

Zur Anzeige wird der QuickTime™
Dekompressor -TIFF (Unkomprimiert)
benötigt.

Evaluation Report - BBC LIFE Series China - 2.



Zur Anzeige wird der QuickTime™
Dekompressor -TIFF (Unkomprimiert)
benötigt.



Building up on the experiences of the first Evaluation Report of the *BBC Life Series China*, on further survey was conducted in order to verify or partly falsify the previous result and to get a deeper understanding how people integrate the presented environmental-, sustainable development- and public health issues into their own life stories. Therefore this survey (**see: Appendix III**) put more emphasis on a small number of people, but at the same time giving them rather more time and space in order to answer a quite open-narrative questionnaire.

The collected data of this Second Evaluation Report is based on a screening of three films at the WWF-Building in the center of Beijing. No previous information about the content of the films was given, as well as no introductions to the single films, in order to ensure that the situation is altered as little as possible. This time the audience represented a broad spectrum with people ranging from the age of 16 to 46, with all sorts of different professions and education levels. The number of male and females was almost even. However, in comparison to the first *BBC Life Series* Evaluation Report it has to be taken into consideration that the level of education was higher than a representative survey would demand. Also more than 80% of the respondents grew up in urban areas rather than in rural areas.

Taken into consideration the low number of questionnaires, this evaluation Report cannot be taken as representative for the entire country of China, but it could provide a better understanding of the awareness, reactions and integration of the *BBC documentaries* content into personal narrative patterns.

One outstanding positive feedback in nearly all the evaluation sheets was on the use of personal stories to present the problems and their conditions and consequences. This narrative method was recognized and assessed as very suitable in order to present critical- and urgent issue of our times. Mostly, the film "*Killing Poverty*" was source of reference. At the other hand quite a few voices demanded the integration of the various specific problems within a broader context or bordering framework - especially a global one. Others also highlighted that the films could further benefit from making cross-links to other regions with similar or the same problematic issues.

Another section of the evaluation sheet consisted of a *Yes-No-Answers* cluster, which generated the following results: more than 75% of the audience was already aware of the issues being presented. 72% thought the information being provided is sufficient, while 28% demanded more and deeper information. Being asked if one would like to see more films like these 94% answered with yes. Except for the high percentage of people with previous knowledge, these numbers highly correlate with the findings of the First Evaluation Report.

Besides that, another similar observation could be made in relationship to the First Evaluation Report, namely that topics and geographical regions are one determiner, if people are able to relate the film to their personal lives or not. Therefore great differences within the answers could be found. "*Roman Right*" for example, a film on discrimination and integration of a small quasi-mobile minority within Europe could not establish many direct links to a broad Chinese audience. At the other hand, energy efficiency, migration and urban planning, with an example from Ulan Bator, could create links to nearly all of the audience's experiences.

By having a closer focus on three specific films and their results, it is interesting to mention that "*Warming up in Mongolia*" often was characterized by the adjective "*authentic*". It can be assumed, that the geographical closeness and the urban environment triggered a high degree of identification within the audience. Since most of them grew up in the city of Beijing or in the nearby provinces. Some people especially liked the fact that the film point towards solutions, even though it did not explicitly portray them. The harsh contrast between the semi- pristine ecosystem in the countryside and difficult housing conditions together with destructive industrialization in the capital was another aspect that stroke many people.

The second film, "*Killing Poverty*", also received high notes in terms of showing realistic dimensions. One attendant answered that the documentary "realistically reflected on the problems within society and the government." The film had also the ability to create an immediate understanding about how two social constrains are deeply interwoven with each other. "Corruption and poverty are twins. They go hand in hand." Or "Poverty starts with corruption. Quite true." Another distinguishing positive aspect - as stated above - was the fact that large parts of the plot structure were carried by the story of a single family.

The third and final film called "*Roman Rights*", could indicate how the awareness of social problems is closely linked to the own socialization context and environment. "Some things are unfamiliar/strange to me due to a lack of understanding of the Roma people's problems. / Before, I did not know about the living conditions of this people./ Made me see and understand a problem which I did not see before." But at the same time this film could also give proof that the problem of segregation and discrimination in Europe can easily be converted by the medium of film to people outside of Europe and trigger a process of linking these topics to a own immediate environment. "I liked that this topic is also relevant to nearly all groups in China that are excluded from mainstream society." Or "The film of the Roma people is quite something new to the current situation in China."

In relationship on how the films could be improved a great majority of the answers pointed towards the audio-tracks and their clarity, as well as technical- and aesthetical aspects by the use of subtitles. "Emotions are better transmitted through subtitles rather than dubbing" one stated. At the other hand, most suggestions towards an improvement of structure and content asked for the presentation of solutions at the end of the films. "I would have liked to

see some of the solutions and see how it would influence peoples lives.” Or “It left me wondering, what exactly can be done.”

At this point, one has to critically question, if this demand for solutions derives from the common *Hollywooden-Happy-End* plot structure, which provides a satisfiable feeling for the audience at the end. One hypothesis could be, that especially the exception of a tailor-sized solution at the end raises the quality of the *BBC Life Series* in order to create an awkward awareness of the problems, which ultimately brings people to (re)act or to create a further demand for information on environmental-, sustainable development- and public health issues.

Finally the evaluation sheet ended with the question “*which topics would you be most interested in to see on film?*” The following answers were the five most stated ones:

Water, Pollution, Solutions, Woman Issues and Protection Methods

Several answers also stated that it would be interesting to highlight the same social problem in various countries and different film. This way a multi-perspective approach could be created. In relationship to “Killing Poverty”, for example, one girl answered that she would like to “see a comparison between Kenya and it’s other East African neighbors.” Emphasis on solutions and protection methods surfaced many times in relationship with environmental issues and natural disaster. This fact was often pointed out by referring to one of the most destructive natural disasters in the recent history of China – the Sichuan Earthquake.

It seems that close links between the present condition of China, with all it’s major achievements and transitions within the three decades behind, but also with its huge environmental-, health- and social challenges ahead, makes it more urgent than ever to continue and to increase the meaningful and important contribution these BBC documentaries can make to the public awareness. This is something both Evaluation Reports clearly found out. And the effect on peoples thinking cannot be denied. Even though documentaries do not have the potential to form an opinion - they can introduce critical issues into a public discourse, which is carried by the awareness of single people.

What is your first impression after seeing the film? [Warming up in Mongolia] Just write down your spontaneous thoughts:” Me understanding the environmental situation a little better. Learning about environmental problems that affect me.”

Annendix III:

Zur Anzeige wird der QuickTime™
Dekompressor „TIFF (Unkomprimiert)“
benötigt.

BBC LIFE Series



Zur Anzeige wird der QuickTime™
Dekompressor „TIFF (Unkomprimiert)“
benötigt.



Evaluation sheet on the Film Screening organized by the Environmental Media Project EEMP at the WWF-Office in Beijing at the 08.07.2008

Thanks a lot for your participating, personal opinion and time. We highly value all of that. The following short questionnaire will only take a few minutes to fill out. Please address the questions to each individual film right after each screening. Below you will find an additional section that will ask seven questions on you, the viewer, as a person. All data are anonymous and will help to improve the films and to find out more about new topics the public is interested in.

Viewer Data:

1. Age:
2. Sex: Female Male
3. Education Background: Middle School High School University
4. Profession:
5. Hometown and Province:
6. Form of household (e.g.: single/family):
7. Grown up in a: rural area urban area

Film No. 1: Warming Up in Mongolia

1.) What is your first impression after seeing the film? Just write down your spontaneous thoughts.

2.) What especially did you like about the film?

3.) What didn't you like about the film?

4.) Did you already know about the presented issue? yes no

5.) Has watching this film changed your attitude towards this issue? yes no

6.) Was the amount of information provided sufficient? yes no

7.) Is the film's content relevant to your life? yes no

8.) Would you like to see more films like that? yes no

9.) What do you think can be improved about the film?

10.) Which topics would you be most interested in to see on film? Name at least three.

1.) What is your first impression after seeing the film? Just write down your spontaneous thoughts.

2.) What did you especially like about the film?

3.) What didn't you like about film?

4.) Did you already know about the presented issue? yes no

5.) Has watching this film changed your attitude towards this issue? yes no

6.) Was the amount of information provided sufficient? yes no

7.) Is the films content relevant to your life? yes no

8.) Would you like to see more films like that? yes no

9.) What could you improved in the film you just saw?

10.) Which topics would you be most interested in to see on film? Name at least three.

1.) What is your first impression after seeing the film? Just write down your spontaneous thoughts.

2.) What did you especially like about the film?

3.) What didn't you like about the film?

4.) Did you already know about the presented issue? yes no

5.) Has watching this film changed your attitude towards this issue? yes no

6.) Was the amount of information provided sufficient? yes no

7.) Is the film's content relevant to your life? yes no

8.) Would you like to see more films like that? yes no

9.) What do you think can be improved about the film?

10.) Which topics would you be most interested in to see on film? Name at least three.

Many Thanks once again for your time and personal opinion !!!