

RICE NOT BULLETS



Defending the Human Rights of the Farmers

A Handbook and Viewing Guide

ABSTRACT

This document can be used by teachers viewing this film with students. Inside you will find an overview of the main topics, talking points for each topic and guided questions to use in class. This document can also be used by other to guide their view and answer questions about the film.

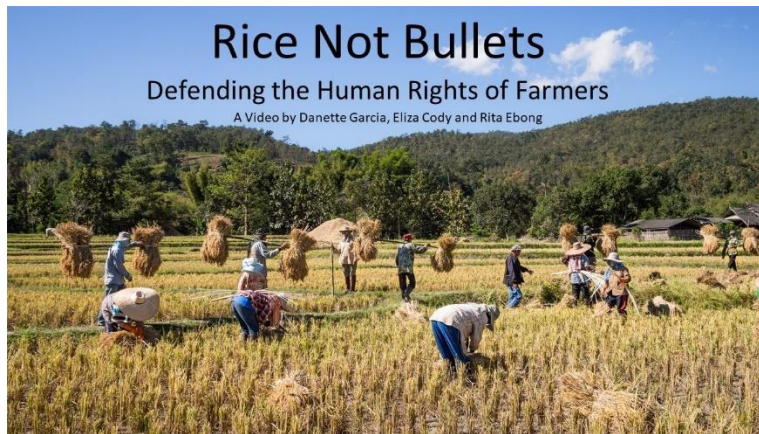
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Internship
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Academic Year 2017-2018

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ABOUT “RICE NOT BULLETS”



SYNOPSIS

This film, “**RICE NOT BULLETS**” is a timely, thought-provoking, and moving documentary on the sad plight of the farmers especially during calamities. After experiencing severe drought for months, the starving Kidapawan farmers in the Philippines went on the streets on March 29, 2016 and blocked the road under the scorching heat of the sun to desperately beg for rice from the government. However, when their permit to rally ran out the following morning, 3 farmers died, 16 were injured and 76 were arrested from the bloody picket dispersal by the police. The film zooms in this local true story to a global scale by connecting the challenges faced by the farmers with UNESCO’s sustainable development goal of “Zero Hunger” and the existing International Seed Treaty on farmers

BACKGROUND

At present, there is only one governing treaty on the human rights of the farmers, which is International Seed Treaty. However, as we can see from the film, interventions and assistance must be based on what the farmers really need to avoid a repeat of Kidapawan City Massacre. Just prior to this dead encounter, a ridiculous situation happened when the Department of Agriculture in the Philippines distributed drought-resistant seeds, wheelbarrows, tractors, water sprinklers and shovels when what the farmers really need for the “here-and-now” is rice to eat.

RELEVANCE

While farming communities produce 85% of the world food, they were grossly underrepresented in terms of human rights. This film highlights the lack of adequate protection on the human rights of the farmers, to stimulate the audience into action. Moreover, it underpins the reality that the issue of human rights of the farmers is not a single problem but a complex one, considering that the farmers are the most vulnerable to natural disasters and worsening climate change. In addition, the film stresses the sense of urgency to support the farmers NOW, individually or collectively whether in small, medium or large-scale.

CALL FOR ACTION



It is imperative, therefore, that a more integrated, creative and collaborative approach be done hand-in-hand by all concerned ---- individuals starting from ourselves, the communities, schools (pupils and students), government, national and international groups ----- to effectively address the problem.

The UNESCO's goal of "no hunger" can only be achieved if we stand together, act now and defend the very hands that feed us.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. In what ways are the farmers underrepresented in human rights organizations today?*
- 2. Why do you think that more than ever, our farmers need our urgent support and human rights protection now?*
- 3. Individually, how can you help spread awareness of this urgent need?*
- 4. As part of a community group, what concrete actions can you do to support and/or protect the farmers?*

ADDED-VALUE



Food is the number one (1) basic need of all and the farmers are our food-suppliers. The film therefore, adds value, not just to pupils, teachers, and communities but to all sectors of society including our own selves:

- a. It promotes awareness on the lack of human rights protection for the farmers;
- b. It connects the audience to the farmers' issue because if we keep our eyes closed on the problem, our very own food security would be at risk;
- c. It awakens our consciousness to the reality of the human rights challenges of the farmers, complicated by climate change problems; and
- d. It touches, stimulates and builds individual and organizational capacity to take concrete actions to address the human rights issues of the farmers especially during natural disasters and emergencies.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. *Can you connect your own self to the sad plight of the Kidapawan farmers in the film? How?*
2. *What are the human rights and/or climate change challenges of the farmers in your own country?*
3. *Can you suggest any best practices on the following which are done for the farmers by your country and which can be applied by the Philippines?*
 - a. *Supporting the farmers during drought or other natural disasters?*
 - b. *Protecting the human rights of the farmers from being abused?*

EMPOWERMENT



Empowerment is the authority or power given to someone to do something. When someone is empowered they are motivated, encouraged, and determined. We believe that this film will empower many different people and groups of people to open their minds to other groups of people who need support from human rights groups. This film serves as a call to action to both individuals and large groups of people to support farmers around the world and to demand support for farmers by human rights organizations and governments around the globe.

OVERVIEW

Students: This film educates students on the important role that farmers play in their everyday lives. Most probably, they do not realize how much of their food is provided by the farming community. By informing students on this and the also educating them on the Kidawapan Famers, they will be motivated and empowered to stand up for the farmers in their communities.

Farmers: This film will undoubtedly empower farmers to unite together to demand protections by their governments. We hope that by empowering farmers they will form organizations to further raise awareness of the human rights violations they have suffered. Furthermore, we hope farmers will bring enlist the support of major human rights organizations to support and help their cause.

Human Rights Organizations: There are a great number of human rights organizations worldwide that support large groups of people. We believe that this film will empower human rights organizations to join with farmers and support them in their fight for fairness and justice. With worsening climate change, they need to expand the support given to farmers especially in times of emergencies and calamities. The farmers need to be protected not just in the medium-and-long-term, but most especially during in the immediate-and-short term. Most farmers are very poor, living from hand-to-mouth, so they cannot afford to have stock of food supply to get-by in case of calamity.

Government: This film should empower the legislative body of government to enact laws protecting farmers. There are a great deal of government officials who represent farmers around the world. This movie should empower them to take action and write laws to protect their people.

NEXT STEPS

As discussed above many groups will feel empowered after watching this film. They may question what to do next. Sometimes, after viewing something very powerful, people feel overwhelmed and not know where to start on the path to action. Action Items for each of the above groups will differ, but it is important for all groups to be familiar with not just their own action items but also those around them.

Students: Support local farmers, volunteer on farms, buy local produce, write to your local government and human rights organizations you think would support farmers in their mission.

Farmers: Begin communicating with other local farmers to discuss potential human rights violations, write local government, start an organized group, alert human rights organizations of human rights violations

Human Rights Organizations: Begin communicating with farmers, find out their needs and add them to your mission

Government: Begin communicating with famers in your communities, find out their needs and learn if and how they are being underrepresented, work with fellow government officials to write laws protecting farmers, encourage other constituents to shop local and buy directly from farmers, unite farmer and police organizations to create more cohesive unity

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. *What do you think empowered the Kidawapan Farmers to finally protest the treatment by the government? Do you think they should have taken action sooner?*
2. *How did the film make you feel empowered and what can you do to act on that empowerment?*
3. *Can you think of other examples where groups of people were empowered around a cause and made a difference in society?*

CARE



The aspect of care can be defined as helping others to grow and to self-actualize by embodying genuine empathy, concern (=“care”) and love . The issue of care is a vital aspect for every human being, every human being needs care in order to feel respected and accepted in a society or community. There are certain components of care which can be seen as in the film both positively and negatively. The group of people who join the farmers in their protest personify care because they show empathy and concern for the farmers lack of food. Unfortunately, the government did not show care for the farmers and failed to express empathy or concern.

COMPONENTS OF CARE

There are certain attributes that are at the core of caring, which is applicable to the film. These are **attentiveness, responsibility, competence and empathy.**

Firstly to begin, **attentiveness** is a vital issue of care this is so because, care requires one to listen truly and to recognize other’s needs. This therefore means that, it is only when a person is attentive and he or she will be able to know the need of a person and this will enable the person to respond to one needs. In the case of that Kidapawan Farmers, had the government been more attentive they perhaps would have had a harder time turning a blind eye to the farmers.

The second aspect of care is **responsibility.** In order to care we need to take it as aspect of responsibility. If we take it as our own responsibility to care for others, there would be much less suffering in the world.

Another component is the aspect of **competence**. This explains the fact that, to provide care for someone you need also the aspect of competency. One cannot simply acknowledge the need to care, but not follow through with enough adequacy and as such action would result in the need of care not being met, which therefore means competence is a vital aspect of care. Had the people who helped the farmers acknowledged their suffering but not gone out to protests the wrong doing with them, they would not have personified care. Instead, they took to the streets with the farmers and were competent in their care.

Apart from the above, another component of care is **responsiveness** this means a person or groups need/s to be ready to respond to the needs of the other based on the “real” needs --- both the expressed and not expressed. In the story of the Kidapawan Farmers, the government could have shown care by being responsive to the needs for the farmers and provided them with food assistance quickly instead of letting them starve or giving them assistance which is not what they actually need for the here-and-now. The government responded late by giving drought resistance seeds and farming tools but the real need is the food to survive. **Listening with care** is the key to effective response.

CARE IN GENERAL



How does the film relate to care general ?

The film makes the viewer feel empowered, as if they need to take action immediately. This story is highly relevant to all watching because farmers are the backbone our economic system and provide food security to all of us.

So, as one watches this film, it makes one think of his/her family, friends and farmers in one’s own community. Genuine care entails concrete action and – the film stimulates one to care and give back to them the way they give to you.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. In what ways can you show care to the farmers in your community?*
- 2. How can you help improve the living standards of farmers in our society?*
- 3. What rights could be given to farmers in order to show care to farmers in general? How about during natural calamities? Why?*