Media Interventions and the Syrian Crisis: Can We Do More?

Presented by:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Media Interventions and the Syrian Crisis: Can We Do More?* seeks to create a deeper understanding of the role of media interventions as strategic drivers of impact on the ongoing Syrian crisis.

In exploring the impact of media interventions in this context, we conducted a landscape scan and a review of programs and approaches conducted by FilmAid, the nonprofit organization that collaborated with us on this paper.

The landscape scan indicates the prevalence of awareness raising activities, with an emphasis on the goal of sustaining or increasing funding. The landscape of projects on Syria is not particularly diverse. Our analysis indicated first, a need for increased transparency in funding and program evaluation, and second, that there is a gap and opportunity in the field for community-centered and impact-driven communications.

We analyzed FilmAid’s programs in Kenya and Jordan to understand how entities in the landscape might fill the market gap on community-led narrative. FilmAid’s work in Kenya is ongoing and the organization’s participatory approach has allowed the organization to build a profile as a trusted organization. By engaging the population in media creation in combination with strong media and audience-focused expertise, FilmAid has been able to increase knowledge on topics such as health, education, gender and cash-transfers.

Based on interviewee insights on the use of strategic narrative interventions in conflict and crisis situations, particularly in long-term displacements and effective community- and impact-driven media interventions such as those in Kenya, we drew out guidance on what media interventions can offer to Syrian refugees as the crisis deepens and becomes a protracted complex emergency.
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INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to create a deeper understanding of the role of media interventions as strategic drivers of impact on the ongoing Syrian crisis.

By examining the larger role of media and its impact, we have sought to explore the advocacy basis for the use of strategic narrative interventions towards conflict and crisis, and particularly to examine the role of media in long-term displacements.

In this context we have proceeded with and have attempted to flesh out the following premises:

- The Syrian crisis has become a long-term, chronic displacement;
- Development actors, humanitarian actors, and those working with media and narrative interventions should all be on the ground at the same time in the course of addressing a crisis for most effective response;
- Media interventions that are community- and impact-driven are often more effective than those that are communications-driven or aimed at “raising awareness” only.

Our Purpose

Through this report, we hope to further address paths forward for multiple actors -- including private sector and corporate media enterprises, and large-scale humanitarian organizations -- working to serve the needs of Syrian refugees in Jordan and beyond through the use of media.

Our Methodology

We conducted our Landscape Scan and Program Review via a combination of desk research, interviews with key stakeholders and program staff at relevant NGOs as well as FilmAid program staff, and the application of the Communications for Development evaluation framework.

We first researched a sampling of media projects launched since the beginning of the Syrian crisis to build an understanding of the landscape. We did this through desk research and informal interviews with key communications and program professionals.

We then examined the work of FilmAid and its program design model in the context of this landscape, reviewing at its community-driven engagement and community-led advocacy. In our analysis, we developed an interview rubric and drew together insights from 16 key interviews and a review of existing documentation on FilmAid programs in Kenya and Jordan.
LANDSCAPE SCAN SUMMARY

This section of the report presents the context of the Syrian crisis, followed by a survey of the media and funding landscape, and FilmAid’s place within that landscape as a potential model for media interventions.

In doing this survey, we have come to see where there are opportunities and highlight where there are gaps. In particular:

- The appetite for prominent communications activities revolves around awareness of the conflict to a broader public and fundraising for humanitarian assistance.
- The landscape of communications activities as relates to Syria is not particularly diverse. The sample of projects analyzed indicates the prevalence of awareness raising activities, with an emphasis on the goal of sustaining or increasing funding.
- There is a need for increased transparency in funding and program evaluation.
- There is a gap and opportunity in the field for community-centered and impact-driven communications.
- FilmAid is one of the relatively few entities in the landscape that fills the market gap on community-led narrative.
What started as peaceful pro-democracy protests in March 2011 slowly unfurled into a conflict that is nearly into its eighth year. The statistics for the Syrian conflict are shocking and often uncertain, speaking to the chaos and carnage that has marked every year since its onset.

It is estimated that over 470,000 Syrians have been killed in the conflict since March 2011. The United Nations estimates that approximately 6.3 million Syrians are displaced within their own country, often many times over. Approximately half of the 22 million pre-war population is in need of dire humanitarian assistance, be that through aid inside Syria or assistance to Syrian refugees in the Middle East and beyond.

Approximately 5 million Syrians are currently refugees, most of whom are living in the countries nearest to the conflict: Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. One of Jordan’s camps for Syrians, Zaatari, now has over 80,000 residents – making it Jordan’s 4th largest city. Approximately one in four people in Lebanon now is Syrian.

Syrians were initially hesitant to leave their country. In July 2012, there were 100,000 refugees but a year later the United Nations had 1.5 million registered Syrian refugees. That figure tripled by the end of 2015.

In addition, the impact the conflict has had on the mental health and overall well-being of Syrian refugees cannot be overstated: “The effects of conflict on Syrian mental health and psychosocial well-being are profound. Experiences of conflict-related violence and concerns about the situation in Syria are compounded by the daily stressors of displacement, including poverty, lack of basic needs and services, on-going risks of violence and exploitation, isolation and discrimination, loss of family and community supports, and uncertainty about the future.”

Additionally the impact of the war on Syria’s children has been profound. A 2015 survey showed that 79 percent had experienced a death in the family; 60 percent had seen someone get kicked, shot at, or physically hurt; and 30 percent had themselves been kicked, shot at, or physically hurt.

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1 [www.unhcr.org/55f6b90f9.pdf](www.unhcr.org/55f6b90f9.pdf)

Key Moments of the Syrian Conflict

Narratives frame collective understanding of people and events. This is especially true in the context of Syrian conflict, where information is often piecemeal and filtered at various points before dispersal. Information shared with the general public on conflict is often packaged with narrative frameworks that preclude nuance, and rarely prioritize the voices of survivors. This has been especially true of the Syrian crisis, particularly as it is understood outside the region. The voices of Syrians have not been prominent, and certainly not determinant in the framing of the crisis for non-Syrians outside the region.

Western news outlets often have a predictable approach to reporting on military and political developments with occasional focus on stories that reflect the realities for civilians. The reasons for this are sometimes practical - budgetary constraints in a limited media environment and understandable reticence on the part of civilians to be interviewed for reasons related to personal security. While international news outlets often fall into tropes of conflict news cycles, there have been alternative outlets and approaches that have attempted to dig deeper. Regional outlets often do a more thorough job of personal storytelling but supporters for these outlets have overarching goals to influence the conflict and that, at times, mars the reporting.

In its seventh year, the Syrian conflict is one marked by sustained, if sometimes low-level coverage by the regional, European and American media. Stories about the conflict straddle a broad range of topics encompassed by this crisis: Continued barrel bombings and chemical weapon attacks, street by street fighting, limited and sustained ceasefires, the refugee crisis, and key moments where the international community has sought engagement - either directly inserting itself into the conflict or moments where engagement was sought to further an end to the conflict. At times, coverage has focused on the broader geopolitical shifts taking place within the US-Russia relationship, US-Iran relationship, and how these dynamics are playing out in UN Security Council actions.

A few key moments thus far include:

- onset of the conflict in early 2011;
- United Nations announcement of one million refugees in March 2013;
- chemical weapons attacks of 2013 each receiving its own cycle of media coverage;
- the announcement and agreement late in 2013 for Syria to hand over its chemical weapons;
- the rise of ISIS in 2014;
in September of 2015 the photo of Alan Kurdi marked awareness of the refugee crisis specifically the rising numbers of Syrians and other refugees fleeing to Europe. In general much of the media in this period was dominated by the refugees and migrants fleeing to Europe;

- The siege of Homs and fall of Aleppo in 2016

- Intensification of the conflict in Eastern Ghouta and Damascus in 2018, prompting the UN to issue a “blank” statement on Syria, saying it has run out of words to describe children’s suffering and its outrage.

In addition to these moments, each anniversary of the conflict received significant, albeit dwindling, media coverage in media throughout the West and the region. The various iterations of the peace process drew the attention of the press as well, in addition to campaigners and advocacy groups. Media coverage is dominated now, in part, by the impact of the crisis on Europe’s borders, the continual movement of migrants and refugees across those borders, alongside the impact of ISIS on the region.

Non-profit organizations have taken advantage of specific news cycles around the anniversary of the crisis each spring to draw attention and raise awareness, and specific moments like the tragic death of Alan Kurdi to highlight the expanding influence of the crisis beyond the borders of Syria and its neighboring countries. Often these moments are highlighted in order to illustrate several overlapping needs and goals including, but not limited to, awareness raising, fundraising, and drawing attention and action for specific advocacy agendas. At times, the goals these organizations have overlap with many Syrian’s own goals of ending the conflict and increasing humanitarian assistance, but the dismantling of civil society as a result of war and massive displacement has forced Syrians to re-establish or forge new channels to get their direct or unfiltered perspectives out to the world.

One issue that has galvanized public attention but which is not exclusive to the plight of Syrian refugees is the issue of resettlement, specific to the United States, especially in light of the Trump administration’s so-called Muslim Ban. In total, 63,170 resettlement places have been offered since the start of the Syrian crisis, which equates to a mere 1.7 per cent of the total population of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and Turkey. The refugee resettlement program in the US for Syrians is effectively halted at present which receives varying attention depending largely on statements related to the topic by President Trump and his administration as well as actions by the courts where the Muslim Ban and its effects on the refugee resettlement program are currently being resolved.

The Current Funding Landscape

**UN Funding:** Funding for the Syria crisis has largely revolved around the announcement of UN appeals, with commitments and renewed interest during the UN General Assembly period
where Syria has been a focus for varying reasons. United Nations crisis appeals are the product of an extensive process whereby the United Nations and non-profits determine the programming that will require funding for the coming year and groups those requests through a centralized fund that ultimately channels funding to both UN agencies and non-profits. Governments and private sector can provide funding for the UN appeals but some of the funding for the Syria response happens outside of the appeals process. Nevertheless, UN appeals give a sense of where the larger international community feels that the bulk of needs will be for the coming year and helps to drive and determine funding provided even outside of the appeals process.

To place the Syria crisis in the broader context of the global humanitarian landscape, in 2016 the United Nations requested $19.7 billion for global humanitarian programs and appeals, which was only half funded. “The scale of humanitarian crises today is greater than at any time since the United Nations was founded. Not in living memory have so many people needed our support and solidarity to survive and live in safety and dignity,” said Stephen O’Brien, undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, at the launch of the 2017 appeal in Geneva, which is seeking $22.2 billion for the nearly 93 million people in 33 countries who need assistance.

According to the United Nations, approximately $4.5 billion was required in 2016 to provide assistance to Syrians in need of vital humanitarian assistance. As of March 2017, only $2.9 billion of that had been funded to meet the needs of the appeal.

In January of 2017, the United Nations appealed for $4.63 billion in new funding to help Syrian refugees in the region and to continue to support the communities hosting them. The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) for 2017 and 2018 aims to help 4.7 million refugees from Syria and 4.4 million people hosting them in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Overall, of the $5.6 ultimately requested, only 47 percent of funding has been received.

Trends in funding for the Syria regional response are far better than global trends for other United Nations appeals, most of which are less than half funded. The 2015 appeal received 66 percent funding and the 2016 appeal received just over 60 percent funding. The unspoken reality not reflected in these statistics are the millions of Syrians who fail to receive assistance when the funding does not come through and the many, many communities hosting Syrians who fail to receive the help they need to bear the brunt of the burden.

**Private Sector Funding:** After President Obama’s call to action for the private sector assistance at the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in 2016 the private sector pledged assistance, albeit with varying degrees of transparency about specificity of assistance and specific dollar amounts attached to pledges. As is often the case, pledges sometimes reflect work already in progress and existing projects from the past year.

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3 reliefweb.int/report/world/record-international-humanitarian-appeal-requires-222-billion-2017-enar
The pledges at the UN from the private sector ranged from employment assistance services, free or reduced priced software, financial support, in-kind strategic consulting for non-profits, wifi connectivity for refugees, educational opportunities, financial services support, access to credit, and entrepreneurship among other opportunities.

The only clear example of a public partnership within the realm of communications and media was through 180LA, which pledged to provide its advertising, digital, social media, and design services to raise awareness of the refugee crisis and welcome resettled refugees. Companies like Airbnb, Instacart, and Kickstarter⁴ have also engaged in campaigns to encourage private sector giving in partnership with UNHCR, with a specific focus on raising funds and awareness for the crisis.

The Syria crisis attracted the most funding⁵ in terms of private dollars in 2015, amounting to roughly 6 percent of humanitarian funding that year. It should be noted that concrete figures for private sector funding for the Syrian crisis will remain proximate figures given the lack of transparency in the sector.

What’s clear about both the UN appeal funding and the limited data on private sector funding is that the primacy of funds are channeled through the different clusters of aid work that the United Nations uses to categorize and organize programming. Those sectors are: camp management and coordination, coordination, early recovery and livelihoods, education, emergency telecommunications, food security, health, logistics, nutrition, protection, shelter, and water and sanitation.

There is no specific United Nations classification for communications and media funding, which is reflected in the fact that most programming for communications and media comes from overhead, non-restricted funding for UN agencies and non-profits, and as a portion of larger projects for the express purpose of informing the broader public about specific projects, raising awareness of the crisis with the general public, and advocacy and campaigns work that seeks to move policy makers towards policies that would peaceably resolve the conflict. (FilmAid also receives direct funding from the World Food Programme, though again funding for communications activities under World Food Programme is not broken out and therefore impossible to ascertain.)

The lack of transparency in both the United Nations classification and funding and private sector funding is not an indication that communications activities are not being funded and supported or that there isn’t appetite to fund communications activities. Rather, it indicates that funding is not being channeled in ways that are public and transparent. Differentiation between

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⁴ www.newsweek.com/us-tech-companies-partner-un-syrian-refugee-relief-380276

communications that are intended for fundraising purposes and promotion of agencies, general awareness campaigns or advocacy, and communications activities that are designed to provide Syrians with the tools and opportunities to tell their own stories is not prioritized and thus the sector remains opaque.

Using FilmAid as an example, some of its funding sources and its routing helps to illustrate the gaps in transparency in the sector:

- FilmAid’s behavior change communications are classified as protection activities and funding because they address SGBV, early marriage, people with disabilities, and others whose interests fall under this sector. FilmAid’s behavior change communications are often classified as protection activities because of FilmAid’s rights-based approach. The rights-based approach seeks to expand knowledge and either establish or reinforce social norms that allow all groups to take advantage of their rights;

- FilmAid’s work with the World Food Programme to create a media strategy for the implementation of a cash assistance program is funded under its food security strategy;

- FilmAid’s work with the Malala Fund falls under both protection and education since women and girls are a protected class within the affected population;

- FilmAid’s cholera, malaria, and anemia campaigns are funded through grants focusing on the health and nutrition sector;

- FilmAid’s new arrival information kits address basic needs across sectors, providing information about service provision, including access & accountability;

- FilmAid’s cholera prevention, as well as information campaigns related to regional droughts in East Africa fall under WASH);

- FilmAid’s media training programs provide vocational skills that fall under livelihoods. FilmAid’s communications and workshops that address the potential for conflict and provide specific instruction in conflict resolution and prevention, fall under social cohesion.

Private sector funding largely follows the prompts of governments, thus filling in the gaps of UN appeal funding for specific sectors, such as education, which may be chronically underfunded and which may be in keeping with the skills and expertise of the companies involved, with a focus on technology and financial services. Some partnerships have sought to directly address the issue of communications. For example, as cited in UNHCR’s Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan for Syria: “WFP is partnering with Microsoft to expand and improve its beneficiary communication system. The improved system will provide a platform for WFP and beneficiaries to communicate in real time. Beneficiaries, most of whom have access to
mobile phones, will receive timely and on demand information on key aspects of WFP assistance, permitting near real time reporting of their experiences.”

**The Context for Media Funding**

Our brief introduction into the origins and evolution of the Syrian conflict, its impact on Syrians in the region, and the effort to provide much-needed aid to ease this crisis illustrates a few important trends which are key in understanding the communications and media landscape.

The length and intensity of the conflict and the massive impact it has had on large swaths of the Syrian population have made consistent, relevant, and impactful media coverage challenging. The enormity of the story and its many facets, coupled with fatigue from those engaged from the general public, have led to media coverage that is largely centered around specific moments, such as anniversaries, and a focus on counter-terrorism and large geopolitical implications with the rise of ISIS. On top of this, is the muddled and complex funding landscape for communications and media work. The funding gaps that affect programs of all shapes, sizes and orientations have a disproportionate impact on communications and media work across all disciplines. Avenues and platforms to provide Syrians with direct opportunities to articulate their own experiences and the concerns for their communities accurately and authentically have been limited which leaves an enormous gap in the landscape as pertains to narratives and storytelling.

It’s likely that Syria’s refugees have more information at their fingertips than any other refugee population in recorded history. Syrian voices have been affected in a variety of ways by the media and communications landscape as relates to this crisis. First and foremost, Syrians interact with media and communications professionals who tell the story of the Syrian conflict. Their voices are also leveraged in advocacy and fundraising campaigns. Often, Syrians have access to their own, direct channels of communication including Youtube, Facebook and other forms of social and online media. Through all of these avenues, and with all of these actors, Syrians have attempted to tell their stories and to frame the narratives around how they are perceived, and how their needs and desires are expressed. What’s more, there is also the pressing and dire need for inter- and intra-community dialogue in order to promote conflict resolution, effective integration, or safe return when feasible.

Funding for communications and media often reflects a complex web of goals, including but not limited to awareness-raising, advocacy for specific campaign targets, fundraising, and programming to transfer communications and media skills for Syrians. Coupled with the lack of transparent funding analysis it’s difficult to gauge just how much funding has gone into communications and media work in these various disciplines. Long term stability and safety for Syrians and their long-term goals for sustainable, peaceful co-existence among refugee and host communities demands a thoughtful, comprehensive and sustainably funded communications effort, where Syrians clearly have a voice, and clear and transparent sources of funding.
Although funding for communications activities has largely been directed at fundraising and international awareness activities there is an increasing recognition of the need to focus on communities. The World Humanitarian Summit, a convening held with leaders in the aid, business community, high-level government representation, and thought leaders, was designed to help reform the humanitarian system to address the immense needs reflected in the world today through various crises that have taken center stage. The humanitarian system is stretched - and challenged by the protracted nature of conflicts and complexities involved in addressing them and providing assistance. Reform to the humanitarian system will, in the end, make it more adaptive, responsive, and effective.

The various outcome documents and agreements from the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 include recommendations that international organizations recognize and use existing local and national mechanisms for collective communication and community engagement mechanisms. Key recommendations also highlighted the need to analyze and understand local communications contexts and stakeholders to prepare for pre-positioned content platforms at the national level. The outcome documents of the World Humanitarian Summit's focus on communications also details what is the thorn in the side of much of this necessary work: flexible funding mechanisms adaptable to context, to community needs, and to the conflict as it evolves.

One of the core outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit is that communities should be front and center, empowered to be decision makers, when it comes to decisions that affect every aspect of the delivery of humanitarian assistance, be it in acute or protracted responses. Recommendations and outcomes from the summit clearly delineate that community engagement is essential in response and that existing local and national mechanisms for communications should be employed whenever possible. What is crucial is flexible humanitarian funding from donors to fund and support programs that improve communication within communities and so that communities have a direct link to the stories that are told about them, the assistance they receive, and the opportunities available to them as they forge ahead.

The gaps in funding for communications programs and activities that meet the requirements of the recommendations from the World Humanitarian Summit are challenging to address given the structure of humanitarian assistance funding to date. Challenges include, but are not limited to, the understandable pressures to raise funding for the response in its entirety and the overlap for those activities in communications budgets, as well as the urgency and clear need to convey awareness of crises to the general public not yet for fundraising purposes but also to compel international bodies and governments to take action when action is needed. The humanitarian community has made clear that accountability and community engagement are paramount in the delivery of humanitarian response, making communication and dialogue with communities a vital component of humanitarian assistance.
Words need to be followed by action and stated commitment to these goals requires consistent and flexible funding - not just an afterthought. Community engagement, an important component to most humanitarian programming at this stage, means that agencies must not only develop the expertise to do this with great thought, care, and respect but that funders must also commit to consistent measurement and evaluation to ensure that this very key aspect of humanitarian aid does not go astray.

Fundraising and advocacy communications are important but they do not supersede, or replace the need to invest in social change communication and individual behavior change communications that will have an immense impact on not just the short-term programming people in need receive, but may well affect them for years to come as they forge path ahead. Engagement with the private sector actors who focus on media and communications would significantly improve the abilities of international and local aid agencies to invest in this crucial aspect of aid. Ensuring that companies proceed in an informed, thoughtful, and flexible manner would lead to innovation and improvement in the sector, and the resulting, evidence-based program designs can be made extensible and adaptable to other contexts.

The conflict in Syria is both a protracted and complex emergency, which presents different needs and risks. Syria is a complex emergency because it is the result of political instability, conflict, violence on a grand scale, social inequities and poverty. Addressing each and every one of these elements in a population traumatized by years of conflict requires effective communication with communities. There’s just no way around it. Clear and consistent communication with communities is the lynchpin to finding durable solutions in protracted and complex emergencies.
THE COMMUNICATIONS LANDSCAPE

Communications-developed approaches to programming in the Syrian context have evolved both within the existing structures of programs designed and developed to provide vital humanitarian assistance or as stand-alone programming with differing goals, perspectives and outcomes.

The bulk of communication activities as relates to the conflict in Syria have taken place with the ultimate desired outcome of ending the conflict and to help ensure the provision of additional funding and humanitarian assistance to Syrians in dire need of aid. The majority of resources for information gathering, including stories from affected populations, serve as the foundation for achieving these goals. This is then disseminated through a broad, international contexts be it media channels, additional content on non-profit communications channels, social media platforms, or other additional means of reaching international government stakeholders to the conflict, intervening forces, and the general public. All of this with an eye towards pressuring governments to act and end the war and to provide as much humanitarian assistance as possible.

What’s largely missing from the communications landscape is community-centered design and communications programming that not only aids the communities directly affected but also ensures that communities can disseminate and share information through clear channels and that their collective voices are being heard in the midst of conflict, trauma, and uncertainty. There are exceptions: the White Helmets and the Syrian Network for Human Rights are among the examples of Syrians attempting to help the world understand who they are and what is truly happening in this conflict day to day. They are among the myriad groups of Syrians working tirelessly to ensure that that this moment in history doesn’t happen quietly, in the shadows, and without their say in some capacity. It is a remarkable show of solidarity but, also, an incredible effort to preserve culture, history, and voice.

Communications for Development Framework

In this section we shed light on some of the communications efforts undertaken in response to the Syria crisis, understood within the Communications for Development (C4D) framework. The framework has five levels: (1) advocacy, (2) social mobilization, (3) social change communication, (4) interpersonal, and (5) individual behavior change communication.

- Advocacy broadly includes any kinds of communications that seek to change or in any way influence the policies impacting those affected by conflict on an international, national, or local level. Most broadly this can include communications and media work that seeks to draw the attention of the general public, regardless of intended outcome.
• Social mobilization, under communications for development, applies to communications that seek to address the accessibility of basic and essential services to all layers of the population affected as well as special services for specific groups of the population. This kind of communication can also include anything that reflects improved quality of services, and improved accountability from the organizations providing assistance.

• Social change communications include any form of communication that improves the capacity of a group to advocate within their own communities and with the organizations and actors providing direct assistance. This form of communication builds strong social cohesion by bolstering alliances, partnerships and relationships within communities affected by conflict and crisis.

• Interpersonal, which includes behavior change communication and social change communication, is any communication that both improves the capacity of a group to advocate within their own communities and which also provides individuals with the tools to make better informed decisions, for themselves and their communities and which will ultimately improve dialogue in communities.

• Lastly, individual behavior change addresses the kinds of communications that aids in individuals making informed decisions, improving their ability to take action to support much-needed change, and increased and improved dialogue in communities about issues will lead to beneficial behavioral change.

Applying C4D to Syria-Focused Activities

Using C4D to analyze a section of the communication landscape, we find the bulk of prominent activities for the Syria crisis fall within the scope of advocacy, broad awareness building, and fundraising.

What follows below is by no means an exhaustive study of the communications work done on behalf of Syrians and with Syria since the onset of the war, but is a sampling of the work that has been done to date:

Syria Deeply | newsdeeply.com/syria

Syria Deeply is a single issue news website on the Syrian Conflict cofounded in December 2012 by Lara Setrakian and Azeo Fables (and is now under Setrakian’s umbrella organization News Deeply). In their own words, “Our goal is to build a better user experience of the story by adding context to content, using the latest digital tools of the day. Over time the hope is to add greater clarity, deeper understanding and more sustained engagement to the global conversation.” Their mission is to build understanding of the crisis and advance
foreign policy literacy through public service journalism. Through original reporting and curation, existing reports and news data on the Syria crisis, Syria Deeply is meant to provide users with a better sourced, more thoughtful, and in-depth look at the crisis and its ramifications than available in the traditional news media landscape.

**Timing:** Late 2012  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

The Syria Campaign | thesyriacampaign.org/our-impact/

The Syria Campaign is an explicit advocacy and campaigns movement, aimed to mobilize people from around the world to stand with Syrians in their struggle for a free and democratic Syria. They create communications materials, including reports, infographics, and videos, to inform the general public and to drive actions that seek change in the Syria crisis. In their own words, “We launched on the third anniversary of the uprising in March 2014 at a time when Syria was slipping off the media and political agendas of countries around the world. As human rights activists we wanted to do what we could to refocus global attention and action on Syria.”

**Timing:** 2014  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

UNHCR / UN Celebrity ambassador media and campaigns work

Bono’s trip in 2016 to the Middle East and East Africa was emblematic of much of the work that takes place between UN agencies and celebrities. Namely, a celebrity with broad reach travels to areas that need humanitarian assistance and a suite of communications are released thereafter to garner the attention of the general public and to drive the advocacy messages from the UN and humanitarian agencies. During this trip, Bono was able to shine a light on the overwhelmed and underfunded humanitarian system in light of the multiple acute and protracted crises, drawing upon the resources of UN and humanitarian agencies. (In Dadaab, Bono specifically called on the world to provide durable solutions to the conflict.)

**Timing:** 2016  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

Syria: direct | syriadirect.org

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Syria: direct is a non-profit journalism organization that produces coverage of Syria while training Syrian and American journalists in professional news-gathering and accurate, in-depth reporting. Syria Direct’s model as a hybrid news site and training program for Syrian journalists which allows for Syrians directly affected by the conflict to attain the training they need to seek employment as professional journalists with international agencies and to also ensure that information the general public is receiving on the conflict comes from the perspective of Syrians.

**Timing:** 2013  
**C4D Category:** Social Change Communication, Individual Behavior Change, Advocacy / General Public Awareness

**Humans of New York and UNHCR**

Through a partnership with UNHCR, Humans of New York’ Brandon Stanton was able to launch a successful series of photographs posted to social media that included a short snippet of first person interviews, with light editing, of the refugees themselves in the Europe, Middle East, and US resettlement contexts. The narratives were specific rather than exemplary of a certain issue or need, usually without a direct call to action. The photographs led back to petitions and fundraising information for UNHCR. HONY’s 15 million followers (at time of publication) had access to data and information on the Syrian conflict and its impact on refugees but the lasting impact of the series are the short interviews, which provided a humanizing, albeit limited, opportunity to take actions contacting members of local government or providing funds for aid through mediums Americans frequent.

**Timing:** 2015  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

**180LA / “Unfairy Tales” campaign for UNICEF**

The private sector partnership ad campaign which initially launched in February 2016 won acclaim at Cannes with a Grand Prix Lion. The ads follow the story of Malak and Mustafa, which follows their journey as refugees. The ads were primarily completed to drive attention from the general public to the Syria crisis and as a fundraising vehicle for UNICEF.

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8 [www.adweek.com/agencySpy/180la-launches-next-chapter-of-unfairy-tales/123002](http://www.adweek.com/agencySpy/180la-launches-next-chapter-of-unfairy-tales/123002)
Timing: 2016
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

‘The White Helmets’

This short documentary (a Netflix original) follows the work of the White Helmets, or the Syrian Civil Defense Forces. It garnered the award for Best Documentary (Short Subject) at the 89th Academy Awards. The documentary has proved popular on Netflix, garnering a significant amount of coverage on Syria as did its Oscars nomination and victory. The media around the documentary’s’ Oscar was marred in some respects by the Trump administration’s so-called Muslim Ban. The film’s Syrian cinematographer was barred from attending because of the ban which led to extensive media coverage on the subject.

Timing: 2016 / 2017
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

‘Last Men in Aleppo’

This documentary focuses on the White Helmets, a group of volunteers that provides emergency aid to Syrians. Directed by Feras Fayyad, the documentary won the World Documentary Grand Jury Prize at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival and had its PBS premiere in 2017 as well. The story arc of the documentary follows the work of the White Helmets as they rescue survivors of bombings and attacks, with gritty footage and substantial interviews, the documentary provides a window into some of the bloodiest fighting in Syria and its impact on civilians. Announcement of the documentary’ airing on PBS and the prize at Sundance led to significant media attention for the Syria crisis.

Through their work with the media, the White Helmets not only drive engagement and interest in the plight of Syrians, but they’ve also opened up the public’s eyes to what Syrians are doing to provide assistance. What’s more, the films and media products White Helmets distribute on a regular basis reflect the direct experiences of Syrians.

Timing: 2017
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

‘City of Ghosts’

The documentary City of Ghosts follows the journey of “Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently” – a handful of anonymous media activists who banded together to work as citizen journalists.
Institute for War & Peace Reporting | SyriaStories.net

Supporting by the Institute of war & Peace Reporting, SyriaStories.net includes a body of work that lifts up the work of Syrian journalists, particularly women, and includes security training, digital security training, a women’s center, basic website training, film-making courses, election, and more. The Institute for War & Peace Reporting provides a platform for Syrian journalists to augment their skills and to share stories of the conflict with Syria and its impact throughout the Middle East and beyond.

Team Refugee / 2016 Rio Olympics

In March 2016, the International Olympic Committee announced that it was putting together a team for that year’s Olympics comprised of refugee to draw attention and shed light to refugee crises around the world. The team included refugees from Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. The announcement came in the midst of increasing numbers of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe, which was reflected in media coverage about the team in the run-up and during the Olympics. Coverage centered on the personal stories of the refugees participating in the Olympics and garnered significant attention, particularly at a moment when negative sentiment towards refugees was on the rise. Some of the media coverage steered the general public to fundraising portals.

The Refugee Nation?

An Ogilvy New York campaign with assistance from Amnesty International, which included a flag, reminiscent of a life jacket, and an anthem. The flag and the anthem have been employed in a variety of settings, including sporting events, museums, and government-
hosted public forums. The campaign includes a multi-platform site. Media attention around
the campaign was mainly comprised of press coverage for the campaign and opportunities
where flag and anthem were featured.

**Timing:** 2016  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

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**Radio station in Jordan for Syrian refugees**

Syrian journalists, trained as a part of the UNESCO program, produced a radio program
designed for Syrian refugees in northern Jordan living outside of camp structures where
they could learn about services available to them, including cash assistance and non-food
items, and learn more about the kinds of psychosocial support available, including practical
advice on dealing with daily tasks and challenges.

**Timing:** 2012  
**C4D Category:** Social Change Communication, Individual Behavior Change

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**Ai Wei Wei life jacket installation in Berlin**

Chinese artist Ai Wei Wei installed 14,000 lifejackets to draw attention to the migrant crisis
affecting Europe and the backlash against migrants and refugees. The jackets were
previously used by migrants and refugees crossing into Europe and were procured in
Greece. The art installation received multi-layered media coverage across a range of outlets
in the United States and Europe.

**Timing:** 2016  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

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**Save the Children Syria video / Most Shocking Second A Day**

To mark the anniversary of the Syrian conflict in 2014, Save the Children produced a video
that creatively illustrated what the onset of the war must have been like for Syria’s children
and how it had affected them since then, including experiences and milestones missed and
dangers experienced. With over 58 million views, the video intended to draw attention to

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11 [www.cnn.com/2016/02/14/arts/ai-weiwei-berlin-life-jackets/index.html

12 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBQ-IoHfimQ
the anniversary of the Syria conflict and to as a vehicle for fundraising. A second video in 2016\textsuperscript{13} showed the experience of refugee and migrant children on the journey to Europe and the squalor of refugee life but received substantially fewer views.

**Timing:** 2014  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

**IAMSYRIA.ORG**

Non-profit media based campaign which seeks to educate the world about the conflict in Syria. The site, media clips, social media presence, and other communications products produced by the campaign are also intended to show Syrians solidarity with their plight. There are also materials for educators and mini-campaigns tied to specific advocacy moments, highlighting the anniversaries of the conflict or specific milestones.

**Timing:** Various  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

**WITHSYRIA.ORG**

#WithSyria is a movement of over 130 organizations and people around the world not taking sides, but standing in solidarity with those caught in conflict. Banksy lent his support and this image to the #WithSyria movement to say: there is always hope. The campaign includes art, social media content, infographics, additional content and general campaign asks that encompass and show broad support for the Syrian people and advocate an end to the conflict.

**Timing:** Various  
**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

**PLANETSYRIA.ORG**

Planet Syria originated within Syria and primarily with Syrian-led and originated civil society groups and peace activists. Nearly 300 Syrian groups were surveyed on their hopes, desires, and more broadly, what kinds of actions they wished to see from the international community. The campaign is now joined by international organizations and advocacy groups but is still led by Syrian activists directly and was borne out of frustration for western-led and oriented Syria advocacy.

\textsuperscript{13} [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKDqFCojiT8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKDqFCojiT8)

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*Media Interventions and the Syrian Crisis: Can We Do More?*
Timing: 2014  
C4D Category: Advocacy / General Public Awareness, Social Change Communication

Searching for Syria | searchingforsyria.org

Google and UNHCR teamed up to answer common questions about Syria that people search for on Google, seeking to improve understanding about Syrians and the Syria crisis. Answers are produced through UNHCR data as well as 360 photos, videos, and stories from refugees that illustrate common themes or trends in the crisis. The campaign’s main theme is to provide better, more thorough answers to questions about Syria and to paint a picture of what the experience is like for Syrians still inside Syria and those who are now refugees. The site encourages people to sign up for updates, to learn more from UNHCR.org and to donate to help Syrians. At time of release Google announced they had provided $20 million in grants supporting solutions to provide over 800,000 refugees with emergency support and access to critical information and education.

Timing: 2017  
C4D Category: Advocacy / General Public Awareness

Radio Rozana | www.rozana.fm

Run by Syrian journalists, Radio Rozana provides independent news and perspectives from Syria with the help of 30 local journalists across the country. Reaching Syrians inside and outside the country. Funders and supporters provide training for journalists, funding to continue the broadcast, and additional support including security assistance.

Timing: 2013  
C4D Category: Social Change Communication, Advocacy / General Public Awareness

The Syrian Observer | syrianobserver.com

The Syrian Observer produces English language journalism. This includes but isn’t limited to op-eds, interviews, blog posts and a database of the main actors of the Syrian political and civil society. The Syrian Observer also curates and translates news content produced by Syria’s official press, opposition groups, activists and civil society. Funders and supporters provide training for journalists, funding to continue the broadcast, and additional support including security assistance.

Timing: Various
**Holograms from Syria**¹⁴

A mixed reality art installation that uses the Microsoft Hololens to bring the war in Syria to safe and familiar spaces in the USA. Produced by Pakistani artist Asad J. Malik, this project is meant to bring the immediacy of war to people far removed from the conflict and to draw attention to the grisly nature of the conflict with Western audiences. "Certainly a sense of productive guilt is what most viewers, including me, feel when they try on the project. Although it was a clear expected outcome, inducing guilt in the viewers wasn't the primary intention of the project," he told Vice Creators¹⁵. "I simply wanted to explore this idea of war in our current day and age, especially in the US, being a simulation."

**Timing:** 2017

**C4D Category:** Advocacy / General Public Awareness

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¹⁴ [https://1ric.com/project/holograms-from-syria](https://1ric.com/project/holograms-from-syria)

COMMUNICATIONS LANDSCAPE | KEY TAKEAWAYS

The foregoing review represents a sampling of the prominent communications activities on Syria since the onset of the conflict.

There are several themes that emerge through a survey of this work:

- The landscape of communications activities as relates to Syria is not particularly diverse. The above set of examples is by no means an exhaustive examination of every communications activity undertaken regarding the Syrian crisis, but this sample indicates the prevalence of awareness raising activities, with an emphasis on the goal of sustaining or increasing funding. This is in part driven by user and supporter metrics and at times driven by aid agencies and the UN recognizing they must keep the crisis top of mind to maintain or increase funding. The propensity for these types of communications can be attributed to the scale of the crisis and the funds required to maintain the response. This is perhaps understandable given the larger funding gaps and dearth of stable donors, and the propensity of the general public awareness to be greatly reduced and fragmented in the instance of protracted conflict. Governmental donors generally respond to pressure from their constituents and private donors are at least somewhat responsive to appeals through media news cycles.

- The most prominent, well-received work is often done in conjunction with UN agencies. A relationship with the UN and prominent non-profits provides gravitas, channeled funding, and access to Syrians, particularly refugees. Access is often one of the most challenging stumbling blocks in scenarios where communications activities are feasible, particularly since the United Nations is the primary conduit to service provision.

- Media training for Syrian-led media organizations is supported, in part to ensure information is accurate and timely and reflects the realities on the ground for Syrians.

- Visual communication - be it through documentary film, photography, or other content that is easily digestible - is the proven method of conveying realities on the ground and the enormity of the impact on Syrians. Those narratives are largely driven by UN agencies, non-profits, activists, and others in the Western civil society space at times with input and collaboration from Syrians.

- There is therefore a gap and opportunity in the field for community-centered and impact-driven communications.
FILMAID PROGRAM REVIEW
PROGRAM REVIEW SUMMARY

We analyzed FilmAid’s model and programs in the context of the global communications landscape to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which organizations working to address the Syrian crisis can incorporate a community engagement approach.

FilmAid’s approach is closely aligned with the Communicating with Communities (CwC) approach as well as C4D, specifically the social ecological model which seeks to impact on individual, interpersonal, community, organizational and policy/enabling environment levels. FilmAid’s work is mainly aimed at the individual, interpersonal, community levels, and through partnerships, the organization also contributes to the wider level of organizational level and policy level.

FilmAid’s work in Kenya is ongoing and the organization’s participatory approach, involving refugees along with its strong presence in Kakuma and Dadaab have allowed the organization to build a profile as a trusted organization. By engaging the population in media creation in combination with strong media and audience-focused expertise, FilmAid has been able to increase knowledge on topics such as health, education, gender and cash-transfers. There is also some initial evidence that suggests FilmAid’s large-scale information and communication efforts have led to increase in demand for these services. Alongside supporting behavior change, FilmAid has contributed to stronger soft skills among youth (self-esteem, voice, negotiation, critical thinking, leadership) and to greater economic opportunities for young people who have participated directly in ongoing training programs. These soft skills, in turn, may also contribute to greater resilience, self-efficacy and social cohesion through an improved ability of communities to effectively collaborate and respond to challenges, and avoid conflict which prevents effective collaboration.

Based on interviewee insights on the use of strategic narrative interventions in conflict and crisis situations, particularly in long-term displacements and effective community- and impact-driven media interventions such as those in Kenya, we draw out guidance on what media interventions can offer to Syrian refugees as the crisis deepens and becomes a protracted complex emergency.
**FILMAID’S MODEL**

FilmAid’s work resides at the heart of the paradigm between availability of vital information, access, and relief for Syrian refugees.

**Intended Impact**

FilmAid uses the power of film and media to transcend language and literacy, bringing life-saving information, psychological relief, and much-needed hope to refugees and other communities in need around the world. Maintaining voice, hope, and identity for people affected by conflict and crisis is crucial.

The organization’s work falls into the three integrated components of Media Content, Community Outreach, and Skills Development that combine to support program delivery. FilmAid produces multiple forms of creative media, which are subsequently distributed through a variety of outreach channels, ensuring that target communities are engaged. This outreach includes targeted screening events and workshops, radio, SMS, as well as digital media.

In addition, FilmAid builds skills within the community to deliver media and outreach components. This participatory approach drives individual change while ensuring community involvement. Through its work FilmAid communicates and transfers knowledge to enhance aid delivery; educates and helps foster behavior change; facilitates community engagement and expression; provides critical information about rights, safety and available resources; and provides skills that help build resilience at the individual and community level.

FilmAid’s approach is wholly centered on the people it serves - be that through the creation of videos that tell stories of what is currently impacting communities or through skills training and development that provides communities with the additional tools to forge the path ahead. FilmAid’s approach is flexible to the context and to the needs of the community, as voiced by its members. One of FilmAid’s primary goals in its behavior change communications is resilience, or building the capacity of communities to respond to social challenges without outside support. This behavior change is directed at empowering communities with the skills and knowledge they need to directly address the social challenges within their own communities.

Present throughout its work regardless of specificity, the organization’s core belief is that a community that speaks for itself is a community that can change and heal itself.

**FilmAid’s Programming**

**Jordan:** FilmAid has implemented three pilot programs in Jordan, bringing its model of mobile cinema and camp screenings, film-based workshops and visiting artist workshops to the Syrian refugee camps of Mafraq, Zaatari, and Irbid.
Working in partnership with ImageNation, FilmAid was able to develop a series of screenings of the documentary, “He Named Me Malala” and subsequent workshops, also described below. Through the documentary screenings and facilitated discussion, Syrian girls were encouraged and provided a safe and open space to discuss their concerns and hopes regarding their education, communities and the opportunities and challenges their families face in this moment of great upheaval in their lives. Screenings, and the workshops derived from the screenings, are catalysts for confronting difficult social issues and can inform participants of their rights, their safety, their health, and provide them with tools for approaching the challenges they experience within their families and their communities, challenges significantly augmented by the refugee experience. Workshops always contain information for participants to immediately engage with the issues raised. If there are existing resources that can address these challenges, then they are informed and encourage to make use of those resources.

The relationship with ImageNation, and partnership with Another Kind of Girl, for a project of this scale and scope illustrates what is possible when a partner and donor is fully engaged and committed to experiences that bring relief to refugees. ImageNation’s informed perspective comes from their experience in the region. In collaboration with FilmAid, ImageNation paid close attention to curriculum development and impact. They were flexible funders who recognized that the situation on the ground changes and that programs must adapt to those changes. Partnerships like this offer opportunities for communities to both explore and articulate their needs and challenges while which encourages community-driven and community-supported responses to conflict and trauma.

Through its relationship with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, FilmAid was able to augment this program with girls who had seen the documentary on writing and filmmaking skills so they could share their own stories, encouraging a creative journey that would help them explore their relationship with their education to date and their hopes and desires for the future. The encouragement of self-expression, coupled with direct skills training and creative arts had not only a profound effect on the short-term well-being of the girls in the camp, but provided skills that could be used in future.

It’s clear that girls and young women’s stories are told by someone else, be it international news outlets, advocacy groups. This program, and the broader partnership with ImageNation and the Academy, shows an intrinsic understanding of the power that underlies storytelling that is personal and told directly through the experience, voice and perspective of those affected by conflict. ImageNation is dedicated to bringing Arab and Muslim voices into the international entertainment space. They saw the value of structured, thoughtful projects and have championed the type of program interventions supported by FilmAid. The impact on programs and on the lives of individuals who have been through trauma is difficult to quantify but expansive in its long-term effects. and the nature and structure of this partnership has meant that the young women were fully in control of the message, intent and execution of the stories they told.
Given the length of time the Syrian conflict has been ongoing and the unlikely end to conflict in the near future, a need to realign for a protracted response is necessary. The situation and response to Syria is reminiscent of those for protracted crises requiring a coordinated, sustained, and sustainable international intervention. The needs of refugees in the context of protracted crises differ from crisis to crisis but one commonality remains: the pressing need to ensure that affected communities have a voice in determining and directing the support and that an expanded slate of services and goods reflect the needs of communities in extended exile.

Kenya: FilmAid’s work in Kenya is powerful example of what can be done in the Syrian context in the months and years to come.

The sustained conflict and humanitarian crisis in Somalia has resulted in a protected humanitarian response that has spanned an extended length of time, resulting in Dadaab refugee camp which has now housed refugees for over a generation. Kakuma refugee camp, also in Kenya, houses a mix of refugees from the conflicts in Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia and serves partially as an overflow from Dadaab. The area around Kakuma is among the poorest in Kenya and the camp, its denizens, and the protracted nature of the conflicts that led to the camp’s creation and growth have created understandable tension.

FilmAid’s work in Kenya included the production of thoughtful, high-quality film that deal with some of the thorny issues facing refugees and host communities, including conflict resolution, prevention of HIV/AIDS, and educational films for refugees that help them better understand the opportunities available to them through the United Nations World Food Programme.

Refugee filmmakers in Kenya have produced documentaries that show, for example, the impact and experience of their arrival into camp settings or explored the excitement of the Olympic experience for refugees and the communities where the athletes live. The films from Kenya not only inform and provide useful, cogent information for refugees about how to reach key services and how to improve their experience, but they also explore nuance, pain and growth, and shine a light on the unique and often challenging aspects of refugee life and the tensions that often arise between refugees and the communities who host them.

FilmAid’s approach in Kenya reflects a deep connection and commitment to the refugee community and an understanding of the discourse that is a necessity as refugees navigate new lives. The importance for actors in the humanitarian space to understand local context and, what’s more, build and support platforms that are suited best to the context at hand is evident in FilmAid’s work and approach, regardless of context. Its community-centered programming focuses not only on community development but addresses the long-term needs expressed by communities, including psychosocial needs, skills development, and the transfer of vital knowledge through media that are the most available to the community.
REVIEWING FILMAID’S PROGRAMS

Our Methodology
The program review draws together insights from 16 key informant interviews and a review of existing documentation on FilmAid programs in Kenya and Jordan. It pulls together core elements of FilmAid's approach in Kenya and uses them, combined with commentary and analysis from FilmAid staff, partners and others working in the space to suggest potential areas of focus and action if FilmAid expands its work further to support Syrian refugees.

Our Findings
FilmAid’s model is hybrid under the C4D framework, primarily seeking to fulfill the objectives of the social mobilization, social change communications, and individual behavior change approaches. What the projects in Kenya and Jordan illustrate clearly is a profound desire to work in tandem with communities, improving effective communications and transferring knowledge that would have a lasting, ameliorative impact on aid delivery, education, and the ability for the communities to engage and express their needs and desires and respond to their own needs directly.

In surveying the communications landscape, we have come to understand that FilmAid is one of the relatively few entities in the landscape that fills the market gap on community-led narrative. The organization possesses the methodology and processes that allows it to meet some of the challenges detailed above, based on its embrace of a programmatic approach towards engagement with communities, relying on process and not product, and building on skills aimed at voice, empowerment and engagement, negotiation, self-efficacy, local connection, local relevance, locally-driven and designed programs. All of these are deemed essential in responses. At the secondary level this work creates locally-relevant communications that support refugees to be better informed and make better use of resources and services, and thereby also reducing costs for implementers.

As explored in the course of our landscape scan, of the funding that has gone to support Syrian refugees a relatively small amount has gone to media-based programming or information-focused interventions. This is despite the growing recognition in the humanitarian sector that “information is aid,” and that agencies need to enhance two-way communication between affected populations (both refugee and host populations) and humanitarian agencies, and to
engage and involve refugees, host communities, and local organizations more fully in programming and related decisions.16,17

‘A participation revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives...We need to include the people affected by humanitarian crises and their communities in our decisions to be certain that the humanitarian response is relevant, timely, effective and efficient. We need to provide accessible information, ensure that an effective process for participation and feedback is in place and that design and management decisions are responsive to the views of affected communities and people’.18

Much of the humanitarian funding going to the Syria crisis is aimed at fulfilling critical basic needs such as food, shelter, protection, water, and sanitation. Yet as the Syrian crisis continues and the likelihood of refugees spending several years (if not forever) living outside of Syria, the question of longer-term issues known to affect those who live in camps or with refugee status for years on end arises. Attention to aspects such as integration, adaptation, skills for livelihoods and community cohesion is growing, as can be seen in some of the more recent funding from DFID and ECHO, but it is not yet clear whether funders see the potential for including funding for information and communication-based approaches as they shift the paradigm from relief to durable solutions.

The Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) Network embraces the principle that information and communication are critical forms of aid. It also recognizes the role of C4D methodologies such as the CwC approach as linked to better accountability, greater participation and enhanced effectiveness of humanitarian response.19


Review Framework

Key elements of the CwC approach (outlined in CDAC’s working paper on CwC and Accountability):

- Rights-based: recognizing affected communities as active decision makers and shapers of their own lives
- Aspiring to shift power from aid providers to aid recipients, and to facilitate recipients’ own actions
- Aiming to shift emphasis from supply-side driven response to demand-driven response
- People-centered, providing information for, and listening to, affected communities
- Facilitating effective information sharing; promoting use of and response to feedback
- Emphasizes access to life-saving / risk-mitigating information to help communities make informed decisions about their recovery in the wake of a crisis
- CwC approaches engage a varied range of actors to leverage improvements in communication, resulting in significant emphasis on coordination and partnership
- Tends to involve the wider community, beyond those directly reached by humanitarian service delivery (including communities in non-affected areas and the diaspora).
- There is no pre-designed toolkit, nor does CwC encompass established standards; contextual understanding and flexibility is considered key.
- Seeks to build resilience by providing information on how to mitigate risk and strengthen adaptive strategies
- Improved intra- and inter-community dialogue that can be facilitated through a CwC approach seen to have capacity to support conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts.
- Seeks to understand how the information ecosystem has changed in a crisis, with the aim of capitalizing on/rebuilding pre-existing capacity and strengthening local communication channels.

When working on CwC in complex emergency situations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) notes that it is critical to:

- understand the local context
- understand the local information ecosystem and meet your audience where they are
- remember that the information space is increasingly contested (e.g., propaganda, spread of rumors, misinformation, weaponizing of information)
- build trust at the point of delivery
- build trust with listeners (due to a ‘trust deficit’ with the humanitarian industry)
- restore connectivity and enable communications
- create space for meaningful dialogue to help manage community expectations
- consider digital, age and gender divides
- building collaborative approaches and better evidence
- remember that there is no silver bullet.

Program review of FilmAid’s work in Kenya and Jordan

Many believe that the Syrian crisis has moved from an emergency state to a protracted, complex emergency and that most Syrian refugees will remain outside of Syria for years to come, if not forever. Recent statistical analysis has shown that the amount of time refugees spend in camps has increased over the past several decades, with estimates that refugees remain on average 17-22 years in a camp environment. Dadaab in Kenya (which opened 25 years ago) is the ‘poster child’ example of this. Learning from Kenya can offer insights into how programming in Syria might be undertaken to achieve greater impact on the well-being of Syrian refugee populations living in Jordan.

A program review and series of key informant interviews were done to explore the following questions:

- How does FilmAid fill programming fill gaps related to voice and participation, access to information, capacity strengthening (soft and hard skills\(^{21}\) among refugee populations?
  - What are the gaps that FilmAid is filling?
  - What approaches and methods does FilmAid use to fill these gaps?
  - Why do these approaches and methods matter?

- How does FilmAid’s work impact on the lives of refugee populations? Which populations? How? What type of impact and how sustainable is it?
  - What insights can we draw out about the impact of FilmAid’s programs?
  - What do we know about how FilmAid’s work enhances the impact of its partners?
  - What internal and external changes could be made to improve FilmAid’s impact or potential for impact?

From the review and interviews, we will offer insights and recommendations on how FilmAid could adapt its approach to better support Syrian refugees in camp settings as well as outside of camps as the crisis deepens and becomes chronic.

a) What is FilmAid’s Approach?

Since 1999, FilmAid has worked to enhance the effectiveness of aid delivery, knowledge transfer, community resilience, and behavior change in complex emergencies in East Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, and beyond. FilmAid’s mission is to use the power of film and media to transcend language and literacy, bringing life-saving information,

\(^{21}\) Hard skills refer to skills that are more specific and technical, such as learning to do math or read, to repair a vehicle, or program a computer. Soft skills are skills such as consensus building and negotiation, critical thinking, public speaking, reasoning, debate and/or planning and self-direction.
psychological relief and much-needed hope to refugees and other communities in need around the world through a community-centered methodology.

FilmAid produces multiple forms of creative media that are subsequently distributed through a variety of outreach channels to reach target communities. This outreach includes targeted screening events and workshops, radio, SMS, as well as digital media. In addition, FilmAid supports skills development within the community to produce and deliver the media and outreach components. This participatory approach aims to drive individual change while building trust and community engagement.

FilmAid’s approach is based on the integration of access, creativity and participation to drive individual and community change, contributing to overall positive social impact. The organization identifies as “a humanitarian media and communications agency, creating and distributing content which provides critical information, knowledge transfer, and psychosocial relief” through three primary program activities: (1) media content and creation, (2) community outreach, and (3) refugee skills development, outlined below:

**Media Content and Creation**
FilmAid uses a participatory approach to producing content, including:

- **Drama**: Storytelling is a powerful tool to deliver critical information about the social issues impacting a community. FilmAid’s drama programming includes a short-form, long-form and feature-length films.
- **Documentary**: FilmAid produces long and short-form documentaries to tell real stories about the social issues impacting a target community. These documentaries are designed to educate audiences as well as influence attitudes and promote behavior change.
- **PSA/Music Video**: This short-form content involves informational PSAs that deliver critical health and safety information as well as more creative approaches designed to shift attitudes and behaviors.

**Community Outreach**
FilmAid employs a two-way communications approach that includes:

- **Mobile Cinema**: Targeted mobile screenings deliver FilmAid’s content to communities underserved by traditional mass media platforms and create opportunities for two-way dialogue with service providers and agencies most involved with the issues at hand.
- **Workshops**: Facilitated community workshops use FilmAid content as a catalyst for community engagement and dialogue around critical issues.
- **Mobile**: SMS outreach delivers targeted information and encourages community feedback.
- **Digital Media**: Provides both a channel of communication and mechanism for dialogue with the community.
- **TV/Radio**: Mass media broadcast ensures wide reach of FilmAid’s content.
• **Film Festival:** FilmAid’s Film Festival is a showcase of community content and social impact films.

**Refugee Skills Development**

FilmAid conducts several kinds of training to support community participation in program delivery:

- **Media Arts Training:** Through film, photography, journalism, radio and digital media education, FilmAid enables youth to strengthen their creative and technical skills so that they can explore the concerns of their own communities and express themselves creatively.

- **Facilitation and Outreach Training:** Community engagement and participation ensures that information is conveyed in culturally sensitive and locally relevant ways. Members of the community are trained to facilitate workshops on the issues featured within FilmAid’s media content. This enhances program delivery and strengthens leadership and technical capacity.

- **Staff Training and Development:** Because the majority of FilmAid’s staff is drawn from affected populations, capacity building is built into FilmAid’s model. All staff are trained, and a special emphasis is placed on capacity building among FilmAid’s refugee staff.

FilmAid also aims to complement the work of humanitarian partners through:

- **Effective Communications and Knowledge Transfer to Enhance Aid Delivery** - FilmAid’s multiple and two-way communication channels enable partner organizations to have deeper, more consistent and more nimble contact and dialogue with the communities they serve, helping to shape programs, smoothly introduce new programs or changes, and be cost-effective.

- **Education & Behavior Change** – FilmAid engages with refugees to strengthen knowledge and encourage attitude and behavior change in close collaboration with the refugee community and aid partners—be it about health and nutrition, safety, financial skills, gender equality and their options for the future. These interactive educational efforts help refugees to better understand their options and the potential consequences of their choices and actions, be stronger advocates and make informed decisions. Refugees trust FilmAid because of its community-based approach, which includes their own content. Further, FilmAid’s communications platforms reach marginalized populations.

- **Community Engagement & Expression** - FilmAid’s methodology stems from a rights-based approach that engages affected communities in culturally appropriate dialogue and creates a platform that refugees can use for expression and feedback to other stakeholders. FilmAid’s community engagement processes lead to smoother collaboration and coordination among all stakeholders present—donors, aid providers, refugee leaders, government—and strengthen relations among stakeholders, making partners’ programs more effective and efficient.
• **Protection** - FilmAid has extensive experience providing critical information about rights, safety and available support to vulnerable, in need and at-risk individuals—by raising awareness, provoking discussion (often post screening) and bringing communities together to share information with refugees in camps and urban settings on how to access assistance.

• **Skills Training to Build Resilience** – FilmAid trains refugees in media production and communications, including a year-long, accredited course in Journalism, Filmmaking and Media Entrepreneurship, and staff training and development programs. These programs develop self-expression skills and can lead to employment in camps, temporary asylum settings and in durable solutions.

b) How is FilmAid positioned within the wider sector?
To frame FilmAid’s work and position in the wider world of communication and development, we draw on a UNICEF model (Figure 1) that combines communications work as defined in the “social ecological model’ (SEM) and the corresponding communication for development (C4D) approaches used at each level. Table 1 and 2 (below) provide more detail on the levels and approaches.

*Figure 1. The Social Ecological Model and corresponding Communication for Development Approaches.*
Table 1. Descriptions of the Social Ecological Model levels (adapted from CDC 2008 and UNICEF 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Characteristics of an individual that influence behavior change, including knowledge, attitudes, behavior, self-efficacy, developmental history, gender, age, religious identity, racial/ethnic/caste identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, financial resources, values, goals, expectations, literacy, stigma and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Formal (and informal) social networks and social support systems that can influence individual behaviors, including family, friends, peers, co-workers, religious networks, customs, traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Relationships among organizations, institutions and informational networks within defined boundaries, including infrastructures such as parks. Includes village associations, community leaders, businesses, transportation modes, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Organizations or social institutions with rules and regulations for operations that affect how, or how well, for example, services are provided to an individual or group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy/Enabling Environment</td>
<td>Local, state, national, global laws and policies that determine access to services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our landscaping study of the communications and media programs running in Jordan and other refugee camps, highlights that many programs work at the widest two levels (organizational and policy/enabling environment), aiming to build public support for refugees, to advocate for more refugee-friendly policies. Others may have an agency goal to increase brand recognition or raise funding for refugee programming through communications and social media content and campaigns.

While advocacy is critical for wider shifts in policy and public opinion and to raise the necessary funds to operate programs, it is not the core purpose of FilmAid’s work. Rather, FilmAid is primarily focused on the three inner circles of the SEM model: individual, interpersonal and community, using social mobilization, social change communication and behavior change communication approaches. For FilmAid, this work translates into supporting refugee voice and participation, access to information, capacity and skill strengthening, human rights awareness and helping create demand for services (such as education and maternal health care), strengthening self-efficacy and resilience, social and psychosocial well-being, conflict resolution, and positive behavior change.

FilmAid international describes itself as is a community-based, impact-driven humanitarian communications organization.

**FilmAid Kenya**

FilmAid has operated in Kenya since 2003, centered in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and the surrounding host communities. Its approach in Kenya is characterized by participatory and community centered arts- and media-based programming. These programs aims to enhance knowledge; shift attitudes and increase self-efficacy; increase self-esteem and self-reliance; demonstrate behavior change in refugee camps and in host communities. Most recently, FilmAid has primarily focused in three areas: media content and creation; community outreach; and refugee skills development. Table 3 outlines FilmAid’s programming and partners over the past 2 years.
### Table 3.
FilmAid Kenya Programs reviewed (includes programs implemented since 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project and Location</th>
<th>Program focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promoting social cohesion, peace building, cholera prevention among out of school children in Dadaab</strong>&lt;br&gt;UNICEF&lt;br&gt;Feb-Aug, 2016</td>
<td>• To promote access to lifesaving information on cholera for out of school children, through use of video messages and other interactive activities among out of school children and other community members.&lt;br&gt;  ○ Cholera education targeting children out of school as interventions have been found to focus on children in school, leaving out those out of school;&lt;br&gt;  ○ Access to Peacopoly Education in schools (APE) that skilled children with conflict solving methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengthening Health, Protection, and Livelihood Outcomes in Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps</strong>&lt;br&gt;US State Department&lt;br&gt;$1,119,308&lt;br&gt;Sept 2015-Aug 2016</td>
<td>• Deliver life-saving information on emergency/humanitarian issues through media-based communication.&lt;br&gt;  ○ Strengthen beneficiary community capacity to positively impact health, protection, and livelihood outcomes.&lt;br&gt;  ○ Provide livelihood opportunities and skills development for refugee youth to facilitate durable solutions.&lt;br&gt;  ○ Enhance the monitoring and evaluation of programs with a focus on impact to effectively ensure the quality of community-led service delivery and empowerment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mass Information and Communication on Refugee Protection and Assistance Programme in Kakuma Camp</strong>&lt;br&gt;UNHCR&lt;br&gt;$182,177&lt;br&gt;Jan-Dec 2016</td>
<td>• Partner with UNHCR to design and implement community communication strategies that will build community self-management.&lt;br&gt;  ○ Capacity building, skills building and awareness raising activities focused on:&lt;br&gt;  ▪ Health &amp; Hygiene (comprising water and sanitation (WASH), nutrition and other public health concerns)&lt;br&gt;  ▪ Protection (to include GBV, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, most at risk population of unaccompanied and separated children (UNSC), and other vulnerable populations)&lt;br&gt;  ▪ Community Self Management (where services are accessed, rights, entitlements and procedures)&lt;br&gt;  ▪ Assist with development of Community Mobilisation Strategy for Kakuma Camp&lt;br&gt;  ○ Promotion of media arts through Filmmaker, Journalism, Arts for refugees programs&lt;br&gt;  ○ Access to information on voluntary return for Somali refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bamba Chakula (Kakuma and Dadaab)</strong>&lt;br&gt;World Food Program&lt;br&gt;$1,394,818&lt;br&gt;May 2015-Apr 2016</td>
<td>• To design and implement a communications strategy to support the scale up of vouchers for food assistance in Kakuma and Dadaab.&lt;br&gt;  • To communicate with communities (CoC) on the implementation of the Bamba Chakula voucher programme in Kakuma and Dadaab through promotion and outreach methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support for FilmAid Kenya and Jordan (Kakuma and Dadaab in Kenya)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA)&lt;br&gt;$60,000&lt;br&gt;Aug-Dec 2016</td>
<td>• Mobile cinema screenings, filmmaker training program and film festivals for&lt;br&gt;  ○ Psychological relief &amp; life-saving information for at-risk and vulnerable populations&lt;br&gt;  ○ Health and protection issues in multiple languages&lt;br&gt;  ○ Nurture development of young refugee filmmakers through training and mentoring&lt;br&gt;  ○ Mobile cinemas and camp screenings to promote health, protection and self-reliance, including health, rights, protection, peacebuilding, literacy: 10th Annual Film Festival and Malala Day; host and new arrival screenings to support peaceful integration.&lt;br&gt;  ○ Film-based workshops and filmmaker training program on issues of concern to communities (early marriage, gender-based violence, peace and conflict resolution, women’s leadership, girl mentorship, sexual and reproductive health; to support self-reliance and healthy living.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls First Program: He Named Me Malala</strong>&lt;br&gt;Kakuma and Dadaab&lt;br&gt;Malala Fund, New Venture Fund, Global Giving, Participant Media Nairobi, Kakuma, Dadaab&lt;br&gt;Mar-Jul 2016</td>
<td>Targeted daytime and evening screenings, focus group discussions, and a girls’ mentorship program to instill confidence and skills in girls to advocate for themselves on education and other issues&lt;br&gt;  • Increase knowledge and awareness of the importance of education, challenges and solutions.&lt;br&gt;  • Transfer life skills necessary to stay in school and manage other life’s challenges affecting girls thus boosting their self-efficacy.&lt;br&gt;  • Facilitate participant to implement activities to harness skills learned through the Community Action Plan model.&lt;br&gt;  • Attitude change (positive thinking and actions that have resulted from the program)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
a) What has FilmAid Kenya achieved and how?

As outlined above, the goal of this program review was to understand how FilmAid’s approaches enhance voice and participation, access to information, capacity strengthening (soft and hard skills) among refugee populations and how FilmAid’s work impacts on the lives of refugee populations.

By understanding the Kenya program approach better, we hope to be able to apply learning to the Jordan programs. We reviewed reports on the above-mentioned five programs and conducted interviews with the following FilmAid Kenya staff and partners:

- Stella Suga, FilmAid Kenya, Country Director
- Fatuma Roba, FilmAid Kenya, Acting Field Manager, Dadaab
- Charity Kola, FilmAid Kenya, Field Manager, Kakuma
- Mordecai Odera Robins, FilmAid Kenya, Program Director
- Magu Ngumo, FilmAid Kenya, Creative and Content Director (outgoing)
- Aroji Otieno, FilmAid Kenya, Creative and Content Director (incoming)
- Charity Kola, FilmAid Kenya, Field Manager, Kakuma
- Samantha Wamani, Program Associate, Akili Dada
- Ann Njeru, Communications Manager, Akili Dada
- Gretel Truong, Film Campaign Manager, The Malala Fund
- Lindsay Guetschow, Film Campaign Director, The Malala Fund

In the absence of longer-term impact evaluations, it is difficult to assess impact in terms of sustained behavior changes among program participants. We can say, however, that FilmAid’s approaches and methodologies follow good participatory practices and address gaps in programming for refugees and host communities. FilmAid’s content work has been assessed based on community feedback in some cases. Community outreach programs have been tracked in terms of number reached and in some cases, pre-and post-tests that aim to measure knowledge and self-efficacy. Evidence of the impact of skills-building and resilience-focused programming is limited, however, to individual success stories and anecdotal evidence of success. When it comes to partnerships, FilmAid’s work can be shown to contribute in some cases to greater uptake of particular services, such as an increase in mothers giving birth in hospitals, or girls going to school, or men visiting a clinic to be circumcised for better HIV prevention.

Below we share insights drawn from interviews with FilmAid Kenya staff and partners alongside examples of measurable change in cases where it has been documented. These insights can be used by FilmAid to map out a longer-term approach for work in Jordan.
1) How do FilmAid Kenya programs enhance voice and participation?

_Being a participatory organization at the core._

Charity Kola, Kakuma Field Manager describes FilmAid Kenya’s approach as participatory. Programs are designed with communities, through community meetings, creative feedback sessions, and focus group discussions before design so that participants are engaged even before implementation. During implementation, FilmAid periodically engages participants at different levels. “If it’s film production, we engage them from the beginning – the conceptualization, scripting, pre-testing, all the way through to the very end of the film.” Through filmmaking and journalism programs, she adds, “refugees are able to tell the world their own stories, their experiences.” They also influence communications geared toward social change within their own communities. “If the community sees that this is information from one of them, then if it’s a problem they will really take a step back and look at it. But if it’s done externally they feel like it’s a solution or idea being imposed on them.”

_Respecting local knowledge and treating people as equals and with dignity._

Stella Suga, FilmAid Kenya Country Director, considers that many organizations may say that they are participatory or would _like_ to be participatory, “but for us, it’s really our practice.” She notes that FilmAid respects the knowledge that people bring, and that the participatory approach protects dignity and encourages trust. Fatuma Roba, FilmAid Kenya, Acting Field Manager, Dadaab, agrees. “The way we engage the community is very different. We go out, we move from one block to another. We use our own creativity to address the topic. We have ways of addressing issues. We involve artists to drive the message home. If there is need for quick communication we are good at that. Bulk SMS, or events, or whatever. Our methodology always involves people at a deep level. Our films are so deep. Those who are literate or not literate can sit with us. We use the local language. We have content in all languages not just the main languages.” FilmAid engages the community in film production, and this make the films more relatable. “If we want to produce a film on motherhood – women, delivery, babies, We will mobilize the community who addresses the issue. We have mothers on board. We have skilled young people making the films.”

_Deep involvement of communities in defining and addressing challenges._

Mordecai Odera Robins, FilmAid Kenya, Program Director, explains that FilmAid’s approach uses communications to address development issues. “It begins with the community participating in the design of the project. Biannually we go around and interview change agents, stakeholder, leaders, etc. to understand areas of needs and concerns and based on that we develop our priorities. We do needs assessments that inform the areas we need to focus on and how to tackle these issues being raised.” Mordecai notes that program
implementation is community driven because 80% of FilmAid’s staff come from the communities FilmAid serves. “We call them outreach facilitators and they are tasked to use media content to attack individual attitudes, knowledge, perceptions and facilitate them toward a desired way of behavior.”

Centering media on the community and its voice.

Working with staff and community level outreach facilitators means that programs can include various languages and dialects and appeal to cultural nuances. Community facilitators go

### Table 2.
A description of the different C4D approaches (from UNICEF’s 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C4D Approach</th>
<th>Key Features</th>
<th>Participant Groups</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Advocacy                            | • Focuses on policy environment and seeks to develop or change laws, policies, and administrative practices  
                                  | • Works through coalition-building, community mobilization, and communication of evidence-based justifications for programs. | • Policymakers and decision-makers  
                                  | | | • Programme planners  
                                  | | | • Programme implementers  
                                  | | | • Community leaders  
| Social Mobilization                 | • Focuses on uniting partners at the national and community levels for a common purpose  
                                  | • Emphasizes collective efficacy and empowerment to create an enabling environment  
                                  | • Works through dialogue, coalition-building, group/organizational activities | • National and community leaders  
                                  | | | • Community groups/organizations  
                                  | | | • Public and private partners  
| Social Change Communication         | • Focuses on enabling groups of individuals to engage in a participatory process to define their needs, demand their rights, and collaborate to transform their social system  
                                  | • Emphasizes public and private dialogue to change behavior on a large scale, including norms and structural inequalities  
                                  | • Works through interpersonal communication, community dialogue, mass and digital social media | • Groups of individuals in communities  
| Behavior Change Communication       | • Focuses on individual knowledge, attitudes, motivations, self-efficacy, skills building, and behavior change  
                                  | • Works through interpersonal communication, mass and digital social media | • Individuals  
                                  | | | • Families/households  
                                  | | | • Small groups  

through intensive training on how to use film for development, reporting writing, basic monitoring and evaluation, and more. “Behavior does not change overnight -- it will take more than 2-3 sessions. We select passionate people who believe in the power of art and film to transform people's lives and we equip them with the right skills. When communities are part of the information collection and design of solutions, films, and topics, then they are also part of the solution. They identify with their own people in the films, they see ‘this is how we are, this is how we need to adjust.’ it's not a foreign film developed by someone, somewhere else and sent to them. It's not talking down to them, because they've been involved throughout the whole thing,” he says. “The biggest thing voice and participation do is create buy in” says Magu Ngumo, outgoing FilmAid Kenya Creative and Content Director. “If I’m coming in myself, it looks agenda-laden because I’m an outsider. But in our programs, people take ownership -- they participate in formulating messages and taking those messages to their wider community. Likewise, Akili Dada, who partnered with FilmAid on programming in Kakuma and Dadaab noted that film is an interesting way to engage with girls. “Most girls respond to visuals, as opposed to just being taught in a session with no visuals. It resonates will with audiences. FilmAid gives refugees a chance to tell their own stories, which is great.”

2) How do FilmAid Kenya’s programs enhance access to information and catalyze behavior change?

In order to begin tracking changes in knowledge and self-efficacy, FilmAid conducted pre- and post-tests in several of the programs we reviewed to measure recall and understanding of messaging. In some cases this knowledge appears to be leading to particular changes in behavior. It is unclear whether this is short- or long- term, due to lack of documentation and measurement over the long-term, because the programs are normally only funded for one year and they do not include sufficient additional funding to measure longer-term change. Staff and partners, and program participants themselves, anecdotally demonstrate enthusiasm, engagement and demonstrable change in areas related to FilmAid’s work, as evidenced through films made by participants, quotes from participants and staff, and as shown in a number of success stories captured in reports. A more thorough and longer-term monitoring and evaluation effort would likely lead to firmer evidence on knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy and longer term behavior change and help to identify the role of FilmAid in contributing to these goals.

Measurable changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors

**UNICEF**

Cholera campaign. In the UNICEF program aimed at cholera education, for example, FilmAid disseminated video messages to out-of-school children and other community members and conducted interactive sessions. Pre- and post-tests showed that the average right response during
the pre-test was 13.4% and 93.8% in the post-test. FilmAid also worked with facilitators and child handlers, training them on the causes, spread, prevention and management of cholera, as well as capturing feedback and incorporating changes into program design. In this case, however, pre- and post-tests showed a mean of 9% out of a total score of 20 in the pre-test and a rise in the mean score to 12% out of a possible 20 in the post-test. These poorer results in the case of facilitators is assumed to be because the tests were conducted in English, which many struggled with. A wide campaign was also conducted, with posters, wall murals, mobile screenings, and t-shirts combined with soap distribution and hand washing facilities. Four focus group discussions were also held with children who had been exposed to messaging and one with unexposed children. Children who were exposed to the cholera messaging could easily recall them, and it was observed that they practiced hand washing. The comparison group struggled to answer basic questions on cholera.

**Access to Peace Education.** In this program, an assessment was conducted and a campaign designed based on skills and knowledge gaps among in-school and out-of-school children. FilmAid worked with children to create an 11-minute video, which was distributed along with a facilitation guide for teachers and swag branded with peace messages. Parents, teachers and community members were also engaged through dialogue sessions on the topic. School-going children participating in the program on average rose from 17.5% in the pre-test to 79.4% in the posttest. For out-of-school children the average right response during the pre-test was 14.6% and rose to 86.4% in the posttest. In terms of adults, the average right response during the pre-test was 9.6% and rose to 54.4% in the post-test.

Other program data was more qualitative and anecdotal, and may be picked up in a final evaluation of the program. Conclusions included that FilmAid’s participatory model fully engages communities and that the success of the project is owed to the accurate development of media content used to start conversations on access to cholera information and peace education. Input from beneficiaries right from the scripting and production of the ‘I Stand For Peace’ video to the assistance offered to distribute the knowledge and skills to most affected populations cannot be overstated.

**US State Department Grant**

Under this grant, which was aimed at strengthening health, protection and livelihoods in Kakuma and Dadaab, FilmAid conducted knowledge and self-efficacy tests on the grant’s core thematic areas: Safe Motherhood, Early Marriage, Hygiene, Access to Peace Education, Peacebuilding, Cholera prevention and Gender Based Violence.

Specifically, for the indicator listed as “BCC activities, 40% increase in knowledge, 40% increase in self-efficacy, 40% increase in improved attitudes, and 40% increase in positive behaviour intent,” the final report shows Dadaab with a 50.2% Increase in knowledge and a 60.85% Increase in self-efficacy; and Kakuma with a 53.5% increase in knowledge and a 58.5% Increase in self-efficacy. These numbers are based on the administration of 994 questionnaires during the final quarter of the project and a total of 712 interviews conducted during video based learning activities in Dadaab. The report notes that there was a spike from 39% to 80% in self-efficacy in the third quarter when a new video-based project “Access to Peace Education for children in and out of school funded by UNICEF was being implemented.
UNHCR
In the UNHCR refugee protection and assistance program, FilmAid conducted a series of capacity building, skills building and awareness raising activities aimed at new arrivals, at risk population, youth and the general community and leadership structures. These covered several thematic areas which were addressed through a mixed approach to communicating with communities that included mass awareness campaigns, film-based workshops, mobile screenings, outdoor night screenings, bulk SMS broadcast and theatre performances and radio. The information was aligned to thematic areas such as gender based violence, health, hygiene and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Knowledge and self efficacy testing employed on a random sample of those participating in FilmAid’s film-based workshops showed a 53.5% increase in knowledge and a 58.5% uptick in self-efficacy in health and protection thematic areas in (Malaria, Hygiene, HIV) and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

FilmAid also implemented activities that enabled persons of concern to make an informed choice concerning return to their places of origin. The information dissemination was done through radio call-in shows, which were conducted in conjunction with partners, and combined with radio broadcasts, film-based workshops and daytime screenings. Information on the rights and entitlements of returnees, security of country of return and where to seek further information on voluntary return were key messages delivered. A reported 200 Somalis made the informed decisions to return and were voluntarily repatriated, and this FilmAid attributes this to their communications work with key partners who assisted the repatriation.

Bamba Chakula
This project was implemented in collaboration with the World Food Program (WFP). It aimed to increase uptake of WFP's vouchers for food assistance. Dubbed “Bamba Chakula,” the voucher system substituted a percentage of the in-kind food rations with an electronic voucher for food, managed through the mobile phone. FilmAid tested and assessed a number of communications elements, including communication channels, formats, culturally appropriate aspects, wording, animation, subtitling and language in the process of creating films that were used as part of a strategy of deep and broad communication. This involved production of short films, radio spots, radio sketches, mass information events: day-time and evening screenings, film-based workshops and series, radio call-in shows, radio public service announcements, mass awareness campaigns (mobile sound car, multiple languages + Q&A and support for residents, and community action plans to continue outreach via local facilitators.

In Kakuma, mass awareness campaigns were considered by those interviewed as the preferred method of receiving information, followed by video workshops and SMS broadcast. In Kakuma, about 90% of beneficiaries interviewed said they were very satisfied with the level of information that they received about the Bamba Chakula Programme. Most of the respondents agree that Bamba Chakula films played a major role in informing the community about the new cash and voucher system. Approximately 95% of respondents interviewed were able to identify the food items that they could purchase using the Bamba Chakula vouchers within the first year of project implementation.

Knowledge tests conducted during the period February 2016 to March 2016 in both Dadaab and Kakuma, reporting an overall 45.4% increase in knowledge among 323 sampled person attending
film based workshops. Dadaab recorded a 38.5% increase in knowledge while Kakuma recorded 52.3% knowledge increase. The sample size respondents were distributed in the following way; 239 were male representing 74% of the total sample size, 84 were female representing 26% of the total sample size. Clients were largely satisfied with an average 80% (83% in Dadaab and 77% in Kakuma) score awarded by participants for good activity durations, subject matter, appropriate venues and facilitators answer and response to question and participatory approaches used in facilitation of the activities.

The critical piece of FilmAid’s programming appears to lie more in the “how” than the “what,” as we explore below:

*Integrating information in any/every other vertical.*

In refugee situations, as has been noted by the CDAC network and increasingly understood by the humanitarian aid sector, information is aid. As Charity notes, “When it comes to the various straight sectors [food, shelter, protection, etc], we are not at the core of every sector, but we support them all with information. Our scope of work falls everywhere, across all of them.”

*Providing timely information that prevents greater future harm and cost*

FilmAid carries expertise in designing communications that reach and engage local populations. As Stella says, “if it's a cholera outbreak for example, we go to the community, we identify the communication channels they use (mobile, television, etc.) and we design a campaign that responds to the problem at hand. We coordinate the outreach and ensure that there’s a proper communication response. We are not a health partner, but we get the correct information from the health partner and get it to the community. What’s important is that we bring efficiency and effectiveness. When we provide timely information in the right language using the right channels, we can avoid the situation deteriorating rapidly. So people are immediately taken away from harm by having the right information. So in terms of the dollar value we ensure that there is less expenditure as it doesn’t get out of hand.”

*Choosing the right language, channel and format to ensure reach and relevance*

FilmAid understands how to choose language, format and channel because it conducts assessments with communities around access and language, and it does pre-testing of scripts and format with refugee and host community members as part of the development of its communications, notes Magu. Charity adds that FilmAid transcends the literacy and language barrier. “We are able to reach out to people not informed by other media because it does not reach them in their own languages. Also we go through multiple channels – radio, SMS, film, mass awareness, and information dissemination through public awareness announcements. We do these in different styles and different areas and they cover most of the camp. So you find that info is disseminated in various forms. If you didn’t get from radio, you get from film or from
public awareness or a poster somewhere or a community discussion.” Messages are also segregated by audience age or gender, and FilmAid assesses whether to work at a broad level that focuses on sharing vital information quickly versus going deep and aiming to achieve longer term behavior change such as that related to gender norms.

**Working on longer-term behavior change goals**

Charity highlights the uniqueness of FilmAid in the humanitarian sector in that the organization works with communication for development and social communication models whereas most of the other agencies are focused on short-term communications. “They may want to communicate around maternal mortality but they often only consider the medical aspects of it. They don’t look into the other socio-economic factors that make women not want to go to the hospital, They don’t think as much of the social part. This is where FilmAid comes in with the theory of social change – we look into the roots of the issues where the other organizations are looking at the leaves. When it comes to measuring of impact, sometimes it’s not hard and fast – it’s not in numbers. Behavior change is hard to measure in numbers -- it’s only achieved over time, not in one instance. It might not even be achieved in one generation – it might take two generations. You can only measure it in stages – if levels of knowledge before the intervention was not there, but you measure knowledge increase, attitude change, then you can measure a portion of the intervention, but it’s difficult.” In Charity’s experience, small group sessions tend to lead to deeper and more lasting behavior change. “Our smaller sessions speak more to emotions and experiences. People realize they might not be the only one dealing with an experience.”

**Tracking individual changes that are witnessed**

Charity considers that much of the behavior change starts with the individual. “Our method starts there and casts a wider net to the interpersonal. Stella also shares this viewpoint, noting that a number of changes have been observed, but they are hard to measure widely. For example, one of FilmAid’s efforts was a campaign to encourage mothers to deliver in hospitals. They began by targeting individuals, and from there to a wider group intervention which included outreach and dialogue. Eventually through trained members of the community outreach advisors and refugee staff, the information reached over 100,000 people. Once this level was engaged, she says, then society began taking action – “mothers trained other mothers and the numbers started growing and we started to see increases in the number of mothers going to hospital to deliver. We’ve seen this process happen with many areas that we are working.”

One story that several FilmAid staff shared is of a young girl who was in the Dadaab camp. Fatuma recounts that “she went back to Somalia but ended up returning to Dadaab because she wanted to continue her education.” The girl had been a part of a film-based workshop called the Girls First program, which promoted girls education and empowerment. Through the Girls First program she came across the Malala Fund supported campaign. “She saw how
Malala fought for her education and she thought – how can I do this? I can’t stay in Somalia, I have to come back to Dadaab to get back into school. She took such a risk to come back to Dadaab to continue and now she is in Nairobi studying. Other parents are saying they have a passion now to keep their girls in school or for women to return to school. Many parents are saying the want their daughters to be like Malala and to speak out, to make themselves heard, not refusing to marry but to finish studying first. When we asked people, many of them say that the film has really made them think. Men have told us, ‘thank you, this has opened my eyes, girls must achieve their goals and I’m supporting my daughter to achieve hers.’ The story of the Somali girl then was repeated among other girls who later participated in the Girls First campaign. Following a viewing of the Malala film, the participating girls came together to share their stories. “They were adolescent girls in the high school system. Their discussions after the film touched on a girl being married off in Somalia and running back to Kenya to get an education. This impacted so much on the other girls who compared their own situations to this particular girl,” says Charity.

Lindsay Guetschow, Film Campaign Director, The Malala Fund also speaks of visiting the Girls First program in Dadaab. “We brought Malala and her father Zia with us and used the film as a training tool. The girls didn’t know who Malala was, but they saw themselves in her. They could relate to her story, her struggles and were inspired that she stood up for herself and her story was a spark for their own growth. Once they were trained in filmmaking they could also stand up and raise their own voices. I felt like I was seeing hundreds of Malalas. The girls had not spoken in front of groups, adults, or men before but they were not shy and it was so profound to see. What FilmAid is doing is really unique. There are so many organizations providing crucial and necessary services for refugees but not many that are providing opportunity for creativity and personal growth that is left behind when they are in this situation. The focus is on their basic needs yet this gives them hope and perspective for a different future.” Lindsay also speaks about the ripple effect. “We talk about this all the time – if you change one girl, it will change her life forever, but it will also have a massive change on her community and her country at large – it’s exponential.” Gretel Truong, Film Campaign Manager at the Malala Fund adds that the Girls First program offered girls a safe space to talk about issues they face and things they want to see change. “They were learning about their own rights, talking to parents about school. They see girls like Malala and it allows them to see a different future for themselves in the camp and beyond.”

Charity mentions another example, linked to the cholera prevention campaign. “There was a day a mother was in one of the dissemination workshops and told us that FilmAid is really...
teaching kids to wash hands with soap. ‘My son is demanding that I give him some soap.’ It’s clear that children are learning a lot from these campaigns,” she says.

Mordecai and Magu both tell of how a campaign on voluntary male circumcision contributed to an increase in men from Turkana (the community that hosts Kakuma) going to the local clinic to be circumcised. “Voluntary male circumcision was introduced as a method of HIV prevention and FilmAid was tasked to provide a messaging campaign about the benefits and why young and old might want to do it and to drive demand. This is a community that has not traditionally circumcised. It involves men and pain and surgery and abstaining from sex for 6 weeks. The method had been politicized as being ‘anti culture’. So we produced a film and designed an outreach strategy to tackle those perceptions and brought in the benefits of circumcision from a medical point of view. We captured a baseline before intervention and in that county HIV/AIDS services were getting around 500 clients every month for HIV services. One month after the campaign, the amount doubled, in two months the number was four times what it had been. So we could tell we were driving demand for services. Similar to our work with maternal health and delivering in hospitals. We’re driving demand for services through practical arguments through film and letting people them make a choice. So those are the things we do,” explains Mordecai.

3) How does FilmAid Kenya contribute to creating space for input and feedback?

The CDAC network and the humanitarian sector in general have highlighted the importance of involving populations affected by conflict or disaster in programming as we highlighted earlier in this paper. Alongside this call for greater consultation and engagement is the recognition that listening to the affected populations and host communities not only improves relationships and reduces conflict, but it enables better programming in the cases where feedback is welcomed, responses are provided by agencies, programs are adjusted, and people see that there is responsiveness among agencies to hear them and to make changes. Because FilmAid works so closely with communities and the approach is participatory, the organization can help to open space for feedback and carry that feedback to other agencies. FilmAid’s own work is also an example of constant testing and feedback from the target population, because the filmmaking process involves research, input and testing of language, format and message, all of which are adjusted to ensure relevance and acceptance by the viewers of these films.

As Stella says, “Over the years, the trust that FilmAid has with the communities has been seen. Many times communities come to us about our programs but also about things happening in the community where they would like an intervention. In 2015, for example, somebody was offering scholarships for children to go to Nairobi, but this was actually child trafficking. The communities told us about this and we were able to interrogate it, find out what was going on, and put a stop to it by getting the information to UNHCR. We also informed the community that they should not to trust this person and to protect their families. Another example is that when the World Food Program shifted from an in-kind to a cash and voucher system, the
vendors were increasing prices. We were able to take that information to WFP to tell them this was happening so that they were aware of these consequences.” The feedback channels used to be informal but FilmAid has developed tools to capture the information more systematically and take it to organizations. “We’ve been evolving as the communities and the issues are evolving but we still need to do this more systematically to show communities what we’ve done. Communities are always looking to see ‘I’ve raised this complaint so what has been done?’ We need to close that loop. We are always trying to ensure that the right people get the complaints and the responses are being shared back.”

Charity highlights FilmAid’s community feedback sessions as an avenue for people to complain or to give feedback on services. “This is normally non-sensitive information related to programs,” she says. In these sessions they are often prioritizing their issues and they also let us know their issues. “We have been working on a feedback response which will be ready in a few weeks. Part of the mechanisms incorporated are an email address and an SMS code. It will be ratified in the next few weeks. There are multiple ways of reporting and it can be used in any of our offices.

Fatuma mentions that FilmAid uses a bulk SMS system with people receiving communication from FilmAid. “The community can return feedback to us – it’s 2-way communication.” FilmAid was able to send out messages about a flood last May and community members commonly replied to request more information. “When we send something about health, they may reply and say OK you’ve addressed this thing, but we need you to address this other thing. Also we have radio shows where the community can give us feedback and air their opinions there on the radio.”

Mordecai says that because FilmAid is a participatory organization by nature, a good chunk of FilmAid’s time is spent with communities. “We are always interacting with them. We’re the second most recognized NGO after UNHCR because of our engagement with the communities. Other agencies only interact with them during food distribution like twice a month, but that’s not enough. FilmAid is there on a day-to-day basis providing information through various channels and they are devolved, we’re not waiting for them to come to us, we go to them. Complaints often reach our ears about other agencies, and our role is to be like a viral system to ensure that these complaints reach partners in ways that do not look like we are policing. That’s a challenge. We don’t want to look like we are policing operations.” Mordecai feels this complaints mechanism needs to be collective -- designed by all partners, agreed on, and signed off on. “There is room for improvement here.”

4) How does FilmAid Kenya strengthen skills, capacities and resilience?

FilmAid supports skills and capacities amongst refugees, who are trained in community mobilization, facilitating discussions, and participating in developing content that speaks to the target audience. Additionally a core program area for FilmAid is skills development and livelihood capacity building among youth through filmmaking training. It’s difficult to show
proof of widescale impact, but as with evidence of behavior change, staff have several stories of strong impact on individual participants.

**Longer-term filmmaking and entrepreneurship training enables access to livelihood opportunities**

Magu mentions FilmAid’s training programs as something unique. “We teach skills and entrepreneurship. We take students through a curriculum over 12 months on multimedia. It teaches simple, basic skills that helps them lend a voice to content that they themselves create. It also has a livelihood and entrepreneurial element.” Aroji Otieno, incoming FilmAid Kenya, Creative and Content Director highlights the impact of this program. “We had refugees really interested in what we were doing. They worked as interns for us and then we started thinking about a full-time training program for filmmakers. It’s a one- to one and a half year training program on communications and filmmaking. We have trainers who are staff of FilmAid who take them through the basics and the entry points and we also have experts coming in to work with them.” Some of the youth who were trained in 2014 have begun to work professionally either in their home countries or in the camps. Three alumni have started three small film and photography businesses fourth has started a radio station. “They have formed themselves and got jobs from the other organizations. It has shown that these training programs have provided sustainable skills.” FilmAid has also provided internships and absorbed students into working professionally with them. “The students feel they are able to achieve something with these programs. That gives a bigger impact – for example in Kakuma they are making their own films that are shown in festivals around the region and in Nairobi. We’ve trained about 300 ppl and the results were overwhelming. We used to have 25-30 students per year, and now we have 86 students.”

Fatuma also mentions this area as one of FilmAid Kenya’s success stories. “We have several young men and women who are filmmaking in other places now, including in the US and the UK or in Somalia, working with government or with other agencies. We have some in Kakuma who really came up and are producing films. One girl did a film on female genital mutilation and it was taken to the national level and shown in Nairobi. Sometimes when someone comes out and needs someone to do film work they are trained and able to do it – films, shorts, etc. And they create their own livelihood. So through our training they can really learn enough to sustain themselves later for their own livelihood back in Somalia or elsewhere.” Likewise, Aroji speaks to the psychosocial impact. “I’ve spoken with refugees who have been in the camp since they were two yrs old, but they don’t have work permits and are not able to work. They have to keep busy. The organizations cannot give them enough to do. So we can help them get some psychosocial relief through film, theater, other art. The end product offers the relief but there is a training program that comes with it. So we are getting the beneficiaries busy to pursue their dreams and professions, but also they can work with something that if they go back to their countries or on to other countries – they have a professional skill they can use.” Mordecai also sees the importance in terms of psychosocial relief. “There are people who have been in the camps for over 20 years. So we need to create a space for them to earn a living no
matter the scale of that living. When you do something and get paid for it you get self-worth and worth gives you a psychosocial relief. Sitting around and doing nothing takes a toll on you and your self worth. This bit of work gives them that relief.”

Creating safe space for filmmaking, expression and narrative enables expression and healing

Gretel Truong, of the Malala Fund agrees on the importance of the filmmaking workshops and adds that the Girls First project provided a platform for both entertainment and expression. “It works in a dual sense of both being able to provide a place for people to gather and do things together, and it also provides tools/skills in the camps to earn a living, to express the high level stress or crises they’ve been through thru storytelling, filmmaking, photography.” Likewise, Mordecai says that these workshops allow individuals to open up while also opening up the world to them. “They develop confidence and this becomes a protection for them. They move from a place of vulnerability to being self-sustaining, taking care of themselves. These skills that we don’t really measure are equally important. They are interacting with other agencies, with intellectuals, professionals, building their capacity to cope with the issues they are facing.” Girls in the media and arts programs, he says, often start out very timid. “They don’t want to talk much. They want to take a backseat. But at end they are outspoken, they stand for their rights, they’re able to navigate life in the camp, and they have extra skills and knowledge to adapt to the pressures they face.”

Arts and storytelling help develop social and cultural resilience

FilmAid prides itself as an organization that preserves the arts. When you have like 20 nationalities in a refugee camp, there is a risk of losing traditional art forms, says Mordecai. “They are in a new country, with new relationships, and children are even being born in the camp away from their cultures.” FilmAid preserves culture and the art of storytelling. “In the camps we provide a space for people to continue this art and pass it onto next generation. We also tap into different artforms to design behavior change communications messaging. Some cultures love music and fashion, so FilmAid preserves this and also uses it. We give them space to perform music but we also introduce skills to transform the music into something with a message that is marketable and used by other agencies and FilmAid itself and to also earn a living out of it.” FilmAid’s theater programs serve a triple purpose of entertainment and education along with culture preservation. “People are displaced but need to keep laughing and earning a living and also just living their lives. We provide that space for them to thrive and grow, and we give them space for their voices through the various programs that we implement. We support both individual and community resilience, providing information that is needed in the right format, in a way that enhances individual, informed decisions which lead them to improve livelihoods and living standards because they are informed.”

Engaging local people to run their own programs builds capacities
For Stella, “community members are part and parcel of creating the communication that we give back to the community and they are at the fore of giving the info back – the frontline people are from the community. So that is unique about what we do and how we work.” Community members are also involved in needs assessment. FilmAid also prioritizes hiring people within the refugee population and from within the country. “We identify talent from within the country. If you look at the setup of most international nonprofits, most of their staff are from outside Kenya. But all of FilmAid’s senior management is Kenyan.”

5) How does FilmAid Kenya achieve and measure broader impact?

Some films produced by refugees reach decision makers and the wider public

Though FilmAid’s work is centered on behavior change and social change communications in refugee camps and nearby host communities, some of that work, because it is in the form of films and media, reaches the broader public and decision makers. “We use these films to talk about the positive impact of refugees in the country, to talk about context and cause of refugees, why they are there. We can sometimes take this to the mainstream media in Kenya and bring the voices of refugees into these conversations. We do this in partnership with other organizations who are good in direct advocacy and they are able to use our materials to influence policies and advocate for better policies for refugees,” says Stella.

By supporting shifts in how humanitarian aid is delivered

Stella believes that “FilmAid is almost at the peak of its mission. For a long time people didn’t understand. There was a lot of work in the development sector on behavior change communication and such. But now there’s also been a big shift concerning the role of communications in humanitarian work. CDAC has really helped show more clearly that communication is what allows a person to be protected because they’re aware of what is happening, of their responsibilities. Communication and information is a component of protection and the wellbeing of a person. OCHA has understood this and they have played a key role here. Basically what we’ve been doing is what everyone’s looking for now.” This is seen also in the shift in UNHCR funding rubrics, which formerly did not include communications. “We were locked out because their tool didn’t allow them to give us money because there wasn’t a category for communications – but now they have an objective that’s related to communication.” Stella sees that a clear shift is starting. “This is really FilmAid’s time. We are the most well-rounded organization that is already doing this. All the things that are now being entrenched in how aid should be done are things that FilmAid is already doing. What everyone is looking to do now is the culture that we were born with.”

Through partnerships and local solutions to challenges
A key point from Mordecai is that partnership is critical because communications cannot reach its objective on its own. “If you are talking about service delivery, you have to have the service! So the agencies play a very important role. There are not enough resources to go around and crises are growing. We can tell people they have a right to have a treated mosquito net, but if the ICRC doesn’t have the nets then it’s an issue.” To manage these challenges, it’s important to support communities to evolve their own solutions. “Enabling environments and resilience are also critical – we do community action plans so that communities can address some of this on their own without waiting for an agency to do something or provide material. What can you do on your own to clean up the community? Can you get a small grant from a business owner for supplies? Can you establish dumping areas?” According to Aroji, relationships with partners and consortia support impact and scale, but they can also pull FilmAid away from its own center of gravity. Because FilmAid works on communication and information campaigns with partners, its programs change from year to year and consistency is lost. “If we had a program that was running year after year and partners came to work with us and there was a clear focus, we would be better able to show impact.” As it is, FilmAid is beholden to the logistics of these other agencies and at times the work can resemble service provision rather than agenda setting. “It’s time for us to set the direction. We have enough experience. We know communications and we know the community. We have data on the best communications practices. We know the best way to reach the masses individually and as a mass and the right media to use. Our vision is very clear – projecting hope and bringing in change,” considers Aroji.

**Difficulties in measuring long-term impact**

Hard and fast data on the softer side of behavior change and capacity-building programming can be difficult to obtain, especially for programming that does not extend beyond one year. Some funders do not require or fund the capturing and processing of the data needed for this kind of long-term impact measurement. It has been difficult for FilmAid to gain funding to do the M&E because often private sector funders are not interested in that. But when funders don’t provide funding for the monitoring and evaluation, it becomes difficult to create data, insights, or evidence -- which in turn leads to obstacles to funding. FilmAid sees the need to to generate learning from its experiences as it deals with logistical and operational challenges of working in these environments. While funders are thinking in project terms, FilmAid is thinking in long-term, in behavior change terms. That is impossible to achieve solely via a short term pilot.

There is a fundamental misunderstanding about the use of media in the humanitarian context. FilmAid doesn’t do advocacy or marketing, or use communications brand building, brand awareness, or brand impact, but rather uses communication as a tool for programs. There is an inherent bias when it comes to evaluating the effectiveness of media that if a film is shared in a camp but doesn’t reach someone’s social media feed in the US, that it has been a failure. This is a by-product of the journalistic framing of communications work. Some NGOs do small workshops with a primary goal to feed the news cycle rather than to do longer-term skills-
building with youth. FilmAid does not engage young people in filmmaking training so that it can create a piece for external marketing but rather to engage the youth in building soft and hard skills and to support behavior changes at the local level. In the context, it doesn’t make sense to do a 5-day workshop and then leave. The organization needs a stronger commitment for the long run. It matters less if the media makes it out of the camp, and more how refugees access media channels and relationship and how they create their own media and contribute to their own cultures. In this context, the existing measurement rubrics are inadequate to measure this kind of work.

Charity notes that there is soft data. “People appreciate the work that we do. You’ll find that people will say that they owe their success to FilmAid. Recently one of our former students called Amina was featured in the Kenyan national newspaper because of her film premiering on Female Genital Mutilation. It’s a film she directed and she won an award in 2015. This may look small in number, but if looked at more widely, it would reach a great population in term of future impact. Aroji agrees, “the next question would be whether we have an impact in 5 or 10 years, but they always want us to show impact in one year.” Some funders have supported FilmAid to evolve their monitoring and evaluation, and FilmAid welcomes this.

Programs like Bamba Chakula and the Girls First program have had material impact which could be measured by tracking access to and improvements in service delivery. A challenge for measuring impact, however, is that FilmAid is unable to do the final tracking. While FilmAid does referrals, it cannot track critical outcomes of whether students do seek and get services. The organization is able to measure knowledge but the most important thing is tracking the action, the change, the long term change. A young woman seeking healthcare it not long term social change, it’s just an action.

The team from Akili Dada, also expressed an interest in having a better understanding of the impact in the girls they worked with one year on. “We haven’t had contact with them since the project ended, and we don’t know what kind of a longer term impact we had,” they note.

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Focusing on better monitoring and evaluation going forward: the SPARK program

One of FilmAid’s newer grants, the SPARK program, works at multiple levels, and includes advocacy around peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities. It works at the local level with the two groups and also at the national level to share how communities can prosper and live together and the importance of diversity. For this project, FilmAid is collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, and also conducting a market survey to determine whether there is a market in the camps for the media skills students are being trained in. An assessment towards the tail end of the project will indicate how many students get jobs or start business. “The evaluation will look not at how many students we’re trained, but at how many actually got business that benefited them. If we are talking about peaceful coexistence, then what – are we seeing less conflict?” says Mordecai.
Thinking about higher level advocacy work

Aroji notes that at this point, FilmAid does not work directly on advocating to the government. “The question is, do we want to play a more active role? What would that mean? Is there a need to be clearer on the advocacy aspect? If we feel FGM needs govt attention, should our movies change from creating awareness in the camp to asking the govt and other orgs to do more about it? Do we want to blame the govt and orgs? Or where does that leave us? It’s an interesting kind of discussion to take forward regarding effectiveness in the scope of the crisis.”

FilmAid Jordan

FilmAid’s programming in Jordan is relatively new. The organization began supporting Syrian refugees in March 2016. FilmAid has implemented three pilot programs in Jordan, bringing its model of mobile cinema and camp screenings, film-based workshops, and visiting artist workshops to the Syrian refugee camps of Zaatari, Azraq and the Emirati and to urban refugees in Amman, Mafraq and Irbid. Through partnerships with the Silk Road Ensemble, The Malala Fund, and Another Kind of Girl, FilmAid set out the following objectives designed to create a foothold for future programming in Jordan:

1. To support the empowerment of girls’ and girls education through film screenings and film-based workshops.
2. To provide skills-based training workshops to develop concrete communication skills.
3. Provide cultural based arts programming through collaboration with local artists and the Silk Road Ensemble.

To learn more about FilmAid’s programming in Jordan, we reviewed documentation related to three programs as shown in Table 4 below.
Table 4. FilmAid Jordan Programs reviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project and Location</th>
<th>Program focus</th>
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| *He Named me Malala Impact Campaign*                                                | • A two-month outreach campaign and screening series in three locations in Jordan aimed at changing the underlying perception of the value of adolescent girls’ completion of secondary education, and their viability as community leaders and advocates.  
  • Building on previous work with Syrian girls in 3 refugee camps and urban areas in Jordan, FilmAid targeted refugees in camps and those who are living outside the camp system and deployed storytelling-focused communication and self-expression training, including:  
  ○ Psychosocial and educational mobile cinema screenings  
  ○ Girls mentorship and self expression creativity-based workshops |
| Image Nation, The Malala Fund, Global Giving, Lutheran World Federation               |                                                                                           |
| $74,000                                                                             |                                                                                           |
| Jordan                                                                              |                                                                                           |
| Sep 2016-Aug 2017                                                                   |                                                                                           |
| *Girls, Cameras, Action: Video Storytelling Project with Syrian refugee girls in Jordan* | • A two-month outreach campaign and screening series in three locations in Jordan aimed at changing the underlying perception of the value of adolescent girls’ completion of secondary education, and their viability as community leaders and advocates.  
  • Building on previous work with Syrian girls in 3 refugee camps and urban areas in Jordan, FilmAid targeted refugees in camps and those who are living outside the camp system and deployed storytelling-focused communication and self-expression training, including:  
  ○ Psychosocial and educational mobile cinema screenings  
  ○ Girls mentorship and self expression creativity-based workshops |
| Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences                                          |                                                                                           |
| $15,000                                                                             |                                                                                           |
| 2016                                                                                |                                                                                           |
| *Support for FilmAid Kenya and Jordan (Mafrak, Zaatari, Irbid in Jordan)*            | • FilmAid implemented three pilot programs in Jordan this year, bringing our model of mobile cinema and camp screenings, film-based workshops, and visiting artist workshops in Mafrak, Zaatari and Irbid.  
  • Through partnerships with the Silk Road Ensemble, The Malala Fund and Another Kind of Girl, implement the following objectives designed to create a foothold for future programming in Jordan:  
  ○ To support the empowerment of girls’ and girls education through film screenings and film-based workshops.  
  ○ To provide skills-based training workshops to develop concrete communication skills.  
  ○ Provide cultural based arts programming through collaboration with local artists and the Silk-road ensemble. |
| Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA)                                          |                                                                                           |
| $60,000                                                                             |                                                                                           |
| Aug-Dec 2016                                                                       |                                                                                           |
a) What has FilmAid Jordan achieved and how?

As noted earlier in the document, the goal of the program review is to better understand how FilmAid Kenya’s approaches enhance voice and participation, access to information, capacity strengthening (soft and hard skills) among refugee populations and how FilmAid’s work impacts on the lives of refugee populations; how these approaches were applied in the context of its programming in the Jordan setting; and how organizations throughout the sector can apply and/or enhance these programming approaches with Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, and beyond.

We reviewed documentation related to the above-mentioned five programs and conducted interviews with the following FilmAid Jordan staff and partners. Below we share insights drawn from interviews with FilmAid Jordan staff and partners who have been involved with the above mentioned programming, including:

- Amer Tubeishat, FilmAid Jordan, Program Director
- Laura Doggett, Another Kind of Girl Collective
- Kristen Tymeson Rittenhouse, FilmAid, Partnership and Communications manager (former)
- Lindsay Guetschow, The Malala Fund, Film Campaign Director
- Flavia Draganus, Head of Communications for International and US Programs, International Rescue Committee
- Natalia Tapies, Regional Senior Advisor, Youth Initiatives, Middle East and Eurasia, Save the Children

1) How does FilmAid Jordan operate and what are the implications?

FilmAid Jordan has been operating for a very short time, and in Jordan FilmAid operates through partnerships only and does not always have direct access to camps (different than in Kenya, where it has official status to work in Dadaab and Kakuma).

Kristen Tymeson Rittenhouse, former FilmAid Partnerships and Communications manager comments, “the difference between Kenya and Jordan here is how most of the populations in Kenya are in camps. They’re separated from the rest of society in a pretty significant way. In Jordan they are almost all in urban pockets -- Syrian refugees next to Palestinian refugees living near Jordanians. FA’s programs in Jordan could benefit from working with already-formed community centers and spaces and making sure refugees have a voice there and are welcomed by the host community. Really focusing a lot more on refugee and host community relations was something I saw as really interesting.”
The structural set-up of the refugee situation in Jordan has implications for how FilmAid might consider its approach. As Flavia at the International Rescue Committee notes, “if you go to Azraq in Jordan, for example, regardless of their economic status, everyone does have some version of a smart phone. They use social media, apps, Facebook. They communicate with friends and family to get information about what’s happening at home, about refugee routes, other things. They access information on their own devices. People seek out their own information.” For this reason Flavia suggests that FilmAid consider a shift in approach and use new communication channels that refugees currently are used to accessing. “Producing apps, content, and materials that refugees can download while online and then use or see when they are disconnected or offline later would be incredibly useful.” Flavia also feels that the use of short videos in smaller venues and safe spaces could work. “Having a variety of material designed and adapted to their situation and their realities would be powerful. More information is always better,” she says, and “varying the channels to disseminate information is a good idea.”

Programming in Jordan paused in January due to lack of funding to continue. Doing project based work in multiple locations in Jordan without consistency did not allow FilmAid’s methods to flourish. For example, doing a 3-month program separated by 6 months, and then another 3-month program, disrupts regular contact with the community and prevents them from having ownership and expressing their needs. Additionally, having strong partnerships over the longer-term helps with impact measurement.

Amer Tubeishat, FilmAid Jordan’s program director, considers the organization’s programs as “unique and promising,” because they touch on issues that are not normally addressed within conventional programming. “Most people working on girls’ education and early marriage are doing it very traditionally, with awareness raising that is not really effective, whereas FilmAid’s approach brings new ideas, tools and mechanisms.” Amer feels that the influx of refugees and funds has created NGO bubbles that are superficial. They target youth, women, girls, and children in Jordan because there is a lot of funding but many of the programs are ineffective with little impact. FilmAid’s work is different because it brings in unconventional ways of raising awareness and changing behaviors and addressing psychosocial issues and trauma that are seen in refugees. Amer feels that FilmAid’s work in Jordan is very promising, but that it has been difficult to raise funds for it. Because FilmAid implemented activities and achieved impact with relatively minimal cost, Amer feels the organization should have considered wider range of funding in Jordan, such as the UN and other agencies. This can be difficult, however, since the UN normally requires a sustaining funder in order to add its own funds to the mix. High turnover in Jordan made it difficult for FilmAid to establish sustained relationships from one program to the next.

Natalia Tapies, who formerly worked with FilmAid and now heads Save the Children’s youth initiatives in the Middle East and Eurasia, noted Jordan is currently saturated with high capacity grassroots organizations. “The region is very big, and the crisis is not just here in Jordan,” she says. “I would do a scoping exercise to see where there is more space for working. Jordan is a
good entry point, but why not explore Northern Iraq? Or Mosul? There are a lot of new areas that have been taken back from ISIS that have huge needs. The need for information is enormous.

She went to note there could be opportunities to collaborate with Syrian organizations that are working inside of Syria. “There is a huge need to increase capacity to work with youth in these organizations. There are a lot of Syrian organizations based in Lebanon who could use this type of capacity building,” says Natalia. She recommends getting out of camps and moving to partner with community-based organizations, but she feels that this is a more difficult path. “In Jordan, [the model used by] FilmAid is more a ‘nice to have’ whereas in some other places like Northern Iraq and working with organizations who do work actually in Syria - that would be a ‘need to have.’” Some agencies are beginning to allocate longer-term funds, up to four year programs, for supporting work in Syria and Northern Iraq, especially with returnees.

2) At what levels does FilmAid in Jordan focus its work?

Within the levels and types of work outlined earlier under the Social Ecological Model (See Figure 1), FilmAid’s Jordan work, like that in Kenya, focused at the level of the individual, the interpersonal, and the community.

According to Amer, this makes sense given the short funding timeframes. “If I have three months in Irbid or Mafraq, I would assume I’m staying at the level of individual and interpersonal work. But if I had 2 years or 3 years of programming linked to national organizations and partners, then I’d work at the next two levels of community and organizational. If I’m working with state actors, universities, national institutions like the royal film commission then I’d assume I would work to to affect the whole bubble, the largest layer of policy and enabling environment. So this all depends on time, resources, and networks.” At the end of the day refugees are a mid-term issue in Jordan, says Amer. The situation might continue for another 30 years, but no one knows when it will be solved. In this context, organizations might consider “pick[ing] up from the lower levels of the circle (individual and interpersonal) and build on that as they build relationships and subjects to be covered, and more funding and continuous funding.”

Amer believes that FilmAid brings a unique approach and this helped the team to establish legitimate partnerships. Thus FilmAid was able to slip its programming in with their wider holistic programs. Because FilmAid has a participatory model, it was important for the organization to find partners that would carry on with that model and hold similar values and approaches.

Kristen feels that in order for FilmAid to have worked on behavior change programming that is impactful in Jordan, “we’d have to have a really strong office there with a lot of presence. FilmAid in Kenya has learned that you need good partnerships on the ground or you won’t put
the right information out there. FilmAid will never be a health or livelihoods or protection expert, but working with International Rescue Committee (IRC) on putting out cholera information makes the information FilmAid gives credible. FilmAid is more of a conduit for this information, but the information should be coming from people themselves and the organizations working on the issues. If we got a 1 year project to do ‘access to information’ things, it would be hard without having had a presence in Jordan for a little while. It would be much easier to do it as part of a larger program where you have a chance to build up partnerships and trust over the course of a few years.”

3) What early results were seen in FilmAid Jordan’s programming?

Girls education campaigns and film workshops

Though FilmAid’s programs in Jordan were relatively short-term, results were observed in some areas. FilmAid conducted a two-month outreach campaign and screening series in three locations in Jordan: Zaatari refugee camp, Azraq refugee camp, and the Emirati Jordanian Camp (EJC). Screenings, outreach and discussion occurred from March to May 2016. FilmAid deployed two tested and proven methods of youth engagement through film: larger awareness-raising screenings and targeted film-based workshops. Daytime Screenings were also done, drawing audiences of 100 participants or more followed by discussion sessions about the challenges faced by Malala and the solutions she represents.

Additionally, FilmAid in cooperation with Lutheran World Federation (LWF) conducted two screenings of the film “He Named Me Malala” in Zaatari refugees’ camp in Northern Jordan. They were attended by about 80 girls between 12-18 years old who were already enrolled in LWF’s psychosocial support programs. Many of them had limited access to informal education facilities. Each screening lasted for about 3 hours and included discussions following the film between the LWF, FilmAid facilitators and the audience of girls. During the screening, a lot of scenes made some girls to feel sad and upset. On the other hand there were a lot of scenes that make them feel happy and smile.

The He Named Me Malala mobile cinema screenings and girls education advocacy program in Jordan, supplemented and increased FilmAid’s existing community-based programming supporting girls education. Girls who had previously seen the He Named Me Malala film were targeted for training in writing and filmmaking so they could share their own stories about their own education, deriving inspiration from Malala’s story. With these funds, FilmAid partnered with Another Kind of Girl to conduct two 8-week programs to train 12 girls total in technical and artistic training exercises in filmmaking, photography and writing in Irbid (6) and Zaatari Refugee Camp (6). During the first 7 weeks, the girls developed their voices and visions through writing, photography and filmmaking. They enhanced their skills in scriptwriting, short filmmaking, storytelling, directing, performing, writing, advanced cinematography, editing, and sound. During the last week of the program, the girls produced their own short pieces or
vignettes relating to their experience and aspirations. These vignettes were used to engage program participants as well as family members, friends and the community at large in an effort to promote the inclusion of girls’ opinions and perspectives when discussing girls education within the Syrian refugee community.

In Zaatari, “after film screenings and film-based workshops, partner organizations reported that many girls came back with their parents or their mothers to ask the NGOs to facilitate their rejoining school.” The young girls were motivated and believed in everything they were doing, according to Amer. “They were restless about the things we were doing, the norms and values we were trying to disseminate among frustrated refugees. We used human rights approaches to pursue learning, awareness raising, psychosocial programs. The partner organizations carried the same spirit of FilmAid and the unique tactics of FilmAid have a greater impact than these large organizations even though they have tons of money.”

Laura Doggett from the Another Kind of Girl Collective, who partnered with FilmAid on the Girls, Cameras, Action project, says that the type of programming that FilmAid and her organization did together was very different than what most organizations bring in. She feels that the film workshops were small and focused but had a very deep impact on the lives of the participating girls and young women. “Our program is different. We put a lot of extra work into making it feel like a family. We make it a really special environment. That stands out in terms of media programming. I don’t see this as a communications effort at all – I see it as a young women’s development program.” Laura highlights the skills that girls participating in the film workshops gained in confidence and collaborating. “Those are foundational skills to be successful in whatever they take on in the future. I was just speaking with one of the girls. She said I love how you put that attention into each of us. They’ve talked about having a place to express what they haven’t said or expressed elsewhere. This is a strength of visual media and photography and arts. All of the girls produced work and every person has some kind of artist in them. The films are very expressionistic short films that people were not expecting. After food and shelter, it helps make their lives meaningful. They transform individually and when their media goes out and people value their media they feel like they have a voice in the larger world. They feel valued and important.”

The film workshops in Jordan helped girls overcome their shyness and enabled them to express themselves in various aspects of their lives. Parents also were impacted by seeing their daughters blossom. “The parents at the final screening are shocked and they cry and laugh and realize ‘oh, this is what they’ve been doing!’” The girls also gain confidence to initiate projects, to initiate anything in their lives – it wouldn’t necessarily exist if they – and I say this because they tell me this – they say that ‘if we’d been back in Syria’ – they are from southern Syria, they leave school in 6-7 grade; they say they wouldn’t have been doing any of this if the war hadn’t begun and they’d stayed in their villages. This type of programming for the groups in Jordan – it’s especially important,” says Laura.
“The girls in our programs have a lot of ambitions they are pursuing now that they were just not pursuing before. One wants to be a lawyer, she’s taking computer classes, and wants to do all this stuff for the betterment of herself. You can point to any girl we’ve been working with and I can tell you stories. But especially, all of them are back in school. They are normally either married or they have to start working by this age. But now they have cameras and computers – they are making their livelihoods that way. They are seeing that they can actually have a future that includes family and work that they really want to be doing and that will provide for them – it’s pretty new for the girls coming from that region of Syria. Girls from a different part – in cities – it would be a different story maybe and I can’t speak to that. A lot of the NGO programming is aimed at teaching people to make soap and this is not what girls want. Maybe their mothers do, but they want computers, laptops, films, etc. They talk about wanting to be an example – ‘I want to show my own community that there’s a different way that we can move forward. Change is slow but it’s possible.’” They also talk about the need to to be able to take what’s inside and put it outside through creative expression, says Laura.

Yo Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble project to support peaceful co-existence

In partnership with Participant Media and the Silk Road Project, the educational arm of Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Ensemble, FilmAid launched an arts-based program in Jordan with more than 1,220 participants. Through visual art workshops, screenings of the film The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, as well as facilitated discussions FilmAid’s programs focused on cultural resilience in the face of displacement, and the role of self-expression and creativity in facilitating civic and cultural engagement among displaced youth. In the urban areas of Mafraq, Irbid and Amman, as well as the three main refugee camps of Zaatari, Azraq and the Emirati camps in Jordan, Syrians and Jordanian youth participated in sixteen film-based workshops, nine film screenings and fifteen musical and visual workshops. In the facilitated workshops FilmAid explored difficult questions of identity and ambition in the context of long-term displacement. Questions like “What is my culture?” “What is my concept of home?” “What can I do in the face of revolutions and cultural dislocation?” and “What is my role in my society?” functioned as jumping off points for youth to learn how to foster community and cultural resilience through engagement with diverse art forms and personal self-expression.

“After the project,” according to Amer, “lots of Syrian and Jordanian youth picked up on their dreams to be musicians, painters, or pursued other hobbies etc. Some 3 or 4 months later I talked to the principal of that group who said we gained a lot of Syrian refugees who are picking up and pursuing their skills, talents, music, drawing. This helped provide a platform to join existing local initiatives and to connect with local service providers who could then provide another level of intervention for these refugees.”

One of the main impacts of FilmAid programming in Jordan was on the local NGOs that partnered with FilmAid. “They started adopting our methodologies – using short films to attract audiences and bring in newer topics. I wouldn’t assume that the short term time of
FilmAid in Jordan had any real impact among donors or the wider ecosystem. A longer term presence might do something more. But this was not enough time to learn from our experiences,” said Amer.

“The project introduces the idea that art can be a vehicle for self-understanding and what is happening to you in a new context. Being a ‘refugee’ becomes an identity even though it’s really just a political status. You bring that word -- that tag -- with you. You become a ‘refugee artist’ not just an artist. The project was an exploration of identity in that sense. There’s a bit of psychosocial relief that comes through processing and exploring - a positive assessment of your own self worth through valuing your own identity and self confidence and self efficacy.”

Though there are some early indications that individuals are experiencing change, Kristen notes that for long-term behavior change impact, “it would need to be a 3-5 year program that focused on a set of messages… with a needs assessment done beforehand to determine the real needs. Is there a public health crisis? Issues with domestic violence? Gender based violence? Girls’ education? What are the real needs? Then find the partnerships for those — eg., a shelter, an advocacy group, a legal group if it were [related to] gender based violence. And then work closely with them to give out the key, targeted messages in different ways to the audiences, whether it’s men, mothers, teachers. And then have really good monitoring and evaluation throughout.”
There are several themes that emerge through a survey of FilmAid’s work in Kenya and the beginnings of its work in Jordan with Syrian refugees:

- Community involvement and ownership start with how an organization is staffed and how programs are designed — e.g., FilmAid Kenya staff are majority refugee and Kenyan. Constant engagement and presence in communities allow staff to get to know, listen to, and hear what communities are thinking and feeling, and to develop trust and rapport that enables effective communication materials. Being seen frequently among the community is critical to develop trust necessary for people to provide feedback and use complaints mechanisms.

- Film-based workshops and media training can help people to re-develop a purpose upon arriving into a situation where they have little control and autonomy; having a purpose helps with self-esteem, psychosocial wellbeing and resilience. Arts and media programs that aim to support preservation and mixture of cultural traditions can help with integration and healthy identities.

- ‘How’ is just as important as ‘what’ when it comes to program implementation and information and communications work.
  - Understanding the full picture and wider social causes that surround behaviors is critical for being able to design effective media strategies.
  - Media should be centered on and in the community and/or target population. The media should be in the "voice" of the target population/community.
  - Research and pre-tests of media are critical to ensure the right message, format, language, and attitude are used.

- Tools need to be adapted to the local situation — for example in Kenya digital tools may not feasible, old tools (such as loudspeakers as one example) are a fine substitute (whereas in Jordan, if the population accesses the Internet, newer kinds of channels may be more appropriate).

- Timely and targeted information in the right languages and through the right channels can prevent larger crises later on. A combination of various channels provide better coverage - these tools need to be adapted to the local situation. For example in Kenya digital tools may not feasible, old tools (such as loudspeakers as one example) are a fine substitute, whereas in Jordan, if the population accesses the Internet, newer kinds of channels may be more appropriate.

- Short and widespread efforts are effective for basic information sharing, whereas deep, focused, and longer-term efforts are required to achieve longer-term behavior change.
This has impact on cost and scale, so an affordable combination also needs to be determined.

- Behavior change doesn’t happen overnight. It’s difficult to measure, especially when grants do not last longer than a year or there is no additional funding to conduct evaluation. Audience reach is easy to measure but does not tell the story of impact or longer-term behavior change. Anecdotal stories/success stories can point to deeper change, but more systematic monitoring and evaluation, along with a firm “Theory of Change” against which to measure, would offer improved learning and evidence of what works, where, and why.

- Collective official feedback mechanisms are needed so that agencies do not get involved in taking sides or creating conflict. However, this is a big undertaking that requires a great deal of coordination among agencies.

- Leveraging funding from private sector media companies who understand the content, especially companies from the region, or with significant knowledge and experience in the region is key.
RECOMMENDATIONS: WORKING WITH SYRIAN REFUGEES

Based on the landscape scan, and our deep dive review of FilmAid’s model and programs as one model for media interventions, we offer insights and recommendations on how organizations might adapt their approach to better support Syrian refugees in camp settings and outside of camps, as the crisis deepens and becomes chronic.

The way forward for response to the Syrian conflict is complex, due to the nature of the conflict and also the constrained state of the humanitarian system. Syria is currently one of many humanitarian crises testing the limits of the abilities of the international system to respond, including but not limited to an ongoing conflict with Yemen coupled with massive food insecurity and a worsening cholera epidemic, threat of famine in East and West Africa, and the increasing need to respond to natural disasters and other impacts of climate change.

In light of these challenges, the conclusions drawn from the World Humanitarian Summit are of vital importance, namely that accountability and community engagement are absolutely essential to effective response. **There is no way to resolve conflict and no way to provide consistent, effective, and timely response without a focus on communications and dialogue with communities.** Any effort to provide assistance in an emergency that does not place community needs front and center, and any effort that does not expend significant effort to understand the needs of communities cannot possibly hope to achieve its goals.

To reach a juncture where this stream of work is prioritized, the effort must be three-fold:

- **The international community and international donors** must prioritize programs and ways of operating that speak to a commitment to community voices and on social change communications and individual behavior change communications
- **Non-profit organizations and aid agencies** must come to terms with prioritizing approaches and programs that not just raise funds and international change behavior but which also reflect the voices of those affected by the conflict directly and programming that can help not only keep them alive but help people live with dignity and purpose in the face of these challenges;
- **There is a pressing need for the private sector** to invest in this way of working, with a particular focus on private sector companies that work in media, communications and advertising where partnerships that transfer skills and expertise are possible.

There is therefore a large opening in the landscape and an opportunity to deepen the landscape for programmatic uses of media and culture-based engagement.

In addition, in all sectors there needs to be more transparency in funding and data that evaluates the impact of programs. Further investigation is needed that looks closely at the
various pools of funding and programming, to assess where funding is being channeled -- specifically what programs are being supported -- and how closely communities play a part in genesis of program planning and execution.

Drawing upon FilmAid’s successes stemming from its methodologies in Kenya, and considering the work the organization has conducted in Jordan with Syrian refugees, there is guidance suggesting direct presence and access to the population will be necessary to produce the best results.

Alternatively, and perhaps more relevant to the Syrian context, organizations should develop expertise in media creation with participation from refugees to open a context-specific program and distribution channels that adapt to the fact that most refugees are not in camps and smartphone access is high. The model that FilmAid has built in facilitating content by refugees for refugees is a plus in this context, and localized content may resonate with the refugee population. Enabling the development and testing of content would benefit the information ecosystem of which Syrian refugees are a part. Combined with the individualized content (accessed via smart phones), organizations can support community- or group-centered programming to support psychosocial work and safe spaces for developing self-efficacy and community cohesion.

For either type of programming effort, efforts that invest in a stronger, sustained presence in camps or in urban setting allow for a better understanding of refugees’ context, and also allow for greater participation in agency meetings where partnerships and funding determinations are often made. (This is the case across the region, whether in Jordan, in Lebanon, which is a base for supporting Syrian grassroots organizations working within Syria, or in Northern Iraq, where large numbers of returnees are expected).

Sustained and strategic engagement with local, grassroots partners already working in the region to develop rapport and build trust for larger-scale work will be a necessary foundation for any western-led or external organization in this work. A partnership mapping exercise would help such organizations determine where to work and which (existing or potential) partner relationships need developing in selected geographies. A more sustained presence in the region is needed in order to build trust, strengthen working relationships, and be seen as a serious player.

An assessment of the communications landscape and preferred communications channels and modes would help the sector determine where there are gaps to fill and where to focus future wide-scale Communication with Communities work. This may be available for camp populations through UNHCR; however, for any organization that plans to work outside of camps (as recommended), they will need to better understand the refugee and host populations’ information and communications needs, access,
habits, and preferences. This is an area where private sector partnerships might be leveraged to better understand the landscape through sharing of information, market research and institutional knowledge.

FilmAid’s strategy of building up from a small program that enables community buy-in and then expanding in a measured and incremental way is a fitting approach and provides a good model for how other organizations might proceed. However short-term grants make this difficult as continuity is lacking and programs are often “one-off.” Donors should consider providing for longer-term grant funding (3-5 years) that matches a sustained relationship with communities.

Organizational monitoring and evaluation systems and frameworks such as those established at FilmAid Kenya provide a model for how to assess impact in the context of Syrian refugees. More focus on how to measure longer term behavior change and impact would help to create an evidence base for both learning and supporting this type of work.

Finally, investment in building production and distribution capacity for Syrian refugees is limited, but necessary for the elevation of refugee participation in decision-making around their own situations, as well as to assist in re-developing purpose and reclaiming agency and autonomy.
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FilmAid uses film and other media to bring life-saving information, psychological relief, and much-needed hope to refugees and other communities in need. www.filmaid.org