

Film festival raises awareness of migration issues

Cinema and Migration is a magical bond that began over a century ago when filmmakers, many of whom were immigrants themselves, began making movies about a world on the move. Their films brought the dramatic, poignant and comic stories of migrants to diverse audiences, through a language of images and emotions that were meaningful to every culture.

The Global Migration Film Festival was launched by the UN Migration Agency (IOM) in this spirit. The festival features new films that capture the promise and challenges of migration for those who leave their homes in search of a better life including the unique contributions migrants make to their new communities and their home countries.

The Migration Film Festival runs from 5-18 December every year in commemoration of the International Migrants Days on 18 December. This year the festival is taking place in approximately 100 countries with 30 films to be screened worldwide. The first IOM Global Migration Film Festival in 2016 took place in 89 countries. Some 10,000 people attended 220 screenings at cinemas, universities, cultural institutions and other venues. The festival hosted 13 feature films and documentaries and nearly 200 short films about and by migrants, as well as dozens of post-screening discussions and side-events.

In Namibia, the screening took place on 16 December 2016 at Katutura Youth Centre where more than 30 young people of which most are internal migrants watched the film “30 Million” a film that talks about 30 million Bangladeshis at risk of being displaced by climate change and rising seas. This was done in partnership with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration (MHA) and there was a panel discussion consisting of IOM and MHA representatives on issues of migration and climate change in Namibia. IOM again plans to partner with MHA in 2017 for the screening of the film.

