

Mtetezi: Daughters of Tomorrow (community screenings)

Ortum Girls Primary School & Nadaluk Women Group – Masol, West Pokot

Date: 20TH-21ST JUNE 2025

Organized by: I_REP FOUNDATION

Partners: Ortum Girls Primary School, Nadaluk Women Group, IREP Foundation

Audience: ~300 schoolgirls, ~55 community members (including elders, women and youth)

1. INTRODUCTION

Mtetezi: Daughters of Tomorrow is not just a film, it is a testimony. A bold, beautiful, and unapologetic reflection of the resilience, spirit, and untold stories of women and girls from remote areas such as Masol, West Pokot. The film offers a raw portrayal of grassroots realities: from the violence of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child marriage to the power of education and community-led transformation.

These two screenings, one at Ortum Girls Primary School and the other with the Nadaluk Women Group marked a deeply emotional milestone. For the first time, the lived experiences of girls and women in the region were not only seen, they were heard with dignity, clarity, and power.

2. SCREENING 1: ORTUM GIRLS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance: Approx. 300 girls, school staff, and select community members

Setting: The school Dining Hall was transformed into a pop-up cinema space. For some students, this was their first time watching a film let alone one reflecting their own stories and realities.

The screening at Ortum Girls Primary School was more than an event, it was a revelation. For the girls watching *Mtetezi*, for the first time, the film mirrored their unspoken fears, hopes, and hidden strength. In a hall filled with young minds, something extraordinary happened: a collective awakening.

Highlights & Impact:

- The screening was followed by an emotional dialogue session.
- Many girls shared their reflections on Faith's story, which mirrors their own.
- Three girls privately approached Domtila Chesang, expressing urgent needs for support:
 - One girl while crying explained that she needs help to continue staying in school as her sickly father can no longer sustain her in school.

- Another who couldn't stop sobbing and took a while to be calmed before sharing a similar plight that her single mom was struggling to keep her in school by doing menial jobs. She says she sees Domtila as her hero and answers to her dream for education.
- A third girl issued a heartbreaking plea to intervene and rescue her younger sister who is scheduled to undergo FGM and be married off:
"My sister is home and she is not in school. My father says that she will be his source of wealth, (dowry) Please help me save her, if you do manage to save and bring her to school, we will never go home again until we finish school."



Personal Reflections from the Girls

As the credits rolled and the discussion began, three powerful voices emerged:

- **The School President**, standing tall with her heart visibly moved, declared:
"From today, Domtila is my mentor. I want to follow in her footsteps. I want to bring change in my community."

Her words were met with loud applause and affirmation of budding leadership ignited by representation.

- *Another girl, her eyes still glistening with tears, shared:
"Now I know it's possible to come from my community and fly as high as I want if I have education."
This was not just a statement. It was a breakthrough moment of belief.*
- *At the very back, almost unnoticed, a quiet voice rose:
"I have learned the effects of FGM. It's my duty now to help stop it."
Her courage to speak especially from a place of silence embodied the true essence of the film's impact.*

Peer-to-Peer Empathy & Dialogue



The following day, during informal conversations and reflection sessions, the school environment had visibly shifted. Many of the girls expressed a new level of empathy and understanding particularly those who come from regions where FGM is not practiced.

Girls shared that they would now be more kind and supportive toward their peers from affected communities. One student said:

"I never knew what some of my classmates have gone through. Now I understand why they are quiet sometimes or why they don't talk about home. I will love them more."

This shift in mindset represents a rare and powerful form of change, one that doesn't require policy or programs but begins with human connection and awareness.

The screening became a bridge:

- *Between girls from different backgrounds*
- *Between lived experience and safe learning spaces*
- *Between silence and voice*

Key Outcomes from Ortum Screening:

- *Inspired leadership and mentorship aspirations*
- *Strengthened peer support and emotional intelligence*
- *New self-belief among girls from marginalized communities*
- *Enhanced awareness on FGM and child marriage as urgent human rights issues*

Emerging Themes:

- The urgency of expanding education access
- The unseen violence of selective empowerment
- The transformational power of storytelling as a tool for advocacy and action

3. SCREENING 2: NADALUK WOMEN GROUP, MASOL



The second screening took place in Masol with the Nadaluk Women Group women who not only live the story *Mtetezi* tells, but shaped it. Many were part of the film as cast members, speakers, and changemakers. Bringing the screening back to them was not just an act of inclusion; it was an act of honoring their truth.

This was a deeply emotional homecoming. As the film played, the atmosphere shifted from quiet curiosity to visible pride, joy, and tears. For many, this was their first time seeing themselves reflected back not in a mirror, but on a screen that dignified their voices and struggles.

Attendance: Approx. 55 community members, including an elder, Nadaluk women group (featured in the film) mothers, Youths and local champions

Setting: A community-centered gathering in Masol at a local church, where the women watched themselves portrayed with respect and authenticity on the big screen.

Community Reactions:

- Tears, laughter, and moments of stunned silence punctuated the screening.
- The women were overwhelmed and deeply moved to see their lives, language, and efforts represented with honesty.
- One elder commented:
"We have spoken these truths for years in our circles, but today, the world will see it too."

That is power.”

Voices from the Community

One woman, speaking on behalf of many, said:

“We are very happy to be featured in this film. Now we can see ourselves on a big screen. We are indeed happy.”

Another, turning to Domtila Chesang with gratitude and emotion, said:

“Thank you so much for standing with us. Thank you for being our pillar. By now, maybe this group would have broken, but because of your support and love, we keep educating others and empowering ourselves.”

These words reflect the heart of what Mtetezi represents: visibility, recognition, and sustained solidarity.

*One of the most striking moments came when **Faith’s mother, whose** story is intricately woven into the film. expressed immense joy at the support her family has received, and more importantly, at the transformation in Faith since she joined school.*

She proudly stated:

“I am ready to take Faith’s younger sister to school.”

This declaration was a pivotal moment, a signal that change is not just theoretical, but tangible. Yet, even in this progress, the deeper struggle persists. When asked about Faith’s twin, she hesitated and repeated the same reasoning:

“She is too strong and useful at home. She cooks well. She is mature. She will bring cows.”

This is the complex, layered nature of progress in contexts shaped by tradition and economic survival. It is a reminder that change is a journey, not a single event.

Still, this moment marked an important beginning. The very act of watching Mtetezi opened space for reflection, self-questioning, and dialogue. Faith’s mother is seeing school not just as an outside concept but as a door she can open.

Feedback Summary:

- The community women expressed full ownership of the film.

- They gave their blessings for *Mtetezi* to go beyond Pokot, declaring:
“Take this film to the world. Let them know who we are and what we endure.”
- There was a strong call to ensure that more screenings take place within similar underserved communities.

This screening was not just a moment of entertainment, it was a mirror. And in that mirror, the women of Masol saw themselves not as victims, but as leaders. They gave their full blessing for *Mtetezi* to be shared across Kenya and beyond

4. THE STORY OF FAITH: A SYMBOL AND A SEED



Among the stories depicted in *Mtetezi*, one stood out like a shaft of light: Faith. A 13-year-old girl from Masol, the only one among her eleven siblings to attend school. During the film’s production, she secured admission to Ortum Girls, a direct ripple of the movement. Her journey speaks to the tangible impact of community storytelling.

Yet, behind Faith’s rise is her twin still at home, still burdened, still unseen. Deemed too “useful” to be allowed an education, her story exposes the quiet cruelty of systemic gender inequality. *Mtetezi* does not sensationalize this reality. It honors it and demands action.

Faith has already become a beacon of possibility. In just a few months since joining Ortum Girls:

- She speaks Kiswahili and some English - during the film screening her mother said Faith helped her translate some of the parts that were in Kiswahili.
- She walks with more confidence
- Her face lights up when she talks about school
- She sings in the choir

Faith is no longer just a beneficiary, she is emerging as an ambassador for education in her community. Her transformation is not just personal; it is symbolic. She now represents what happens when a girl is seen, supported, and given a chance.

5. REFLECTIONS FROM PARTNERS (I_REP FOUNDATION)

“MTETEZI is more than a film. It is a testimony; a bold and beautiful reflection of the resilience, spirit and untold stories of women and girls from remote places like Masol. For us at I-Rep Foundation, this premiere was a deeply emotional milestone. For the first time, our grassroots work, the lived realities of the communities we serve and the voices we fight for were not only seen they were heard with clarity, dignity and force”

“We carry this movement forward not just for Faith, but for her twin. For the girl too burdened to dream. For the girl on the verge of being cut. For the girl who dares to whisper, ‘I am not ready to be a bride.’”

“Watching the story unfold on screen was like walking through collective memory-painful, proud and powerful. The images from Masol were not dramatizations; they were life, raw and real. The film did not simply showcase our efforts. It honoured our truth.”

“To the African Women Rights Advocates (AWRA), we say thank you. You did not just film. You bore witness. You honoured our struggle without sensationalizing it. You stood with us, not above us. Your lens carried our stories with the care they deserve and the truth they demand.”

6. RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

1. **Expand Grassroots Screenings:**
Roll out more community-centered Screening

2. **Emergency Response Fund:**

Establish a small rescue and sponsorship fund to respond to urgent cases like that of the girl whose sister is at immediate risk of FGM.

3. **Partnership Building:**

Leverage *Mtetezi* as an advocacy tool to build more global partnerships while staying rooted in community voices and leadership.

Picture& Video Annex:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PW0Qfgno3TH7OGOqdbMqsQhyYrLy6Wt?usp=sharing>