Multimedia Library Collection: Environmental Film Profiles (videos)

Why Poverty? Solar Mamas

Eldaief, Mona, and Nehane Noujaim. *Why Poverty? Solar Mamas.* New York/Cairo: Noujaim Films, 2012. HD, 52 min. https://youtu.be/VBt3bWYcF_A.

> *Solar Mamas* tells the story of Rafea, a Jordanian Bedouin mother who is given the opportunity to study at the Barefoot College in India, and become a solar engineer, capable of bringing power to the remotest places. She attends the college's program, which brings together 27 women from all over the world. They're all from poor backgrounds, they are mothers and grandmothers and mostly illiterate. For six months, they live on the campus and learn about electrical components and soldering. The Barefoot College focuses on women because as founder Bunker Roy explains, women are more likely to stay in their communities once they have trained. Unlike men, who'll take their new knowledge and leave for the big cities, women often return to their families and homes, bringing their new skills back to share. But staying the course is not easy. The film shows how learning about electrical components and soldering without being able to read, write, or understand English is the easy part. Harder to negotiate is the pressure from Rafea's patriarchal, unemployed Bedouin husband who demands that she returns home. (Source: Why Poverty)

The series Why Poverty? was initiated and produced by Steps International, a non-profit organization that combines documentaries, new media, old media and outreach to get millions of people talking about big issues.

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This film is available at the Rachel Carson Center Library (RCC, 4th floor, Leopoldstrasse 11a, 80802 Munich) for on-site viewing only. For more information, please contact library@rcc.lmu.de.

About the Environmental Film Profiles collection

Further readings:

- Droege, Peter. *100% Renewable: Energy Autonomy in Action*. London: Earthscan, 2009.
- Mondal, Md. Alam Hossain, and A. K. M. Sadrul Islam. "Potential and Viability of Grid-Connected Solar PV System in Bangladesh". *Renewable Energy* 36, no. 6 (2011): 1869–74.

- Sen, Amartya. *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.
- Scheer, Hermann. *Energy Autonomy: The Economic, Social and Technological Case for Renewable Energy*. London: Earthscan, 2007.

Related links:

- Barefoot College Website
  https://www.barefootcollege.org/
- Bunker Roy on "Learning from a Barefoot Movement" (TED Talk)
  https://www.ted.com/talks/bunker_roy
- Nilanjana Bhowmick. "The Women of India's Barefoot College Bring Light to Remote Villages." (The Guardian)
  https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2011/jun/24/india-barefoot-college-solar-power-training
- Shweta Desai. "India's Barefoot College Lights Up the World." (Al Jazeera)
  http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/01/india-barefoot-college-lights-up-world-201411464325362590.html
- STEPS
  http://www.steps.co.za/

Websites linked in this text:

- http://www.comminit.com/whypoverty/content/solar-mamas-are-women-better-getting-out-poverty-men
- http://www.carsoncenter.uni-muenchen.de/index.html
- https://www.environmentandsociety.org/multimedia/collection/environmental-films-project