

Moving Pictures

Film Distribution, Audience Development, and Social Impact of Independent African Films

Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda

Context

Independent films from African countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, and Rwanda hold a distinct transformative power. These films offer compelling narratives that not only reflect local realities but also challenge perspectives, address critical social issues, and amplify underrepresented voices. Through authentic storytelling, they bridge cultural gaps and contribute to global conversations on identity, heritage, and social change. Despite their impact, access to these films remains limited.

Kenyan films, for instance, are rarely screened in cinemas in Nigeria or Rwanda. In Germany, only two films from these three countries—*Rafiki* and *Neptune Frost*—have made it into the regular cinema release in the past five years. Yet, these films serve as vital platforms for marginalized voices, tackling themes ranging from social justice, historical legacies, and decolonization to unpaid care, surrogacy, and gender-based violence. They also explore universal themes such as love, grief, family dynamics, and comedy, offering both entertainment and fresh perspectives on the marvellous complexities of African societies. By showcasing diverse African cultures and languages these films contribute to a more nuanced global discourse. Expanding distribution within Africa and internationally is not just beneficial, it's essential.

Despite persistent distribution challenges, the film industries in Nigeria, Kenya, and Rwanda are experiencing growth, fueled in part by the rise of social impact producing and campaigning.

According to the Global Impact Producers Alliance (GIPA) social impact campaigns by filmmakers, *“are used to ensure that their film spurs change on an issue – where they are deliberate about who needs to see a film, what audiences need to do, and what partnerships, tools and resources are needed to reach the desired goals of the campaign.”*

Project Name	Moving Pictures: Africa's Emerging Film Industry as a Connecting Contributor to Global Sustainability Debates and Postcolonial Discourses
Project Countries	Kenya, Nigeria and Rwanda
Objective	To ensure that African narratives and postcolonial perspectives as well as decolonisation— especially on sustainability issues – are given a wider reach through better regional and international distribution of independent films from Kenya, Nigeria and Rwanda.
Target Group	Independent film producers, social impact producers, sales agents, film distributors, film aggregators, film exhibitors, film marketers, PR platforms
Implementation	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Duration	01.06.2024 – 30.11.2025

The Moving Pictures project will offer technical support to independent filmmakers in Nigeria, Kenya and Rwanda on audience development, distribution and social impact producing.

Expected Outcomes

- Independent film producers and social impact producers have a better information base on audience preferences and distribution models and make better distribution decisions on this basis.
- Independent film producers and social impact producers have better film distribution skills and networks.
- Selected social impact producing, and distribution use cases are widely exhibited in international film forums.



L. to r.: Awarded start-ups at the pitch event in Nairobi 2024. Kael Wafubwa (*Koeh*) and Lucarelli Onyango (*Sensei*) in Kenyan short film [Stero](#).



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Project Activities

● Market Analysis

Conducting a market analysis for audience development, distribution and social impact models for Kenyan, Nigerian and Rwandan films.

● Community Building & Networking

Creating a common knowledge base, identify current obstacles and new approaches and establish networks for future collaboration among practitioners from Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Germany.

● Study Tours & Residency

Organizing benchmarking tours on audience development, distribution, and social impact campaigning. For those aiming to establish careers in film distribution, the project partners with the international distributor Neue Visionen and its newly launched African-European Distribution Academy. Under this framework, it offers webinars and a residency in Berlin providing hands-on experience in distribution companies, tailor-made workshops, and networking opportunities at film festivals.

● Incubation and Start-up Support

The innovators in audience development, social impact and distribution who targeting to overcome challenges in their business segment through collective actions are invited to participate in an incubation lab, implemented by Some Fine Day Pix. In a match-making event the participants pitch their newly developed Start-up ideas to an international jury which will award grants to the winning teams.

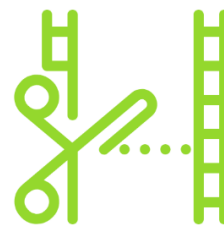
The overall coordination and steering of the project is managed in close cooperation with additional strategic partners from the film industry, civil society and government agencies, such as African Audiovisual and Cinema Commission or Canex Creation Ltd.

Our Impact in Figures



24

Film distribution professionals from Kenya, Rwanda, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Germany connected



9

Distribution start-ups incubated with regional approaches



5

Start-Ups awarded with EUR 80,000 as seed funding

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GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.



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