

## Reflection Paper Assignment

35 points

**Due Date: November 6 in Drop Box**

### **Purpose:**

To analyze the important role a NPO and YOU can play in increasing global sustainability.

### **Writing Emphasis:**

No referencing is required for this essay. However – use strong writing skills such as:

- Unified paragraphs with first sentences that convey the main idea
- Develop the ideas that follow the first sentence within each paragraph by using examples or evidence from discussion or the video
- Sentences that use mostly active verbs (not is, was, were) that are not rambling
- Good spelling and grammar

### **Assignment:**

Based on the video, “Solar Mamas,” our discussion of sustainability, reflect on the impact that NPOs can have worldwide. In a 500-700 word essay, reflect on the following:

1. In what ways does/might the Barefoot College NPO (in Solar Mamas) change the village’s sustainability? How will Rafea’s experience have a sustainable impact in her village?
2. What challenges did her experience create for her and for her village? What was hard for them?
3. In what ways might YOU support Rafea, others like her, and the organizations that help in developing or undeveloped countries? Include an assessment of your own awareness/education, your lifestyle, and your philanthropy.
4. Compare and contrast Rafea’s journey (in Solar Mamas) to your own journey into college?

### **Grading criteria:**

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| <b>5 points</b>  | Incorporates illustrations from video and class materials                          |
| <b>10 points</b> | Development of your ideas – analysis – depth of thinking                           |
| <b>7 points</b>  | compare Rafea’s journey to your own college journey, commonalities and differences |
| <b>5 points</b>  | Responds to assignment   |
| <b>8 points</b>  | Strong writing (see above)   |

## Results of Sustainability Assignment – Hopscotching the World of Nonprofit Organizations

Fall 2014

Dr. Lora Warner

### Assignment summary

Watch a PBS documentary video (1 hour) entitled “Solar Mamas,” chosen for its sustainability themes. The video portrays two women in a poor village in Jordan, their families, and way of life in extreme poverty with high unemployment, hunger, and third world country conditions. The women are approached by a nonprofit organization in India to learn how to build solar panels and to install them back in their village, leading to jobs and as a result, hope for a better future. The video ties in beautifully to the three pillars of sustainability, i.e., economic, social, and environmental development. Then, students wrote a reflection paper about the themes they observed in the video.

### Selected student reflections

Each paragraph below is clipped from student reflection papers where they were asked to write about how the nonprofit educational program would lead to sustainable development in Jordan.

The Barefoot College has made a big impact on Rafeas life, which inspires her to try and make a difference in her own village. She wants to educate all the women of her village so they will no longer have to be dependent on the government, or so they could one day maybe open a business. Education to these women would be powerful to their economy. Since the women are most likely to stay in the village, the education they get would directly impact their village. They may one day use that education to open a business and sell the solar lights. The other women are interested in what Rafea has learned, and with her encouragement, they may one day be able learn about solar power. Barefoot college taught the women how to create solar lights, which will be environmentally sufficient. They will not have to be dependent on energy from electricity, but rather natural energy; the sun. Barefoot College made an impact on the other women in the village, environment, and the economy of the village.

Barefoot College can change the village in three great ways. Economy is a great one, by training one person to teach, it can create multiple jobs for the villagers with raising the economy there greatly. They are also improving equity, by training women and trying to make more opportunities for the women in the village. Another one is the environment, by using solar electricity instead of kerosene, it greatly improves the environment in the village. Rafea’s experience will impact her village greatly, especially the economy in her village. The reason why is because if she teaches and trains others in her village, they can get jobs and change the economic situation in their village. Also, with using solar power energy, it can improve the environment in their village.

The Barefoot college non-profit organization in “Solar Mamas” will change the village substantially because it will allow women and other people in the village to obtain jobs. By going on this trip Rafea has changes the future of the whole village. Before the village was very poverty stricken and everybody that lived in it did not have a job. All the people of the village basically did was sit around and smoke cigarettes. Rafea’s experiences will allow women and other people in the village to get a job and have money of their own. It will allow them to be free from living in a tent and also allow the women to

perhaps get some freedom from their husbands. Rafea gained a lot of freedom by going on this journey. She was finally free from her husband telling her what she could and couldn't do. For example, when she went over to India her husband did not want to allow it. But now that she has gained some independence she is partially free from his orders. By going on this journey Rafea has also created a better future for her children. Rafea's children are not stuck with the same future as she once had. Rafea and the girls now live in a house. When the girls are old enough they could even start working with their mother on the solar energy project.

Specifically, Barefoot College provided education on solar engineering to the women of these countries. Before Barefoot College intervened, Jordan was accustomed to a life of poverty. Here, families lived in tents in the desert without electricity or running water. These families had no job opportunities and only got by because of government aid. However, Barefoot College was able to change all of that. This college was able to take an uneducated woman, like Rafea, and turn her into a solar engineer. Not only did they provide her with education, but they also gave her the courage and strength to want more in her life. Due to Rafea's education, she was able to introduce solar energy to her region and teach other women. Hopefully, this will begin a chain reaction where education becomes a requirement in this region. Through education, Jordan is able to start companies for solar engineering and reduce the need for government aid. In the years to come, Jordan could transform into a developed country.

In Solar Mamas, the Barefoot College changes life for Rafea and her village. The village Rafea lives in is filled with 300 unemployed people. Rafea wanted to give her daughters a better life and help those in the village who could not help themselves. Rafea is a certified mechanic and therefore can teach other women how to be mechanics as well. This has given her village a sustainable impact because now more people can get jobs and make money. Also, they are focusing on solar energy which is a big deal for the people of the village. Rafea's village is in the desert, so there isn't a lot of electricity to go around. Now though, she and the women she teaches can provide power to the village. This is very beneficial for everyone. The barefoot college is the reason that this sustainability change could be made.

Barefoot College taught Rafea and other women from around the world about engineering specifically solar technologies. This allows her to support not only her family but will also let her spread the knowledge to others about what she learned. This will then let others in the community help their families and provide more for their children. As this continues, the domino effect will occur and more and more families will lead better lives and eventually their village will become more sustainable. If the village is more sustainable they will grow and become more independent and self-reliant. This will allow the possibility in the future for children to attend higher education institutes and move up in the world. If Barefoot College can provide this first step for women all around the world, they could make a huge difference in underdeveloped countries.

The women are chosen to attend Barefoot College in India. The tuition is paid for by the local government who believe so much in the women it's incredible. Most of the men in the village look down on the women but the government support them so much it's incredible. Barefoot college not only provides an education for the women they are also helping the environment. The women are being trained to create solar lights, Rafea helps not only the environment she is also empowering other women who see how successful she has been.

The sustainability of Rafea's village in Jordan was positively impacted by Barefoot College. It is a school in India that gives women from around the world the chance to learn and work. The school teaches women to assemble solar lights for villages without electricity. The college impacted her village's economic sustainability because it gave women the chance to work and earn a salary instead of receiving all of their income from the state. It impacted her village's equity in giving women the chance to learn since they are not allowed to attend school past the age of 10. Finally, it impacted her village's environmental sustainability because the solar energy used to power the light poses no negative impact on the environment.

In the video "Solar Mamas", uneducated women in remote areas are given the opportunity to go to the NPO, Barefoot College, to learn how to make solar panels. These women are then given the chance to take the things that they have learned, and teach them to other women in their area. This method helps provide uneducated women with the chance to have a job, and have an income, and teach sustainable energy methods, rather than burning old cupboards in the middle of the floor. Rafea is going to teach the women in her village the methods that she learned while at Barefoot College. By doing this, she will be able to be independent, and allow other women to do the same. However, because she is a woman, and she is teaching other women, she has to overcome the fact that families, husbands in particular, have to approve of their wives leaving the house and being a part of the program. She, and the others in the village, must also accept the fact that they are leaving traditions behind, and doing more than sitting around drinking tea and smoking cigarettes.