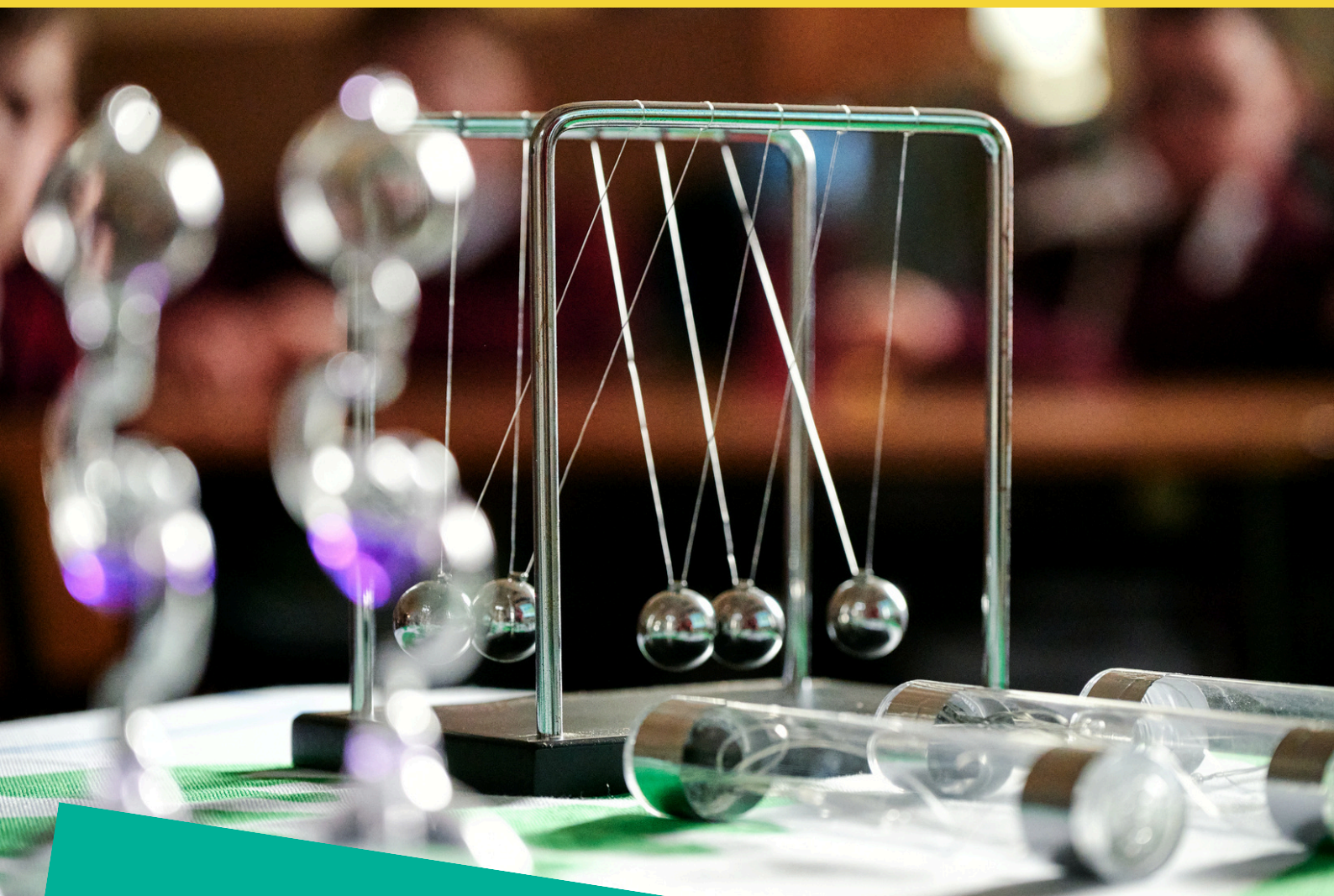


**Green-Schools  
Energy**

**EirGrid**



# ENERGY ACTIONS

**Strategies for energizing & impactful ideas  
that engage the entire school community**

# Introduction

Coordinators often ask us,

**“What should we do next?”**

You might be just starting out or already working with your Green-Schools Committee. Wherever you are along the 7 Steps, the steps give a clear structure to guide your work. Start by reviewing the 7 Steps to make sure you are covering all parts of the programme. Most steps are led by the Green-Schools Committee, but the programme really comes to life when more people get involved.

**Step 6: Informing and Involving is the most important (and often the most rewarding) step.** It’s about getting students, teachers, school staff, and where possible the wider community, engaged with the Energy theme. We recommend involving people as early as possible (**section 1**), planning actions around your local assets (**section 2**). Still needing inspiration? Jump to **section 3**!

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Action! Idea! Inspiration!



# Getting More People Involved



**Key idea:** When planning actions, design them with the people you want to reach in mind.

Green-Schools Committees often include students who already care about the environment and that's great. But real impact happens when **more people are brought along.**

To do this, think about what others are already interested in: sports, music, technology, competitions, creativity... Design activities that connect to those interests first, and environmental action second.

For example, some schools will take energy meter readings in the lead up to school sports days. They will take a reading on the day of the event, showing the impact of your sports day through comparison, for many school sports days are held off site and are big events. By adding a poster campaign or announcements in the lead up, committees help keep all informed. Saving Energy will not feel like a punishment—it's part of school fun and achievable.



## Tools to Help:

when coming up with your actions and ideas these tools can help - (especially for secondary schools)

- **Persona worksheet:** helps students understand their peers better
- **A–Z brainstorming sheet:** useful for generating ideas after students have reflected on others' needs and interests
- **Idea Development Activity:** produces a fully developed action idea by having students build on and adapt ideas from their peers

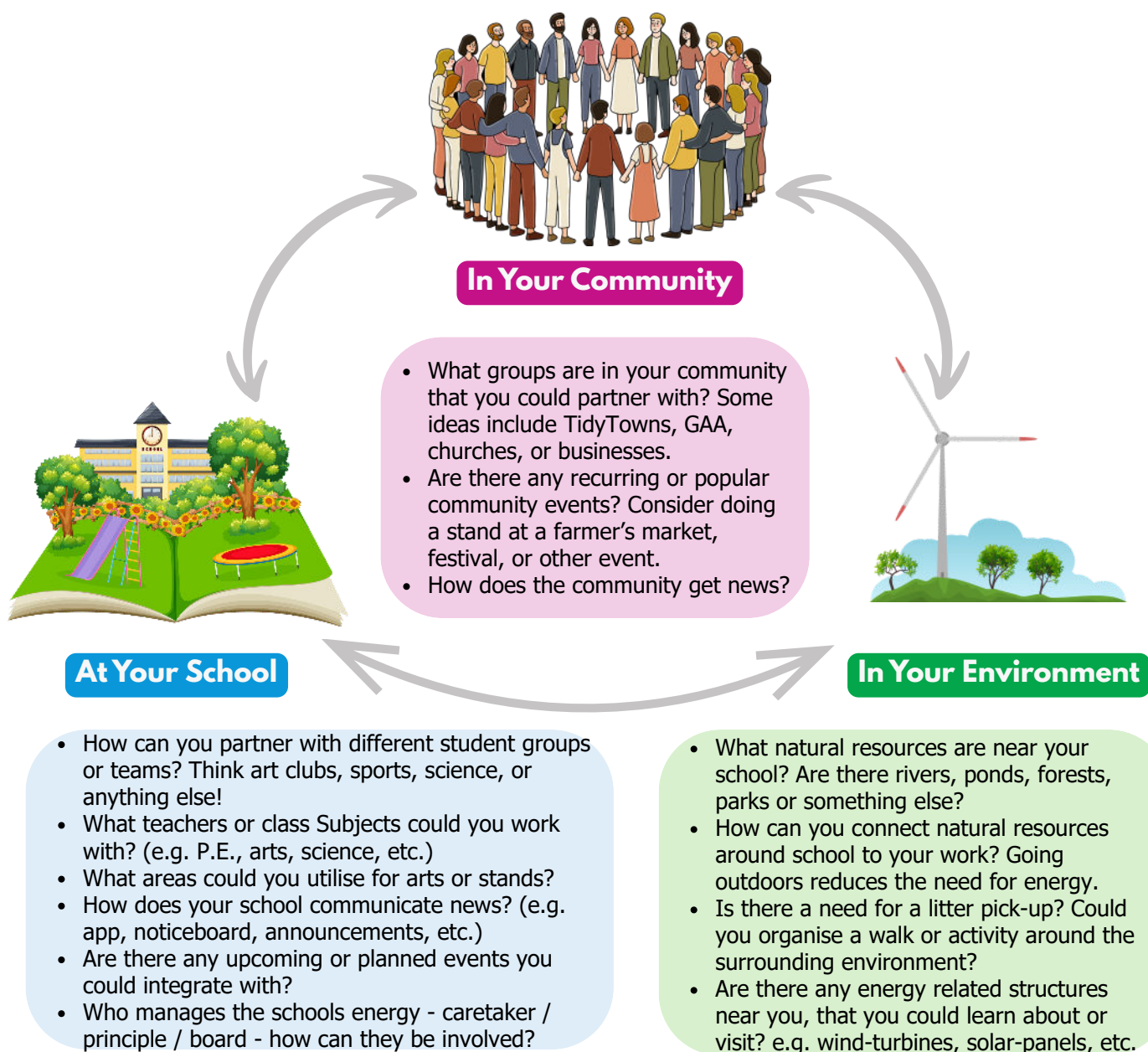
# 2

## Action Planning Around Local Assets



**Key idea:** Local assets are important because using what is already around you helps you plan actions that make sense for your school and are more likely to work.

This section shares a **simple method** to help you plan actions that suit your school. Think about the **human and natural assets** you already have: people, spaces and resources you can build on.



# 3

## Action! Idea! Inspiration!



**Key idea:** This section offers a range of practical action ideas to spark your inspiration and help you turn what you've learned into meaningful, real-world action.

Check out some action ideas in the following categories:

**Arts, Creative & Media Activities**

**Science, Experiments & Investigations**

**Outdoor, Nature & Place-Based Activities**

**Whole-School Events & Competitions**

**Communications & Outreach Activities**

# Action Ideas:

## Arts, Creative & Media Activities



### Performing Arts

- **Song/rap:** Create a song or rap and teach it to the school
- **Musical/play:** Create/Identify a play, musical or drama piece with a water theme.

### Film & Video Projects

- **Videos:** Create short awareness videos (e.g. Meter Reading, Solar Panels reading, Switch Off Campaign, fast fashion and energy, etc.) Show in class or on social media
- **Stop-motion animations:** Use paper, clay or photos to create a stop-motion animation
- **Documentary showing:** Show a film in class, have an assembly for the whole school, or even invite parents and community members to attend! [Check out our recommended documentaries here.](#)

### Visual Arts

- **Poster exhibition:** Design posters promoting Energy Savings, or switch off campaigns and display them around the school (you can link with Art, Science or Geography classes).
- **Mural:** Design and paint a mural with an Energy / Green Schools theme
- **Photobooth:** Set up a themed photo booth for events or awareness weeks. Use sustainable materials!

### Other Creative Activities

- **Energy mascot:** Imagine a character to embody Energy saving efforts at your school. Give them a name, personality, and emotions. Draw your mascot, create it with sustainable materials, or even dress them. Show and tell!
- **Literature:** Read/write stories or poems with an Energy theme in nature.
- **Podcast:** Record podcast episodes that highlight different energy topics. Invite guests like students, teachers, or community members to join episodes.

# Action Ideas: Science, Experiments & Investigations



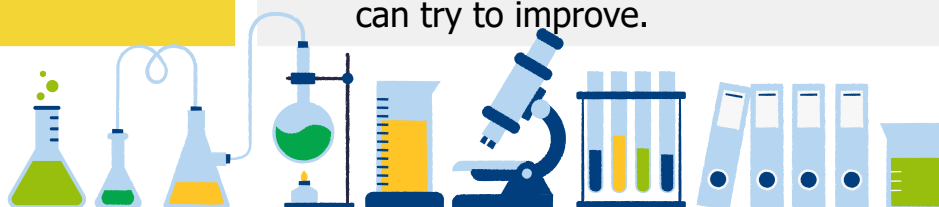
## Experiments

Links underlined in the text.

- **Static Jump:** Learn about static electricity and make your own static jump experiment.
- **Build you own Lego Balloon powered car:** Design, build and race your own balloon powered Lego cars or elastic powered cars.
- **Make an Energy Pledge Light Bulb:** Why not make personal energy pledges and display them in the school for all to see, you can make a colourful display like party bunting. Conas Bolgán solais a chruthú Féile Fuinnimh
- **Book SEAI workshops for your school:** SEAI offer free in-person workshops in the school for all ages (Book Here).
- There are many more energy experiments you can learn about by coming along to one of our regional workshops.

## Energy Investigations

- **Standby/ Vampire Hunt:** One way to save energy and learn what's using all your power is to carry out an energy vampire hunt or a standby hunt. Electronic devices can use 10-30% while on standby. Primary resource / Secondary resource.
- **Thermostat / Heating Survey:** Heating is responsible for 60-70% of your school energy use. Why not carry out a check on room temperature, and heating saving activities.
- **Lighting Survey:** Investigating lighting in the school starts with a survey of where lights are positioned and can bulbs be more efficient. Running a switch off campaign can save up to 10% on your bills.
- **Meter Reading:** Reading meters directly or via bills is an essential action for your school. It helps establish a baseline from which you can try to improve.



*Action Ideas:*

# Outdoor, Nature & Place-Based Activities

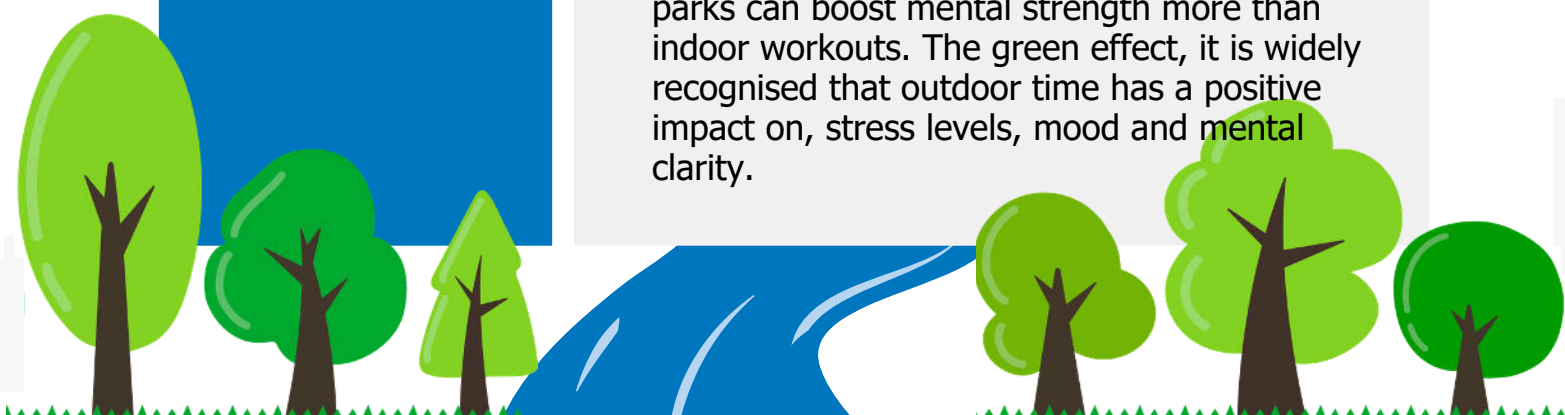


## Turn Off and Tune In to Nature

Connecting children to nature through the concept of **Energy** can bridge the gap between scientific theory and the real tangible world. Energy is everywhere, and we can use the outdoors to explore different types of energy involved in solar, wind, water, food chains and even physical movement. There are many hands-on experiments that let children observe natural forces being converted into working energy. See examples below.

## Lessons from the Outdoors

- **Solar Ice Race:** Place one ice cube in direct sunlight and another in dense shade. Have children time how fast the sun's thermal energy melts the ice.
- **Stick & Leaf Wind Vanes:** Push a large stick into the mud. Have kids tie long blades of grass or light leaves to the top to see which direction the kinetic energy of the wind is moving.
- **Pebble Splash Waves:** Find a calm pond or puddle and toss stones of different sizes into the water. Observe how the kinetic energy transfers into ripples and waves.
- **Sun-Catcher Scavenger Hunt:** Give kids a magnifying glass or just use their eyes to find "nature's solar panels" (broad green leaves). Discuss how plants use photosynthesis to turn light into food.
- **Green Exercise:** Jogging or cycling in local parks can boost mental strength more than indoor workouts. The green effect, it is widely recognised that outdoor time has a positive impact on, stress levels, mood and mental clarity.



# Action Ideas:

# Whole-School Events & Competitions



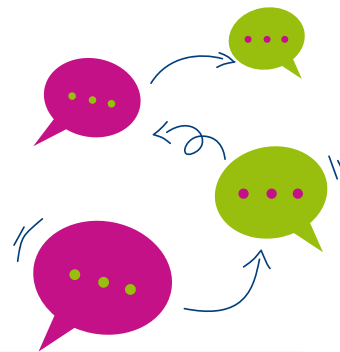
## Events

- **Themed days:** Organise a themed day with dress-up, activities or something else (e.g. Energy-themed fancy dress or “Zero Power Day”).
- **Themed weeks:** Plan a week of themed activities (e.g. Festival of Energy, Climate Action Week, Environment Week).
- **Swap shops:** Organise a swap shop for students to swap clothes they don’t wear. Have a generic swap shop or pick a theme (e.g., uniforms, school dances, Christmas). [Learn how to host your own swap shop here.](#)
- **Physical activities:** Get moving! Plan a low-energy day around school events like sports days. On days that school activities take place outside we use less energy (remember to take their impact by recording meter readings)
- **Action Day:** Organise games, stalls, experiments, bake sales, litter pick-ups or other activities. Bonus points for involving nature and community members!
- **Awareness activities:** Host activities like experiments, talks or art projects during breaks, during class or after school.

## Competitions

- **Poster and video competitions:** Participate in a Green-Schools competition such as TLDR Global Goals Bookless Club, or organise your own. Create your own Energy saving posters and energy campaigns.
- **Try out Photography Orienteering in the school:** Learn about the different types of energy, then challenge students to take energy-themed photos to show off all of the submissions in a competition.
- **Story writing or creative writing challenges:** Let students be creative and have students submit writing pieces. This is a good way to create your Green Schools Code.

# Action Ideas: Communications & Outreach Activities



## Social Media

- **Content creation:** Create social media content, such as videos. Feature the local environment and tag community groups.
- **Social media campaign:** Choose a message for a social media campaign. Create content, choose a hashtag, post polls on your story and ask students to post photos of their own.
- **Create your own social media page:** Create an account or page for your Green-Schools Committee. Share upcoming opportunities, photos and fast facts.
- **Create a hashtag:** Brainstorm a hashtag to include in all of your posts.

## Wider Community Involvement

- **Guest speakers:** Invite guest speakers (e.g. parents, grandparents, Tidy Towns, local Energy offices like EirGrid, Codema, SEAI, Wind Energy Ireland, etc.)
- **Newspaper feature:** Ask a local newspaper to feature your work or promote a message.
- **Posters:** Ask your local GAA club, businesses, or community centres to showcase posters!

## Peer Education

- **Energy Warden:** Give students roles in classrooms to monitor or switch off campaign's lights, devices, etc.
- **Classroom visits:** Have committee members share announcements or lead presentations.
- **Learning pop-up:** Host a pop-up at school breaks or community events. Include mini quizzes, games, posters, or experiments.

## Awareness Campaigns



### Planning a campaign?

Try to use multiple ideas from this page!  
[Check out this resource](#) to get started.

- **Energy at Home:** Create awareness about what energy savings can be made at home and share it.
- **Switch Off Campaign:** Design and create a Switch Off reminders for class rooms. Focus on lights and stand-by devices.
- **Earth Hour:** is a worldwide event that asks participants to turn off non-essential electric lights for one hour on the last Saturday of March to show support for the planet.

# Appendix

# Energy-Themed Documentaries & Films



Host a documentary showing! Show a film in class, have an assembly for the whole school, or even invite parents and community members to attend! Check out the free documentaries below:

| Title                                                   | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>The Story Of Energy</u></b>                       | A short, animated film available via the <a href="#">SEAI Schools Programme</a> that introduces young learners to where energy comes from and how we use it. <a href="#">Available in Irish.</a>                                                                                                                |
| <b>Before the Flood - (Secondary Schools)</b>           | A National Geographic documentary following Leonardo DiCaprio across the globe examining climate change, fossil fuels, and the urgent need for renewable energy alternatives.                                                                                                                                   |
| <b><u>Tackling Climate Change</u></b>                   | Tackling Climate Change (Science Museum Group): A six-part short video series presented by young people exploring wind/tidal power, low-carbon tech, and sustainable futures.                                                                                                                                   |
| <b><u>Juice: How Electricity Explains The World</u></b> | Over a three year period, this film crew travelled 60,000 miles to interview 40 people from seven countries on five continents to tell the human story of electricity and explain why power equals power. Available to Stream On Prime.                                                                         |
| <b><u>The 4th Revolution: Energy Autonomy</u></b>       | The 2010 documentary The 4th Revolution: Energy Autonomy directed by Carl-A. Fechner. The film details a global transition to 100% renewable energy through profiles of activists, business innovators, and global leaders. Available to stream on-demand (paid) via the <a href="#">Vimeo On Demand Page</a> . |