

Nomination 5 Highflyer Award 2024

'Dilstories NL' | Stichting DOEN

While the HuCom Awards focus primarily on representation, it's time to shift attention to how stories are created: the production process. For years, we've advocated producing campaigns in collaboration with – or entirely by – the people the stories are about, a practice known as participatory storytelling or co-creation. This year, we believe this approach is best exemplified in the video highlighting [Dilstories Film Studio](#).

Addressing social issues (such as LGBTQ+ rights, combating malaria, or tackling unemployment) is seamlessly integrated with conversations with the Dilstories team, who emphasize the importance of artists telling their own stories in their own way. What stands out is how effortlessly this video weaves together creativity, social issues, entrepreneurship, education, and international collaboration. This context also makes it much clearer what the Dutch partner (in this case, Stichting DOEN) contributes: long-term financial support, enabling the film school to pay trainers and acquire equipment.

Another excellent video on social entrepreneurship comes from SPARK, a long-time advocate for participatory storytelling. In '[I am driven by the urgent need to combat water pollution in Gaza](#),' shot before the Israeli invasion of Gaza, Salah El Sadi explains how he tackles water purification. Like the Dilstories video, this one demonstrates how much complexity can be conveyed when a story is well-crafted. Topics include the Israeli occupation, energy issues, salinization, chemical and practical solutions Salah developed, and a strong focus on environmentally friendly approaches. Special mention!

And since we're on the subject of balanced production processes, here's one unusual special mention. Typically, we advise against working with celebrities as ambassadors due to the potential pitfalls of misguided representation. However, when an ambassador demonstrates how to do it right, it deserves recognition. This honor goes to the Red Cross for [a video featuring Iris Enthoven discussing sustainability issues in Kenya](#).

Enthoven takes a background role, avoids sentimentalism, engages in equal conversations with her interviewees, remains curious and informed, and sticks to substantive discussions. While the video still contains problematic elements (generalizations about the African continent, anonymous children in vulnerable medical situations, and the use of terms like 'sloppenwijk' ('slum') – please don't!), the tone is refreshing. Perhaps this video could serve as training material for other ambassadors.