

GOD LOVES UGANDA

Discussion Guide



About the Guide

This guide is designed to assist novice and seasoned screening organizers in facilitating a pre- and post-screening discussion about the issues in God Loves Uganda. This guide is meant for general audiences. Please visit our website to download a guide for a multi-faith audience, Evangelical Christian audience or general Christian audience. This guide contains:

- *Background information on the film and the director;*
- *Historical timeline of Uganda;*
- *Instructional information for presenters, including facilitation tips;*
- *Sample discussion questions; and,*
- *Ten ways your audience can take action.*

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Introduction

In recent decades, some Christian Evangelical groups have deemed the United States a lost battle in a cultural war, and turned their resources and missionary work to “savable” countries in the developing world.

The images of Uganda we receive in America are framed by decades of ethnic persecution, human rights abuses, and political hate mongering that have bloodied the state.

This small country (about the size of the state of Oregon) has been a battleground for the past forty years. As a consequence, Uganda has one of the world’s youngest populations; in fact, half of all Ugandans are under the age of fifteen.

Ugandans are vulnerable in many ways, not the least of which is related to sexual identity, an issue that has galvanized a trans-national movement led by American evangelical missionaries. The movement has culminated in Ugandan Member of Parliament Mr. David Bahati’s Anti-Homosexuality Bill.



In 2009, Mr. Bahati first introduced the Anti-Homosexuality Bill to the Ugandan Parliament. Dubbed the “Kill the Gays” bill, this proposed legislation would broaden the criminalization of homosexuality and same-sex relations, making homosexuality punishable by life imprisonment.

Bahati’s bill criminalizes the “promotion” of homosexuality, bans counseling of gays, and makes failure to report homosexuals to the police a crime punishable by imprisonment.

By the end of the parliamentary session in late 2011, the Ugandan cabinet was unable to bring the bill to vote, effectively rejecting it. Mr. Bahati reintroduced the bill in early 2012 and Speaker Rebecca Kagada fervently supported the bill, promising to deliver it as a “Christmas gift” for the Ugandan people. Due in large degree to international pressure, the “gift” was not delivered. But it threw Uganda, once again, into the world’s media spotlight.

Mr. Bahati’s bill is neither the product of an individual’s crusade nor solely the result of Ugandan politics. In *God Loves Uganda*, the Anti-Homosexuality Bill is the touchstone for Academy Award-winning director Roger Ross Williams’ investigation into the connections between American evangelical missionaries and the exportation to Uganda of a far-right, Christian ideology of hate and deadly anti-gay fervor.

Director's Statement Roger Ross Williams



I grew up in the black church. My father was a religious leader in the community and my sister is a pastor. I went to church every Sunday and sang in the choir. But for all that the church gave me, for all that it represented--belonging, love and community--it also shut its doors to me as a gay person. That experience left me with the desire to explore the power of religion to transform or destroy lives. This desire took a new form when I visited Africa to make Music by Prudence. I was struck by how intensely religious and socially conservative Africans were. There was literally a church on every corner. People were praying in the fields. It was like the American evangelical Christianity I had known – magnified by Africa's intensity.

The more I learned about religion in Africa, the more intrigued I became. It was as if the continent was gripped with religious fervor. And the center of it was Uganda.

In both Uganda and America, I began meeting some of the missionaries who have helped create Uganda's evangelical movement. They were often large-hearted. They were passionate and committed. Many of them were kids from America's heartland.

And they were, I began to discover, part of a larger Christian evangelical movement that believed that their interpretation of Biblical law should reign supreme, not just in people's hearts, but in the halls of government as well.

This movement, fueled by American money and idealism, had produced a noxious flower: Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill, which originally made death one of the penalties for homosexuality.

I thought about following the activists, the brave and admirable men and women who were fighting against these policies. But I was more curious about the people who, in effect, wanted to kill me (according to the provisions of the original Anti-Homosexuality Bill, I could be put to death). Notably, almost every evangelical I met, whether American or Ugandan, was polite, agreeable, even charming. Yet I knew that if the bill passed, there would be blood on the streets of Kampala.

What explains that contradiction? What explains the murderous rage and ecstatic transcendence? In the well-known trope about Africa, a white man journeys into the heart of darkness and finds the mystery of Africa and its unknowable otherness. I, a black man, made that journey and found... America.

Roger Ross Williams, 2013

About the film



God Loves Uganda is a 83-minute documentary film by the Academy Award-winning director/producer, Roger Ross Williams.

The documentary examines the connections between American Evangelical missionaries and a growing Christian extremist movement in Uganda. From prayer rooms in Kansas City to prayer groups with village women in rural Uganda, filmmaker Roger Ross Williams masterfully exposes the links between the seemingly well-meaning efforts of young missionaries from the International House of Prayer (IHOP); the American extremists and far-right politicians behind the Ugandan Anti-Homosexuality Bill; and the resulting changes in Uganda's public health and human rights policies.

The film raises essential questions about the missionary work of American evangelicals, the use of congregants' donations to Africa, and our personal responsibility when American conservatives and evangelical institutions export prejudice and discrimination.

Cast (in order of appearance)



Kapya Kaoma
Episcopal Priest



Joanna Watson
Missionary



Jono Hall
Media Director,
International House of
Prayer (IHOP)



Archbishop H.L. Orombi
Church of Uganda



Lou Engle
Senior Leader,
International House of
Prayer (IHOP)



Martin Ssempe
Pastor and Host of Ugandan
television show, "Spotlight"



Robert Kayanja
Pastor of
Miracle Center Cathedral



Scott Lively
Pastor and Author
of "The Pink Swastika"



**Jesse and Rachel
Digges**
Missionaries



David Kato
Ugandan Gay Rights Activist



**Bishop Christopher
Senyonjo**
Church of Uganda

PRE-SCREENING CHECKLIST

A screening can be a challenging event to implement successfully, and it's easy to forget some of the details. To make the set-up process as smooth as possible for you, we put together a list of everything you should consider and confirm before the big day. Good luck!

- o When and where is the screening?
- o Who is the contact person, and what is the best way to contact him or her?
- o What are the audio/visual requirements at your venue?
- o Are there logistical concerns to be aware of (e.g., adequate parking, wheelchair accessibility, building access and entry, need for a sign language interpreter)?
- o What is the room capacity?
- o How large is the expected audience?
- o Who is the audience?
- o What, if anything, does the expected audience know about the event/film? What have they been told?
- o Are there specific goals or outcomes that you and/or the sponsor or hosting organization would like to achieve?
- o Who will introduce the film (contact person, facilitator, organization representative) and what information does he or she need?
- o How much time is available for the pre- and post-screening discussions?
- o Who will manage registration at the door and the passing out of our surveys afterwards?

PRE-SCREENING INTRODUCTION (5-10 MIN.)

We suggest you project the slide that came with your screening kit, images from Uganda or a map of Uganda (look online for these) onto the screen as audience members fill the auditorium and as the pre-screening discussion unfolds.

Sample Introduction:

Hello, my name is NAME and it is a pleasure to be here at NAME OF LOCATION. I'd like to thank ORGANIZER for making this event possible and to thank all of you for attending this special screening of God Loves Uganda.

PRE-SCREENING INTRODUCTION (CONT.)

Inform the audience about the post-screening discussion and let them know they will have an opportunity to share their thoughts at that time. Introduce the film with the following key points about God Loves Uganda:

- Directed and produced by the Academy Award-winning filmmaker, Roger Ross Williams;
- Premiered at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival and has since won numerous awards;
- Will be broadcast nationwide on PBS in 2014;
- Examines the connections between some conservative American Evangelical missionary efforts and a growing Christian extremist movement in Uganda;
- Offers an opportunity to witness the challenges and mishaps of cross-cultural and trans-national communication, especially around different values and beliefs;
- Exposes the often-discordant differences between intention and effect; and
- Asks us to reflect on our personal responsibility when some American conservatives and evangelicals export an unyielding message of prejudice and discrimination, ultimately leading to human rights abuses and death.

PRE-SCREENING DISCUSSION

Note: If you are screening for a faith-based audience, you have the option to use our multi-denominational faith-based guide or one of the religion-specific addendums. These can be downloaded from our website.

The objectives of the pre-screening discussion are to:

1. *Provide information about the film;*
2. *Gauge the audience's knowledge of, and attitudes towards, the issues raised in the film;*
3. *Engage audience members in an open exchange of thoughts and expectations;*
4. *Cultivate receptivity to the film's themes and content; and*
5. *Prime the audience for the post-screening discussion.*

PRE-SCREENING DISCUSSION (CONT.)

To effectively achieve the goals for the pre-screening discussion, it is important to build a rapport with the audience and to invite them into the experience.

Suggested Questions

For each of these questions, take one or two answers from the audience.

If you encounter a wall of silence, gently invite someone to share.

- How did you hear about the screening?
- How far did you have to drive/commute to attend the screening?
- Does everyone live in NAME OF COMMUNITY?
- Is everyone a member of this SCHOOL/CONGREGATION?
- What do you know about the film?
- Why did you come today?
- Does anyone have a specific question about the film?
- Where is Uganda? What are your images of Uganda?
- What have you heard about Uganda recently?
- Think about the words “missionary” and “missionaries.” What thoughts, images, and intentions come to mind? What is an acceptable and appropriate role for American-based faith institutions and missionaries abroad?
- Should missionary work be solely a charitable act of service (providing for the sick and needy) or a proselytizing act of “spreading the word”?
- In an impoverished community, is it acceptable to tie access to services (e.g., food, clothing, education, etc.) to participation in a religious doctrine?

POST-SCREENING DISCUSSION (20-30 MIN.)

Before you begin the post-screening discussion, expect someone in the audience to ask you “What can I do?” Refer to the “Take Action” section of this guide for ideas and turn the question back to the audience, asking them what they think they can do to stop the exportation of hate.

- Open the post-screening discussion by asking for thoughts and feelings about the film.
- Sometimes it is helpful to simply ask the audience if they enjoyed the film, then follow up with inquires about which parts they enjoyed.
- Be prepared for a range of responses and thank each speaker for sharing her/his thoughts.
- Ask the audience if there were specific scenes, images, or words that stood out for them. Invite them to share their responses with their neighbors. Be thoughtful about who is speaking from the audience and do your best to invite a diverse range of respondents.

Quotes from God Loves Uganda

God Loves Uganda is a very intense film. Viewers may feel strongly about what they have seen and heard, but they may not accurately recall what was said and by whom. The quotes below will help remind viewers of the film's content.



Rachel Digges:

"Fifty percent of the population is under fifteen years old. This is a youth nation. What Jesse and I could do is so limited. We can multiply ourselves in these young people."

Jono Hall: *"Any sex outside of marriage is wrong."*



Pastor Robert Kayanja:

"Whatever you see here is the fruit of American labor."

"God gave us leaders who fear God. Whether it's homosexuality, whether it's murder, whether it's racial hatred, whether it's corruption, sin is sin."



Lou Engle: *"The west has been in a decline but right now I think Africa is – it's the fire pot of spiritual... renewal and revival. It's very exciting to me."*



Kapya Kaoma:

"I've been studying the relationship between American conservatives and Africa. I was concerned about Uganda. American Evangelicals are all powerful in Uganda. And that power is used to persecute those who are trying to question them."



David Bahati: *"The moment we said no to homosexuality, actually the donations from Western churches multiplied by three."*



Rachel Digges: *"We're looking for creative ways on this end but the majority of our funds are coming from the west."*



Scott Lively: *"Homosexuality does not benefit the society. It harms the people that engage it... It harms the society that embraces it. Now, that said... we need public policy that discourages homosexuality. Discourages it."*



POST-SCREENING DISCUSSION (CONT.)

If you have an enthusiastic audience that is open to talking, time will become an issue. It may be necessary to remind people to be concise when sharing their comments. If the audience is hesitant, you may need to begin with a leading question from below.

Sample Discussion Questions:

Uganda:

1. What did you notice about the Ugandan religious and political leaders' promotion of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill?
2. Who or what caused the death of David Kato?
3. How does the fact that Uganda is made up of mostly young people make an anti-homosexual message socially and morally acceptable in the minds of the messengers?

LGBTQ Identity:

1. What would daily life be like under the threat of imprisonment and death for being who you are and loving whom you love?
2. How are the families, friends, and relationships of LGBTQ people affected by the anti-homosexual messages and proposed laws in Uganda?
3. How are the lives of all Ugandans impacted by the promotion of anti-homosexual messages?

Taking Responsibility:

1. In which ways might we all be culpable for the increase in violence against LGBTQ people in Uganda?
2. What is our personal responsibility when we witness the encouragement of violence against others?
3. What is our responsibility when our leaders or institutions promote messages of violence and condemnation, here or abroad?

IHOP:

1. What did you notice about the congregation at IHOP? What about the missionaries?
2. How would you describe the language used by the American evangelical leaders? Early in the film, someone preaches about taking over the world, "You're gonna take over the world with words that slay the hardest of hearts." Which feelings and reactions does this language evoke?
3. Lou Engle states that the West is in decline and that the US is in "moral chaos." How do you feel about this statement?

Financial Transparency:

1. Should religious institutions be responsible for openly disclosing how they use your monetary contributions?
2. What can we do to assure that our donations have a positive impact on the lives of people in other nations?
3. Is it acceptable to use donations to financially support politicians in Uganda or elsewhere?



TIP:

Should you encounter responses that support the Anti-Homosexuality Bill and the evangelizing messages exposed in the film, you can ask the audience to reflect on the words of Jono Hall, IHOP Media Director, "All sex outside of marriage is wrong." Allow for discussion about the logical end of such a belief system as related to divorce, affairs, premarital sex, reproductive rights, and roles for women.

CLOSING

- Give the audience an update on the bill (as of March 2013). The Ugandan parliament reconvened at the beginning of February. The Anti-Homosexuality Bill is still under consideration. Life imprisonment for homosexuality is still under consideration, as are bans on counseling gay people and promoting "gay culture." American conservative evangelicals continue to have close ties to Ugandan politicians and unhampered missionary access to Ugandans, as noted by Pastor Kayanja.
- Close the event with a reminder of the scene in which Bishop Senyonjo asks himself, "What is the most loving thing in this situation? Not just going by the letter of the law." Cultivate suggestions for personal action by asking the audience the same question: What is the most loving thing in the situation? What can you do to promote human dignity for all?
- Hand out our action postcards (if you've received them) and/or print out the list of actions in the back of this guide and pass them out to the audience.
- Thank the audience for their time and participation. Thank the sponsor for hosting the screening, request that the audience fill out a survey (we can email this to them or you can pass around a hard-copy), and advise whether any information or additional resources are available.

TAKE ACTION. EXERCISE YOUR POWER.

Please project these actions on the screen during your Q&A, print out this list, and pass it out to your audience or email it to them after the screening.

Make the world a kinder, safer, and more equitable place:

- 1. Ask your faith institution to create a report on how donations are used.**
- 2. Share your thoughts about the film with your faith-leader and ask him or her to sign on to our Statement of Principles.**
- 3. Get involved with faith-based groups or organizations that accept LGBTQ people.**
- 4. Write an opinion piece for your local newspaper sharing your thoughts and feelings about missionary efforts to promote anti-homosexuality in Uganda.**
- 5. Host a screening of God Loves Uganda in your community and invite a diverse group of faith leaders.**
- 6. Educate yourself about missionaries representing your faith tradition in the U.S. and abroad.**
- 7. Share this video with your online community to help prompt conversation and personal reflection: <http://nyti.ms/W8wFIZ>**
- 8. If after watching *God Loves Uganda*, you've experienced a change of heart about the rights of LGBTQ people and the role of missionaries overseas, please share your story with us at info@godlovesuganda.com.**

About Uganda



- **FULL NAME:** Republic of Uganda
- **POPULATION:** 34.5 million (UN, 2011)
- **CAPITAL:** Kampala
- **AREA:** 93,072 square miles
- **MAJOR LANGUAGES:** English (official), Swahili (official), Luganda, various Bantu and Nilotic languages
- **MAJOR RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS:** Christian, 85.1% of population, Muslim, 12.1% of population (statistics based on 2002 census, the most recent one available)
- **LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 54 years (men), 55 years (women) (UN, 2010)
- **MAIN EXPORTS:** Coffee, fish, tea, tobacco, cotton, corn, beans, sesame
- **GNI PER CAPITA:** US \$510 (World Bank, 2011)

Historical Timeline: Late 1800s - Present

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| <p>1875 Bugandan King Mutesa I allows Christian missionaries to enter his realm.</p> <p>1877 Members of the British Missionary Society arrive in Buganda.</p> <p>1879 Members of the French Roman Catholic White Fathers arrive.</p> <p>1894 Uganda becomes a British protectorate.</p> <p>1962 Uganda becomes independent with Milton Obote as prime minister.</p> <p>1971 Milton Obote toppled in coup led by Army chief Idi Amin.</p> <p>1972 Amin orders Asians who were not Ugandan citizens - around 60,000 people - to leave the country. Amin's reign is characterized by human rights violations and ethnic persecution. An estimated 300,000 people are killed and/or tortured.</p> <p>1979 Uganda National Liberation Front forces Idi Amin to flee the country.</p> <p>1986 Following years of political turmoil and military coups, the National Resistance Army rebels take Kampala and install Yoweri Museveni as president.</p> <p>2002 Army evacuates more than 400,000 civilians caught up in fight against cult-like Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which continues its brutal attacks on villages.</p> <p>2005 International Criminal Court issues arrest warrants for five LRA commanders, including leader Joseph Kony.</p> <p>2006 President Museveni wins multi-party elections. EU observers highlight intimidation and official media bias as problems.</p> | <p>2009 Scott Lively, author of <i>The Pink Swastika</i>, which accuses homosexual people of inventing Nazism, visits Uganda. He speaks about the "gay agenda – that whole hidden and dark agenda" at a conference with three other Americans who have been widely discredited in the US for spreading teachings about "curing" homosexuals.</p> <p>2009 Member of Parliament, David Bahati, introduces the Ugandan Anti-Homosexuality Bill that would broaden the criminalization of same-sex relations from up to fourteen years imprisonment to life imprisonment and the death penalty.</p> <p>2010 President Museveni distances himself from the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, saying the ruling party MP who proposed the bill did so as an individual. The European Union and United States condemn the bill.</p> <p>2010 Investigation into corruption of Vice-President Gilbert Bukenya, Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa and several other officials over the alleged theft of \$25m.</p> <p>2011 Museveni wins his fourth presidential election. Challenger Kizza Besigye alleges vote rigging and dismisses the result as a sham. Kizza Besigye arrested several times over "walk-to-work" protests against rising prices.</p> <p>2012 Anti-Homosexuality Bill is reintroduced to the Uganda parliament. Backer Speaker Rebecca Kagada fervently supports the bill, promising to deliver it as a "Christmas gift" for the Ugandan people. Due to international pressure the bill does not pass, but remains under deliberation.</p> |
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Lesbian and Gay Rights in the World



-  Homosexual acts punishable with death penalty
-  Homosexual acts illegal

These maps are produced by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Associate (ILGA) as part of Daniel Ottosson's 2008 report, "State-sponsored Homophobia".

You can find additional information and a copy of the report at http://ilga.org/historic/Statehomophobia/ILGA_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_2008.pdf

What is the worldwide population of LGBT people?

Do many countries prohibit homosexuality?

Are there any international bodies that protect the rights of LGBT people?

What has the UN done recently to protect the rights of LGBT people?

Do many countries try to limit discrimination on the basis of sexual identity?

The estimated worldwide population of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered people is between 250-500 million people.

- 78 countries have legislation that persecutes people on the basis of sexual orientation.
- Homosexuality is a criminal offense in 85 countries.
- In 7 countries, homosexuality is punishable by death.
- In 113 countries, homosexuality and homosexual acts are legal.

According to the 2012 IGLA report, State-Sponsored Homophobia, roughly 60% of the United Nations 193 members (113 of 193) abolished (and a few never had) legislation criminalizing same-sex sexual acts between consenting adults.

In 2011, 85 countries signed a United Nations Declaration to decriminalize homosexuality. In 2011, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed the first resolution on LGBT rights, condemning homophobic discrimination, violence, and hate crimes.

24 countries prohibit incitement to hatred based on sexual orientation. 19 countries prohibit gender identity discrimination in employment. 26 countries around the world have laws that recognize same sex unions. Currently, five countries have constitutional prohibitions against discrimination based on sexual orientation: South Africa, Kosovo, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland.

Sources: IGLA, www.global-briefing.org (The global struggle for queer freedom), www.government.nl (Government of the Netherlands, Gay Emancipation); www.colorlines.com (Snapshot of Global LGBT Rights, From New York to the United Nations).

Definitions

BISEXUAL	A person who is attracted to both men and women. Because bisexual assumes a binary between male and female, many individuals now use the term pansexual, which includes all genders.
DISCRIMINATION	Differential treatment that favors one individual or group over another based on prejudice.
GAY	A person whose emotional, romantic, and sexual attractions are primarily for individuals of the same sex.
LGBT	An acronym, which stands for “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender.” Other versions may add “Q” for Queer or Questioning, and “I” for Intersex. Some may prefer to list the acronym as TBLG to place transpeople in a position of importance and to rectify the way “trans” has historically been omitted, devalued or excluded.
GENDER IDENTITY	One’s internal, personal sense of one’s gender. The common understanding is that a gender identity is tied to biology; however, a person’s gender identity is much more complex. It is connected to a multitude of social and cultural factors. For transgender people, the sex they are born with and their own internal sense of gender do not match. Many people believe in a more fluid gender identity than simply “male” and “female.”
GENDER EXPRESSION	External manifestation of one’s gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, or body characteristics.
HETEROSEXISM	The societal/cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege heterosexuals and subordinate and denigrate LGBTIQ people. The critical element that differentiates heterosexism (or any other “ism”) from prejudice and discrimination is the use of institutional power and authority to support prejudices and enforce discriminatory behaviors in systematic ways with far-reaching outcomes and effects.
HOMOPHOBIA	The fear of homosexuals and homosexuality (this is a literal definition); however, this term is generally applied to anyone who dislikes LGBTIQ people, who uses any derogatory sexuality or gender based terms, who feels that LGBTIQ people want “special rights” and not “equal rights.” Homophobic behavior can range from telling jokes about lesbians and gay men, to verbal abuse, to acts of physical violence. (Some people choose not to use the word “homophobia,” preferring instead “heterosexism,” which includes anti-GLBT attitudes and behavior.)
LESBIAN	A woman or girl whose emotional, romantic, and sexual attractions are primarily directed at other women or girls.
INTERSEX	Formally termed hermaphrodites, Intersex people are born with the condition of having physical sex markers (genitals, hormones, gonads or chromosomes) that are neither clearly male nor female. Intersexed people are sometimes defined as having some combination of “ambiguous” genitalia. The Intersex Movement seeks to halt medically unnecessary pediatric surgeries and hormone treatments that attempt to normalize infants into the dominant “male” and “female” system. Surgeons often assign the infant as a sex that does not match their gender identity. In addition, many surgeries affect the sexual functioning of intersexed adults, which may include causing the inability to receive pleasure or reach orgasm.
SEX	The classification of people as male or female. At birth, infants are assigned a sex based on a combination of bodily characteristics including: chromosomes, hormones, internal reproductive organs, and genitals. Approximately 1 in 2000 babies is born with some type of difference in sexual development.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Describes an individual’s physical, romantic, emotional, and/or spiritual attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Trans and gender-variant people may identify with any sexual orientation, and their sexual orientation may or may not change before, during or after gender transition.
TRANSGENDER	An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term may include but is not limited to: transsexuals, cross-dressers, and other gender-variant people. Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.



Resources

Gay Rights Advocacy

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Acknowledgements

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Web Director & Web Content Producer: Casper de Boer

Photos: Derek Wieseahn, Crispin Buxton, Paige Ruane, Roger Ross
Williams, Lynne Melcher