal evaluations of the workshops we conducted in Kerala with various stakeholder groups, we conclude that VPA does enhance communication, contributes to acquiring new insights, and enables social learning of direct and indirect stakeholders. Trainees in the workshops in Kerala

indicated that they learned about the system complexity and the different problem perspectives and that by critically reflecting on their own problem perception could develop new ideas about taking action to improve the current situation.

The power of the simulation, when VPA is used in formal education, lies in the metaphor of the consultant on his or her mission and the competition between the consultancy groups. In Kerala, in the reality of using the VPA with stakeholders, its power lay in the presence of unfamiliar stakeholders throughout the filmed interviews. The VPA facilitated workshop participants to meet people who would otherwise be absent in the discussion because of barriers of distance and deep cultural and social divides like gender, caste, and economic hindrances (see also, Leeuwis, 2004, p. 174).

Considering the VPA as an intervention tool (Touraine, cited by Hamel, 1997) in processes of negotiation and conflict management, we assessed the results of the workshops against the preconditions for integrative negotiation as mentioned by Leeuwis (2004, p. 172). We conclude that the VPA Kerala's Coast represents a divergence of interest; enhances the stakeholders' feelings of mutual interdependency in solving the problematic situation, and enables key players to communicate. Question marks remain over the fourth precondition: "There must be institutional space for using innovative negotiation results." The workshops were organized by the universities involved in VPA production in association with local organizations such as the National Service Scheme, the Ministry of Fisheries and the Panavally Grama Panchayat representing the problem owner. Although we assumed that it was possible to combine both agendas, the research agenda was more concretely defined and evaluated as compared to the institutional policy or social action agenda of the local organizers.

The notion that participation should be treated as a scarce resource (Chambers, 1993, p.18; Leeuwis, 2004, p. 253) may provide another criteria on which to assess the results. This issue was considered during the selection of invitees. Participation was voluntarily, transport was facilitated where required, and loss of income compensated where applicable. The effectiveness of participation can be questioned, however, as no clear mandate for formulating follow-up or social action was defined. Additional and legitimate objectives of the respective co-organizers, such as the presentation of new teaching tools, subject matter learning, and networking opportunities, also led away from the intervention agenda. Moreover, the direct and resource-poor stakeholders were relatively absent in these workshops, as compared to students, administrators, and elected panchayat politicians. Because of their absence we cannot elaborate more on the contribution of the VPA in terms of agency for this group.

Nonetheless the results of the Kerala pilot justify further development of the VPA as a tool for stakeholder dialogue and social learning. In line with Wenzler (2004, pp. 40-41) we reason that the VPA is not effective when learning is not translated into action. It is evident from the Kerala pilot project that real social learning and the eventual move into action only occurs when VPA is organized

with an explicit problem owner and with a concrete mandate to the participants regarding the use of the results.

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3. Learning about Complex Multi-stakeholder Issues: Assessing the Visual Problem Appraisal

Abstract

This paper presents an evaluation of the visual problem appraisal (VPA) learning environment in higher education. The VPA has been designed for the training of the new competences that are required in complex stakeholder settings in relation to sustainability issues. The design of the VPA incorporates a diversity of instruction strategies to accommodate the heterogeneous learning styles of students in the international and inter-cultural classroom. The focus is on visual learning. The core of the VPA comprises documentaries and filmed interviews that together simulate a consultancy assignment. Students are immersed in the reality of 'wicked problems' and complex multi-stakeholder settings. The VPA also provides feedback loops that pull students out of their comfort zones and makes them reflect on what they learn, how they learn and how they perform in a team.

The study is based on experiences with the VPA learning environment 'Kerala's Coast', which was offered in 2007/08 and 2008/09. The evaluation indicates that the VPA strategy creates a challenging though safe space that provides students with the opportunity to learn outside their comfort zones. They learn from their interaction with unfamiliar stakeholders and by dealing with wicked problems, whilst enhancing their critical reflection on learning and change routines. Students seem to acquire complex competences, such as the competence to reduce their self-referentiality. The study highlighted the reconsideration of lecturing and facilitation in new learning strategies such as VPA.

The Research Context

The visual problem appraisal (VPA) strategy is a learning space whose design is based on an interpretation of a study into frictions in the international and inter-cultural classroom (Brinkman and Witteveen, 1996:73). This study concluded that:

> *International student groups show great heterogeneity with regard to issues such as culture stress, language, cultural background and learning styles. Speaking of lectures and other large-group activities it may seem difficult to take this heterogeneity into account. However, from the point of view of learning, the question whether this heterogeneity should be considered is less interesting than the challenge to design and use appropriate methodologies.*

This conclusion delivered a first VPA strategy design principle: diversity in the international and inter-cultural classroom should be considered a condition in instructional design. The VPA strategy therefore incorporates diverse learning and instruction strategies. A second influential consideration was the quest for learning strategies that address wicked problems. To analyse complex multi-stakeholder settings in relation to sustainable development, a VPA learning environment should focus on resource efficiency while addressing wider political, social and ethical issues (Elkington, 1997:84). The commissioners of the first VPA learning environment provided a third design consideration: they sought a learning strategy that would provide an alternative to fieldwork. Such a strategy should enable students to explore the uncertain and ambiguous reality of stakeholders – such as farmers, fisherman/fisherwomen, local politicians, the unemployed or landless people – without bothering them and taking up their precious time.

These design principles were converted into ideas for a fuzzy yet attractive learning strategy and a visual learning process. The resulting VPA strategy comprises films and other materials that simulate a consultancy used for the training of students in problem analysis and policy design. The first author has so far produced three VPA learning environments that focus on wicked problems in the context of sustainable development, namely the VPA 'Rice from the Guyanas' (1996), 'Kerala's Coast' (2004) and 'AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa' (2008).

Over the years, both bachelor and master's students have reacted very positively to the VPA. Many still remember the VPA because it is so different from ordinary courses and lectures; different because they use films and simulations, as well as journals that guide a reflection on their learning. To evaluate concisely the effect of the VPA learning environment, the following research question was formulated: 'What has been the effect of the VPA strategy and to what extent are these effects in line with the VPA educational design?' To answer this question we were guided by the design principles, that is, a

consideration for a diversity of learning styles, a focus on wicked problems and complex multi-stakeholder settings, and a learning strategy that provides a simulation of complex reality.

The present authors have experienced both the constraints and the advantages of being engaged with the VPA strategy in a mixture of roles, namely as researchers, as educational developers and as facilitators. We assume that this must have influenced our outsider objectiveness. Yet this combination of roles also enhanced our engagement with the study. Articulating these roles and acknowledging that the aim of this study was prospective and forward-looking is another way of framing our own bias.

The Educational Positioning of the VPA Strategy

In developing the VPA strategy, we linked the aforementioned design principles to learning theories and concepts. To concretize the diversity principle we followed Vermunt (1996:29), who defines learning style as a coherent set of learning and thinking activities, related mental models of learning and learning orientations. He subdivides learning and thinking activities into three groups: cognitive, affective and regulative. Cognitive activities are such activities as analysing, selecting and concretizing. Affective activities refer to the learning process, such as motivation and concentration. Regulative activities deal with the regulation of the learning process and time-planning activities, such as orienting, planning and adjusting. The mental model of learning refers to the students' ideas and concepts regarding learning and studying. The concept of learning orientation includes personal objectives, intentions, expectations and doubts, as well as other individual aspects that influence a student.

Vermunt (1996) formulates recommendations for instructional design that are focused on respecting students' learning styles and preferences while also creating constructive frictions. He suggests making smart combinations of cognitive, affective and regulative learning activities in combination with the articulation of learning routes and instruction strategies. Wals (2007:498) contributes similar notions when he states that: 'Given the importance of conflict and dissonance in social learning, it is important to be mindful of people's comfort zones or dissonance thresholds.' He also underlines the relevance of quality facilitation:

The trick is to learn on the edge of people's individual comfort zone with regards to dissonance: if the process takes place too far outside this zone, dissonance will not be constructive and will block learning. However, if the process takes place within peoples' comfort zones – as is the case when homogenous groups of like-minded people come together – learning is likely to be blocked as well.

Following these learning theories, applying a wide variety of instruction strategies and stretching students' comfort zones was seen as a translation of the diversity principle. In the VPA this comfort zone is considered to have both an individual and a collective sphere.

The problem-based learning (PBL) approach and experiential learning inspired the concretization of the focus on wicked problems and complex multi-stakeholder settings. PBL is described by Boud (1997:15) as 'an approach to structuring the curriculum that involves confronting students with problems from practice that provide a stimulus for learning'. Arguing that institutes of higher education have a responsibility to help students to become capable professionals, Engel (quoted in Boud, idem:18) formulates a need for what he calls composite competences: 'Adapting to, and participating in, change and self-directed learning are composite competences. Each will require the development of a number of composite competences, such as the skills of communication, critical reasoning, a logical and analytical approach to problems, reasoned decision-making, and self-evaluation.' In PBL, students work in small teams according to a well-defined procedure and are coached by a tutor who is a process facilitator rather than a subject matter expert.

Experiential learning is well known for its learning cycle (Jarvis, 1998:48), which is a continuum of the process steps experience, observation & reflection, conceptualization & generalization, and testing & action. According to Jarvis and colleagues (1998:46), experiential learning may be defined as 'the process of creating and transforming experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses'. To define the diverse nature of experience in learning, we differentiate between direct and mediated experience. Jarvis and colleagues (1998:57) elaborate on the conversion of mediated experience into a direct experience in education, explaining that:

The didactic education that takes place within the classroom is based on the provision of secondary experiences. As such it often seems far removed from everyday life. Only in story telling does the story teller try to relate the story to the experiences of the listeners. While the experiences of listening to the story are secondary, the story seeks to encourage listeners to recall similar experiences from their own lives and to empathize with the characters in the story.

While considering the implications of the third design principle – namely of finding an alternative to realities in the field – we came across a study into language problems in the international and inter-cultural classroom in higher education. Vinke (1995:163) explains that although language problems are often considered the first indicator of study problems in international education, the correlation between English language proficiency and academic success is often weak and inconsistent. However, she mentions a trend whereby English language proficiency seems to be more strongly related to academic success in social sciences than in technological disciplines. As this argument contests the

dominancy of text-based learning material, when constituting the skeleton of the VPA strategy we opted to give visual instructional materials a prominent role.

The design of the VPA strategy was influenced by the concept of impact assessment as defined by Roche (1999:21), viz. 'a systematic analysis of the lasting of significant changes – positive or negative, intended or not – in people's lives brought about by a given action or series of actions'. The idea to simulate the reality of stakeholder consultation was also inspired by concepts of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participatory learning and action (PLA). PRA and PLA structure information-search and analysis processes. They share common principles such as 'a defined methodology and systematic learning process', 'context specific', 'facilitating experts and stakeholders' and 'leading to change' (Pretty, 1995:56-57). For rather complex situations or systems, key problems are identified, hypotheses towards the analysis are constructed and multidisciplinary teams formulate possible solutions. PRAs have strong affective learning components for the people involved, and the ability to evoke such feelings was considered a challenge for the experience offered in the new learning strategy. This matches Miller and Boud (cited by Jarvis, 2004:56), who define experience as 'the totality of ways in which humans sense the world and make sense of what they perceive.'

Interpreting the above led to the construction of the VPA strategy as a realistic open simulation; there is no undisputed best practice, either for the track to follow or for the outcome of the process. The VPA strategy positions students in the role of consultants who are assigned to unravel complex issues. The assignments follow the routines of a consultancy mission: kick-off meetings, scoping, stakeholder consultation and action (see figure 1). Each team of students selects a limited and therefore different number and order of films from what is made available to them (Witteveen and Enserink, 2007:287). The build-in option for a particular learning route creates a sense of competition or gaming amongst the teams, as they know that the other teams will make different choices. Students question or reflect upon whether these different choices will eventually produce a 'better' analysis, as their peers will gain access to other sources of information.

The projected effect of the VPA strategy in formal education is that students will become more competent at learning and analysing complex multi-stakeholder issues, problems and policies, and will develop transformation strategies that respect public participation. The VPA learning outcome in formal education also aims to contribute to more effective learning strategies and to challenge mental models of learning by means of articulated reflection. The VPA strategy encourages various types of reflection that are considered crucial for social learning (Groot et al., 2002:209), namely:

- Reflection on practices, procedures and rules (single loop learning),
- The questioning of assumptions, values and objectives (double loop, learning)
- Critical reflection on the way people learn (triple loop learning).
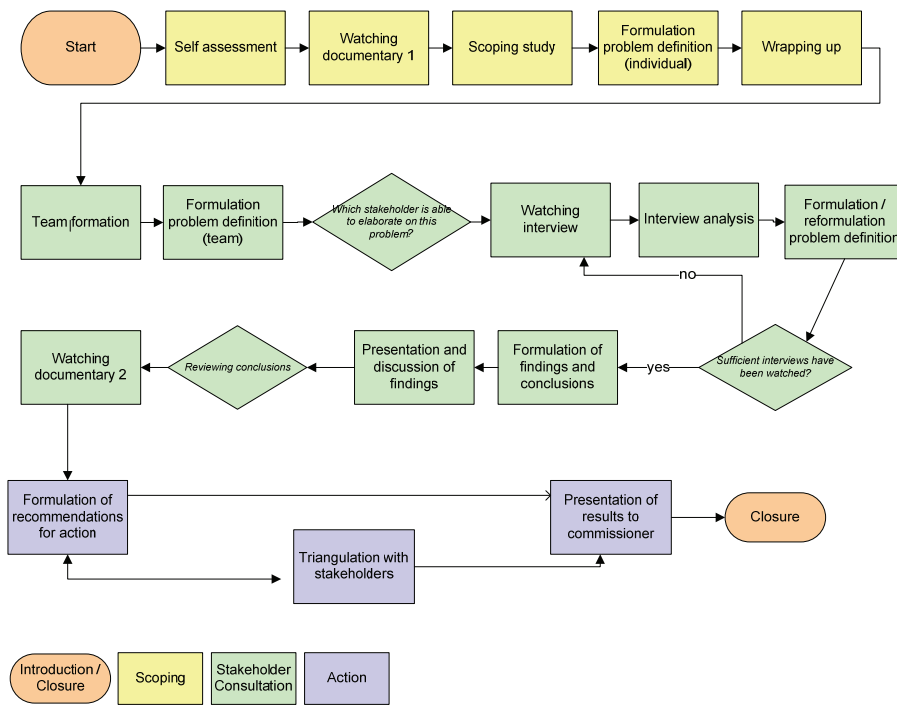
Figure 1: Flowchart of the VPA Learning Route

This reflective learning matches the professional competence of self-referentiality. According to van Woerkum (2000:200), self-referentiality refers to the predisposition of people and organizations to perceive the environment (and themselves) from their own perspective, from their own concept of relevance and from a fixed idea of what is and what is not important. In this respect, we can speak of the way people 'frame' the world. When trying to define 'framing', reference is often made to Goffman (1974:10-11), who explains frames as 'a principle of organization which governs the subjective meaning we assign to social events'. Reducing self-referentiality – that is, changing people's frames of reference by opening their minds to the ideas held by other stakeholders – is one of the projected effects of the VPA strategy. This learning outcome also relates to the expected increased commitment to the concerned stakeholders, and both are considered an expression of double loop learning. Combining these learning outcomes with a deeper understanding of the problem issues at stake should eventually lead to enhanced intersubjective consensus.

To support reflective learning, the learning process is guided by a VPA reflective journal and supported by facilitation. A facilitator guide contains full transcripts of the available interviews, the background information and other support material.

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Assessing the VPA Strategy in Formal Education

To assess the effect of the VPA strategy in formal education, a study was undertaken of the VPA course 'Kerala's Coast' in the Management of Development (MoD) Master's programme at Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (VHL). The VHL authors were part of the facilitating team and documented the events and archived students' outputs for the 07/08 (N=40) and the 08/09 (N=31) cohorts. Students are adult mid-career learners with an age range of 25 – 40 years from Asia, Africa and Latin America. The VPA is organised at the start of their programme; the course is supported with an electronic learning environment.

An evaluation was undertaken at the end of the VPA in October 2007. A summative anonymous questionnaire was distributed on the last day of the course. The questionnaire comprised 26 statements to be agreed with on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree – strongly agree). Five of the statements were further refined with an open question. The students were not obliged to complete the questionnaire. Of the students, 39 returned the questionnaire to the facilitators. In September 2008 (i.e. 10 months later), 15 students were invited to recall what they had learned during the VPA. This 1-page form was returned by 11 of the 15 students.

The perceived strength of the simulation is interpreted as an indicator of the relevancy of the design principle to find an alternative to field work (the third design principle); defining this indicator as a threshold indicator explains why we first present these results. Following this, we present the results of the study on the effect of the VPA strategy in formal education following the sequences of the simulation as indicated in figure 1 (kick-off meeting, scoping, stakeholder consultation, action). For each stage, we evaluate the diversity of learning styles (the first design principle), and the focus on wicked problems and multi-stakeholder settings (the second design principle). We also present the results of an evaluation of reflective learning and of aspects related to facilitation.

The results of the student evaluations are presented in the form of simple statistics. Except for the results presented in table 8, 'slightly' and 'strongly agree' mostly cover over 80% of the answers. For the sake of readability, 'strongly disagree', 'disagree' and 'undecided' are therefore presented in a single column. Additional information that supports or opposes the statistics is provided by the comments given by the students. The anonymous questionnaires were numbered and are presented as such in a selection of students responses made by the authors.

The Effect of the VPA Strategy in Formal Education

The Strength of the Simulation

Even though the interviews are mediated (and thus the students are not in a position to put supplementary questions to the interviewee), they psychologically align and associate; that is, they feel sympathy for or antipathy towards the interviewee, as they would in a real-life encounter. This becomes apparent during feedback sessions with the facilitators: the students reveal their identification with their filmed informants by talking in terms of 'we' ('We first went to see Mr Murugan' or 'After the interview, we stood there and saw him fishing'). This way of talking about the selected and observed interviewee is maintained whilst debating with another team of students ('But during the interview with Lalitha, she told us…').

According the results of the questionnaire, students evaluate the simulation as 'strong' (see table 1).

Statement	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Total
It was like travelling and working in Kerala (N = 39)	10	51	39	100
I 'met' and 'saw' people I had never spoken to before (N = 39)	21	28	51	100
I became familiar with life in coastal communities in Kerala (N = 39)	5	39	56	100

Table 1: The Strength of the Simulation (percentages)
Source: own evaluation

Students exemplify their positive engagement with their simulated role of consultant in Kerala, indicating how they got immersed in the local situation.

> *My mind was totally occupied by Kerala's coastal zone information and problems during the last two weeks. I can say I was there, because when I was eating, walking and even sleeping, I thought about the fishermen, farmers, mangroves, etc. (#1)*

> *After working the whole day, I feel like going back to my room is just like going back to the hotel in Kerala and the next morning returning to the field. (#20)*

The realization that they had been watching a video did not stop most of the students from experiencing engagement with the stakeholders they 'interviewed':

I somehow got carried away such that I forget I was watching a video, and for some moments it occurred to me like I was actually there, talking to real people. (#35)

Fewer students indicate the limitations of the filmed VPA interviews whilst at the same time adhering to the simulation of interviewing stakeholders:

I slightly disagree, because I would have formulated my personal questions that was never asked during the interview. (#21)

Students also indicate at a more generic level that during the VPA they are preparing themselves for the real world:

The VPA helps students to know what they do, how they do and what they can face in real situations. (#39)

Thank you very much: [it was an eye-opener to me into the world of professional consultancy. (#22)

Various comments indicate that the facilitators contribute to the perception of the simulation:

The way the facilitators guiding us was to feel like we are in Kerala, the video and issues we were talking was about Kerala for two weeks, so I feel I was like travelling and working in Kerala. (#17)

Students even found their own, somewhat surprising way of dealing with the simulation, as we read from an email from team 6/08, who wished to return the DVD after watching the interview:

We've just interviewed Mr Thankachan. He wants to go back home. Where is located the bus stop to lead him to?

Ten months after participating in the course, students of the MoD's Training, Rural Extension and Transformation (TREAT) specialization readily recalled the VPA during the general course evaluation. When asked to indicate what they had learned, 10 of the 11 respondents stated that the major learning activities during the VPA comprised consulting or interviewing stakeholders. Although all these respondents referred to the interviews (using the word 'interview'), only one used the word 'film'.

Learning During the Kick-off Meeting

Based on the notion that learning is promoted when existing knowledge is activated as a foundation for new knowledge (Merril, 2002:45), the students are confronted with a self-assessment comprising open generic questions, such as: 'What do you associate with India?' In the plenary exchange, the facilitators ask guiding questions or refine vague clues in order to help the students to formulate answers. The facilitators take into account the students' uncertainty and unease with this learning strategy and therefore induce reflections on routine learning patterns. The self-assessment causes 'friction', as students do not expect to start with an assessment activity. They are surprised that they do not have to return the forms, and that they do not get a mark even though their answers are considered relevant. However, because the friction created by the unexpected learning activities and by the facilitators' activities is discussed in terms of learning orientations, it becomes a positive friction.

After the self-assessment, the students watch the first VPA documentary. This film, with its positivist perspective on reality, guides the students from the beginning to the end. The documentary confirms the basic associations generated by the self-assessment, and in combination with the familiar aesthetics of the film it is an affective instruction strategy in terms of motivating, creating emotions and expectations, and is just like learning in the comfort zone.

Learning During the Scoping Stage

The students-cum-consultants start the scoping phase with a desk study that is guided by conventional instructions and by a research journal. This makes them reflect upon their activities, strategies and results, and as such achieves externalization of learning and self-regulation activities. The external regulation consists of submission of the reflective journal and feedback from the facilitator. Students are initially confused by the fact that they do not have to submit the results of the desk study, but 'only' share the reflective journal. The feedback from the facilitator departs from control and review, and changes to reiterative questions and conceptual issues. This feedback is given in plenary sessions for similar or collective issues, as well as in individual sessions. The desk study culminates in each student making a provisional problem definition. To conclude the scoping stage, the students receive a self-test. This tool is similar to conventional cognitive-oriented questions, but is not submitted or marked; on the contrary, students receive the answers within 48 hours. The students are later given a reflective journal in which they have stated which questions they did and they did not answer, and for what reasons. This reflection is then discussed in a plenary session. The students have to give themselves a mark; they also have to justify it and compare it with a fellow student. The marks are annotated by the facilitator.

A relevant outcome of the scoping stage is a precondition for the stakeholder consultation, as students need to increase their understanding of

current problems and issues and to identify stakeholders. Table 2 shows how the students evaluate their subject matter learning. A large majority of the students state that they have learnt a lot about coastal zone issues in Kerala.

Statements	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Total
I learnt a lot about coastal zone issues (N = 39)	0	15	85	100
I learnt to identify the problems of the various stakeholders (N = 38)	0	39	59	98

Table 2: Learning about the Situation on Kerala's Coast (percentages)
Source: own evaluation

Learning During the Stakeholder Consultation Stage

The stakeholder consultation stage starts with team formation. Without indicating performance criteria or giving instructions, the facilitator invites the students to form consultancy teams. Later, the students have to articulate how the teams were formed and what quality of the team is foreseen. The teams are also informed that they will be held accountable for their choices, including the team formation. In October 2008, students discussed to repeat the team formation process, as they had realized the effect of their lack of reasoning.

The students select a first interviewee from the list of filmed interviewees. The fact that the students see only some of the available interviewees and that they define both the selection and the order, simulates fieldwork conditions (i.e. limited time, limited resources and limited access to respondents). 'Meeting' a number of stakeholders (through the interviews) allows the students to learn about the different perspectives of the interviewees, about the way they frame their problems and about their own views on reality. The students need to consume the films in an active and engaged way in order to disclose the information provided. This effect is purposely striven for in line with Roy Stryker (quoted in Hall, 1997), who argues that a 'good documentary should tell not only what a place or a thing or person looks like, but must also tell the audience what it would feel like to be an actual witness to the scene'.

After each interview, teams fill in a reflective form articulating their actions and decisions. These reflections offer a basis for the feedback session with facilitators, during which the students present the interview findings and experiences and the planning for new interviews. The VPA strategy has the advantage that the students present and share real outcomes of their work, thus providing precise feedback options for the facilitators.

After the stakeholder consultation, the students watch the second documentary, which summarizes and highlights interview captions of the most

pressing issues. Contrary to the first documentary, it puts the emphasis on the fuzzy reality, that is, on the wicked problems and the contrasting and contradictory perspectives of the stakeholders. This documentary provides students with an overview that they will not receive in reality and provides confrontational feedback on their learning route.

Table 3 indicates that a large majority of the students say that they learned about problem analysis. However, the reports written by the students indicate that they still have difficulty linking causes and effects. This could be explained by their limited prior experience, as exemplified by the following statement:

I had no idea about research, but now I've learnt a way of critical analysing and creative thinking. (#37)

Statements	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Total
I learnt about relations between various problems in the coastal zone (N = 39)	0	20	80	100
I learnt new things about causes and problems in the coastal zone (N= 38)	0	21	77	97
My problem understanding has grown (N = 37)	3	26	67	95
I learnt to identify the problems of the various stakeholders (N = 38)	0	39	59	97

Table 3: Learning about Problem Analysis (percentages)
Source: own evaluation

A very large majority of the students agree strongly with the statement that they had learned that different stakeholders may hold different views and perspectives. Most students state that they now better understand why people act the way they do.

It is interesting to note how students construct their problem understanding during the series of interviews and how they reflect critically on their performance:

When we finished the first interview, we think that we could not use anything from this interview. But when we changed our perception of the, each interview were interesting and resourceful, we almost forgot to use secondary data. (#36)

Sometimes we would go to an interview with already persistent ideas, so we would not really be keen and pay attention to small details the interviewees were saying, making us miss very important information. If only we would have been open and unbiased. (#26)

Statements	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Total
I have learnt that different stakeholders may have different views (N = 38)	3	10	85	97
I learnt about the different perspectives of the stakeholders in the coastal zone (N = 39)	3	41	56	100
After the interviews I better understand why people act and work the way they do (N = 39)	8	41	51	100

Table 4: Learning about Different Perspectives Stakeholders May Have (percentages)
Source: own evaluation

We also wanted to know whether the VPA strategy reduces self-referentiality. As shown in table 5, the students say that their perspective on coastal zone problems changed, that their commitment to working with vulnerable stakeholders has increased and that the VPA module will change the way they work in future.

Our experience is that students often get very engaged and that they articulate prior prejudices or biases:

The interviews done and other videos watched made me feel like I was actually feel their frustrations, and I felt like I really need to do something to change their life. The desperation of some of the situation was touching. (#15)

I used to think fishermen were less privileged people, but I have learnt that they have an impact in society. (#38)

I learnt about my bias since I felt that instead of blaming the government or others of their problems, they could do something. But I realized they had few options because they did not have knowledge, access to information, opportunities. (#31)

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Statements	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Total
My commitment to working with vulnerable stakeholder groups has increased (N = 37)	5	21	69	95
My own perspective on coastal zone problems has changed (N = 39)	3	28	67	100
I better understand that problems are made up of issues and policies and are always bound to people (N = 39)	3	21	77	100
What I learnt during the VPA will change the way I work in the future (N = 38)	3	10	85	97

Table 5: Reduced Self-referentiality (percentages)
Source: own evaluation

Another student denied that he was biased and underlined his neutrality:

My perspective towards direct stakeholders is neutral, not biased. (#27)

Some students show insight into why people act the way they do and many students rethink their professional experiences:

I think it is for their needs now but not for the future. (#24)

As a change agent in the government, I thought that all what is needed is to put laws and policies. About what the farmers needed I thought was information, but now the issue is involvement in planning. From what Mrs Lalitha said about consultation, I think no problem should be assumed for any stakeholder, small or big. (#14)

The facilitators have seen how the students work and how they interpret the information obtained from the interviews. Positive feedback from the facilitator as well as immediate interference when students make questionable conclusions is possible. We have learnt that facilitators' familiarity with the content and context of the interviews and the issues at stake enhances the coaching of the student teams.

Learning During the Action Stage

The focus of the action stage is to interpret and transform the overall palette of confusing and contrasting information into some sort of action. In the educational context of this study, the students had to write a report in anticipation of a project proposal.

The reports reflect the simulation, as we read that: 'Our interview with Mrs Sakunthala has encouraged us to find out what fisherwomen in Kerala find problematic about their lives' (team 2/08) and 'As Father Antony Aresseril says…' (team 4/08).

Although the reports present the normal weaknesses and inconsistencies that are found in all students' reports, it can be seen that students link the scoping phase with the stakeholder consultation using an iterative approach. Team 2/08 tried to explain why 'Mrs Sakunthala mentioned that she does not receive a loan', whilst they had learned from the desk study that loans are provided by the government and NGOs. They reflected that 'Perhaps the fisherwomen do not know about this kind of support or have no access to it' and further elaborate 'That Mrs Shantha Raveendran stated that "the majority of women are dependent on their husband's salary or income"'.

Team 5/08 referred to a paddy farmer who 'added that the water is polluted and the government is not doing much to solve their problems' and continued by reporting that 'in order to hear the government's side, we interviewed Dr Pradeep Koodaickal, the president of Panavally Grama Panchayat'.

Team 1/08 focused on intersubjective consensus: 'In order to have a common understanding of the problems that contribute to low fish catches and depletion, we need to have a common forum for all stakeholders to objectively share their views and agree on amicable solutions.'

As facilitators, we questioned during the post-course evaluation whether the nature of the report was in line with the potential of the VPA strategy, as we concluded that the requested and delivered reports were more conventional research reports than aligned with VPA's 'learning on the edge' potentials.

Reflective Learning

Of the students, 64 per cent strongly agree with the statement that VPA made them learn about the way they study and learn, while 33 per cent agreed slightly with this statement (table 6). This shows how important VPA is as a tool to confront students with their learning style. Table 6 also shows that VPA have taught many students about their own perspective on direct stakeholders.

Statements	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Total
I have learnt a lot about my way of studying and learning (N = 38)	0	33	64	97
I learnt about my own perspective on direct stakeholders, like fishermen and farmers (N = 39)	3	41	56	100

Table 6: Learning about Own Learning Style (percentages)
Source: own evaluation

The students stated explicitly that VPA provides space to make mistakes and learn from them:

> *We were made to learn from our mistakes; we would get ourselves into a ditch by doing the wrong thing. The facilitators did not give us solutions on how to get out of the ditch, but just inform you are in a ditch: how to get out depends on you. This kind of learning through mistakes is good for me: if I make 20 mistakes, at least I know there are 20 ways of doing it wrong! (#15)*

> *With the VPA you learn when you don't know. Self-evaluation is very difficult, but I tried to evaluate myself and I have no doubt that VPA will forever have an impact on my professional performance. (#5)*

A large majority of the students agree strongly that they have learnt a lot from their team mates; they are slightly less satisfied with their role in and contribution to the team work (table 7).

Statements	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Total
I learnt a lot from my team mates (N = 38)	0	18	80	97
I am content about my own role and contribution to the team result (N = 38)	10	18	70	97

Table 7: Learning about Team Work (percentages)
Source: own evaluation

Students distinguish between individual and group learning:

The module asks you to work individual and as a team. this makes me learn that both have advantages and disadvantages, but as a whole my team mates are good. (#20)

Peer assessment was especially difficult. (#10)

As learning and instruction are related, we also evaluated the role of the facilitator (table 8). A large majority agrees with statements about keeping them on track and with the comments given by the facilitators, even if the comments are confusing or difficult.

Statements	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	Total
Facilitators kept a close eye on our activities (N = 34)	5	18	64	87
Facilitators' comments were in line with our performance (N = 37)	0	33	62	95
Facilitators' comments strengthened our performance (N = 38)	0	20	77	97
Facilitators' comments were difficult to understand (N = 38)	59	33	5	97
I got totally confused and the facilitators did nothing to relieve my doubts (N = 36)	66	21	5	92

Table 8: Facilitators' Guidance (percentages)
Source: own evaluation

Facilitation

In line with the above, during the study we realized that optimal achievement of the learning outcome is strongly influenced by the quality of the facilitation to stretch the boundaries of the students' comfort zones or otherwise create positive friction.

Each student consultancy team selects its own path, which can be monitored by the facilitators as they have inside knowledge, the full transcripts of the interviews and other support material. This provides opportunities for sharp and concise feedback, which is not possible in the reality of fieldwork where logistics, issues of culture and language, and other perceived constraints allow

students to justify whatever impediments they come across. Students realize that their own performance is the major variable that influences the quality of the process. When they are questioned on their procedures and findings during the feedback sessions, they express a sense of accountability.

Serious comments from the facilitators, especially when we were going off the track, were delivered with encouragement, which broke the tension and improved our performance. (#34)

Problem statement can be changed according to specific situation, going back to check what we did before, consistency were some of the facilitators comments which helps us to check our work. (#32)

The feedback opportunities also surprise and confuse students:

Some comments I could not understand. (#28)

Sometimes their comments were difficult to understand, but the comments motivated and forced us to work harder. (#27)

An example of precise feedback resulting from the visuals concerns Mr Murugan, a cast-net fisherman. The interview was filmed at night. Mr Murugan is seated on the sand, holding his cast net in his hand; a bucket and an oil lamp can be seen. He explains in full detail about his work as a fisherman, the loan for the net and the value of the insecure daily catch. The facilitators often ask the students why this interview takes place at night. This question helps VPA teams to imagine the reality of fieldwork and to realize that the night fisherman represents a group of stakeholders who would not figure in field work that takes place during office hours, say from 09.00 to 16.00. The end of the interview, where Mr Murugan expresses his wish to end the interview because 'I have to go to work', also makes quite an impression on students: it makes them realize that it is his precious time that they are taking up. To appreciate these experiences as a learning outcome, the students are often supported by facilitation.

The interview with Mr Babychan, a traditional fisherman, provides another example. Mr Babychan talks in an enchanting way about life at sea, low catches and an insecure household income. So far, he is the common representation of a 'small-scale poor' fisherman. But when he says 'To be frank, liquor is a problem for most of the fisherman and a major part of their earnings are spent on it; drunken brawls are common', the students find that information hard to process as it contradicts the image they constructed on prior information. A team sometimes needs facilitation in order to realize that this apparently inconsistent behaviour is also valuable information for their analysis and understanding of fragile livelihoods.

In our experience, students accept and appreciate sharp feedback from facilitators, as it can be checked against their performance:

The facilitators are cool. They bother us about so and so, make us disappointed about what we have found – but it's really working. It helps me to have deeper understanding and open my mind about this work and how you work in reality. (#20)

The facilitators' comments were the guide and words to trigger our performance. (#12)

Time considerations and other reasons also limit the length of feedback because facilitators leave final judgements and decisions to the students:

Surprisingly, sometimes facilitators did not comment though they knew that our problem definition was not good. (#4)

I sometimes myself I was like failing to know if we were right, as they were not strictly saying what should be. (#2)

The VPA feedback instruction for the facilitator provides a kind of checklist for instructions that are very common, such as confronting teams with their gender biases, social biases and other misrepresentations in their stakeholder selection.

The facilitators showed the importance of looking at a cross section of all stakeholders. (#3)

Facilitators also create discourse awareness by highlighting words that indicate old-fashioned thinking (e.g. 'top-down' or 'upliftment of the fisher folk') or the use of concepts that are not appropriate in the given situation. An example of the latter that the authors use to explain this to students, is attributing an annual income to farmers or fisherman/fisherwomen who talk about a daily income. Once students understand that converting a daily income into an annual income disregards all aspects of seasonality, uncertainty and risk, they find the example both hilarious and repulsive.

Discussion and Conclusions

Diversity of Learning Activities and Strategies

The results of the VPA evaluation show that strong affective learning and thinking activities induce students to experience the simulated practice as realistic; they enjoy the mediated interaction with stakeholders and feel engaged with the problems and issues that are at stake. Although the students are sometimes discomforted, they gain confidence during the VPA process, they perceive VPA materials as attractive and appreciate the relevance of their study activities, and consequently nurture their learning ambitions.

Students appreciate the diversity of learning styles, as they feel challenged by the variety of activities and the feedback loops in the VPA; they do experience doubts, but these are positive doubts, as the feedback results from their own decisions. It seems that the diverse learning strategies and the quality of the feedback create positive friction and the students engage themselves passionately. Some students from countries where teaching is done in a more conventional way (i.e. strongly controlled instruction by an expert lecturer) acknowledge that they lack the 'right' answer or an ultimate truth. Remarkably, several students added to the evaluation an urgent request to produce or make existing VPAs available in their respective countries.

The VPA leads to a variety of learning outputs. In the scoping stage, the students learn about problems and the context and they identify stakeholders. This is initially done without questioning the underlying causes; it can therefore be considered single loop learning. As students learn to appreciate stakeholder consultation and consider the diversity of stakeholders' views, they articulate and question the assumptions, biases and values of their work. This can be considered double loop learning. Although the students are hesitant and doubtful at the start, they express their learning in terms of activities, strategies and emotions. They become confident about the final aim of their reflections upon the events and their role in the learning process to the extent that reflection becomes an integral part of their learning. In other words, this can be considered triple loop learning.

Wicked Problems and Fuzzy Realities

Considering that the VPA helps students to acquire the above-mentioned complex professional competences, we consider the VPA strategy effective for studying and analysing wicked problems in complex multi-stakeholder settings. In line with fuzzy logic theories, it could be argued that it is appropriate to regard the VPA strategy as 'a fuzzy set modelling vague predicates and informal reasoning', since 'fuzziness formalizes a kind of deterministic uncertainty and ambiguity' (Cat, 2004:4). VPA allows students to combine a growing insight into their personal agency and responsibility with more accurate attention for

stakeholder agency and responsibility. In this sense, VPA is in line with what Chambers (2005:211) calls 'a precondition for grounded pro-poor realism and understanding by "uppers" in order to make development policies, programs and practices pro-poor by making them to fit the priorities and aspirations of those who are poor and marginalized and doing no harm'.

Students experience an opportunity to learn from their interaction with unfamiliar stakeholders. They realize that it is the freedom to make 'stupid' errors that enables them to acquire complex competences, such as the competence to reduce their self-referentiality.

Learning on the Edge

We conclude from the evaluation that the effects of the VPA strategy in formal education match the original design principles. Generalizing these results, we also conclude that acquiring complex competences, paying justice to complex multi-stakeholder settings and sustainable development in new and challenging learning environments is possible. To further develop a comprehension of conducive factors for challenging and effective educational design we could study the VPA design and production. We could further research how the design principles which originated from education and communication studies, from arts and media studies were linked to contemporary competences. An additional focus on how the design principles were concretized during the production will add a valuable perspective.

We learned from the study that the original VPA design disregarded the competences of the lecturers or facilitators who are needed in order to optimize the facilitation of VPA. Although the educational design was a response to a demand from lecturers and university policy makers, the background of the lecturers/facilitators was less considered and they were equally or perhaps even more rooted in traditional or conventional forms of lecturing and facilitating than the students. This coincides with Wals's call for quality facilitation (Wals 2007:498).

A major reorientation in the conceptualization of the VPA design is that the VPA was originally thought of as a simulation of fieldwork, replacing the direct experience with a mediated experience. Now, however, we claim that the VPA is not only an alternative but also a reality of its own. Although the context and the interviews are simulated, the activities and emotions of the concerned students are real. We no longer consider the mediated presence of the 'other' as creating a second-rank experience, since it allows students to experience and reflect differently on their common images and on their usual behaviour when meeting farmers, fisherman and women.

Due to the absence of 'live' interviewees, routine politeness procedures do not prevail in the reflection on the analysis and interpretation of the interview. This allows students to realize their embarrassment in encountering the 'Other'. The safe space that is created allows a deep realization that they soon become confused and defeated when stakeholders' stories do not adhere to assumed

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representations. Since they sometimes fail to see what the 'Other' says and to hear what the 'Other' feels, students risk questioning to what extent they are a contributive factor to the wicked problem at stake rather then assuming that they are part of any solution.

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4. Cultural Issues in Making and Using the Visual Problem Appraisal "Kerala's Coast"[1]

Abstract

Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is a complex multi-actor issue. Staff members of Cochin University (CUSAT) from India and colleagues from the Netherlands interpreted this issue as a challenge to initiate and enhance multi-stakeholder dialogue and action and the idea was born to produce a Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA). VPA is a film-based learning system that aims to induce social learning, to increase problem and policy analysis competencies, to reduce selfreferentiality, to increase commitment for concerned stakeholders, and to enhance intersubjective consensus. In 2003 Indian and Dutch university staff members and Indian filmmakers produced two documentaries and 23 films portraying the Keralite stakeholders in their natural environment, exposing their engagement with, and different perspectives on, ICZM. Although produced for formal education, the notion emerged that the VPA might as well work in the reality of ICZM in Kerala. It was a fascinating conversion of questioning the nature of some events and frictions that occurred during the production process. As critical incidents were attributed to various cultural disparities such as local/foreign, male/female, higher/lower status, the hypothesis was formulated that if producing the VPA had already set a deep impact; how about using it directly with involved stakeholders? This hypothesis was tested in 2004 in

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[1] This article is based on the paper "Visualising the Invisible: Cultural Disparity and Dynamic Frictions in Relation to the Visual Problem Appraisal "Kerala's Coast" that was presented at IAIA'05 • 25th Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment "Ethics & Quality" 31 May-3 June 2005, Boston, Massachusetts.

workshops with publics, ranging from CUSAT students to local stakeholders of the Thycattussery Panchayat. The process of producing and testing the VPA Kerala's Coast was a complex and intriguing multidisciplinary and multicultural project. We wondered what made the project a success. Framing the project as a space of cultural communication gave guidance to the questions that articulated our search to understand the process we had been immersed in. In this article we describe the events and analyze critical incidents that occurred during the production and the use of the VPA. The outcome leads to valuable recommendations for international and intercultural teams working on similar production and research projects.

Introduction

Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is a highly complex issue especially in tropical regions. The needs for economic development and demands of the local fisherman population on the natural resources conflict with the long-term interest of sustainable management of these scarce and vulnerable resources. In a wider context (economic) power, equity, and access to knowledge resources contribute to the complexity of the issue (Ramachandran et al., 2002, 2005). The training tool known as Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) has been developed by Loes Witteveen (1999) for the training of student in helping them acquire the analytical skills to assess complex issues such as ICZM. VPA sprung from a study after the successes and failures of accommodating different learning styles inside of the international classroom (Brinkman and Witteveen, 1998). This system fits into the Problem Based Learning approach as real-world problems provide the context of the simulation (Maxwell et al., 2004: 488-489). Along with Mayer and Veeneman (2002: 30) VPA can be characterized as a realistic open-simulation game as there is no undisputed best practice where the student works as a consultant executing a complex assignment and meeting with real stakeholders (Witteveen and Enserink, 2007). At the heart of the VPA are films as the explicit articulation of the various problem perceptions of the stakeholders encapsulated in their filmed interviews and accompanying documentaries.

The VPA set Kerala's Coast was produced in 2003–2004 and comprised 25 films: the introductory documentary "Kerala's Coast," 23 films with stakeholder interviews, and the documentary "Janam, People on Stage." The other elements of the simulation are included in a learner workbook that is complemented with a facilitator's guide. The latter presents facilitator's instructions and background information, shares experiences, and includes full transcriptions of all the interviews (Witteveen et al., 2003a, 2003b). The VPA production on Coastal Zone Management in Kerala, India resulted from cooperation on course

development between Dutch and Keralite universities, where new learning approaches would be introduced in India.[2]

VPA proved to be a strong and motivating learning environment in formal higher education that enhanced students' personal learning orientation and generated enthusiasm (Witteveen, 2003a). The hypothesis that VPA might be an effective tool for social learning and stakeholders' empowerment was tested in a series of workshops with local Kerala stakeholders in 2004. For extensive information on the impacts of VPA on stakeholder empowerment and its effects of social learning we refer to Witteveen and Enserink (2007).

The VPA, as experienced by its participants, is a simulation of a problem analysis through interviews with stakeholders on location in line with rapid appraisal principles (RA) (Conway et al., 1987; Chambers, 1994; Pretty et al., 1995). The actual making of the VPA—the search for, and selection of, the stakeholders, the way the stakeholders were engaged and activated, the way they express themselves—uses RA methodologies and follows RA principles. VPA deviates from this class of exploratory methods as visual diagramming is less prominent as a tool for extracting information on behalf of the outsiders. In VPA the information is in the story told and in the visuals that portray the context of the person being interviewed. A VPA is likewise produced—a multidisciplinary team working with primary and secondary stakeholders on location, stimulating them to express their concerns and issues in their own words.

The VPA production team for the VPA Kerala's Coast team did not reflect the multidisciplinarity of integrated coastal zone management but was a reflection of the production reality. It was made up of university scholars from Dutch and Indian universities and a crew of Indian filmmakers and technicians plus a Dutch director.

The production process, although successful and effective, was also hectic, tough, with some tense and intriguing moments. We knew beforehand that the production aim and target was ambitious to achieve working together for the first time with an international and intercultural team while dealing with time and budget limitations as well as technical challenges. Under the given circumstances we expected some conflicts with the inducement to the consideration of the production process as a space of intercultural communication. In this paper we aim to describe and analyze the events that occurred in that space of intercultural communication during the production of the VPA and the VPA workshops in an attempt to define the facilitative and constraining factors that contributed to the final successful outcome of the production process and a two-year intensive relationship.

In the next few paragraphs we will introduce the concept "critical incident" and sketch a framework based on notions of cultural differences and intercultural communication for the interpretation of these incidents. A number of

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[2] In 2002 a diploma course was initiated at the IMCOZ Centre (Integrated Management of Coastal Zones) of Cochin University of Science and Technology in Ernakulam (Kerala, India) as one element in an institutionalized cooperation between CUSAT and Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands.

critical incidents will be presented that occurred during production of the films and during a series of workshops held on location. We are aware that the framing and interpretation of these incidents calls for cultural relativism, and probably tells us more about our Western frame of reference and cultural sensitivity than those of our Indian partners and friends. We fully agree with Hofstede (1997: 7) when he states that: "no scientific standards for considering one group are intrinsically superior or inferior." We will assess the quality of our analytical framework and discuss the general findings envisaging recommendations for working in international and intercultural project teams on a demanding task in the final part of this paper.

We recognize that this article will reflect our Dutch perspective. As we have taken the freedom to interpret certain critical incidents, we also like to highlight a certain disregard of circumstances of time pressure, budget limitations, and the variety of languages involved. We acknowledge the ignorance of those incidents that were felt as critical by other team members but which have not been identified by us due to our lack of sensitivity, understanding, or engagement in a concrete task somewhere else on the set. After Hofstede's (1991) definition of culture as a collective programming of the mind we also have not paid attention to the individual level of mental programming and therefore do not address issues of personality.

A Space of Intercultural Communication

A complex and stressful project like the making of VPA Kerala's Coast is not just a hell of a job, it is an adventure. It was a miracle that no serious damage or hardship occurred except for an occasional dead battery, a lighting assistant being attacked by a lizard and the tears of an interviewee remembering a flood that destroyed her home.

The realization of this project occurred against a background of a variety of class, national, and professional cultures. We realized that we were challenging a variety of mindsets and cultural notions in a situation of close cooperation and physical togetherness, as working on location was a main pre-requisite of VPA filming. The occurrence of conflicts due to cultural stress, fatigue, financial, and technical constraints was expected, we just did not know when, how, and where. We framed the VPA design and production process as a "space of intercultural communication" after Lie (2003) to prevent any major problems taking over and maintain some harmony. We considered the project as a combination of virtual and tangible meeting places in which national and professional cultural notions might play an important part. We worked together for two years, sometimes physically over each other's lap, working inside the confined space of a small fishing boat; inside a fisherman's shelter on a beach, or a cold air-conditioned studio room. Sometimes we were separated by thousands of miles. We had extremely long days, waking up in the middle of the night in order to travel a long distance and have the early morning light for shooting nice takes. We

worked on tangible products like films and books and were engaged in a continuous discourse on public participation, representation, policymaking, and sustainability. It may not come as a surprise that frictions and congruencies in our VPA space of intercultural communication were manifest and dynamic. Our "we" was made up of two Dutch scholars from different Dutch universities, a team of three to five Indian university scholars, and a five- to ten-people Indian film crew and other support staff.

The strategy to analyze and experience the project as a "space of intercultural communication" requires rationalization of a process of which you are part and parcel. The distance created by considering daily events as part of the (experimental) space of intercultural communication sometimes creates a schizophrenic feeling but also makes things tolerable and fascinating. The abovementioned rationalization took place by a continuous discussion, reporting, and reflection on the process by the authors and during regular debriefings with the whole team after full days of field work. The authors made an effort to record carefully all daily events, findings, and discussions on paper, pictures, and/or videotapes.

We compiled, after finalization of the entire production project, all formal and informal documents, notes, e-mails, drawings, and other paperbound recordings in two documents in a chronological format to make these data meaningful for content analysis; one in relation to the production, the filming, and editing of the VPA; the other one concerning the workshops with stakeholders.

Both documents provide an overview that is complete in the sense that all working days and major activities and issues are covered, and often reported in various ways from different angles and in different ways such as conversation notes, e-mails, reports, drawings, and other forms of documents. This elaborate description and depiction of the events and issues permitted selection of the Critical Incidents Theory to analyze the data further.

Critical Incident Approach

Critical incidents refer to real experiences in which a communication issue was involved and where appropriate responses were not clear. Most commonly the term critical incident is associated with the six-stage model of critical incident debriefing described by Mitchell (Everly & Mitchell, 1995; Mitchell & Everly, 1996; Fay, 2000). This formal, structured process is mostly led by trained facilitators (not exclusively mental health professionals) and occurs soon after a potentially traumatizing event. It involves the telling of a traumatic story, the sharing of emotions, and the teaching of common reactions of trauma and coaching in coping skills (Carr, 2003).

We used such a narrative approach to critical and subcritical incidents that were affecting our work, hurting ourselves and/or others emotionally, or were

obstructing good and pleasant cooperation between the various groups involved in the project. We held a debriefing session after each day of work. During filming operations we held after-dinner debriefing sessions with the entire team to have them speak out and release tension.

The purpose of this paper is to show a reflection on spaces of intercultural communication; because of this, it is advantageous to give this work a critical approach. This article focuses on observable, measurable behaviors as it occurs in real situations—not artificial (laboratory) ones. It focuses on behavioral extremes that lead to success or failure that can be recognized and internalized easily by the reader. A drawback is that critical incidents theory (CIT) relies on observers to recognize, remember, and report these incidents accurately. Observers reporting on the same incident should have the same factual description, in principle, of the actual occurrence but, in practice, may report different things and can have diametrical opposing perspectives on what happened due to personal and cultural biases. In this paper we start from those incidents that we (the Dutch team members) noticed and reported as tangible and crucial incidents. We selected 15 critical incidents from the document that reports on the design and production phase of the project, and six from the VPA testing phase. Although we feel secure about the occurrence of the mentioned incidents, we cannot comment on how representative they are as we may assume that we have missed others due to our own biased Western perspective. What adds to the validity of the selection of critical incidents and the narratives is the context of a film project as several incidents can be exemplified with original film rushes.

Figure 1: Debriefing Session at Thiruvananthapuram

A Framework to Analyze Critical Incidents

We re-constructed the framework developed to focus on the analysis of cultural constraints in education to adapt the critical incident theories to the analysis of our space of intercultural communication (Brinkman and Witteveen, 1998: 71). It is made up of a matrix that combines relevant perspectives on the

problematic situation with several levels of interpretation. Analogous to Everly & Mitchell (1995) do for critical incident debriefing we discerned three levels of interpretation:

1. the visible incident describing the facts as seen by a relative outsider (the narrative),
2. the conflictive interpretation of the involved people,
3. the determinants or notions that provide terms and theories explaining the incident.

In case of the VPA project, the determinants or perspectives within our "spaces of intercultural communication" are dimensions of national cultures, and dimensions professional cultures, and we will go into more detail for these two in the next section. However, from our 21 critical incidents, we noticed that many of them did not just have to do with this limited notion of culture; some incidents seemed to have nothing to do with cultural background, but had to do with differences in professional judgment, methodological rigor, and perspective on media use. One could argue that these factors are related to professional culture but we chose to add them to our framework as the incidents we ran into are typically for rapid appraisal and filming projects. For now we labeled them "view on stakeholder analysis and social learning" and "view on filming." We will come back to this later.

Combining the CIT analysis with the aforementioned perspectives leads to a matrix, presented in Table 1 that we used as a framework for analysis of the critical incidents. The application of this framework for constraint analysis does not pretend to give a final conclusion or recommendation; rather it aims at an extended analysis of a culturally defined complex situation. We searched for elements we recognized from each of the four perspectives to have been at stake during the VPA project. We would like to stress here that the conscious elaboration and use of this framework took place only after finalizing the project.

Nr.	*Source:*			
Determinants Level of interpretation	Dimensions of national cultures	Dimensions of professional cultures	View on stakeholder analysis and social learning	View on filming
The visible incident				
Interpretation by involved people				
Determinants and notions				

Table 1: Conceptual Framework of Critical Incidents during VPA KC Design and Production Process

Dimensions of National Cultures

A dimension is an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other cultures; it groups together a number of phenomena in a society which were empirically found to occur in combination. The dimensions of national culture, as constructed by Hofstede (1997), are power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and uncertainty avoidance.

- *Power distance* is the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.
- *Individualism* pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which, from birth onwards, people are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which all through people's lives continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.
- *Masculinity* pertains to societies in which social gender roles are clearly distinct (i.e., men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life). Femininity pertains to societies in which social gender roles overlap (i.e., both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life).
- *Uncertainty avoidance* is the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations. This feeling is, among other things, expressed through nervous stress and in a need for predictability; a need for written and unwritten rules.

More recently, a fifth dimension of differences among national cultures was identified, opposing a long-term orientation in life to a short-term orientation (www.geert-hofstede.com). The fact that it had not been encountered before may be attributed to a cultural bias in the minds of people studying culture, including Hofstede.

The new dimension was discovered when people's values around the world were studied using a questionnaire composed by "Eastern" (in this case, Chinese) minds (Hofstede, 1991). Using cultural dimensions provides a cultural vocabulary; the focus on revelation and description of these fundamental differences provides an instrument for cultural analysis, rather than assessing or valuing.

Dimensions of Professional Cultures

In line with Hofstede's dimensions of corporate culture we describe professional culture as motivation, relationship, identity, communication, control, and conduct (Neuijen, 1992; Hoecklin, 1995).

- *Motivation* refers to the extent to which the members of a professional culture focus on the process, the activities to be precise, consistent and accurate or focus on the output, pursue objectives that are innovative and progressive.
- *Relationship* refers to the extent to which the members of a professional culture focus on the need of the individual or on the needs of the job.
- *Identity* refers to the extent to which the members of a professional culture identify with the profession or with the employing organization.
- *Communication* refers to the extent to which the members of a professional culture stimulate an open communication system focused and sharing and exchange, or focus on a closed system, monitoring and controlling sharing and access to information.
- *Control* refers to the extent to which the members of a professional culture focus on tight systems and procedures or work flexible and adaptive.
- *Conduct* refers to the extent to which the members of a professional culture focus on conventions, putting professional expertise and standards first, or have a pragmatic view to prevail demands of customers.

View on Stakeholder Analysis and Social Learning

As we explained before some incidents seemed to have to do with differences in professional judgment, methodological rigor, and perspective on media use rather than culture. We suggested these incidents typical for rapid appraisal and filming projects. From the literature on RA and social learning we came up with the following dimensions:

- *Participation* indicates the typology of participation. After Pretty (1995: 60) participation ranks from passive participation, participation in information giving, by consultation, for material incentives, functional participation, interactive participation to self-mobilization. Robb (1999) categorizes this dimension as extractive versus empowering the poor.
- *Representativity* indicates the extent to which participants in a stakeholder analysis or rapid appraisal process represents the reality of the issue at stake.
- *Learning versus teaching* after Pretty (1995: 72) refers to the extent to which the outsiders actually listen to the people involved or maintain a preference to teach correct messages. Learning also refers to the extent

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to which learning is seen as an effect for local people or as an effect for researchers, local people, and others involved (Robb, 1999: 67).

- *Mastering* after Pretty (1995: 72) refers to the extent to which the facilitator is still skeptical and naïve versus experienced and motivated. Robb (1999: 67) describes this as the RRA/PLA is "easy and cheap" notion versus it is professional, tools selection, time spent in communities.
- *Intrusion versus engagement* is the extent to which stakeholder analysis activities are assumed to be interventions in itself, resulting from the process and therefore considering the role of outsider, methodology, and impact (expectations raised) versus the consideration of the activities as objective, outside, temporarily, distanced, and non intrusive (Slim, 1993: 147, 151).
- *Reliability*: validity and truth, the academic truth and data-based evidence versus stories and combined data sources, Can the local stakeholder be an expert?
- *Time*: value of time; what is more valuable, time of the stakeholders or of that of the facilitator's. Time also relates to the length and speeds of the process, should it be carried out quickly or is there the sensation of sufficient time available. Roche (1999) recommends thinking about balancing "length and depth of engagement."

View on Filming

Dimensions on view on filming can be defined as follows:

- *Footage versus treatment* refers to the extent to which the filming reality, the actuality is supposed to be sufficiently fascinating to present almost "mere footage" versus the creative treatment of footage, where the audience receives a transformed evidence of reality (Nichols, 2001: 38).
- *Parallel versus popular cinema* (Datta, 2003) refers to commercially based, profit-driven "popular" fairy tale storyline cinema versus realistic and art cinema that is often based on journalistic or literary sources.
- *Hollywood versus Bollywood*. Iyer (1988: 279-330) describes Bollywood or Hindi films in comparison to Hollywood as products of a mass-production system, which combine a love story, a crime melodrama, a musical, and a moral parable in one single film. In comparison with Hollywood films the Hindi films are suggestive (no kissing or bedroom scenes) and excessive—bigger, broader, louder, and longer (two-and-a half hours rather than 90 minutes).
- *Stage actors versus social actors*. Actors who are filmed can be treated like people who just should do what "we want them to do" similar to theatre actors, or in line with ethical notions of documentary making are considered as "social actors" who share with the film crew the story of

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their live without much interference on their daily routines rather then taking their time (Nichols, 2001).

- *Audience approach* refers to the construction by media industries of the audience. The extreme approaches are known as the effects model and the uses and gratifications model (Gill Branston, 2003: 148). The effects model emphasize what media do to the audience while the uses and gratifications model sees the audience as an individual consumer who selects media for particular needs such as diversion and information.

An additional element is the notion that filming requires careful consideration regarding the technicalities in obtaining sufficient quality footage. For example sound recording is done according to a determined style but it also requires proper connections, levels, and other considerations that are undisputable. Another example are issues regarding ambient light. It is almost impossible to do any noon time film shooting. Around that time there are hardly any shadows left. This results in too much cold bluish light and contrasts disappear.

Critical Incidents

In the next couple of paragraphs we will treat seven critical incidents—one before the start of the project, three during the making of the VPA films in 2003, and three incidents that occurred in the field test with the materials in Kerala in 2004. The incidents are taken from our work documents and described along the framework depicted in Table 1. The visible incidents are presented as an introductory extract at the start of each section; the interpretation (emotions) of the people involved and the determinants and notions are elaborated in the text.

Many Assistants, No Sound

In the months preceding the filming activities in Kerala, our Indian counterpart hired a professional filming agency to do the job. During the negotiations with our counterpart and this company we wondered about the huge number of camera assistants and the absence of any sound operators or assistants in the presented budget proposal. Urgent requests from our side remained unanswered and only we reluctantly agreed upon the offer because of time constraints. During our first meeting with our counterpart we challenged our partner for not answering our questions and asked him to explain why so many assistants were needed and no sound was included when we had explicitly asked for it? Our counterpart replied that he had arranged things well and had hired real professionals just as we had asked him to do. Only when we met the full crew we learned that it is quite normal in

India to have many camera assistants and no specific sound operator. The use of natural sound is uncommon; spoken texts are dubbed in the studio and sound effects are added during editing.

This incident occurred before and at the start of the fieldwork in India. We doubted whether our counterpart knew what he was doing and we also wondered what kind of arrangements was being made. Why did he not address our concerns or answer our pretty straightforward questions? We feared a confrontation with an amateur film crew who did not even put "sound" on their offer! Our counterpart was puzzled by our concerns; he had made a major effort to arrange real professionals who told him that sound was no problem and the number of assistants needed was considered normal.

The explanation of this incident can be found in differences in national culture where we challenged our counterpart's seniority and mastership of the situation (power distance). The second explanation has a professional and economic dimension: in contrast to the Netherlands where labor is very expensive, in India skilled and experienced laborers should not waste time and energy on manual labor. A further explanation was found regarding different views on filming and film technique. Once we understood that natural sound recording was uncommon in Kerala, we convinced the film team that natural sound was a requirement for the VPA production. Once they understood the defined film style they managed to adapt.

Preferably a Woman

After filming three interviews with senior male indirect stakeholder the production director decides it is time to film direct stakeholders, preferably a woman. Indian scholars argue that no women are engaged in fisheries. The Dutch team members are not convinced but they do not have sufficient local knowledge to come up with concrete proposals. Indian crewmembers keep quiet. The Dutch propose to give it a try and go out into the community close to the backwaters. Without enthusiasm or conviction this is agreed upon. We meet a lady engaged in clam picking whom we interview the following day on the shore side and while working in the backwaters.

This incident has elements of various determinants or cultural dimensions. From a professional perspective of wanting to use RRA/PLA-like methodology, and for the sake of stakeholder representation in our selection, we needed to engage an appropriate number of primary stakeholders. RRA/PRA is about fieldwork; meeting people at their homes and place of work. Until then, we had only been speaking to male bureaucrats in city environments. Also from a filming perspective, images of bureaucrats in their office do not provide very attractive visual material. Moreover 50% of the population is female and we had not met any female spokesperson yet. The Indian scholars were hesitant and

reluctant to the idea of interviewing someone unknown with whom no fixed arrangement had been established beforehand. It was suggested that we should stick to the original idea of making prior arrangements with interviewees. Since they did not know of any woman engaged in fisheries she probably does not exist. Our proposal to film someone they had never met before was therefore rejected. This relates to the professional culture dimension of control.

Based on our standing experience in rural area projects in various parts of the world we did not accept their arguments as convincing evidence. We were tied to the conviction that direct stakeholders cannot be traced through conventional (academic) networks but can often be met by moving to their communities and places of work. This relates to the RRA/PLA dimension of mastering.
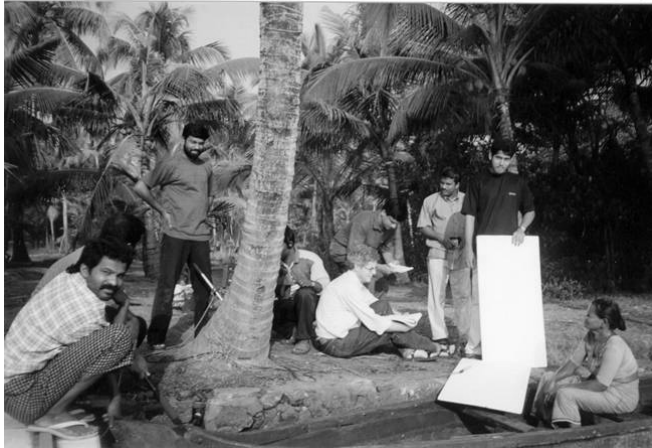
Figure 2: Interviewing the Female Clam Picker

Another argument was brought to the forefront; even if we could find a woman engaged in fisheries she would probably not be willing or be able to give an interview. The project assistants and film crew kept quiet during the discussion; they kept themselves neutral as the seniors engaged in the debate.

In this incident national culture is involved, both power distance and gender issues are at stake. Support staff, probably more knowledgeable of local circumstances and people's behavior, does not contradict the senior staff (power distance). The masculine character of Indian society largely explains why women are classified as not very interesting resource persons while the Dutch feminine culture feels hesitant in case of masculine overrepresentation. There is an additional element of uncertainty avoidance in combination with a specific professional/academic culture; to smoothen our project our Indian counterparts had engaged a large number of potential resource people and had sent out invitations for pre-arranged meetings; an official university letter confirmed all meetings. Changing the scheme would generate embarrassment and hassle and people would have to be compensated for loss of time. A clear methodological (professional) issue is at stake too: the representativeness of the stakeholders

selected for the interviews. Disregarding the women (50% of the coastal population) is not thought of when doing a RRA-like field study. Here mastering the methodology and engagement were the main dimensions where differences were tangible as the Indian academic counterparts at this stage were only starting to learn about RRA methodology. As RRA/PLA-like approaches are very much oriented towards direct engagement with local people and have them express their concerns and issues, the professional culture at many Indian universities is an academic one with a focus on desk research and laboratory tests.

The All-Knowing Translator

A translator is needed to translate our carefully prepared non-directive generative questions since neither of the Dutch observers spoke Malayalam. He also needs to report back on the answers in order to know how to continue. Once interviewees start telling stories they become more enthusiastic, they talk faster, and translation gets harder. At times the only back reporting we get is "that is a very good answer, very interesting." Especially during the first interviews with primary stakeholders we sometimes wondered about the length of the questions asked. Or we would hear our translator mention "Tamil Nadu," which is the neighboring state from where coconut husk is imported, an issue which was not mentioned in the question that was to be translated.

This is an example of a common problem in many projects when researchers do not master the local language.

We had not hired a translator during the production of the VPA, so different members of the team had to take on that role. There were problems; they did not translate, they interpreted. The university scholar thought that the answers given by the local stakeholders were not to the point; he knew better. We were annoyed and disappointed; it seemed that our extensive introduction on RRA/PLA methodology and the explanation as to why it was important to have people tell their own stories had been misunderstood. Our Indian colleagues were confused and perhaps intimidated by our arrogant interpretation of them having poor translation skills. They had translated with the intention to improve the quality of the answers received from those being interviewed; otherwise, wouldn't the students learn the wrong things? They argued that our expectations, with regard to the intellectual capacity for abstraction of our interviewees, were too high.

There is a RRA/PLA dimension here. The interviewee is always right when it comes to telling their own stories. For that, we recorded the interviewee's truth not the truth of the analyst. Our Indian colleagues reluctantly went along, as they preferred to improve the answers that were being given. They would often modify the interviewer's words when the answer given was not in line with the mono disciplinary background of the university scholar. They had not

realized the methodological requirements of working on a VPA. It should be noted that after the incident the Indian colleagues turned out to be quick studies. In one of the following interviews the interviewee was denying the presence of sand-miners in the backwaters, an activity we had filmed the day before. No one batted an eye, however on our way back it turned out to be the talk of the day.

Difference on the way filming was viewed also played a role. VPA interviews are made up of rather raw footage as compared to documentaries based on elaborate treatments or interviews with an analyst telling the "objective truth." In a VPA interview one person is being portrayed and it is his or her story that is being told.

One thing does stand out after everything that we went through working on the VPAs. Translation is a hard job. If you happen to come across a good translator, hold on to him tight! Speaking figuratively, of course.

The Night Fisher

> We come across a man who fishes for shrimp at night using a casting net while on scouting location in Cherai. Both his profession and the peculiar roadside/pond side location called for a VPA interview. However, the Indian coordinator decided that "we are not going to film the shrimp fisher late in the evening because we will have problems with the light." After insistence from the Dutch director that the interview seems to match established criteria for stakeholders to include, and upon confirmation of the Indian associate director that he is the one to take decisions on lighting issues, we agree to come back. The director and associate director want to use the last glimpse of daylight for an introductory shot upon arrival that night. It is then decided that "there is nobody" and the university team goes out for tea. The film crew stays behind and prepares the set. Once the fisherman arrived, we filmed a very touching and meaningful interview.

"The night fisher" incident occurred during the first days of filming. Group dynamics might have played a role at this stage as this incident has to do with control and a clash of national and professional cultures. The authority of the female director is overruled when the Indian coordinator decides this is not the right moment and the lighting is all wrong. The director, annoyed by this interference in film matters, tries to counter the coordinator by methodological rigor and by seeking support from her film colleagues. The two subteams separate upon arrival. At least no one loses face and production can continue.
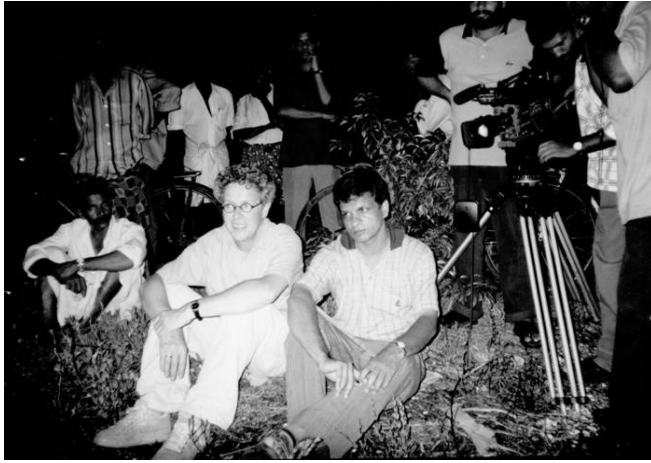
Figure 3: Interviewing the Night Fisher

An important element here is masculinity; it being important for the Indian coordinator to be recognized as being in charge even when it is not his domain. An element of uncertainty avoidance might be there too since filming along a congested road in the dark is not a very common working environment for a scientist. Here we also connect to professional dimensions as control, conduct, and identity. The stakeholder dimension of time also plays its role, filming a night fisher will definitely take place after office working hours. Representativity is another determining element as the night fisher exemplifies a bias for working during office hours (9 to 5) that we had almost overlooked during the stakeholder selection. We did not realize the divergence between the working hours of the production team as opposed to working hours of stakeholders engaged in fisheries. The factor identity played along when calling for the Indian co-director for support on lighting issues. The co-director was trapped. The joined film identity with the female director conflicted with the power distance of the Indian coordinator. His film identity prevailed when he indicated that lighting issues were to be tackled by the film crew and not be a constraint in this case.

Finally, as it can be seen here from the story, the footage—the nice picture, the peculiar location of these fishing activities in ponds alongside a congested road—triggered the film team on doing location scouting in the first place. Location scouting is a typical film thing that analysts would not go for except for the stakeholders. Location scouting in this project was related directly to the introductory documentary and not to the RRA/PLA interviews and stakeholder selections. In this case the images seemed to coincide with relevant groups of stakeholders often neglected in official studies as their activities are done after office hours.

The fourth group's presentation, on their interview with Gracy, culminated with the expression that "Gracy did not have any relevance to our problem" and "she was a perfect actress and deserves an award." The group members' 'visual solution appraisal' and their criticism on the fishermen folk were formulated, as "a change of mindset is needed." The presenter added, "The answers the interviewee has given are not to the point and we used discussion within the group to determine her problem." We felt a need to defend Gracy. Our female facilitator gave feedback by asking "If Gracy was a good actor, who then was directing her?" The presenter seemed confused noticing that a lady was rebuffing him, but knew not how to react. He shifted to the front of his chair and started speaking in a loud voice. She told him that she was perfectly able to hear him and asked him to sit back. The ladies in his group smiled when the spokesman was rebuffed. Our male facilitator added to the criticism by stressing they were to analyze the situation and not to go looking for answers to a problem that they did not know about yet. Moreover, it seemed they were only looking for confirmation of their own preconceived ideas. Should Gracy not know best what her problems are? A Forestry Department executive, working with indigenous people, fully supported our analysis of social class biases and methodological flaws. The spokesman for the group then started talking loud to his subgroup members and announced he had to go to the bathroom. He never came back.

This incident sprouts from a pilot project we did in 2004. Four two-day workshops were held to test the impact of the VPA with stakeholder groups. Munnar was the second workshop.

There was a clear preference in the workshops to choose informants that we categorized as "secondary stakeholders"—people professionally involved with the problems of the coastal zone (See Table 1). Especially with higher educated and higher social strata people this bias seemed stronger; the most conservative in this respect were the group of principals in Munnar. Participants in the Munnar workshop were mostly authoritative scientists; registrars, school principals, and readers of various schools of engineering. Several were connected to CUSAT's National Service Scheme (NSS). NSS sends volunteer students to work with grass-roots level organizations.

There is a lot of emotion in this incident: body language expresses clear anguish, supported by loud voices and confirming smiles. We also felt offended on behalf of an interviewee. National cultures are a determining factor. The remarks from the Western female facilitator are seen as disrespectful and undermining the authority of the older, male, high-ranking official who acted as a spokesman. Moreover there is a huge power distance and knowledge distance between the university scholar and the poor illiterate Gracy in the interview, whose house was washed away by the sea.

The start of the incident was a methodological issue. As was indicated by the facilitators, the choice of respondents seemed highly biased. These participants seemed to prefer talking to people who are like themselves (See Table 2 for the choice of respondents). The criticism was interpreted as an offense as they were university experts who know what the problems are. Unfortunately this one participant was not able to recognize his expert bias; the female members of his group did. Issues of audience approach do play a role as well. Formally we will support the idea that an audience is free in its interpretation and "usage" of the films. However we felt that we neglected Gracy when we did not speak up on her behalf.

Q	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	R
12			X																					
11			X															X						
10			X									X						X						
9			X									X						X						
8			X						X	X		X						X						
7			X						X	X		X						X						
6	X		X						X	X	X	X						X						
5	X		X						X	X	X	X						X						
4	X	X	X						X	X	X	X						X		X				
3	X	X	X					X		X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		X		
2	X	X	X			X		X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X		
1	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	R

Table 2: Frequency of Choices per Resource Person in the Kerala Workshop Series
Notes: (N = 21 groups; R = respondent; Q = frequency of choice)
Primary stakeholders: white; secondary stakeholders: gray highlight

Critical Debate

Contrary to the other workshops, the workshop in Panavally Panchayat is conducted in Malayalam. Dutch staff members cannot follow this local language but read from the reassuring smiles of the Indian facilitators that the workshop is going fine. The Dutch facilitators observe and depend on their Indian colleagues and others who speak English and translate every now and then. The Dutch notice similar patterns from other workshops occur but they are unable to act upon their observations.

Most participants are in some way or another politicians or elected representatives of grass-root organizations stirring a lot of boisterous (political?) debate. It is not clear to the Dutch if their tone of voice is intended to be negative or just a normal way to discuss things. One outspoken participant complains that the interviewees are biased and do not speak the truth. This comes to us as a shock. We do not understand if the critical remarks made refer to the VPA methodology or to something else. The accusation is countered by explaining that in our methodology interviewees are allowed to tell their own story. Much to our surprise this workshop ranked higher (the evaluation is more positive) than those of the preceding workshops according to the written evaluations we received after the event.

Figure 4: Critical Debate at Panavally Panchayat

The *"critical debate"* incident is a very positive experience. Dutch staff members see their Indian colleagues work hard and see workshop participants engage in lively debates. Now and then we get reassuring smiles and remarks from Indian colleagues, "we're doing great, they are all heavily engaged!" We are relieved; the VPA works with local grass-root stakeholders. Obviously the method can be used and facilitated successfully by others and the investment in dubbing the English language interviews into Malayalam and in translating the workbooks does pay off. However, the Dutch staff members feel superfluous and useless as they are only participating as observers, not active participants. They are puzzled by the fierce and emotional debates, especially with male participants arguing and gesticulating loudly. We are accused of having filmed stakeholders who are biased by not giving right and objective information.

Our Indian colleagues are in control and doing fine. They are managing the process. They divide tasks, distribute interviews, debrief groups after their interviews, and stimulate them to present and discuss their analyses. They see local politicians hold their rhetoric underlining their points with gestures and loud voices as it is customary in Kerala.

The Westerners' confusion has to do partly with language proficiency. Malayalam, one of the oldest Dravidian languages, is complex and has tones, sounds, and rhythms that largely differ from Latin and Nordic tongues. We would have needed instant translations in order to be able to understand the locals. We cannot rely solely on the interpretation of events as given by the translators. Our experiences with bad and biased translators during fieldwork make this action necessary.

The complaint by the outspoken participant that the interviewees are biased comes as a surprise. There is a clear tension here between expectations about classical teaching (the truth) and social learning (about other people's truths) in a VPA/RRA approach. There is also a tension in professional culture; the

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fieldwork having a less intrusive character; the analysts being distanced outsiders looking through camera lenses, the actual workshops with direct confrontation between opinions are about actual physical engagement and creating agency as described by Long (1989) and Leeuwis (2004).

A Good Problem that Came Too Late

We challenged the participants to look beyond the known, to widen their scope, to look at interrelated issues and remember the long-term perspective with a story about problems: "Absence of drinking water is only a problem when others do not want to share their water or don't allow me to drink. But why does my neighbor not want to share her water with me? Is it because I did not take care of her child when she asked me to last week, or maybe because our parents were quarrelling over something and we were told to keep apart? Those are real problems: not wanting to share scarce resources for other reasons than just scarcity. A problem becomes a real problem when people are involved."

One man's reaction. "Yes. You are right, we keep the safe side; we know what the problems are but we cannot address them properly. It is politics; we live in Vipeen, some 8 kms it is to the Periar River, a major source of fresh water. We know how to lay pipes, we know how to solve the problem, but still we don't have drinking water and lorries are coming to bring fresh water. It is not technical but when I speak out, I will be transferred again as it has happened four times before and I might lose my job and the family will be hurt. Here I can speak about it but not outside and we all know this is happening…

The final incident that we will present in this paper occurred during the fourth workshop with a lot of field workers present from the Ministry of Fisheries. At the end of the first day most groups met with three of the filmed stakeholders. We interrupted the meeting and confronted them for their self-serving choice of respondents—only people like themselves, educated outsiders and "helpers," not the actual grass-root people who were actually experiencing the problem. The Fisheries people seemed to have the same expert bias as the principals of the Munnar workshop, but that was not the case. They denied they were neglecting grass-root people as they worked with fishermen and women's organizations in their daily jobs. We were not satisfied with this explanation and challenged them further. Our example, "the problem is not the empty glass, but that no one wants to fill it" hit home. There was an emotional and strong reaction from one man (See Above), which was confirmed by others present. He spoke truth and a kind of collective indignation that could be felt among all present. Room was created to make the problem analysis more concise and to indicate the driving forces upholding progress by identifying corruption and political arbitrariness. The next day all groups interviewed the primary stakeholders. Their analyses and plans of action were more political in character

and more action-oriented than those from previous workshops. We were puzzled. Why did they not address corruption and politics from the very beginning?

National culture may explain why fundamental societal problems were not addressed from the start. The large power distance in India makes it hard to exercise criticism; moreover as the incident shows, you might be punished for exercising criticism against those in power. Collectivism—belonging to a specific social group—is also strong in Indian society as a reflection of the officially discarded ancient caste system, which supports the status quo and discourages upward social mobility. Relationship and identity as elements in the Fisheries department's professional culture contribute to the explanation of their behavior and choices made during the workshop. Their reference to their daily work with local stakeholders is an indication for that and partly explains why they stick to politically acceptable non-contentious issues. The RRA/PLA characteristics of intrusion and engagement are another factor in play. The training here comes to a critical point when participants take the step to engage actively in the problematic situation they have been analyzing. The facilitators' interference brought about the change from being observing outsiders to engagement; they identified themselves with the RRA/PLA outside analysts, getting their motivation from the methodology and their professional perspective on social learning processes. In their respective roles facilitators and participants together created agency—the will and motivation for change.

Discussion

The Framework

The framework was helpful with unraveling and giving meaning to the critical incidents and giving us clues how to handle in comparable situations according to four perspectives—national, professional, stakeholder analysis, and social learning. By formulating the incident it induces the narrative under-standing of the issue at stake. Just like in a theater performance, the events and roles start to unfold leading inevitably to friction and clashes during the First Act—something already expected by the careful observer. In the Second Act, these roles interpreted by the actors involved according to their (subjective) view and in line with their (cultural) notions and convictions. The Third Act tries to analyze the incident more precisely for its determinants and notions. The four perspectives are complex though helpful as they underline that differences in national cultures are prominent but other differences need consideration to be precise in judgment.

A great advantage of the framework is that it helps to unravel the incident; it forces to distinguish between facts, the interpretations, and determinants. This unraveling lowers the emotion attached to the incident and may present ways to cope with the incident and/or suggest more fruitful ways for cooperation and

continuation of the project. The incident is a learning opportunity for all involved in adapting to circumstances.

The framework gives meaning to the incidents described and the definitions of national and professional cultures and their dimensions come from theoretical sources, but the dimensions of "RRA/PLA methodology" and "View on filming" can be categorized as eclectic elaborations using the authors' personal libraries or otherwise notions prominent in the project. Our argument to distinguish between them and add them to the framework has to do with the methodological requirements of RRA/PLA and the specific professional cultural and technological requirements of film making, which distinguishes these activities from more general cultural notions. We acknowledge the framework in its current form and its predecessor that we used during the project as a tool we felt operational in an international and intercultural project. In our project understanding the "space of intercultural communication" did serve as a tool for risk management. For other projects too it might enhance the anticipation of cultural-determined frictions and incongruencies and may lead to understanding for all involved what is behind incidents and frictions and to better understand expectations and behavior. However, as the framework focuses on the analysis of critical incidents, it fails to shed a light on specific factors leading to success that can be extracted from the most positive experiences inside the space of intercultural communication.

Choose Your Battle

The critical incidents elaborated above exemplify the cultural disparities and dynamic frictions we experienced in our space of intercultural communication. Our advantage was the determination of both the Indian and Dutch partners to make the project a success and by realizing beforehand that this goal would not be attained without arguments, irritations, and debates. Moreover, the field work and field test were not considered to be just projects, they were also considered to be a process in which interpersonal relationships and mutual respect played an important role. Both sides struggled at times with frustrations and anxieties as it can be gleamed from the critical incidents, but the joint determination to keep communicating kept the project on track. Next to this, in intercultural cooperation, one has to respect core values and when they clash with own values find a way to cope with the difference.

To address this notion we applied a strategy we call the "choose your battle approach." This strategy is based on the clear principle that everyone involved wanted to achieve the final goal of making available the VPA set towards its intended audience. Even though the individual motivation for achievement of this objective may have differed, finalizing the production has never been a question. This explicit focus on the final goals allows giving up other issues by categorizing them as secondary to the ultimate goal.

A specific example for "choose your battle" was the fast realization that the (Dutch) project director was the only female amongst a large group of men. It

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would lead to instances of "losing face" or other delicate issues for the men involved causing stress towards the project director. It was quickly decided to delegate financial matters, as much as possible, to the Dutch and Indian males highest in rank or position within the VPA project. In that respect, gender issues were made acquiescent to the issue of representation and public participation—to the content and methodology of the VPA, not the process of making it. A comparable conscious step was taken during the field test of the finalized product, at the start of the Munnar workshop where, after rising tensions about the program, the main facilitation task was transferred to a male facilitator.

There were similar clash-evasive actions from the Indian side that could also be noticed. For instance the female director traveled with the film crew in their van instead of traveling inside the university board vehicle. This pragmatic approach of reframing the situation can also be explained as the conviction that there was more to win than to loose by giving in.

The above examples had to do with gender and status or power distance. It clearly showed, at the start of the filming exercise, when budget issues had to be decided upon and at the start of the Munnar workshops when decisions were made on the workshop's organization. Budgetary decisions were delegated to the Dutch male project partner even though the filming budget was the prime responsibility and had been arranged by the Dutch female director. Our interpretation is that financial matters were a male thing, and had to do with control and power. The Indian host and organizer in the Munnar incident overruled the female director and workshop facilitator when he changed the program to allow high-ranking officials to see the "fun" introduction movie, thereby undermining the educational sequence of the workshop. Here status (high power distance) prevailed, leading to the decision of the female director to step back and have her male companion take the lead and not to claim the agreed positions. The explanation for both incidents can be found in the national cultural differences between India/Kerala and the Netherlands especially with respect to masculinity/femininity in combination with a large power distance. According to Hofstede (1991: 87) the Netherlands along with the Nordic countries score (very) low on both axes while India scores relatively high in these aspects. The above incidents seem to confirm Hofstede's findings; the gap seemed unbridgeable and we decided to avoid further gender issues at these occasions.

As indicated and expressed in the "preferably a woman" incident, gender issues played an important role on the discussions onVPA methodology and representativity of stakeholders. Gender sensitivity is important for adult learning and rural development (FAO, 2001) and it could not be ignored, nor withheld from our students. Here the battle was on and won as this conflict was in the domain of professional culture and research methodology and did not interfere directly with national culture, thus allowing for change and adaptation of ideas. The above methodological arguments were convincing for all participants.

Representativity, especially with respect to presence of primary stakeholders in our interviews and later in the selected interviews of participants, was a major methodological/professional concern. A convincing argument, from a professional and cultural point of view was giving students the opportunity to meet people they would usually not get to meet in order to learn about the stakeholders' issues and concerns. Here professional culture and methodological rigor prevailed over national culture as power and class distances were neglected and considerable risks were taken to engage with the lower class strata of the Indian society.

Academic Professionalism versus Film Professionalism

At times differences in professional cultures are more important than differences in national cultures. In several of the incidents described it showed that film professionalism—the orientation at the concrete production of visuals, the clear hierarchy, responsibilities and roles within the film team—gave the team the room to go untrodden paths; to film on board of canoes, on roadside locations, on beaches, and in the dark. Their easiness with adapting to local circumstances contrasted with the more conservative and bureaucratic attitudes of the Indian scientists. The professional characteristics of being serviceable towards the product made that the film crew members always put the image or the person being interviewed as the center of attention. Their rigid division of roles and responsibilities helped them to produce regarding the circumstances. In contrast, the participating Indian scientists were more content-oriented and less accustomed to field work circumstances. They minded having regular people, and not specialists, stand as the center of attention especially during the first week of field work. Film team members, from their more serviceable perspective, handled uncertainty in a pragmatic way. They resolved technical problems on the spot, whereas the scientists tried to evade uncertainty and tried to arrange things from their office and then tried to stick to fixed schedules, appointments, and pre-arranged meetings.

Academic Truth versus Stakeholders Stories

The issue of RRA professionalism and the issue of academic truth versus stake-holders'stories emerge from the critical incidents. The Indian counterparts had never worked before with RRA/PLA methodologies at the start of the VPA filming; they were academics mainly involved in technical desk and laboratory research. The idea of different truths, as narrated by the different stakeholders, was confusing to them. It was only after a while of work that they started to understand the charm of recording different perceptions on the same issue. In the example of the "knowing translator" the argument is made that students using the VPA should get the right story, while the essence of the VPA method is the fact that there is no one right story, but many stories of which a common base of knowledge should be distilled.

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As mentioned before representativity of the stakeholders interviewed in order to allow our students to make a fair choice out of a representative set of stakeholders was a RRA requirement that overruled even national and academic culture. The rigor of the method even convinced our Indian counterparts, who after initial doubts accepted the principle of representativity. Nevertheless, to many Indian scientists stakeholder truth is less true than academic truth as became very clear in the Munnar incident. Here power distance and, to a lesser extent, masculinity are major national culture factors opposing RRA professionalism.

Conclusions

We described and analyzed seven critical incidents out of the 22 we listed in our project documentation. From these seven incidents, and corroborated by the other incidents, a couple of general characteristics or trends in the cooperation between Dutch analysts, Indian film makers, Indian scientists, and the workshop participants were uncovered.

The framework presented in this paper helps to understand the dynamic frictions that can occur in complex projects such as theVPA. It shows that national cultures do not always dominate, as at times professional cultures and professional requirements do prevail. It can even be argued that professional cultures should receive the most attention, as they are likely to be influenced or changed as compared to dimensions of national culture. Considering an international project as a space of intercultural communication helps to anticipate constraints and frictions and to devise coping strategies. To make this consideration operational it should be improved with time and procedures for (informal) debriefings and sharing experiences.

When focusing on national cultures, power distance and masculinity/femininity are dominant factors in the relationship between Dutch and Indian partners. These factors impeded on the way the VPA methodology was being executed. The methodological transfer was hindered by these elements of national culture and was reinforced by uncertainty avoidance and elements of the professional culture of the scientist involved in the project and/or engaged in the workshops. Group identity and control hindered the actual engagement of the professionals in our workshops; the latter did not occur in the workshops with students and grass-roots stakeholders. The stalemate was broken in the fisheries workshop.

National culture is also a major factor, but professional cultures can be more divergent than national cultures as can be seen from several incidents where the all-Indian film team clashed with the team of Indian scientists. The (international) film team's motivation, their focus on delivering a good quality product, and their adaptivity to continuously changing circumstances stands out against the uncertainty avoidance of the Indian scientists. This stands in a

surprising contrast when compared to the crew member's focus on control when it comes to film technicalities, when camera, sound and light are required to work in full accordance. In this respect the professional culture of the film team seems to have the character of a dominant international (sub) culture.

The "choose your battle" approach worked as a condition for harmony in our space of intercultural communication. At the same time one should be aware that it is a lose-win strategy and implies that there should be a future gain to offset the loss. What stands out was the friendship and respect amongst the various team members. Working on this paper is therefore a tribute to the entire VPA team as bringing the project to a successful end is maybe not so much a miracle but basically an issue of camaraderie and dedication from all members involved.

Epilogue

Did we make the invisible visible? We did so in making the VPA and showing Keralites other Keralites they had never met before. We did so for our students who went on a simulated mission to India and met people they could not meet at their schools. We did it for ourselves as we showed in this paper what cultural and professional factors shape international cooperation projects. We hope we did it for you by showing you how these factors can be understood and managed to bring a project to success.

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5. Embedded Filming for Social Change: Learning about HIV/AIDS and Rural Development Professionalism

Abstract

Rural Development Professionals (RDPs) are key actors in processes of social change for people living with HIV/AIDS in rural areas. This article reports on the filming of a series of workshops and courses for RDPs in Ghana, India, Tanzania and Zambia. In this article the filming and the films are analyzed as tools for learning and social change for different audiences. Analyzing the production and consumption processes shows the inter-connectedness of the filming and learning during the courses. The results indicate that the films contribute to improved rural development professionalism in the context of HIV/AIDS.

Introduction

Over the past decades, 'Communication for Social Change' has become an established field of expertise in development cooperation (see, for instance, Gumucio-Dragon and Tufte, 2006 for an anthology of this field). Mainstreaming communication for development is now on the agenda of many organizations, including the World Bank and the FAO. The first World Congress on Communication for Development (WCCD), which was organized in Rome, Italy, in October 2006, is an example of this mainstreaming process. An increasing number of field studies discuss and develop the roles that communication can play in processes of social change. The field is broad and incorporates the study of media such as community radio, local television and new ICTs including the internet, PDAs and GSMs, but also considers group communications, stakeholder negotiations, extension services and processes of social learning. Within the field of communication for social change, the potential of film/video for learning in a development context has hardly been discussed in academic circles. Emerging fields that studies and uses film/video in a development context is participatory video (see, for instance, Braden and Huong, 1998, White, 2003, Lunch and Lunch, 2006 and CTA, 2006) and video for advocacy (see, for instance, Gregory et al., 2005). Participatory video is often described as handing the camera over to the people. It is perceived as a filming technique to give people a voice and is considered an empowering process because it visualizes the local problems of marginalized people. Video for advocacy, on the other hand, is about integrating video in advocacy efforts "to achieve heightened visibility or impact in your campaign" (Cadwell, 2005:3). The above examples indicate that the various definitions used to describe film for social change have overlapping and contrasting definitions as the term film comprises an array of meanings. Film can refer to the process of filming; to the film itself as an end-product that, after editing, reaches various intended or unintended audiences; and to 'footage' as an input for a continuous learning process.

'Film for social change' as discussed in this article acknowledges the multifaceted use of the term film and aims to position the study in relation to current definitions of film. We therefore define 'film (or video) for social change' as film (video) production or consumption that deliberately aims at achieving social change. In the context of this definition, this article focuses both on exploring the production of films that aim to capture learning processes and on the learning processes that occur when various audiences, including the participants of the filmed learning process, watch and discuss the film as end-product.

The use of films as a strategy for inducing social learning as discussed in this article is studied in the context of a series of 5 films on AIDS and rural development professionalism produced from 2002 to 2007. This series originated from a media workshop at Larenstein University of Professional Education in the Netherlands in 1999. In the media workshop adult African

students produced An Exciting Story[1], a short (3'27'') AIDS prevention film. Even before its release, the film caused a dispute in which staff and students involved in the film's making were accused of pornography and sexual activities in the classroom. When the film opened, the audience was almost disappointed to see only half a naked leg and a thumb covered with a condom representing the sexual relation of the two students acting as a couple in the film. The student makers of the film interpreted the rumors and gossips both as a sign of the power of suggestion and as a sign of serious discomfort among their peers and the university staff at being confronted with the existence and impact of the AIDS epidemic, At the time of the film's release in 2001, the East African students even hesitated to publish the results of their combined thesis under their own name, and they requested their supervisor to be first author.[2]

Although the series initially caused discomfort and debate, the film production and the joint thesis project ignited a series of activities on AIDS and rural development professionalism. In this context, films and 'visual learning' were thought to support learning for social change as it led to the start of the Larenstein and Wageningen Alumni Professional Network on AIDS and Rural Development (LAPNARD) (Witteveen et al., 2001; see also www.lapnard.com). Because working on a joint film production lay at the origin of the LAPNARD network, the various meetings of LAPNARD and its refresher courses have been filmed since the organization's inception. From 2002 to 2007, five films were produced based on LAPNARD network meetings in Tanzania and Zambia and on refresher courses in India, Ghana and Tanzania (see Box 1 and Appendix A for short descriptions of the films). The films visualize issues related to HIV/AIDS and rural professionalism as they report on learning processes of a group of Rural Development Professionals (RDPs) who meet for a fortnight to exchange experiences, to discuss professional constraints and challenges, and to discuss how to proceed. All the films portray different socio-economic aspects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic as it unfolds in Africa and Asia. In addition to the professional networking aspect, each of the meetings has a different theme such as farming systems and AIDS impact assessment, orphans and vulnerable children, AIDS in rural Asia, and AIDS in rural West Africa. The films are done on location at the course venues and during fieldwork with different film crews. They are produced with limited, though increasing budgets, and are all co-directed by Loes Witteveen.

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[1] Larenstein University of Professional Education (1999). *An Exciting Story: Care for You is Care for Me* (VHS, DVD), Deventer, The Netherlands.
[2] Witteveen, L.M. (ed.) (2001). *HIV/AIDS Prevention and Rural Development Professionalism. Exploring Our Responsibility*, Larenstein working paper series nr. 2, Larenstein University of Professional Education, Velp, The Netherlands.

Box 1: Descriptions of the Five Films on HIV/AIDS and Rural Development
Professionalism in Africa and Asia

After the shooting stage, each film's editing and post production stage took from 3 to 12 months before the film was released. Copies of the film were distributed to all participants of the filmed courses and meetings, as well as to related institutes and organizations. Because all of the film's recipients received 3–5 copies each for further distribution, the producers only partially knew about the distribution, which was basically left to the participants. After this organized

distribution, the film was sent on request and free of charge to organizations that were able to justify the future use of the film.

The aim of the films is to provide strategic and informative learning tools for RDPs and related institutions by visualizing the impact of HIV/AIDS on the livelihood of RDP clients. This is primarily done by portraying linkages between HIV/AIDS issues and rural development professionalism and by showing the perspective of RDPs towards HIV/AIDS consequences on their profession. The films present stakeholder opinions, current debates and social learning processes.

Based on incidental and spontaneous feedback, the notion grew that the films carried the potential of a specific learning impact that was hardly articulated when the series' production was started. This article reports on a study that we undertook to reconstruct the series' production process and to explore the impact of its consumption.

This article aims to contribute to the 'video/film for development' debate by providing insights into the series' production conditions and its learning impact. Finally, the article seeks to sharpen the contribution that these films make to the fight against HIV/AIDS in rural communities.

For the presented study, we reconstructed the various stages of the filming process. We compiled project proposals, terms of reference, treatments and storyboards, take lists, footage transcripts, editing notes and other reports, diary notes and other documents that gave insight into the production. Audience feedback was found from email archives, LAPNARD documents and elsewhere. This 'reconstruction' enabled us to compare the pre-production process, the filming, the editing, the distribution and the impact of the five films. As the title of this article indicates, we have come to realize that the combined effort of course facilitation and filming at the same time has been our strategy to cope with the complexity of social learning in the context of HIV/AIDS and rural development professionalism. The very nature of 'embedded' filming has allowed us to realize direct learning for the films' participants and facilitators and has mediated learning in a later stage for a variety of audiences.

Filming Rural Development Professionalism

Rural Development Professionalism and AIDS

Rural Development Professionals (RDPs) play an essential role in social change processes. It is their mandate to be involved in communication processes that lead to sustainable development. Their learning and the learning of their professional organizations in the context of HIV/AIDS are important. By recognizing vulnerable livelihoods and the need for mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS, RDPs aim to achieve social change among the rural populations living with HIV/AIDS. Currently, quite a large part of the global attention for the HIV/AIDS epidemic focuses on treatment, care and prevention. However, as

the Task Force on HIV/AIDS states, "Prevention and care programs will fail if they ignore the underlying determinants of the epidemic: poverty, gender inequality, and social dislocation" (Task Force HIV/AIDS, 2005:9). Because RDPs who work daily with the underlying determinants of HIV/AIDS, the focus of this article is on the learning processes of these RDPs in relation to poverty, gender inequality and social dislocation in relation to HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS is no longer seen as just a health problem. It is now recognized as an overall development problem. Although this recognition seems to be widely accepted in policy circles, RDPs in Africa and Asia do not seem to be prepared for dealing with the AIDS epidemic. Sub-Saharan Africa and India, in particular, are two priority areas in the world where RDPs must learn how to deal with the consequences of HIV/AIDS. RDPs need to deal with specific problems such as sectoral integration, stigmatization of affected households, gender issues and new emerging client groups, i.e., people living with HIV/AIDS and orphans and vulnerable children. Livelihoods are increasingly vulnerable and fundamentally eroded through changes in different capitals (human, social, natural, physical, financial) and new strategies to secure income and food security need to be developed. (see, for example, Zambia Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, 2005a, Zambia Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, 2005b and Müller, 2004).

In addition to knowledge, RDPs lack adequate competencies that are related to social sensitivity and communication skills. A study by Brinkman and Westendorp conducted among RDPs in Zambia concluded that the pandemic requires a shift from technical competencies to more social competencies with regard to counseling and communication, and lobbying and networking (Brinkman and Westendorp, 2005). This learning process is of core relevance to RDPs and their organizations as they are the people working in organizations that are in daily contact with rural populations. RDPs have the power and the mandate to contribute to social change.

Learning Strategies in the Context of AIDS and Rural Development Professionalism

The learning strategy of the LAPNARD network meetings and the VHL/WU alumni refresher courses is based on principles of experiential, social and collective learning. These strategies have been chosen because the issue of AIDS and rural development is not primarily about new content, but about new forms of professionalism. This is also in keeping with Pretty and Chambers (2000) who underline a need for the new assumption "of multiple realities that are socially constructed". Experiential learning is, following Wildemeersch, defined here as "learning taking place in groups, communities, networks and social systems that operate in new, unexpected, uncertain and unpredictable circumstances; it is directed at the solution of unexpected context problems and it is characterized by an optimal use of the problem-solving capacity which is available within this group or community (Wildemeersch, 1995:33). The

learning within these systems is basically experiential and can therefore be characterised as learning by doing" (Wildemeersch, 2007:100). In this context, experience is understood as the conscious realization of a particular event and is keeping with the idea of experience as observation and visualizing phenomena (Leeuwis, 240:149, following Kolb, 1984). Consequently, the facilitation of experiential learning aims at creating an environment conducive to articulating and providing//sharing experiences and facilitating reflection, re-conceptua-lization and documentation. Box 2 gives the general overview of the learning process as it has developed over time.

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(1) Setting the scene
    a) Getting acquainted & introduction
    b) Scoping: defining the issue at stake
    c) Defining mandates & common principles
(2) The state of the art – primary experiences
    a) Articulation or recalling experiences
       Country or sector presentations by participants
    b) Actual experiences
       Guest speakers
       Field visits and/or rapid appraisal
(3) Reflection and reporting
(4) Discussing future plans
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Box 2: General Overview of the Refresher Course A&RD

As such, the curriculum tries to articulate the four dimensions that Wildemeersch distinguishes in a strategy of social experiential learning: action, reflection, communication and negotiation (Wildemeersch, 2007). The facili-tation aims at creating spaces in which these dimensions can take shape. To ensure local ownership and embedding, staff members of Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Science and Wageningen University in collaboration with alumni/colleagues in the countries where the events take place coordinate preparations. The local coordinators preferably represent different local institutions such as ministries of agriculture, producer organizations, NGOs and agricultural universities or colleges. Twenty to twenty-five participants are selected based on criteria such as an even distribution of countries, disciplines and organizations, a fair gender distribution, and diverse experience with HIV/AIDS. The motivations that the participants express in their applications are also considered.

RDP learning in the context of HIV/AIDS incorporates developing sensitivity to the presence of the epidemic and the associated stigmatizations and vulnerabilities. However, the learning goes further than that. It also relates to being able to deal with the people infected or affected and the consequences to livelihood and at the professional level. RDP learning also tries to teach its participants to develop and implement strategies that fit the new situations and emerging client groups. These consequences are always evolutionary and not revolutionary because of the character of the disease.

An example of learning in the film When the Beat of the Drum Changes, the Steps Will Follow is when a Beninese participant expresses "I was touched", as he describes his experience in Ghana. In this way the participant's description connects to Kolb's 'experiential learning' (Kolb, 1984) in which learning resulting from reflection on concrete (emotional) experiences is emphasized. With social learning, the concrete experience is of a social nature. A different remark from the participant in another take expresses reflection as he says "when I compare Ghana with my country". Following Vermunt (1996), these kinds of expressions can also be categorized as affective processing activities in learning and cognitive processing activities in learning, respectively. Another learning example comes from a Ghanaian participant. His remark on the quality of interviews realized during a fieldtrip illustrates reflective and triple loop learning (learning about underlying values and norms that ground actions and assumptions):

I had an experience in a small group and basically people find it very difficult to ask questions and that is because people are not sure what type of questions to ask because they do not know what type of questions can create a difficult situation particularly for a person who is affected.
(Ghanaian Participant, female, Ghana Refresher Course)

The stage of Kolb's learning cycle 'action' is exemplified by the final statement in Tamaso ma Jyothir Gamaya when a Nepali participant says:

Before coming to attend this course I had only one objective, to attend the course. At that time I had no idea or any other thought about what after the training. But today I feel that this is not the closing of the course, this is the entry of our program. Now I understand the relationship between HIV/AIDS and our profession, the rural development profession. So we have a big responsibility.
(Nepali Participant, male, India Refresher Course)

In the same film a Nepali participant elaborates on her experience when interviewing an HIV-positive woman:

For me from the experience side, as a Rural Development Professional it is an opportunity to learn how the people are suffering, and how the people are feeling and how other people are behaving to them, but for her, I think I did something wrong to her like this because when I asked her about her livelihood and some other things she started to cry.
(Nepali Participant, female, India Refresher Course)

This remark indicates a particular advantage of using film where it captures delicate stories, which, after editing, have the advantage of repeated observation

without constantly bothering the informant. The participants' awareness of the interview's repeated use justifies and motivates their actions, and all participants realize the re-use potential of every interview. This motivates them to prepare and to realize an interview in 'the right way'. Moreover, their professional ethics of fieldwork seem to be sharpened in the context of HIV/AIDS. Whereas, for instance, talking about the harvest may not directly be an issue of life and death, HIV/AIDS strongly connotes this. This justifies elements of collective learning as the agricultural sector needs to learn collectively about how to deal with HIV/AIDS. Group or collective learning is different from the sum of the individual, psychological learning by group members (see, for instance, Holford et al., 2001:44) because it can change group, community or sector characteristics. Individual learning on the other hand only changes that individual. In short, collective learning can change the group's shared social and cultural aspects.

This series of films contributes to the collective learning of the agricultural sector by portraying the professional context and challenges of the RDPs rather than employing an often used negative perspective of RDP clientele as 'suffering people in need'. The films portray the RDPs as committed to their search to explore and to analyze the issues at stake in order to formulate guidelines for further action. The films underline the professional responsibilities of RDPs to act in the given situation by discussing their mandate, reach and activities. The films show that the participants involved critically review the policies and principles that guide their work. They thus show that the RDPs are not in search of clear-cut solutions or technological innovations, but aim to create an environment conducive to optimizing their efforts. Consequently, the films do not always have a format that is accessible to other viewers than the primary audience as the films are to be understood in the wider setting of rural development professionalism. Some audiences may be disappointed to notice that they are required to be engaged with the narrative to come to any kind of conclusion. The narrative is sometimes implicit or contextual and is not as ready for consumption as a Discovery Channel documentary where The Other is depicted with a glimpse of sensation to popularize the documentary and to cater to audience preferences (Foster, 1997:242). To keep the film as unsensationalized as possible we have deliberately chosen not to do a voice over because we want the edited footage to reveal the narrative rather than having an outsider precisely articulate the argument; the sound edit is not meant to punctuate or to challenge meaning (Dancyger, 1997: 325–330), but to smoothen transitions between edited takes.

Filming Learning Processes

Over time, the style of the films has developed to show the following basic characteristics. The narration explains the real events in chronological order. It covers part of the general activities of the meetings at the conference centre and the field activities through the eyes of the participants. The film records the learning process through reflective interviews with participants at various stages:

at the start, after a particular experience and at the end. In doing so, the film presents the participants' experiences to the audience in such a way that the audience feels actively engaged in the course of events. Aspects of social learning and collective learning require that the course activities are about learning in groups that are preferably self-directed. This also implies – contrary to some aspects of participatory video or of a performative documentary style – that the crew and the facilitators are left out of frame to focus solely on the participants' learning and transformation process. The film's soundtrack is made of the original sound recordings. During shooting, film makers record local music for audio inserts with titles and credits. The footage's original sound track is not altered during editing with a voice-over as it is assumed that the "absence of voice-over leaves the narration to be made by the audience interpreting the 'pure' recorded events" (Bruzzi, 2000:40).

The films are about the learning processes of RDPs. They are not about the disease or the epidemic because the films visualize the learning processes rather than focusing on medical aspects of the disease. Where the people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) or people who are otherwise related to the epidemic come on stage, there a realistic representation that focuses on the quality of life is deliberately searched for. As the prognosis for people living with HIV/AIDS in rural Africa and Asia is rather bleak, a number of prevention efforts focus on the disease's lethal character. These efforts have led to a signifying practice where skinny people, bed-ridden people, crosses and grave yards, prevail. The films discussed here present other images or aim to reframe the dominant images. They move away from images that arouse individual fear to images that represent collective day-to-day stories. In other words, the films highlight people living with HIV/AIDS rather than people dying of AIDS. The people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the films represent actors in the rural service delivery system, with the particular characteristic of being infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. This type of representation also seeks to reduce stigmatization and consequently to change the discourse on AIDS-related matters. A very concrete example of evading particular representation in the films is the absence of stereotypical conference bags. The participants do not receive the standard semi-leather bags with the red ribbon logo. They receive cotton bags that are locally made and printed in a variety of colors and patterns. AIDS-related signs such as the red ribbon are not present, and neither are conference status symbols, such as university logo-types and long conference titles shown. To see participants in the field with their local and colorful bags adds a touch of cultural localization to the films.

Together the above-mentioned characteristics indicate that the mode of filming primarily relates to what Nichols (2001) calls the observational mode. The films register what happens in front of the camera without overt intervention. "Social actors engage with one another, ignoring the film makers" (Nichols, 2001:111). On the other hand, the filming process also deliberately searches for elements of the participatory mode. The films incorporate elements of anthropological style participant observation. As such, the films are embedded in the events they register. During the filming, the members of the

film team participate in the events. They try to find a working balance between being an observer/film maker and being a participant. A form of participant observation is thus established. The basic idea is that the film team integrally participates in the events and does not remain outside observers. This development of rapport between the members of the film team and the participants is important in creating an atmosphere of "accepted disruption" and enables the film to present an observational, but inside view.

The first two films were produced with a situational crew, with a professional director and with a professional cameraman but, otherwise, with non-professional and non-experienced filmmakers. The equipment was also gathered from a variety of sources. The temporarily formed crews of the first two films scored higher for their participatory video characteristics, but the technical problems generated too many disruptions during the filming and led to technically low-quality footage. Because of this, quite some footage that was relevant to portraying the events could not be used during editing for inclusion in the final film. Since the use of the footage justifies the filming in 'embedded filming', the filmmakers decided to diminish technical constraints to a minimum.

Changing the classification of the production process from 'participatory filming' to 'professional embedded filming' primarily ensures a qualitatively valuable end-product. We are now in the process of building joint production experience with the same Indian film crew in this type of professional 'embedded educational filming'. Tamaso ma Jyothir Gamay – From Darkness to Light and When the Beat of the Drum Changes, the Steps Will Follow and Close Concerns, Distant Mountains – A Space of Intercultural Learning on AIDS & Rural Development have therefore been made with a professional crew and with professional equipment.

The certainty of having film professionalism as part of the project has helped to improve the quality of not only the end-product, but also the process of 'embedded filming' itself as it enhances the unconditioned continuation of the participants' experiential learning processes. A professional crew reduces the risks that are logical consequences of the 'embedded filming' production process. Embedded filming depends on the course of events and is only partially predictable. There is no predefined script or a treatment. The program of the course or workshop is available beforehand, but even the program itself is subject to change and is open for discussion; it is based on participants' wishes and needs and is adapted accordingly. This requires a good deal of concentration and flexibility from all actors, including the film makers. Several measures are taken to counteract possible constraints and to manage associated risks that result from this openness.

Lessons Learned

This section discusses the mutual influence of learning about HIV/AIDS and rural development professionalism and the filming of this learning process. The filming actively interacts with the course, and the filming influences the design and the facilitation of the learning process. To exemplify the lessons learned, we will quote from the transcripts of the films and from feedback we received, either by email, face-to-face, in official speeches and through other sources.

About Facilitation and Participation

The course or the learning process is designed according to principles of experiential learning. As a consequence, the provision of experiences is an explicit activity in the process, but it is also the film that needs experiences or activities performed by participants to record the process in a visual way. Traditional classroom lectures are difficult to incorporate into the film. They are not suitable to represent reflection or re-conceptualization.

In the Indian film, a Chinese participant reports about the learning strategies as follows:

> *It is different from what you have read from the newspaper, from the*
> *journals, from books. You came, and you saw, and you felt, you*
> *observed and then began to think.*
> *This course, this Indian refresher course also reminds me, to think*
> *about the methodologies like the role play, we can adopt this, use more*
> *in our class room teaching.*
> *Students we can imagine if they learn knowledge from books from*
> *lectures and from if they don't go to the village, do not visit the people*
> *or the rural area, this wouldn't make sense, so here I think, really think*
> *a lot about what we can do, what can change.*
> *(Chinese Participant, female, India Refresher Course)*

As the film makers intend the film to be meaningful for all participants, they try to include all countries, languages and participants in a representative way. This is, however, impossible while maintaining a narration that an audience can identify with. Audience identification requires a limited number of main characters (natural actors) on screen. The selection of the actor-participants is a process that is not very rational. On one hand, actor-participants are selected on concrete skills such as the ability to tell a story and the availability to participate. However, on the other hand, casting elements can also be discerned as the participants should have some screen sensitivity and expression. Reducing the number of participants who are most 'visible' carries the risk of excluding others. We, therefore, deliberately include ample travel and transition shots because

they allow participants to be seen amply on screen. If they would be absent from frame or from the credits, they might otherwise feel excluded.

When discussing compromising between the ambition to have all participants in the film and the film's technical demands, film makers often end the discussion with the comment "there is no compromise". This refers to the need to maintain a minimum level of film narratives or film conventions. In other words, the film needs to favor audience expectations over participant expectations. The listing of the credits presents similar difficulties. Whom to put where and in what order? What is really representative for a participant's contribution? Are film conventions to be followed? What is strategic? What is polite? Although quite some compromising takes place, the discussion is strongly influenced by film conventions, allowing the audience to participate in a mediated way in the events rather than favoring participation of all course participants equally in the filming process and giving each an equal share of screen exposure.

About Visual Learning and Realism

The films rely heavily on the events undertaken by participants and on the participants' individual and collective reflections on these events. Fieldwork interviews with people with HIV/AIDS and other relevant informants are included in the films. An example of such an interview is the discussion with Kofi in the Ghanaian film. Kofi is a farmer and both he and his wife are HIV+. They have lost three children and the major part of their properties and assets during their illness. Careful observation of Kofi's facial expression provides 'evidence' or justification, or at least motivation, for filming these types of interviews instead of repeatedly organizing 'live' meetings for students/participants/learners. The interview reflects the intimacy of respect and other due considerations for informants like Kofi. It confirms the notion that enabling repeated observation through filmed interviews is a strategy that respects the informant's time and privacy, on one hand, and opens this world to others, on the other hand. Additionally, it is worthwhile to note that it is not only the informant's story – in this case Kofi's – that strikes the audience, it is also the reaction of the participant/interviewer. At one point in the Ghanaian film, the interviewer's face reveals that she realizes she is talking about Kofi's children in the present tense; she hesitates a moment and then shifts to the past tense. Kofi's real story is underlined by the strong impact it makes on the interviewer.

Although the films' aim is to make a realistic portrait of events, it must be made explicit that reality is sometimes 'upgraded' in the films. In any case it is clear that film time and real time do not coincide; when a 40-min film is made that covers the events of 12 days, the more expressive parts are compressed and highlighted. This is, for example, the case when a take of dozing participants is not used during editing. Editing is, by definition, a process of selecting and influencing the portrayal of the events. However, the confrontation with reality is not avoided. This can be illustrated by an academic participant's interview

with a PLWHA. The interview is about nutrition, his ARV treatment and labor related aspects. It is difficult to edit the interview without showing the clumsiness of the participant/interviewer. In the spoken text and in the visual images, the film clearly shows that the interviewer embarrasses the interviewee with questions about 'good' food; the interviewer's questions do not relate to the interviewee's day-to-day food routine. For example, asking about the consumption of red wine and green tea is not appropriate in a context where the interviewee has lost his job because of his HIV status and has no income. Here again, the interviewee's story is articulated to a painful level by the interviewer's suggestive and inappropriate questioning.

Editing aims to maintain respect for all parties involved because, in the end, learning may come with obstacles and errors, but the aim may justify the means. The respect for those joining the film production is underlined in the start roll of the film where it reads: "The good spirit and courage are appreciated of all who joined in our endeavor to capture on film this stage of a learning process." The text of the start credits also indicates the partiality of the film makers. It explains what has been done and why. This is in line with Jarl when he defies the objectivity claim of documentaries versus the subjectivity of non fiction films: "there is always a person behind the images on the silver screen and the easier it is to discern that person the better" (Jarl, 1998:150).

About Disruption and Learning

The filming motivates participants, especially when they are interviewed on an individual basis. The motivation to contribute to a tangible, longer lasting and shareable product has a more positive influence on learning than simply contributing to the individual and temporary participation in the film. People seem to be more concentrated, to be more alert and pay more attention to formulating statements when a camera is present. This probably has to do with the fact that words and images are captured. However, the filming also interrupts in an unfamiliar way. Deliberate interruptive actions are often necessary to guarantee the quality of the end-product.

Over time, the lesson has been learned to anticipate eventual constraints and to smoothen the filming. Providing instructions beforehand is very important in creating a safe and workable environment for filming. Therefore, an explicit preparation for participants has been introduced. The film and the filming are announced in the call for participation and a 'terms of reference' is shared with all those involved. Information on the filming is also included in the course handbook. At the beginning of the course, the filming activities, the expected impact of the film, and the concrete filming operations are all explained to, and discussed and practiced with participants. These instructions concern several issues such as 'dealing with the equipment'. In the introductory meeting, the participants are told the following: "It is appreciated that participants want to help carry equipment, but the members of the film crew rather take care of the equipment themselves, as equipment is too delicate and its handling controlled

to allow others than the crew to deal with equipment." Other instructions are also discussed such as looking into the camera, mobile phone ringtones and seating arrangements – space should be created to allow the film crew to move around, especially between the walls and the outer chairs.

This is a crucial stage in the filming process as it sets the scene for the successful integration of the filming in the course activities. Formal and informal moments are also built into the course to create space for feedback and evaluation of the filming process in relation to the learning and facilitation process. These preparatory and monitoring activities are demystifying practices, which are of paramount importance in participatory video activities of any kind.

These kinds of instructions or anticipated interruptions undoubtedly influence the various learning processes, but participants quickly get used to the film crew's presence during the courses and meetings, and they accept the filming as an integral part of the program. The instructions at the start and the acceptance of the final goal smoothen the acceptance of the disturbance. These preparatory sessions now cover three elements: visual learning, video for development, and production or 'technicalities'. During the refresher course in Tanzania (October, 2006), we had an extensive preparatory session and we experienced participants to be very comfortable with filming procedures. During that course we also included reading material on the process of filming, wondering if it would make them too conscious during the filming. However, we have not yet noticed such an effect. It is also worth mentioning that the filming is often only one of the disrupting issues; coffee breaks, visitors, power cuts, tire punctures and participants with malaria, to name a few, equally disrupt the program and are considered to be part of normal routines.

Films for Social Change for Various Audiences

In this part of the article, we focus on interactions between the film, the learning process and the envisaged social change for various audiences. From the study we discern four audiences: (1) the course participants, (2) other people involved in the films who are not the course participants. Here, we basically refer to PLWHA who allow us to film them and course participants to interview them. (3) Peers of course participants who are other RDPs and rural development organizations, and finally, (4) the unintended general audience. The leading question for this section is: "How do the films represent learning processes and lead to social change for the various audiences?" Audience feedback was searched for in email archives, in LAPNARD documents and elsewhere.

The five films are meant to appeal to and to engage a variety of audiences. The films are similar, but not the same. For example, where the Kilio film culminates with the start of the LAPNARD network, Tamaso ma Jyothir Gamaya reflects on the issues at stake as interpreted at an individual level. When

the Beat of the Drum Changes, the Steps Will Follow reflects on the issues at a more organizational and institutional level. Another way of determining differences between the films is that triple loop learning is more obvious in the Ghanaian film, where participants comment on the interviewing competencies of other participants. The fifth film Close Concerns, Distant Mountains has the particularity of the intercultural learning space with African and Asian participants.

The release of the films is basically determined by the time it takes to get transcripts of the footage in local languages as they are needed before editing can start. Release of the films varies from a year after the shooting (the Zambian film) to 3 months after the shooting (the Ghanaian film). Participants are engaged in the production during this stage by supporting the creation of local transcripts and by checking data such as the names of people and places. The films are first distributed to the course participants and the local organizers. They receive several copies each. Other audiences are catered for afterwards without very specific or systematic distribution plans. Distribution also depends on the available financial resources. The film is sent to collaborating university partners, to the funding agency, to the ministry of foreign affairs, to producer organizations and to colleagues working in the same field. This way of distribution creates a certain snowball effect as people who see the film and recognize its value for their organization often send us a request for a copy. When the request is well explained, we send the requested copy without further charges.

Although the films are widely distributed, the lack of systematic distribution is acknowledged. This is even more acknowledged considering the fact that one of the motivating factors for making the film is the sharing, the mainstreaming of the experiences and the learning processes. Thinking about the audience is relevant as we feel that the efforts of people involved, the engagement and courage of those who are interviewed and portrayed in the films are legitimized only once the film has been distributed and has an audience. Through embracing this principle, this type of 'film for social change' differs from participatory video approaches, where the process as such is the aim of the activities and a larger audience is not anticipated.

Learning by Course Participants

Some of the films show parts of presentations that are given in formal situations. Students are often asked to present country reports on the HIV/AIDS situations in their respective countries. Learning takes place in these formal sessions. Presentations, discussions and interactions resulting from the rural rapid appraisals are also captured on film. Results of these fact-finding tours are shared in the group and portray processes of collective learning. The films also show learning through the filmed interviews. The films portray participants' reflections on their own learning processes during the course. In short, participants seem to appreciate the films. From their reactions and feedback, we

learn that the first viewing of the film frequently takes place in the privacy of their home. If participants have no player at home, they still prefer to watch it individually where a player is available, for example, in the office. Often, they do not invite anyone else. This action can probably be explained by the fear or the uncertainty of not knowing how you look on screen. A direct audience response is often the recognition, the re-call and the 'captured memory'. This can, for instance, be read in the following email from a Chinese participant:

> *Thank you very much for the DVDs. I got them today. They are great.*
> *Well done! I felt nostalgia watching the film. It's such a nice memory. I*
> *admire your accomplishment.*
> *(Chinese Participant, female, India Refresher Course)*

The films seem to reinforce the obtained experiences as a Ghanaian participant writes:

> *What ever each person has perceived in the eyes cannot be wiped out*
> *from the mind.*
> *When there is the need to play back a scene it is always possible and*
> *that produces a lively and practical discussion and a learning situation*
> *which will never be forgotten.*
> *(Ghanaian Participant, female, Ghana Refresher Course)*

After a first individual viewing, most participants organize presentations of the film at their workplace and indicate that the film is shown elsewhere.

> *Today I show the VCD to all our district program advisors who are*
> *working in 20 district which is the remotest part of the country.*
> *I have been receiving compliments from people and organizations*
> *would like to use it in their OVC program.*
> *(Nepali Participant, male, India Refresher Course)*

This feedback also shows that the film may add to the participants' identification with the issues at stake. Participants show the film not only to their colleagues at work but also to other communities that they belong to, for instance, churches, civil society organizations and networks. The films are also shown to clients and/or rural people whom they work with.

> *The film used here was the famous 'Kilio'. It was very effective*
> *especially at the beginning with song from children – as it was in*
> *Kiswahili. I was glad that for the first time I could use our 'Kilio' film*
> *production to these grassroots farmers who are the hearts of rural*
> *development in Tanzania (and elsewhere in most African countries).*
> *(Chonya, 2006:11)*

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In line with the origin of the A&RD activities of our universities, the films are frequently and repeatedly shown at LAPNARD regional or country meetings. We were recently informed that the Kilio film, which was released several years ago, is still successfully being used today.

> *The video Kilio – The Cry was also presented and participants reflected on it as a nice means of creating awareness and building the competencies of Rural Development Professionals for seeing is believing.*
> *(Ethiopian Participant, female, Tanzania network meeting)*

Presenting one's own experiences is quite challenging for many participants as we heard from a South Asian participant, a veterinarian in Sri Lanka. He said the following:

> *Promotion of condoms-or making people aware of sexual education and sexually transmitted diseases also has become part of our life. So I want to say, I may say, it was not really an embarrassment to promote a condom being a vet I think I am rather happy that I can also be a part of the community who are trying to eliminate the disease from this world.*
> *(Sri Lankan Participant, male, India Refresher Course)*

After receiving the film, the Sri Lankan participant organized a presentation of the film at his workplace. In a mail he reports his feelings:

> *At first time when I met some of the victims in India I really did not know what to do or how to deal with them. However, my knowledge and attitudes helped me to successfully deal with them and I am extremely happy. Even when I joined the movie I did not think of the outcome as I was very much willing to fight against the disease. Just before I launched it I was just wondering about how would they accept it and how would they think of me. But finally I was very happy as they accepted it very well and most of them really understood the weight and there is something for us to do there. So I was so satisfied. I did not really get any repercussions after watching the movie. They did not think that I am also a victim but they really understood the role as RDPs. But it may take time to react.*
> *(Sri Lankan Participant, male, India Refresher Course)*

Learning by Others Who Appear in the Films

An audience, which also has our interest, is 'other people involved in the films who are not the course participants'. We refer here, for example, to

PLWHA who participate in the filming and agree to be interviewed by a course participant. Unfortunately, we have only a few insights about their exposure to the finished film; we do not send all of them a copy, as many of them are difficult to reach or do not have any means of viewing the film. During the filming we are careful not to promise to send the film unless a local staff member or course participant becomes responsible. Although not sufficiently systematic, we do send films to the organizations that represent or through which we got in touch with PLWHA. From those who have seen the film, we have received only a few responses. As a consequence, we can only superficially discuss the learning or the impact of the film on these people. From feedback that we have received, we know, for instance, that Florence, who gave an impacting interview in the Zambian film, passed away a few months after the filming. She never saw the film after editing. Elizabeth, the course participant who had interviewed Florence, visited the surviving orphaned children whom Florence had taken care of and gave some direct support to them.

The representation of PLWHAs in films has raised concerns. For example, we have received requests to produce a version of the film where PLWHA have 'blurred' faces or to give permission to produce such a version. However, we do not encourage this as we do receive comments that reveal that the films contribute to processes of de-stigmatizing PLWHAs. We have filmed interviews with people who clearly state that they do not want to disclose their status, such as the following statement by an Indian woman:

> *I don't go to anybody's house. I will stay in the house. I just speak to the people who come from the organization. Otherwise I just go to the office. I don't know about anybody. Even if I ask no, they will try to send me from this place. That's why I don't disclose it. Even my husband is not aware of this. Only my son and my daughter know it. My husband doesn't know. If he knows, he drinks and beat me.*
> *(Indian Interviewee, female, India Refresher Course)*

In the course of our discussion she eventually gave permission for filming an interview with her. However, we find it difficult to understand the exact procedures for these kinds of permission as it involves coordination with local organizations and local languages. We mainly understand that giving permission is a combination of the participants' wish to be heard and to share their story with the assumption that nobody in their surroundings will see the film as a general audience. This is very feasible as distribution is not to a general audience, but to a professional audience of course participants and their peers. But even in the case that relatives or acquaintances would see the film, we do feel confident enough about the impact of the film to assure that, in most cases, the films lower stigmatizations on a collective and individual level rather than enhancing or contributing to the stigmatization of the people in the film.

We have also witnessed interviewees who after agreeing to be filmed felt supported in their strive to come out in the open regarding their HIV+ status. An Indian man shares the following in a filmed interview:

> *I may not be able to tell my brothers as they are elder to me. But I can certainly tell to my friends, I advice them not to go to the sex workers and gays and even if go use condoms otherwise you will be infected with HIV."*
> *(Indian Interviewee, male, India Refresher Course)*

He was invited to participate in the closure ceremony of the refresher course. During that ceremony he asked the film director for permission to give a short contribution about his status and his interview.

Learning by Peers, Other RDPs and Their Organizations

Other RDPs than the participants and other institutions and organizations may access the films indirectly through the participants (who receive several copies) or directly when they are sent a film. An important topic is the context in which the film is used for learning. When the film is shown in a context where the audience knows an acting participant, part of the focus is on tracking his/her presence on the screen. Similarly, we have observed that in those situations some scenes can be interpreted as very anecdotal (e.g., the interview with the earlier discussed 'red-wine-question'). This familiarity incorporates the danger of overshadowing the film's general narration.

Han van der Horst from the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) in a speech delivered at a graduation ceremony of the Larenstein Master of Development program expressed his learning after watching Kilio – The Cry as follows:

> *I learned that the AIDS epidemic - and that was for me, as a city-dweller, an absolute eye-opener - weakens farmers in the most literal sense. As a consequence, they are unable to grow any crops that demand heavy physical exertion. By coincidence, these are also the more lucrative crops. What is more, many farmers have gone through their last reserves, put aside for buying medicine. Some, for example, sell their only cow to pay for drugs. What is the right way for you, as a graduate of Larenstein, to respond to the situation there? How can you take account of this all too literal weakness and give effective help to these rural communities struck down by AIDS? The documentary provided no answers, it simply put the question in a most powerful way.*

A colleague from the university sent her feedback on When I Die, Tell Eliza:

It was a surprise to receive the film 'When I Die, Tell Eliza'! It is great that you managed to produce it and it is a beautiful film. It made me extremely sad, it confronts you with a miserable situation of those children and it is unbelievable touching that the young girl already passed away. My compliments for the clear story line and sound quality as compared to the Kilio film.

From the Ministry of Foreign affairs a comment was received that said:

"I have seen the film. It is very sincere and natural. I liked watching it: both the linkage between nutrition/agriculture and HIV/AIDS as well as the openness about the issue and the readiness for action."

This audience frequently expresses a keen interest to have a similar film for their own context as exemplified by an Ethiopian RDP from the Institute of Biodiversity Conservation who commented after viewing Kilio – The Cry:

"we should have also such materials that reflect Ethiopian experiences and cases in relation to HIV/AIDS and rural development in the country"

Learning by Unintended Audiences

The films have an unintended or general audience, most explicitly through the broadcasting on regional or national channels. An attempt has never been made to know formally or to document the effects on this type of audience, and it is therefore difficult to elaborate beyond the few recorded comments. On the continuum of audience reactions, we know that some viewers expected a more conventional documentary with a narration of explicit arguments and an undisputable conclusive end. At the other end of the continuum is the reaction of a women's group in the Philippines inviting the film maker to make a similar film for one of its projects. When I Die, Tell Eliza and From Darkness to Light were also appreciated by an international audience as they were selected for the Northamptonshire International Community Film festival. The selection committee commented: "… was highly impressed by the content of your film and the strength of your message, supported by impressive production standards and a most effective edit of the material".

Most audience reactions in this category of unintended audience reveal that the narration is clear and touching. Whereas the intended action is beyond the reach of the unintended audience, other realities take over as exemplified by the following comment:

"Thanks for the video report about Zambia. I watched it last night. Maybe the credits are most touching. The interview with the four boys is very impressive maybe because I do associate care and support with girls and women [] their empty gazes and that boy who moves slowly to the big hand for comfort. It didn't make me happy, fortunately I just had to go out for playing tennis.

Conclusions

This article discussed 'embedded filming for social change' as it is embodied by the production and viewing processes of the five films about HIV/AIDS and rural development professionalism in Asia and Africa. The impact of the films as end-products on various audiences has also been discussed. As the paper sets out to address the relationship between learning and social change through the use of 'embedded filming', we can now draw the following conclusions.

It is possible to capture processes of experiential learning on film

The concept of experiential learning fits with the visual learning potential of the films. The course's learning events can be followed by the filming, when and if the learning strategy creates visual opportunities. In other words, the film style that is linked to experiential learning determines the course outline and vice-versa. It is important to consider the facilitation of the course, the learning in the course, and, the filming of the process as a significant whole. All elements should be interwoven in an iterative process because a sense of separation enhances disruption. Moreover, the film must be embedded in the course. Splitting up the film//filming into two activities creates the possibility of ranking them hierarchically and undermines their mutual positive influence. As a whole, the film can 'upgrade' the educational events it records. The impact of the filming, learning and facilitation are intrinsically linked. Finally, an articulate preparation of participants for the filming inhibits it to be a disruptive activity.

The film as an end-product can also be classified as a visual report of the course as we 'report' the events/the experiences and the reflections and re-conceptualizations. A consequence of applying the technique of 'following the events' in the observational mode is the production of lengthy footage. This makes transcribing and editing a time consuming process.

The series of films have contributed to the improvement of rural development professionalism in the context of HIV/AIDS

The films have a variety of audiences: the course participants, others who appear in the films, peers, other RDPs and rural development organizations and unintended audience.

Although we wish to know more about the various audiences and to better understand the film's learning and social change impact, we conclude that the films support, recall and impregnate the experiences and the reflections of participants. The films enhance the participants' aims for action. The films allow audiences, other than direct course participants, to get engaged in the flow of experiences, reflections and re-conceptualizations of the course participants; they 'share' the experiences in a mediated way. The films allow audiences to experience that AIDS and rural development professionalism is not a simple issues with clear-cut alternatives or solutions. Noteworthy is the motivation among PLWHA to join the film and their consequent portrayal. We assume this to be the combined effect of the sound approach of the film makers and of the commitment to the film's aims. In this article we classified this approach as embedded filming.

The systematic distribution of the films can be improved. This would not only broaden their reach, but would also enable a more systematic evaluation of the impact of the films. On the other hand, it is a pleasure to learn that the films sometimes seem to find their own way to the audiences. However, we still recommend distinguishing between the various audiences because not all audiences will be able to act after viewing the film. Defining a primary audience is also required to provide clear outlines for the filming and editing.

Producing a series of films under comparative circumstances and for similar objectives allows a particular film format to be elaborated on and refined

Participants and other professional audiences appreciate that the films are produced and widely distributed to a variety of places and audiences. It is an effort that audiences recognize and support in their feedback and with requests for copies of the film, while producers show their appreciation with an increasing budget. The film makers are pleased about the opportunity to elaborate on and to refine a particular film format as the field of studies for filming for social change is not yet very extensive and is searching for new formats. Making a series of films under comparative circumstances and for similar objectives allowed us to elaborate on and to refine this particular film format. We recognize that the full potential may not be fully exploited because systematic audience research did not take place, but in this article we do articulate some of the experiences obtained.

A shift occurred from participatory production to professional production

In the course of producing the five films, major changes in production style or format design resulted from film or audience considerations. A shift occurred from participatory production to professional production considering audience needs of 'attractiveness' and 'accessibility'.

We changed from working with tight or insufficient budgets, temporary crews and borrowed equipment to professional qualities of crew and equipment and increased budgets. Ethical considerations made us want to guarantee the technical quality of delicate filming. We defined not being able to edit an interview with PLWHA for technical reasons as a non-participatory element resulting from participatory production ambitions. Therefore, to a certain extent we can no longer be classified as working according to principles of participatory video as equipment remains in the hands of the professional crew only.

We also changed from representing all participants on screen to following a more conventional film rule. The footage of the first film tried to represent all participants in an equal way while editing requires main characters in order to create a digestible story line for the audience. In the course of producing the series, it became apparent that we needed these main characters to make the films attractive. The impact of the film's attractiveness and the selection of participants to be filmed were discussed with the participants beforehand. As it turned out, in the course of the program some participants 'emerged' as 'natural actors' suitable for these 'roles' due to a variety of reasons such as screen confidence, interest in the filming and availability for the reflective interviews.

Filming for social change has an unexplored potential

For this article we have re-constructed the filming process of a series of five films. We acknowledge that 'embedded filming' combines specific filming peculiarities with action research and being embedded in an educational process. The experiences obtained during the production of this series of films and the sharing of these experiences with colleagues point towards an unexplored potential of filming for social change.

The films provide authentic and strong learning environments for social learning. The audience does not witness the outcome of a learning process for adoption, but is socially involved in the learning process of 'colleagues'. The identification with the 'actors' on screen provides a natural and emotional insight into the learning process experienced in the film. The audience learns from this mediated social environment. 'Embedded filming' does not focus on subject matter cognition and single loop learning. As a consequence, the films portray RDPs and their 'professionalism' by addressing various dimensions of social learning from an institutional perspective. The films highlight learning and the consequent ambition for action. 'Actors' and audience reflect on their

role as stakeholders in a multiparty process of dealing with the complexity of a collective health issue that requires consideration by rural development organizations. A special feature of the films is that conflicts over resources, services and policies are approached as professional challenges coinciding with personal commitment calling for integrative negotiations.

'Video for development' as a new emerging subfield of development communication emphasizes, in many cases, the participatory production process of video; the cameras are handed over to the people. We recognize the potential that this type of participatory filming can have for purposes especially related to empowerment. 'Embedded filming' seeks to address participation at two other levels. First, participation is sought in the learning process that is filmed in an embedded way. As mentioned earlier, embedded filming addresses participation by combining action research with being embedded in an educational process. Second, over the years we have come to recognize that participation can be addressed in all phases of production and consumption of the films. Initially, we felt uncomfortable with the fact that the end-products of participatory filming could not be used outside the intervention process because of their low technical quality. In participatory filming, and in most 'video for development' projects, it is the process of production that is important, not the film that is produced. Participation is addressed in the production phase. In the process of learning about 'embedded filming', we gradually shifted from addressing participation in the production phase of the films to addressing participation in the consumption phase of the films. Over the years, we have changed to working with professional film crews and broadcasting quality to ensure that the films can be used in new learning processes. In this paper, we showed that learning takes place by various audiences in participatory – but, of course, also in non-participatory – ways.

This leads to the recognition that this series of films is just one of the possible strategies to use films for social learning. Many other formats and uses of films are probably out there, but have not yet been described. We have identified gradual development in addressing participatory action, from participation while filming to providing stakeholders an audience, an arena for debate. We wish to further explore this potential. We realize that it requires interdisciplinary knowledge and familiarity with the issues at stake, but also experience with filming processes and with educational designs and related types of learning processes. Recommending that it requires the discipline to document these experiences and share them with colleagues is very much thinking out loud and hoping that we take notice ourselves.

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Appendix A. Technical Details of the Five Films on HIV/AIDS and Rural Professionalism in Africa and Asia

Title, Location, Date, Length and Languages	Content	Crew	Budget
Kilio – The Cry. AIDS and Rural Development in East Africa Tanzania, June 2002 32 minutes English and Swahili, English subtitles	Film reporting on the LAPNARD network meeting and the research on impact assessment, Arusha, Tanzania	*Filming:* Samuel Taye, LAPNARD members and Loes Witteveen *Editing:* The Netherlands Autumn 2002 Samuel, Loes, Dialoog Produkties	No film budget and limited editing budget provided by Larenstein University of Professional Education and The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
When I Die, Tell Eliza… AIDS, Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Rural Zambia Zambia, May 2004 42 minutes English and local languages, English subtitles	Film showing LAPNARD members researching the position of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in rural service delivery systems in Central Province, Zambia during the second LAPNARD network meeting	*Filming:* Elizabeth Chintu, Machona Kasambala, LAPNARD members and Loes Witteveen *Editing:* The Netherlands Autumn 2004 – June 2005 Loes, Berthine, Jaap, Dialoog Produkties	Limited budget for filming and editing provided by The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Title, Location, Date, Length and Languages	Content	Crew	Budget
Tamaso ma Jyothir Gamaya – From Darkness to Light India, May 2005 41 minutes English and local languages, English subtitles	Film portraying the learning process of Asian participants during the refresher course and field study in Andhra Pradesh, India	*Filming:* Loes Witteveen and Prasanth Thachapuzha *Editing:* Kerala, India August 2004 Loes and Prasanth	Budget for filming and editing provided by Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC)
When the Beat of the Drum Changes, the Steps Will Follow Ghana, November 2005 38 minutes English and local languages, English subtitles	Film documenting a refresher course for alumni from Van Hall Larenstein University of Professional Education and Wageningen University from the Netherlands in Kumasi and Techiman, Ghana	*Filming:* Loes Witteveen and Prasanth Thachapuzha *Editing:* Kerala, India 2006 Loes and Prasanth	Budget for filming and editing provided by Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC)
Close Concerns, Distant Mountains. A Space of Intercultural learning on AIDS & Rural Development Tanzania, October 2006 39 minutes English and local languages, English subtitles	Film documenting a refresher course for Asian and African alumni from Van Hall Larenstein University of Professional Education and Wageningen University from the Netherlands in Dar es Salaam and Morogoro Region, Tanzania	*Filming:* Loes Witteveen and Prasanth Thachapuzha *Editing:* Kerala, India 2007 Loes, Prasanth and Rico	Budget for filming and editing provided by Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC)

6. Mediated Participation: Using Filmed Narratives in Complex Multi-stakeholder Settings

Abstract

Mediated participation aims to bring 'distanced' or 'overlooked' stakeholders in a mediated way to the doorstep of decision makers. It promotes inclusion of their stories, concerns and proposals in decision-making processes because it allows policy and decision makers to 'learn' in mediated interaction with distant stakeholders. Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) is a film-based methodology for analysis and social learning, which is produced and used in settings of complex problems and sustainable rural development. The core of a VPA consists of filmed narratives in which stakeholders express their concerns and issues and tell their stories. This form of 'mediated participation' was explored by studying vulnerable and distanced stakeholders in the production and use of the VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (A&RD) in workshops in Congo DRC, Ghana, Tanzania, the Netherlands and Zambia. The qualitative assessment indicates that mediated participation is not just a second-best option to live participation. The VPA-methodology offers an alternative to learning through face-to-face interactions. Quality and legitimacy of policymaking and decision-making might be enhanced in situations where live encounters between decision makers and overlooked primary stakeholders are not feasible or realistic.

The Potential of Mediated Participation for Stakeholder Dialogue

Mediated participation is about using media to facilitate stakeholder participation in policy processes. The Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) methodology for analysis and social learning about complex problems integrates mediated participation by using filmed narratives with relevant stakeholders. VPA thus facilitates mediated stakeholder consultation to enable a well-founded assessment of an actual situation (Conway, McCracken, and Pretty 1987; Witteveen, Enserink, and Ramachandran 2003).

In this paper, we report on our study of how mediated participation is manifest while using VPA in the public domain and to what extent it replaces or complements to live participation. In the following sections, we aim to define the value of mediated participation to public participation processes. Special emphasis is given to the participation of underrepresented or generally overlooked stakeholders. We first address concepts of public participation and stakeholder consultation. Then we describe the VPA methodology and position it among other uses of film for stakeholder dialogue. After that, we explain a framework for evaluation and assess the potential of mediated participation using VPA as a specific case.

Our analysis and assessment were empirically based. We used materials like field notes, interviews, films, observations, evaluations, critical incidents, debriefings, reports and reflective journals of participants. These materials originated from producing the VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (VPA A&RD) in Ghana, Zambia and Tanzania and its use in a series of workshops in Congo DRC, Ghana, Tanzania, the Netherlands and Zambia. Based on the analysis of these experiences, we evaluate the value of mediated participation.

Public Participation and Stakeholder Consultation

Our research relates not only to public participation in sustainable development as described in the Rio Declaration but also to public participation in impact assessment. Public participation in impact assessment is conceptualized by André, Enserink, Connor and Croal (2006) as involving individuals and groups that are positively or negatively affected by a proposed intervention (e.g., a project, a program, a plan, a policy), are subject to a decision-making process or are interested in it. This definition is elaborated in the context of technological and infrastructural interventions that in most countries are subject to legal Environmental and Strategic Impact Assessment (EIA, SIA) procedures, including a regulatory framework for processes of public participation. In agriculture, rural development and development cooperation, public participation and stakeholder consultation are enacted from a compliance

perspective. United Nations (1992) is relevant to this sector; Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development states, "Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level". Legally required or not, it is widely accepted that sustainable change cannot be accomplished without social engagement. All concerned stakeholders should participate in policy and decision making processes.

In this paper we aim to assess mediated participation as a follow-up to critical arguments as defined by Leeuwis (2004) regarding the weak conceptualization of participation because of ideas that change and because of large gaps between participatory rhetoric and participatory practice (pp. 248-256). This can be exemplified by Leeuwis' statement that "conventional participatory literature and methodologies are particularly weak in conceptualizing and dealing with conflict as an inherent component of change" (Leeuwis, 2004, p. 248). Other critiques elaborated by Leeuwis (2004) focus on the de-contextualization of participation and poor institutional incorporation, where he states that, "Often, participatory intervention projects have a tendency to overlook or deliberately ignore [such] existing institutions and create their own forms of organization because the latter are considered more 'democratic' and conducive to 'maximum participation'" (p. 255).

Chambers (2005) commented on the types and degrees of participation as reflected in the various ladders of citizen participation. Although interpretations and uses of the word may vary, Chambers emphasized that they also reveal, "How much participation is about power" (p. 105). Under this critique and the practical inappropriateness of Arnstein-like participation ladders (Arnstein, 1969), Ker Rault (2008) conceptualized public participation as a palette of practices, like a palette of colors, with no a priori normative graduation (p. 234). In their studies on public participation in water management in the Levant, Ker Rault and Jeffrey (2008) focused on the appropriateness of public participation styles in a specific context. According to Enserink, Patel, Kranz and Maestu (2007), in all sectors and domains, the level of public participation in practice varies according to social, political and cultural determinants. All authors expressed a critical view of public participation (realized through live presence of concerned stakeholders) when the rationale for participation is based more on rhetoric than on a genuine consideration of the agendas and motives of the parties involved.

To act on the often-neglected issue of access to participation and to enhance accountability for the quality of the public participation process, professional organizations like the International Association for Public Participation (2007) (IAP2) and the International Association for Impact Assessment (2009) (IAIA) developed Best Practice Principles or guidelines. See Text box 1 for an example.

Adapted to the context: Understanding, appreciating and respecting the social institutions, values, and culture of the communities.

Informative and proactive: Recognizing that the public has a right to be informed early and in a meaningful way.

Adaptive and communicative: Recognizing that the public is heterogeneous according to their demographics, knowledge, power, values and interests.

Inclusive and equitable: Ensuring that all interests are respected regarding the distribution of impacts, compensation and benefits. Equity between present and future generations in a perspective of sustainability should be promoted.

Educative: Contributing to mutual respect and understanding.

Cooperative: Promoting cooperation, convergence and consensus-building rather than confrontation.

Imputable: Improving the proposal and taking into account the results of the public participation process.

Text box 1: IAIA's Best Practice Principles for Public Participation
Source: Andre et al., (2006)

These Best Practice Principles represent the core values of these organizations and with that aim to promote a meaningful practice of public participation (Andre et al., 2006). Consequently, they might provide inspiration and criteria for assessing the potential contribution of mediated participation to public participation processes.

Decision makers, policy designers and developers, whether bound by legal requirements for public participation or not, may be reluctant to organize demanding processes of public participation. This reluctance does not imply that they are unwilling to consider stakeholder views in framing the problem and alternatives. It means that these stakeholders are stigmatized, excluded or ignored by definition. The reluctance may be grounded in apparently sound reasons and tangible constraints such as low accessibility to rural communities, long travel distances between central and peripheral locations, and a top-down political culture. Other reasons include low expected rewards in terms of electoral votes, low status-related benefits of particular working settings and low access of remote stakeholder groups to exacerbating public pressure through the media. On the other hand, some stakeholders might find it difficult to express openly their opinions in front of decision makers. Minority groups, realizing that they are absent on the public agenda, sometimes do establish their own forms of organization and communication. They may withdraw deliberately from public debates and even develop their own discourse. In this context, Molina y Vedia

(2008) focused on the concept of silence or silencing. She explained this silenciamiento as a reaction of a minority group to social exclusion. For the minority groups concerned, this creates a further widening of the gap between the majority and the minority groups as their communication systems and languages diverge over time. Sunstein (2003) analyzing conformity studies in organizations and societies, suggests that silencing also results from peer pressure where people "sometimes fear that they will, through their dissent, weaken the effectiveness and reputation of the group to which they belong" (p. 29).

Another issue that may constitute an argument for using mediated participation is a constrained ability to communicate (Leeuwis, 2004) because of issues of languages (tongue and discourse), cultures and other barriers in direct communication (Witteveen and Enserink, 2007; Witteveen and Enserink, 2005). Providing stakeholder views in a mediated way on to the doorsteps of decision makers and policy designers may therefore facilitate considering the otherwise absent interested and affected parties. VPA is expected to provide an opportunity for incremental opening of the Public Sphere. In the Habermasian tradition – making reference to the tension between public and private spheres – we can therefore see mediated participation as removing impediments between public authorities on one side and 'common' people on the other side for meeting in the 'public sphere' for collective learning. Creating this public sphere as a precondition for social learning is central to any good practice as illustrated by the International Association for Public Participation (2007), which focuses on involvement to "work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered."

Inspired by the above considerations, we describe mediated participation as bridging physical constraints, communication barriers and socio-cultural gaps and acting on the patterns of exclusion and silenciamiento that impede the realization or hinder the effectiveness of live participation in the public sphere. Its legitimacy is based on ethical and political considerations and sound articulation of its procedures and principles.

Using Film for Stakeholder Dialogue

The prototype of using media, specifically film, to facilitate processes of social learning and change is based on a series of films that presented issues of poverty and isolation through interviews with the population of Fogo Island off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada, which were made by Donald Snowden in 1967 (Crocker, 2003; Quarry, 1994). The 'Fogo process' is recognized as the first recorded use of film to facilitate processes of reflection and learning in communities (See also: Don Snowden Program for Development Communication, 1994). The Fogo process also reported that inhabitants are more comfortable expressing themselves in the 'safe space' of the film

recording, compared to expressing their views in public community meetings. After the positive experiences of showing the filmed interviews during community meetings, the films were shown to representatives of the government, which enabled "fishermen to talk to cabinet ministers" (Don Snowden Program for Development Communication, 1994).

The Fogo process exemplifies several of the roles that film plays in learning, as suggested by Erickson and Curl (1972), quoted in Pinnington (1992). Films extend human experience and overcome physical limitations. They serve to present information about distant places to help define and contextualize local experience (White, 2003). A recent and popular method of using film to voice concerns, explore issues and tell stories is 'Participatory Video' (PV) (Lunch & Lunch, 2006). In participatory video, contrary to most documentary film productions, the camera is handed over to the people themselves. This is because "the PV process is less concerned with appearance than with content" (Lunch & Lunch, 2006, p. 13). Participatory video processes often have the objective of information exchange between peers rather than 'vertical' communication (between groups of stakeholders with different roles and responsibilities in policymaking).

Visual Problem Appraisal

Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) is related to the Fogo process, as it is a film-based learning strategy that aims to enhance the analysis of a "wicked problem" (Rittel & Webber, 1973). A VPA package normally consists of two documentaries (framing reality from different perspectives), a fair amount of filmed stakeholder narratives, a printed facilitators' guide and a workbook for workshop participants. The package provides the materials necessary for the VPA methodology to be implemented.

The VPA methodology was first developed for the international classroom, but also proved a valuable tool for learning in the social sphere (Witteveen & Enserink, 2007). The core of the VPA for communicating ideas and stakeholder perceptions is the active observation of articulating the diverse problem perceptions encapsulated in the filmed narratives of the various stakeholders. Confronting practitioners, local communities, civil society, developers, decision makers and technical specialists with the uncertainties, the diverse perspectives and problem perceptions of concerned stakeholders is conceived as a first step in coping with complexity. Thus, VPA guides the users through a program – from problem exploration and stakeholder consultation, to proposed action.

VPA Film Strategy and Style

Stakeholders' narratives are at the core of the VPA, and a specific film strategy is used. The filmed VPA stakeholders' narratives offer some iconic

authentication by providing basic pictorial information on the professional context, the livelihood or the family context of the interviewee. The central part shows the interviewee him or herself who provides and represents the information. During this narrative, no visual inserts support the audience interpretation or framing of the information that is provided. The narrative is activated by open generative questions of an offscreen interviewer. This interview style results in narratives that cover a whole answer or longer stories in uninterrupted takes. The interviewees are filmed in steady basic frames (total, half-total, close-up). The interview questions are not included in the edited version, and all answers that are good in terms of film technique are included in a narrative sequence of the interviewee presenting his or her story. In this way, traditional interview conventions are contested. The audience is challenged to make up their own minds, since the above mentioned editing principles are not conducive to fulfilling the expectation the interview complies with the 'default' function in documentary: "Trust those who speak to the camera unless given reason to do otherwise" (Nichols, 1993, p. 178).

The literal screen framing of the interviewee and the narrative leaves the audience no option but to focus on the interviewee. In the consistent selection and viewing of a series of interviewees, the audience soon comes to realize that stakeholders' consultation is not about finding a single final truth; it is about constructing a rich picture of diverse stakeholders' realities. The VPA narratives portray a complex and conflictive arena and highlight the divergent views, controversies, claims and emotions of the filmed stakeholders who are involved at an interpersonal and intrapersonal level. Practitioners, policymakers and decision makers experience these personal framings of reality as inconsistent, fragmentized or emotional. By reflecting on this experience, they realize that synthesizing never means that this messy reality can be ignored.

To achieve mediated participation of filmed stakeholders through VPA, the film style or narrative should contribute to creating a mediated dialogue between the interviewee and the audience. VPA aims to create a space where the interviewees share their stories on film while the audience feels the 'live' presence of their selected informant. In accordance with the Fogo filmmaker Colin Low, who differentiated between 'vertical' and 'horizontal' films (Crocker, 2003), the film format or style of the VPA interviews was defined as a 'vertical' documentary style. As quoted by Crocker, Low stated that:

...most documentary film had a 'horizontal' structure that consisted of a montage of scenes from different situations crosscut together to give an overall effect. They were based around an 'issue' for which they collected evidence from several sources (Crocker, 2003, p.129).

Low claimed that in a horizontal film style, individual stories are swallowed up by a larger story. Consequently, this gives a limited voice to the total story and thus makes a smaller contribution to the related social process. Low made

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single films, showing single interviews. Such a vertical film style is also used in VPA.

A similar observation was made by Cizek (2005) who distinguished between narration-driven film and interview-driven film. A narration-driven film uses a voice-over narration or title-cards (text on the screen) to explain what is happening, and the film often takes the narrator's credibility for granted (p. 85). The narrator takes the audience by the hand and guides them through the film, framing the audiovisuals in a chosen perspective. Cizek calls this approach the classic 'voice of God' narrative style, and this is exactly what mediated participation does not want to do. It does not want to take the construction of reality away from the audience. Out of the fragmented and fuzzy pieces of information, the users have to build their own interpretations.

An *interview-driven film* is often referred to as a 'talking head' film, particularly when the interviews are filmed in a traditional Q&A style. The style of filming applied in VPA is 'interview driven', but not as a talking head. Whenever possible, the interviewees are filmed on location and during activities in their daily environment. However, this film style takes more time to produce than a narration-driven film, which may constrain its realization. The longer production time is due to the rapport that needs to be developed with the interviewees and the long interviewing times. Moreover, the selection process of the particular stakeholder and the technical set-up for filming the interview are crucial and demand extra time. In narration-driven films, less footage is needed because the narration links the scenes together, which is not possible in an interview-driven film. In contrast to the filming itself, the editing is relatively less time consuming. Due to the interview-driven style, the editing is limited to selection, since the sequence and arguments are not alternated. Editing focuses on making the interview accessible to the audience by editing out technical problems (light, sound).

Representing stakeholders' views with audiovisual media means making interpretations and informed, subjective choices. Of course, the main challenge lies in selecting the particular stakeholders to be interviewed. We will come back to this issue later. Based on the above, we conclude the VPA films represent a vertical or interview-driven film style that aims to capture the diversity of stakeholders, thereby allowing the audience to construct their own interpretations and make their own analysis.

VPA Impact and Objectives

The VPA users or workshop participants are expected to analyze, organize and structure the information encapsulated in the narratives. In the last stage of a VPA workshop, the action stage, they convert the insights acquired from the scoping and stakeholder consultation into recommendations for policy design and implementation, research proposals or for developing transformation strategies.

To formulate the objectives of the VPA for particular users, we distinguished between future practitioners and primary and secondary stakeholders. We used the definition by FAO:

> Primary stakeholders can be defined as those with a direct interest in the resource; either because they depend on it for their livelihoods or they are directly involved in its exploitation in some way. Secondary stakeholders would be those with a more indirect interest, such as those involved in institutions or agencies concerned with managing the resource or those who depend at least partially on wealth or business generated by the resource" (FAO Corporate Document Repository, n.d.).

Future practitioners refer to settings in education where students use the VPA as a simulation of the reality that is to become their professional context. An overview of the use and claimed objectives of the VPA is shown in Table 1.

VPA Use	VPA Objectives for Scoping and Stakeholder Consultation Stage	VPA Objectives for Action Stage
Future practitioners in an educational setting	Enhanced professional problem and policy analysis competencies	Proposals for policy design and implementation
	Learning about public participation, stakeholder analysis and policy design	Proposals for transformation strategies
Primary stakeholders in the public domain	Enhanced problem and policy analysis, capacity and intersubjective consensus	Empowerment / Awareness
	Social learning; collective learning about social issues, problem framing and perceptions	Lobby and advocacy strategies
		Project proposals
Secondary stakeholders in the public domain	Enhanced problem and policy analysis, capacity and intersubjective consensus	Policy design and implementation
	Social learning; collective learning about social issues, problem framing and perceptions	Development of transformation strategies
	Reduced self-referentiality and increased commitment for primary stakeholders concerned	

Table 1: VPA Impact (Adapted from: Witteveen et al., 2003)

We define mediated participation as the participation of primary stakeholders through filmed narratives in public policy and decision-making. These filmed narratives are used to create a social dialogue between secondary stakeholders (live presence) and primary stakeholders (mediated presence) focusing on a public issue.

By Table 1, we hypothesize the impact of mediated participation is to contribute to achieving the following objectives for secondary stakeholders using the VPA in the public domain. We propose that these VPA objectives of mediated participation in the Scoping and Stakeholder Consultation Stage lead to:

1. enhanced problem and policy analysis, capacity and intersubjective consensus,
2. social learning; collective learning about social issues, problem framing and perceptions, and,
3. reduced self-referentiality and increased commitment for concerned primary stakeholders.

The claimed VPA objectives of mediated participation in the Action Stage are that it leads to:

4. policy design and implementation, and,
5. development of transformation strategies.

Assessment of Mediated Participation in VPA

In line with the prior theoretical framing of Best Practice Principles (International Association for Public Participation, 2007; International Association for Impact Assessment, 2009) and the above definition of mediated participation and VPA characteristics, in this section we assess VPA as an option to complement 'live' participation. From the Best Practice Principles and the critiques on participation practices, which we described in the first section of this article, we formulated criteria to assess the potential of mediated participation. Producing and using the VPA AIDS & Rural Development (Witteveen, Lie and Thachapuzha, 2008) constituted the empirical context to explore arguments in favor of or against mediated participation as well as the conditions for its manifestation. This assessment had an exploratory and experimental nature. We used observations, critical incidents and user evaluations as our main source of information.

In the preceding sections, we stipulated that mediated participation acts on impediments and hindrances to the effectiveness of live participation in the public sphere. In other words, mediated participation is characterized by the ambition to increase the inclusiveness and equity of the public participation process. A second characteristic of mediated participation is that it aims to

create a space for social dialogue. This latter characteristic relates to public participation being adapted to the context, both educative and cooperative.

Therefore, when looking at the filmed narratives of VPA, a first criterion to assess mediated participation through VPA is:

1. VPA creates a space for social dialogue.

Based on the claimed impact of VPA we assessed the pros and cons and the conditions for manifesting mediated participation by using the following criteria:

2. The VPA users learn about complex problems and stakeholder perspectives.
3. Using VPA leads to action.

A fourth criterion is meant to reverse the perspective and focus on the meaning of mediated participation for the mediated stakeholders, the filmed interviewees:

4. Mediated participation is relevant for filmed stakeholders.

The extent to which these criteria are met was assessed by analyzing the production and use of the VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (A&RD). Producing this VPA was a long, haphazard and at times opportunistic process, hindered by budgetary constraints and technical problems resulting in much professional hassle. Although opportunistic at times, its use was embedded in policy processes consciously organized; the workshops being hosted by dedicated commissioners and a license to act.

The analysis of the production and use of the VPA A&RD was set against a background of accumulated experiences with the VPA Rice from the Guyana's (Witteveen 2007, 1996) and the VPA Kerala's Coast (Witteveen, 2003) in formal education, which was reported by Witteveen and Enserink (2007). Though not used as a comparative study, we mention this because these two VPAs were produced with fewer budgetary problems, whereas we assumed that major critical issues observed during the VPA A&RD were primarily the result of limited finances.

Before continuing with the assessment, we will first elaborate on the context in which the VPA A&RD was developed and used.

The Empirical Context: VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

The AIDS epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa is destroying the social fabric and generating new demands on infrastructure, technology and the communi-

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cation information system. This impact goes far beyond health issues alone; it also highlights the slow pace of addressing HIV/AIDS issues in rural development organizations. This limited response justifies developing innovative interventions to enable communication, mobilize people and agendize these issues with NGOs and rural development agencies. Under the Rio Declaration, these interventions should be grounded in empirical knowledge and have the consent of primary stakeholders to create local ownership. (See also: PANOS, 2003, p. 58).

Inspired by previous experiences with the VPA Kerala's Coast (Witteveen and Enserink, 2007), the VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (A&RD) was developed to provide an instrument for problem analysis and policy design for rural development professionals and organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa. The VPA was produced based on the assumption that the absence of social dialogue hindered appropriate problem analysis and policy design. AIDS related issues were insufficiently recognized as a multidisciplinary issue and hardly mainstreamed in rural service delivery institutions and organizations.

It was envisaged the VPA A&RD would be used as an instrument for problem analysis and policy design for staff members of Ministries of Agriculture, producer organizations, rural development service providers and related institutions. The primary stakeholders were rural people infected and affected by the epidemic, such as farmers living with HIV/AIDS, orphans taking care of siblings and grandparents taking care of orphaned grandchildren. The secondary stakeholders in this VPA represented rural development organizations and institutions dealing with the impact of the epidemic on policies and activities.

After a VPA A&RD package became available in a trial version, it has been used under varying conditions and with varying aims. In this paper, we have used the experiences from a series of six of workshops (See Table 2). The first (afternoon) workshop was conducted with 13 international MSc students from Wageningen University in the Netherlands (March 2006). The workshop was relevant to the participants as preparation for the fieldwork for their theses. In Zambia (May 2006) a workshop took place with twelve senior staff members from the Natural Resource Development College (NRDC) and two staff members from the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO) in Lusaka. The objective was to explore the issue of HIV/AIDS and its impact on the activities of both organizations. The workshop in Tanzania (September 2006) was held in the context of a refresher course for Alumni of Van Hall Larenstein and Wageningen University with 24 practitioners of rural service delivery organizations from Africa and Asia who in their daily practice are confronted with the effects of AIDS in rural settings. The VPA workshop in Congo DRC had 32 participants representing member NGOs of the Réseau d'Innovation Organisationnelle, (RIO). The objective was to explore the relevance and options for concerted action of AIDS to Rural Development for these NGOs (January, 2008). This workshop also anticipated a new VPA 'Kadogo' dealing with reconciliation in war ridden areas, with a focus on the issue of the socio-

economic reintegration of former child soldiers in Kivu provinces of East Congo (3TAMIS (n.d.)). Finally, two workshops were held in Ghana (May 2009); one was organized by the Ghana Education Service (GES) in Accra with 20 participants from GES, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to explore its potential application in Higher Education, and one was organized by the Presbyterian University in Akropong with a total of 77 participants from various institutes for higher education, NGOs, including 30 students.

Nr	Date	Location	Participants	Focus
1	March 2006	Wageningen, the Netherlands	13 MSc students	Preparation for field work
2	May 2006	Lusaka, Zambia	12 NRDC staff 2 MACO staff (Ministry of Agric)	Application in Rural Service Delivery and Agric Education
3	Nov 2007	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	24 RSD Professionals (NGO and government officials)	Problem analysis and Policy design
4	Jan 2008	Bukavu, Congo	32 Rural Development Professionals and NGO staff members	Policy design Application in rur dev practice Preparation VPA Kadogo
5	May 2009	Accra, Akropong, Ghana	14 GES and Min. of Education Staff 5 MOFA staff 23 Teachers 24 Rur Dev Professionals 30 MSc students	Application in curriculum, Application in rur dev practice Value of VPA for higher education Preparation VPA water sanitation

Table 2: Overview of the Use of VPA A&RD

Evaluation

A Space for Social Dialogue

In this section, we will begin the evaluation by addressing the question: Does the VPA create a space for social dialogue? The evaluation of the production and use perspectives leads to the following subquestions: (a) do the VPA narratives constitute a diverse range of stakeholders? And (b) is the viewing and analysis of the VPA narratives experienced as a real or at least realistic encounter with the mediated stakeholders concerned?

Safeguarding the diversity of the stakeholders that constitute a VPA is an ongoing concern during the production. Rather than evaluating the diversity achieved, we prefer to focus on and evaluate the challenges and complexity of the process of including all relevant stakeholders during producing the VPA A&RD. The production of the VPA A&RD began in November 2005 in Ghana. Taking advantage of our presence in Ghana for another assignment, we filmed three interviews. This footage was edited in February 2006 with the VPA interviews, according to the 'found footage' approach. 'Found footage' refers to using footage for editing a movie or a documentary that was not filmed for that particular purpose. Because the first author and colleagues disposed of almost 75 hours of footage filmed for the series Embedded Filming on AIDS and Rural Development[1] (Witteveen & Lie, 2009), there was a proposal to reuse this footage to reduce production costs in absence of a production budget. This cost-saving approach resulted in only few edited interviews, representing an unplanned stakeholder selection. Considering the footage was shot for a different style of documentary films, this was not an unexpected outcome for the filmmakers involved. At a later stage, even the few interviews resulting from the found footage approach that we included in the trial version were removed from the final selection due to insufficient production quality. Consequently, the found footage experiment was an interesting experiment, but an expensive failure.

After the failure of the found footage experiment, producing the VPA A&RD continued. In May 2006, a major part of the production was realized in Zambia, supported by the Ministry of Agriculture in Zambia and Van Hall Larenstein University of Professional Education. It began with a stakeholder analysis to provide guidance to the filming. Besides differentiating between primary and secondary stakeholders, criteria were applied to consider affected and infected stakeholders, sex, age, language and variance in general public, civil society and government organizations. Zambian crew members planned and held meetings with the secondary and institutional stakeholders. The primary stakeholders were mainly tracked 'on location', often with the support of local organizations, a method that is also described as chain sampling or snowballing (Roche, 1999).

The result of the filming activities in Zambia was footage potentially for fifteen interviews. Unfortunately, the review of the footage revealed significant technical problems with light and sound recording in many of these interviews. Of the usable footage, only four interviews portraying primary stakeholders could be selected for editing. This was a disappointing result, considering the

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[1] These films are: *Kilio – the Cry. AIDS and Rural Development in East Africa*, Samuel Taye & Loes Witteveen, Tanzania, June 2002, 32 minutes, English and Swahili, English subtitled; *When I Die, Tell Eliza… AIDS, Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Rural Zambia*, Elizabeth Chintu, Machona Kasambala & Loes Witteveen, Zambia, May 2004, 42 minutes, English and local languages, English subtitles; *Tamaso ma Jyothir Gamay – From Darkness to Light*, Loes Witteveen & Prasanth Thachapuzha, India, May 2005, 41 minutes; *When the Beat of the Drum Changes, the Steps Will Follow*, Loes Witteveen & Prasanth Thachapuzha, Ghana, November 2005, 38 minutes.

efforts made to reach remote rural communities, such as the costly travel allowances requested by crew members. During another assignment in Tanzania in November 2007, three more interviews with primary stakeholders were then filmed. These interviews focused on the lack of access to treatment, resulting in the stakeholder selection presented in Table 3. The resulting footage was edited in May 2007. The finalization of the production took place in 2008. This was because translating one of the Zambian interviews from a local language into English subtitling took almost two years. An overview of the stakeholders included in the VPA A&RD is shown in Table 3.

Primary Stakeholders	Secondary Stakeholders
Farmer, Living with HIV/AIDS, ♀. Morogoro District, Tanzania. (Swahili, English subtitled)	Assembly Man of Mesidan Village, ♂. Techiman, Ghana. (English)
Farmer, Living with HIV/AIDS, Morogoro District, Tanzania. ♂. (Swahili, English subtitled)	Chief, ♂. Chiefdom Liteta, Chibombo District, Central Province, Zambia. (English)
Farmer, Living with HIV/AIDS, Chongwe, Zambia. ♂. (English)	Director General, ♂. Ghana AIDS Commission, Accra, Ghana. (English)
Fisherman, Chairman of the Fisheries Management Committee Shamungalo Fishing Camp, ♂. Mazabuka, Southern Province, Zambia. (English)	Food Nutrition Specialist MOCA, ♀. Central Province, Zambia. (English)
Former Street Kid Now Living in DAPP Children's Town, ♀. Chibombo District, Zambia. (English)	Medical Doctor UNDP, ♂. Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. (English)
Grandmother Taking Care of Orphans, ♀. Chibombo District, Zambia. (Local language, English subtitled)	Programme Coordinator, ♂. SEND Foundation of West Africa, Tamale, Ghana. (English)
Orphan Taking Care of Younger Brother, ♂. Kabwe Outskirts, Central Province, Zambia. (Local language, English subtitled)	Technical Advisor Zambia National Farmers Union, ♂. Lusaka, Zambia. (English)

Table 3: Stakeholders in the VPA A&RD

The longer the production process lasted and the more hurdles that were encountered to realize the filming for this VPA package, the more filmmakers and producers felt accountable for a thorough inclusion of diverse interested and affected parties. They realized that some of the physical impediments for 'live' participation also influenced filming the VPA narratives. The remoteness of locations makes the filming a 'search and find' mission. Potential interviewees had to be found somewhere on their farm, and dealing with local vernaculars is a time-consuming process under expensive production conditions, since all crew members were receiving travel allowances on top of their regular salaries, plus food and accommodation expenses. Another constraint was the technical

problems with some of the recorded material in Zambia. The interviewees had to use their time and scarce energy to participate in the project, motivated by their ambition to make their voices heard, but this did not happen if the footage was found to be worthless for editing. This was essentially seen as an ethical dilemma.

Achieving a diverse composition of stakeholder narratives required constant focus and monitoring during the production and was strongly influenced and defined by the resources available. We realized that if a diverse stakeholder compilation was not achieved during the production, the package of filmed narratives was not considered to constitute a VPA.

From the above it may seem that only primary stakeholder narratives are included in a VPA package. Though they are in the focus, compiling narratives also includes filmed narratives of secondary stakeholders to complete the diversity and to widen the options for iterativity.

The second aspect of creating a space for social dialogue refers to the way VPA participants or VPA users experience the encounter with the filmed others: is the viewing and analysis of the VPA narratives experienced as a real or at least realistic encounter with the mediated stakeholders concerned? From our observations and the reports of the users it is noteworthy that almost all participants in the five VPA A&RD workshops reported experiencing the encounter as real. Although some regret not being able to ask questions themselves, most often we observed and heard users talking about real emotions resulting from their own selection for a particular narrative and the resulting 'interview'. Participants revealed their identification with the interviewees in the way they talked about the interviews. Common in all workshops was that participants reported on the interview using the past simple tense: "as Sebastian Tiah explained…" (Workshop 2). They also frequently spoke with high-level of respect about the interviewees: "They are not victims; they are not beneficiaries, but our brothers with a different destiny". And participants articulated how they felt: "The VPA is not only information; the VPA is information plus emotion" (workshop 4 – all statements translated by the first author). Finally yet importantly, the VPA users changed their discourse. In Ghana (workshop 5) one group selected the HIV-positive farmer Mr. Mwechiwa as a respondent and addressed him in the interview selection as 'AIDS patient'. After the interview they were talking about 'the farmer living with HIV/AIDS'. The justification of their selected interviewee, which was set down in their workbooks and discussed during debriefings, shows that this 'live' experience was enhanced by the selection they had to make for particular interviews out of a larger series of people they might meet. Realizing that they would not be able to watch all the interviews, in their work groups participants made careful and deliberate decisions about whom they wished to 'meet' and confirmed their selection by defending their choice. Making a deliberate choice to 'meet' a particular respondent reinforces the identification with that person.

Facilitation at this stage focused on selecting stakeholders as individuals. The work groups made a request to the facilitators indicating a name, a

profession or location. If participants requested an interview based on the numbers attached to each film, the facilitators refused to give them the DVD and inform them to organize an interview with a person, not with a number. Participants learned this lesson quickly. This type of reflective learning, supported by instruction, is not always specific for VPA; it is sometimes much the same in face-to-face encounters. A unique feature for VPA is the facilitator can have insight to the narrative through viewing the interview, reading the transcripts and experiences with VPA facilitation.

Elaborating their findings, participants converted this individual interview into a story representative for a specific category or group of stakeholders: "Mukonda gives life to other orphans, he represents the case of thousands of children" (Workshop 4). In this respect, the VPA users reversed our conceptual step in the stakeholder identification during the production, where we move from a generic typology of stakeholders to the specific filmed individuals.

Interpersonal face-to-face communication is said to be 30% verbal and 70% non-verbal. Mehrabian (1971) the founder of these kinds of studies asserted there are three elements in any face-to-face communication: words, tone of voice and body language. When it is about 'liking someone', his studies showed that words account for 7%, tone of voice accounts for 38%, and body language accounts for 55% of the 'liking'. The VPA A&RD and mediated participation are not about 'liking someone', but about connecting and learning through active observation and listening. We use the above to illustrate the relative importance of words compared to other visual information encapsulated in the interviews for the ability to communicate. In editing the VPA interviews, hesitations, misunderstandings, (mis-)perceptions were presented without correction. Additional contextual information was also present in all footage, since filming took place on location using natural sound.

The evaluations of the participants indicated that they realized that with the VPA "authorities have an opportunity to meet with stakeholders who they would not meet otherwise, as they live far away, because people are afraid of HIV/AIDS, because people cannot speak to fishermen, etc…" The participants also indicated that they were impressed to have 'met' a child "who is not aware of NGOs, and therefore we learn the VPA is useful for reflection by the NGOs" (Workshop 4 – all statements translated by the first author).

Sometimes participants showed reluctance or otherwise a critical perspective on the interview. This concerns the fact they cannot ask their own questions to the interviewee as presented in the film: "we do not have the opportunity to raise our own questions" (Workshop 1) and "we expected to get information on … but she does not say anything about that" (Workshops 1 and 5). Facilitators formulated this comment in a reverse mode, for example as 'we did not hear anything about it'. In Workshop 1, the group members first fell silent, and then one group member reacted defensively to the feedback, while another member acknowledged the feedback, almost ashamed that such a formulation affects the interpretation considerably. The group later reported, "She did not say anything about AIDS". Immediately after finalizing their

statement, they rephrased: "We mean to say; she did not mention the words HIV or AIDS" (Workshop 1). Most participants did not contest the interviewees for their shortcomings, but showed high engagement by using subjective and emotional formulations to indicate that they were touched "We are in trouble…" (Workshop 2). Participants seldom commented on the subtitles for translations, they appreciated that a subtitled interview is 'faster' than working with an interpreter. Regarding the accuracy of the subtitles, participants sometimes required encouragement from the facilitator to listen to local vernacular. Much to their surprise, participants realized they heard recognizable terms, they heard the changes in tone, the pauses, hesitations and different emotions. They understood they should not forget to listen, even they are not proficient in that language. This aspect was an option the facilitator could use to focus the reflection.

From the above we concluded the mediated encounter is experienced as a real or at least a realistic encounter.

Learning

The second question for evaluation is whether the VPA users learned about complex problems and stakeholder perspectives. This leads us to address two evaluative questions: (a) did the VPA users learn about the constituents and the complexity of the problem? And (b) did the VPA users identify with the stakeholders, that is, did they understand their problem framing and perceptions?

For assessing the learning effect, we will refer to the written comments in the workbooks and evaluation forms of the workshop participants. The initial point for the first discussion in the Zambian workshop is Question 4 of the self-assessment form in the workshop guide, "How did you obtain this [prior] knowledge [on AIDS and rural development]?" This question was deliberately asked to make prior personal knowledge explicit and to activate the participants through sharing this knowledge with colleagues. Participants in Zambia, all working in the field of agriculture and rural development, came up with personal experiences of relatives and in-laws who had passed away or were living with HIV/AIDS, and some of them were even taking care of orphans. Participants shared that these personal experiences enhanced their motivation to join the VPA workshop, yet they still considered themselves as not knowledgeable regarding the issue of AIDS and Rural Development. By a simple count, their sources of knowledge are found in either formal education (1 out of 14); in a workshop or seminar (11 out of 14); or in personal contact with relatives or in-laws (12 out of 14).

The complexity of the socio-economic consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic was recognized, which can be exemplified by an evaluative statement of a participant after the Congo workshop: "you cannot have a simple vision on the AIDS problems". For participants of the Tanzania workshop, who all were professionally familiar with the issue of Rural Development and HIV/AIDS to a certain extent, the VPA was supportive in identifying related and embedded

complex problems, such as food insecurity and lack of alternative sources of livelihood for households of People Living with HIV/AIDS. Moreover, they problematized this issue in combination with Agricultural Extension Workers, who exclusively target heads of households and overlook orphans and vulnerable children. One participant elaborated on the experiences by stating in the evaluation, "We learned that even when ARV[2] is available it also brings problems; the need for food while on ARV and the cost of bottle-feeding to replace breast-feeding" (workshop 3).

The above examples and the one about the absence of knowledge regarding the existence of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the previous section illustrate the learning effect of mediated participation. Watching and analyzing filmed interviews allowed the participants to express and discuss their findings and to make their learning explicit. The fact that their client (the orphaned boy) did not know about the existence of the NGO was a revelation to the participants; the intertwining of issues like food security, loss of agricultural tacit knowledge and HIV/AIDS was another learning point in this case.

One option for in-depth learning with a filmed narrative is repeated observations, which were especially prominent in the Ghana workshops. Repeated observations are useful because participants realize that when they watch the first time, they hardly look, but essentially listen to most factual information. Repeated observation then provides an opportunity for better looking and listening. Participants often realized that the first time they listened "to get our ideas confirmed" with a notebook in their hand, while repeated observation allowed them to understand what was being said or to perceive non-verbal information. Two instances from the Ghana workshop illustrate this effect. One group selected Mukonda, a Zambian orphan taking care of his younger brother; the group expected that he would inform them about AIDS peer education in schools. Initially, during the debriefing with the facilitator, they reported that he was not so interesting because he seemed so lonely and did not dispose of financial resources to go to school. It took the group a short while to react – somewhat ashamed – to this analysis once the facilitator questioned whether they listened to Mukonda or looked for confirmation of their ideas. They asked for a second viewing when they realized the meaning of their impression of his solitude. One of the groups with mainly female students watched the interview with Rose, the former street kid, which initially led to a reaction of disbelief and a focus on possibilities for support. After a second viewing, their more charitable stance changed into a realization of their own privileged position, acknowledging the existence of parallel worlds, and so reduced self-referentiality.

Using the VPA Leads to Action

In this section, we analyze whether the results of the mediated participation process are used in practice or translated into policies. This includes (a)

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[2] ARV stands for Anti Retro Viral Drugs.

discussion of the mandate of the users, (b) whether the concerns expressed by the primary stakeholders are considered, and (c) whether the mediated participation process leads to action, e.g. agenda setting, to new policies or the reformulation of existing ones. For assessing the action aspect we will look at the workshop outcomes.

The first workshop was quite experimental; it was the first time the test version of this VPA package was used and no specific action at an institutional level was foreseen. Remarkably, two Asian students commented the VPA workshop confirmed their experience that 'farmers' were sometimes exploited as interviewees by students who were not prepared for field research. They appreciated that basic issues of good and respectful interviewing could be practiced using the VPA interviews.

The Tanzania workshop resulted in increased insight into problems associated with HIV/AIDS at the level of rural livelihood and at the organizational level of rural service delivery organizations. The resulting inventory (See Table 4) was used as input for defining common principles (Lie, 2007), which showed a high focus on the mandate of the participants.

Ranked Common Principles by Workshop Participants

1. HIV/AIDS is a multi-sectoral problem and should not be solely approached as a health problem. Rural organizations should act accordingly, depending on the stage of the epidemic.

2. Problem solving approaches in relation to HIV/AIDS issues need to be transdisciplinary in order to be efficient and effective. (Knowledge institutions, farmer's organizations, Ministries of Agriculture and other organizations should opt for joint action.)

3. Problem-solving approaches in relation to HIV/AIDS issues need to be sensitive to a possible existing gap between policies/interventions and village level life.

4. Every rural development organization needs to mainstream HIV/AIDS (internal and external).

5. Problem-solving approaches in relation to HIV/AIDS issues should be cultural-embedded and sensitive to gender and religion.

6. An emphasis on access to treatment and care is necessary, but it is equally important to address nutrition, income generation and livelihood strategies.

7. Although an emphasis on access to treatment and care is necessary, it is more important to address the causes of the epidemic.

8. Our knowledge and understanding of sound prevention efforts is insufficient. More research is needed.

Table 4: Output of Tanzania Workshop

Zambian workshop participants exceeded the agreed closing time; during the plenary closure they stated that they felt motivated and had ideas on how to incorporate AIDS and Rural Development issues in the NRDC curriculum. One

participant stated, "The VPA is helpful because the students do not know what is going on, on the ground." Participants did not limit themselves to the curriculum and their professional domain; they also discussed HIV/AIDS policies for the students, most of them living on the NRDC campus. The participants appreciated the workshop brought together colleagues from two organizations, and they made a concrete agreement about the agenda for follow-up activities.

The kick-off session of the Congo workshop concluded by questioning Mr. Mashanda, the organizer of the workshop, about the mandate of the participants:"Do you accept the offer of this group to undertake a study for RIO on the issue of HIV/AIDS and Rural Development professionalism by using the VPA?" Mr. Mashanda on behalf of the organization Réseau d'Innovation Organisationnelle (RIO) accepted that offer and expressed his confidence to the group. Participants received this answer with the understanding that they were delegated to implement a 'kind of action research'. They would use the VPA to develop policies and potential interventions for RIO. This agreement was the most explicit articulation of institutional space for using the results of the VPA workshop that we have encountered.

The Congo workshop resulted in recommendations for AIDS-related policies and interventions by the organizations represented by the participants. After formulating, ranking and discussing this outcome, the VPA A&RD workshop was then analyzed and used to prepare a new VPA. Participants had the ambition to produce a VPA dealing with the socio-economic reintegration of former children soldiers[3] and produced a project proposal to that end. Currently, the project is seeking funding, but the earthquake in 2008 and the increase or resurgence of the civic war in East Congo in 2009 is not conducive to realizing the production of the VPA Kadogo.

The Ghana workshop led to concrete plans for incorporating the VPA A&RD in the curriculum of a number of institutes for higher education. The Ghana Education Service will actively promote this and the Presbyterian University will take the lead in implementing this educational innovation. In addition, ideas for a new VPA on water sanitation have been discussed.

The above examples show that mediated participation can lead to action and institutional change and can agendize issues. We had similar experiences with the VPA Kerala's Coast, where university officials aligned with and supported fishermen communities, which had not been the case ever before.

A fourth criterion was formulated, which was meant to reverse the perspective and focus on the meaning of mediated participation for the filmed stakeholders. We will first return to the production process and then discuss the use phase.

The overlooked stakeholders in the VPA A&RD case include people living with HIV/AIDS, orphan headed households and rural communities without access to medical treatment. We have not encountered, much to the surprise of

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[3] This VPA was referred to as Recherche-Action Visualisée (RAV) sur la réintégration socio-économique des enfants soldats au Kivu, in short the RAV Kadogo.

others engaged in interviewing activities, a lack of motivation, or fear, or shame to share a life story. Stakeholders who were filmed for this VPA A&RD agreed joining the production after ample introduction and explanation of the VPA and its intended use. Primary stakeholders, such as rural people infected and/or affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, joining the production of the VPA A&RD, were able to explain their motivation. They indicated that specific issues that hindered their public participation related to the cost of traveling, physical impairments and experienced or anticipated stigmatization, among others.

Secondary stakeholders comply with institutional policies, engage with the potential of the VPA or feel otherwise supported by the initiative. Only once did a filmed interviewee withdraw her permission to use the interview a week after the filming, stating, "The organization I work for has procedures on who should speak for the organization. I might be a wrong person to speak on behalf of the organization" (email correspondence).

The other way around, we have experienced how VPA users, much to their shame, were confronted with their own prejudices, moral judgments and unfamiliarity with complex associated problems. It is encouraging to see how the VPA creates a safe space for recognizing these embarrassing feelings and gives the VPA session an experimental character for the participants, without consequences for the people involved (as subjects of study), since the interviewees are present on film.

The VPA and Mediated Participation: Discussion

This paper has explored mediated participation. The objective was to assess the potential contribution of mediated participation to public participation processes, especially for underrepresented, distanced or overlooked stakeholders. Experiences with the production and use of the Visual Problem Appraisal AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa were used as an empirical basis, since VPA is considered a form of mediated participation. The point of departure was the general consensus, supported by regulatory frameworks and international agreements, that stakeholder dialogue and public participation are required for problem analysis and policy and decision-making in the context of 'wicked' problems and sustainable development.

Mediated participation is framed as creating spaces for stakeholder dialogue and social learning by removing social, cultural, psychological and/or physical barriers between authorities, policymakers and primary stakeholders for meeting in the 'public sphere' for collective learning and decision-making.

The use of the VPA A&RD provides concrete indications that VPA has the potential to promote discussion, put new issues on the policy agenda, and that it leads to concrete action. The flow of events in the VPA A&RD, its dynamic character, and the way the information of the VPA interviewees is framed, is very similar to workshops conducted in the context of other VPA packages. The

latter VPAs were reported in Witteveen and Enserink (2007), but they mainly focused on VPA in educational settings.

Using VPA for mediated participation in policymaking processes requires the involvement of a commissioner or problem owner. The role of the problem owner is to define the mandate of the VPA use. He or she delegates authorization to the VPA workshop participants (the users) to act on a particular public issue in the context of a policy to design or an intervention to develop. At the end of the workshop VPA users report to the commissioner or problem owner who indicates how generated results will be used. The sequence of the various VPA A&RD workshops as presented in Table 2 illustrates that the focus of using VPA for mediated participation is differently than using VPA in formal education. In other words: the use of VPA for mediated participation should be deliberately embedded in a policy process.

VPA is hypothesized to be a strategy enabling primary stakeholders to express themselves to a wider audience of policy and decision makers. For our evaluation and for answering the questions of how mediated participation is manifest in the public domain and to what extent it replaces or complements live participation, we developed a set of criteria. First, VPA should create a space for social dialogue, implying the VPA narratives should constitute a diverse range of stakeholders and the simulation should be a semi-realistic encounter with the stakeholders concerned. Second, to assess the pros and cons, we used the user's learning process on complex problems and stakeholder perspectives. Third, using the VPA should lead to action. Finally, mediated participation should be relevant to the filmed stakeholders. The empirical evidence presented suggests the VPA A&RD fulfills these expectations to a great extent. Unheard stories were told, and participants and policymakers recognized the realism of the encounter, gained new insights and learned about the complexity of the issue. Most importantly, they responded to the need for action. The latter proves the potential power of media use for representing the underrepresented and the impact of their stories once they are listened to. We could therefore assert that mediated participation indeed contributes to the quality of public participation processes, especially for underrepresented or overlooked stakeholders.

In fact that making and using the VPA A&RD created a space for social dialogue in the public sphere was expressed by the rural people infected and/or affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic who joined the production process. They indicated that issues hindering 'live' participation included the cost of traveling, physical impairments and (self) stigmatization. When convinced of the utilization of the VPA they expressed their wish to cooperate in order to be heard. The realism of the mediated encounter with these primary stakeholders as experienced by the users or the participants in the VPA workshops is shown by the engagement of the VPA users with the issue at stake and the actions instigated after the workshops.

The issues raised and discussed during the workshops confirmed our assumption that learning about AIDS and Rural Development can take place by means of a VPA. We conclude that the individual stories of the VPA

interviewees represent, as intended, collective experiences and narratives. Presenting these narratives in a mediated way to other stakeholders then led to learning, and ultimately to action.

From the found footage production experiment, we learned that the VPA interviews should be filmed according to specific styles of interviewing and filming to allow mediated participation to be effective. It is not the filmmaker/analyst who is the pivotal actor, it is the stakeholder. In their own words, rhythms and localities, the stakeholders tell the stories of their lives. Consequently, as with other interview-driven film styles, the production requires time to build rapport with the interviewees and due attention needs to be paid to issues of informed consent. Going forward on this quest and exploring the potentials of mediated participation using VPA agendizes ethical issues such as informed consent of the interviewees, a sound use of the VPA interviews and the aesthetics of representing these stakeholders.

We did not go into the important role of the facilitator in VPA workshops in this article. It should be noted the facilitator could contribute significantly to the quality of the mediated encounter. A trained facilitator can promote and increase in-depth listening or enhance the experience of the encounter through 'mirroring' questions and techniques.

Based on the experiences with the VPA A&RD reported here, we conclude that mediated participation is a valuable concept that can add to the quality and inclusiveness of public participation processes and to the quality of policymaking. It is a concept that is worthwhile to explore further. VPA as a concrete method for mediated participation has been proven to have a real impact on policy making, as was illustrated by making and using the VPA A&RD. These results suggest that mediated participation should not be considered as only a second-best option next to 'live' participation, but that this approach has its own merits. It might be considered as a different strategy and as one part of the public participation practitioners' toolkit.

Word of thanks

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7. Unraveled Patterns, New Scenarios

Introduction

This study focused on designing and evaluating visual learning strategies in relation to wicked problems in multi stakeholder settings and sustainable development. The study combined theoretical insights from the fields of development studies, communication and education studies, film and art studies and policy analysis with the exigent practice of film design and production. The focus on learning by social actors, practitioners and policy makers involved in multi stakeholder settings carried the ambition to contribute to sustainable development and impact mitigation of wicked problems. The PhD developed along a design track and a research track. The design track focused on the development of the visual learning strategies VPA and Embedded Filming and these visual learning strategies provided the empirical basis for the research track. The research track focused on understanding the dynamics resulting from these visual learning strategies.

The design track started with the design and production of the VPA Kerala's Coast. The series of Embedded Filming provided a comparative learning strategy to study the distinctive features of both visual learning strategies. The VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (A&RD) was produced and used providing new insights into a concept we called mediated participation as this VPA was mainly used in the public domain with secondary stakeholders.

The experiences and learning that resulted from these activities were reported in articles presented in the previous chapter to answer the research questions.

The first research question was: How can film-based visual learning strategies be designed to achieve learning about problem analysis and formulation of alternatives in relation to wicked problems, multi stakeholder settings and sustainable development? A major answer to this question is the development of ideal types for VPA and for Embedded Filming. In the next section we explain the development and present the resulting ideal types. The theoretical notions that contribute to the design, production and use of films in visual learning strategies is reported throughout the thesis. Chapter 1 provides an initial outline positioning the research in relation to complex problems and visual learning. Chapter 2 presents the initial design of VPA and relates it to simulation and gaming. The main educational design principles of VPA are elaborated in detail in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 studies the production of the VPA Kerala's Coast as a space of intercultural communication. A comparative perspective is provided in Chapter 5 where Embedded Filming is presented and elaborated. Theories on public participation are used in Chapter 6 to position the concept of mediated participation.

The second sub question on critical conditions and processes influencing the design, production and use of films in visual learning strategies is answered in those sections describing the production processes that were part of the study such as VPA Kerala's Coast (Chapter 2, Chapter 4), VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (Chapter 6) and the series of Embedded Filming (Chapter 5). The sub question on cultural dimensions of producing visual learning strategies is most articulated answered in Chapter 4 where the focus is on cultural issues in the production and use of VPA Kerala's Coast as a case study. Cultural dimensions are to a lesser extent addressed in Chapter 5 and 6, and a conclusion to this sub question comes back in the last section of this concluding chapter.

The second research question was: What is the value of visual learning strategies using film, for learning about problem analysis and formulation of alternatives in relation to wicked problems, multi stakeholder settings and sustainable development? This question was sub divided for three user groups or audiences: future practitioners and policymakers, primary stakeholders and secondary stakeholders. In Chapter 3 we answer this question very specific for the user group of future practitioners and policy makers in a setting of capacity building and education regarding VPA. For the user group of primary stakeholders in settings in the public domain our answers are limited, they have not been very much in the focus of this study as direct users of the VPA and Embedded Filming, although this is shortly addressed in Chapter 2. The value of visual learning strategies for primary stakeholders comes to the fore in the article on mediated participation (Chapter 6). The value of visual learning strategies for the user group of secondary stakeholders such as practitioners, policy makers, and decision-makers in settings in the public domain based on using the VPA Kerala's Coast is reported in Chapter 2 and 3, whereas Chapter 6 reports on the VPA A&RD. This questions is further answered for Embedded Filming in Chapter 5.

In the previous chapters we followed the journey of this research through the articles that each reflect a partial perspective or outcome. This chapter aims

to compile the gained insights to unravel emerging patterns and to bring new scenarios on stage. In the first section a comparative overview of VPA and Embedded Filming is provided to explain the development of the two visual learning strategies. Based on lessons learned we developed ideal types which are presented. In the second section of this chapter the value of using visual learning strategies in a context of wicked problems and sustainable development, as resulted from the various research activities, will be brought together. We will review the gained insights and define the value of visual learning strategies for problem analysis, social dialogue and mediated participation as we learned from this research. Critical conditions and processes influencing the design, production and use of VPA and Embedded Filming will be brought together in the third section. Lastly we will formulate general conclusion and reflect on the outcome of the research. Throughout this chapter we will indicate some initial thoughts on future research.

Ideal Types of VPA and Embedded Filming

The VPA design developed with the production and use of the VPA KC and the VPA A&RD. The Embedded Filming design developed with the production and use of the series of five films on HIV/AIDS and rural development professionalism. The wicked problems addressed in these VPAs focus on integrated coastal zone management in Kerala, India, and on AIDS and rural development professionalism in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Embedded Filming series also focuses on HIV/AIDS and rural development professionalism in Sub-Saharan Africa. The visual learning strategies have been used in an array of situations and with a variety of audiences. The visual learning strategies have shown the ability to bring complex realities and a diversity of stakeholders together in spaces of learning, reflection and change.

The shared focus of VPA and Embedded Filming is reflected in similarities in the general production and use. The filming process of both strategies focuses on social actors, their perspectives and reflections on reality. This consideration for multiple realities and societal complexity in the films is further underlined in the absence of a voice over or otherwise a steering 'outsider.' Although VPA and Embedded Filming have strong similarities, they are also characterized by differences. VPA filming activities are not embedded in a wider activity as is the case for Embedded Filming. Editing in Embedded Filming differs from the editing style of the VPA interviews as it adheres more to conventional documentary editing. The distinctive visual language of each film style was highlighted in the found footage experiment. This experiment showed that the footage of the Embedded Filming series could not be used for the production of VPA narratives because of the film styles not being congruent.

The wider setting of using VPA and Embedded Filming also differs. A VPA interview establishes a dialogue with the interviewee. It simulates an encounter, and the audience experiences the VPA interviews as meeting and listening to

real persons. In Embedded Filming, the audience identifies with the main characters on screen in a more conventional documentary style. The viewers identify with their peers or colleagues and immerse in their process of experiencing, reflecting and learning. This creates for the audience an intra-personal dialogue leading to similar, yet mediated aspects of experiencing, reflecting and learning. These varying ways of using visual languages can also be seen as using specific types of analysis and thinking. In this study we discerned this different impact in order to understand and specify the value of the respective visual learning strategies and the specific underlying designs. This analysis is reflected in the developed ideal types of VPA and Embedded Filming. In the following paragraphs we will present these ideal types indicating basic technical features. Digesting these technical features is not sufficient to cover the full picture of a film design, it is however an initial approach to outline the ideal types.

The following table shows an overview of Ideal Type development for the different VPA packages. They all contributed to the development of the VPA Ideal Type presented in the last column. Though the VPA Rice from the Guyana's is not a part of this study, we include it here as the VPA Rice from the Guyana's was the first VPA prototype. From Table 1 it can be read that the VPA Ideal Type is in line with the VPA Kerala's Coast. The package is made up of 2 documentaries and 23 filmed narratives with accompanying material (a workbook and a facilitator guide). The VPA Kerala's Coast is complete for use in education and in the public domain. The VPA AIDS & Rural Development package contains the core elements of VPA. This VPA is complete for use in the public domain as it is made up of a relevant selection of filmed narratives with basic accompanying material.

Title	VPA Rice from the Guyana's (1996)	VPA Kerala's Coast (2003)	VPA AIDS & Rural Development (2008)	VPA Ideal Type
Crew	Professional crew	Professional crew	Professional crew	Professional crew
Introductory documentary	Available (12 minutes)	Available (30 minutes)	Absent	Supportive (20 – 25 minutes)
Filmed narratives (Stakeholder interviews)	Available (13 pers.)	Available (23 pers.)	Available (14 pers.)	Essential (15 - 25[1] pers.)
Sex balance interviewees men / women	100% - 0%	75% - 25%	66%- 33%	Reflecting stakeholder diversity
Balance primary / secondary stakeholders	36% - 64%	30% - 70%	57% - 43 %	70% - 30% or otherwise emphasizing underrepresented, overlooked and/or distanced stakeholders

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[1] Depending on complexity of the issue at stake.

Conclusive documentary	Absent	39 minutes	Absent	Supportive (20 – 25 minutes)
Facilitators' guide	55 pages	148 pages	74 pages	Essential, including transcripts
Workbook	71 pages, English	83 pages, English	Workshop version, 12 pages. French and English	Essential, including reflective forms and list of stakeholders
Narrative metaphor	Available	Available	Absent	Supportive in education
Self test	11 questions	17 questions	Absent	Supportive in education
Voice Over	In the documentary	In the documentaries.	n/a	In the documentaries
Sound	Actual sound recorded on location	Actual sound recorded on location	Actual sound recorded on location	Actual sound recorded on location
Formats	VHS tapes digitalized in 2007	DVD	DVD	DVD or comparative quality
Funding	Fragmented funding: budget for filming and for editing	One budget for the whole production	Fragmented and insufficient funding	One budget for the whole production
Distribution / Use	Distributed to commissioner. Used in education	Distributed to commissioner and others. Used in education	Distributed to commissioner and others. Used in the public domain and in education	Distributed to commissioner. Used in the public domain and in education

Table 1:Overview of VPA Ideal Type Development

For the VPA Ideal Type, depending on the use in education or in the public domain, the established basic features might differ slightly. To achieve claimed objectives in education, a more elaborate process of use is envisaged. For example, VPA users in a setting of formal education require more time for the scoping stage as they are not as familiar with the context as VPA users in the public domain. Therefore VPA in educational settings is made up of more films and materials as compared to VPA in the public domain. Based on the proceedings of VPA workshops in the public domain we conclude that the essential core of VPA is made up of a fair amount of filmed narratives, the workbooks and the facilitators' guides, including the transcripts of the narratives. These differences also result from the initial level of knowledge and expertise regarding the concerned issue. In the public domain, VPA users all have a 'stake' and therefore do already have a kind of relevant knowledge.

As reflected in the previous chapters, the use and objectives of VPA developed in the course of this study. The differences between the various uses of VPA became more articulated in the course of its development and the terminology adapted over the years. Table 2 (also presented in Chapter 6) presents the claimed impact of VPA use for the Scoping & Stakeholder Consultation Stage and for the Action Stage.

VPA Use	Objectives for VPA Users in the Scoping and Stakeholder Consultation Stage	Objectives for VPA Users in the Action Stage
Future practitioners – educational setting	Enhanced professional problem and policy analysis competencies Learning about public participation, stakeholder analysis and policy design	Proposals for policy design and implementation Proposals for transformation strategies
Primary stakeholders – public domain	Enhanced problem and policy analysis capacity and intersubjective consensus Social learning; collective learning about social issues, problem framing and perceptions	Empowerment / awareness Lobby and advocacy strategies Project proposals
Secondary stakeholders – public domain	Enhanced problem and policy analysis capacity and intersubjective consensus Social learning; collective learning about social issues, problem framing and perceptions Reduced self referentiality and increased commitment for primary stakeholders concerned	Policy design and implementation Development of transformation strategies

Table 2: VPA Impact

In the previous chapters we have reported on VPA use in settings of education and capacity building (see Chapter 3 a.o.) and on VPA use by secondary stakeholders in the public domain (see Chapter 6 a.o.). Most of the VPA experiences that are included in the study refer to future practitioners and secondary stakeholders. As indicated in Table 2 we also claim that VPA use by primary stakeholders in the public domain might have a relevant impact. This is however hardly elaborated in this study. We have touched on this use in the VPA Kerala's Coast workshop in Panavally Panchayat where we observed glimpses that could eventually confirm this claim, but we did not study it in-depth (see Chapter 2).

In contrast to the VPA Ideal Type, the Embedded Filming Ideal Type developed in a more conventional, linear way. Table 3 lists the technical features of the Embedded Films and its Ideal Type.

Title	Kilio – the Cry, AIDS and Rural Development in East Africa (2002)	"When I Die, Tell Eliza…" Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Rural Zambia (2005)	Tamaso Ma Jyothir Gamaya – From Darkness to Light (2005)	When the Beat of the Drum Changes the Steps Will Follow (2006)	Close Concerns Distant Mountains (2007)	Embedded Film Ideal Type
Crew	Partial Participatory production: sound recording, scripting, a.o.	Partial Participatory production: sound recording, scripting, a.o.	Professional Crew	Professional Crew	Professional Crew	Professional Crew
Length	32'	42'	41'	38'	38'	30' – 40'
Formats	VHS	VHS / DVD	DVD / VCD	DVD / VCD	DVD / VCD	DVD / VCD
Voice over	Voice over narration recorded and inserted to complete the editing	A narrating 'I' / subjective voice over narration by one of the participant – actors	No voice over narration	No voice over narration	No voice over narration	No voice over narration
Contained elements of Participation — Sound	Actual sound recorded on location	Actual sound recorded on location	Actual sound recorded on location	Actual sound recorded on location	Actual sound recorded on location	Actual sound recorded on location
Contained elements of Participation	Partial Participatory production: sound recording, scripting, a.o.	Partial Participatory production: sound recording, scripting, a.o.	Discussion and monitoring of the filming with partici-pants.	Discussion and monitoring of the filming with partici-pants	Filming as an integral strategy of the learning procedure	Filming as an integral strategy of the learning procedure
Funding	Fragmented and insufficient funding	Fragmented funding: budget for filming; Limited budget for editing	One budget for the whole production	One budget for the whole production	One budget for the whole production	One budget for the whole production
Distribution (use)	To course participants and on request	To course participants and on request	To course partici-pants and on request	To course partici-pants and on request	To course partici-pants and on request	To course partici-pants and on request

Table 3: Overview of Embedded Filming Ideal Type Development

From Table 3 we observe that the Embedded Filming Ideal Type gradually developed from the Embedded Filming series as we elaborated in Chapter 5. The film 'Close Concerns, Distant Mountains' coincides with the Ideal Type.

The aim of Embedded Filming is to provide a strategic and informative learning tool for practitioners and related institutions to reflect on the dynamics of challenged professionalism. The films show linkages between elements of the issue at stake and concerned professionalism. It brings the practitioners, their clientele and other stakeholders on stage and portrays the social learning process of the practitioners. Embedded Filming refers to the style of filming that is embedded in the learning process previously mentioned.

The Value of Using Film for Learning about Wicked Problems in Multi Stakeholder Settings and Sustainable Development

Problem Analysis

Through VPA, the audience or users learn about the complexity of the issue at stake.

In Chapter 3 this is elaborated for the context of formal education and Chapter 6 elaborates on this learning outcome through VPA in the public domain. VPA users such as future practitioners and secondary stakeholders indicated that they learn about the substantive, strategic and institutional components of the problem. They experience the multi stakeholder complexity and learn about the short and long term variations of problem definitions. VPA introduces or underlines the recognition that problems are 'owned.' Ownership of problems is attributed to stakeholders directly impacted by the (perceived) problem and to indirect stakeholders; those with a mandate to act or otherwise have a functional relation.

From the very start, where VPA users assess and therefore activate their expertise and existing knowledge, they feel intrigued with the problem and the issue at stake. In the scoping stage VPA users analyze the problem. The depth and quality of the scoping stage may vary as it depends on resources and time available, but basic scoping activities are required to enable VPA users to articulate substantive problem elements. The stakeholder consultation emphasizes the strategic and institutional problem perspectives. The different tracks that are followed by the VPA groups during this stage create a sense of competition as groups wish to assure their stakeholder selection and consultation to be optimal. As VPA users realize that the option of different tracks might indicate a deficiency or accidental quality of their analysis they feel responsible for justifying the process. This effect further enhances the problem analysis.

It is the creation of a safe space through the VPA that helps to induce learning. The safe space tolerates uncertainty and allows contrasting or even conflictive information to circulate. This safe space has not been researched in detail in this study. To understand its functioning we assume that issues such as

maintenance of face and prevention of embarrassment play a role. Interpreting the studies of Goffman on interaction rituals (Goffman, 1967) these issues can be considered as conditions not as an objective of interaction. This remains however an interest for further research.

In this study we have seen that VPA users, reflecting on their enhanced problem understanding also report on their own learning processes. A major element of this (meta) understanding of problem analysis by the participants, is the realization that their previous constructions and perceptions of the problem were somehow naive and too straightforward. This enhanced problem analysis results from VPA as a whole; from the created space constituted by the films, from the reflective forms, the learning strategy and the interactions between all participants. The identification with concerned stakeholders through the mediated encounter creates engagement. The continuous reflection and feedback on the process enhances the intrinsic motivation to come to terms with the issue at stake. This continuous focus on accountability for the process increases a sense of legitimacy for application of the outcomes among the users.

During the study, especially in settings of formal education in the life sciences, the mediated stakeholder consultation provided valuable options for training or preparing students (future practitioners) for undertaking fieldwork in internships and thesis projects. Students, exposed to filmed resource persons through VPA, have limited options to attribute problems to failing logistics, transport issues, cultural differences, language and other communication constraints. The filmed narratives are available and the students can observe and learn from them and reflect on their way of dealing with the problem analysis process.

In Chapter 5 we elaborate on learning in line with the concept of 'creating positive friction' (Vermunt, 1992:38) and from the results of the study we conclude that visual learning strategies we are researching create such positive friction.

Since facilitators or lecturers can observe the films on forehand and dispose of transcripts, they have an insight into the students' experience and informative resources that would not be possible during real live or outdoor field activities of students. In a sense, VPA diminishes the number of variables affecting the quality of the students' analysis to one major variable that is made up by the performance of the students. This enables the facilitator to provide students with direct and concise feedback on their work. The directness and preciseness of this feedback may be perceived as confrontational by the users or participants. But is leads to positive friction as the quality of the feedback supports the future practitioners to reflect on possible misconceptions, omissions and other weaknesses that could otherwise be attributed by students to factors beyond their influence and control. Narrowing and even eliminating disputes on what internal or external factors are determining the quality of the problem analysis is experienced as very advantageous by VPA facilitators. It increases the focus on potential professional weaknesses and failures, which is not a favorite subject for many students, but all too soon they convert this reluctance to a reflection

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and expression of learning objectives. Such a strong or deep learning experience makes students realize how they treat subjects of study as objects, make wrong interpretations, raise false expectations and intrude fragile livelihoods.

The no-escape character of VPA feedback loops sharpens the focus on harm that may result from unethical or weak professional practices. It is a harsh conclusion to state that in preparing students for fieldwork, some basic elements of ethics and intercultural communication with vulnerable and diverse stakeholders are often been disregarded in education. Manuals and textbooks on research do sometimes narrow down to issues of informed consent whereas others elaborate in more detail on dilemmas of the encounter (Oliver, 2008:116-118, Thrift, 1993:107). VPA provide an alternative to practice the procedures and ethics of interviewing and fieldwork.

Similar effects have also been observed while using the VPA outside settings of formal education. VPA users in the public domain also learn from facilitators' feedback though the setting is different. The relationship between VPA users and facilitators in the public domain is not hierarchical defined as in formal education. VPA users and facilitators in the public domain often have shared interest in achieving outcomes that goes beyond personal learning objectives.

The Embedded Filming series also leads to problem analysis, yet in a different way as resulting from using the VPA. The audience learns about a variety of aspects of the issue at stake as the viewers follow the personal and professional development of their portrayed peers or (future) colleagues as the events unfold. As a consequence the problem analysis of the Embedded Filming audience is always combining the substantive elements with strategic and institutional elements. The resulting problem analysis and the reflective process is colored by the engagement with the personalized perspectives of the professionals involved in the film.

Overall, we conclude that the visual learning strategies contribute to enhancement of the quality of a problem analysis as both VPA and Embedded Filming provide mediated experiences and reflective processes that induce problem analysis. Their distinctive designs generate different processes and different outcomes. VPA stimulates diverging processes with less predefined outcomes whereas Embedded Filming may bring about an analysis similar to the content of the film, yet transplanted to the Embedded Filming audience.

Social Dialogue

From this study we conclude that visual learning strategies have a capacity to create a space for social dialogue. The adjective social in a conceptual definition of social dialogue in this study refers to interpersonal relations, to the content, to the process and to the intentional focus (Leeuwis, 2004:148). VPA participants report on the stakeholder consultation in first person plural and identify themselves as interviewers and the filmed stakeholders as interviewees. This sense of realism creates for the audience the experience of meeting the

Other. In a context of experiential learning, it means that the live experience is replaced by a mediated experience. This mediated, but still primary experience is not a quality strictly deriving from the films. It is the co-construct of realism in the films and the real engagement coming together in a space for learning. When we assessed VPA in formal education, as reported in Chapter 3, this aspect was labeled as "the strength of the simulation" and was considered as a threshold indicator for the visual learning strategy. A particular example of the co-construct of reality in the VPA is the interview selection in the stakeholder consultation stage. The selection determines the events to follow and participants are held accountable and feel responsible. As a result, independently of live or mediated interviews, the selection is a real decisive act.

We conclude that films designed, produced and used in a visual learning strategy that incorporates principles of experiential learning, can replace the live experience for a mediated experience and still maintain the experience to be perceived as primary. Although the films provide a mediated experience, the associated emotions and perceptions of the user (individually and collectively) are real. VPA as such creates a space of (experiential) learning. In this space of learning the users or audience meets the Other in social dialogue.

The social dialogue results from the particular film style as well as from the activating process that incorporates the audience in a process of change. The audience does not watch the films as 'couch potatoes' but feels part of a constructed dialogue. The VPA films represent the every day discourse of social actors. The specific VPA interview driven film style respects the complete narrative as it was delivered during recording. Editing maintains 'mistakes', hesitations and repetitions in the narrative of the interviewee. In this way interview conventions are contested and do not match the audience expectation as they are mostly trained to consume parboiled arguments.

As the VPA narratives unfold, the users realize they are to deconstruct and reconstruct the storyline. This adds to the experience of being part of the dialogue. As a result they realize that the analysis of the discourse also reveals their own framing and understanding of the issue at stake. These effects occur in the observation and analysis of one single interview and are repeated and iteratively reinforced in the consecutive observation of a series of narratives.

The Embedded Filming strategy creates a different kind of social dialogue. Rather than focusing on an interpersonal dialogue between different stakeholders or social actors, it creates during observation intra personal dialogues about the functioning of one self at a collective level. The experience of sharing the learning process of a group of peers or (future) colleagues as observed in the film leads to reconstruct the professional debate represented in the film for the situation of the observer. Depending on the use of these films in individual or group settings this debate remains individual or becomes collective during discussions after observation of the film.

Throughout the study it was realized that an additional value of using film for social dialogue is the option for repeated observation. This allows the users to see, hear and feel more of what is encapsulated in the film. This results from

the richness of the visual strategy as it is difficult to appreciate all information at a first look. It has been frequently observed that the audience is initially keen on factual information. For instance, rather than observing and listening to the interviewee, the audience often pays attention to their notebooks for factual note taking. This conventional focus on extracting information may hinder a more holistic or interpretive focus. Good listening to tone of voice, to concealed information or to meaningful gestures sometimes needs the instigation of the facilitators. This process of gaining insight into their usual way of observing also allows the audience to reflect on their 'normal' audience behavior in a live situation. This reflection on mediated observation leads to social learning about their abilities and shortcomings as partner in a dialogue.

Overall, we conclude that the two visual learning strategies contribute to create social dialogues, and these dialogues have social action and change on the agenda. The research suggests that visual learning strategies create social engagement between relevant actors.

Mediated Participation

As a promising value of visual learning strategies we studied mediated participation. We use this term to contrast live presence of silenced and overlooked stakeholders in processes of public participation. Mediated participation refers in this study to the filmed contribution (or mediated presence) of direct stakeholders who otherwise wouldn't be present in public policy making processes. At the start of this study, in the initial designs of the visual learning strategies, mediated participation was considered as a second best option after live presence or participation. Throughout the study we acquired the insight that mediated participation is a concept worth to consider for its autonomous relevance as it may enhance social inclusion and equity in problem analysis and decision making by other means as through live participation.

Mediated participation allows altering perceived or tangible constraints such as distance, scarce resources, an agenda loaded with productive and reproductive tasks, health problems or safety issues that impede on the participation of stakeholders in processes of public participation. Mediated participation removes these constraints away from the primary stakeholder (e.g. the interviewee) and convert them into the responsibility of the film makers to produce a good selection of filmed narratives.

Other hindrances influencing the effective participation of stakeholders during a process of public participation such as language barriers and an array of socio-cultural issues are converted as filmed narratives change the resulting dialogue. This effect may not only be advantageous to the mediated stakeholders but may also have advantages to the observer- stakeholders. VPA users commenting on their prejudices and biases did express a sense of shame upon realizing how their inappropriate observations and analysis would have influenced the quality of a live dialogue. Mostly, participants realize to have a safe space for experimenting and learning as their 'errors' will not have negative

consequences for involved stakeholders. Realizing this freedom to learn and act by trial and error, provides a psychological space for learning and dialogue which is absent in the reality of live stakeholder consultation or public participation. Facilitation may underline using this freedom wisely and ethically.

Mediated participation as defined above for VPA is not as explicit as in the use of Embedded Filming. In this visual learning strategy the perspective of silenced and overlooked stakeholders is represented in more conventional documentary styles. However, similar considerations for the inclusion of filmed portraits of direct social actors are discerned as the constraints for live participation exist for concerned stakeholders. Independently of the visual learning strategy that may be designed or implemented as an alternative to live presence we can conclude that using film is a strategic and effective way of portraying stakeholders who would otherwise not be heard and known by the audience. Throughout the study we have come across audiences addressing people they had seen on screen in such a way that the encounter seems to have been real. Filmed stakeholders are perceived as individuals, they are addressed by their names, they are literally quoted 'Mrs Maniyamma told us …' and at the same time they give face to a story which is understood to be representative for others, to represent a collective story. The quotes from students (reported in Chapter 3) and VPA workshops participants (reported in Chapter 6) exemplify these effects.

From this study we learned that mediated participation also constitutes advantages for interviewees sharing delicate stories. It is appreciated that silenced and overlooked stories about issues such as commercial sex work, drunkenness, AIDS, poverty and social exclusion were contributed to the films produced in this research. Observing the effort of primary stakeholders to externalize his/ her story we realize that a single time recording is of a high efficiency degree when watched by a high number of interested outsiders.

In the workshops, undertaken in the course of this study, we have come across audiences that expressed a wish to go beyond the filmed narrative of these delicate issues and establish a direct dialogue with concerned stakeholders. As it is not feasible to grant this wish the underlying ambitions were then discussed and analyzed and in our experience this could lead to discourse analysis of substantial quality. Peculiar examples derived from the VPA A&RD workshop in Bukavu, DRC. A group of VPA users discussed for what reason they wanted to find out how an HIV+ stakeholder was infected and they concluded that the answer was of no professional interest yet grounded in personal curiosity or a combination.

Another group questioned extra-marital relations and later discussed that extra-marital maybe was a quite erroneous term to use in a war ridden situation where many women never reach stable economic and affective relations with man for reasons beyond their influence. As if inspired by Foucault (Hall, 1997:43) they discussed that using the term extra-marital was maybe done to feel themselves of a higher social status as they themselves were married with

children of same father- same mother relationships. In line with Table 2 this reflection can be considered as an indicator for reduced self-referentiality.

Overall we conclude that mediated participation should not be considered as a second-best option to live participation. Especially the VPA learning strategy offers a primary experience and an alternative to learning through face-to-face interactions. Consequently visual learning strategies may enhance social inclusion and equity in problem analysis and decision making. A similar conclusion is drawn by Braden (1998:97) when commenting on groups "at the margins of society" to whom the public sphere was "relatively private." She reports that the realization of common interest with others through video projects stretches the boundaries of their communities leading to the transformation of the public sphere. Braden (1998: 99) further concludes that although other media are available to make local people heard "beyond their immediate context," video records both sound and image and offers opportunities "for representation and dialogue through which excluded people can be heard in the public and semi-public spheres from which they have been marginalized."

Considerations about the Design, Production and Use of VPA and Embedded Filming

The value of visual learning strategies to achieve problem analysis, social dialogue and mediated participation results from the creation of a specific visual language through the use of film. In this section we focus on critical conditions and the processes related to designing and producing these visual languages.

Film Making as a Space of Intercultural Communication

A basic feature that is conditional for the production of the visual learning strategies relates to the diverse professionalisms required. Designing and producing visual learning strategies brings professionals together from various domains such as education, communication, film studies, policy analysis and from the subject matter issue concerned (e.g. agricultural production, coastal zone management). It also brings different professions together. Scientists, subject matter experts, filmmakers and policy analyst have to work closely together under sometimes difficult conditions. They all have specific and more or less well defined contributions, yet they also adhere to collective professional cultures. To further increase the complexity of the production arena it should be acknowledged that quality film making also results from elements of art and intuition which may not be as tangible or clear to others than the involved filmmakers.

We studied the production of the VPA Kerala's Coast from a perspective of culture and conflict as described in Chapter 4. We concluded that using an active approach towards the production process provided a workable approach and we considered the filming and the diverse crew as a space of intercultural communication (Lie, 2003). Anticipating the complexity of the task in this way calls for deliberate reflection and may create a sense of exciting anticipation and expectations of learning. This conclusion coincides with lessons learned from participatory video projects by Braden (1998:88) who highlights the relevance of sensitivity to contextual and cultural differences and she promotes trajectories of learning and reflection for all involved in facilitation of the film process continuum.

The Art of Interviewing

Regarding the art of interviewing and the portrayal on screen of vulnerable social actors and other stakeholders we learn from this research that a good interview is a treasure to cherish. Interviewing is a skill and an art and it requires preparation to be familiar with the context and to have a "better understanding of what might be left unsaid" (Slim and Thompson, 1993). It is not a coincidence that social actors are willing to share their stories, especially regarding sensitive topics. It requires building rapport, making people feel at ease and creating space to let stories surface and to enable listening. It takes time to create a space of trust, openness and willingness to share the story of your life. Having created these narrative spaces, the interviewers, filmmakers and facilitators then have a serious responsibility to harbor the stories.

We have not seldom been asked to reveal how or why we managed to film interviews which are assumed or experienced as difficult for reasons of gender, caste and other delicate issues such as AIDS prevalence. We have not found a definite answer to this, yet; we assume that it is probably a combination of our film making training and the willingness of social actors to share their stories. In line with research results reported by Ker Rault (2008:256) we have experienced a willingness to participate. Results from Ker Raults' study on public participation in integrated water management in the Levant indicated that main reasons for involvement were to "give my opinion to the public authority about future plans' and to 'exchange views with other citizens and stakeholders."

An emerging issue thus relates to ethics; to the (moral) authority of filmmakers to record, store and 'use' the stories of the interviewees and to the competences of interviewers and filmmakers to guarantee the integrity of the interviewee. Converting this in ample elaboration of informed consent formalities is only one alternative. Williams (2003:169) departs openly from the idea that "informed consent must be violated to do a great deal of field research. [ ] Respondents cannot possibly be informed in such detail as to make them as knowledgeable agents as the researcher himself or herself". He therefore claims that "being ethical is a much more personal and subjective quality and is about [ ]

being able to reflexively evaluate the consequences of one's own actions on the lives of others" (Williams, 2003:169) Informed consent means that the stakeholders agree on the film production and its use and sign a form articulating this consent. It is however recognized that it is more the quality of the consent procedure and the way of dealing with consent issues that makes social research earn credits of ethical. (Thrift, 2003:119).

Informed consent in the filming activities of this study was approached from a point of view focusing on procedures that aim to explain and ensure a particular use of the interview, that provide basic information and contact details to enable the right to interviewees to withdraw permission.

In this study we have been careful not to promise anything we could not materialize. We have had a few opportunities to return their filmed interviews to interviewees to show and give them a DVD with their interview. In those rare cases the interviewees confirmed their consent. This approach towards issues of consent also results from the interpretive stand of the involved filmmakers that it is their responsibility to deal ethically with the deposited confidence of the interviewees as they agreed to contribute to the filming. In this context, Williams (2003:169) states that "being ethical at this level is about a balance between science and commitment." To define what we mean by ethical we can follow the Credo for Ethical Communication of the National Communication Association (Andersen, 2000). One of the nine principles advocates "truthfulness, accuracy, honesty and reason as essential to the integrity of communication" and another principle underlines that "we accept responsibility for the short- and long-term consequences of our own communication and expect the same of others." Braden (1998:88) mentions in this context 'rapport' to describe a "climate in which people work together with mutual respect and trust." Adding to this a remark about the stakeholder selection is justified. In this study ample time was allocated to stakeholder selection. Biases as gender, social, class and caste, health status, age, and rural / urban biases were articulated and considered on various occasions. Departing from the notion that it is difficult to include actors you tend to overlook, all time dedicated to stakeholder selection has been appreciated as meaningful and ethically sound.

The Art of Facilitation

The initial assumption that using film as a visual learning strategy could create a rather autonomous learning process whereby personal instruction is replaced by a mediated learning environment is not confirmed for VPA. Impact assessment shows that VPA creates a strong learning environment that requires sound facilitation. Evaluating Embedded Filming indicates a more autonomous use with these films, however the use is optimal by appropriate facilitation. Since producing and using film in the social domain always seems to be incorporated in wider processes of learning and change it seems reasonable to do further research on the facilitation of visual learning strategies. One of the issues we propose to research further is what we came to call 'visual discourse

analysis'. In line with Foucault who argues that "since we only have a knowledge of things if they have a meaning, it is discourse – not the things-in-themselves – which produces knowledge (quoted in Hall, 1997:45)" we imagine that we can elaborate tools for visual discourse analysis that support the construction of meaning and leads to learning.

Another issue that requires more attention is the training of facilitators as VPA carries new elements of facilitation and maybe also requires de-learning of obsolete competences as 'watching videos' differs substantially from 'creating a learning space through VPA' as we are discussing here. An interesting example of a need to change perceptions on using visual learning strategies is exemplified in a passionate quote we received from a correspondence on a prospective VPA production "It sounds nice, but is no good for our trainees. Our trainees should do such an exercise for real - otherwise they will not get it. The live interaction with interviewees, walking around at the farms, going to meet people of all kind of different stakeholders in their offices, meeting the people in their workplace cannot be adequately substituted by watching video recordings! It really opens your mind if you can do all that, live the experience and not just talk and fake it in a classroom. We never do such things, although we talk about it" (email correspondence, June 2009).

From this example we learn that the VPA design principle of providing an alternative to fieldwork (as explained at the start of Chapter 3) continually returns on the agenda when comparing mediated experiences with reality. In line with notions of 'experiential learning' we have elaborated in Chapter 3 that we consider VPA as a simulation of reality that provides a mediated primary experience. The above quote is not taking into account this primary experience of analysis. VPA blurs the boundaries of fake and real and provides a simulation in cases where above mentioned 'real' experiences are often not possible. As this experience results from dealing with mediated visuals and narratives, it might be worthwhile for facilitators to support visual discourse analysis by the audience or participants during feedback activities. An interpretative semiotic approach may provide an entry point to have a better vision (Dick, 2010:360-361). Discerning changes or differences in technical features such as camera frames and perspectives, lengths of shots, sound and voice over may be a start to come to an articulation of rhythm and composition, to recognize symbolic meanings and attach the past and the future to what is visible on screen.

Mediated Participation Requires Institutional Space

Considering mediated participation as a strategy that matches the ambition of public participation, social inclusion and equity seems to be a great result in the current society where the quest for social and natural sustainability is high on the agenda. This stands hold for the theoretical value of mediated participation. In practice mediated participation is not a silver bullet, it will not solve everything. Conflicts over resources and knowledge, conflicts over power and culture will probably affect mediated participation. However mediated

participation creates a different setting; it requires a different preparatory trajectory and may create less hassle and disappointment for vulnerable stakeholders. Still, the organization and use of mediated participation requires a serious mandate and delegated authority. If the process is not legitimate and the institutional space for using the results is absent or hardly articulated the generated results of a mediated participation process are likely not have any serious effects.

Braden (1998:26) reflects in this respect on participatory video projects in Vietnam and states that "there is no point in practising conscientisation and participation for their own sake: they must have outcomes." Similarly, for other visual learning strategies, the need for strategic distribution is recognized as claimed by Harding (2005:233) "to truly make an impact, you will need to ensure that it reaches key viewers with the power to act."

The Cost and Benefits of Visual Learning

Designing and producing films, in the social domain, with a multi disciplinary team, in a context of learning and change and all other aspects to consider, remains a film production. Whatever compromise needs to be negotiated, if a film is to be produced, it is the visual language constituted by images, voices, sounds, the editing rhythm and other filmic elements that make it a film.

Regarding the efficiency of producing films in the social domain we experienced in this study that the costs required for producing film is often considered as excessive. The VPA sets that were proposed, but not produced may indicate that producing a VPA is experienced as costly in monetary terms of the budget. For the envisioned VPA Hunze en Aa and the VPA Kadogo budgets of around 100,000 EURO were established. Considering the production cost from a point of view of impact offers other options to frame the design and production cost. In other words defining the costs and benefits of visual learning productions can be done from various angles, ranging from monetary per-spectives towards qualitative approaches.. Although both VPA and Embedded Filming are not common products to find a market share there might be a niche market if searched for, but even in that niche market we have the experience that it is not considered very usual to add a price to the product. Most often it is expected that we distribute it for free. On the other hand, it is experienced that the shell life of VPA and Embedded Filming is quite long. Most exemplary is the use of the VPA Rice from the Guyana's. Though filmed in 1996 it is still used in education. Although the context has changed the basic issues remain valid.

The found footage experiment shows that the 'recycling' idea is nice, but cannot stand hold and resulted in an expensive failure as reported in Chapter 6. Fragmented production budgets such as with the VPA A&RD also seem to give rise to problems as it leads to lengthy production processes and sometimes incompatible results. Another way of showing limited understanding on

filmmaking through a focus on reducing budgets, were proposals for limited budgets wrapped up as approaches for 'participatory video.' These proposals were most often based on the premise that handing over a small camera to a cheap non-filmmaker assistant would lead to the designed and desired final product. Another way to bow the knee for quality, were ideas to invite students to produce footage during their fieldwork. D'Antonio (1998:253) attributes discrepancy between footage and an edited film to a lack of distance between filmmakers and the narrative when explaining how the footage for a documentary could not be edited. "They had captured the spirit in the footage but it was not communicated in the structure, the writing and the editing. Their knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject actually hampered bringing the material close to a view who was new to the story." D'Antonio (1998:254) recognizes that "many documentaries do not start with a prewritten script, but it helps if the filmmaker has a story in mind while shooting. [ ] The point is to continually be thinking about the story and keeping that focus as much as possible while shooting. This will make life easier in the cutting room since footage needs to 'belong' to the story." Although the above quotes are most valid for documentary style of filming like the VPA documentaries and Embedded Filming he exemplifies with these comments the need to distinguish roles in the film making process and to recognize professionalism.

Considering the production of visual learning strategies as 'expensive' may be attributed to a lack of knowledge and experience with film productions. Costs of educational design are often perceived as low as most of the costs are incorporated in overhead expenses such as monthly salaries. We have not found substantial information in the literature regarding this issue. From the experiences in this study and the financial constraints results the recommendation to guarantee a budget for the whole production. This will ensure a basic quality of the film production. We have learned more lessons on dealing with problematic budgets, such as the advantage of production insurances and the importance of reliable sound recording. They fall outside the scope of this study.

Focusing on design of visual learning strategies underlines that strategic use is linked with specific users. In this study other audiences and unintended uses were reported. Eventually many other unintended uses and audiences are not known to the author. An example of an unintended use is the viewing of an interview in research modules at master students level. The interview between a researcher and an HIV+ Ghanaian in the 'When the Beat of the Drum Changes the Steps will Follow' from the Embedded Filming series is a successful example of unintended use that still matches original aims of the film production (see Chapter 5). The above mentioned interview is used to show wrong practices and approaches of interviewing to an audience of future practitioners and underlines issues of ethics and professional responsibilities which are in line with the film from which the interview is taken.

The aesthetics of a 'good film' are not extensively addressed in this research; it requires however mentioning. Aesthetics and art delivered criteria during

filming and editing that were – thought not always explicitly articulated or omitted to paper – of relevance and inspiration to the filmmakers.

Conclusion

The experiences obtained with Visual Problem Appraisal and Embedded Filming provide evidence that it is possible to design, produce and use specific visual learning strategies to achieve strategic learning objectives that enhance complex competences for action and change.

Visual learning strategies overcome physical, cultural and social barriers between vulnerable stakeholders and decision makers. The mediated encounters of the Other and other places and realities turned out to contribute to problem analysis, social dialogue and mediated participation. The value of these visual learning strategies in the context of wicked problems in multi stakeholder settings and sustainable development make it relevant to design and produce specific film formats.

Fundamental features in the production and use of films in the social domain for the realization of the above mentioned values is the consideration that a specific learning strategy requires a particular film style or visual language. It is not film in general that defines the outcome of the learning process; it is the conceptual design, grounded in specific learning and film theories that lays foundations for the process that can be induced by the film. Designing, producing and using existing and yet to innovate visual learning strategies require due attention, expertise and resources.

In this study we combined a design and a research track. Both were dealing with a different perspective on interpreting, analyzing and or learning from the design, production (film making) and use (facilitation and learning) of visual learning strategies. This way of working might be considered as complicated and challenging yet it also has the advantage of being a 'productive work in progress'. Results are tangible outcomes such as DVD's or a workbook, used in a particular setting and leading to concrete evaluation results which – from a design perspective – can be converted into building new or sharpening existing design principles. This might explain a difference between design and research dynamics. Formulating research conclusions is done in a most careful and validated way whereas in design a more intuitive approach is followed, or 'evidence' is further put into practice once it has been observed. Documenting and sharing with a wider public is not always required or seen as essential.

The discussion on criteria for academic design that is taking place at technical universities, especially architecture addresses the need to balance between art and science yet responding to academic criteria. Conventional academic criteria such as measurability, intersubjectivity, validity are useful to a certain extent yet formulated and defined by scientists without a background or expertise in designing (Van der Voordt, 2008:7). This thesis links to that debate

as we searched to define how the output of films, prototype developments and academic documentation relate to each other in an academic perspective as mentioned in chapter 1. Based on proposed criteria for design assessment by Van der Voordt and Jong, the developed Ideal Type of VPA and Embedded Filming can be evaluated as academic as they can be assessed; they have a theoretical underpinning, they are feasible, their impact has been evaluated and ethically considerations are articulated. (Van der Voordt and Jong, 2008: 8-9). We also feel that the criterion that the work contains new and original elements is achieved with this combined design - research study.

From the study we learn that if stories, people or practices are to be filmed with the articulated intention to bring other places, spaces and realities in the arena of social learning it is not just any story that will provide new insights and induce dialogue. In this thesis it becomes apparent that the film making process should pay due respect to the (technical) quality required based on a grounded conceptual and educational design and flavored with a sense of art or attractiveness. Achieving this quality requires appropriate competences which are not yet common in the social sciences.

As the research was reported in professional and academic settings it was aligned and positioned in relation to debates such as video for development, ICTs for social change, film in research and a search for alternative forms of realizing public participation. This growing attention for using and producing films for social learning and change gave this research a sense of actuality. The enthusiasm for filming and use of film in the social domain should not be regarded as a fashionable trend with a short lifespan. Filmmakers, communication specialists, process designers in the social domain may feel inspired to produce films for learning in the social domain; they may engage in strong multidisciplinary teams and further explore the field.

To contribute to the challenges of advancing the field and completely finish this study it might be recommendable to compile all notes and protocols that compose a living production manual into a formal and accessible document so that the VPA and Embedded Filming can be taken up by others.

The focus in this thesis on the VPA and Embedded Filming is not to claim their one and only unique qualities but served the purpose to study design and production of visual learning strategies. Based on the results of the study it is assumed that an infinite amount of visual learning strategies are yet to be designed, produced and used.

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Summary

The Voice of the Visual. Visual Learning Strategies for Problem Analysis, Social Dialogue and Mediated Participation

The changing needs for innovative learning strategies in the life sciences results from the growing complexity of societal issues. Nowadays, complex societal issues are also called 'wicked problems.' Wicked problems are problems that do not have one single solution that is right or wrong, good or bad or true or false. These are problems in which many stakeholders are involved, all of them framing the problems and issues in a different way. Reflecting on the consequent changing role of scientists and the way they need to be trained, it is realized that innovative learning strategies are needed to enhance problem analysis.

This PhD project explored visual learning strategies for problem analysis. In exploring these strategies, the project emphasized dialogue and participation by social actors, (future) practitioners and decision makers involved in wicked problem settings. The project had the twofold aim of exploring the potential of visual learning and defining the design and production of visual learning strategies. The project materialized in a design and research perspective on the production and use of visual learning strategies. The design track resulted in the development of the Visual Problem Appraisal (VPA) and Embedded Filming strategies. At the start of the project these strategies were used in settings of international master course work and adult education. As the project advanced, the attention also focused on using the strategies in the public domain, with a focus on public participation by silenced or overlooked social actors.

The VPA design developed with the production and use of the 'VPA Kerala's Coast' (2003 – 2008) and the 'VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa' (2005-2009). Core of the VPA design are filmed stakeholder narratives and a well elaborated methodological approach that creates a learning space where the VPA user meets with these stakeholders as part of a decision making process. The wicked problems addressed in these VPAs focus on integrated coastal zone management in Kerala, India, and on AIDS and rural development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Embedded Filming, designed and produced between 2003 and 2007, also focuses on HIV/AIDS and rural development professionalism in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Embedded Filming involves participation in the production phase by combining action research with a learning process. The film crew, facilitators and participants form an integrated whole.

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The shared focus of VPA and Embedded Filming is reflected in similarities in the general production and use. The filming process of both strategies focuses on social actors, their perspectives and reflections on reality. This consideration for multiple realities and societal complexity in the films is further underlined in the absence of a voice over or otherwise a steering 'outsider.' Although VPA and Embedded Filming have strong similarities, they are also characterized by differences. VPA filming activities are not embedded in a wider activity as is the case for Embedded Filming. Editing in Embedded Filming differs from the editing style of the VPA interviews as it adheres more to conventional documentary editing. The distinctive visual language of each film style was highlighted in the found footage experiment. This experiment showed that the footage of the Embedded Filming series could not be used for the production of VPA narratives because of the film styles not being congruent.

The visual learning strategies have been used in an array of situations and with a variety of audiences. They have shown the ability to bring complex realities and a diversity of stakeholders together in spaces of learning, reflection and change. The experiences obtained with Visual Problem Appraisal and Embedded Filming provided the empirical evidence that it is possible to design, produce and use specific visual learning strategies to achieve strategic learning objectives that enhance complex competences for action and change. Research on these experiences is documented in the various chapters of this dissertation.

The first chapter provides the background to the study and elaborates on the research design. The second chapter gives a broad introduction to the design, production and use of the 'VPA Kerala's Coast.' It describes the educational design of VPA and the operationalisation during the filming process in Kerala, India. The analysis of the production experiences led to a series of workshops to research the impact of the VPA in the public domain. The evaluation of these workshops provided indications for social learning and stakeholder dialogue.

The third chapter elaborates on the effects of the VPA in higher professional education. The study is based on experiences with the 'VPA Kerala's Coast,' lectured in 2007/08 and 2008/09. The VPA design deliberately incorporates a rich variety of instruction strategies to anticipate the diverse learning styles of students in the international and intercultural classroom with a prominent role for visual learning. Students are confronted with a variety of learning activities that provides a challenging environment. They are immersed in the reality of complex multi stakeholder settings and they are stimulated to learn about wicked problems that are not easy to solve. Facilitator's instructions and precise feedback options stimulate students to reflect on their work and that of their peers. It makes students almost immediately aware of the effects of their actions and the way they learn. The assessment presented indicates that the VPA strategy is effective as a strong and attractive simulation. The created safe space provides students an opportunity to learn from their interaction with un-familiar stakeholders and the VPA enhances critical reflection on learning procedures and patterns. Besides elaborating on the impact in education the chapter also provides insight in the design process of this learning strategy.

The fourth chapter presents the process of producing and testing the 'VPA Kerala's Coast' as a complex and intriguing multidisciplinary and multicultural project. We wondered what made the project a success. Framing the project as a space of intercultural communication gave guidance to the questions that articulated our search to understand the process we had been immersed in. In this chapter the events are described and critical incidents are analyzed that occurred during the production and the use of the VPA. The outcome leads to valuable recommendations for international and intercultural teams working on similar production and research projects.

The fifth chapter reports on Embedded Filming. The filming and the films of a series of workshops and courses for Rural Development Professionals in Ghana, India, Tanzania and Zambia are analyzed as tools for learning and social change for different audiences. Analyzing the production and consumption processes shows the interconnectedness of the filming and learning during the courses. The results indicate that the films contribute to improved rural development professionalism in the context of HIV/AIDS.

Chapter six highlights the potential of 'mediated participation' as compared to live participation, especially regarding the inclusion of vulnerable and distanced stakeholders. Mediated participation was explored by studying the production and use of the 'VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa' in workshops in Congo DRC, Ghana, Tanzania, the Netherlands and Zambia. The qualitative assessment was based on production experiences, evaluations of participants, and debriefings of workshops. The results indicate that mediated participation is not just a second-best option to live participation. Mediated participation as operationalized in VPA-methodology offers an alternative to learning in face-to-face interactions. The concept of mediated participation that resulted from the study is perceived as a promising concept. This term is used to contrast live presence of silenced and overlooked stakeholders in processes of public participation with participation or representation of these stakeholders' concerns through the use of media (film). Mediated participation refers in this study to the filmed narrative (or mediated presence) of direct stakeholders who otherwise wouldn't be present in public policy making processes. Mediated participation enhances social inclusion and equity in problem analysis and decision making by other means than through live participation.

The experiences in this study with the design, production and use of VPA and Embedded Filming indicate the relevancy of designing and producing specific visual learning strategies in the context of wicked problems in multi stakeholder settings and sustainable development. It was learned that a specific visual learning strategy requires a particular film style or visual language. It is not film in general that defines the outcome of a learning process; it is the conceptual design, grounded in specific learning and film theories and film making expertise that lays foundations for the process that can be induced by the film. The discussed visual learning strategies overcome physical, cultural and social barriers between vulnerable stakeholders and decision makers. The mediated encounters with 'the Other' and 'meeting' other realities in social

dialogues turned out to contribute to problem analysis. Designing, producing and using visual learning strategies requires due attention, expertise and resources.

Samenvatting

The Voice of the Visual. Visuele Leerstrategieën voor Probleemanalyse, Sociale Dialoog en Gemedieerde Participatie

De veranderende behoeften voor innovatieve leerstrategieën in de 'life sciences' komen voort uit de toenemende complexiteit van maatschappelijke kwesties. Tegenwoordig wordt dit soort complexe zaken ook benoemd als 'wicked problems'. 'Wicked problems' zijn complexe problemen die niet over één enkele oplossing beschikken die juist of onjuist is, of goed of slecht. Ze hebben betrekking op sociale systemen en waarden. Bij dit soort problemen zijn vele belanghebbenden betrokken die allen een verschillende zienswijze hebben op de problemen en vraagstukken. Reflecterend op de daaruit voortvloeiende veranderende rol van wetenschappers en de wijze waarop zij moeten worden opgeleid realiseren we dat nieuwe leerstrategieën nodig zijn die probleem-analyses verbeteren en bijdragen aan intersubjectieve consensus.

Dit PhD project onderzocht visuele leerstrategieën voor probleemanalyse en beleidsanalyse, met een focus op dialoog en deelname door sociale actoren, (toekomstige) professionals en beleidsvormers betrokken bij 'wicked problems'. Het project had het tweevoudige doel om het potentieel van visuele leerstrategieën te onderzoeken en om voorwaarden te definiëren voor het ontwerp en productieproces van visuele leerstrategieën en/of films in het sociale domein. Het project kreeg vorm in een ontwerp en onderzoeksperspectief op de productie en gebruik van visuele lerenstrategieën. De ontwerproute resulteerde in de ontwikkeling van de 'Visual Problem Appraisal' (VPA) en 'Embedded Filming' methodiek. In het begin van het project werden deze op films gebaseerde leerstrategieën gebruikt in internationale 'master' opleidingen voor volwassenenonderwijs. Toen het project vooruitging, richtte de aandacht zich op het gebruik van films in het publieke domein met een toenemende aandacht op deelname aan publieke debatten door gemarginaliseerde of kwetsbare sociale actoren.

Het VPA ontwerp ontwikkelde zich met de productie en het gebruik van de VPA 'Kerala's Coast' (2003 – 2008) en de VPA 'AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (2005-2009). De kern van het VPA ontwerp zijn gefilmde verhalen (narratives) van sociale actoren en een methodologische benadering die een leerruimte creëert waar de VPA-gebruiker deze belanghebbenden ontmoet als onderdeel van een beleid- en besluitvormingproces.

De 'wicked problems' in deze VPAs focussen op geïntegreerd kustbeheer in Kerala, India en op AIDS en rurale ontwikkeling in Sub-sahara Afrika. De 'Embedded Filming'-serie, ontworpen en geproduceerd tussen 2003 en 2007, focust op HIV/AIDS en professionalisering van ontwikkelingsinitiatieven in

ruraal Sub-sahara Afrika en Azië. Kern van 'Embedded Filming' is de visualisering van de leerervaring van een groep professionals en de identificatie van de gebruiker met dit leerproces en deze professionals. De VPA en 'Embedded Filming' hebben overeenkomsten in productie en gebruik. Het filmproces van beide strategieën concentreert zich op sociale actoren, hun perspectieven en weerspiegelingen op realiteit. Deze focus voor veelvoudige realiteiten en sociale complexiteit in de films wordt filmisch onderstreept door de afwezigheid van een voice-over of anderszins een sturende 'buitenstaander'.

Hoewel VPA en 'Embedded Filming' sterke overeenkomsten hebben, worden zij ook door verschillen gekarakteriseerd. De productie van VPA films is niet geïncorporeerd in een breder proces zoals dat het geval is voor 'Embedded Filming'. De montage bij 'Embedded Filming' verschilt van de montage van de VPA-interviews aangezien de montage bij 'Embedded Filming' meer lijkt op een conventionele documentaire montage. De onderscheidende visuele taal van elke filmstijl werd uitgelicht in het 'found footage'-experiment. Dit experiment toonde aan dat de opnames van de 'Embedded Filming'-serie niet voor de productie van VPA-verhalen kunnen worden gebruikt omdat de filmstijlen niet congruent zijn.

De films zijn gebruikt in een variatie van situaties en met verschillend publiek. Ze laten zien dat ze complexe realiteiten en een diversiteit van belanghebbenden samen kunnen brengen in een ruimte waar leren, reflectie en verandering kan plaatsvinden. De ervaringen die zijn opgedaan met Visual Problem Appraisal en 'Embedded Filming' leveren empirisch bewijs dat het mogelijk is om specifieke visuele leerstrategieën te ontwerpen, te produceren en te gebruiken. We doelen hier op leerstrategieën die in staat zijn om strategische leerdoelen te behalen en die complexe competenties voor actie en verandering nastreven.

Het onderzoek naar de ervaringen met het ontwerp, productie en gebruik van VPA en Embedded Filming is gedocumenteerd in de verschillende hoofdstukken van deze dissertatie. Het eerste hoofdstuk positioneert het onderzoek en beschrijft de onderzoeksopzet. Het tweede hoofdstuk geeft een brede introductie op het ontwerp, de productie en het gebruik van de VPA 'Kerala's Coast'. Het beschrijft het onderwijskundig ontwerp van de VPA en de operationalisering tijdens het filmproces in Kerala, India. De analyse van de productie ervaringen leidde tot een serie van workshops die het mogelijk maakte om de impact van VPA in het publieke domein te onderzoeken. De evaluatie van de workshops gaven aanwijzingen voor het plaatsvinden van sociaal leren en een verbeterde dialoog door betrokken actoren. Het derde hoofdstuk beschrijft het effect van de VPA in hoger onderwijs. Deze studie is gebaseerd op ervaringen met het gebruik van de VPA in het hoger onderwijs in een Master opleiding van Hogeschool Van Hall Larenstein in het academisch jaar 2007/08 en 2008/09.

Het VPA-ontwerp incorporeert opzettelijk een diversiteit aan instructie-strategieën anticiperend op de verschillende leerstijlen van studenten in het internationale en interculturele onderwijs met een prominente rol voor visueel

leren. Studenten worden geconfronteerd met een variatie aan leeractiviteiten die een uitdagende leeromgeving vormen. Ze raken ondergedompeld in de realiteit van complexe 'multi stakeholder settings' en ze worden gestimuleerd om te leren over 'wicked problems'. Instructies door facilitators en precieze feedback opties stimuleren studenten om te reflecteren op hun werk en dat van hun collega's. Het maakt studenten bijna direct bewust van de effecten van hun acties en de manier van leren en studeren. De evaluatie geeft aanwijzingen dat de VPA-strategie effectief is als een aantrekkelijke simulatie. De gecreëerde veilige ruimte biedt studenten een mogelijkheid om te leren van hun communicatie met onbekende sociale actoren en de VPA versterkt kritische reflectie op leerroutines en patronen. Naast een uitwerking over de impact in het onderwijs geeft dit hoofdstuk inzicht in het ontwerpproces van deze strategie.

Het vierde hoofdstuk presenteert het productie- en evaluatieproces van de VPA 'Kerala's Coast' als een complex en intrigerend multidisciplinair en multicultureel project. We hebben ons afgevraagd wat dit project tot een succes heeft gemaakt. Framing van het project als een ruimte van interculturele communicatie gaf richting aan de vragen die het zoeken articuleerde om het proces waarin we ondergedompeld waren geweest te analyseren. In dit hoofdstuk beschrijven we de gebeurtenissen en analyseren kritische incidenten die plaatsvonden gedurende de productie en het gebruik van de VPA. Het resultaat leidt tot aanbevelingen voor internationale en interculturele teams die aan gelijkwaardige productie- en onderzoekprojecten werken.

Het vijfde hoofdstuk betreft 'Embedded Filming'. Het filmen en de films van een serie workshops en cursussen voor rurale ontwikkelingsprofessionals in Ghana, India, Tanzania and Zambia worden geanalyseerd als instrumenten voor leren en sociale verandering voor verschillend publiek. De analyse van de productie en het consumptieproces laat de vervlechting zien van het filmen en het leren gedurende de cursus. De resultaten zijn een aanwijzing dat de films een bijdrage leveren aan verbeterd 'rural development professionalism' in een context van HIV/AIDS.

Hoofdstuk zes gaat over de waarde van 'mediated participation' (gemedieerde participatie) in vergelijking met 'live participation', en focust op de inclusie van kwetsbare en afwezige sociale actoren. 'Mediated participation' is onderzocht tijdens de productie en het gebruik van de 'VPA AIDS & Rural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa' in workshops in Congo DRC, Ghana, Tanzania, Nederland en Zambia. De kwalitatieve evaluatie was gebaseerd op productie ervaringen, deelnemers evaluaties, en workshops debriefings. De resultaten zijn een aanwijzing dat 'mediated participation' niet zozeer een 'second-best option' is voor 'live participation'. 'Mediated participation', zoals geoperationaliseerd in de VPA methodiek, biedt een alternatief voor leren in face-to-face interacties. Het concept 'mediated participation' dat naar voren kwam in het onderzoek wordt gezien als een veelbelovend concept. We gebruiken de term in contrast met directe aanwezigheid van gemarginaliseerde en kwetsbare actoren in processen van publieke participatie. 'Mediated participation' is de aanwezigheid van deze actoren in processen van publieke participatie door gebruik te maken van media (film). 'Mediated participation'

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refereert in deze studie naar gefilmde 'narratives' van directe actoren die anders niet zouden deelnemen aan publieke beleidsprocessen. 'Mediated participation' versterkt daarmee de sociale participatie in probleemanalyse en besluitvorming op een andere wijze dan door 'live participation'.

De ervaringen in dit onderzoek met het ontwerp, de productie en het gebruik van VPA en 'Embedded Filming' laten de relevantie zien van het ontwerpen en produceren van specifieke visuele leerstrategieën in een context van 'wicked problems' in multi stakeholder settings en duurzame ontwikkeling. Het maakt duidelijk dat een specifieke visuele leerstrategie een specifieke filmstijl of visuele taal nodig heeft. Het is niet film in het algemeen dat de uitkomst bepaalt van een leerproces, het is het conceptuele ontwerp, gebaseerd op specifieke leer- en filmtheorieën en film productie expertise dat de fundering legt voor het proces dat kan worden opgeroepen door film. De geanalyseerde visuele leerstrategieën overkomen fysieke, culturele en sociale barrières tussen kwetsbare belanghebbenden en beslissingnemers. De gemedieerde ontmoetingen met de 'Ander' en het 'ontmoeten' van andere realiteiten in sociale dialoog bleek een bijdrage te leveren aan probleemanalyse. Het ontwerpen, produceren en gebruiken van dergelijke visuele leerstrategieën vereist passende aandacht, expertise en voldoende middelen.

Short Curriculum Vitae

Loes Witteveen (Baarn, the Netherlands 1959), after completing secondary education (VWO, 1977), studied the first year Tropical Agriculture at the Royal Agricultural College in Deventer, the Netherlands. In 1984 she obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theatre and Education, School of Arts Constantijn Huygens with graduation projects focussing on Media for Development and Participatory Theatre and Film Production. In 1984 she worked in community theatre of the Municipal Cultural Centre on Bonaire, Dutch Antilles. From 1985 till 1988 she worked in Nicaragua, Central America as an advisor to the Ministry of Agriculture and from 1989 till 1991 as a consultant to the Empresa de Comunicaciones. Since 1992 she is employed at Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences in Wageningen, the Netherlands as a lecturer in the International Rural Development team. She coordinates the master specialisation Rural Development and Communication (former Training, Rural Extension and Transformation). She lectures communication, culture, media, participation, research, rural development and related subjects. Her work also entails research and international consultancy assignments with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. She has (co-)produced a variety of film, theatre and poetry projects. The water sanitation film 'Fuente de Amor' (Juigalpa, 1994) and the Participatory Opera Project 'The Valley of the Druves' (Wageningen, 2007) are particularly cherished. The research project 'The Voice of the Visual. Visual Learning Strategies for Problem Analysis, Social Dialogue and Mediated Participation' started in 2003 in cooperation with the Communication and Innovation Studies Group of Wageningen University and the Faculty of Technology, Policy and Management of Delft University of Technology, both in the Netherlands.

Completed Training and Supervision Plan
Loes Witteveen

Description	Department/Institute	Year	Credits
I. General			
CERES orientation programme	CERES, Utrecht	2006	5
CERES presentation tutorials	CERES, Utrecht	2006	5.5
II. Research Methods and Techniques and Domain Specific Theories			
The concepts, process and methods of social impact assessment: A basic course	IAIA course, Stockholm	2006	2
Scenario development course	PE&RC, October 23-25	2006	2
Participatory video workshop		2006	2
III. Presentations of Research Results			
Ticket to India, simulating a consultancy mission with the Visual Problem Appraisal Kerala's Coast	International Association of Gaming and Simulation ISAGA –SAGSAGA, Transforming Knowledge into Action through Gaming and Simulation, Munich, Germany	2004	4
Cef Tes and the VPA or diversity in the international classroom	European Association of International Education, EAIE, Torino, Italy	2004	4
Visualising the invisible: cultural disparity and dynamic frictions in relation to the Visual Problem Appraisal 'Kerala's Coast'	25th Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) "Ethics & Quality", Cambridge Boston, Massachusetts, USA	2005	4
Filming, learning and social change. HIV/AIDS and rural professionalism	International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) conference, Knowledge Societies for All: Media and Communication Strategies, Cairo, Egypt.	2006	4
Mediated representativity and the International Best Practice Principles of Public Participation: assessing the Visual Problem Appraisal	IAIA Seoul, Korea	2007	4
Learning on problem analysis and policy design in the context of complex multi stakeholder issues in the international and intercultural classroom. Assessing the Visual Problem Appraisal learning environment	European Communication Research and Education Association, Barcelona, Spain	2008	4
Mediated participation: using filmed narratives in complex multi stakeholder issues. Assessing the use of Visual Problem Appraisal	IAIA conference Accra, Ghana	2009	4
Total			**44.5**