Participatory video and citizen voice –
We've raised their voices: is anyone listening?

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Abstract

Sheathed in the glamour of filmmaking and technical innovation, participatory video (PV) is often evangelised as a communication for development methodology that intrinsically fosters transformative social and political change. Such celebratory notions, however, can obscure the complexity facing participatory video practice in achieving significant response to the inequities PV participants face. In reply, I offer the principles of representation, recognition and response as a potential pathway for more meaningful citizen engagement and action. Doing so challenges the idea that using PV primarily to help people on the margins represent their concerns through film is enough to shift deep-rooted inequities of power. Rather, my argument suggests that participatory video approaches aimed at raising citizen voice require a broader framing of practice: one that positions key decision-makers watching the films to both value marginalised voice, and responsively listen.

Introduction

Alongside mountainous terraced rice fields torn away by recent landslides, nine Nepali children huddle around a cooking fire under a blue tarp held up by tree branches. As part of a participatory video (PV) project, they dramatise their fears related to changing climate impacts in their village (Plush, 2009b):

Father: Look son. All our fields were ruined by the rains and landslides. The animals were killed.
Son: We won't be able to eat then?
Father: What to do son?...We need to send our eldest son abroad to find work.
Daughter: Father, I want to study until the SLC (school leaving certificate).
Father: We'll see daughter. We don't have any income right now. The landslides have taken away everything. Where can I get money from?...
The Father makes a decision: You will work for the landlord. You will eat there and I will keep the two youngest ones at my brother's.
Later…
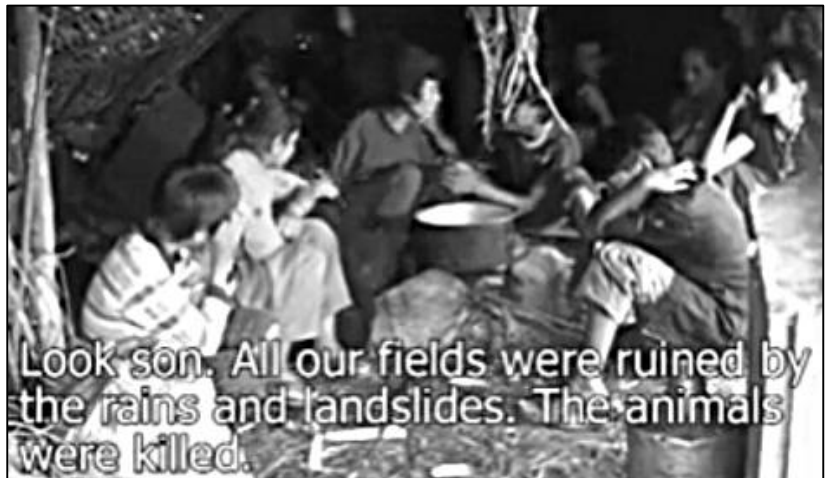
Father: Wife, we weren't able to educate our children as we wanted to. We have to pay off the 350,000 rupees (approximately USD 3,400) that we've borrowed. All our children have left to find work. We're left alone in our old age… I hope they return home soon.

The content of the children's film reveals the fears that exemplify the lived reality tearing at the social fabric of families in their village. It tells how they are coping with the harsh impacts of a changing climate and other factors on their health, education and well-being. It highlights deep-rooted concerns about complex political issues including disasters, migration, food security and girls' education (see report) (Gautam and Oswald, 2008). The making of the film also achieves its core intention within the development programme in which it was embedded (i.e. *Disaster Risk Reduction through Schools)*: to amplify children's voice about their climate change concerns as a means to foster social change (see report) (Plush, 2009a, Plush, 2012). The motive to amplify voice with participatory video resonates in the sector, as illustrated by the World Bank's impetus to align 'citizens, stakeholders and voice' as a key value for development projects (Odugbemi and Jacobson, 2008). Accordingly, it defines voice as 'the ability to formulate and express opinion' as a means to 'engage in public debate and in systems of social accountability' (Odugbemi and Jacobson, 2008). The Nepali children's video certainly fits within this intention[2] (Plush, 2009b). However, is voice amplification in decision-making spaces enough for responsive and transformative change?

My argument is that for participatory video processes to cultivate transformative change, a principled and practical framing is worth exploring. Such framing will be especially valuable for PV practices that aim to strengthen people's capacity to disrupt, challenge and transform structures and 'dominant discourses' of power (Dutta, 2011). In this way, participatory video praxis can more readily contribute to addressing the root drivers of social injustice and inequity that are keeping their voices from being articulated and heard (Enghel and Wilkins, 2012, Sinha, 2013). A principled foundation also puts PV in a better position to be ultimately transformational for the participants (Low et al., 2012, Wheeler, 2012).

The linkage between participatory video and transformation is grounded in Paulo Freire's radical arguments in the 1980s for people's rights to 'individually and collectively speak their world' as a means to transform oppressive structures (see Servaes, 2008). Freire's theories have been highly influential in the development sector for both participatory programming and communication practices (Servaes, 2008, Chambers, 1994b). However, what does embracing a transformative vision require for participatory video practice? To answer this question, I will first investigate how approaches to raising citizen voice with participatory video align with development studies and communication for development (C4D) theory. I will then explore the Fogo Method, a 1960s community filmmaking project long considered as the genesis of participatory video (Quarry and Ramirez, 2009, Crocker, 2003, Corneil, 2012). In doing so, I will offer three prospective principles for PV praxis: representation, recognition and response. I will conclude with a discussion of how contemporary scholarship links to these three principles and their benefit as a framework for raising citizen voice with participatory video.

Participatory video in development

The participatory video methodology is often theoretically understood as a 'self-determining,' collaborative filmmaking process (Low et al., 2012). PV aims to foster learning and bring about social change for people living in poverty or marginalisation through the creation and showing of their own films (Plush, 2012, PV-NET, 2008). Participatory video thus prioritises filmmaking as a reflexive process for people to identify and 'legitimate shared concerns and demands' in their own voice and language regardless of their levels of literacy (Khamis et al., 2009, Askanius, 2014, White, 2003). The intention is for the PV process to not only serve as a catalyst for excluded groups to strengthen their cohesion, but to also bring about new citizen engagement pathways for those often shut out of mainstream decision-making spaces (Low et al., 2012, White, 2003, Wheeler, 2009). Citizen engagement and action evolves through internal and external dialogues that build on reflexive processes (Braden, 1998, Shaw, 2012b). That is, dialogues that enhance mutual understanding through people engaging with other perspectives (Westoby and Dowling, 2013) and reflexive processes that compel people to examine, situate and address their concerns within wider social contexts (Yang, 2012). This is often achieved through PV processes that first develop individual and group awareness of an issue in ways that strengthen their collective self-worth and agency. The group then engages in external forums with their film(s) to amplify their concerns and promote social or political action (Shaw, 2012a).

Similar to other communication for development applications, participatory video is commonly implemented through a facilitated process (White, 2003). Such practice is distinguishable from C4D approaches that focus primarily on training community members as citizen journalists, educators or documentary filmmakers who will engage in long-term video use [i.e. Digital Green, SEWA Video or Video Volunteers (Capila and Sachdev, 2010, Rodrigues, 2010, Gandhi et al., 2007)]. In international development contexts, PV is often embedded in initiatives where citizen participants are invited to join the PV activity by the implementing organisation (see Suarez et al., 2008, Plush, 2009a, Tanner and Haynes, 2015). By locating participatory video specifically in this sector, I will now provide a brief overview of how the concept of participation evolved in development theory and practice.

From participation to citizenship

In the 1990s, Freire's theories inspired a multitude of grassroots development methodologies and tools supporting the argument that beneficiaries of aid have valuable knowledge to contribute towards their own development (Cornwall and Scoones, 2011, Chambers, 1997). The participatory approach soon 'hit the development mainstream' as donors and development practitioners promoted and often mandated the use of participatory approaches such as Participatory Rural Appraisals and Participatory Poverty Assessments (Chambers, 1994a, Cornwall and Scoones, 2011, Robb, 2002). By the 2000s, participatory practices were recognised in more than 100 countries (Cornwall and Scoones, 2011, Chambers, 2007). Similarly, in C4D studies, theories shifted away from embracing elitist, top-down practices that historically supported 'sender-to-receiver' information diffusion (Melkote, 2012). Instead, scholars argued

for communication for development 'at all levels' to value culture, democracy and participation (Servaes, 2008).

As participatory approaches popularised and proliferated around the world, however, so did criticism, organisational challenges, and examples of bad practice in both development programming and communication for development endeavours (Cornwall and Pratt, 2011, Lennie and Tacchi, 2013, Waisbord, 2008). Researchers and practitioners alike recognised that participation alone was insufficient without a focus on the disparities of power that reinforce injustice (Melkote, 2012, Gaventa and Cornwall, 2006, Gumucio-Dagron, 2009). In development studies, arguments embraced citizens' rights to demand accountability, equal and equitable social change, and distributive justice from the state (Nyamu-Musembi, 2005, Kabeer, 2005). In the participatory communication paradigm, scholars promoted grassroots capacity building and access to localised communication processes for people historically silenced (Gumucio-Dagron, 2009). Such beliefs encapsulated Freire's arguments for people on the margins to individually, collectively and proactively claim the rights to their own words (Servaes, 2008).

Operationalising such theories in practice, nonetheless, proved challenging within a sector increasingly driven by results-based agendas often incompatible with communication for development approaches (Enghel, 2015, Lennie and Tacchi, 2013). Even when C4D efforts helped people move beyond their oppressions to claim their words, the challenge of being meaningfully heard remained (Dutta, 2014). In response, contemporary scholarship is calling for innovative communicative approaches that can address the 'crisis of voice' facing those systemically shut out of democratic processes due to today's neoliberal hegemony (Couldry, 2014, Enghel, 2015). Recent arguments promote an evolved participatory communication paradigm that can fully recognise and challenge structures that reinforce inequality and inequity (Dutta, 2011). What this implies for participatory video is that a stronger gaze is required on how the methodology can shift structural causes of injustice. PV used this way would move its use away from merely amplifying voice. Rather, it would encourage a more politically disruptive, yet potentially impactful practice considerate of 'power, human rights and social justice' (Enghel and Wilkins, 2012, Thomas and Van de Fliert, 2014).

Foundational principles for participatory video

Historically, participatory video praxis has been chronically and uncritically over-simplified (Mitchell et al., 2012, Shaw, 2012a). PV rose in popularity through the view that 'anyone can express ideas, articulate their viewpoints, or voice opinions of importance with no barrier to status or consequence' (White, 2003). Such celebratory framing of PV practice has often leaned away from circumspection, highlighting PV's potential over its more constrained reality (Shaw, 2012a, Walsh, 2014). However, calls for more rigorous critique of C4D approaches within wider, socially and politically charged contexts are growing, especially for raising citizen voice (Tacchi, 2012, Corneil, 2012). As an example, Nick Couldry (2010) argues that influential voice requires processes of voice that focus on more than its expression; also considering circumstances that keep it from being valued. Linking this idea to participatory video reinforces my argument that praxis must go beyond the capture and amplification of unheard voices. Rather, PV activities

must be tailored to the unique contexts and conditions that enable or constrain participants' voice.

Sourayan Mookerjea (see Low et al., 2012) argues that a conditional approach is necessary to avoid situations where the political history and context of PV implementation are shunned in favour of 'middle-class, pseudo-therapeutic ideas of transformation taken from the self-help manuals as taken-for-granted natural categories of cultural-political analysis.' Mookerjea's observation indicates that tokenistic participation with participatory video is not just bound to happen, but already occurring as PV practice grows around the world (High et al., 2012). In an attempt to alter this trajectory, my argument suggests that transformative PV practice requires a values-driven framework for raising citizen voice. To locate proposed principles for an alternative framing, I turn to participatory video's foundational history for inspiration.

The 'Fogo Method' as foundation

Scholars and PV practitioners link participatory video's emergence as a process for social and political transformation to a film project in the late 1960s on Fogo Island, Newfoundland, Canada (Crocker, 2003, Hume-Cook et al., 2007). Here, in disparate fishing communities, the livelihoods of 5,000 people were under threat as the 'forces of modernity at home and abroad were pushing its ten scattered communities to the edge of social and economic collapse' (Newhook, 2009). At the time, government officials were advocating to relocate the population to the mainland (Crocker, 2003, Corneil, 2012). As part of efforts to counter this proposal, the National Film Board of Canada and Memorial University of Newfoundland's Extension Service conceived an innovative community development approach using film now called the 'Fogo Method' (Newhook, 2009). The filmmaking process included collaborating with community members to determine how they wanted to represent their lives on camera. It also strategically linked their concerns to government officials promoting their relocation (see Quarry and Ramirez, 2009, Crocker, 2003, Corneil, 2012).

The process included collaboratively capturing the lived experiences and opinions of concerned citizens on film to be shared with targeted stakeholders (i.e. dispersed community members, local and national government officials, academics and activists concerned with poverty reduction on the island); recording and sharing responses through feedback loops between the government and citizens; and building and strengthening community networks focused on finding solutions other than relocation (Crocker, 2003). As its core driving factor, the Fogo Method aimed to infuse community member concerns from Fogo Island into the decision-making spaces of those 'stuck in bureaucratic halls' (Corneil, 2012). At the time, the government screenings and dialogical communication loops proved to be 'innovative, provocative and effective' for enhancing community engagement on the island (Newhook, 2009). They provided insight into the uncensored lives and opinions of people on Fogo Island in a forum that offered government officials space to reflect on and respond meaningfully to what they had seen (Corneil, 2012, Crocker, 2003). In the end, the filmmaking process fed into wider advocacy, academic and community mobilisation efforts against relocation, and the resettlement plans were abandoned (Corneil, 2012).

Following the Fogo Island experiment, filmmaking came to be seen as a medium that could build the knowledge and self-confidence of community members so they could advocate for their own interests and needs (Quarry and Ramirez, 2009). The Fogo Method's innovative reversal of traditional filmmaking roles in practice forever changed the idea of video communication, in that the prior 'object audience' became 'subject participants' in the message. In doing so, the project's facilitators moved the power to control the message away from themselves as media producers towards a process that 'encourages people to attempt the control of their lives as a whole' (Quarry and Ramirez, 2009). The community-driven filmmaking model would prove especially influential in the international development sector as video equipment became more mobile and affordable; and the participatory video field continued to be inspired by Freirean ideals of transformative change (Walker and Arrighi, 2013, Wheeler, 2011, Underwood and Jabre, 2003).

Three key principles for raising citizen voice

At the time, the Fogo Method was revolutionary in espousing values now commonplace in participatory video discourse. Such values include using PV to strengthen grassroots knowledge and awareness; build community confidence and capacity; empower people through reflexive and dialogical activities; and affect political change at multiple levels of governance (Hume-Cook et al., 2007). And yet, despite such aspirations, participatory video practice today is increasingly facing critique in being able to fully realise its ideals (Shaw, 2012a, Walsh, 2014). In response, I suggest a return to PV's history for inspiration. To this end, it is necessary to consider strategic pathways for transformative social change that emerged through the Fogo Method. Firstly, the participatory video process flipped responsibility to community members as they determined how to make their own meaning and represent themselves through film (Quarry and Ramirez, 2009). Secondly, the films became a catalyst for the participants and community field-workers to create dialogical spaces where community voice could be recognised as having value to both bureaucrats and peers (Corneil, 2012). Thirdly, participatory video helped strengthen existing efforts for political response, such as building community networks across the island and supporting on-going academic research on social and economic change (Crocker, 2003). My argument is that these three strategic pathways can be promoted respectively as *representation*, *recognition* and *response*. In the following sections, I interrogate how these three principles link with contemporary development and participatory communication theories that argue for transformative social and political change.

The principle of representation

Representation suggests participatory video processes that fully engage participants in how their films are conceptualised, expressed, visualised and distributed; as well as the dialogue that ensues. In doing so, PV processes would need to prudently consider, challenge and overcome cultural, relational and power dynamics that might hinder the occurrence of representation.

Of the three principles I am proposing, representation is the most historically theorised (Braden, 1999, Marchessault, 1995, Gadihoke, 2003, Braden, 1998). More than 15 years ago, Su Braden—

an early adopter of video for development practices (Braden and Than Thi, 1998)—identified the value of representation for people living in poverty:

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

Braden's observation aligns with contemporary scholarship that values building the capacity of people on the margins to reflect on and represent their own lives and experiences through communication for development approaches (Tacchi, 2010, Thomas and Van de Fliert, 2014, Askanius, 2014). Additionally, my argument suggests, there is also scope for *representation* to embody how participatory video can catalyse building local awareness, agency and confidence. This is where people on the margins gain capacity as respected actors in their own development through filmmaking (Khamis et al., 2009, Plush, 2012, Melkote, 2012). Representation through this lens implies participatory video processes that support participants to realise and amplify their voice in ways that strengthen their engagement in and ownership over decision-making. Core to such intent is that PV participants gain the confidence, knowledge and skills necessary to meaningfully influence and/or claim decision-making spaces long after creating and showing their films.

Such efforts can be difficult, however, within a development sector that often 'positions the poor as listeners rather than vice versa' (Tacchi, 2012). The sector struggles to embrace alternative views from the margins that might radically challenge the entrenched power of their own agendas (Lennie and Tacchi, 2013, Dutta, 2012b, Enghel, 2015). At a basic level, representation promoted through participatory video conceptually aligns with arguments within development studies that a lack of voice, power and accountability exacerbates poverty as people are distanced from the policies that affect their lives (O'Neil et al., 2007, Lister, 2007). Such arguments often assume that if excluded groups have the capacity to express their opinions, they are able to hold the state to account (O'Neil et al., 2007, Gaventa and McGee, 2013). The challenge with this view is that it unrealistically positions amplified voice from citizens on the margins as being highly influential on policy regardless of the wider context or power dynamics. It does so by minimising the reality of an 'unruly' political environment, where the language and practicalities of influence are often dictated, conducted and sanctioned by those holding the most power (Khanna, 2012).

In addition, within development studies, the evidence of the impacts of voice and accountability is still quite limited, especially in relation to poverty at the margins of society (Holland and Britain, 2009, Gaventa and McGee, 2013). This is of little surprise, given that development efforts aimed at raising citizen voice are often applied through the common perception of 'voice as a process,' which primarily values everyone's ability to narrative their own lives (Couldry, 2010). Through this lens, voice is essentially understood as both a means of expression and the capacity to engage in such expression (Couldry, 2010, 2014). While such narrative processes can be highly beneficial for people and groups experiencing marginalised voice, this particular

conceptualisation of voice nevertheless lacks a wider perspective on the conditions that might keep certain voices silenced.

Couldry (2010) addresses the problem through his argument for a 'second order value' of voice that situates it within wider contexts of its erasure. His 'voice as a value' concept aligns with my categorisation of *representation* in that it considers raising and sustaining citizen voice within situations that could, even inadvertently, undermine voice or advance its denial (Couldry, 2010). Arguably, this proposition presents particular challenges for participatory video praxis, obliging PV endeavours to do more than merely create opportunities for excluded groups to express and amplify their concerns through film. The principle also requires PV processes to acknowledge and attempt to transform the conditions and dynamics of power that might hinder participants' capacity to represent themselves both during the film's creation and in decision-making spaces.

The principle of recognition

Recognition reflects participatory video processes that can increase respect for participants' voice as well as its influence on the concerning issues. In doing so, PV processes would need to consider and confront the unjust conditions that presently devalue, exclude or erase participants' voice.

While participatory video can act as a 'lens through which the power relationships, identities and perspectives of the people involved are projected' (Wheeler, 2011), the reality of PV participants' voice being recognised as valuable is a more nuanced and often politically charged proposition (Wheeler, 2011, Lister, 2002). As such, considered action is necessary beyond PV participants having the communicative tools and capacity to represent themselves in public (Sparks, 2007). Particularly, my argument suggests, it requires a focus on *recognition*.

The principle of recognition essentially positions participatory video as a communication for development approach that can shift inequitable conditions and structures that preserve the status-quo and keep marginalised voice from being valued (Dutta, 2011). In practical terms for PV practice aimed at raising citizen voice, it means that voice is more than speaking. Rather it is a social process that involves, from the start, an attention on both speaking and listening (Couldry, 2010). When this argument is applied to participatory video practice, it implies that a heightened focus on listening is necessary to 'shift institutionalised hierarchies of attention' (Dreher, 2009). Or, more pointedly, it suggests that *recognition requires active listening* whereby the receiver of voice from the margins is 'open to the possibility of hearing them' (Dobson, 2014).

To better understand active listening in the context of participatory video and transformative change, it is important to attend to the political nature of citizenship and listening (Bickford, 1993). Susan Bickford argues that a politics of listening requires the listener to be open to the possibilities of 'learning and connection' as well as the possibilities of 'challenge, conflict, dissonance and persuasion' (see Dreher, 2009). If this is the case, to support greater recognition using participatory video processes, the first priority is to create dialogical spaces where active listening has potential to occur. This is common in PV praxis as activities often open new policy

spaces through targeted focus groups, community meetings, national screenings and international policy forums (Tremblay, 2013, Wheeler, 2012, Tschirhart and Mistry, 2014, Plush, 2009a). An obstacle for recognition, however, is when PV processes prioritise the participatory action of the screening event itself; discounting a second and more difficult task. That is, to ensure PV participants' voice will be recognised as valuable by powerful decision-makers working in spaces where active listening is often limited or constrained.

Certainly, active listening can be problematic in a development sector more attuned to amplifying voice over the democratic processes of voice required for increasing its value (Tacchi, 2010). This is all the more reason to focus attention on listening within PV practices aimed at social and political transformation. As Mohan Dutta (2011) contends, starting participatory communicative processes from a place of listening is vital to 'transform global, national and local structures of power that create and sustain oppressive conditions.' For it is only when attention has shifted towards recognising alternative voices that spaces open up to further address social injustice, as Tanja Dreher (2009) pertinently argues:

'In the context of the media and communications, justice becomes a question not simply of quantity of airtime or access to the means of production but also the quality of relationships between speakers and listeners mediated by institutions. To put it another way, the politics of recognition suggests that a redistribution of material resources for speaking is inadequate unless there is also a shift in the hierarchies of value and esteem accorded different identities and cultural production' (Dreher, 2009).

In her interrogation of listening, Dreher (2009) identifies recognition as a way to think about how a listener responds to voice; tying the two principles of recognition and response together. My argument, however, is that when using participatory video to create spaces for recognition, the principle is best regarded as independent to response. Such action is necessary for recognition to be explicitly and strategically nurtured as part of participatory video processes. Doing so acknowledges that decision-makers being present to hear voice is an insufficient indicator of them meaningfully recognising and respecting its value. Arguably, the latter must occur first before response can ensue from those privileged with power.

The principle of response

Response captures participatory video processes that spark potential for more empathic connections from listeners to PV participants' concerns through deliberative, dialogical encounters. In doing so, PV processes would need to consider transformative strategies for more equitable social, cultural, political or structural conditions for voice.

In today's neoliberal environment, generating a meaningful response to marginalised citizen concerns is often a more difficult proposition than the idea of raising citizen voice with C4D methods might imply (Tufte, 2013, Dutta, 2012b, Kindon et al., 2012). Couldry (2014) illuminates this point through his argument that society is threatened with becoming 'voice blind' due to an erasure caused by neoliberal practices that focus on economics and politics through a

competitive market approach. Such 'crisis of voice' devalues and diminishes spaces for alternative narratives that threaten this system (Couldry, 2014):

'A system that provides formal voice for its citizens but *fails so markedly to listen* exhibits a crisis of political voice of the sort [where]… it offers voice (having no choice to do so) yet retracts it as a reality, so engineering what Manuel Castels has recently called 'a systemic dissociation between communicative power and representative power' (Couldry, 2010).

What this implies for participatory video is that focusing on people being able to represent their voice and having people recognise its value is not enough. Participatory video practice for raising citizen voice also requires parallel efforts dedicated to increasing the potential for responsive action to PV participant concerns. To realise such response, I suggest practitioners adopt a more strategic and reflexive approach to practice. If PV processes aim for transformative social and political change, the principle of response thus necessitates watchfulness on even its most common activities, such as community and stakeholder film screenings. To illustrate, a reflexive focus on response would compel practitioners to question and determine if public events on their own are enough to provoke responsive action to citizen voice. If not, they would seek alternatives. Similarly, more reflexivity invites scrutiny of any potential harm for participants whose voice is not respectfully or responsively received (Kindon et al., 2012). As Joanna Wheeler explains:

'Digital technology through participatory video can lead to a strong sense of seeing like a citizen—seeing yourself and your ideas reflected through film and acknowledged by the wider community or even representatives of the state. At the same time digital video technology can lead to a sense of alienation and seeing like a subject—when your ideas are erased or omitted from the film or the results you hope for fail to materialise' (Wheeler, 2011).

Wheeler's reflection on PV praxis implies that a considered approach to participatory video is necessary for response; one that acknowledges that influences of power are bound to affect the reception of voice from the margins. The principle of response, in other words, accepts that activities like film screenings and focus groups can foster greater recognition of citizens and their concerns. However, it also accepts that not every participatory video process will automatically generate social or political action and response (Wheeler, 2011). Additional efforts may be required. As Johan Bastiaensen and Tom De Herdt (2004) assert, 'expecting a package of simple participatory planning techniques to make the 'voices of the poor' heard and guarantee their participation in the real world magically assumes away the deep-rooted social causes of poverty itself.'

In counter of such presumptions, I argue that the potential for meaningful response requires participatory video to situate within and support broader development activities aimed at increasing citizen representation and recognition. Such efforts could include, for example, citizen engagement initiatives that strengthen grassroots networks, increase government accountability and/or build more inclusive societies (Gaventa and Barrett, 2010). Doing so encourages participatory video practice to engage more strategically within the wider social and political

contexts in which PV operates; setting it on a pathway towards more considered response to voice on the margins.

The final framing: a principled approach for PV

In this paper, I have positioned participatory video practice as a viable communication for development methodology for raising the voice of citizens on the margins. Raising voice with PV is conceptualised here beyond citizens realising and amplifying their opinions. Rather, PV processes also must attend to the injustices faced by excluded groups so their voice can be meaningfully respected and heard. In making this argument, I have explored the complexities facing PV activities aimed at achieving significant response to the concerns raised by participants. The obstacles can be especially acute when participatory video is applied within a development sector more accustomed to amplifying voice than to challenging the wider social, cultural, political and structural conditions that might be silencing marginal concerns.

Within such an environment, I suggest a principle-driven approach to raising citizen voice with participatory video—as inspired by the Fogo Method, a process historically regarded as the genesis of PV (Crocker, 2003). This proposed framing for PV praxis includes three key principles categorised as representation, recognition and response. Participatory video practice can strengthen *representation* by excluded groups in decision-making spaces through the catalyst of filmmaking; cultivate *recognition* for valuing marginalised voice through creating spaces and conditions conducive for active listening; and foster significant *response* through confronting and destabilising conditions complicit in voice denial and erasure.

In essence, I have made these principles explicit to inspire a participatory video praxis that aims to rebalance inequitable structures that unjustly constrain voice. Presented here as a framework for social and political transformation with PV, representation, recognition and response offer possibilities for practice to meaningfully support citizens on the margins whose voices most vitally need to be heard, valued and responded to in society today.

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[2] In this case, the Nepali children from the film were involved in the multi-year 'Disaster Risk Reduction through Schools' programme, which focused on both voice amplification and 'raising their capacity to lead their own Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives' and engage in decision-making spaces (Plush 2009b).