

# MOBILE FILM FESTIVAL IN MALAWI

## Background

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world ranking 160<sup>th</sup> out of 182 countries on the Human Development Index. The proportion of poor and ultra-poor is highest in rural areas, and 90% of the country live below the US\$2 a day threshold.

There are many factors that prevent people from escaping rural poverty. Key amongst these are frequent crop failures, often caused by adverse weather conditions which are now becoming even more uncertain and severe, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic which has affected 12% of the population and all too often results in the loss of members of the family responsible for generating income and/or growing food. As a result, poor households are frequently forced to adopt costly coping strategies such as withdrawing children from school and reducing food consumption.

In an effort to help ameliorate some of these problems, PFP has now made four films, produced in local languages and designed to address the most serious issues, provide information, and assist people in making changes that can improve the quality of their lives -

**Banthu Ngathi Isi (People Like Us)** – an educational documentary on HIV & AIDs

**Mawa Langa ( My Tomorrow)** - a drama to help young people protect themselves from AIDs

**Ulimi Mchuma Chathu (Farming Our Wealth)** - documentary offering sustainable farming techniques

**Mbeu Yosintha (Seeds of Change)** - drama introducing ideas for sustainable agriculture and protection of the environment.

If these films are to achieve their full potential it is crucial that they are seen by as many people in rural Malawi as possible. To achieve this, PFP plans to organise a

Mobile Film Festival and follow-up distribution programme in rural areas of the country in partnership with locally operating NGOs. By establishing working distribution partners, training up local distribution managers and distributing DVDs, PFP will also ensure the sustainability of the distribution programme, providing an opportunity for the films to have a lasting impact.

### **Objectives of this project**

- 1) To screen as many as possible of the four\* PFP Malawi films to a minimum total audience 7,000 people located in a number of different localities scattered down the length of Lake Malawi from north to south.
- 2) To also screen, as appropriate, "Kugawana", PFP's new digital magazine, thus increasing and broadening the information made available to local people
- 3) To distribute additional copies of films and the magazine on DVD and to develop a distribution network around Malawi to increase screening opportunities and ensure the future distribution of PFP films.
- 4) To train, and subsequently support, a local Malawian Distribution Manager and Assistant with a view to further ensuring sustainability of the project.

### **Method**

The project will be divided into two phases commencing August 2014 and lasting five and a half months in total -

- Phase 1 – a six week mobile film festival during which we hope to reach a total audience of 3,000 people
- Phase 2 – a four month further distribution programme

This document provides information on Phase 1 only

### **Team**

The PFP team will consist of –

- A Volunteer Film Festival UK Representative to go out to Malawi from the UK (Phase 1 only)
- Two Malawian distribution officers (paid) to train as Malawi Distribution Manager and Assistant (both phases)

- A part-time Festival Support officer (paid) located in the UK and already in post (Phase 1 only)

Overall responsibility for the project will rest with the PFP Overseas Director

During Phase 1, this team will be assisted by personnel from different partner NGOs in each of the different locations.

### **Equipment**

Both phases will employ PFP's new 'Backpack Cinema' comprising a compact folding pedal-powered generator with cable and speed connector to the Field Cinema, a single unit involving DVD player, sound box and projector. The whole kit weighs less than 18 kgs and is conveniently packed in two backpacks so that it can be easily conveyed over the roughest terrain by only two people. Moderate pedalling is all that is required, and operators can change over during a screening without interrupting the film. The whole system, being easily transportable and obviating the need for a diesel generator or electricity supply overcomes many of the obstacles in bringing film to the most remote areas of Malawi.

By the summer of 2014, it is hoped that PFP will have two complete kits, so that after the festival one can be available for use in the north of the country and one in the south.

### **PHASE 1 - THE MOBILE FILM FESTIVAL**

**Involvement of other NGOs** It is vital that, during this phase, PFP has the support of a number of grassroots organisations working on the ground in the communities we plan to visit. These partners will be asked to find and arrange locations for screenings, provide publicity, arrange transport for the team and help find accommodation. **In return, partners will have their logos, website links etc. promoted at our events, screenings and on all our publicity. So far, at least 12 NGOs have confirmed their wish to be involved in this way.**

### **Means of transport**

The main means of transport will be the ferry MV Ilala, which has plied [Lake](#)

[Malawi](#) since 1951. She is based in [Monkey Bay](#) (on the southern end of the lake). Every week she crosses the lake all the way north to [Chilumba](#), about 300 miles (480 km), then returns to Monkey Bay. She carries both passengers and freight and calls at major towns on both the Malawian and [Mozambican](#) coast. Land transport will also be employed for some journeys.

### **Itinerary**

The Mobile Film Festival itinerary has been planned according to the locations of participating NGO's and where they operate in relation to the ferry itinerary, plus information on how many screenings each NGO can arrange. The festival will commence with a major launch event accompanied by press and radio publicity etc in Mzuzu, the third largest city in Malawi and capital of the north. Later it will move to the Lake, and the team will embark on the *Ilala* at Nkhata Bay. It is essential that the schedule allows for flexibility, and that the team are ready, and able, to adapt to changes.

### **Ensuring the effectiveness of screenings**

Partner organisations will be asked to publicise all screenings in advance in the best possible way in order to draw large audiences. Partners and PFP teams will work together to ensure the most effective presentation of each film and to facilitate subsequent discussion amongst the audience. The audience will be given every opportunity to discuss and debate the issues involved, to ask questions surrounding each subject, and to find out how they can get help in applying the messages received.

### **Sustainability**

At all locations, the PFP team will work to develop good relations and build on the partnership with NGOs and communities involved in order to ensure the development of a distribution network for the future. DVDs will also be distributed wherever organisations or individuals feel that they can use them effectively.

The Festival Manager will be responsible for ensuring that the festival provides the two local distribution officers with a thorough training in both the operation of

the kit, the presentation of the films and the facilitating of subsequent discussion amongst the audience.

### **Feedback & Reporting**

Throughout the festival, the Volunteer Film Festival Manager will be responsible for collecting data on screenings and feedback received, and for making a visual record. Wherever possible, s/he will send reports to PFP via the internet and post feedback on the social media for the interest of supporters and donors. On return to the UK, s/he will be responsible for collating and presenting a full report.