



**SEE IT
FILM IT
CHANGE IT**

FILMING CASES OF FORCED EVICTION

Introduction

Any successful advocacy video depends on planning. Know what you will film and why even before you turn the camera on. It is rare to film a human rights abuse as it happens, and video can be powerful before a proposed eviction even takes place or after a community has been evicted from their homes. Filming should be planned carefully beforehand so the right interviews and footage can be used to complement the ongoing campaign.

This guide will present the key steps in planning your video, how to film during different stages of a forced eviction. First, answer the questions in the Mini-Video Action Plan below.

MINI-VIDEO ACTION PLAN		
AUDIENCE	<i>Who must watch this video for the positive result to happen?</i>	
MESSAGE	<i>What is the message to this audience?</i>	
STORY	<i>What is the story of the video?</i>	
FOOTAGE	<i>How do you tell this story with video?</i>	
VOICES	<i>Who will be featured in this video and why?</i>	
DISTRIBUTION	<i>How will you reach the audience and others who should see the video?</i>	
TIMING	<i>When is the best time to reach the audience?</i>	
EXTRAS	<i>Do you need other materials for the video? (i.e. photos, music, reports, translators, editors?)</i>	
ALLIES	<i>What other organizations are part of this campaign?</i>	
FEEDBACK	<i>Who will review this plan and the completed video?</i>	
OBJECTIVE	<i>What result in policy, behavior or practice will the video demand?</i> <i>Who will make this change?</i> <i>When will this happen?</i>	

Filming Before a Proposed Eviction

a. **Document lives and environments:** If you are aware that an eviction is going to take place in a specific area, take time to make contacts in the community and document people's living environments. Show people cooking, children playing, anything that will show that these are people's homes. You can use this footage later to contrast it with the aftermath of a forced eviction.

b. **Find people who will communicate their concerns well on camera:** It could be powerful to follow the experience of a family or individuals before, during and after an eviction. Look for diverse but representative respondents. If possible, get a broad range of individual experiences if doing so won't draw unwanted attention to you.

c. **Ensure informed consent:** Explain the campaign and how the footage will be used to everyone you interview. Explain the worst-case scenario if the footage is seen by police, government officials, project staff and others.

d. **Film assuming your presence will be noted:** Film as discreetly as possible keeping in mind that although there may not be a strong police presence it's very possible that your presence will be observed.

e. **Bring a colleague/Film indoors/Blend in:** Consider bringing a colleague to keep watch for you and conduct your interviews indoors if possible. Try to blend in as much as possible.

f. **Interview key protestors:** Get their side of the story before the event. Have people explain their own situation in their own words.

- *How long have you lived here? With whom?*
- *How did you first hear that you would be evicted? How did that make you feel?*
- *What is going to happen?*
- *Describe your fears about the upcoming eviction?*
- *What will you / your family do if you get evicted?*
- *Why do you think this is happening?*
- *What would you like to say to government officials, people in Cambodia or to international viewers who see this interview?*



ASSESS THE RISK. Before you start filming, make sure videos is the right choice to get the word out; because you, your organization, friends and the people you film all face potential risks. Risks occur when you film, when you edit and when you distribute.



ASK OPEN QUESTIONS. A good way to get the full story is to ask questions that begin with "Why" or "How" or just "Tell me," and can't just be answered "Yes" or "No." Make sure you don't talk over someone.



GET GOOD SOUND. Your sound is as important as your image. Getting closer to your interviewee or the action will make sure your camera picks up the sounds.

BEFORE PROPOSED EVICTION: SAMPLE SHOT PATTERN

- Consider how the footage will support the advocacy objectives of the campaign. What do you need to show and which questions do you need to ask to support the campaign or report recommendations?
- Take multiple wide-shots of the potential eviction site.
- Pan by moving your camera sideways from one point of interest to another across the eviction site – hold the starting shot for ten seconds, hold the end-shot for ten seconds
- Film daily family activities of your primary subject person – remember you are trying to show what is happening, who is doing it, where it is happening. Use a variety of shots to capture a particular scene in a meaningful sequence – for example a wide shot of a person cooking with their family, mid-shots of one person in particular, close-ups of him or her chopping food.
- Film interviews either as people are doing activities or in mid-shot, so that the shot shows them from a little over the top of their head down to just above their waist.
- Try filming an activity interview – walk along as someone explains a location and what has/will happen.

Filming During an Eviction

- a. **Plan a shotlist:** Plan for everything you would want to document, such as police aggression, people's emotion, people getting arrested and any injuries that might occur. It will likely be a very difficult shooting environment but try to stay calm, and keep steady long shots of what is happening.
- b. **Decide whether to hide the camera:** You may decide that it's safer to try to hide the camera. You could do this by cutting a small hole in a plastic bag and discreetly taping around the camera's lens so the image is not blocked. Cover the red light while recording by placing a small piece of black tape over the light without covering the microphone beside it. Practice recording so you can better anticipate what will be captured while not being able to view the picture. Be aware that filming in this manner can appear suspicious and the bag could possibly appear to be a concealed weapon.
- c. **Try not to film alone:** You should bring someone with you to keep an eye out for problems so that you can focus on filming. If the other person can bring another camera, she/he could stay behind and get a wide shot of the eviction while you capture close shots. If you believe that having two cameras recording at the same time would attract too much attention, try using a second camera as a back up. If it's impossible to film with someone, try positioning yourself with your back against a pole or wall so you can film without being attacked from behind.
- d. **Think about your appearance:** Consider your appearance before filming the eviction. Will it be safer to blend in with the crowd? Would you be treated differently by the police if you appear to be an NGO worker, journalist or outsider? Try to get a sense of police behavior from people within the community, or if possible, people that have witnessed similar events in the area you are working.
- e. **Scout the area:** This involves finding places where you would want to film, or film from, or finding an adjacent building from where you could safely shoot at a distance.
- f. **Plan an exit route:** Look for different ways to exit the area if things get out of control during the eviction.
- g. **Keep safety AND good shots in mind:** While filming an eviction with a hostile police presence, keep in mind the fine balance between getting a good shot and having your camera confiscated, getting hurt or being arrested. If you anticipate that the police will be aggressive, consider filming from an adjacent building or through a window. You can always supplement a wide shot with first hand accounts and testimony when the police are not present.



GET EXPLANATIONS. If you are in a confusing situation, or are missing a key piece of the footage, turn to an onlooker and ask them to explain on-camera what happened.

- h. If you can, and it's safe, do some interviews in the moment:** If a situation is not clear, you can often ask someone who was watching to explain it in the moment.
- i. Make sure someone who wasn't there can understand what happened:** When you think of the shooting, you have to think of how to collect images and sound that will help provide the most comprehensive information to the future viewer. Focus on the abuses that are taking place and look for people you have interviewed before, or take note of people you would want to talk to after the event.
- j. Do follow-up interviews, particularly with people you filmed before or during the eviction:** If you can capture testimony by people who have been affected by the eviction soon after the event, you will get a more emotional interview that will therefore be more powerful. Look for people you have interviewed before or filmed during the eviction.
- k. Get footage to a safe location:** Immediately transfer your footage to your computer, submit it to your allied organizations, or keep the camera and memory card in a safe place away from the eviction site.

DURING AN EVICTION: SAMPLE SHOT PATTERN

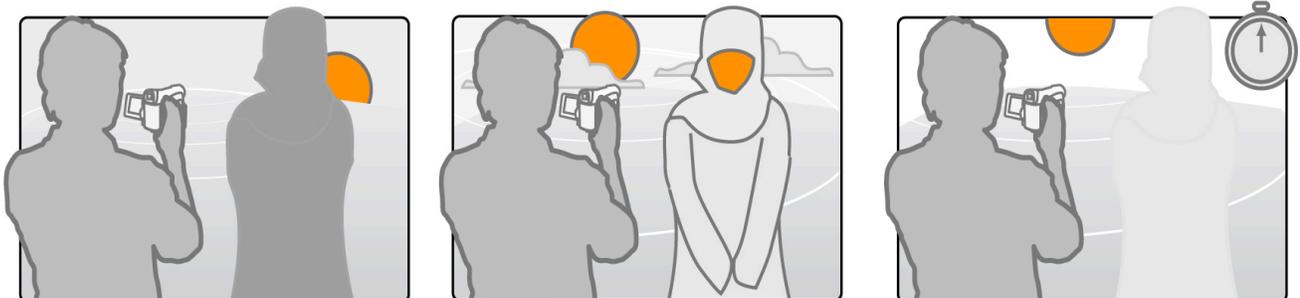
- Because you have a camera and are recording an event the authorities may not want others to see, you and your camera are at risk. Speak with persons closest to the event about the risks of filming and alert others that you are planning to film.
- Take multiple wide-shots of the events from a safer location.
- Pan across eviction site to show the extent – hold the starting shot for ten seconds, hold the end-shot for ten seconds.
- Personal details are important – when safe, focus in on personal items (family photos, heirlooms).
- Consider asking others without cameras to shield you from the view of authorities. Hold the camera at waist level or conceal it in a bag or a shirt pocket, with a hole cut for recording.
- Make sure to get shots of both the people conducting the evictions, as well as the people being evicted. Be aware that if your footage is confiscated, *any activities* could be used *for or against* anyone on the footage. Remember you cannot blur faces immediately while filming.
- Try filming supporting interview with someone close by – don't expose them to danger - but pull them out of sight of authorities to conduct an immediate interview.
- Get your footage to a safe location and, if relevant, how to distribute it quickly.

Filming After an Eviction

- a. **Document the 'after' of the situation:** If possible, and only when safe, document the evicted area – look for details close up. Return to the same places you have filmed before so you can show the before and after of the situation. Try to follow-up with the people you interviewed earlier and document how their life has changed due to the eviction.
- b. **Document physical injuries:** Document all injuries and abuses which have occurred and ask people to explain what happened as if they were talking to someone who was not present during the eviction. Take separate shots of the injuries rather than trying to film the interview at the same time.
 - *Could you tell me what happened on the day of the eviction?*
 - *Could you describe any abuse you witnessed or experienced?*
 - *How have you and your family been affected by the eviction?*
 - *Where will you live now? What will you do?*
 - *What would you like to say to government officials, people in Cambodia or to international viewers who see this footage?*

AFTER AN EVICTION: SAMPLE SHOT PATTERN

- Consider how the footage will support the advocacy objectives of the campaign. What do you need to show and which questions do you need to ask to support the campaign or report recommendations?
- Take multiple wide-shots of the eviction site after the fact.
- Pan across the site – hold the starting shot for ten seconds, hold the end-shot for ten seconds.
- Film daily family activities after the fact – how have people's lives changed? If at a relocation site, use a variety of shots in a meaningful sequence to capture how activities may be different at the relocation site.
- Film interviews either as people are doing activities or in mid-shot, so that the shot shows them from a little over the top of their head down to just above their waist.
- Try filming an activity interview – walk along as someone explains a location and what has happened.



CHECK LIGHTING. Don't film people with the sun behind them unless you need to backlight them to conceal identity. The best light for filming is a cloudy day outside. Avoid direct midday sun.