

# African School

## Love, Football and Money

Television coverage of Africa is often dominated by images of disaster and poverty. This ground-breaking series attempts to dispel the clichés and to capture the daily lives and concerns of young Africans and their teachers.



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Programme running: 8 x 30 mins | Production: Lion TV/BBC | Executive Producer: Richard Bradley

## Show Me the Money

Mrs Mukasa, the new headmistress at Masindi Secondary School, finds herself in dire financial straits. Three quarters of the students have failed to pay their school fees and the teachers have gone without full pay for three months. She is determined that all the children must pay and instigates a tough new gate policy that is supposed to catch the defaulters. But her students are equally desperate to get into school. Eddie, an orphan, tries to scrape the fees together through odd jobs and help from his brother. And Justice, a skilled dodger, crawls under the fence and tricks his teachers with a borrowed payment card to get into class.

## The Candidate

Masindi Secondary School holds Prefect Elections every year but this one is going to be different – a change in the rules allows girls to run for Head Prefect for the first time. Susan, a remarkable and strong-willed girl, takes up the challenge and competes for the job. But the boys in the school think it can be done only by one of their number and their candidate, Nelson, stands against her. Male pride, female emancipation and girl power are all at stake as Susan and Nelson take to the hustings to fight for the top spot.

## Football Fever

It's not just the reputation of Masindi Secondary School's coaching staff at stake – the pride of the whole school is hanging on the progress of its soccer team. This is the fast-moving story of the school's progress in the highly competitive Coca-Cola Cup. And it's a chance to share in the hopes and aspirations of the players. Shem and the others dream of the potential riches on offer if their skills impress the talent scouts – enough to support their whole families. But football fever can be contagious, and as it grips the school, a pitch invasion and a full scale riot unfold.

## Sex Education

Early pregnancy forces 6,000 girls out of schooling in Uganda every year. When he took up the post of headmaster at Kamurasi Primary School, Mr Ntairaho introduced a system of surprise pregnancy testing believing that it would protect the girls from prostitution and 'defilement', and reduce the drop-out rate. We follow Christine, a final year student who fears she's pregnant, as she is put in for the test.

## The Womaniser and the Evangelist

Sixteen-year-old Dickson is a schoolboy womaniser in a puritanical country. While he risks seven years imprisonment for having sex under the age of 18, the evangelical Christians ram home the message that sex before marriage is wrong. Dickson has already seen his father, six uncles, three aunts and his sister die of 'that disease', as he calls AIDS. This remarkable film gives an insight into why God is so big in Africa. The local evangelical church, The Miracle Centre, promises Dickson spiritual salvation and possibly a cure from AIDS if he'll become born again. He's spurred on by the outspoken schoolgirl evangelist Prossy and a touching friendship develops. It's a personal journey in which he confronts himself and God as he waits for the results of his HIV test.

## Running for Your Life

Primary school headmaster, Mr Ntairaho is taking part in a survey of displaced children in the Masindi district. The area is full of people who have fled the terrible fighting further north where the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) is taking on the Ugandan government and terrorising the local population. But ordinary life goes on and this moving film also tells the story of Opio, an orphan who came to Masindi after his parents were killed in the conflict. A talented athlete whose father ran at national level, Opio is striving to follow in his parent's footsteps.

## Boy Meets Girl

Having a love life in Uganda isn't easy. Teenagers face being expelled from school if they admit to having a boyfriend or girlfriend; teachers struggle to afford to get married and those that do manage to tie the knot can find themselves posted to schools at opposite ends of the country. But this revealing programme shows how love can flourish despite the challenges.

## Fred Gets To Z

This touching film follows Fred, the first boarding student at Kamurasi Primary School, where staff are trying to create the best Special Needs Integrated school in their district. Fred is blind and spends his first term learning the Braille alphabet from A to Z with his friend Miungo. As well as following Fred's progress, we get to know his remarkable teacher, Harriet and the headmaster Mr Ntairaho, who is determined to support Special Needs despite the constant demands on his school's limited resources.

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