



Fall Newsletter 2004

using the power of film to promote health, strengthen communities and enrich the lives of the world's vulnerable and uprooted

Welcome

This year has been a particularly exciting one for FilmAid. We now operate in four East African refugee camps thanks to a team of over 60 refugee and local staff, and we have just begun working with the Somali Muslim refugee community in Dadaab, Kenya. Since January hundreds of thousands of people have gathered to watch FilmAid screenings; in Nduta camp in Tanzania the film *Everyone's Child*, focusing on African children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, saw a record turnout for the year of 26,786 people.

In August Program Director Natalia Tapies established a FilmAid office in Nairobi, from which to direct the East African programs. As Nairobi is the hub of relief work activity for the region, an increased presence there is a positive development for FilmAid. We are also happy to announce new partnerships with Church World Service (CWS) in Kakuma and Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service/Lutheran World Federation (TCRS/ LWF) in Tanzania, and would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their wonderful support.



FILMAID
Aspiring Filmmaker,
Kakuma, Kenya.

In less than five years FilmAid has enjoyed tremendous growth, the success of the programs far surpassing anything we initially envisioned. Another milestone was reached in May when, having completed the transition from the International Rescue Committee (IRC), FilmAid officially established as an independent organization. We continue to collaborate with IRC programs in the field; their ongoing support remains the cornerstone of FilmAid's achievements to date.

In the New York headquarters our new Executive Director, Elizabeth Silkes, formerly the Director of Major Gifts at Amnesty International USA, joined us in June. She brings with her a wealth of experience and we are delighted to have her leadership at FilmAid as we move into this exciting new era!

As we are a dynamic, growing organization, your continued involvement and support is crucial to helping us reach thousands of the world's most vulnerable and uprooted with the educational and inspirational power of film.

Stories from the Field

FILMAID CHANGING LIVES

Emmanuel Mabe, a Sudanese refugee, lost both parents before he was fourteen. Now twenty-two, he says "*The story of my struggle is long but it ended in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya*". He joined the FilmAid team going out presenting films "*to people who really needed them...it was one of my best decisions in life*". Thanks to the World University Service Canada refugee sponsorship program, Emmanuel recently resettled in Toronto where, inspired by his work with FilmAid, he has chosen to study film. His spare time is spent recording and producing hip-hop albums.

"... a word for those helping FilmAid achieve its goals. You have no idea how you have changed the life of a refugee who had been deprived of television and the knowledge it brings... I'd like to solicit your support in helping me tell my brothers and sisters in Africa that there is more to life than the killing game..." Emmanuel Mabe, Toronto, 2004.

Stories from the Field

LETTER FROM THE FIELD - Program Officer's Report from Melissa Brough

In August I visited FilmAid's offices in Nairobi and Kakuma, Kenya and Kibondo, Tanzania, to witness the day-to-day operations of our programs and assess how the headquarters in New York can best support FilmAid's field work. In the hope of sharing an unforgettable experience, some impressions from my first FilmAid screening follow.

Kibondo, Tanzania - August 22: Kibondo is a base for the NGOs operating in five refugee camps along the border of Burundi. There is a gravel airstrip, generator-run electricity and dirt roads. Kibondo has a local Tanzanian population of 15,000. Natalia Tapies and I met the core FilmAid staff in Kibondo and we drove the bumpy and dusty 40 minutes to Nduta refugee camp where, on arrival, we began preparations for the evening screening.

Two cargo containers were stacked at the end of a large dirt field, tinted orange by the dust. Roisin Gallagher, our Kibondo Program Manager, assured me that we would all be that color by the time we left the next day. The screening was eagerly anticipated by refugees throughout the camp. I noticed small piles of handmade bricks laid in a half circle near the containers - the children of Nduta camp had been saving their front row seats all afternoon!

As the sun began to set our refugee and local staff flew into action and within minutes the screen was unraveled and anchored to the containers. With the generator and speaker system up and running, music began and the children started dancing. By nightfall a crowd of 22,000 men, women and children of all ages had gathered. The intense focus of so many thousands of people on one movie screen in rural Africa was a breathtaking illustration of the power of cinema.

The welcome FilmAid enjoys from the refugees made me realize that their night at the movies - one of the only positive diversions in a what is often a particularly bleak existence - is that much more exciting, that much more anticipated, and holds that much more potential to inform and inspire than I had ever imagined possible.

The show began with *Tom and Jerry* and waves of laughter rose into the night sky. ' *Metamo* ' followed, the story of a young Kenyan woman who becomes pregnant but overcomes alienation from her family to become a judge. As the screening ended the crowd of thousands dispersed into the night almost without a sound. After breaking down the equipment, the Kibondo staff and I headed to the IRC compound in the camp. In the morning we rose early, brushed some of the dust off, had tea and chapattis, and moved on to set up the daytime screening.

A week and several screenings later I left for Kenya, inspired by the difference FilmAid's programs are making in the lives of thousands who are otherwise isolated and often forgotten.



ROISIN GALLAGHER

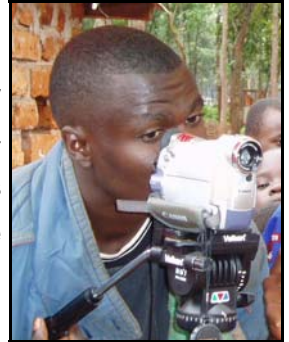
Setting up for the evening screening. Kibondo, Tanzania.

East Africa: Highlights

NEW PROGRAM NOTES

Collaboration with the World Food Program (WFP): FilmAid recently launched an initiative with the WFP to produce a video about HIV/AIDS in the Dadaab camps in Eastern Kenya.

Program Director Natalia Tapias conceptualized and implemented the project: a community based video on the threat of HIV/AIDS, made specifically by and for the Somali Muslim community living in Dadaab. While video has been used as an educational tool in these camps before, success has been limited as the population there has been reluctant to acknowledge the threat of HIV/AIDS. The hope was that FilmAid's innovative, community-based approach would prove more successful than previous efforts. FilmAid worked with refugee and religious leaders, teachers, community health workers, and youth groups to produce a unique video that met the need for locally relevant, culturally sensitive information on the risks of the disease. We are proud to say the community has fully embraced it. FilmAid is thrilled to be involved in this challenging project and hopes to develop similar projects in the future.



R. GALLAGHER
Refugees in Kibondo
get behind the camera.

Helping to end sexual exploitation and abuse: In December FilmAid will start a new project in Kenya, in collaboration with the IRC, CARE and UNHCR, to develop educational materials designed to help reduce the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse of refugees. FilmAid will create and screen videos designed to prevent abuse and inform refugees of their rights. The program will reach all refugee populations in Kenya, including urban refugees in Nairobi.

Participatory Video Project (PVP): This past winter, FilmAid's Kakuma PVP Club took part in a six week visual workshop that culminated in a powerful exhibit called "Refugee Voices from Kakuma" held at the French Cultural Center in Nairobi. A team of twelve refugee youth and three FilmAid refugee staff explored creative expression through photography and video during the workshop led by the Brazilian multimedia artist Marie Ange Bordas. They produced a visually stunning, honest portrayal of life in Kakuma camp from their unique personal experience.



R. GALLAGHER
FilmAid staff member Ken Bayona
teaches basic camera skills.
Tanzania.

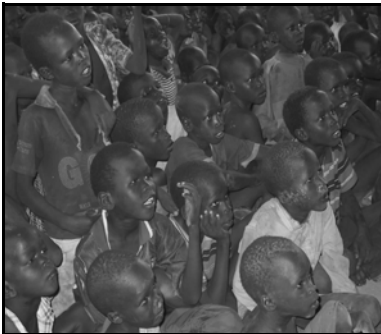
In Tanzania, twelve refugee youth were selected from the twenty-four invited to participate in a video training selection day as part of the PVP in Nduta. They worked together to create five-minute videos on topics they selected. One film focused on an HIV positive woman getting married, and another on marital discord. The enthusiastic new film makers are eager to continue developing their skills and FilmAid looks forward to providing the resources for them to do so.

Special Screenings

The Constant Gardener, a film directed by Fernando Meireilles (*City of God*) and starring Rachel Weisz and Ralph Fiennes, was shot recently in Loiyangalani, amongst other locations in Kenya. FilmAid, in collaboration with the cast and crew, held a special screening for the local community of Turkanas and El Molo in Loiyangalani, including raw footage from *The Constant Gardener* and the film *Yellow Card*. It was a wonderful occasion for everyone; children danced for hours before the screening and at the party afterwards, two thousand Kenyans from the local community celebrated late into the night with Ralph Fiennes and others from the cast and crew.



NATALIA TAPIES
Evening screening, Kakuma, Kenya.



MELISSA BROUGH
Sesame Street screening for
Sudanese children.

The possibility of an exciting collaboration with Sesame Workshop prompted our Kakuma staff to hold a special screening of an episode from Sesame's South African series, which addresses the stigmatization of HIV/AIDS patients and features an appearance by Kofi Annan. Over 400 Sudanese refugee children packed the room. As the Sesame Street characters appeared on screen, murmurs of curiosity and laughter filled the room. Based on the success of this pilot FilmAid hopes to bring more programming from Sesame Workshop's African series to East Africa in the near future.



R. GALLAGHER
Mtendeli Hospital, Tanzania.
Daytime screenings are drawing

FilmAid saw consistently larger turnouts in Kibondo town this year; evening screenings of *Yellow Card* and the cartoons *Crack Ups*, *Taswira za Ukimwi* were so popular that the District Executive Director of Kibondo noted that more people came to the FilmAid screening than to the Tanzanian Vice President's recent visit!

*"Your screenings have penetrative powers,
I have no words to express how I was affected by last night's show.
You need to increase the frequency of the screenings."*

Muhktar from Somali Community - special screening for the Positive Lives Exhibition on HIV/AIDS.



Headquarters

2004 brought noteworthy recognition for FilmAid's work when Caroline Baron was named this year's recipient of the 12th Annual *Montblanc de la Culture Award*. Montblanc created this award to support worldwide arts patronage. Caroline was honored with 15,000 Euros toward FilmAid's programs. Previous winners include Tony Randall, Susan Sontag and Russell Simmons.



FILMAID
Julia Ormond and Richard Gere
at a FilmAid event

FilmAid's Founding Co-Chair, Julia Ormond, secured a capacity-building grant for the organization from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Thanks to this special grant, FilmAid was able to hire our new Executive Director, Elizabeth Silkes.

Press

FilmAid has been featured in a diverse range of publications over the past months. *Vanity Fair* recognized Caroline Baron for her work with FilmAid in their July issue's, Hall of Fame. In October she appeared in the *New York Daily News*, *Film Journal International* and was voted *The New York City Mayor's Office of Film, Theatre & Broadcasting* "Industry Star of the Month".



MICHAEL QUINN
Caroline Baron - In front of the camera

Ms. Baron also appeared on the CNN program "*Inside Africa*" discussing the impact of FilmAid's work and the growing need for such programs in the daily lives of refugees. The BBC radio show "*The World*" broadcast a story on FilmAid International's impact in the Kakuma Camp. "*The World*" is produced by Public Radio International and WGBH, and has an audience of sixteen million listeners.

Julia Ormond spoke about an "Integral approach" to humanitarian aid work with Ken Wilber last month, on the online discussion forum *Integral Naked*. The interview focused on the importance of taking into account social, cultural, and personal realities in addition to understanding the unique needs of each community. The thirty minute transmission can be downloaded from the FilmAid website by clicking on the *Integral Naked* link under "FilmAid in the Press".

Footage of FilmAid's work is featured on the recently released '*World On Fire*' music video. The video by internationally renowned artist Sarah MacLachlan has received worldwide acclaim and can be viewed online via our website or at www.worldonfire.ca. A big thank you to FilmAid's Mary Soan who filmed and supplied the footage featured. FilmAid received a donation from Ms. MacLachlan for our assistance with the project.



FILMAID
FilmAid Staff in Tanzania.



Congratulations

A number of FilmAid refugee staff have recently been resettled or repatriated. We are happy to report that members of the FilmAid family are now in Southern Sudan, Burundi, Uganda, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and USA.

Good luck Patrick, David, Elijah, Emmanuel, Amal and Clement. We will miss you!

Get Involved

FilmAid International is invited each month by humanitarian professionals working in the field to set up new programs in countries whose populations are in desperate need.

To expand our programs and reach more people, we need your financial support. You can support our programs by donating online through our "How Can You Help?" link: www.filmaidinternational.org/help.htm or by mailing your donation to us at:

**FilmAid International, Suite 301,
215 W 125th Street, New York, NY, 10027**

For further information about making a gift to FilmAid please contact us at: **1.646.284.9696**
or email us at info@filmaidinternational.org.

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Some of FilmAid International's greatest supporters first heard about FilmAid from friends. If you know of anyone who may be interested in FilmAid's work please forward this newsletter to them.

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Please feel free to contact us with any additional questions or comments at: newsletter@filmaidinternational.org.

Thank you!



NATALIA TAPIES
Evening Screening in Kakuma, Kenya.



MICHAEL QUINN