



SAUTI DISCUSSION GUIDE

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Introduction

Thank you for watching Sauti and for raising awareness about the realities of refugees' lives in East Africa. This guide offers discussion questions and supplementary activities to incorporate into community screenings. Questions or comments about this guide? Please email info@sautifilm.org. We would love to hear your thoughts.

More About Kyangwali Refugee Settlement

83,588 refugees currently reside in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement (UNHCR 2018). This number began to increase precipitously near the end of 2017 when violence in nearby parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo began to escalate. Many of the challenges depicted in *Sauti* persist today. Refugees report lack of access to land in order to farm, food insecurity, a limited number of schools and high barriers to enrolling in primary education among some of their top concerns.

In spite of these barriers, refugees living in the settlement continue to persevere and develop innovative approaches to help their community thrive, as the women of "Sauti" continue to prove. Favourite works for a Non-Government Organization called COBURWAS, which was described in News Deeply as "one of Uganda's best [schools]." Napona has volunteered extensively with the International Committee of the Red Cross to welcome new refugees to Kyangwali. Beatrice has started a piggery project as a source of income for her family and continues to document the experiences of refugees in her community as a citizen journalist.

More Updates on the Five Women in Sauti

Read updates from Betty, Beatrice, Favourite, Napona and Peninah at sautifilm.org/the-team



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Post-Screening Discussion Questions

1. Drawings made by the five characters are used throughout the film in specific ways to describe past traumas and future dreams. What effect did this have for you as a viewer? Why do you think the filmmakers incorporated the drawings into *Sauti*?
2. The film also incorporates film footage captured by the characters and other women in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. What was your reaction when you saw the girls interacting with the cameras? What effect did seeing their footage have on you?
3. Discuss examples of other news stories you have seen about refugees. How are refugees typically depicted in mass media? How were refugees depicted in *Sauti*? Discuss similarities and differences between *Sauti* and other stories you have seen about refugees.
4. What did you know about refugees in East Africa before viewing the film? Discuss anything new you might have learned.
5. Favourite expresses,

"You see, I'm from Kyangwali. Automatically they say 'this is a refugee' and they believe that a refugee cannot do anything to help anyone in the country."

Who do you think "they" are in Favourite's statement?

Discuss whether the women of *Sauti* prove this statement to be true or false.

6. Do you think refugees living in your own community experience similar perceptions to those experienced by Favourite? Why or why not?
7. Peninah, several months after being resettled in the U.S. states:
"When I came here, I could see everyone maybe have much money and more money. But now I think the more money you work for, it just goes for the house and paying bills. You don't remain even with the balance of maybe \$100. America is really hard, I've realized that."

Were you surprised by Peninah's reaction to the United States? Why or why not?

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Discussion Questions, continued

8. Do you think a refugee is a refugee for life? Why or why not?
9. Do you relate to any of the stories or experiences depicted in the film? Discuss.
10. Consider the following quote given by a UNHCR officer in the film:


"Priority right now has been given to the Congolese. We're dealing with this protracted caseload. By protracted, I mean, they came in 1996. That's when the camp was started. They came and started this camp. But staying in Uganda is not the permanent solution right now because the refugee law has a gray area. Can refugees be locally integrated and have the same rights as Ugandan citizens? Because if it doesn't work, then you remain in a refugee situation for the rest of your life? No. Right now, our protection strategies are geared towards self-reliance and also a lot of counseling in the community to understand that, you know, things may not always work as you hoped, but that doesn't mean you lose hope."

Do you think the women in *Sauti* have reason to hope? Why or why not?

11. Do you think refugees who have lived for decades in a host country should be treated differently than those who are newly arrived to a country? Discuss.
12. Regarding overcoming struggle, Betty states:
"You feel like though there is a problem, you say no, let me continue. This problem I'll solve later. Even though there is no soap, you say, ah, let me wash just with water. One day I'll get that soap."

What does this soap metaphor reflect about Betty's experience and mindset in her refugee experience?

13. An education officer expresses near the beginning of the film that even though there are 60,000 girls in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement who are supposed to go to school, only five have made it to university. Favourite was one of the characters in the film who successfully went to university. Why do you think Favourite was able to finish university? How do you think her experiences differ from other women in the settlement?
14. "Sauti" means "voice" in Swahili. Why do you think the filmmakers chose this title?



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Suggested Supplementary Activities

- Connect with a refugee resettlement agency or immigrant services organization in your community. Invite a resettled refugee leader in your community to attend the screening and, if they feel comfortable, speak to the audience after the screening about how their experiences compare to those shared by the women in *Sauti*.
- Invite a local expert working on refugee settlement issues to your screening to discuss the work they do.
- After the screening, watch a previously recorded conversation with the filmmakers and Favorite Regina, one of the characters in *Sauti* that was broadcast on Facebook live. See the broadcast at <https://tinyurl.com/y3ahd8oe>
- Organize a “giving pop-up event” in which each participant donates a sum upon entering. Break up into teams, and have each team research and choose an organization supporting refugees to present to the rest of the room. Have a panel of judges choose the winning organization, and donate the proceeds to the winner.
- Research statistics about the demographics of refugees in your community and present these to the audience. (Local municipal governments are a good place to start.)
- Share your *Sauti* story and post about your activities on social media using the #SautiVoice and tagging @SautiFilm on Twitter/Facebook and @NeeNeeProductions on Instagram.
- Find a refugee-owned business in your community and schedule a time for members of the screening’s audience to patronize it. This could be a chance to discover delicious food or inspiring artwork/ craftsmanship in your own neighborhood!
- Collect donations from the audience to contribute to the Sauti Women’s Fund, which directly benefits the educational paths of the women featured in the film. Learn more at sautifilm.org/takeaction
- Read the additional articles available at Sautifilm.org/readings