

EXPLORE IMPACT:

HOW TO REACH NEW AUDIENCES

AND BOOST IMPACT

A handbook for film festival organisers

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INTRODUCTION

- WHY EXPLORE

IMPACT?

Documentary film festivals, showing films about present day problems, human rights violations and social causes, have served as a natural field for activism, often bringing together activist filmmakers, protagonists or activists from the nonprofit sector, presenting their stories and work to the audience. At documentary film festivals, powerful stories

are shared and information is spread. These festivals have the potential to create a space where individual minds can change, which might later lead to larger scale social change and have an impact, either on the individual viewer, the wider audience or even a bigger segment of society. Powerful stories well told in a film can awake a need for change. Therefore, social impact can be a natural part of documentary film festivals and of the documentaries themselves, regardless how one chooses to label it.



After watching a film that tackles a complex cause or shows the story of someone in a difficult situation, audiences often ask us a simple question: "Is there any way I can help?" Some viewers are more pessimistic and immediately assume there is not much we can do about it. Trying to find an at least somewhat satisfactory response, One World has delved deeper into the field of social impact. As part of the Czech NGO People in Need, which provides humanitarian aid abroad as well as inclusive education in the Czech Republic, One World cares about how films can change the world for the better. We believe that together with offering a powerful cinematic experience and information, documentaries can inspire people to take action in the struggle for healthy civic society and a more engaged citizenry. We feel this is especially needed in Central and Eastern Europe in light of recent political developments.

There is a lot going on in the area of filmmaking and social impact, with numerous studies focused on the impact campaigns of documentaries. But not much is being said about

the role of the film festivals. Usually they are described as an important distribution channel and as an instrument for raising awareness and reaching out to audiences. The studies typically only mention the festivals as a tool for impact. As there are many film festivals, including One World, that work to enhance impact not only by screening the films, we believe this area deserves more attention.

The aim of this handbook is to introduce ways in which film festivals can tackle social impact and how teams of organisers from different festivals approach it. At One World we have spent several years thinking about and experimenting with ways to combine the usual festival programme and impact activities. Each year we try to improve, testing new strategies to inform our audience about how they can take action. We do not think we have the only solution. With this handbook we want to share our experience and those of other festivals to hopefully inspire others, whether to engage in concrete impact activities or to start thinking

about impact in festival work in general.

An important part of thinking about the impact of a festival or a film is impact evaluation. There are many ways to research something so delicate and difficult to grasp. We will present two methods of impact assessment that we have tried in recent years that hopefully will be a meaningful contribution to the impact assessment debate.

This handbook can also serve as a source of inspiration for other cultural events organisers, who are mindful of the impact of their activities. Finally, documentary filmmakers and others working in the documentary film industry, who may be thinking about creating their own impact campaign or already have one, may find interesting examples of what festivals are capable of in terms of impact work.

Thanks to the Visegrad Fund and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, who supported the Explore Impact project, we are now able to present this handbook focused on the impact

of documentary film festivals. The result is based on cooperation with four great festivals: CinéDOC-Tbilisi, DocuDays UA, Verzio Film Festival and Watch Docs, who have been our partners in this two-year project and who have contributed valuable inputs and ideas to this handbook. The Explore Impact project enabled our five festivals to carry out workshops and other activities to learn more about impact. We strongly believe this will improve our festival work in the future, making it easier to reach out to new audiences and have a better chance to contribute to social change and agenda setting.

ABOUT ONE WORLD

Over the past 20 years, One World has grown into the largest human rights documentary film festival in the world. Organised by People in Need, the festival works with a broad definition of human rights, and therefore in addition to films about political causes and development themes, the programme also includes films about social issues, the environment and lifestyles.

Each year, we select about 120 films, including VR projects. The festival in Prague, the regions and Brussels attracts more than 120,000 viewers each year. In the course of the festival, the industry programme East Doc Platform takes place, organised by the Institute of Documentary Film.

We also help fledgling human rights festivals, especially those in nondemocratic countries. In 2015 we published a practical guide entitled Setting Up a Human Rights Film Festival. We are members of the Human Rights Film Network and the Green Film Network.

WHAT IS IMPACT?

To come up with an impact handbook, we first need to understand what we consider to be social impact – or simply impact.

Recently, social impact has become a term you often hear in various fields, whether sociology, fundraising, culture or the NGO sector in general. Impact is defined as a change of attitude, opinion or behaviour that occurs as a direct consequence of the

given activity. The change might happen immediately, but more likely will take some time and the whole process will depend on many variables and external influences. The impact can affect a single individual, but it can also influence society as a whole, for example, in the form of a legislative or institutional change, or a shift in discourse.

How does impact work when it comes to documentary films?

Documentaries provide valuable information and investigative insights into causes that you might have never heard about – or that you have heard a very different version of. They present true stories of real people. Some are inspiring, some are difficult and complicated. But every time, there is a significant likelihood that the stories of other people, that you have just watched, will move you or make you recall similar situations in your own life. The deeper the storytelling touches you, the greater the chances of further engagement. This moment opens a space for filmmakers, impact producers, campaigners, activists or festival organisers, to explore impact activities.

FILMMAKERS AND IMPACT DOCUMENTARY FILMS AND CAMPAIGNS

Filmmakers have thoroughly explored documentaries with impact campaigns in the last couple of years, bringing many awareness campaigns to life. In some cases, the films and the teams around them have sparked public debate and advocacy work and/or community screenings at such a scale that real social change was brought about. If you are interested in learning more about specific films, campaigns and their outcomes, you can read [Doc Society's Impact Guide Library](#) with materials dedicated to individual films.

Examples:

Taste the Waste, directed by Valentin Thurn

Thurn's film showing the outcomes of food waste and ideas on how to prevent consumerism has inspired a group of young Czech activists, who founded an organisation called [Save the Food](#) and organised a public feast prepared from ingredients that would otherwise

end up in the garbage. Since then, they have organised several campaigns and are successfully expanding their public awareness activities.

Crooks, directed by Silvie Dymakova

The film uncovers the manipulation behind the closed doors of "product demonstration excursions for seniors" in the Czech Republic. Even while it was being completed, the documentary caused an uproar when it became clear that dozens of Czech companies were abusing seniors, leading to a petition that later resulted in an amendment to consumer protection law¹.

Virunga, directed by Orlando von Einsiedel

Virunga shows the struggle to preserve a Congolese national park endangered by poachers, rebel groups and the SOCO

¹ https://ekonomika.idnes.cz/zacal-platit-novy-zakon-proti-smejdum-dx6-/ekonomika.aspx?c=A140115_075047_ekonomika_maq

company trying to start oil exploration.

Thanks to a massive campaign, the film managed to raise awareness globally and put pressure on SOCO. You can read more in the [Doc Impact Award analysis](#)².

²<http://www.docimpactaward.org/files/virunga.pdf>

A lot has been written about how filmmakers should work with impact documentaries, but the discussion has mainly focused on the balance between the film's artistic value and the impact message it delivers. The studies usually recommend separating the role of filmmakers and impact producers or other team members who organise the campaign, ideally crafting it from the early stages of the shooting. For a successful campaign, it is crucial to create partnerships with stakeholders, communities, media, activists, NGOs and other actors, who are concerned with the film's central issues and who already have a voice in the given area and/or a capacity to advocate for the cause. Sharing information with the potential audience from the

beginning of the filmmaking process also seems to pay off later when the film is released, as there already is a buzz around it.

As film and campaign development is not our main expertise, we will not go further into exploring this area. If you are interested in the impact filmmaking point of view, we recommend reading the [Doc Society's Impact Field Guide](#) and [Center for Media and Social Impact](#) for more analytical reading.

FESTIVALS AND IMPACT

In the introduction, we mentioned why One World pursues impact work. It is mostly because we want to provide information and practical experience to our audience beyond the story of the film. Our impact work should give audiences – who often feel helpless after watching a human rights documentary – ideas on how to take action and contribute to improving the situation.

In this part, we will introduce the strategies that we (and many other festivals) use to enhance the impact of the films and reach as many viewers as possible. We are acutely aware that doing impact festival work is a long-distance run. You can never do it perfectly and give space to all the ideas and causes that deserve attention. You can also probably never figure out and make use of all the impact instruments and channels that exist. That is why we are especially grateful to fellow festival organisers, who have contrib-



uted with their input. They are also our motivation for putting this handbook together – so other festival (or cultural events) organisers can find inspiration for their own impact work.

Several years ago, documentaries with impact campaigns started to appear and many of them were selected for the One World programme (e.g. **Blackfish** directed by Gabriela Cowperthwaite, **Bully** directed by Lee Hirsch, **The Act of Killing** directed by Joshua Oppenheimer). Throughout the years, we have decided to pay more attention to this trend and in 2014, we conducted a survey among Czech filmmakers, trying to find out if and how they relate to impact in their work. The result was that most of the filmmakers believe that documentaries can change society, but were not convinced their films have this power. Less than half of them plan to create an impact campaign in the future. In 2015, an extended Q&A with Signe Byrge Sørensen (the producer of **Act of Killing** and **The Look of Silence**) and Georgia and Sophia Scott (the directors of **In the Shadow of War**) about their campaigns was held during the

festival. In the same edition of the festival, we organised a special event following the film **Print the Legend** directed by J. Clay Tweel and Luis Lopez about the rising importance of 3D printing, where viewers could print an object on a 3D printer. Another event followed the screening of **Sugar Blues** – a film showing the life of a sugar-free family. A tasting of sugar-free snacks took place.

Since these first steps, which encouraged us to further explore this field, we have settled on a standard for our impact work, which we try to improve every year – mostly impact partnerships and a growing number of special events.

STAYING UP-TO-DATE

Research is an inherent part of a programmer's job. This work is essential to keep an eye on progress and new industry trends, to find new films, projects and innovations. When it comes to impact, it has proved useful to follow:

- Film funds that focus on supporting films with impact potential and/or impact campaigns.

We recommend getting in touch with the fund, filmmaker or production company directly. Recommended platforms to follow: [Doc Society](#), [Firelight Media](#), [Fledgling Fund](#), [Ford Foundation – Just Films](#), [Impact Partners](#), [ITVS](#), [Participant Media](#), [Sundance Institute – Stories of Change](#), [Together Films](#), [Tribeca Film Institute](#), [Why Foundation](#)

- Meetings and networking – try to meet people working on impact films and campaigns, learn about their plans and discuss possible future cooperation. Stay in touch with them.
- Works in progress – keep an eye on films in progress, be in touch with the filmmakers and distributors. [Doc Society's Good Pitch](#) is an especially valuable source of impact docs before completion.

PROGRAMME SELECTION AND PROGRAMMING

At One World, we aim to always consider the impact potential of the film (its original campaign or our own idea for local impact activity) in the Czech context.

We try to consider these factors when selecting the programme. While impact potential is important for us, the quality and relevance of the content is central.

Each year, we have a couple of topics in mind that we would like to work with more, for example, to support the campaigns of local NGOs or to organise an event that will be attractive for our audience. Then we deliberately search for films with this theme, for example, films about biking, which we could then complement with a bike ride in the streets of Prague, promoting environmentally friendly commuting and collaborating with local cycling communities.

Once the films are selected, a programme timetable starts to develop. It is important to consider suitable timing for different target audiences. This way, the impact of the films can be enhanced by attracting more viewers.

Tips

- [Human Rights Watch Film Festival](#) tries to be in touch with filmmakers and offer them support as they seek to use their

film for advocacy purposes. The festival looks for opportunities to connect filmmakers and HRW workers in their field. Many films have premiered at HRWFF as a launching pad for continued exposure and distribution after the festival. Some of the titles launched at HRWFF are anticipated to get distribution and be available in cinemas and online, others will likely struggle to screen at major venues in the city or via major online platforms. Both types of films are important for them to show, and they place great value in being able to share films that audiences might otherwise not have access to.

IMPACT PARTNERSHIPS

To increase festival impact and outreach, we suggest looking for new strategic partnerships and maintaining ones that already exist. It is especially important to collaborate with NGOs working in various fields. We usually reach out to NGOs a couple of months prior to the festival, to find out what their current focus is. If our topics intersect with one of their topics, there is a chance to cooperate more. We may invite them to partici-

pate in the Q&As or recommend other speakers, highlight their organisation in the impact information that we write for some of the films, organise a special event together or ask them for their expert opinion when we are unsure about some factual information in the films. Some organisations have already been collaborating with us for a long time, but every year we still encounter new ones, as the topics of the films can be very unexpected.

At One World, we focus any extra activities only on events that are connected with the selected films or with the main theme of the festival (the theme is different every year, as we try to react to current events). This rule may sometimes complicate things, for example, when a partner suggests an interesting topic in no way connected to the current festival edition. In our experience, it is counterproductive to go in this direction. The number of extra festival activities increases and it becomes difficult for the audience to understand what is going on. It is also difficult to promote, as there is no thematic connection.

NGOs are a valuable source of knowledge and expertise, which can support and boost the audience impact of the film. They also have their own information channels where they can publish information about the festival. In return, the NGOs get a chance to promote their work and to recruit volunteers and supporters.

Tips

- At CinéDOC-Tbilisi, NGOs and civil activists moderate panel discussions or Q&A sessions, promote film screenings and sometimes screen the films again for their beneficiaries or target groups. For example, the Women Fund in Georgia promoted the film **Venus** directed by Mette Carla Albrechtsen and Lea Glob, which helped attract many viewers interested in the topic, who then contributed to a great debate.

- Ambulante also cooperates with NGOs in terms of promotion, expertise and event co-hosting, but they also get financial support for events that are of interest for the organisations.

Support a campaign

In 2018, we formed a partnership with the Czech NGO It's Only Fair, which promotes and lobbies for a fair form of marriage for all, especially focusing on people in the LGBT+ community. Their campaign (a petition that was later handed to the parliament) was planned to culminate in May, so we decided to support it in March and April and provide them space, both in Prague and in the regions, so our viewers could sign the petition. An informational slide was presented at all our venues before the screenings. In return, information about the festival was promoted via their channels. This is an example of an activity that we would like to continue – to each year choose one campaign and give it space at the festival. The petition was signed by almost 70,000 people and equal marriage will be discussed in the parliament.

Universities

In 2018, we tried to strengthen our collaboration with universities. University students traditionally are one of the biggest parts of our audience and also one of the main target groups

when thinking about impact. Our strategy was to invite professors to afternoon screenings, where ticket prices are lower and therefore more attractive for students. The aim was to encourage professors to watch a film with the students and then use it as a source for continued discussion in class. Thanks to this collaboration, afternoon attendance was higher compared to the previous year.

This work demands more effort, as professors are very busy and it is difficult to coordinate their schedule with the festival programme. We succeeded in bringing several groups of students and their professors and we hope to do even more next year, as these groups may in the future constitute an educated audience that is interested in the world around us. In addition, teachers are usually invited to participate in Q&As. The festival is promoted thanks to the professors, faculties and student groups that we work with.

IMPACT PROMOTION

There are several PR channels for spreading additional information about the films and for supporting impact.

- We include information in the catalogue on how viewers can take action. There is a special section called "Films that change the world", where films are presented together with tips on what can be done about problems. Sometimes there is information on the original campaign of the film, sometimes it is connected with local NGOs and action groups.

- The same information is then published on the website, right below the synopsis.

- For selected campaigns, we create information slides that are then screened at the cinemas, during Q&As after the films.

- Moderators can highlight the information during Q&As.

- There are petitions available for many issues and campaigns that can be distributed in the venues.

REACHING OUT TO NEW AUDIENCES

A key question for many documentary festivals is "How should we reach out to this group?"

We aim to make the films available to as many people as possible. This idea follows

the effort to enhance impact. Apart from the usual online and offline festival PR and the various initiatives mentioned in this handbook (i.e. regional festivals, strategic partnerships, films available via alternative distribution, school screenings, accessible festival) we try to think about new audiences that can be reached. One example is the elderly. We cooperate with organisations who work with this group and offer them reduced-price tickets. We also organise screenings of films for kids and their parents, followed by workshops.

Another great way to promote the festival differently is to create video messages with local influencers (we have tried famous Czech actors). These materials have the potential to go viral, if you choose the right person. Another effective platform is Instagram. We have attempted to work together with several influencers, who promoted the festival on their profiles.

Tips

- Take One Action offers free tickets to registered organisations who can distribute them

to young people, who neither work nor study full-time, and to the socially disadvantaged. Another initiative for a diverse audience is "pay it forward", where viewers are invited to pay more so another person can attend for free³.

- CinéDOC-Tbilisi recommends outdoor cinemas and other public spaces to screen the films (e.g. public libraries).
- Docudays UA organises film clubs in prisons.
- Try site-specific screenings – abandoned buildings, train stations, galleries.
- Motivate your audience to invite people from outside of their usual social circle and take them to the festival.

Q&As AND PANEL DEBATES

Q&As are one of the most effective and most often used impact instruments for a documentary film festival. A debate with filmmakers, protagonists,

³ <https://www.takeoneaction.org.uk/event/food-for-thought/>

experts or activists following a film screening is a great way to enhance the film experience, provide more information and capture the audience's attention. A moderator is always present – a festival team member or expert preferably working in a field related to the film topic. Q&As at One World usually last from 20 to 45 minutes.

The impact assessment we did in 2018 also focused on assessing Q&As. What audiences appreciated most were the so-called "behind the scenes" stories of filmmakers or characters, or other insiders discussing the making of the film and the fate of its protagonists. Basically, it is always good if a director or other key person in the production either provides personal information about the actors (whether they are sympathetic to the audience or vice versa) or elaborates on their stories. Audiences also appreciate if the filmmakers, especially those coming from abroad, take the time to talk to them briefly.

Many viewers sometimes felt there was not enough room for Q&A discussions. In some cases, the moderated debates would

have benefited from greater activity and engagement on the part of the moderators.

Many festivals organise extended Q&As in the form of panel debates, where speakers get more time to talk and there are usually more guests invited. In our experience, having more than two speakers can benefit the variety of presented opinions, but it can also make the discussion too long. It can also be problematic to find guests with opposing views, so the debates sometimes tend to affirm what everyone already believes.

In 2018, we tried a new model which we call Talking Cinema – having two or one more high-profile international guests, who discussed the topic of the films in English. Each of them first gave a short presentation, followed by a debate moderated by a journalist. Viewers had the chance to ask questions via [sli.do](#), an interactive online app that projects the questions onto a screen. It is still a bit early to evaluate whether the change was for the good after the first year, but generally we were satisfied with the new direction. The international guests (e.g.

Rohingya activist Wai Wai Nu brought more media attention and the whole debate model became more professional.

Tips

- CinéDOC-Tbilisi invites social activists or representatives of different communities as moderators (e.g. representatives of the LGBT community, green activists). Inviting such moderators helps to reach out to more people.
- Docudays UA emphasises Q&As, which makes it special in the Ukrainian festival circuit. What is called an extended Q&A at IDFA is a normal Q&A at Docudays UA. They always try to bring filmmakers to the festival, as well as local experts to comment on the issue taking the local context into account.

Often they organise special debates, such as in 2017, following the film **Audience Emancipated: The Struggle for the Emek Movie Theater** directed by Emek Bizim İstanbul Bizim Initiative. Heads of local cinemas, activists and urbanists discussed struggles faced by Ukrainian urban cinemas while they try to remain

cultural venues and resist commercialisation. Similar debates followed in seven other Ukrainian cities⁴.

- Human Rights Watch Film Festival's Q&As are an essential part of programming, which aims to give those working at the heart of the issue the chance to speak directly with audiences. For these 30+ minute panels, filmmakers or protagonists are almost always present. Human Rights Watch researchers, activists or other experts on the issue may also participate, which expands the opportunities for collaboration between filmmakers, advocates and audiences.

- As part of the Movies That Matter top-down impact strategy, they focus on informing decisionmakers about urgent subjects through films. Inviting the decisionmakers to be part of the Q&As has proven effective. They also try to include interactive elements by using voting devices for each viewer. The moderator briefly interrupts the debate several times, ask-

⁴ <http://traveling.docudays.org.ua/eng/2017/news/kino/summing-up/>

ing the audience a thematic question that moves the debate to another topic. The audience answers via the devices.

IMPACT EVENTS

Besides the typical festival accompanying programme (Q&As, panel debates, art exhibitions, concerts), we organise several special impact events linked to the films, which elaborate on the topics and give the audience an opportunity to experience more. These kinds of events proved very adept at giving audiences a deeper experience and are a great way to support the impact of the films. They are also an opportunity to collaborate with local NGOs and initiatives, which often co-organise these events, as they have expertise and practical knowledge. To give you a better idea of what these events could look like, here are several examples from our recent editions:

Event: **Maleness crisis, or crisis of the system?**

Film: **Theory of Equality**, directed by Barbora Chalupová

A film depicting the state of gender equality in Czech society inspired us to collaborate with an initiative called Genderman (of which one of the protagonists of the film is also a member), which organises moderated discussions of male and female groups, trying to make each understand the other gender better. The discussion focused on the social impact of the MeToo movement.

Event: **SWAP**

Film: **Second Hand Heroes**, directed by Christian Knorr

Second Hand Heroes praises the importance of reusing and recycling. This created a great opportunity to organise SWAP, to exchange old and unused items and find "new" ones that somebody else doesn't need anymore. Local initiatives that restore old furniture or exchange plant cuttings joined the all-day event.

Event: **Live library**

Film: **Granny Project**, directed by Bálint Révész

Collaborating with an NGO that collects memories of 20th century witnesses, a live library took place after the screening of **Granny Project**. Just as the filmmakers asked their grandmothers about their life stories, visitors had the opportunity to ask contemporary witnesses about important events of the 20th century.

Event: **Sign language workshop**

Film: **Deaf Child**, directed by Alex de Ronde

Following the film about the life of a hard-of-hearing boy and the Q&A, we organised a Czech sign language workshop, led by our hard-of-hearing colleague.

Researches were present at this workshop and their observations provided interesting information. The follow-up workshop was closely linked to the film (and to the Q&A), when the lecturer not only taught the basics of Czech sign language, but also talked about his own experience

of living as a deaf person. One of the participants said that "the contact with the lecturer helped me to see the issue in a more practical context." As a whole, the film, discussion and workshop constituted a functional tool to build impact that has the potential to manifest itself in specific action on the part of the audience. The structure of all three elements of the evening was logical and beneficial, with the discussion expanding the audience's enthusiasm for and inspiration received from the film. Finally the workshop brought something that could be called a handbook for working with the deaf. An important feature of the workshop is its practicality.

Event: **Dance workshop**

Film: **A Young Girl in Her Ninties**, directed by Valeria Bruni

Tedeschi and Yann Coridian
We had a great opportunity to host the protagonist from the film, Thierry Thieû Niang, who developed a method of communicating through dance with seniors suffering from Alzheimer's disease and taught the method to four Czech dancers in

Prague. After the screening, they held a workshop together at an event to which seniors from a local community were invited.

Similar events can often be seen in the programmes of other festivals. Some films simply inspire you to do this. For us, it has proved as effective to have a team member taking care of the events and bringing the ideas, even for films that at first sight do not seem suitable for an event.

As regards programming, it has proved effective to hold the events right after the screening, when the audience is still immersed in the topic. It works well when a moderator invites the viewers personally.

The 2018 assessment focused on selected impact events. The outcome was that the workshops succeeded in adding a practical dimension to the impact of selected films, thus enhancing the impact of the festival as a whole. This is a hypothesis that we have worked with since we started emphasising the impact events and we were glad to have it confirmed now by the assessments that

showed the functionality of practical workshops.

As a special kind of event, we can also mention the opening of the festival in 2016, when we decided to do a screening in a community centre that had been attacked by ultra-right-wing aggressors a couple of days before. Aside from the usual ceremony, we screened the same film in their centre as a sign of support and to voice our condemnation of ultra-right-wing violence.

Tips

- [Movies That Matter](#) holds Activist Night – a thematic quiz for the public, moderated by the team members.
- [CinéDOC-Tbilisi](#) organised a football match of the festival team against the guests, as an accompanying event to the film *Infinite Football* directed by Corneliu Porumboiu.
- [Take One Action](#) holds workshops to dive into activism and the struggle for social change⁵.

⁵ <https://www.takeoneaction.org.uk/event/step-into-the-action/>

• Ambulante's Transmedia Salon, a virtual reality programme dedicated to criminal justice, was a great extension of the programme.

FESTIVAL IN SCHOOLS

School screenings are an inherent part of One World, just as they are at many other documentary festivals. They are organised by our colleagues from One World in Schools (a department of People in Need). The films are divided into two age categories:

- high-school students (ages 14 – 20) – five feature films, which are thematically and formally suitable for the students
- grammar school students (ages 8 – 13) – a set of six short films (up to 20 minutes) which are divided into two blocks for two other age groups: 8 – 11 (the smallest children) and 12 – 13 (pre-adolescents).

In our experience, there is one crucial thing that should be borne in mind when choosing a film for any of these age groups: a personal story. That gives students a very particular idea

about how any global problem can influence the lives of local people, and when the story is told from the point of view of their peers, it makes it even more relatable.

In 2018, some 60,000 young viewers attended more than 700 screenings in Prague and other cities. Thanks to the experienced team that prepares the school programme, each screening is followed by a debate led by moderators, who receive detailed materials that prepare them for the discussion with the young audience (in high schools they also invite a guest, usually an expert in the given topic).

The success of the school screenings is also based on the long-standing cooperation with schools and a good network of teachers. School screenings are a great way to teach young viewers how and why to watch documentaries and to care about what is happening around them. Students are also naturally a very active audience, so we encourage teachers to work further with the reactions that seeing a film about a powerful topic elicit. On many occasions, the debate when leaving

the cinema is so lively that the teacher decides to revisit the topic in their next lesson and examine it more closely. The films clearly have a strong impact on young audiences. There are many cases of students proceeding to take direct action, such as starting a project in their hometown or raising money for a protagonist of the film.

Tips

- [Movies That Matter](#) held a political film quiz for the public, moderated by the team members.
- [The True/False Film Fest](#) has an interesting programme for students, for example, the DIY day for students. They come to watch a film at the festival, followed by a Q&A with a filmmaker. For many students, this is their first time in a cinema. After the screening, students can join interactive artist workshops with filmmakers or other artists. The day continues with a traditional parade through the streets⁶.

⁶ <https://truefalse.org/attend/education-outreach/high-school/>

FESTIVAL IN THE REGIONS

Each year, when the festival ends in Prague, it travels to more than 30 other Czech cities. We cooperate with local NGOs, People in Need offices, cultural organisations and individuals, who organise their own unique festivals, with our help. We arrange film licences, prepare the film copies, graphic visuals and give locals basic knowledge (but we also get a lot of inspiration from them!) and support while they prepare the screenings, Q&As and other events. Three times a year, we organise meetings for planning, learning new skills, selecting the films and evaluating.

In many places, the teams remain the same for many years. Thanks to them, we have a great opportunity to reach a much bigger audience (in 2018, it was more than 70,000 viewers, including the screenings for schools). This network is a functional instrument for film distribution and raising awareness in smaller cities, as it is a platform that can bring hundreds of viewers for one film. It also creates a space where locals can meet, exchange opinions and discuss many topics.

In 2018, a quantitative audience survey was done for the first time in the regions. It aimed to find out who the viewers are – their motivation to come to the festival, where they learned about it, how they chose the films to watch, and what accompanying programme they are interested in. Out of 3,345 respondents from cities of various size, most were: women, younger than 35 years and university-educated. A third of them were first-time visitors. Most learned about the festival from their friends or via social media. The average number of watched films was three. The hottest topics were poverty and social exclusion, environment and authoritarian regimes. The results can help promotional strategies be devised for the next edition, as you realise what your strong and weak points are.

Tips

- Movies That Matter continues the screenings after their festival in almost 20 other Dutch cities, making one film available each month.

- Ambulante has a wide network of screenings outside of the capital. They try to bring films to the places where cinema isn't usually seen. The screenings are organised from the festival's headquarters, but in cooperation with local organisations to figure out how to find audiences in each place. They do as much outreach as possible to find out who is doing interesting work in the area and if they could contribute to the festival, at least to be consultants about certain communities and help to design outreach and publicity plans in each place.

- Docudays UA is present in the regions, too. More than 200 cities take part, screening great documentaries to the public, inspiring young audiences with screenings at schools, organising educational workshops, public space interventions and street actions.

ADVOCACY SCREENINGS

For the last 12 years, the One World Festival also has been held in Brussels. Viewers have a chance to see a selection of the most interesting documen-

taries screened at One World in Prague. The festival, in close cooperation with the human rights department of People in Need, aims to encourage debate about human rights issues in EU institutions through screenings followed by discussions with filmmakers, activists and experts. One World Brussels is organised in cooperation with the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU and the Czech Centre Brussels.

When organising advocacy screenings, it is important to develop partnerships with local organisations, institutions or NGOs to reach the desired audience. Partners need to be found for each screening and the film selection should be adjusted to the activities of the partner organisations, while aiming for the most relevant and ground-breaking topics. It is a great advantage to select venues as close to your target audience as possible. In Brussels, we have been organising screenings in the European Parliament to get as close as possible to the policymakers. When it comes to advocacy screenings, Q&As are as important as the screenings themselves. It is a unique oppor-

tunity to bring up specific issues and give voice to those who are usually not heard.

ALTERNATIVE DISTRIBUTION

Throughout the year, One World manages its own alternative distribution channel called Get Your Audience!. The project is based on a website, from which anyone in the Czech Republic can download one of the more than 60 films. The festival buys the licences, usually for a limited period. Hundreds of people across the country have joined the network of projectionists, screening the films at home, in cafés, at schools, at work, in prisons, etc. We try to stay in touch with the projectionists, who often tend to be very active in their local communities. Selected films together with accompanying materials and information are available to everyone, whether they want to screen the film at home alone or arrange a public screening for friends or family. The accompanying materials enable the audience to get extra information on the topic of the film, which in a way can substitute Q&As. This comes in handy, as it is not

easy to organise a debate with an expert in a remote village. The texts are usually written by experts from NGOs. We make the films public during the whole year and we try to launch them in thematic blocks, e.g. a film on alternative schooling is made available on the first day of school.

Tips

- Sheffield Doc/Fest offers to pick the limited number of eligible viewers up at their homes and give them a ride to the cinema and back home. The From Door to Doc programme makes the festival accessible to a wider audience for only £17.

ACCESSIBLE FESTIVAL

Since 2017, we have focused more on audiences with various physical and mental disabilities. Inspired by the fact that the right to culture is a fundamental human right, we decided that it is necessary to make the festival as accessible as possible. So far we have provided special subtitles for the deaf and hard

of hearing, audio commentaries for the blind and visually impaired and relaxed screenings for mentally disabled people. All these screenings were of course also open to the general public. All our venues were mapped in detail and described in the catalogue and the website, so that people with physical disabilities could plan their festival programme accordingly. Besides these film adjustments, several Q&As were translated into Czech sign language. These improvements tend to be costly, meaning that unfortunately we can adjust only several films and a part of the Q&As. Each of the target groups is represented by a member of the festival team, which helps us a lot.

Making an accessible festival also requires adjusting the way in which it is promoted. We try to improve our website and other information channels. We have informational videos in sign language, easy-to-read versions of the texts for the mentally disabled and we are working on alterations so the website is more blind-friendly. These activities are particularly difficult, because you need to keep an eye on so many details and it is hard to get a perfect

⁷ <https://sheffdocfest.com/articles/579-from-door-to-doc>

result. However, viewers with disabilities have rewarded us with their huge gratitude that we are trying to make the festival accessible to them, which is a great motivation for us to continue.

Tips

• Sheffield Doc/Fest cares about viewers with disabilities, too. They publish information about the accessibility of the venues, travel and accommodation, and special ticket offers on their website. Viewers with disabilities can therefore plan everything ahead⁸.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABLE FESTIVAL

Apart from screening films depicting environmental issues, we also aim to organise the events in a sustainable manner. This is a way in which the festival itself can have a direct impact, in this case on the environment. During the planning and implementation of the festival, we try to minimise any negative environmental impacts by recycling,

⁸ <https://sheffdocfest.com/view/accessibility>

reducing waste and supporting local companies and organisations. For example, we have:

- reduced the amount of printed materials, trying to promote the mobile app instead;
- put separated waste bins in the venues;
- switched to vegetarian banquets, biodegradable dishes and seasonal bouquets at the ceremonies;
- used electric powered vehicles to transport festival guests;
- encouraged guests to travel by train when possible (same goes for team members travelling to other festivals);
- bought food containers for the office, to reduce plastic ones.

SPECIAL FUNDS

The True/False Film Fest manages the True Life Fund. Each year, they choose one compelling film and in cooperation with the filmmakers, who are close to the protagonists, create an opportunity for the audience to contribute via a fund. For example, this year the film **Primas**

directed by Laura Bari was selected. The sum raised will be used for the future education of the two protagonists⁹.

EVALUATIONS

After describing many ways to make an impactful festival, it is also important to mention evaluation. Whether it is impact assessment, team evaluation or classical audience research, it is always beneficial for the next edition and it helps the festival take another step forward. Evaluations can be done by the team members or by an external agency or individuals.

At One World, we have conducted quantitative evaluation of the audience (in the past in Prague and this year also in the regions), which helped us find out what our audience looks like as regards age, gender, education, social status, etc. This is very useful especially for our promotion strategy.

As was already described earlier in this text, we have also carried out impact evaluation,

⁹ <https://truefalse.org/program/true-life-fund/>

quantitative and qualitative impact assessment. Thanks to these studies, we can see what forms of impact the festival and the films can have, and most importantly, we now have data confirming our presumptions, that the festival content has the potential to change people's mindsets. This is an excellent foundation for motivating of the festival team, our partners and the public.

Tips

- Ambulante hired an outside evaluator who conducted a qualitative and quantitative study of the screenings. The audiences participated in surveys (both on paper and filmed interviews) as well as focus groups to measure the effect of the film on their perceptions. They were interviewed both before and after in some cases to measure changing opinions and knowledge.
- At Docudays UA, individual stories about how somebody's life has changed after a film screening are collected. One of the most impressive ones concerned a female prisoner who, after watching the short film

Liza, go home! directed by Oksana Buraja, called her daughter with whom she hadn't spoken for many years.

- According to the Human Rights Watch Film Festival, measuring the impact of films on people's decisions and actions is an imperfect science and notoriously difficult. The idea behind the festival is to share perspectives and conversations that ideally influence the way we interact with news, each other and the world, but it is hard to know if this translates into impact. In terms of gauging what the audience thought of the festival, they conduct an audience survey after each screening, though the questions are more geared towards understanding how the audience member came to hear about our festival, what films they saw, and what they thought about it overall. They don't necessarily focus on what an audience member may have thought, and may think now, about the topic they saw in the film.

IMPACT AND THE FESTIVAL AUDIENCE

At One World, we have tried two approaches to audience and impact assessment in 2016-2018 to determine what effects the films and the festival itself can have on the viewers. In the following part, we will present our findings.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH: QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The aim of the research was to evaluate the impact of the festival on its audience, and what forms this impact takes. The overall concept of the assessment is based on an empirical qualitative survey whose



research methods included in-depth individual (and sometimes group) interviews and independent observation of the festival. Respondents were selected at random in various venues throughout the time of the festival. Although this was a sample survey (total of 44 interviews with 39 respondents), the findings of this assessment can in many cases be applied to One World as a whole.

The aim of the activity was to determine the impact of the festival films, debates and accompanying programmes on viewers and whether and how they change their attitudes to the themes presented by the festival, how they change the thinking, values and behaviour of visitors. Specifically, these were the following research areas:

- How does the audience choose from the themes of the films and their relationship to these themes?
- What type of films and what topics potentially have the greatest impact on the audience and why?
- How does the impact of films manifest itself in concrete

changes in attitude or behaviour?

- How do the selected target groups respond to particular types of films? What are the differences in film impact, for example, on different age groups?

To preserve the representative structure of the sample as much as possible, respondents were asked for additional, non-film-related attributes such as age, employment, etc. (these were not mandatory questions, e.g. age was often only estimated).

The goal of the impact assessment of the festival films was to identify what the impact is, but also to check whether these films have any (and what) impact on the viewer.

The audience members were approached randomly, regardless of the film they had attended. Two films were recommended by the festival team to be evaluated, with the hypothesis that they might be impactful. Most of the evaluated films were selected randomly by the evaluators.

It turned out that while audiences often have different motivations, in many cases they have taken away similar or comparable experiences from the films. Our analytical effort was to understand these common principles and how they are depicted in these films so that the meta-analysis of the general impact would be clearer to the reader.

CASE STUDY: GRANNY PROJECT

Granny Project

Bálint Révész

Hungary, UK | 2017 | 93 min.

How does family history affect our approach to others and to ourselves? Three young filmmakers from Great Britain, Germany and Hungary take on the serious theme of World War II with a light touch. Each of them has the task of interviewing their own grandmother. Thanks to these ladies' willingness to play along, the personal stories of women who experienced the Second World War on different sides emerge. The young filmmakers learn through the stories of

their grandmothers about their family history, but also about themselves.

As impact can have a long-term effect, a second part of the assessment is now underway, to find out how the respondents think about the films several months later.

Did the film change the viewer's perspective in any way?

As for Anna and the impact on her, she takes away rather personal lessons from the film (e.g. about reconciliation). She does not talk about it in the first person but transmits it to others. It appears more like a certain interest in the stories of the grandmothers, it does not have any activating effect on her. Interestingly, one of her acquaintances is a Holocaust survivor, so this topic is a very strong, deep experience thanks to personal transmission.

A more noticeable impact was evident in Jiří and Alena. They are interested in the stories of their parents and grandparents, but do not record them yet - the film inspired them to do it in the future. They compared the characters in the film

(grandmothers) to their own parents and their life stories. The documentary inspired them to discover the stories of their own parents and record their interviews with them. Clearly the age of the respondents played a role in the way the film was perceived. They shared the fact that the film appealed to their humanity and that they realised some values were important.

But this would be a simplification, because for Jiří and Alena, even if it was a unique case, it is obvious that the impact will be limited only to their personal lives, when the couple decided at the instigation of the film to record the memories of their parents.

Positive factors

- Emotion (the film is believable and evokes real emotions), not pathetic
- Relationship to the topic (Anna personally knows someone similar to one of the grandmothers)
- Simple example to follow (recording of grandmothers => the

viewer will also record his or her relatives).

CASE STUDY: THE LIMITS OF WORK - QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The Limits of Work
Apolena Rychlíková
Czech Republic | 2017 | 71 min.

A Motol laundromat, the Vodňanská poultry company, a supermarket, a razor blade factory and a waste sorting room. Saša Uhlová spent about a month in each job, enough to discover that people on a minimum wage do not lead very happy lives. They spend almost all their time at work, do overtime, weekend and night shifts, never take breaks, and often work when sick. Lunch or a tram ride are luxuries they can't afford. Poverty is just one aspect of their suffering. This documentary by Apolena Rychlíková won the 2017 Czech Documentary Film Award at the International Documentary Film Festival in Jihlava and also took the Audience Award.

Why did people attend the film?

"Our kids will go to work soon. So if they take a summer job as cashiers they should know what to expect."

Mom

The motives of this mother were atypical and very interesting. Her intention was to bring her two children to the film so they can see how important it is to study and to fight for their labour and other rights. It's unique for a parent to actually send their children to the festival to receive impact.

Did the film change the viewer's perspective in any way?

"We see it on the news, but it's news that just goes in one ear and out the other. I think that this kind of reporting can help people think more and get engaged in some kind of social activity."

Anna

"I knew that this kind of work, like waste sorting, existed; but I was surprised that it is so poorly paid. I expected that if the conditions

are so bad there, like for example the smell, it would at least be somehow financially compensated."

Jaromír

"You have an idea about work on the fringes, but then you get caught up in your everyday life and forget about it. The film is a very raw reminder."

Vladimír

Vladimir also suspected that the problem of poorly paid work existed. He complained that the majority society do not see similar films because they don't care. He too has seen labour laws broken at his work, which bothers him, but thanks to the film he says he has nothing to complain about.

The mother is aware of the problem of the impact of such jobs on the next generation – a pattern of behaviour and habits we take from parents, which can cause bad working conditions to be accepted in future generations as well – as well as falling incentives to keep working on oneself. In general, however, she perceives the role

of the film rather in opening the topic for discussion, or initiating a solution to the problem, not in changing opinions.

What was the impact of the film?

The Limits of Work undoubtedly produced a strong response among the viewers we spoke to. Luboš's partially negative reaction to the human side of the documentary (basically he didn't like the main protagonist) is and will be typical for some viewers. It is confirmed that emotions, which are not only on the screen, but can also be seen in the audience and eventually in discussions, have a powerful impact on what viewers take away from the cinema. It acts as a catalyst for the impression not to be superficial and transient. The eye-opening effect was seen as an important factor, where filmgoers had an idea about the problem, but the raw, non-stylised insights via hidden cameras and the protagonists' stories made them aware of the film as something that affects them personally. It challenges their own worldview, while suggesting that the people whose

suffering they see in the films are not that foreign to them. Compassion is also an extraordinarily powerful feeling, where the people in the films were seen not as someone foreign and strange, but as victims of the system. It is this combination of injustice, inertia and, at the same time, ordinary, decent people as victims which leaves a strong impression on the audience and inadvertently compels them to realise the seriousness of the problem. Although marginal, it is important that parents can educate their children through films. The fact that the film also made an impression on the daughter of one of the respondents confirms that One World can be educational in the broadest age range.

Positive factors

- Emotions (the film is believable and evokes real emotions)
- Eye-opening (calling attention to problems that are in front of us and we pass over)
- Compassion for the characters

- Association (the problem of poverty affects us as well)
- Perceiving the problem in the social context (what effect will it have on the children of the characters)
- Impact on children

The Limits of Work was also screened in the regions. Apolena Rychlíková (the director) participated in several Q&As and appreciated the possibility to show the film outside of the capital.

"The possibility to show the film in the regions was crucial for me, because I could learn about the specific perspectives of the local audience. Hearing dozens of interesting opinions and ideas has fundamentally contributed to the mosaic of responses we received. It also helped me to grasp the problems of the periphery."

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH: QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

We tried a quantitative approach to impact assessment in 2016 and 2017. In 2016, 662 respondents were involved. In 2017, the number was 397. Paper surveys were handed out after the screenings in the first round of assessment. Viewers filled in the surveys at the venues. The second round of assessment was carried out via e-mails one month after the festival, with about a quarter of the respondents taking part. Besides topic based questions, the survey also included basic questions on age, gender, etc.

In 2016, the focus was on two films - **Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret** directed by Kip Andersen and Keegan Kuhn and **10 Billion - What's On Your Plate** directed by Valentin Thurn. We chose films focused on food consumption and sustainability because we assumed that lifestyle topics will have a strong impact potential.

In 2017, two films depicting the situation of migrants were

researched - **Lost in Lebanon** directed by Sophia and Georgia Scott and **The War Show** directed by Andreas Dalsgaard and Obaidah Zytoon. These two films were selected so we could compare the impact potential with the 2016 outcomes. We wanted to focus on migration as a slightly complicated topic, which could help us see if and how the impact can be evaluated in this case.

The aim was to research the impact, starting from the hypothesis that the selected films have an impact. The main research questions were:

- Does the film have impact potential?
- How did the film influence the lives of the viewers?
- What were the viewers' attitudes towards the topics before the screening?
- Did the viewers search for more information?
- Did the viewers share the information they acquired with others?

The sub-questions were designed to learn more about the emotional impact (e.g. To what extent is this topic important for you?) and rational impact (e.g. How much new information did you acquire?). In both years, the research focused on comparing the impact potential of two films, identifying the key factors causing impact. To compare the situation before seeing the film, right after seeing it and one month later, typical questions were e.g. "How often did you consume meat products before and after the screening?" or "To what extent did you feel threatened by refugees before and after the screening?" The second part of the assessment was comprised of questions aimed at discovering the extent of the impact after one month, asking questions such as "Did you actively engage in discussions about refugees after watching the film?" and "Did you start buying local products?"

Two hundred sixty-six respondents received the film positively, acknowledging the value of presenting a lot of information with an effect on our everyday lives. Almost 90% of viewers felt the need to think more about the

topic than they had until then. A third of respondents stated that the film "changed their lives".

The respondents also found the film comprehensible and a little distinct compared to other documentaries, which creates motivation to search for more information. Since some parts of the film may be seen as controversial, the film was perceived as slightly less trustworthy.

CASE STUDY: COWSPIRACY: THE SUSTAINABILITY SECRET

Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret, Kip Andersen, Keegan Kuhn / 85min. / 2014

Environmentalist Kip Andersen wants to stop the destruction of our planet. He learns that saving water in the shower, limiting car use and sorting waste is not enough if humans remain dependent on animal production, which creates an enormous volume of waste and uses an unbelievable amount of water and soil. Surprisingly, this issue is trivialised by governments and environmental organisations alike. The entire

matter starts to look like a conspiracy and the director is even afraid to continue filming. In the end, he does deliver his daring message. This film, including some humorous exaggeration, calls for a radical lifestyle change.

Even though some respondents found it more intrusive than other films, most still appreciated its engaging form.

After watching the film, a quarter of respondents wanted to support local producers and buy fewer mass-produced goods. Trust in environmental NGOs decreased from 42% before the film to only 9%.

In the following month, 13% reduced their purchases of mass-produced goods, 10% reduced meat consumption, and trust in environmental NGOs went up 16%. More than 60% positively changed their consumption habits. Almost all the respondents shared the information they acquired with others and tried to change others' opinions, and also searched for additional data or watched other documentaries. Overall, 98% of respondents took action

connected with the film in the days following the screening.

Out of 136 respondents, almost 90% were extremely emotionally touched by the story. Somewhat fewer found it difficult to stop thinking about the topic. Only 15% consider the topic important for their everyday life. 90 – 100% learned new facts from the film, which struck them as very trustworthy, relevant and gripping.

CASE STUDY: THE WAR SHOW

The War Show, Andreas Dalsgaard, Obaidah Zytoon / 100min. / 2016

In March 2011 the Arab Spring reached Syria. Radio DJ Obaidah Zytoon and her friends join the street protests against the regime of Bashar al-Assad and decide to film the dramatic events. The atmosphere of excitement and hope for change was soon dashed by the regime's brutal response and harsh repression. The country sinks into a bloody civil war. Obaidah and her friends

witness the birth of the armed resistance, which, however, due to the incompetence of the international community soon falls victim to the rising tide of Islamic fanaticism. This deeply personal film captures not only Syria's descent into the hell of an endless war, but also the fates of a group of friends who hoped for a better future and freedom.

Immediately after the screening, about 70% of the respondents felt a strong need to help the refugees. More than half planned to learn about and discuss this topic more and to consider it as one of the factors in elections. Almost one fifth of the respondents in the second round donated to NGOs which help immigrants, volunteered or informed and talked to other people. Overall, the film has not changed the opinions of the audience that much, probably because most of them already had a rather positive view of migration. The change was therefore mostly visible in the respondents who became motivated to donate to NGOs and to change the opinions of those close to them.

KEY TAKEAWAYS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What have we learned from three years of impact assessment?

- The audience expects the film to introduce them to the problem, and the film usually **builds awareness** of the problem.
- Providing **new information** was the most common form of film impact.
- The impact may get to the next level when the film has an **emotional potential**. Some of the films that the assessment focused on have succeeded in pushing the audience beyond an emotional boundary. If the film did not evoke any emotions (positive or negative) in the respondent, they were not able to judge whether the film had any influence on them, and mostly talked about learning new information.
- Another important element is the **personal relationship** to the topic, where the viewer has an a priori personal experience with the subject of the film. This experience can be relatively free and he or she is looking for more

information in the film or wants to confront his or her experience or confirm it.

- Most viewers attending the films already have some **familiarity with the issues**; a certain, even minimal, relationship to the topic tends to be the rule rather than the exception.
- Impact can take various forms. In general, impact potential is the most intense if the viewer can **identify with a character** or other phenomenon in the film. This is the case not only in domestic films, but also foreign films, where the difference between perceived boundaries is eliminated.
- **Compassion**, in cases where the story or opinions of the characters are similar to those of the viewers, sometimes changes to support. Thus, viewers feel that their opinions or actions, which they feel are unappreciated or rejected, or who feel alone, make sense and are worth defending. Another form of resonance is **sympathy**.
- An unforgettable experience booster is undoubtedly **humour and jokes**. It is understand-

able that for documentaries that overwhelmingly describe weighty themes, this tool is risky, but if the creator has enough feeling and perspective, some comic relief brings the film closer to the audience. This is probably related to the **appreciation of authenticity**, where viewers expect humour to be present even in the worst situations and moments of human life.

- Another important factor is that the viewer, through the film, can really **imagine the problem** and relate these ideas to one another. In other words, the positive attribute of the film is if it overlaps with the ordinary life of the viewer. It is not essential for the viewer to really be part of the problem: he or she must only be able to **empathise**. Not all films have this potential, but there is always a chance for a certain degree of expansion through subsequent discussions or accompanying events where viewers can themselves "feel" the problem.

- We encountered criticisms that the films were **unnecessarily long**, despite having little to say. In addition, they lacked the characteristics of honest

documentary work, replaced by visual effects and sometimes **emotional manipulation**. In both cases, the films confronted the viewer's expectation of One World as an independent film festival.

- **A variety of views**, i.e. an approach where the film offers more insights into a single issue, is also appreciated and mostly desirable. Many viewers have recognised that One World does not consider itself a festival that necessarily has to show them what is right, and that they consider themselves (and others) to be people who are themselves capable of critical thinking. Of course, where a plurality of opinions or views is lacking, there is a higher risk that there will not be anything for audiences to identify with.

- It seems that viewers also unconsciously perceive whether the film has the a priori will to impress or change opinions. In general, these are films where (at least outwardly) the filmmakers do not attempt to manipulate the audience's opinions, but only to describe the world around us. Viewers perceive whether the filmmakers calcu-

late and try to persuade the viewer and evaluate them appropriately. Here it can again be seen that a **laidback directorial approach** can be more effective than a heavy-handed message.

- We rarely had the impression that the respondent, after viewing the film, felt the urge to deal with problems beyond their own, i.e. problems within society, and problems of a global nature not at all. A majority of the researched films **did not show the potential to spark specific actions**, the impact lied especially in creating or expanding awareness of the problem described.

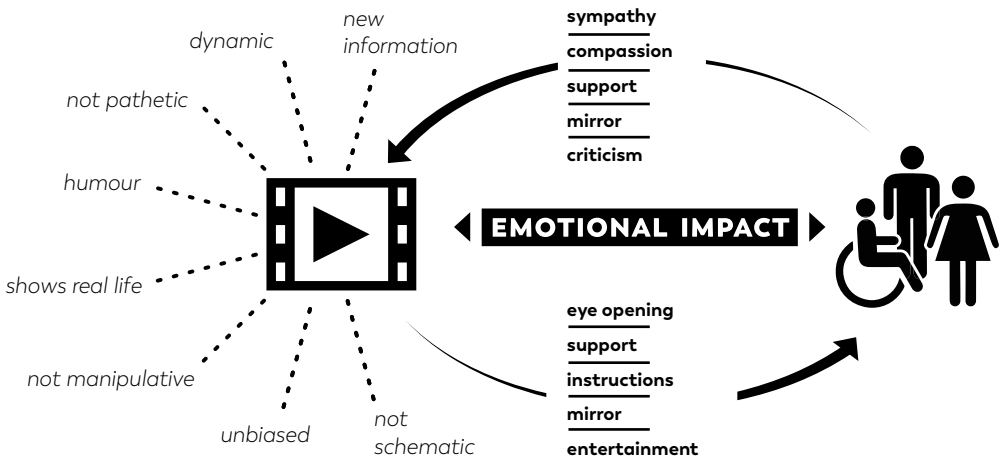
- The exceptionally strong analogy of expanding awareness is the quality of "**eye opening**", which is a condition where the viewer not only learns but is also emotionally moved. Such films have the greatest potential to turn into future engagement in the literal sense.

- Another personal form of impact is **inspiration**, where the viewer either discovers in the film how to do something, or how to do what he or she is already doing in a better way.

- In many cases, the impact took the form of **self-reflection**, for example, when viewers chose a film because they were looking for answers to their own questions and problems.

- For some viewers, the film led to the formation of **associations**, which means that the viewer is able to combine two or more (seemingly) independent phenomena based on the film. An example is when the audience realised that the problem of the extreme right is not only comparable at the level of Greece and the Czech Republic, but that the possible consequences, as we see in Greece, may also occur in another country.

- Impact can also take a purely **personal and individual, albeit practical, form**. An example was the older couple who, after seeing **Granny Project** (read more about the **Granny Project** case study below), decided to record interviews with their parents. It is therefore desirable not to underestimate even seemingly un-impactful films, because the impact itself is rather about the unpredictable transfer of a **spark between the audience**



WHAT IS IMPACT?

AWARENESS	RELATION	INSPIRATION	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get to know the issue • compare opinions • confront opinions • self-education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emotional connection • sympathy • criticism • self-reflection • association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • different attitude to yourself and your close ones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • active engagement in public affairs

and the film, and this connection is always unique. Another example was the interest of the audience in making contact with the hard-of-hearing, whereas this interest was to some extent reinforced by participation in the film, discussion and workshop.

- In any case, the **immediacy of the film cannot be considered as an impact**, without looking at how this impact develops over time. It is always possible that the effect of a film that was enthusiastically received and accompanied by promises of engagement will be overcome in a short period of time, as well as hidden impacts that can only be felt over time, while shortly after screening this impact is latent.

- According to the quantitative assessment, the **immediate impact was much stronger** than the long-term one.

- The desire to change habits or engage in a new activity decreased in the subsequent days. The real changes were much less considerable than planned right after the screening.

To conclude, both studies, using different methodological practices, fundamentally confirmed very similar outcomes. The impact potential of a documentary film is realised when topics relevant for the viewer's life are included and the audience can easily relate to it. When a film manages to elicit emotions and sympathy, impact will more likely follow. Also, a credible and well-founded story may win favour with the audience. One of the most interesting outcomes is that the main factor for impact are emotions – this is especially important when most of the films regarded as impactful tend to be more information-oriented rather than purely cinematic.

Different methodologies lead to slightly different outcomes. A qualitative approach gives you deeper and more detailed insight into the viewer's mind with various nuances. A quantitative approach allows more data to be collected, but the prescribed answers do not leave as much space for the viewers to express their feelings.

In the quantitative research, we determined two films in

advance, already with the hypothesis that they will have an impact. This might be a slightly problematic factor, as it automatically eliminates other possibly impactful films and might also be based on a subjective perception of what impact is. On the other hand, our qualitative approach leaves enough space to examine what kinds of forms impact can have and how different films work with this. The drawback is that it is difficult to have long interviews with many people, meaning the respondent sample is smaller. Also, qualitative research requires more time and resources. Regarding the value of the outcome, it would be ideal to combine both approaches.

CONCLUSION

This handbook should serve as an inspiration guide for festival (or other cultural events) organisers, who care about the social dimension and impact of their work. We hope to have given you some ideas on how to tackle and think about impact when organising a documentary festival. There is more that can be done, because you can never do enough when it comes to enhancing impact. Festival teams work hard and it is difficult to find capacity for new activities. However, if you found inspiration in this handbook and you are considering implementing it at your event, then our mission has been successful. The goal was

not to cover the whole field, but to show several ways you can work with impact, without even having to call it “impact”. Another aim was to demonstrate that documentary festivals are functioning platforms for deepening the impact of films, and that they have many instruments for it at their disposal. As such, they can be useful partners for filmmakers who plan to do more than just screen a film. We would like to thank everyone who contributed with their experience and great tips, especially our colleagues from [Ambulante](#), [CinéDOC-Tbilisi](#), [Docudays UA](#), [Human Rights Watch Film Festival](#), [Movies That Matter](#), [Sheffield Doc/Fest](#), [Take One Action](#) and [True/False](#).



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