



WHO IS DAYANI CRISTAL?

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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// IN THIS REPORT: ABSTRACT



Every year tens of thousands of people, driven by grinding poverty, leave their homes in Central and South America and journey through Mexico hoping to reach the USA. Their dreams often turn into nightmares as they brave one of the most dangerous journeys in the world, traveling along a stretch of desert called the “corridor of death.” Over the past decade some 2000 migrants have died this way in Arizona alone.

We told the story of one such undocumented migrant who died in Arizona in our documentary “Who Is Dayani Cristal?” This unknown man came to represent the issues faced by all migrants who follow his path. The film premiered on opening night at the Sundance Film Festival 2013, receiving the World Documentary Cinematography Award. It won the jury prize at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival in 2012 and the Amnesty International Best Documentary Award in 2014, and was released theatrically, via broadcast to over 2 million viewers, and digitally in 2014 around the world.

The social impact campaign aimed to further humanize and universalize the migration story, while creating direct pathways to action. Issues leading to deaths in the desert

are many and complex. The linear medium of film engaged audiences emotionally with the human story of one man – while the film’s social impact campaign allowed audiences to go deeper into issues related to migration, gain more in-depth knowledge on partners’ advocacy work via original digital content, and participate in real world action.

The impact campaign produced innovative digital engagement tools, a robust social media presence, and had a direct and demonstrable impact on, among other outcomes, three distinct areas:

Bodies on the Border

Formation of a non-profit organization dedicated to identification and repatriation of missing migrants.

The Right Not to Migrate

Community-centered implementation of improvements to the village portrayed in the film.

Humanization

Reinserting the issue of deceased migrants and the effects of an inhumane border policy into the immigration reform debate.

This assessment report sets forth our successes, challenges, failures, methods, and resources invested on these above areas of social impact.
It is also an exploration more generally in how film, video, and digital assets support advocacy and development initiatives.

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// THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

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For me it's very frustrating knowing that somebody had a dream. But they ended up being a number. A statistic.”

Lorenia Ivon Ton-Quevedo,
Protection Department, Mexican Consulate,
Tucson, Arizona



Over 230 million people in the world will have left their homes this year in search of relief and refuge elsewhere. Most of them would rather have stayed.

Despite the foreign policies that contribute to displacement, governments worldwide continue to criminalize migrants and subject them to inhumane conditions. The result of these policies is a systematic set of human rights violations that, at the extreme, results in migrants' deaths. The number of dead is rising globally.

The US is no exception.

Hoping to reach the US, every year tens of thousands of people, driven by grinding poverty, leave their homes in Central and South America and journey through Mexico. Migrants' dreams often turn into nightmares as they travel one of the world's most dangerous journeys along a stretch of desert called the "corridor of death." The perils of this crossing are man-made: The Mexican government will not issue travel visas, preferring to criminalize this desperate crossing, and humanitarian support is left to underground networks. The US government's 1994 Border Control Strategic Plan's stricter border

control measures at common crossing areas forced Central American and Mexican migrants to shift their routes to paths leading through harsh Arizona and Texas deserts.

Prior to the 1994 Plan, the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner in Tucson, Arizona, investigated an average of 12 cases of migrant fatalities per year. After implementation of the new border strategy, this number increased to over 160. Those who don't perish on the journey through Mexico or in the desert bordering the US, face a final danger – confronting the nearly 2,000-mile US border wall. Over the past ten years, some 2000 migrants have died crossing Arizona – and even more have perished in other border communities – a result of US government policies of border securitization, privatization, and militarization. Humanitarian responses and humane border policies falter under pressures of a fear-laden narrative about undocumented migration and resultant calls to further strengthen border security. These policies therefore continue to be enforced and bolstered by the US government, evidenced by proposed increases in funding in both the now-dormant comprehensive immigration reform bill and President Obama's 2014 executive action.

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DEATHS.”

Behind the border wall are some of the toughest blue-collar American jobs. Those crossing want the chance to work in these jobs that US businesses are filling with Central American laborers.

The border security strategy, a policy that costs US taxpayers some \$18 billion a year, was designed to prevent people from migrating. Although there are cyclical periods in which fewer people attempt

border crossings, the policy as a whole has failed to prevent undocumented migration. Degraded social, political, and economic conditions throughout the region, exacerbated by a range of policies including the US government's free trade policies as well as neglect of community needs, have created instability that leave migrants little choice but to leave their homes. The border security policy has not been effective in decreasing migration. But it has directly led to increased numbers of migrant deaths and disappearances.

In the film, *Who Is Dayani Cristal?* we tell the story of one undocumented migrant who left home in search of work and instead met death in the Arizona desert. Mexican artist and activist **Gael García Bernal** traces our main character's migration route, starting from his home in Honduras to the place he died in the desert. The ability to trace a dead migrant's path is uncommon, since it is rare that migrants carry personal ID. Identification documents open migrants to the danger of being targeted by cartels or traffickers, or by government authorities, so when they perish in transit, their families are left with the agony of unanswered questions. Governments have failed these families with inadequate tracking and repatriation of deceased and missing persons. Our unknown man, though he would eventually be identified as Dilcy Yohan Sandres Martinez of El Escanito, Honduras, comes to represent the issues faced by all migrants who follow his path. //



// THE FILM AND IMPACT CAMPAIGN: THE PROCESS

“

First you have to admit there's a problem.
And the problem isn't people sneaking across
the border.
To my mind the problem is all economic.
We need, American capitalist economy needs,
blue collar labor.
As an American, I would like all Americans to
acknowledge that they benefit from a blue collar
labor force that has brown skin.”

Dr Bruce Anderson,
Forensic Anthropologist for
the Pima County Office
of the Medical Examiner





This project began when Marc Silver saw a photo of a member of the Arizona Search and Rescue Team holding a bleached skull in a vast desert landscape, inspiring the question:

“What can one unidentified skull reveal to you about the world?”

That question inspired the core narrative of the film. It was also the first design question we asked ourselves as we started planning our impact campaign. Inspired by our partners, we came to ask two other questions that directed our campaign design:

“What does it mean when your only viable choice for survival is leaving your home?”

“Why are we investing in the dead asset of a border wall when we could be investing in human potential?”

As co-directors of the social impact campaign, we began working together on issues concerning borders and human rights in 2009, and on the film’s impact campaign in 2010 when the story was revealed. The question around the skull inspired us to delve deeper into systemic

issues surrounding migration. To understand the human costs and opportunities surrounding migration policies, we first needed to consider the basic realities migrants were confronting and their needs and wants. Before we attempted to understand larger underlying systemic political and social issues, and how they were addressed by governments and civil society organizations, **we needed to understand migrants’ own stories.**

And so we designed our campaign with its own unique story, one that aligned with the film’s narrative and that would give us room to tell a universal and human tale of migration in Honduras, Mexico, and the United States.

It was our intention from the outset to build our social impact plans in a strategic planning process parallel with the film’s production. We wanted our campaign to tell a story of complexity from multiple perspectives that couldn’t be told within the confines of a linear 90-minute film. We intended our campaign to engage the various communities at the outset, designing the content and inputs, as well as outcomes and impacts. Above all, our campaign had to honor the struggles of those most involved and impacted.

Our planning process was not conducted in a vacuum or after the film’s production. This is rare in social issue documentary impact production. We did this for the following reasons:

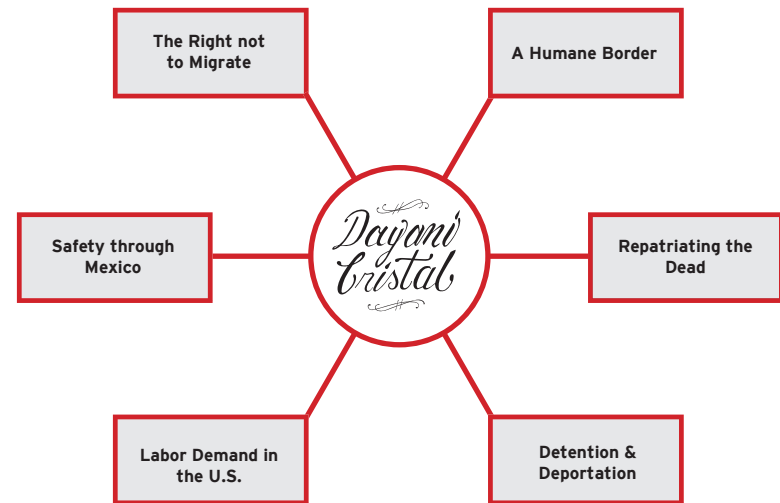
- 1** Our social impact campaign was multi-pronged and aimed at understanding what **systemic change** means for migration. We wanted to make sure we were interrogating aspects of migration that were little known, that didn’t simply parrot existing narratives and proposed solutions, and that reflected the story of systems affecting migrants.
- 2** We were especially interested in taking our campaign beyond ‘creating awareness.’ We aimed for two kinds of impact at the local, national, regional, and global levels: **Direct community impact and shifts in perception about migrants.** We needed to fully understand the context and landscape of migration before committing to any solutions.

3 A unique angle to our work was its **community-centered design process**. We engaged in a three-year consultative process with the community depicted in the film and a carefully selected set of NGO partners. Following this process, and connecting back to our three design questions, we were determined to center our areas of **direct social impact on:**

Bodies on the Border	<i>What does an unidentified skull tell you about the world?</i>
The Right Not to Migrate	<i>Why are we investing in the dead asset of a border wall when we should be investing in human potential?</i>
Humanization	<i>What does it mean to have no viable choices but to leave your home?</i>

We asked the local community how they could improve their wellbeing and thus lessen the need to migrate, and we supported actions to enhance their quality of life. We placed the participation and voice of the community at the heart of our social impact efforts. Additionally, we worked with national rights organizations and with teams in Arizona responsible for identifying and repatriating of bodies found in the desert. We also supported local, national and regional organizations to strengthen their capacity to advocate for migrant rights, connected with advocacy organizations and lawmakers, and engaged the wider public.

4 We needed to design **digital engagement tools** that were appropriate to our communities and aesthetically aligned with our film. Our digital assets were designed to **educate and humanize** around a selected set of systemic migration issues, which we devised and tested in collaboration with our NGO partners. These are:



- > **The Right Not to Migrate**
- > **A Humane Border**
- > **Repatriation**
- > **Detention and Deportation**
- > **Safety Through Mexico**
- > **U.S. Labor Demand**

The centerpiece of the public education aspect of our campaign is a website distributing assets on each of these topics, constructed for multiple audiences on education, humanization, and directed action; and an e-book, aimed at audiences specialized in the study of migration. Through both, we presented migrants' own stories and solutions concerning the "pull" and "push" factors that make migration the only viable economic choice for many, adding narrative from professionals working to change the system and audiences who had seen the film. The website was focused on user experience as both a conduit for learning and for action through layered storytelling and

“ WE PRESENTED MIGRANTS’ OWN STORIES AND SOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE “PULL” AND “PUSH” FACTORS THAT MAKE MIGRATION THE ONLY VIABLE ECONOMIC CHOICE FOR MANY. ”

action prompts. It supported those working on behalf of migrants to share stories, trace the missing, and take political action. A robust and consistent level of engagement on social media, including targeted social media campaigns, reinforced these digital elements.

Who Is Dayani Cristal?, the film, premiered at Sundance in January 2013, winning the World Cinematography Award, and kicking off a global film festival run in 2013. Just ahead of the theatrical release in spring 2014, we launched the website. The film aired on Univision and Fusion to over 2 million Latino and English-speaking audiences.

5 Finally, we needed to have a **proactive plan to address transition** after the campaign ended. There are a few ways we’ve tried to ensure transition:

- › With regard to our digital content, we opened access to all of it for free to our partners and to organizations that work on migration and immigration.
- › For the film itself, we have created screening guides that allow audiences to hold their own specific discussions around the film and which will remain relevant to the discussions around immigration for the foreseeable future and active on our site.

// The Film and Impact Campaign: The Process



- › With our Central American, Mexican, and American border state partners, we conducted a series of workshops in Mexico that dealt with story-based social impact, and we have a mechanism to follow up and remain in contact with them as needed as they incorporate media and storytelling into their advocacy work.
- › With regard to Colibrí, we will remain supporters of the organization through the board of directors.
- › With the Border Stories campaign, the stories will have a life after the website as an arts/activism piece
- › With the community itself, we engaged Catholic Relief Services as a local partner in Honduras, and they will continue to partner with the village community board on development and advocacy projects as needed, and we will keep in contact with them. //



// IMPACT STORIES



1 BODIES ON THE BORDER

Problem definition	Robin Reineke defined the problem within the film and through subsequent collaboration with the social impact team as one of preventable migrant deaths and disappearances, and lack of resources and capacity to identify and repatriate unidentified dead migrants.
Solution definition	The solution was provided by Robin Reineke and co-founder William Masson to establish a formal, institutional body in the U.S. dedicated to identification and repatriation of missing migrants, and to establish a supporting database.
Campaign elements used to support the solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Bodies on the Border: NY Times Op-Doc > Donation link on website > Find a Missing Migrant > 20-minute film version > Targeted film screenings, including Congressional screenings with WOLA > Collaboration among campaign partners > Social media alignment > Website linkage between Who is Dayani Cristal? (WIDC) and Colibrí > Shared media assets
Funder support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > CAMMINA > Tribeca New Media Fund by Ford Foundation
Degree of Success or Failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Establishment of nonprofit organization in the US exclusively focused on centralized documentation and direct service with migrants: Success. > Development of a transnational database: Ongoing.



Two thousand people are missing and 6,000 have died over the last decade attempting to cross the Arizona portion of the US-Mexico border. This number is as accurate as can be measured without centralized reporting - and it contributes to making the US-Mexico border wall 40 times more deadly per year than the Berlin wall was in its entire existence.

**COLIBRÍ HAS
DEVELOPED UNDER
THE AEGIS OF THE SOCIAL
IMPACT CAMPAIGN. ”**



“

The dehumanization of migrants is something that I think has allowed this to happen. We see a law, and we see a law breaker, illegality comes first, before someone's life, or someone's health, or someone's little kids. I think we would want to be human before we want to see people as legal, or illegal. ”

Robin Reineke,

Co-Founder & Executive Director, Colibrí Center for Human Rights

After several days in the desert, a deceased person becomes unrecognizable. Bodies are discovered in various states of decomposition. Currently the identification rate of remains by authorities is only about 65%. The other 35% accumulate over time, in ever-greater numbers.

Families cannot just call the police to find their loved ones. There is massive decentralization in tracking missing persons, including states operating independently. Traditional procedures for reporting missing persons do not work. This is at the core of our film, reflected in its very title.

The effort to address the tracking and repatriation of missing persons was a priority in our outreach work. Despite our advocacy efforts with the Border Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus of the US Congress we were unable to shift policy for NamUS and CODIS (the US' national missing persons databases) to include missing migrants. Though some staffers were moved by the film's main character's story, overall apathy and resistance were strong.

We were, however, able to use the film's reach to facilitate key relationships that led to the founding of the Colibrí Center for Human Rights, who are now working in earnest to set up a transnational cultural and forensics database. Originally portrayed in the film as the "Pima County Missing Migrant Project", it developed into the Colibrí Center for Human Rights, a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization



working to assist families of missing migrants, and informing the public of the ongoing human rights concerns at the border. **Colibrí has, in part, developed under the aegis of the social impact campaign for *Who Is Dayani Cristal?* and would not have been possible without the film.**

Because of our collaboration, Colibrí developed powerful partnerships with the Ford Foundation, WOLA, and several key immigrant rights organizations and border security organizations. The group has garnered a significant audience for its work through the exposure in the film or in-person interactions with audiences after screenings, as well as a great deal of press coverage, including in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Financial Times, The Guardian, and the BBC. Press coverage also resulted in editors from a major independent press expressing interest in Robin Reineke's first book, a product that would help Colibrí meet objectives related to research and outreach.

In addition, the WIDC social impact team and Colibrí leadership collaborated on social media content distribution and amplification, and website development. We created a portal as part of our website which directly received inquiries about missing migrants and linked them to Colibrí. **The collaborative website structure has given people who watch the film the ability to quickly identify a way to**

try to locate missing migrants, and is processing requests directly from the WIDC site. Most requests for information and assistance come through Robin's personal Facebook messenger and the Colibrí Facebook page, referencing the film as the point of first contact.

As the work continues, Colibrí has been able to amplify this issue with data-driven information coupled with the storytelling approach that WIDC helps provide. This is an impactful way to both raise awareness about missing migrants and shifting political will and resources to support the families whose loved ones are missing. **This is crucial: Within immigration reform circles the film helped bring border deaths and the issues of humane border policy, identification, and repatriation back into the discussion, specifically giving a human face to the argument that an increase in militarization and securitization results in an increase in deaths.**

Because migration is a highly contentious topic in the US, we understand our work as signaling and staking a claim in the issue, which will likely take years to resolve. But the WIDC impact team is committed to continuing to work on this issue beyond this campaign: Marc Silver has agreed to be a member of Colibrí's founding Board of Directors, and Lina Srivastava has joined the Advisory Board, anticipating Board of Directors membership within the year.

2 THE RIGHT NOT TO MIGRATE

Problem definition	Delver, our main character Dilcy Yohan's brother, and Mario Bronfman, Representative, Ford Foundation Mexico, during strategic planning of the impact campaign:, there is an urgent need for investment, economic development, and community development in local communities in Central America to prevent the need for migration.
Solution definition	The solution was articulated by the El Escanito village committee: Access to water and improvements to the primary/secondary school, both of which would create conditions that would allow community members to stay home and not migrate, if that's what they chose.
Campaign elements used to support the solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Short film and photo essays > Fundraising short film > Find a Missing Migrant > Donation link on website > Targeted film screenings / fundraising events > Collaboration among campaign partners
Funder support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > CAMMINA > The Fledgling Fund > Tribeca New Media Fund by Ford Foundation > Pamela Tanner Boll > Sorenson Legacy Foundation > The Filmmaker Fund
Degree of Success or Failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Planning: Success. We successfully involved country office of respected NGO as local partners for the village. > Fundraising: Successful, but incomplete. We raised \$85,000 for Catholic Relief Services for community projects but are \$15,000 short of our funding goal. > Water access project: Success. The water access system is complete. > School renovation: Ongoing. > Community self-empowerment: Ongoing. > Community development: At risk for lack of further funding.

We worked on two distinct sides of The Right Not to Migrate:

1 Migration Prevention vs. The Right Not to Migrate: A paradigm shift in the framing of migrants' opportunities and movement.

2 The Right Not to Migrate: Instantiating that shift through direct action with the village in the film.

> "MIGRATION PREVENTION" VS. "THE RIGHT NOT TO MIGRATE"

We had to ask, why are hundreds of thousands of people making the same "choice" and risking their lives crossing inhospitable desert? Are they unlike the thousands of people dying in the Mediterranean Sea traveling from North Africa into southern Europe? Or from Indonesia to Australia? Migrants the world over are messengers of a failed economic and political system. When will we listen?

As was stated recently in the National Journal, this is not a migration story but rather a foreign policy failure. Central American migrants and their unaccompanied children are in fact refugees, fleeing impossible economic circumstances and the highest rates of violence and homicide in the world. El Salvador currently has the world's highest homicide rate for children and adolescents, according to UNICEF, while Honduras has the current overall highest homicide rate.



US foreign policy in Central America has often eroded democracy, weakened civil society and increased criminal impunity. As historian Greg Grandin described it, the US "turned Central America into one of the last killing fields of the Cold War." From supporting the United Fruit Company to ousting democratically elected leaders to promoting the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), the United States has secured its economic interests in the region through violence and imperialism. **Migration is a symptom of deep and widespread economic and political failures. In order to reduce migration, we worked with our partners and determined that we need to:**

- > Rethink economic trade agreements that have not delivered what they promised, especially to the working poor.
- > Reassess US foreign policy in Latin America, reflect on past involvement and learn from our mistakes.
- > Reexamine our approach to the drug trade and consider how US policies push billions of dollars into the hands of organized crime.
- > Reconsider our immigration policies, which at present, separate families and provide no clear, efficient, affordable and legal path into the US for workers from Mexico and Central America.

“

As I understand, the United States is investing billions of dollars on that wall.

Why invest in something that is inanimate?

It's a dead investment.

Why not invest in human beings? ”

Delver Antonio Sandres-Turcios,
Dilcy Yohan's brother



As we entered into our work on the film, it became clear that most Mexican and Central Americans who migrate do so because they see migration as their only hope for survival. We asked ourselves whether the root problem of migration was actually a foreign policy issue - is the US the main architect of the conditions that bring so many people to its door? **Instead of treating the symptom, and doing so inhumanely, would it not be more effective to look at the root causes stemming from the US' relationship with its closest neighbors?**

As part of our legislative work in the US, **we screened WIDC with the State Department's Western Hemisphere Affairs section in late 2014.** In the discussion that followed, we introduced a shift away from the current "prevent migration" policy frame to a frame of "preventing the need for migration," and enhancing the right not to migrate. This reframing garnered recognition from many staffers in the room. Following our screening, the State Department team posted the film and related digital assets on their internal network. We have received requests to screen at Central American embassies.

Similarly, grantees of CAMMINA (Central American and Mexican Migration Alliance) and several other advocacy groups who participated in our capacity strengthening workshops in Mexico over the past year have stated directly that they shifted their advocacy

frame in this same direction and are starting to use our tools and educational materials to help create their accompanying strategic communications.

This shift in political framing is one of the most impactful results of our efforts. **Humanizing the plight of migrants through character-driven narratives is a highly effective way to help people make the shift in thinking.** The story and policy shift combination was one of our greatest hopes as we created the outreach for the film. Our narrative and outreach materials make a clear case for why this shift in framing needs to be amplified and widely adopted in program and policy work and offer tools and language to help others spread the framing throughout their networks.

> ACTING UPON AND SUPPORTING THE RIGHT NOT TO MIGRATE

Central to the re-framing from "migration prevention" to "realizing the right not to migrate" is the question: What conditions would reduce people's sense of desperation and allow them to stay in their communities rather than migrate? **We asked community members in El Escanito these questions and took our lead from them.**

They told us that education and access to water were priorities for them - necessary for improving their health, their general quality of life, and their future opportunities. We created media assets around these needs and raised funds for education and water programs. We linked the community with **Catholic Relief Services (CRS)** for implementation and continued support. **We have raised \$85,000 to date with CRS to support community-driven work on implementation of the water access system, and reconstruction of the school.**

The wider community's involvement with the film and these concrete programs to improve its wellbeing has enhanced community cohesiveness and increased people's engagement in their own development efforts, according to our CRS counterparts. When we first started to work with the community of El Escanito, they were very skeptical and concerned about working with an international NGO. CRS held many meetings with the community and went into the relationship

“
THE COMMUNITY’S INPUT HELPED US TO GENERATE A SERIES OF ACTIONS TO ADDRESS REAL ISSUES ON THE GROUND AS WELL AS TO FRAME OUR ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION MATERIALS AT MULTIPLE LEVELS.”



slowly. When both parties were comfortable with each other’s role, projects started to move forward. CRS worked very closely with the community in the design phase of the project and the end result was a new water system and renovations to the local school put in place. **According to Juan Sheenan, the Country Director, the education and water projects and the relationship with the community are a direct result of the film.**

In addition, community members have become more willing to speak out on their own behalf. Coming together for screenings has helped community members open up and discuss the conditions that lead to migration, particularly in the case of youth migrants. Some mothers and their children told us it was the first time that they had spoken openly about the issue together. Our partner organizations are planning to do a series of screenings for youth as a way to inform them of the dangers of the journey and to generate dialogue on the topic so that youth will be better prepared should they decide to migrate.

After the last year of working together and building the capacity of El Escanito, CRS considers El Escanito a partner and will work with the community on additional proposals. CRS will also work on

strengthening local business capacities in order to increase economic opportunity so that they do not have to leave their community for economic reasons. The people in El Escanito have elected a village committee that is in charge of the oversight of the school and the water system. This committee can also work on other initiatives so for Juan, “this is a huge initiative that they have developed and it does show that they are interested in managing their own future.”

The community’s move from a sense of desperation to that of an aware and engaged community working towards its own improvement shows why it is important for filmmakers to involve the subjects of a film from the very start in co-designing the narrative. **Close engagement with the community and family of the lead subject of the film not only helped to create a realistic and powerful storyline, but also ensured that our social impact materials dealt with real issues.** The community’s input helped us to generate a series of actions to address real issues on the ground as well as to frame our advocacy and education materials at multiple levels.

We will keep in touch with the community over time through CRS to track developments and to attempt to understand whether the tides of migration have been lessened as community conditions improve.

3 HUMANIZATION OF MIGRANTS

Problem definition	<p>Need for migrants' stories to elicit empathy defined in the film in Honduras, Mexico, and the US, and in the campaign design process by various NGO partners.</p> <p>Honduras: We have a desire to better ourselves.</p> <p>Mexico: We need protections and safety in transit.</p> <p>USA: We need legislative action and civil society efforts aimed at humane border policy</p>
Solution definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > All solutions articulated and shaped with NGO partners and community activists, and were shaped as: > Changing legislation in the short and long term. > Engaging the public and shifting perceptions
Campaign elements used to support the solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Website UX > eBook > Border Stories participation > Targeted film screenings, with Q+As and discussions > Screening discussion > Brain trusts and workshops > Advocacy with government bodies > Collaboration among campaign partners
Funder support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > CAMMINA > Tribeca New Media Fund by Ford Foundation > Ford Foundation and Ford Foundation Mexico > Unbound Philanthropy
Degree of Success or Failure	<p>Changing Legislation: Success: We provided NGOs materials that support the primacy of the issue of dead and missing migrants and a humane border in legislative advocacy efforts. Failure: in any legislative gains, and a backward slide on humane border policy through President Obama's Executive Action.</p> <p>Engaging the public and shifting perceptions: Difficult to form a qualitative assessment, though we have anecdotal evidence (not included in this report) through social media and messages of the stickiness of the story, the emotions and empathy engaged, and the discussions generated.</p>



> CHANGING LEGISLATION IN THE SHORT AND LONG TERM

Changing global migration policy is a multi-stage effort because the issue is so complex and politically contentious. While we kept our eyes on the long-term awareness and advocacy needed to contribute to wider legislative changes, we also supported partner organizations to use the film and outreach materials to achieve shorter-term goals in order to immediately save migrant lives.

We advocated at the Congressional level with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Border Caucus through two separate screenings of the short version of the film, in May 2013 and November 2013. We called attention to migrant deaths and the need for humanitarian interventions, such as water stations and decreased detention and deportation.

Our partner the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) hosted 4 events in an effort to work toward appropriations for humanitarian assistance considered for the 2013 comprehensive immigration reform bill. These events were aimed at key DC immigration and migrant rights organizations, immigration rights advocates in DC, and members of Congress. WOLA also participated in a NYC brain trust, wrote an essay on detention/deportation, and participated in our social media campaigning. WOLA was able to insert language around humanitarian assistance to migrants in the immigration reform bill - a significant

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Migrants are not a threat, they are an opportunity.

They come with values and great things to offer.

They are like rays of light shining on the things we must change.

They are heroes who fight not only for their families,

they are fighting to change the story of the U.S. and Mexico. ”

Padre Alejandro Solalinde,

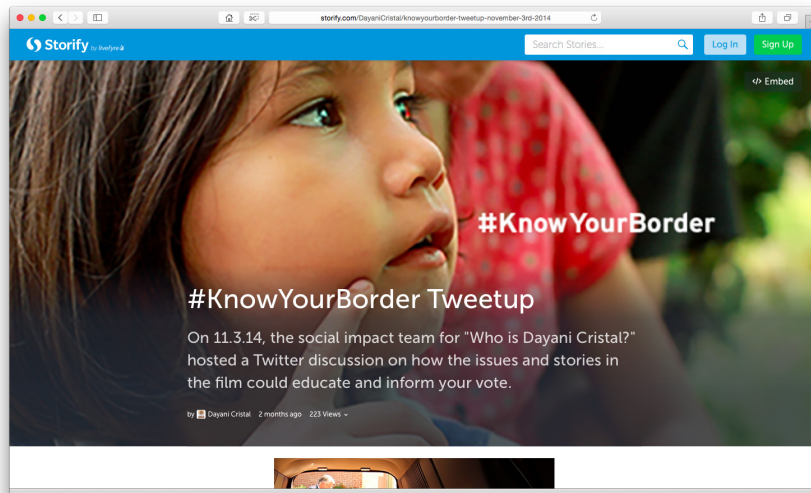
Hermanos en el Camino

achievement - but unfortunately the wider bill did not pass, meaning this win was ultimately not realized.

Another legislative effort, through Amnesty Mexico, is ongoing. In this case, Amnesty used our short films series “*The Invisibles*” strategically in advocating for improved prosecution of abuses perpetrated against migrants by organized crime bands and the Federal Police, including while in detention; witness protection programs for migrants; a database for missing migrants; and transit protection for Central American migrants passing through Mexico, including transit visas. In their words, they sought to use the films to “establish a clear action plan and to collect and publish nationwide data on abuses against migrants and on the action taken to hold those responsible to account.”

> ENGAGING THE PUBLIC AND SHIFTING PERCEPTIONS

Much of the conversation around migration is centered on highly polarized political viewpoints or stories of gangs, drug trade and violence. Knowing that it would be difficult to break through those media strongholds, we focused on humanizing the migrant story and advocating for change around some of the seemingly mundane aspects that in reality could bring huge improvements to migrants’



lives, such as water stations in the desert, the missing migrant database, and improved education and access to potable water at the community level.

In our public outreach, we aimed to engage the public in a story that was relatable in order to influence positioning and perception around migration. We started with the question: Do people know what is happening on the US-Mexico border, or with migration crises around the world? If they don't know, how can they make meaningful political and electoral decisions? We crafted a set of tools aimed at these questions:

> **The Know Your Border Campaign:** We created a “Know Your Border” campaign in the lead-up to midterm elections in the US, including a #KnowYourBorder Twitter discussion the night before the election. During the tweetup, we collected and published the tweets with Storify: <https://storify.com/DayaniCristal/knowyourborder-tweetup-november-3rd-2014>.

Our goal was two-fold: to encourage people to vote and to connect border organizations with one another so that they could collaborate on future work. The quality of engagement was high, the hashtag is still being used, and organizations have begun to connect and collaborate. Ultimately, this campaign was

a success in creating a great deal of dialogue and discussion across organizations, as well as a means for further collaboration among the participants.

We were, however, fighting an uphill battle, both in terms of voter participation in the midterms, and the effects of the protracted and failed comprehensive immigration reform effort that resulted in President Obama's executive action. This executive action, certainly the biggest piece of US immigration news in a long while, resulted in a potential gain for the 11 million people - should it survive legal opposition -- who were granted more secure status in the US. In exchange for that however, we paid with more robust border security. This means more people will be at risk of death as they try to migrate to the US.

For this team, that means our work in partnership with Colibrí becomes more urgent, and we will continue to use our media assets to keep the issue of dead and missing migrants on the border on the table. Informing the electorate to support policy shift therefore is a key impact metric, whether or not policy has yet shifted.

> **Engaging U.S. Latino and Mexican/Central American audiences:** While we weren't planning as the social impact team to engage in marketing to theatrical or broadcast audiences generally around viewing the film, we had to confront a lack of focus from North American distributors on the Latino audience, an audience that was crucial to mobilize for midterm elections and for support on immigration reform and border policy, as well as advocacy below the southern border. We therefore organized a specific social media campaign highlighting our social impact campaign issues and digital assets around the dual English/Spanish broadcast on Univision/Fusion. We worked with a communications firm and a dedicated social media manager and were able to generate 1.8 million unique social media engagements across the broadcast dates. We were also the top view/engagement item on Fandor and we reached the #4 most watched film on Netflix for one day, a massive achievement for a documentary film.

With Active Voice, we crafted messaging for US and Mexican border organizations to use around this broadcast that calls on US and Mexican governments to collaborate to prevent deaths on migrant crossings through their territories and to find humane solutions for dead and missing migrants. Four border screenings were held to target local community members and policy makers on both sides of the border, emphasizing that this is a shared crisis that needs joint solutions.

The US television broadcast and digital distribution successes made up somewhat for the failure in widespread distribution due to a decision made by the U.S. distributors not to target the Latino community, and the failure of the Central American distributor to release the film at all in Honduras or the rest of Central America. (All screenings in Honduras aimed at advocacy and community development were private, foundation-supported events.) This was in stark contrast to the success and focus demonstrated by Canana, Ambulante, and Mundial, organizations co-founded by Gael García Bernal which were proactive in marketing, advertising, and audience engagement.

The presence of a well-known celebrity actor/activist during production was an asset, as Gael was able to contribute his



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WE FOCUSED ON HUMANIZING THE MIGRANT STORY AND ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE AROUND SOME OF THE SEEMINGLY MUNDANE ASPECTS THAT IN REALITY COULD BRING HUGE IMPROVEMENTS TO MIGRANTS' LIVES.”

knowledge of the region and its politics through his own lens of decades of activism and cultural intervention, as well as his passion to use story and his own voice to shift realities in Mexico. His work in creating pre-production assets (including *The Invisibles* and hours of research and interview footage) as well as his partnership with Amnesty International laid some of our narrative foundation for the social impact campaign. His presence was both a benefit and a drawback in terms of distribution, as the North American distributors appeared too reliant on his presence alone without adequate marketing or advertising to engage his audience base.

At the same time, though we had collective discussions on audience engagement, the distributors relied too heavily on influential film critics who were writing primarily for art house audiences and not connected to or lacked an understanding of the communities represented by this film or its campaign, to direct their distribution strategy to general audiences.



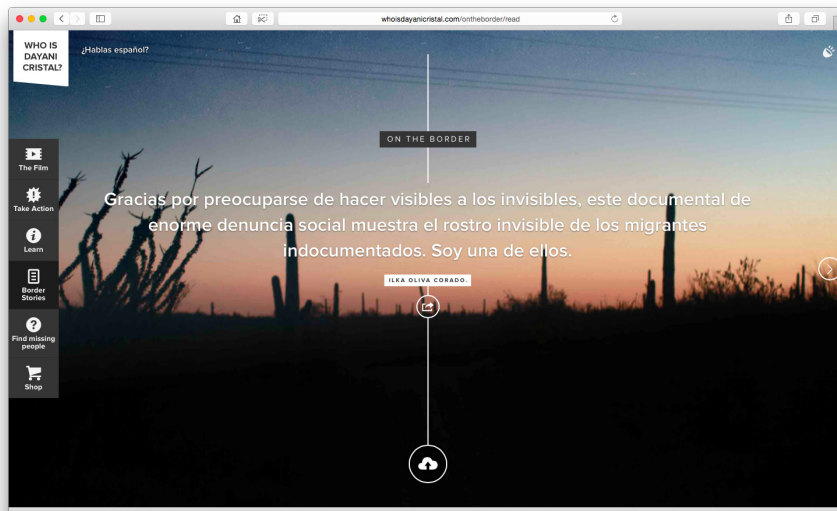
(Educational institutional distribution was more robust.) The theatrical release was tepid at best.

More importantly for the social impact campaign was that the effort behind national community screenings was a collective missed opportunity among all the entities connected to the film, including the social impact team. The screenings that were held were deeply effective, eliciting interest in migration justice and empathetic reactions and stories from attendees. (According to Active Voice's evaluation of their preview screenings, for example, 87% of audiences had increased awareness of border issues and nearly 60% were moved to social action.) However, there could and should have been more screenings that worked off the momentum of a theatrical release or the broadcast and

digital releases, or through a marketing effort that followed the intense news and discussion cycles on comprehensive immigration reform and the issue of unaccompanied minors.

Further, the theatrical-on-demand model didn't work in creating momentum around community or nationwide theatrical screenings in our case. Theatrical on-demand marketing and distribution are expensive efforts and we were unable to manage the relationship with Gathr, the on-demand distribution partner on this film, due to lack of funding and staffing. There was no explicit mandate for any of the entities connected to the film to advise Gathr on reaching into grassroots activist and Latino communities, and an apparent lack of prior knowledge of these audiences on the part of Gathr. This led to a leadership vacuum and a failure to tap into the Latino community, conditions necessary to achieving widespread community screenings. In sum, the community screenings effort was plagued by a lack of various necessary factors, including centralized outreach, database access or management, funding, and centralized communications.

> **Data Visualization of US Labor Demand:** This project was a failure. We originally wanted to create a tool that would allow a data-driven shift in the narrative that migrants are here to steal American jobs. We were inspired by Dr. Bruce Anderson's statement in the film that "as an American, I would like all Americans to acknowledge that they benefit from a blue collar labor force that has brown skin." NGO partners such as National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and the American Immigration Council who told us they could apply such a tool in advocacy efforts. We spent months trying to find unlocked current data and resources that could be visualized to tell the story of where undocumented migrants were being employed. Unfortunately, due to lack of resources, dense and locked decentralized data sets, lack of capacity, and financial limitations, we were unable to accomplish this goal. We finally abandoned the entire effort in 2013 and instead concentrated on educational materials in the ebook to tell the story. (Note: We have included this here to note that there appears to still be a need for the tool, though we will not be committing any further resources toward trying to build it.)



➤ **The Caravan Screenings:** At the global level, we supported international caravans in Mexico and Italy. In Mexico we collaborated with the Mothers of the Disappeared and the Mesoamerican Migrant Movement. The group mounted their 10th annual caravan through 10 Mexican states to call attention to disappeared migrants and allow mothers and families to search for their disappeared loved ones (with documented success on finding some of the missing), to create a network among migrants rights organizations and shelters, and to activate for more government support for migrants. The caravan screened the film in several locations along their journey and left behind copies of the film with migrant shelters.

Meanwhile, in honor of the 10th anniversary of the Mexican caravans, the Carovane Migranti in Italy did a sister caravan to call attention to migrant deaths in Europe, inviting activist and WIDC partner Padre Solalinde to join. The Italian caravan screened our film at three different stops through their journey, hosting discussions on the human cost of European migration policies. These sets of screenings were very successful in allowing the organizers to heighten their audience engagement efforts and opportunities for dialogue and exchange.

➤ **International Migrants Day Screenings:** We followed up the caravan activities with a six-city, same-day screening and discussion series on December 18, 2014, International Migrants' Day, to use the universality of Dilcy Yohan's story to call attention to the migration crises occurring globally. The cities were New York, Madrid, Brussels, Torino, Tel Aviv, and Tegucigalpa. Reports back from screening organizers were of successful engagements, dialogue, and further interest in the issues around global migration.

➤ **Border Stories:** The Border Stories campaign is for general audiences and communities to tell stories and share reflections and thoughts around the film, the border, or migration. The issue of migrant rights, especially the issue of dead or missing migrants, is deeply emotional and raw. Much of our campaign has been dedicated to supporting civil society advocacy goals through human stories and a systemic view of migration, which has been a strategic relationship focused on root causes and solutions that could be contoured through migrants' and activists' stories. But we also wanted a space for pure emotion or reflection to be captured, and a space for everyday people to be able to add their voices, which is what we have in Border Stories. The stories will have a life after the website, we believe, as an arts/activism piece. We're in talks with Culture/Strike to craft a work using them, perhaps involving the U.S.-Mexico border wall itself. //



APPENDIX A // AT A GLANCE: CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

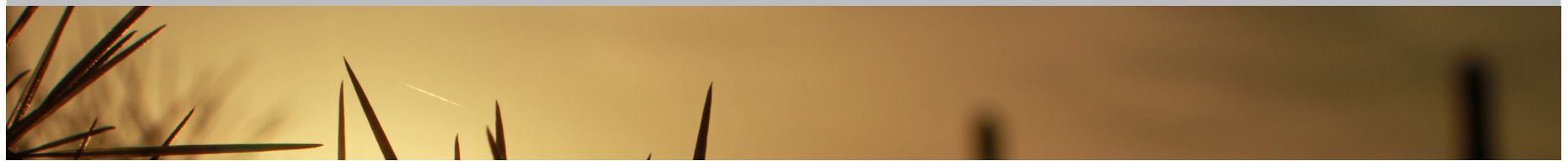


1 FOR THOSE WORKING ON SOCIAL IMPACT WITH DOCUMENTARY FILMS:

- › Build strong, cross-sector teams. Include NGO partners in campaign design early on.
- › Impact planning and measurement are specialized skills. An integrated work team comprised of impact strategists and the filmmaker working proactively and ahead of post-production is an effective way of creating community-level sustained social impact.
- › Early funding for research and development (during film production) followed by sustained funding is crucial to a campaign's success because it enables strategic planning, community-centric design, and prototyping to be conducted early in the process, with room for research, development, and testing.
- › Distributor education on social impact audiences and strategic outreach is necessary for the further evolution of the field so distributors and social impact teams more effectively align efforts to target audiences with affinities to the issues attract higher viewership and revenues, and to get films and digital engagement assets more effectively into the hands of issue influencers, community organizers, and grassroots communities.
- › Identify tools early in the process that can help you to enhance communications and database management. This will support stakeholder engagement and relationship management, both crucial for film viewership and collaborative impact efforts.
- › Craft an exit plan early on together with partners. A campaign that has a succession or exit plan will have more sustained impact because follow up actions will be defined and planned for the long-term.
- › Ensure open access to digital content for reuse and remix as far as you are able given what rights you retain over the materials, so that partners can use it in their ongoing work without incurring additional cost or battling for rights to re-use.

2 FOR THOSE WORKING ON MIGRATION RIGHTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

- › There are opportunities and challenges in any co-design process. Collaborating with filmmakers and impact teams early on in the design process means the campaign is more likely to be effective as an advocacy, activist, or education tool. The challenge lies in obtaining resources for this type of co-design and community/film subject participation.
- › There are difficulties attached to measuring more than 'likes,' views, or audience sentiment, however it is important to measure longer-term outcomes and impacts on the ground to support movements for positive change. Participation of NGOs who are working on the ground with stakeholder communities is one way to improve impact measurement on the ground.
- › Migrant rights organizations should invest in program design efforts to support people in sending communities and advocate for improved living conditions so that staying in community is a viable option. We hope to have continued support dedicated to the village in the film, for example.
- › One of the difficulties in creating a humane border is the constant challenge to deepen and humanize the narrative of migrants and migration. Investing in storytelling that comes from communities, as a matter of program design, and using all the resources available through our platform can help NGOs carry on with this work.



APPENDIX B // **AT A GLANCE: THE LOGISTICS**



> Timeline

Planning and Implementation, May 2010-March 2015

> Expenditures:**WIDC Social Impact Team:**

\$233,000: Campaign design, implementation, management, and multi-stakeholder engagement

\$65,000: Creation of digital assets

\$25,000: Social media management and public relations

Active Voice:

\$150,000 in strategy and partner engagement: Two brain trusts, and management of two screenings series

Catholic Relief Services:

\$85,000: Design and implementation of water access system and school renovations, monitoring and evaluation.

(Deficit: \$15,000)

Total Costs: \$558,000**> Funders****Major funders:**

CAMMINA

Tribeca New Media Fund supported by Ford Foundation

The Fledgling Fund

The Bertha BritDoc Fund

Unbound Philanthropy

The Ford Foundation Mexico

Pamela Tanner Boll

Sorenson Legacy Foundation

The Filmmaker Fund

Individual donors:

Georgia Weiss-Elliott

Justine Simmons

Ayelet Baron

Emily Macfarlane

Anjali Dayal

Maya A Beckersmith

Krystal Gomez

Maribel Arroyo

Patricia Vasquez

Itzel Reyes

Anthony Levy

Laurelene Chambovet

Ramona d'Viola

Suhkyung Kim

Neil Abellon

Brian Clark

KP and Rama Srivastava

Abigail Walke

Samuel Baumel

Patrick O'Donnel

Margaret McCombs

Patricia Finneran

Thierry Devichi

Srinivas Sakhamuri

Maryvonne Rosamont-Ursulet

David Littlefield

Alyson Winick

> NGO Partners and Collaborators**Co-Creation Partners**

Colibrí Center for Human Rights

Washington Office on Latin America

Catholic Relief Services

World Policy Institute

Amnesty International

Amnesty Mexico, Amnesty USA

National Council of La Raza

CultureStrike

Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner

Movimiento Migrantes Mesoamericanos

> **Collaborators:**

Ambulante
Active Voice
React to Film
National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities
Alliance San Diego
EAAF (Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team)
Random Hacks of Kindness
The Samaritans
No More Deaths
Border Action Network
Border Angels
COFAMIDE, COFAMIPRO, FONAMIH, COMIREDIS

> **Staffing / Talent**

WIDC Impact Team:

Co-directors, Marc Silver and Lina Srivastava: 30% average billable time, 5 years,
Outreach coordinator, Sebastian Barrera: 10 hours/month, 18 months
Research consultant, JD Carter: 10 hours/month, 2 months
Political consultant, Robert Becker: 15 hours, 1 month
Social media consultant/coordinator, Will Coley: 15 hours/month, 6 months
Web designer, UC48 (Tim Harbour),
PR firm, Riptide Communications: 3 month retainer

Active Voice:

Two lead strategists, part-time, 10 months

Village of El Escanito:

500 laborers, including architect and construction specialists

Catholic Relief Services:

Country Director

WOLA:

Executive Director, 3 Program Officers, 1 Administrative Assistant



External NGO writers/content producers:

Gael Garcia Bernal
Sarnata Reynolds
Favianna Rodriguez
Thomas Cabus
Mario Bronfman
Maureen Meyer
Robin Reineke
Daniel Martinez
Ellie Klerlein
Padre Alejandro Solalinde
Linda Raftree
Karmen Ross

> **Fiscal sponsors**

Media engagement: Women Make Movies
Development, Honduras: NEO Philanthropy



> Engagement Elements:

Film:

- Full-length cut
- 20-minute version

Digital Assets:

- Website (bilingual)
- Web docs/photo essays
- Border Stories (participatory)
- The Missing Migrant Project
- Original essays
- Screening guides
- Original essay series: World Policy Institute
- The Invisibles short film series
- Bodies on the Border: NY Times Op-Doc
- "An Examination of Modern Day Migration": eBook (bilingual)

Events of note:

- Brain Trust, Ford Foundation, New York City (With Active Voice)
- Brain Trust, Tijuana, Mexico (With Active Voice)
- Brain Trust, Washington DC (With WOLA)
- Migrant Rights Workshop, Mexico City (With CAMMINA)
- Migrant Rights Workshop, Mexico City (With Ford Foundation Mexico)
- Screening, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, US Congress (with WOLA)
- Screening, Border Caucus and Congressional Hispanic Caucus, US Congress (with WOLA)

- Screening, AGM, National Domestic Workers Alliance (with Active Voice)
- Screening, US State Department, Western Hemisphere Affairs
- Screening, Honduran Embassy, Washington DC
- Screening, Honduran Repatriating Remains Team, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Screenings Series:

- Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano: Mothers of the Disappeared screenings, Various locations, Mexico
- Carovane Migranti: Caravan screenings, Various locations, Italy
- Catholic Relief Services / CAMMINA: Various locations, Honduras
- National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities: Various locations, U.S.
- React to Film: US University screening tour
- Active Voice: US Immigration Rights Organizations, US-Mexico Regional Border Tour
- Various Partners: International Migrants' Day screenings, Various locations worldwide

Social Media Impressions:

- Measured from broadcast launch, 6/7 September 2014, with 2,283,000 million total viewers on Univision/Fusion, to November 3, 2014, #KnowYourBorder Twitter campaign)
- Facebook: 2,098,013
 - Twitter: 80,200



ABOUT THE REPORT

> External Evaluators

Linda Raftree is a co-founder of Kurante, LLC and has worked at the intersection of community development, participatory media, and information and communication technologies (ICT) since 1994. She has advised the Rockefeller Foundation's Evaluation Office on the use of ICTs in monitoring and evaluation and worked with Plan International USA on innovation, transparency and strategy. She has also conducted research on adolescent girls and ICTs for UNICEF, the role of ICTs in child/youth migration for the Oak Foundation, and the use of mobile technologies in youth workforce development for the mEducation Alliance. Linda is a co-founder of Regarding Humanity, which encourages debate and dialogue around the portrayal of 'the poor' in the media, social impact work, and non-profit marketing. She coordinates Technology Salons in New York City and advocates for greater dialogue and discussion around the ethics of ICT use and data privacy in the humanitarian and development space. Linda serves on the boards of the International Center for Advocates against Discrimination and SIMLab (creators of FrontlineSMS). She also writes 'Wait... What?,' a blog about new technology and community development. **@meowtree**

Karmen Ross is a filmmaker and political strategist. She most recently worked with Steps International and the BBC on their collaboration with www.purpose.com to address the structural causes of poverty through the emerging tools of digital activism. Karmen's past work has combined documentary film and international human rights advocacy. Her Emmy award-winning documentary about wartime rape in Bosnia helped the US Congress and United Nations to press for a just settlement to the Balkan wars. It went on to become part of an international campaign to recognize rape as a systematic crime of war. She has received numerous prizes for her work as a documentary filmmaker and human rights advocate, including two Emmy awards, a Cable Ace award and a Robert F. Kennedy journalism award. Her work has been featured by The New York Times, CNN, CBS 60 Minutes and Newsweek, among other media outlets. She was Director of Communications for the International Center for Transitional Justice, established by the founders of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. **@karmenross**

> Social Impact Team

Marc Silver, Director/Producer, Who Is Dayani Cristal?, works worldwide as a filmmaker, director of photography and social impact strategist. His first feature length film 'Who is Dayani Cristal?' premiered at the Sundance Festival 2013 where it won Cinematography Award: World Cinema Documentary and the Amnesty International Best Documentary award 2014. His second film '3½ Minutes' about the murder of Jordan Davis is premiering at the Sundance Festival 2015. Marc's rich portfolio includes documentaries, concert visuals, art installations and branding. He has created content for the BBC, Channel 4, Universal Music, The Guardian, The New York Times, Amnesty International, UNHCR and collaborated with artists such as Gael Garcia Bernal, Nitin Sawhney, Michael Nyman, Jamie Cullum, Ben Okri, Matthew Herbert and Cirque Du Soleil. Marc is currently working on a new film about ayahuasca, neuroscience, and global drug policy. He is Creative Director of The Filmmaker Fund. **@marcsilverms**

Lina Srivastava, Social Impact Director, Who Is Dayani Cristal?, is a strategist who works in narrative design, social innovation, and digital storytelling for human rights and international development. She has worked with a group of social impact organizations around the world including UNICEF, the World Bank Institute, UNESCO, the Rockefeller Foundation, Internews, 3Generations, and the AARP. Lina has been involved in impact campaigns for several documentaries, including Oscar-winning Born into Brothels, Emmy-nominated The Devil Came on Horseback, Oscar-winning Inocente, and Sundance-award winning Who Is Dayani Cristal?. A former attorney, and the former Executive Director of Kids with Cameras, and the Association of Video and Filmmakers, Lina currently runs a social innovation strategy collective in New York, and has co-founded the Regarding Humanity community dedicated to ethical and effective humanitarian storytelling. She has taught design and social entrepreneurship at Parsons, The New School of Design, and is on faculty in the Masters of Fine Arts Program in Design and Social Innovation at the School of Visual Arts. **@lksriv**

