



# CAUCADOC: How to Organize Documentary Film Festival

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## Preface

The purpose of this Guide is to provide support to those who have decided to organize public presentations of documentary films. According to our experience, showing documentary films is one of a comparatively simple yet highly effective means of raising the degree of public awareness about the challenges of our times and existing social problems; helping to initiate discussion and critical way of thinking; and formulating questions, comprehensive presentation of views on human rights and other similar problems. As a contemporary audiovisual means, film not only can adeptly present information on the given theme, but also unique stories from the life of real people, making direct or indirect impression on the viewer. Documentary films can stimulate operative solutions to issues and problems.

This Guide presents appropriate recommendations for organizing individual presentations followed by discussions, as well as small-scale festivals (up to 10 presentations, 500 viewers). In general, it is based on experience gained in Southern Caucasus, even though we hope that the presented information will be useful and applicable in other regions, e.g., Russia and Central Asia. This Guide is designated **primarily to organizers of small-scale festivals for protection of human rights, as well as volunteers from the broad public who are interested in films, festivals and cultural activities; organizing discussions and debates; collaborating with communities and various audiences; and promoting human rights.**



## About CAUCADOC and One World

Program CAUCADOC is based on 16 years of experience in work with organizing the festival of documentary films about human rights, One World (Единый мир), in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic. Over the period of its existence, One World has drawn an enormous audience, won a good reputation, and gained considerable experience. In addition to organizing festivals and other socially oriented programs, the festival concentrates on sharing its know-how as part of specific activities, such as Program CAUCADOC.

### One World

People in Need (Человек в Бедe), organizer of the festival, initiated One World in 1999. The People in Need organization is one of the strongest NGOs in Central Europe that focuses on humanitarian aid, development cooperation, human rights, and social integration (see [www.peopleinneed.cz](http://www.peopleinneed.cz)). One World has dedicated its endeavors to using documentary films as a means of supporting and protecting human rights. Initially, One World used to be organized under the patronage of Vaclav Havel, former president of the Czech Republic and a well-known advocate of human rights, who was a great fan of One World. Today, One World is one of the most significant events in the Czech Republic and the world's most ambitious film festival on human rights.

Every year, One World presents over 100 documentary films from the whole world. The festival promotes production of high-quality documentary films on social and political themes, ecological and environmental issues, and current problems. The promoters of One World believe that **if films are used effectively and strategically, they may bring about change.**

One World has built a large audience base, reaching more than 100,000 viewers yearly. An important part of One World is the numerous Q&As with filmmakers and experts and panel debates. One World serves as a **meeting point for discussion in which** the public takes an active role. Moderated and translated debates are held after a vast majority of screenings.

Many **socially oriented activities** take place as part of One World. Smaller-scale One World film festivals are organized in every part of the Czech Republic, in 40 towns, under a common name: One World in Regions. Regional festivals are organized by local NGOs, active citizens, volunteers, or local cultural institutions. Screenings for elementary and high schools are an inseparable part of One World and are held within a special educational programme called **One World in Schools ([www.oneworldinschools.cz](http://www.oneworldinschools.cz))**, which is focused on promoting education through documentary films and other audiovisual materials. Apart from films, the One World in Schools programme offers educational sets and other accompanying tools to teachers and students. One World in Schools is active also in Armenia and Georgia ([www.caucadoc.com](http://www.caucadoc.com), [www.pin.ge](http://www.pin.ge)). One World cooperates with the Institute of Documentary Film in Prague ([www.dokweb.net](http://www.dokweb.net)), which organizes **East Doc Platform** for documentary film professionals. Moreover, One World engages in the **distribution** of selected documentary films for presentations to the public, free-of-charge, under the name "Get Your Audience" ([promitejity.cz](http://promitejity.cz)). One World follows new

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trends indicated by the **role of new means of mass information and new technologies in a changing world**, and organizes every year special side events.

One World is active not only in the Czech Republic, but also takes part in **many activities abroad and collaborates internationally**. Organized efforts of the team One World in Prague produced **One World in Brussels** with the aim of using films for protection of human rights and attract the attention high-ranking politicians and representatives of Brussels' international institutions. One World in Brussels is also performed in the European Parliament.

One World **helps other organizers of human rights film festivals all over the world**. One World shares its experience with those who wish to organize a festival by providing assistance and giving them advice. One World has inspired and helped realize a number of film festivals, including as follows:

Vienna, Austria: This Human World; Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina: Pravo Ljudski; Berlin, Germany: One World Berlin; Budapest, Hungary: Verzio; Bagdad, Iraq: Baghdad Eye; Amman, Jordan: Karamu; Prizren, Kosovo: Docufest; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan: Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan; Tripolis, Lybia: Tripoli HRFF; Skoplje, Macedonia: Makedox; Kuala-Lumpur, Malaysia: Komaz Freedom FF; Yangon, Myanmar (Burma): Human Rights Human Dignity International FF; Warsaw, Poland: Watch Docs; Bucharest, Romania: One World Romania; Belgrade, Serbia: Free Zone Belgrade; Bratislava, Slovakia: Jeden svet Bratislava; Freetown, Sierra Leone: Opin Yu Yi HRFF; Vavunytia, Sri Lanka: Films for Future; Tunis, Tunisia: Human Screen FF; Kampala, Uganda: Many HRFF; Kiev, Ukraine: Docudays.

For information about film festival One World, go to: [www.oneworld.cz](http://www.oneworld.cz)

## CAUCADOC

Program CAUCADOC ([www.caucadoc.com](http://www.caucadoc.com), [www.facebook.com/CAUCADOC](http://www.facebook.com/CAUCADOC)) is realized by People in Need and other organizations – partners from Southern Caucasus – “Sakdok Film” and “Center of Media Initiatives.” **CAUCADOC participates in the production of documentary films in Southern Caucasus**, under the guidance of experienced People in Need, organizer of the One World festival. The program is funded by the European Union under the Eastern Partnership Culture Program; Development Cooperation, Czech Republic; the Open Society Fund, Georgia; the Black Sea Trust (Regional Cooperation Fund); and regional office of the Heinrich Böll Fund in Southern Caucasus. CAUCADOC has been implemented to act from 2012 to 2014 and encompasses all Southern Caucasus, including disputed territories.

The Program CAUCADOC includes **many activities that address various target groups**. Students of primary and secondary schools use study programs complemented by documentary films. Filmmakers from the whole Southern Caucasus may participate in an intensive training course, with emphasis on documentary film projects. During main film festivals held in the region (Golden Apricot IFF, Batumi Art House FF, and Tbilisi IFF), as part of CAUCADOC, are conducted master classes and lectures that are open to all of the community of documentary films. In the effort to address and solve problems related to documentary films on national and regional level, CAUCADOC engages all decision-makers and all roundtable experts in such discussions.

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In addition to activities oriented on the participants and special audience, CAUCADOC is also open to the **broad public**. CAUCADOC presents documentary films to people who live far from the capital cities and **promotes the organization of small-scale film festivals remote area of Southern Caucasus**. Similar small-scale activities focus on initiating development of documentary films as an effective instrument for enlightening the population, and encourage active citizens' involvement in the above-mentioned areas. Small festivals present documentary films to viewers, which stimulate their thinking – moderated discussions are held after such presentations.

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## Why hold film festivals on human rights?

### The Potential of Documentary Film

Film festivals on human rights are motivated by the idea that **film is a powerful means of bringing about a change** – whereby **important** is not merely the given film per se, but mainly the concept of human rights, in the light of which the given film is presented. Therefore, the programs of the vast majority of film festivals on human rights are comprised of films that are shown at festivals that do not claim to be having a specific purpose (classical film festivals not pursuing a concrete objective in human rights protection). Sometimes, it may be that the given filmmaker does not even expect that his/her film would be presented at a film festival on human rights.

**A film can captivate and inspire the viewer:** Mainly in cases where the viewer is not used to seeing creative documentary films, as he/she normally watches TV serials, featuring phantasy and commercials, such viewer might be very touched by authentic stories about people presented by means of documentary films. Very important is the work with the audience during discussions that follow film presentations. After watching a heartbreaking documentary film, a viewer may feel a strong desire to get involved and help. It is hardly possible to resolve directly the problem shown in the film, but there certainly exists the possibility to find corresponding institutions or organizations that can provide assistance or are even working on the given problem. Emphasizing the positive aspects may even inspire the viewer to engaging personally into the process. Involved viewers can be easily guided towards an action, e.g., through participation in campaigns related to a film or participation in solving analogical problems in their community, town, school, etc.

**Films can be used for promulgating information and education:** A documentary film may serve as a source of information. An audiovisual presentation is a good means of absorbing information. Documentary films may have a positive impact, especially in places where the level of education is low and access to information inadequate, limited, or subjected to censorship.

Documentary films, especially those that feature a particularly strong protagonist, instill a deep understanding. Presenting stories of real people in films may change the viewers' attitudes and beliefs, and disrupt stereotypes. Thus, problems can be viewed in a different light, thereby letting the viewer contemplate about his own life from a completely different perspective.

Documentary films **that show violations of human rights testify to abuses of such rights.** Films for presentation must be carefully selected, taking into account the age of the viewers, their past experience or knowledge, local environment, and above all their past traumas or war experience. These films inform about human rights and are essential for conducting such film festivals.

Documentary films **can be used with the aim of convincing politicians of the need to make changes.** The mission of film festivals on human rights is not merely to raise public awareness – the main role is to attract the attention of legislators, who are responsible for the executive and judiciary, and hold leadership positions. These films can be used as propaganda instruments, as part of information campaigns while meeting with politicians, representatives of state institutions and governments.



Therefore, they ought to be invited to presentations of films or presentations ought to be organized in their facilities.

## Festivals on Human Rights and Their Implementation

Festivals on human rights and small-scale activities dedicated to human rights exist all over the world, mainly in countries in a transitional period and in democratic countries, and festivals emerge in places where non-democratic system are losing strength. In such cases, festivals on human rights can play a decisive role in new social movements. The stimulus for initiating a film festival on human rights usually arises from **absence of alternative information** about politics and society, through official means of mass information, or the **need to uncover hidden problems** in the society, such as past infringements, inequality of rights, etc.

Some of the festivals on human rights are included in the **Human Rights Film Network - HRFN**, founded in 2004 in Prague. One World has become one of the founding members of the network that currently comprises 35 independent festivals ([www.humanrightsfilmnetwork.org](http://www.humanrightsfilmnetwork.org)).

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## Setting up the Program

When planning to organize a film festival or small-scale event, it is essential to define **your main objective**. A genuine plan for realizing a festival cannot be implemented without **being certain what you want to achieve with the aid of the given activity**. Do you define concrete objectives and specific problems concerning your country or town? Do you inform about current events in the world with the aid of engage people living amidst such events? Possibly, there might be a combination of two purposes or a different objective on your part.

## Themes and Accents of the Festival

The program should not be arbitrary. It is necessary to define the subject and the subject matter of discussion before searching for suitable films. It is not the films as such, whereas the themes that you want to emphasize and scrutinize, which form the substance of film festivals on human rights. Film is a work of art, whose meaning derives from the context of your discretion. Considerations about issues concerning principal human rights in the Universal Declaration of Human rights<sup>1</sup> is a starting source. The basic problems that are most likely felt in all communities usually concern the rights of women and children, reconciliation with the past, and freedom of speech.

### Examples of themes usually targeted during film festivals on human rights

- Zones of conflict, war, post-war trauma, and reconciliation
- Abuse of power and corruption
- Migration
- Freedom of speech
- Problems concerning women and human trafficking
- Ecology and the environment
- Civil society, activism, and social movements
- Nationalism, racism, and extremism
- Social problems and family relations

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

Once you have decided about the main sphere, you can find **concrete, specific films, or create whole thematic categories or blocks**. Picking a greater number of films dealing with a certain theme allows the viewer to see the given problem from different angles. Do not forget about local production. It is more convenient to look for films of local production, if they exist in your country: they are more comprehensible to the viewers, as the presented problems will not be hard to understand.

## Difficulties with Setting up a Program

The process of selecting a particular film for the program is an enormously responsible matter, for you want to acquaint the audience with the thematic as a whole, not merely the “film” itself. Thus, even though you are not liable for the film’s content, you have to be prepared to deal with liberal questions, disputes, or negative reactions after the presentation or in the press. Be prepared to **stand up for your decision to show the film to the broad public**.

If you want to understand the **subtleties related to selecting films for the program**, it is necessary to **acquaint yourself with the local situation thoroughly**, e.g., take into account the level of education of the audience, their social situation, and learn all written as well as unwritten laws, customs, and traditions. It helps anticipate the audience’s reaction and possible consequences after the given film’s presentation.

Much more important is not to leave the audience without an answer to the theme in point. **Always make sure that a discussion take place after the presentation** – either the film’s author who is familiar with the theme, or with a member of your team who may be a good moderator and will not be afraid to communicate with the audience. Discussions and Q&A – that is what should distinguish you from other festivals and ordinary film presentations. Maybe that instead of a public discussion you encounter an unpredicted outcome of the presentation, for example, the film might provoke an aggravate already existing polemic in the given community or country.

The presentation might cause a shock and arouse a sense of disappointment in the audience, especially when it comes to taboo themes. The taboo might apply to existing conditions in politics and culture. In this case, safety and censorship become a serious issue to deal with. In many societies, taboo themes are: criticism of the government of non-democratic countries, testimony of the violence committed by the authorities vis-à-vis the population, or themes concerning sexual minorities.

Selecting films that will be viewed by hundreds of people is a great responsibility – even more so in post-communist, non-democratic, transitional, and other countries where the viewer is **extremely sensitive to issues associated with personally experienced suffering and hardship**. He who is responsible for compiling the program has to pick films that help the viewer better cope with the trauma, rather than aggravate it. Often, this can be achieved by selecting a film that enables the local viewer draw parallels with his/her own experience. It is advisable to include films that deal with the same problems (ethnic conflicts, wartime trauma, dissident activities, etc.) but in a different geographical and cultural context. Such films can be easily comprehended and can form a good base for discussing the local population’s problems. In addition, it is very effective, if the viewer can see people in other parts of the world struggling with analogical problems.

Apart from all of the above, when selecting a program, make an effort to **be courageous and determined**. If you include non-confrontational, colorful films in your festival, they will bring boredom and no food for thought. On the contrary, a variety of choices will surprise and excite the audience.

## Where to look for films

Once you understand the issues and themes for the program, you can start your search for films. At the beginning, it is necessary to **locate good sources**. If you have decided to conduct the search independently, **look into the websites of film directors, make inquiries about production companies, sale or distribution, and go through other film festivals**. One of the most effective methods of searching for good films is as follows: personally attend other festivals, use video libraries, organize meetings with distributors, and participate in other events where you can benefit from information exchange with professionals (networking). This method might be very costly, so it is better to approach more experienced festival organizers and ask them to send you a list of the films that they presented in their events and which they consider suitable and attractive for your festival.

### Main types of online resources:

- Websites of analogical events with film screenings (human rights festivals, non-specified festivals, film clubs, etc.)
- Websites on production, sale, and distribution of films and TV station sites
- Websites of national film centers, film institutions, NGOs and other institutions related to films dealing with human rights problems (e.g., OSI, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch)
- Various online databases, such as Documentary Educational Resources
- Film schools

**Filmmakers, film producers, and persons specializing in selling films are used to being approached with inquiries about films, so feel free to contact them. Send them a brief and clear letter/e-mail and ask them for a DVD preview version. In the letter, you have to introduce yourself and state what kind of event you are planning.**

## The Selection Process

Once you have picked all the films, **you may start choosing those you want to show**. However, such decisions should be made after detailed discussions with at least two members of your team or with external colleagues, who are familiar with the objectives of your festival. Another possibility is to set up a committee for preliminary selection, comprised of several persons who have experience in the organization of festivals, adequate work experience in this sphere, and most importantly, who know what you want to achieve through your festival. In some cases, it is possible, at your discretion, more profound knowledge is required, if the theme of the film is not so well known. For this purpose, it is appropriate to form a reference group of experts who will stay in touch with you and make helpful recommendations.

They might be journalists, NGO representatives, and persons from academic sphere. Moreover, if you intend to show the film to a target audience (pupils or students), it is advisable to organize a control preview for small groups, in order to confirm your choice for yourself. **The final program always ought to be the result of detailed discussions to help justify your choice before the audience.**

## Screening Rights and Fees

Once the films have been selected, it is time to start the process of acquiring the copyright for presentation. **It is extremely important acquire the copyright from the relevant filmmakers, distributors, or producers. Presenting a film without obtaining a copyright from the author /distributor is unlawful and equal to theft!!!** A film is the property of the author (and/or other persons/organizations, e.g., distributors who hold the copyright title). Usually, filmmakers spend years working on a film, so that the film as well as its destiny is fundamental important to them. Consequently, using a film without the knowledge of the copyright holder, albeit for “good” purposes or non-commercial purposes, is very disrespectful to the filmmaker’s work. **This applies to films available over the Internet.** The fact that it is possible to watch a film on YouTube does not mean that it may be used for public presentations! Even in cases where he has put his film on YouTube himself, the film director may get angry, if you show it without at least notifying him first.

Filmmakers tend to respond positively to requests for the copyright for non-commercial presentations. Send an email announcing your decision, **a letter of confirmation**, to include the specific film in your programme. Ask for his kind consent and require also various materials necessary for the presentation (see below). Explain the nature of your festival/event, its goal, and the format of presentation (number of showings, where, when, to whom).

**Either they grant you the right to presentation, or they will ask you for a contribution.** As a rule, you have to be prepared to pay for the permission to show the film. However, you can always negotiate the price. Try to bring bargain, underlining the non-commercial aspect of the event. Explain that emphasis is put on human rights and the awareness thereof in your country, town, or community. If it comes to signing an agreement, be polite and considerate, and stick to your words (e.g., with respect to the number of showings or length of the presentation period). Only good relations with representatives of the film industry and their cooperation will enable you to join the world of recognized festivals and ensure your access to films for future events.

### What to ask for beside the copyright

While communicating with the filmmaker/distributor/producer, do not forget to ask for materials necessary for organizing the presentation:

- Photographs from films that can be used for PR objectives, posters, etc.
- Dialogue lists (written form of everything what is said in the film) and list of subtitles (list of the subtitles, different language versions can be available), to be used for translation.

Furthermore, define the format of the presentation. For a small-scale festival with modest financing, **DVD** appears to be the most reasonable variant – even though filmmakers may consider the quality inferior to other formats. If you have the option of presenting films using **Blu-ray** discs, give them preference over DVD. Both DVD and Blu-ray discs can be downloaded into your PC /laptop with the aid of an optical drive. Both movie theaters and other projection sites for such events will be equipped with quality DVD and Blu-ray players. There also exist other professional formats (Digibeta, HDCAM, DCP, etc.). They all require separately functioning, expensive players, thus limiting your options of working with the film. Old films might be available in 35-mm print format. Most movie theaters do not have any problem to work with such formats. However, the transport costs of such parcels are high, and, moreover, you lose the option of previewing the film and working with it before its presentation.

Nowadays, film material in file form has become more popular. Films may be converted to appropriate size (from 5 to 50 GB) without affecting their quality. If a very fast Internet connection is available, it is possible to send files over the Internet. Generally acceptable multimedia formats are: **.mp4**, **.mov**, and **.avi**. If you wish to work with files, your team will need an experienced specialized worker (e.g., video production company, video installation engineer/director, etc.).

## Language

**The language of the film plays an important role, and one has to think about it at the latest when asking for the copyright.**

When you ask for the presentation format, do not forget to mention what language version you need. You may either ask for the original without subtitles (blank version) or a copy with subtitles (usually, subtitles are available in English, but you can ask for Russian, French, Spanish, German, etc.).

In case you want to translate the film in your local language, you might need ask for the dialogue list (written form of everything what is said in the film) and the subtitle list (list of the subtitles, different language versions can be available).

In general, there exist three ways of translating a film: dubbing, subtitles, and simultaneous. You ought to choose the variant that suits your viewers best. According the experience with CAUCADOC and One World, dubbing is the most convenient variant for viewers with limited communication capabilities in culture/films (children, peasants). Dubbing is the most pleasant variant for such audiences, as it gives the viewer the comfort of being able to concentrate fully on the film's content. Subtitles are suitable for audiences that are used to them (people with plenty of experience with communication in culture/films, urban population). Simultaneous translation does not bring any possibilities for working with the film (several showings for different viewers). It is only recommended in rare cases or when it is necessary to check what impact the given film will have on the given audience, or if you plan a single presentation, or if there is not enough time for subtitles or dubbing.

Dubbing enables the viewer to concentrate on the film's content without losing a lot of energy trying to understand it. According to the experience of CAUCADOC and One World in Schools (with presenting documentary films in schools), dubbing is the most preferable translation variant. Technically, this is a considerably complex process, so that it is necessary to engage the services of a specialized company. The process starts with the assurance of a good translation of the list of dialogues/subtitles. The translated

text is thereafter edited, read by professional actors, usually 1-3 persons (man, woman, child), recorded, and synchronized with individual scenes. Usually, companies deliver the whole package (with translation and dubbing). The prices and delivery limits may vary considerably (€ 200-900, 1-3 months, if all goes smoothly, for a 60-minute film, as per experience in Southern Caucasus in 2013).

Subtitles, Compared to dubbing, they do not diminish the artistic value of the film, and if your audience feels comfortable with subtitles, it is clearly the best variant. Audiences that are used to watching foreign films and interested not only in the content, but also the form, dubbing can be disturbing and be perceived as affecting the quality of the film. However, subtitles may be preferable for films where the frames do not change very quickly and the quantity of dialogues is limited. In such cases, neither the process of adding subtitles, nor reading them is inconvenient. If the film is packed with dialogues in quick succession, it requires a lot of concentration – consequently, many viewers might find it hard to keep up with the subtitles. According to the experience of CAUCADOC, the use of subtitles is a major drawback for people from rural areas, young students, members of ethnic minorities, and other groups. Subtitles often wore viewers out and prevented them from fully grasping the atmosphere of the film. Sometimes, viewing a film with subtitles resembles “labor,” rather than entertainment.

Once the list of dialogues/ subtitles is translated and edited, you can start projecting the subtitles below the screen (provided that you have the necessary equipment – it is available in some movie theaters), or you can put the subtitles directly on the film’s frames. The latter variant is far more common and has to be done by a company specializing in providing such services. The price varies greatly – if all goes well, the whole process need not last longer than a week per one-hour film. However, be prepared, delays are likely!

Technically, it is possible to download software for subtitling and do the work yourself. It requires good computer proficiency and patience on your part to do this job right. Maybe, there is someone amongst your young colleagues/volunteers/fans who has adequate experience in computer work and video technology. For such persons, it is fairly simple to figure out and learn how to work with subtitles, and letting your team do the work, and save money at the same time, would be a great advantage.

There are two main approaches to subtitling: manual and time-coded. If your rendition is not time-coded (usually **.srt** or **.ass** files with programmed-in timing, e.g., [00:00:08.08] on every line), showing the distribution of the text over the video images, you may do subtitling manually by adding all subtitles on the video, one by one. The process is quite time-consuming, but it gives you the opportunity to have full control over the subtitles. You can use free software, such as Windows Movie Maker, or a professional program (approx. USD 1,000) Adobe Premiere Pro or Final Cut. If you have subtitles with time coding, you can record them automatically on the video. The text, like time coding, may be edited using a free program, such as Subtitle Edit or Subtitle Workshop. To consolidate subtitles with the film, you can use Adobe Encore or Format Factory. Subtitles may be recorded automatically solely to the blank version of the film. If the film already has subtitles and you do not have the option of procuring a blank version, it is necessary to cover the existing subtitles with black masking layer, so that the new subtitles would be easily readable.

Synchronized (simultaneous) translation is usually not recommended because of its monotonous nature - you spend money for a single presentation, but the film becomes a film useless for your further work. As far as prices are concerned, at the time of this Guide’s issue in Southern Caucasus, the cost of



translating a one-hour film was approximately USD 100-200. The fee for the relevant equipment (headphones, etc.) amounts to about USD 600 per day. Films with simultaneous translation are less comfortable for the viewer (compared to dubbing, subtitles), as well as audiences used to subtitles – even more so to the viewer who is not used to subtitles, e.g., rural population or children; simultaneous translation might be more suitable than subtitles). Another drawback is a relatively weak perception on the part of the viewer. Even an experienced and well-prepared interpreter is not able to translate all details, nuances, humor, etc. to the viewer. The viewer obtains a general presentation of the picture and situation, hardly more than that.

If you choose to use simultaneous translation (e.g., if you are planning a single screening, you are short of time or funding), make sure to find a qualified interpreter who has experience in interpreting films. Provide the interpreter with the film in time, so that he/she has time to see it ahead of time and prepare himself/herself. Ideally, provide the interpreter with a printout of the list of dialogues/subtitles. If the interpreter can read the text while interpreting, he/she will be able to see what is being spoken in the film, rather than having to rely on his ears only. For the presentation, you can rent special technology for synchronized translation, or make an interpreter stand in a place with good audibility (front seats, next to the screen). If a large hall, it is necessary to install a microphone.

## The Screening Schedule and Accompanying Events

Now that you have selected the films and reserved a place for the festival, you can start work on the **graphic of the presentations** to announce the **name, place, and time of the presentations**. You set the date of festival in advance and make sure that the days of your festival do not coincide with other similar cultural events taking place in your town/country. According to the experience of CAUCADOC, it is essential to consider the time of the year – aren't the people going to freeze in the hall? Will the viewers be able to get to the place on the winter roads? Isn't the local population busy working in the fields (as the case was in the town of Noyemberyan).

Usually, festivals take place over **at least three consecutive days**. It is a good idea to open the festival with a **ceremonial inauguration**. It can be done before the first presentation in the form of a modest, short opening speech of the festival's organizer or invited guests. It is advisable to invite local official to the opening day or other persons of authority and introduce them to the audience. Alternatively, a reception can be organized after the presentation or a greater-scale ceremonial opening. You have to **select carefully the film for the opening ceremony** to attract appropriate attention. For instance, the theme of the film has to deal with a contemporary problem existing in your community. The film has to possess adequately characteristic features that ensure it certain fame as a "spectator's hit," arouse interest in the event, and motivate the audience come to see the subsequent presentations. The same applies to the **festival's opening ceremony**. The last presentation ought to be somewhat different. You can organize a small reception or give a speech before the last film. It is always welcome and very well remembered, when the festival's organizer publicly expresses gratitude to his team, partners, co-organizers, donors, volunteers, participants in debates, moderators, and viewers for their participation.

When setting up the program, **pay attention to the length of films**. The presented films can be short (up to 30 min), medium-length or TV hour (up to 60 min), or feature-length (approx. 95 min). If you are planning to show several **short films**, there usually are two approaches: you can show a short film before a full-length film, but always add up the length of both films – it should not exceed 95 min. Moreover,

the reasons for presenting these two films must be credible; the films should address similar themes, present the given problem from various perspectives or be somehow linked and have something in common. With the second approach, short films would be shown together as a block of short films. In this case, you have to consider carefully their sequence. Usually, it is recommended to start with the shorter films and leave the long ones for the end. However, it depends on the thematic and other factors. If you organize discussions of one of the films in the block, leave that film for the end, so that discussion would follow right afterwards. If you organize a discussion of several films, then it is necessary to set up their sequence, so that short discussions follow immediately each of them or organize one long discussion after the whole block.

Each presentation should be **preceded by a short introduction** and followed by **Q&A** (questions and answers, debates with the moderator). When scheduling presentations, it is essential to consider, what should be paid adequate attention during the discussion – you need 5-15 minutes for the opening part and a minimum 20-40 minutes for the moderated discussion with guests. Be practical when setting up the schedule. Remember that it is necessary to make a break before the next presentation – not merely for a discussion or verification of tickets (if necessary). There has to be time for the viewers to leave the hall and go back to their seats. It is always advisable to announce intermissions, so that the hall can be prepared for new arrivals, fresh air let it, trash taken out, or additional places arranged.

**The ideal day and time for a presentation is determined by local circumstances.** You have to be familiar with the customs of the local population to be able to the leisure time of their day. Usually, it is the evening for adult audience and morning for children and students. If your shows take place only in the evenings, it would be preferable to have two shows per evening, each followed by a discussion and Q&A, after proposing a suitable time frame to the audience. The same approach is to be applied to determining appropriate weekdays to viewers – it is a good idea to choose days that are suitable for the expected audience. The best time interval is Friday and Saturday evening. However, there are countries where it is not safe make plans for evening presentations (transportation problems evenings, security problems after dark). In such cases, it is advisable to organize the whole festival in the morning or during the day.

Most organizers in the Caucasus preferred to show films during the afternoon hours, but not evenings: at two presentations a day, the first one began at 3 or 4 p.m., the second one at 5 or 6 p.m. Of course, this timing is not very practical, if the target group consists of employed population. However, the factor of people's employment was not taken into consideration when compiling the schedule of any of the CAUCADOC festivals.

Generally, it is advisable to present a diversified program where local films are combined with international ones. For instance, films dealing with a particular theme that can be easily promoted (e.g., poverty, women's rights, etc.) might be scheduled for a certain day. If your festival is foreseen to last a longer period of time, it is a good idea to show each film twice, so that more people get a chance to see it.

If you expect a diversified audience, such as children and adults concurrently, or uneducated people together with students, select a film that is suitable for all of them to avoid discouraging the underprivileged group. When choosing films for a young audience, select one that is up to one hour in length and suitable for the given age category.

In addition to presentations and discussions, you can also organize various accompanying activities, e.g., concerts, art exhibitions, or ordinary competitions for children. Such activities can attract the attention



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of various groups of people who might become viewers of the festival. Exhibitions and concerts attract the media (and, by the way, do not look bad at all in the press). Moreover, since the nature of the presented films and themes is quite serious, the accompanying activities can balance it out. On the other hand, one should not forget about priorities. Specifically, less experienced organizers sometimes invest more financing and energy into accompanying activities, than into the quality of presentations and discussions. It is recommended to invest money and energy into a good film program and into guests and technical provisions, in the first place, and only then – if any resources are left – into other activities.

Sample structure of a small-scale festival based on small-scale One World/CAUCADOC film festivals (i.e., experience from the Czech Republic and Southern Caucasus):

- Three-day event in a local cinema theater (Czech Republic) or a local cultural house (Caucasus)
- 2 screenings per day, at 6 and 8 p.m. (Czech Republic) and 3 and 5:30 p.m. (Caucasus)
- The festival starts on Thursday (opening) and ends on Saturday (on weekends, people are more likely to visit the event)
- Official opening consists of an introductory part – organizer’s welcoming speech, film presentation, small reception, and small photography exhibition
- The opening film has to be a hit: to attract the attention of the media, to be relevant to the given town, to attract viewers and arouse their interest
- Czech Republic: the first screening at 6 p.m. is intended for young viewers and comprehensible to facilitate subsequent discussion. The main presentation is planned for 8 p.m., when the biggest turnout of viewers is expected – the main films are presented and followed by discussions with experts and the moderator
- Caucasus: usually, the same audience attends both presentations, therefore, a small coffee break is set up between the screenings
- Concert of a local band/group after the last screening – Friday evening (Czech Republic)
- The program combines local films with international ones
- Special family screening (children with parents) Saturday morning (Czech Republic); special screenings at schools before noon on a school day (11 a.m., whole classes attending - Caucasus)
- Official closing with presentation of the last film Saturday evening, accompanied by a speech of appreciation, a few songs performed by the local school’s children, and a small reception

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## Discussion about Films

### Why?

- Discussions generate possibilities for discussing the theme beyond the limits of what was shown in the film.
- Discussions allow us to make parallels between the viewer's visual impressions and his direct experience.
- Discussions offers the opportunity to express openly one's opinions that viewers rarely have the chance to discuss with their neighbors, colleagues, etc.
- During a discussion, one can explain what may have been unclear in the film – and there are many such moments.
- Discussions after a film is a wonderful opportunity to identify and challenge stereotypes.
- It can help control emotions aroused by the film.
- Discussions often show possible solutions of problems and help express diverse points of view, as well as lead to catharsis.

### How?

A good discussion is not possible without a preliminary **preparation by the moderator**. The role of a moderator does not suit everyone – it is far better to engage a professional who is used to speaking to the public (journalist, lecturer). Organizers of presentations /festivals should not take the role of a moderator upon themselves: namely, it is very difficult to keep track of all the organizational issues, while dealing with the public. If, however, the organizer does decide to play the moderator, we recommend engaging in the organization a person to take care of the technology and other organizational aspects, when you will have to pay attention to the guests' discussions, preparation of questions, etc.

In addition to the moderator, discussions can be strongly influenced if you involve a **guest-expert**. A guest who has expertise in the given theme is able to explain nuances and correlations that escape the understanding of the public. He can explain stereotypes as they emerge during the discussion. The public enjoys listening to a person of authority from elsewhere, as his presence contributes to the festival's character.

## Organization and Discussion Techniques

- If a discussion is planned after the film, inform the viewers about it and tell them who will be the guest.

- A good discussion can be conducted even with a large audience (100 and more persons). Organizers of presentations sometimes worry that if too many people attend, the discussion would not be successful. Experience testifies to the contrary. If you reckon to have a large audience, you will need microphones – one for the moderator and two mobile ones for the audience. Ideally, portable microphones should be in the hands of volunteers who pass them to the public according to the moderator’s sign.

## Moderator’s Recommendations

- You have to see the film in advance, optimally together with several other members of the team, so that you would be acquainted with the central theme, evolvement of the theme, and opinions presented in the documentary film.
- Decide which moments in the documentary film (problems presented in it, common theme for contemplation, etc.) are suitable for discussion. Choose 2-3 themes, maximum, and concentrate on them. Often, a single theme is quite sufficient. It can be useful to have a script of the discussion or a short introduction, introduction of a guest and several questions that you want to ask in the course of the debate. Write them down in advance and rehearse them in front of a mirror.
- It is recommended to clarify in advance the main issue you want to return to any time, especially when concluding the discussion.
- Find the latest information on the issue, as you have to be prepared for the public’s questions.
- In cases where a stormy debate is expected (especially, in connection with hot, controversial issues), it is useful to familiarize the public in advance with the rules of the discussion: do not shout your questions, wait before the moderator turns to you, let the guest or preceding speaker stop speaking, and comply with the time limit for speeches and the total time that can be devoted to the discussion, etc.
- Do not forget to keep track of time – as a rule, discussions need not be longer than one hour.
- Try to avoid having the debate stuck at a “dead end” – do not hesitate to return to a question that has already been asked, if any of the viewers wishes to elaborate on it.
- Be polite and do not be afraid of humor, but not at the expense of other participants.
- Your main weapon – **questions**. Do not lecture, do not say simply (“Let’s listen what the expert has to say”), rather, address the expert with concrete questions. Your role is not to inform the public, not to repeat what happened in the film (they all have seen it), whereas give the people a chance to express themselves and respond to the views of their interlocutors.
- Be prepared for provocateurs in the audience, who will try to disrupt the discussion. The moderator’s task is to moderate their emotions or exclude them from the discussion, if their behavior upsets the debate. In such situations, it is advisable to have some friendly participants in the room, who will ask constructive questions and help you correct the flow of the debate.

- If the public reacts sluggishly, do not hesitate to ask individual viewers (*“And you, the gentleman in the second row, what would you do in the given situation?”*).
- In conclusion, it is recommended to summarize the debate – this task may be delegated upon a guest.

## Recommendations for guests-experts

- **There are no “know-it-all experts.”** A guest-expert in a particular topic cannot be expected to give qualified opinion after seeing several films on diverse themes. If you present a film on the subject of conflicts and your guest is an expert “conflictologist,” do not expect him to be particularly engaged in a discussion on an environmental theme. It is better to conduct a discussion without a guest-expert, than listen to generally applicable cliché phases that do not bring anything new or interesting.
- **How to choose a guest-expert?** Firstly, it ought to be an expert on the film’s topic. Secondly, he/she should be able to speak so as to captivate the listener’s interest. Thirdly, a guest should not only know how to talk, but also listen, as well. According to experience in Southern Caucasus, audiences in regional areas are more interested in guests from the metropolitan area than in inhabitants from their own town. Of course, the presence of a guest from abroad is always interesting, as he/she can tell the audience how they address the given issue in his/her country.
- Do not hesitate to **interrupt the guest speaker** if his appearance tends to be too long and resembles a monologue. Both the guest and the viewers should have their word in the discussion.
- Very **reputable and respectable experts** are helpful, but there is one concern to consider. The audience might be shy in the presence of a very respectable guest and the discussion turns into a lecture. If a discussion of a particular theme is being attended by such authority, the moderator has to prepare the event carefully. The moderator should not hesitate to interrupt the authoritative guest, if his/her speech is too long and others get no chance to express their views.
- Familiarize the guests with the structure of the discussion, i.e., the main theme of the discussion, the direction of the discussion, and the rule of the discussion. If feasible, let the guest preview the film, so that would have knowledge about the content.
- It is necessary to have **information on the guest** and introduce him/her to the viewers before the presentation.

## How to Work with Themes That Arouse Controversy or Disputes<sup>2</sup>

Many themes covered in films cause controversy and lead to different points of view, in general, which is one of the reasons why we work specifically in the sphere of documentary films.

Which themes are controversial?<sup>3</sup>

The fact that a film could be controversial can be predictable (in the conditions of Southern Caucasus, this applies primarily to films dealing with conflicts, racism, women's rights) or unpredictable (e.g., the organizers of a festival in Azerbaijani Mingeçavir did not expect that the audience, comprising mostly physicians, would so strongly dislike a film about corruption). **How to prepare for such scenarios** to avoid fixation of stereotypes, aggravation of tension, and embarrassment in the audience?

- The purpose of discussing films that cover controversial themes is mainly as follows: to elevate the degree of knowledge amongst the population about the given theme, to present information that is normally not discussed during informal debates.
- Be prepared even better than usual: direct discussion to deal with a certain question or set of questions (based on a list of questions prepared in advance); be an active **facilitator** rather than a passive observer; on the other hand, do not exert excessive control. The moderator's role during the discussions is to formulate the audience's questions, correct inaccurate/ misleading information, ask the participants for clarification, and review the main points.
- **Engage a large number of persons** in the discussion. Do not let the most talkative and opinionated participants dominate the discussion and do not let any of the viewers call himself an "expert", just because he has some experience or has something to do with the conflict.
- If necessary, you may use the following methods, in order to alleviate growing tension in the audience or amongst certain viewers:
  - Engage other participants, whom you expect to have different views
  - Ask the audience how they think the theme in point impacts on their reactions and what could they do to abstain from such behavior. Quite often, groups act during their debate the same way as the given theme dictates. For example, during a discussion on the theme of ignoring women's comments, the participants themselves may ignore the observations expressed by the women in the audience. Having witnessed such behavior and discussed the same problem at the moment of action, people will begin to understand it better.

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<sup>2</sup> Teaching Controversial Issues, © Oxfam GB 2006,  
<http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/html/icb.topic58474/hotmoments.html>,  
<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/racialManuallines>

<sup>3</sup> Teaching Controversial Issues, © Oxfam GB 2006

- In conclusion, **sum up the key points** of the discussion. The likelihood that the audience will appreciate the meaning of the discussions will be greater, if the moderator summarizes all that has been said.
- **Avoid mentoring and do not read quotations.** Controversial issues concern deeply ingrained views and fixated standpoints. Telling people how to think or lecturing them how to behave generates no results, in the best case, or blocks people's minds, in the worst case, and the audience stops searching for alternative positions.
- Adhere to the **basic rules** and outline them clearly to the audience:
  - Only one person may speak at a time – interrupting the interlocutor is not allowed
  - Challenge ideas, not people
  - Express yourself correctly – no race or gender-related comments
  - Explain your point of view
  - Avoid accusations and speculation
- Control yourself – be balanced, do not be afraid of tense atmosphere, take a deep breath. If necessary, make a pause. A pause is beneficial, if you can show that you are comfortable. Do not make personal remarks. Do not take arguments personally, when discussing a theme that is close to your heart or if a remark addresses a group that you are a part of. Do not let yourself be drawn into a personal argument with a person who has made an unpleasant comment. It is very easy to lash out at a person who insults you personally. To do so means to deprive yourself of the opportunity to understand that particular viewer and his/her idea – both within the audience and outside of it. Learn something about yourself. Admit to yourself what you are prejudiced against, what makes you upset and fall into a stupor. Each of us is vulnerable to something specific and tends to manifest strong feelings.

## Practical Aspects of Realizing Festivals (Production)

Organizers involved in the organization of presentations very often spend a lot of energy trying to get the money and set up a distinctive and extraordinary program, so that in the end they do not have enough strength to pay adequate attention to such “details” as testing the format for display or the quality of the sponsors’ logos on PR materials. This chapter contains recommendations that you can use as a guideline and for making a checklist. Remember – the person who will be responsible for the realization of the festival has to be practical and have a clear vision of the festival. There should always be a member of the team who is responsible for the practical aspects of the festival’s implementation.

### The Location

The location where the festival or an individual event is to take place is very important. Basically, it is necessary to consider the following:

- Is the location suitable for presentation of films? Is it possible to darken the windows? Darkness is needed – if there is light in the room, the quality of the presentation will be inferior – in spite of everything else, the viewers will get tired soon, before they relax and watch with interest. Check, if there is place for the screen and the projector? Isn’t too loud?
- How **comfortable** will the audience be in the room? Do not stage presentations in too large halls. Presentations of films in halls for 200-300 persons, such as are in many cultural centers built in regional towns during the socialist era, when filled with 30 people are doomed to failure. The viewers will feel lost in the big hall and it will be difficult to hold a discussion. Neglecting basic needs is a risk. Often, these large halls are inadequately heated and if it is cold and you force people to sit down, watch a film, and discuss it – nothing will come of it. It is better to show it in a chamber-size room that can be kept warm.
- **What kind of technology is available in the location** and what will we have to provide ourselves?
- Are **people used to attend events** in the given location? The more popular the location, the easier it is to make the public come. If you invite viewers to some place they have never heard of, in a town they have lived in all their life, it arouses suspicion.
- How **safe** is the location? If you have reason to suspect possible interference with the festival or presentation (the police, local authorities), the choice of location becomes very pertinent. **If it is likely that the presentation of the film might be banned in the given location**, have another location in reserve, where the films could be screened (local clubhouse, non-profit organization etc.). As a rule, large institutions, such as administrative centers or hotels, can provide better protection than small clubs. **If a public presentation is not possible, for security reasons**, use a private apartment or your organization’s seat – inform about the presentation only those whom you want to invite personally and be prepared that some interference might occur, despite the fact that it is not an open-door event.

- Especially in the winter or on rainy days, you will need a cloakroom for the viewers.
- Prior to the beginning of the festival, ensure easy access to the hall for the audience – hang up direction arrows, sign showing the way to the hall, cloakroom, etc. Thus, arriving spectators will not have to ask you hundreds of questions during the most stressful time – before the presentation.

## Technology/Equipment

Although everyone knows that staging a presentation requires certain technology, it is easy to forget about the most basic and indispensable things.

If the presentation is held in a not fully equipped hall, it is necessary to have:

- **Film** (mostly on DVD);
- **Player** – it has to be checked for compatibility with the computer, in which a high-quality player must be installed and checked for compatibility with the film. While it might appear to be natural, it has happened often enough, unfortunately, that a presentation had to be postponed due to incompatibility of the player and the film. Experience shows that the most reliable one is VLC Media Player (available for downloading, legally and free of charge, at: <http://www.videolan.org/index.html>).
- **Audio equipment** – to have a good sound system is absolutely necessary. Even if it is a film in a foreign language with subtitles, you cannot do without good sound. The audio equipment has to match the dimensions of the presentation hall - do not count on the usual house speakers in the hall for 200 people. First of all, decide whether you need **microphones**. They are necessary, if the hall is very big or you expect a large audience (more than 70-80 people). To be able to conduct a good-quality discussion with such a large audience, you need a microphone (better yet, 3 microphones – one for the moderator, two for the audience).
- **Projector and screen** or a smooth white wall – the bigger the screen, the better cinema-like experience can be achieved. People get tired easily, if the screen is small.
- **Extension cords, tees** – it is always useful to have one or two good extension cords in reserve, as there might not be enough outlets or they might be in wrong places, etc.
- If it is likely that power might be shut off during the presentation (during CAUCADOC, it happened more than once), it is a good idea to have a **generator** in reserve.

The operability of the **projecting equipment ought to be checked before the show** (at least 10 days in advance), so that you would have time to get another copy, if a problem comes up; the DVD film must be checked **using the same equipment that you will use for the presentation**, including the audio equipment. It is advisable, in all places designated for presentations, to conduct a technical check to verify the purity and volume of the sound, the clarity of the visual imagery, and correct installation of the film (the projector/monitor has to be set for appropriate projection format - 4:3, for old films, 16:9, for new films. If you fail to set it up properly, the resulting projection will be distorted - see below).





Projection format

**correct**



Projection format

**incorrect**

## The Team

In a single show or a small festival, the number of team members is small. They need to take care of the following tasks, but often there are only 2 people to do so:

- team leader
- fundraiser
- person responsible for the budget, spending, and all financial issues
- programmer (coordinator of the program of films)
- technical and organizational agenda (production)
- PR, the media
- moderator

Generally, it is recommended that the team be comprised of **at least 2 persons**. It is impossible to be a good organizer and facilitator, and simultaneously keep up with all the technical details. It is important to decide who is responsible for the budget, accounting, and financial documentation. Furthermore, handling PR and promotion is not easy for a non-professional. According to experience with CAUCADOC, festivals that engaged professionals from the media in their team, managed to attract a much larger audience than festivals that relied merely on the members of their NGO and their PR capabilities.

Good practice – **recruitment of volunteers**. For instance, approximately 20 volunteers were engaged in the Terzhola Festival. Prior to the festival, a survey about the potential audience's film interest was conducted in the whole region and the festival's program was drafted based on the results. Moreover, before the festival, the volunteers co-organized a roundtable session for the guest-experts, where they briefed them on the program and prepared discussion materials. The volunteers took over the technical aspects of the entire PR agenda, such as allocation of posters, flyers, personal invitations, etc. during the festival, the volunteers provided technical support, maintenance, took photographs and videos.

If numerous volunteers participate in your festival, you have to organize a **general meeting of the volunteers** before the start of the festival, where all the important issues will be explained concerning the

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timing of scheduled presentations, the films in the program, what is planned after presentations), so that they would be able to answer any curious viewer's questions or learned whom to refer to more complex questions.

In Gyumri, the organizers recruited EVS volunteers (European Volunteer Services), who were in Gyumri on a mission. They actively supported and were involved effectively in the process of organizational tasks related to the festival in Gyumri, e.g., they helped with the technical agenda, elaboration of PR materials and their distribution. One volunteer was responsible for conducting a quiz at the festival.

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## The Budget and Fundraising

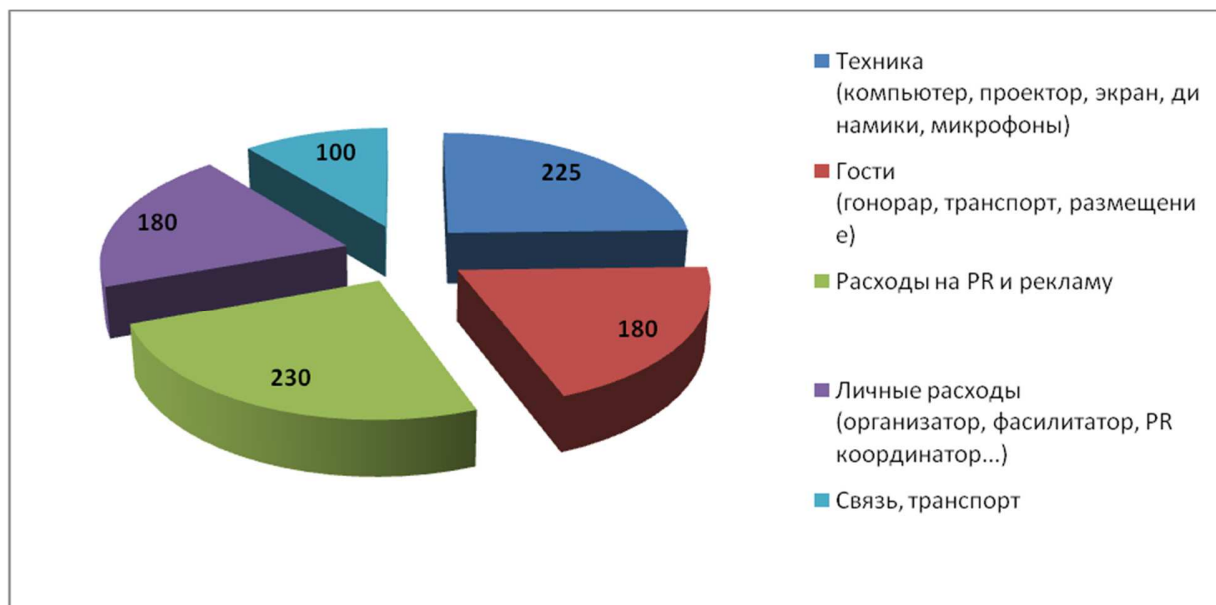
### What funding is needed?

In the case of a **small-scale film festival (2-3 days, 4-9 presentations):**

Expenses are listed by priority, depending on the degree of necessity for the festival's realization.

- Expenses related to films (screening rights, subtitles, sound technique...)
- Location, showroom/hall
- Technology (PC, projector, screen, speakers, microphones)
- Guests (remuneration, transport, accommodation)
- PR and promotional costs
- Personal expenses (organizer, moderator, PR coordinator, etc.)
- Side event(s)
- Communication, transport
- Coffee breaks

For example, the table shows the average distribution of expenses of one of the CAUCADOC festivals (EUR) – Technology, Guests, PR and promotional costs, Personal expenses, Communication & transport.



Expenses related to films are listed separately, as the event's organizers use partly films prepared in the past, i.e., from CAUCADOC's collection of films. **However, if you count on films from other sources, you have to consider the costs of such films – they account for at least one third of the overall budget.**

	Services	Unit price EUR	No. of units	Total EUR
<b>1</b>	<b>Personnel</b>			
1.1	Project coordinator			135-150
1.2	Moderator			85-100
<b>1.3</b>	PR coordinator			50-80
<b>2</b>	<b>Rental for the hall</b>	50-100	3	150-300
<b>3</b>	Fee for equipment rental (projector, notebook/laptop, microphones, etc.)			80-100
<b>4</b>	<b>Guests - Experts</b>			
4.1	Remuneration			25-30
4.2	Transport and accommodation			20-100
<b>5</b>	<b>PR and advertising</b>			
<b>5.1</b>	Graphical design			20-40
<b>5.2</b>	Publishing materials (booklets, brochures, posters, banners)			120-150
<b>5.3</b>	Paid PR (magazines, TV, ads)			50-100
<b>6</b>	<b>Accompanying program (essays, CVs, exhibition and other activities)</b>			130-250
<b>7</b>	<b>Regional transport to organization's events</b>			55-80
<b>8</b>	Coffee break			50-60
<b>9</b>	<b>Communication (phone, Internet)</b>			15-20
<b>10</b>	<b>Bank charges</b>			8-10
	<b>Total</b>			<b>993 -1570</b>

## Expenses related to films (price per one-hour film)

copyright (license)	0-300 EUR
translation & editing	250 EUR
subtitles	100-300 EUR
dubbing	100-300 EUR
printing, DVD copy	50-150 EUR
<b>Total</b>	<b>500 – 1300 EUR</b>

If you organize a **single-presentation of a film with a discussion**, you have to count with the same type of expenses, in principle, as in the case of a small festival (perhaps except the cost of a PR coordinator and side events, and with adjustment for reduced PR expenses, coffee breaks, etc).

## Where to Find Funding?

### 1) Donors – Institutions

At the time this Guide's composition, there exist several funds in Southern Caucasus, with which it makes sense to file an application for the funding of a small-scale festival or a series of presentations:

**Southern Caucasus Regional Office – Heinrich Böll Fund:** headquarters in Tbilisi, [www.ge.boell.org](http://www.ge.boell.org), applications may be filed in Georgian, Russian, or English

The Black Sea Trust of Regional Cooperation: based in Bucharest, <http://www.gmfus.org/grants-fellowships/grantmaking-programs/black-sea-trust>, applications may be filed in Russian or English

Georgian projects may apply to the Civil Society Support Program at Open Society Georgia Foundation: [www.osgf.ge](http://www.osgf.ge), in Georgian, Russian, or English.

Grants from these foundations are in the range of USD 20-25 000. The list is far from complete.

In addition to foundations, small-scale festivals or series of presentations may obtain support from **embassies**, e.g., the Embassy of Great Britain in Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan announce a general competition usually at the end of the year. The Czech Republic Embassy in Tbilisi finances projects of moderate scale (approx. EUR 10,000) in Armenia and Georgia.

When addressing donors – institutions, you can significantly improve your chances, if you do not do it individually, but **in a coalition of several organizations**, instead, offering to hold a festival not only, say, in Vanadzor, but in 5-6 regions of a certain country or even several countries. Five organizers of small-scale festivals from Georgia used this method when applying for funding with the Open Society Georgia Foundation.

## 2) Municipalities and other public entities

Local support is very important for small festival organizations – even more so, if they intend to make the festival an annual tradition, rather than a one-time event. Municipalities are not always able to contribute financially, but they can provide a festival hall free of charge (e.g., in Bolnisi), or transport for viewers from their villages (e.g., Noyemberyan), etc.

There are places where the municipality is able to support a small festival financially, e.g., in Gori, where the local government covered a half of the festival's budgeted expenses. In Syunik, in the south of Armenia, an agreement on financing was signed with the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia to ensure implementation of the festival also in other towns of the Syunik Region (Goris, Sisian, Meghri, Agarak) in the summer season.

## 3) Business

The third possibility – private donors and enterprises. The festival in Kapan received support from a major local businessman, copper and steel works, thanks to which it became possible to hold the festival in nearby Kadjaran a third day.

Support from any party/entity carries along the risk that the donor might exert pressure to prevent criticism of the donating entity (whether it is a local authority or a company contaminating the environment, etc.).

**Do not forget to invite all sponsors, make sure that their logo and other materials are clearly visible in the festival hall and all PR materials. When opening and closing the festival, present the donors properly.**

## What is not necessary to spend money for?

- **The hall** – try to get for free
- **Advertising** (posters, brochures, invitations, social networks) – engage volunteers
- **Technical support** during the festival - engage volunteers
- **Printing** – make an arrangement with the printing company, include their logo in the promotional materials and get a discount
- **Articles in newspapers, reports in the radio & TV** – try not to pay for them. Again, include the logo of the given media in the festival's materials, present the media as partners, propose to distribute the newspaper in the audience for free and get a spot in the media gratis.

## Public Relations (PR)

How do people learn about your event? How to invite them?

Remember:

- When you do something, the world need to know about it.
- If nobody knows about it, it is as if you did nothing.

Start by defining your target group, so that you know whom you want to address and could determine, how to do it effectively. Who is your target group – the youth? Women? NGOs? Activists? Depending on the target group, define the PR strategy and the means you want to use.

What worked in the Caucasus:

**Posters and banners** in the streets of towns – aimed at people “in the street,” on the premise that they will come to the event after seeing the poster. It is not easy to attract people from the street. The film festival’s organizers succeeded only if the festival became a real event for the whole town (such was the case in Terzhola). If this is not done right – and does not take merely a lot of investing into posters and banners, but also constructive use of other means, then this type of advertising has been spent in vain.

On the other hand, organizers often say that they do not want to waste money on posters, claiming that the only way of making people come is personal invitations, phone calls, etc. While this might be true, such a festival would not really look like a real festival, as it would rather resemble a get-together of the friends of NGO’s members. There must be at least one or two large poster in the hall and on the street in front of the hall.

**Personal invitations (phone calls)** – this approach is of key importance, primarily in small towns. As described above, it works, but if you relied solely on this approach, it would affect the festival’s atmosphere.

**Local media** – all depends on the quality and popularity of the local press, television, or radio. For instance, in Mingechevir, the announcements about the festival in the local press and TV attracted an unexpected number of viewers. The situation was similar in Kapan. PR articles and coverages during and after festivals are undoubtedly useful, as the experience of Vanadzor, Mingechevir, and other places shows.

**Social networks** – for some festivals, this channel seems to be fundamental (e.g., in Baku, Facebook was the sole means of attracting the public – and the results were not bad, as the chosen approach corresponded with the target group, i.e., young activists).

**Flyers** – necessary and important, they just have to be distributed in the right places with many people (target group).

**Promotional materials** (T/shirts, stickers) – it is necessary to have clear vision of where they might be useful and how they would be used. For instance, T-shirts were made in Terzhola with the festival's logo for all of the festival's team, including volunteers. This drew a lot of attention to the festival and led to an overall impression that the whole town lives for the festival.

## Contacts

**Start with the databases of all the contact persons you want to tell about the festival (journalists, potential donors).** Try to create a broad **network of partners** (PR and media agencies, other festivals, sponsors, donors, VIPs). Always keep enough business cards, ask for the business cards of people you want meet again, and try not to lose them as you put in your pocket. In all seriousness, it can be said that it is extremely important to establish and keep up a database of all contact persons. Do not contact these persons only when you need them, rather, try to invite them to non-official events (opening ceremonies, other occasions). When sending out electronic letters addressed to a large number of people, with a press release and photographs attached, you can say in the main part of the letter as follows: *"Dear sir or madame, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of an upcoming event ..."*, in short, presenting relevant information. It would not be a bad idea to add a short press release to the main part of the letter (below the signature). **Many journalists do not open enclosed attachments**, unless it is necessary ...

Furthermore, it is necessary to write personal letters to concrete journalists. The text should be formal, but the content should be personal, e.g., *Dear XY, I would like to inform you ...* if they do not answer your letter, you have to call them. Firstly, call their local number. If nobody picks up the phone, dial the number of their mobile phone and say that you only want make sure that they have received your e-mail ... Ideally, you ought to have the number of the mobile phone of all journalists!!!

## Press Release

It is advisable to write a good press release about the festival. It should contain an interesting quote from the festival's director and specific information about the program (as temptation). Furthermore, it should contain a quote about the festival's significance on behalf of the festival's patron. **Journalists love quotes**, as they can use them later in their articles and reports. At the very beginning of the press release, there must be key information on the event, its organizers, dates, ticket prices, the location of the event, etc. (reporter's rule - **who, what, when, where, why, and how**). After that, it is desirable to specify the most attractive and substantial films in the program, not forgetting, however, to **underline the accompanying activities**.

**The first press release** may be distributed **two weeks before** the event, along with a visual image of the festival or a catchy photograph from a film (up to 1 MB in size). As the date of the event gets closer, additional information may be added. Ideally, you should have one short and one long press release with links to other films.

**At the end of this Guide, please find sample press releases of some film festivals.**



## Visuals and Photography

It is imperative to have **high-quality photographs/stills of selected films**. They ought to be as attractive as possible and provide clear information on the given film. You should propose to send them to journalists. Simultaneously, you can put them on the Internet, where they may be downloaded in large size.

**Do not forget to include in your promotional materials the logos of all the organizations and companies that supported you (donors, sponsors, companies that gave you a discount on printing, coffee break, etc.).** Also, give your event a singular identity (logo, font).

Example: (One World Prague, 2012)



After the festival, collect all the published materials about the festival. Then prepare a **Media report (Press clipping)** as detailed as possible, which you can show subsequently to sponsors to prove how successful the event was and how much appreciation it had won.

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Sample of a good media plan (as prepared in Armenia)

## 15-20 days before the start of the festival:

- Posters in public places and targeted institutions
- Booklets, promotional flyers, information materials
- Press release & announces through the media (TV, daily press); websites and social networks
- Invitations to guests and target groups

## During the festival:

- Notifications to special guests, individual invited viewers
- Coverage of the event: TV programs, newspaper articles
- Reviews (feedback)

## 1-10 days after the festival:

- Reports, analyses, photos and videos on TV channels, in the press, on websites, and social networks

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## School Screenings

Organizers of festivals or individual presentations often count on the youth (students) as their primary audience. There are several reasons for it: presentations of documentary films are often staged by organizations whose target group is the youth (at least such is the experience of CAUCADOC). School classes is an easily accessible/available audience (where would children go? You can easily make them watch a movie). Finally, of course, documentary films are interesting and attractive to young people.

Presentations for children/adolescents have certain distinct specifics to reckon with:

- **Not all films are suitable/appropriate** for a young audience. When choosing a film for a presentation to children, it is essential to select a theme that interests the given group. The length of the film is ideally up to 30 minutes; basically, not to exceed one hour. Reading the subtitles might be a bit difficult for children, but they can cope with it.
- Students may be either **invited into the festival hall**, or **the projector can be taken to the school**. Both variants have their pros and cons. To take children out to the festival place has a positive effect, but the logistics are more complicated. If you are planning to stage a presentation at the school, it is necessary to make sure that the windows can be darkened and the projector set up properly. Moreover, consider the fact that the school bell might interrupt the film at the most dramatic moment and the noise during the break will affect the quality of the presentation.
- For school presentations, the **presence of guests**, as well as good feedback, are particularly important. Growing-up children are very emotional/impressionable – children must not be left with possibly conflicting impressions and experiences. Subsequent **discussion is a must and the presence of guests is recommended**.
- **Meet with the school's administrators**, in order to familiarize them with the idea of the film's presentation, the theme at issue, and short description of the content. If they tell you, "*Yes, we have the necessary equipment,*" do visit the school in advance anyway and double-check the situation – otherwise, you might end up having no sound system or suitable player, etc. Discuss the importance of guest-experts.
- When organizing presentations for the youth, it is better to limit the audience to a **smaller number of viewers** – optimally up to 50 persons.

## Evaluation and Feedback

Evaluation of the festival is very important. If we consider organizing another festival in the future, feedback from the public is indispensable.

### During the festival

Handing out questionnaire is one of the most common and simple ways of getting the viewers' opinion, in particular, what they liked and otherwise. Give them the opportunity to express their view (see sample questionnaire below). Try to have the questionnaires filled out by viewers who came to see different films on different days to make sure that you get feedback for the whole festival. If the total number of viewers is 200-300 persons, a survey of 20-30% would give you a fairly good idea about the viewers' assessment of the festival.

The questionnaire has to be drafted prior to the festival's opening. First of all, the organizer has to define the main objectives and the reasons for wishing to get the respondents' opinions – based on these premises, you can draw up the questionnaire.

If you use **hard-copy (paper) questionnaires**, your audience may fill them out after each presentation. In this case, it is necessary to keep in mind that the questionnaire should not be long, i.e., it should be limited to several questions. It is advisable to include as more close-ended questions, where the respondents choose from a choice of suggested answers. Do not forget to provide pencils.

The questionnaire should include questions concerning the overall organizational aspects, the event's concerns, and several questions about future plans.

In short, draw up a short questionnaire, choose questions that help you develop a better PR campaign and promotion strategy, and figure out how to motivate people to fill in the questionnaire! For instance, the first 5 people who answer all questions will get small courtesy gifts in the form of a promotional item or the like.

The second variant is an **online questionnaire**. If your viewers have easy access to the Internet and computer literacy, you can put an online questionnaire on your website or Facebook during the festival and leave it there for one or two weeks.

Below, see an example of a very short questionnaire, drawn up by "YIC" (Gyumri)



Get involved and become a winner!

You can become of three lucky participants who will receive a special prize at the end of the festival.

*Please, do not forget to fill in your contact data.*

**1. How did you learn about the festival?**

1. Facebook
2. Friends
3. PR materials: posters
4. PR materials: brochure
5. Educational institution(s)
6. Other (please, specify)

**2. How would you evaluate the festival? (on a scale of 1-5: 1 = very bad, 5 = excellent, like at the school)**

Location	
Films	
Discussions	
Guest-experts	
Atmosphere	
Organization	
Overall	

Comments, Suggestions | \_\_\_\_\_

**3) What themes would you be interested in seeing in a film the next time?**

1. Young people
2. The environment
3. Human rights
4. Corruption

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5. The handicapped
6. Conflicts
7. Gender problems
8. Other (please, specify)

#### 4) Please, tell us some basic facts about yourself:

**Which film(s) did you see during the festival?**

**Sex:** female / male

**Age:**

1. 20 or younger
2. 21-40
3. 41-60
4. over 60

**Contact data: phone, e-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

#### After the festival

- Appreciations: do not forget to express gratitude to your **guests, partners, and sponsors.**
- Evaluation:
  - Prepare evaluation summary
  - Define positive & weak aspects and tasks for next year
  - Thank your team
  - Analyze problems calmly
  - Get together to evaluate in a quiet place to feel comfortable
- **Reporting:** If you have donors, you will have to report according to their requirements and deadlines. However, even if you are not obliged to file formal reports, it is useful to draw up a short report, as it will be convenient for the purposes of informing your partners and sponsors, who do not require a formal report, when it comes to presenting the festival later in pursuit of partners and donors. In “your” report, include numbers (how many presentations, viewers, guests, overall budget), photographs, links to festival website, articles, coverages on the festival, letters of appreciation to partners and sponsors.

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## During the year

- Maintain contacts with your partners and sponsors, the public, and the team (volunteers, etc.);
- Invite them to other events that you organize throughout the year;
- Advertise the festival at your other events.

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## Schedule, Checklist

### 6-3 months before the festival

- Define your **objectives**
- Define the **target group**
- Define **where and when** the festival will take place
- Create a **team**
- Create a **budget and start fundraising**
- Start compiling a portfolio of contacts

### 3-2 months before the festival

- Prepare a **PR strategy** and start developing **graphic design**
- Continue **fundraising**
- Determine types of **side activities**

### 6-4 weeks before the festival

- Place basic information on your **website**
- Draft the **program**
- Engage **volunteers**
- Get in touch with **guests**
- **Budget and graphics ready**
- **All team members know what to do**
- Gather up **photographs/stills from films**

### 3-1 weeks before the festival

- The program is finalized
- Prepare and distribute **press release**, invite **journalists**
- Printing and distribution of **posters**, etc.
- Large meeting before the start of the festival
- **Technical check of films, halls (showroom), technology**



- Update of the website
- Questionnaires ready

## Festival

<b>Description of tasks</b>	All workers, including volunteers, should be aware what they are responsible for.
<b>Telephone numbers</b>	save all telephone numbers on your phone
<b>Last meeting</b>	Before the festival begins, hold a large preparatory meeting.
<b>Good frame of mind/good mood</b>	Get a new outfit and go to the hairdresser, you will feel better
<b>Your mobile phone</b>	Remember that your phone has to be charged at all times.
<b>Check all locations</b>	Technical provisions
	Films ready (check the format).
	Technicians have got all the necessary instructions
	Festival promotional decorations (posters, etc.).
	Ensure easy access to the hall (arrows, posters).
<b>Guests</b>	Check arrivals / departures..
<b>Opening / Closing</b>	Scheduled opening (who, where, dynamics, lights on/off).
	1-2 people at the door to welcome guests – explain how to verify invitations.
<b>Regular projection</b>	Before the presentation starts, greet/welcome the audience, tell briefly about the festival and film, and introduce the guest(s), mention debate after the film.
	If the hall is large, use a microphone (preferably 2 or 1 portable ones for the audience).
	Reserve seats for the moderator and guest(s). If there are several guest-experts, put a small table on the stage, plus adequate number of chairs. Prepare glasses and water for the moderator and guest(s).
	Ask 1-3 questions during the debate, then let the audience talk

	Repeat the question, if some people could not hear it.
	After the debate, thank the audience and guest(s), invite them to the next program.
	Hand out and collect the questionnaires.
<b>PR, advertising/promotion</b>	Make sure to get quality photos and video recordings.
<b>Problems</b>	If any problems come up, try to resolve them peacefully, not in front of the public.

## After the festival

- Process the questionnaires
- Collect all articles and reviews of the festival published in the media
- Save a database of contacts
- Make evaluation
- Draft a report

## In general

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Double-check your plans at the end of each phase (interim checks)</b></li> <li>• Try to take notes at the end of each week of what you have done for the festival.</li> </ul> |
|---|

## In conclusion

We want to thank you all who organize film screenings and discussions for your courage and initiative, and we wish you success. Should you have any uncertainties or questions when reading this Guide or preparing a presentation or festival, do not hesitate to ask for assistance using the contact data below. We will be happy to hear about your experience and help you as much as we can.

### Contact:

**One World** – Safarikova 24, Prague 2, Czech Republic. [www.oneworld.cz](http://www.oneworld.cz), +420 226 200 400

People in Need **Armenia** – Bagramyan 2, Yerevan, Armenia, (+374 60) 51 91 59 ,  
[Varduhi.dadunts@peopleinneed.cz](mailto:Varduhi.dadunts@peopleinneed.cz)

**Azerbaijan** – Teyyub Mirgasimov, [Mirgasimov@gmail.com](mailto:Mirgasimov@gmail.com)

People in Need **Georgia** – Sh. Didiani 8, Tbilisi, Georgia, [www.pin.ge](http://www.pin.ge),  
[Shorena.kuchukhidze@peopleinneed.cz](mailto:Shorena.kuchukhidze@peopleinneed.cz), (+995 32) 2 92 00 15

## Annexes

### Sample press releases



Yerevan, March 22, 2013

#### DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

As part of Project CAUCADOC, regional documentary film festivals will be organized in 14 towns of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan in March and April. During each of the festivals, it is planned to show about 10 films ranging from 30 to 80 minutes in length, content-wise focusing on such themes as migration of the population, human rights, political systems, etc.

*"The films were made in very different parts of the world and all provided from the archives of the Prague film festival "One World." Actually, the aim of the festival is not merely to show good films in regions that are remote from cultural life. Rather, we want to involve people into discussions of very important contemporary issues, because people in such regions are largely deprived the opportunity to hold open discussions", - noted Sarka Zahradnikova, the project manager of CAUCADOC.*

The entry to the event is free of charge. After screening the documentaries, discussions are planned on the themes dealt with in the films, in the attendance of experts and guests knowledgeable of the issues covered in the specific films. **In Armenia, the festival will be held in five towns: Noyembryan (March 23-25), Gyumri (28-30), Vanadzor (29-31), Yeghegnadzor (April 5-7) and Kapan (April 11-13).** For detailed festival schedule, go to [www.caucadoc.com](http://www.caucadoc.com).

The initiator of the documentary film festivals is the NGO "Человек в беде" (People in Need), in collaboration with its regional partners: "Sakdok Film" in Georgia and "Internews" in Armenia. CAUCADOC promotes the production of documentary films and their presentation as an educational instrument and means of increasing the level of public awareness and information about social issues. The project is financed by the European Union and the Czech Development Cooperation, and implemented simultaneously in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia from March 2012 to February 2014.

Contact for obtaining complementary information: Sarka Zahradnikova,  
sarka.zahradnikova@peopleinneed.cz, +374 91 345 678

[www.caucadoc.com](http://www.caucadoc.com), [www.facebook.com/caucadoc](https://www.facebook.com/caucadoc)

## One World, Prague 4–13 / 3 / 2013, [www.oneworld.cz](http://www.oneworld.cz)

People in Need, Šafaříkova 24, 120 00 Prague 2, Czech Republic, tel: +420 226 200 400

### One World 2013 says: Don't Be Scared of EGGality!

The 15<sup>th</sup> annual One World International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival focuses on the evolvement of dangerous trends in the Czech society over the last period. The festival's provocative motto: "**Don't Be Scared of EGGality!**" aims to open discussion of problems related to growing intolerance, racism, and discrimination.

*"We were struck by what has evolved in the past year from a protest in the Shluknov area. Discriminatory laws, such as temporary exile, enacted in the new Act on Administrative Violations in the Czech Republic, as well as the tone of the election campaigns by some presidential candidates are organic extension Shluknov events,"* says festival director Hana Kulhankova.

To show that the existence of manifestations of racism, discrimination, and search for a "scapegoat" is not unique solely to the Czech Republic, One World decided to organize a presentation of some 13 films from different parts of the world to demonstrate the growing number of cases of xenophobic attitudes among people and their escalation to extremes, including Czech documentaries about the socially deprived regions of the Czech Republic. However, several films will be shown in the same thematic category entitled **Don't Be Scared of EGGality!**, which may have a positive impact on the audience and make them contemplate about coexistence and tolerance.

Other categories presented in the program of One World 2013: **The Power of the Media** – examines the impact that information has on the contemporary world; **Side Effects** – a film about healthcare systems in the West and in developing countries; **People in Need – 20 years** – films about non-democratic countries where People in Need work; and **So-called Civilization** – the center of attention in this film are the different aspects of living close to nature. Films presented under in the **Main Competition** and **The Right to Know Competition** will compete for prizes at the festival. And, importantly, the festival will also feature the **latest Czech documentary films**.

**After presentations scheduled for March 4-13, 2013, in Prague, One World will be presented in 40 other Czech towns. Film screenings will always be followed by Q&A and discussions with filmmakers and experts, as well as roundtable discussions with international guests. For further information, visit our website [www.oneworld.cz](http://www.oneworld.cz).**

A list of the festival's interesting guests – filmmakers and human rights activists – scheduled to come to the festival will be announced in February.

A press conference for obtaining accreditation will be held on Tuesday, February 26, 2013 at 11:00 a.m. at the Langhans Center of the People in Need organization.

Contact: Jiří Sulženko, [jiri.sulzenko@jedensvet.cz](mailto:jiri.sulzenko@jedensvet.cz), tel.: +420 739 123.456

