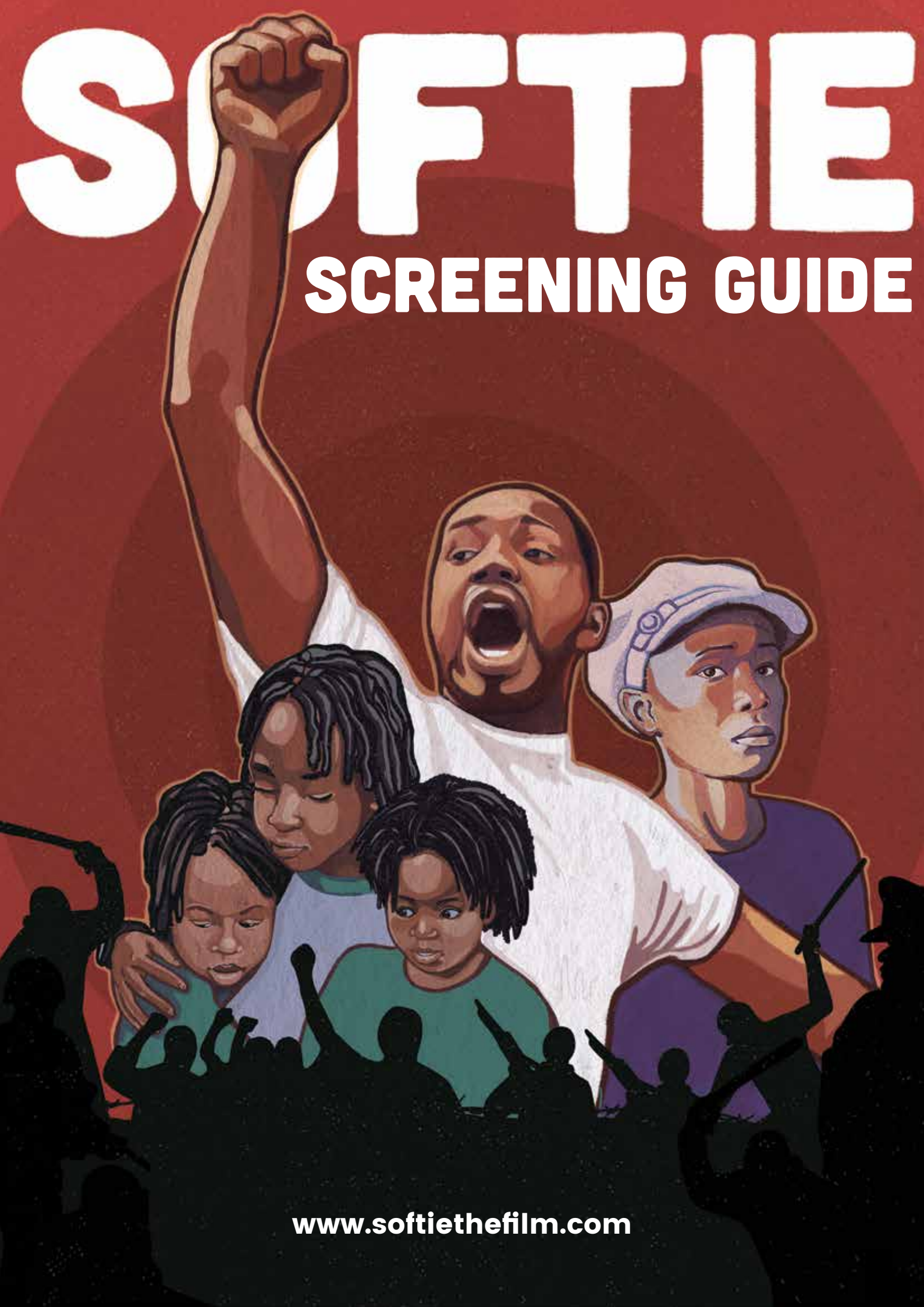


SOFTIE

SCREENING GUIDE



www.softiethefilm.com

A young girl with dark skin and braided hair is shown in profile, looking thoughtfully to the right. She has her hands clasped together near her chin. She is wearing a red garment. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

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INTRODUCTION

As Kenya's most notorious activist enters mainstream politics to challenge social injustice, he faces questions on the cost of his sacrifices, past and present, from his family and himself.

Karibu! Welcome to the Softie screening guide. Softie is a deeply personal and emotionally riveting documentary that captures what is a generally accepted norm of doing politics in East Africa. It uses the complex life of photo journalist turned activist Boniface Mwangi to tell a larger story about belonging, politics and what it means to be Kenyan.

We believe a screening of Softie can do many things for audiences. It is one of the first times that the Kenyan electorate will have the opportunity to see themselves on screen during an election period, and seriously interrogate our collective social conscience and responsibilities as voters and citizens. Some of the key messages Softie holds:

1. Being an active and engaged citizen is how we express our love for our country.
2. Our personal lives are affected by politics even when we are not participating.
3. We know that systemic problems exist, but we have more power than we think. We can make real change within our communities.

Softie often leaves people with diverse thoughts and feelings. The purpose of this guide is to invite audience's to reflect, provoke conversation, and discover new pathways to action. This guide is intended to accompany screenings of Softie wherever possible, including, community centres, home viewing, churches, residential estates, schools etc. We hope that the film inspires, particularly Kenyan viewers, to believe in their power and challenge their leaders from community to national level.

SOFTIE IMPACT CAMPAIGN GOALS



Create a space where Kenyans can question and challenge each other on their responsibility as voters and the quality of leaders we elect.



Enable an environment for increased active citizen participation leading to more progressive and accountable leadership.



Inform and embolden viewers to challenge the status quo in their communities through organizing themselves to push for reforms, support grassroots leaders, and recognize and use the power of their vote.

THE CAST



“When you see activists on the streets fighting for your rights, it’s not just them making the sacrifice. They have families at home who may be unseen but their role can never be discounted. The struggle is not a one-man struggle, it’s a family, it’s all of us.”

— Njeri Mwangi,
Political Activist,
Boniface’s Wife

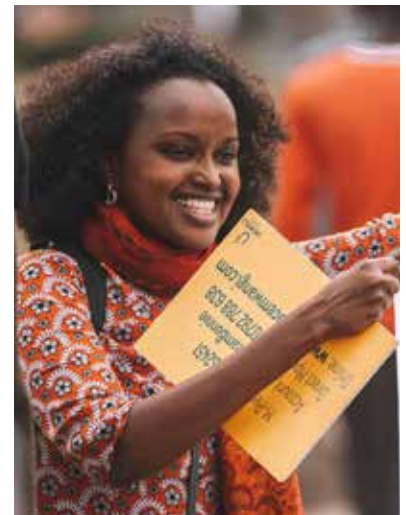


“I want better for my country, a country where everyone has a decent shot in life. Doesn’t matter if you are poor. Doesn’t matter what tribe or gender. That you matter to this country and this country knows you exist.”

— Boniface “Softie” Mwangi

“At your grassroots level, at your own level, you can fight for things you believe in. We need people to speak up, stand out and be a little brave.”

— Khadija Mohammed,
Boniface’s Campaign
Leader



Nate Mwangi – Boniface and Njeri’s Oldest Child



Naila Mwangi – Boniface and Njeri’s Middle Child



Jabu Mwangi – Boniface and Njeri’s Youngest Child

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In 2013 I had the idea to develop an activism manual. It was meant to be a collection of short videos documenting the work of activists around the continent. That is how I met Boniface Mwangi. Four years later, what was to be a manual has turned into an intimate visual portrait and story documenting the thrills, fears, and sacrifices of being an activist. One important question I still have is the implications of living such a life – to the broader community and one's own family? In this case, what comes first, family or country?

The story is set against a backdrop of historical injustices, which post-independent Kenyan governments have used to fester hate between people who generally share similar cultures. Ironically, our current leaders use the same tactics that our former colonizers did – divide and rule by creating “a fear of the other” – using tribal affiliation and voter bribery. Our country has grappled with ‘Fake News’ for over 50 years. Kenyan politicians have spent decades perfecting the dark art of spreading deep falsehoods amongst people, to make sure they despise one another. The outcome is that every 5-year election cycle is characterized by violence. This is done to sustain an even greater obstacle of progress.

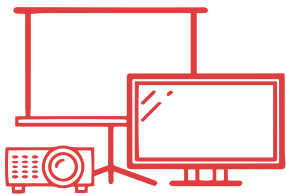
Incidentally, it is this violence that brought the main subject of this story, Boniface Mwangi, into the national and international spotlight. As a young photographer he documented this violence, winning several global and local awards for his bravery, covering the stories of survivors. Boniface's life was forever changed from then on, turning to activism as a means to push for positive transformation of Kenyan leadership. This is how I met him. Boniface's wife, Njeri, has also emerged as a critical element of this narrative. As a witness to what lies beyond the activist and politician that is Boniface, she has provided a rare and remarkable view into the sacrifices that families of activists have to make in their quest for social change.

From dynamic protests, death threats, family fights, and life-changing decisions, this film tells the story of their remarkable journey. In a world where sowing seeds of division continues to be encouraged, I hope that telling this story will inspire you to fight for justice and a more equal and inclusive society in your own way.

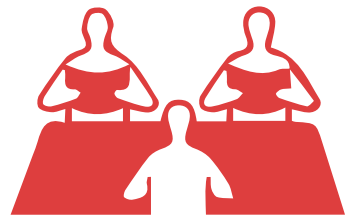


HOW TO FACILITATE A SCREENING

BEFORE SCREENING

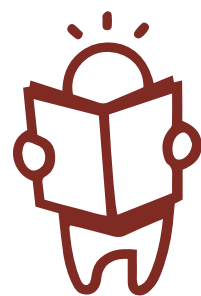


- 1 Ensure you have all the materials including: the film, projector/laptop, screen, audio equipment, softie citizen's guide, and audience survey
- 2 If you have coordinated an after screening panel, share the film's key messages (page 2) to those on the panel BEFORE the screening so they have time to prepare.
- 3 Review the discussion questions/topics ahead of the event and, based on time constraints, highlight certain questions that feel most relevant



POST SCREENING

- 1 Facilitate a post-screening discussion, where people can voice their experiences in a safe and non-judgemental space. We have included a series of discussion points on the next page as starting points.
- 2 Briefly outline the discussion topics for the audience before opening the floor to comment, limit responses to 2 minutes, and designate a timekeeper
- 3 Depending on the size of the audience, consider breaking into pairs or small groups
- 4 After the discussion, share Softie Citizen's Guide and Audience Survey
- 5 Ask the audience/group to visit www.softiethefilm.com/take-action to see the most up-to-date ways to support the campaign.
- 6 Encourage the audience to host a screening in their community or workplace, by visiting www.softiethefilm.com/take-action#showthefilm
- 7 Share pictures and video from screenings





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

1. What do you think about the film?
2. How did you feel about politics or activism after watching the film?
3. Was there a character/scene from the film that resonated most with you?
4. Was there anything that surprised you about the story? Or something new you have learned?

PERSONAL SACRIFICE OF ACTIVISTS

5. What makes a good leader or activist?
6. Has the film changed your perception on the idea of activism and activists?
7. Is there a line between family and country?
8. Women are shown as crucial in social movements. How does this impact your view of women in movements?

RESPONSIBILITIES AS VOTERS AND CITIZENS/

PERSONAL IS POLITICAL

1. Having watched the film, who is responsible for putting in the right leaders?
2. Having watched the film, How are you feeling about the upcoming elections?

3. Did you vote in the last elections, will you vote in the next elections?
4. If you are planning to vote, how will you decide on who to place in office?
5. Do you feel that you have the power to question your elected officials/leaders?

TAKING ACTION

1. Where do you see possibilities for change in your community? How can you contribute to it?
2. Do you believe you can make a difference in your community?
3. Have you ever taken any action/activity to demand for better services or accountability from your leaders?
4. If not, why have not taken any action towards better governance/leadership?
5. Do you have the support system or know how to take action in your community?
6. What motivation or support would help you take action against injustice or bad Governance?

WHAT CAN I DO FROM HERE?

Go to www.softiethefilm.com/take-action for more resources on how to contribute to change and support activists and community organizations, and other actions including:

- a. [Sign up to join the Softie community](#) and receive relevant information on the film and ways to take action
- b. Get the word out and share the film on your social media
- c. Encourage others in your community to [host a screening](#)
- d. Take the [Softie Quiz](#), to figure out your unique activism style
- e. Read Boniface Mwangi's [Book Unbounded](#)
- f. Get involved with Njeri Mwangi's organization, [Pawa254](#)

