



**International
Care Leavers Convention
2020**

My Care, My Voice

A Video-based Workshop

31st Oct, 1330 IST / 0900 CET/ 0800GMT / 1100 EAT

*Anchored & Hosted By :
Udayan Care, India*



Organised By



careleaversconvention.udayancare.in

My Care: My Voice | Amplifying the Voices of Care Leavers

Pre Event 2 - Oct 31, 2020/ 1330 IST / 0900 CET/ 0800GMT / 1100 EAT

COVID-19 has changed the world in more ways than we can imagine. It has made virtual connections much more possible. In the online world, sharing **Videos** is one of the most powerful mode of communication. In the run up to the main event of the International Care Leavers Convention 2020 to be held from November 23-25, 2020, an interactive workshop on sharing ones story by making video was conducted on October 31, 2020. This was the 2nd pre-event, as a precursor to the main Convention. The first pre event, held on October 24, 2020 focussed on the need of [Care Leaver Networks](#)

The objective of this webinar was to inspire and motivate care leavers to enable them to create their own videos and tell their stories of Hope, Experiences and Achievements, by sharing some easy tips with them! Examples were shared of how powerful stories have helped change narratives around leaving care. The webinar helped participants recognize the importance of sharing stories and the power of video to express themselves and advocate their cause.

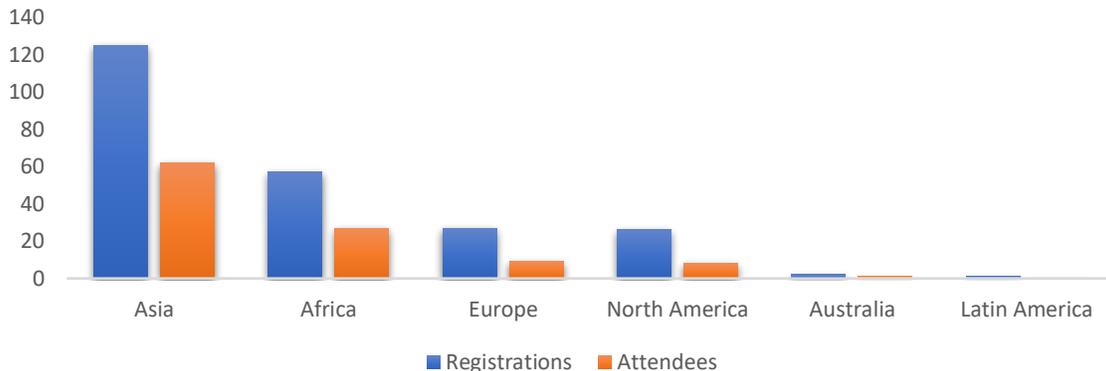
The interactive workshop was moderated by Aneesha Wadhwa, Executive Director of Udayan Care on behalf of the Organizing Committee and was facilitated by Ms Isha Chitnis, who has been creating videos and training youth to create videos since 2016 to create mass social impact.

The session also had Care Leavers, representatives from India, Sri Lanka, Egypt and Jordan to share their experiences, as below:

Name	Location
Nawras Khalid Haroon	Jordan
Naglaa Fathy Khalil	Egypt
Gurmeet Kaur	India
Moses Akash	Sri-Lanka

The webinar saw registrations from across 48 countries with 52% being Care Leavers.

Registrations and Attendees



Aneesha Wadhwa opened the session by sharing information on the International Care Leavers Convention 2020, planned from November 23-25, 2020 and how different pre-events are planned to cover different facets of Leaving Care. While Pre-Event 1 focused on the power of networking, Aneesha mentioned that this webinar was planned as a skill training session on amplifying Care Leavers voices through creating and sharing of videos. She introduced and welcomed the facilitator **Isha Chitnis**, who interacted with participants asking them about where they had joined from. Constantly engaging participants through the chat window, Isha made sure that participants were absolutely engaged all the time, resulting in a 100 percent attendance throughout the session. Through the session, she inspired the participants to be able to create “impact” through videos and shared the tools to make their stories go viral. The 2-hour training session was sub-divided into micro-modules where the participants were introduced to

- Different types of videos focusing on messaging and diverse audiences in mind
- Importance and Impact of telling a story through video
- The entire planning process behind shooting a video
- Interactive discussion on participant plan for videos thus making it action oriented
- Curated suggestions on apps to edit videos

Importance of Video: The session started with a discussion around the reach of videos, asking participants if they knew how many hours of YouTube content are consumed on daily basis. Isha then shared that over 500 million hours of YouTube content are being consumed on a daily basis making it the most effective medium to get your message across far and wide. Isha, who has also made documentary films, said, *“If you want to change society, you would have to create content that can be consumed”*. Through the help of videos, Care Leavers can better advocate for changes in policies since it can provide the much needed “evidence and proof”. Vlogging about their lives and the challenges they face while applying for loans, housing, university, jobs can be showcased which will make policy makers aware of their issues and may aid in the making of affirmative action-based policies. She mentioned that this does require efforts to take the leap of faith by putting yourself “out there”. **Niyomugabo Jean Claude**, one of the participants, shared her fears in the following words: *“The big fear is not about strangers knowing my story but the fear is to people who raised you in SOS and your peers, who thought they know you but they don't really know what you've been going through”*. Isha addressed this by sharing the video featuring Syrian Olympic swimmer [Yusra Mardini](#). She again brought back the reference to this point, later in the session while showing the video of **Malala Yousafzai**, where Malala speaks on self-belief, especially when the odds are stacked against you. She said, *“You need to be the first person to accept yourself, to be confident in yourself and to applaud yourself”* as only then the sense of righteousness and truth will come out.

Isha further talked about why videos are important using a **4E model**. Videos are Engaging, Emotional, Educational and Empathetic and are the reasons why it can help to better connect with the audience. People, who are strangers to their cause, would become their biggest advocates in both financial and emotional support, once they can relate to their fight and movement. She further said that Care Leavers can also leverage videos for showcasing their talents and use it as a medium to earn, based on their talent and interest.

Challenging Stereotypes: Isha shared examples from her own work, of having co-created an online platform for Tribals (Adivasis) in India. She reflected on her experience that society from the outside looks at the Adivasis as “constantly suffering beings who are uneducated and lack agency”. This is because of what mainstream media has fed the public to believe and to change the narrative, the only solution is creating an alternative narrative where the Adivasis can share other aspects of their lives. Their unique culture, songs, dances, language, medicines, attire, food can be documented through the medium of video and shared with the public to change the notion. She suggested that a similar strategy can be deployed in case of Care Leavers. This would help to destigmatize their condition and make the society perceive them as normal fellow citizens.

To emphasize her point, she shared about “**Care Leaver Sophia**” who has her own [YouTube channel](#), which showcases her journey from Foster Care to Oxford University, UK. She regularly posts her film reviews, reaction videos and videos of celebrities in care, and reaches out to other Care Leavers.



To Inspire: Isha further mentioned that with the help of videos, Care Leavers would be able to inspire and influence other Care Leavers who might be facing the same situation as they are. The inspiring story of Sakshi was shared who is the first Care Leaver from Udayan Care to study abroad on a full

scholarship. A 4part video series has been made based on [Sakshi's story](#) to inspire other Care Leavers who dare to dream and is currently being shared through the Convention Social media handles as well. Earlier in the session, the inspiring short video of Syrian Olympic swimmer [Yusra Mardini](#) who survived the Syrian Civil War and realized her dream of becoming an Olympian swimmer was also shown.

Isha also introduced the Care Leavers’ representatives who spoke of their impact stories which was aided by using videos and how videos are a way to gain an identity and agency in a society which judge them constantly. First on, was **Gurmeet Kaur** from **India**, who spoke about the relevance and importance of video making for Care Leavers. She herself is a Care Leaver who lost her parents early on in life and was raised in a group home, being run by Udayan Care. After leaving Care she graduated in mass communication and journalism and currently works as a script writer in the Indian television industry. She reflected, “*Our stories are deemed as sorrowful and people will label and call us names because of our life*”. She also gave an example how her poetry on Instagram got very few likes when it was written in text format however her page turned viral when she started making videos of her poetry. That is the power of video which is crucial to get the messages of Care Leavers across. **Moses Akash from Sri Lanka**, then spoke about his experience in the GNG (Generation Never Give Up) network while in COVID lockdown in Sri Lanka. He and other team members distributed rations for families who were severely hampered due to COVID. A short video of their work, made and edited on his phone and less than 2 minutes, was shown and published on social media. That video post reached across 600,000 people. With support pouring in, they have managed to reach out to 40000 families and 600000 people overall utilizing 38 million Sri Lankan rupees that they have raised. He spoke about an important point that when people donate money, “they are interested to know what happens with it”. So, “evidence and proof” works in case of fund generation and utilization as well. He said that video format works because people are simply busy to read text. You can simply use your phone to record and with free editing software create a positive narrative which can be shared with multiple networks across social media. **Nawras Khalid Haroon**, Care leaver Representative from Jordan also wanted to share his experience – unfortunately due to internet connectivity challenges, he could not join.

Planning a video: Having established a clear need of video as mode of communication, Isha shifted gears to talk about the steps in making a video. She started by explaining the need to break myths around video making being expensive / sophisticated activity. She said, that a smart phone is enough and there are free editing softwares such as Kinemaster, Inshots and Youcut which can be used to edit and make professional videos. She also answered queries from audience mentioning that even if one doesn’t own a smartphone, one can always rent or borrow the same to make the video. About making effective videos, she shared some basic principles like knowing the purpose / audience of video to decide the messaging or being cautious of good light. Video making is a four step process from start to finish with a) Coming up with a

storyline b) Planning the video shoot c) Filming the video and d) Editing and uploading the video. While planning the video content the 3-step process must be implemented- a) Hook and Intro b) Story and Main content c) Outro and Call to Action.

She said, “A great video lies somewhere in the middle between good story and good technique”

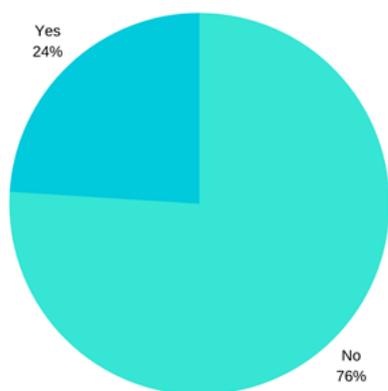
Ethical issues of documenting minors and other vulnerable sections were also discussed to make the audience aware of certain boundaries.

Key Outcomes

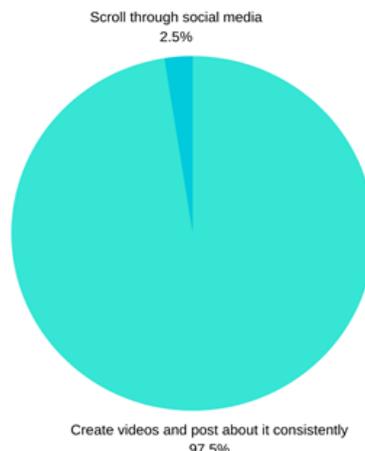
The session kept the audience engaged through the workshop. The key takeaways that emerged were:

The Confidence generated from Care Leavers - While 76 % participants had no experience in making videos but by the end almost 97% agreed that videos are the best way to spread awareness about their cause. The power of video and its reach as a medium was well understood.

Have you ever made a video on the topic of leaving care?



What is the best way to spread awareness about care leavers and their journey online?



- **Need of a collective voice** – A need for a Care Leaver Youtube channel was felt, where all Care Leavers can share their own videos and amplify their voice and impact for change in policies and attitudes towards Care Leavers. It was well understood that policy advocacy requires “evidence” and video making / vlogging puts the power in the hands of the Care Leavers themselves to create that evidence.
- **Effective messaging requires a little planning** – The session broke myths about video making being too sophisticated. With a little planning around content, and with the right light conditions, a smart phone is good enough to make powerful videos supported with free editing software.

Conclusion

The interactive workshop was given a super thumbs up by the participants and was seen as effective in getting across the importance of video to create a veritable impact in the lives of Care Leavers. Knowing about the significance of “evidence and proof” in advocacy and understanding the need for change in narrative to the stories of Care Leavers have been few of the big takeaways.



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