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News stories

From Cannes to European Development Days: Kenyan movie “Rafiki”



“There are many actors of positive change in Kenya. Right now the LGBT people who are pushing in a court case are at the forefront of it... making it public in a society that is very conservative... they're pushing for a reform that is needed and necessary for any human being so they are heroes in Kenya”, said Wanuri Kahiu, director of the film "Rafiki". Wanuri participated in a panel organised by the EEAS on LGBTI people and the SDGs during the European Development Days (5-6 June).

“Rafiki” was banned in Kenya for ‘promoting lesbianism’ however this failure turned into triumph as it was the first Kenyan feature film ever to be selected for the Cannes Festival.

The movie supported through the EU funded Programme ACP cultures, tells the story of two girls, daughters of political opponents, who fall in love and find their identity and dreams compromised by a

conservative society.

Wanuri Kahiu stressed the importance of the EU's support for the people on the ground. "They are already many LGBT community activists on the ground. There're also many human rights activists and international organisations. These people are pushing for constitutional change... but we truly believe that the work in the country by the people should be supported first."



[European Development Days \(EDD 2018\)](#) includes a [special avant-première projection of "Rafiki"](#) with the presence of the movie director, Wanuri Kahiu.

Video of 'Rafiki' - Official Trailer (Exclusive)

For its twelfth edition, EDD 2018 's aim was to bring together the European Union's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Gender equality and women empowerment are at the core of European policies and enshrined within the EU Treaties.

Under the main thread of 'Women and Girls at the Forefront of Sustainable Development: protect, empower, invest', the EDD agenda was based on three major themes : 'Ensuring the physical and psychological integrity of Girls and Women', 'Promoting economic and social rights and empowerment of Girls and Women', 'Strengthening Girls' and Women's voice and participation'.

The [EEAS played an active part in EDD 2018](#) with the participation of the High Representative Federica Mogherini, EEAS Secretary General Helga Schmid, and EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and UNSCR 1325 Mara Marinaki, amongst others.

EDD 2018 highlights:

Video of EDD18 - Women & Girls at the Forefront of Sustainable Development

Photo: AFP

www.eeas.europa.eu

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