

CHILDBIRTH BANNED IN PARADISE

a film by Joana Nin

Case study - Impact distribution

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DISTRIBUTION



PRODUCTION COMPANY



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The **act of releasing a film to the world** poses several **challenges** to filmmakers, who must seek out **creative solutions** and **advantageous distribution partnerships** to prevent their film from fading away into obscurity. The first **concrete** challenge that Brazilian films face is the **competition for theater programming**, an **uneven contest** in the pursuit of the **same goal: reaching the audience**. Nonetheless, theater screenings are far from being the most decisive step. The key point is to **ensure viewers are aware of the film's existence, and that they are both willing and capable of watching it**. Movie theaters are found in only **just over 10% of Brazilian cities**. In this scenario, **alternative movie watching experiences**, such as **streaming platforms**, are here to stay and have quickly become **prominent**, but that does not mean that their menus are more democratic or inclusive. **Screens have multiplied and so has the challenge of reaching them**, making it vital to seek out novel ways for showing films.

Against this backdrop, we released ***Childbirth Banned in Paradise*** just as the Covid-19 pandemic was coming to an end. We, the **distributing company** Boulevard Filmes and the **impact team staff**. Below, **we'll provide an overview about how it all happened** and, hopefully, **encourage other filmmakers to not let their films go unseen!**

Have a good read.

Sambaqui Cultural - production company

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I believe the best way to release a documentary that speaks to a social cause is to combine the force of a social impact campaign with the reach of a commercial release. The idea is to transform the involvement of activists into further reach, whether for a paying or non-paying audience. Coordinating actions on both fronts amplifies the results and renders the film more likely to 'happen', that is, to become known to people who may benefit from it. Thus, in some way, the documentary may contribute to major societal changes, even if powerless to bring about such changes by itself.

Joana Nin, *director and producer*

Innovative distribution project

Commercial Release and Social Impact Campaign

The distribution of the feature film *Childbirth Banned in Paradise* took place between 2020 and 2023 by a team devoted to **evaluating the integration of commercial strategies and the documentary's social ambitions**. The film was concluded in 2020, right at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. **This mean that even the film festival circuit was an impossibility. This did not mean, however, that the film failed to reach an audience, quite the contrary! This case study presents our main results and lessons learned to empower us for future endeavors.**



Organization of actions

Phase 1

may to december 2020

Entirely **online**, prior to the film's commercial release, featuring **debate sessions for closed groups and development of the project's social networks**.

Phase 2

february and june 2021

Premiere in theaters and on **streaming platforms**.

Phase 3

second half of 2022 and first half of 2023

Social **impact campaign** alongside a **re-release tour in movie theaters**, recently reopened and welcoming back audiences.

Only this **last phase** relied on resource grants, from the **PROFICE public notice**, issued by the **Culture Secretariat of the State of Paraná**, via ICMS tax exemption. The support was provided by the electric utility company **Copel**.

The present **case study** provides an **assessment of the results** and a **memorial of the film's distribution project**. This document is intended both for **those directly involved in the debate** on **obstetric violence**, and for filmmakers who wish to learn more about how we develop and organize a film's **impact campaign in unison with a commercial distribution strategy**.

Sambaqui Cultural is audiovisual production company specialized in **custom-tailored projects developed from socially relevant topics**. We aspire to create and spread **films that change the world!**

2020

10 MAY |

Launch of the film's social media platforms - Instagram and Facebook

17 MAY |

Fantástico TV Show a media story includes excerpts from the film and an interview with the filmmaker

18 MAY |

Closed screening session for the executive board of the Women's National Lawyers Association of Brazil-Rio de Janeiro (OAB Women-RJ)

19 JUNE |

Cláudia Magazine publishes an article about the film with director Joana Nin

29 JULY |

Live stream featuring the 1st doula in Brazil, Fadyinha, with Joana Nin (Instagram and Facebook)

2 / 3 AUG |

Closed screening session at the Aurora Institute + Rehuna Network

22 AUG |

Closed screening session at B2Mamy Network (network of women entrepreneurs)

08 SEPT |

Closed screening session with the Curumim Group and Flávio Falcão, the Public Prosecutor representing Fernando de Noronha

28 SEPT |

Closed screening session at the IMS – Institute of Social medicine/ UERJ/CLAM - Latin American Center on Sexuality and Human Rights

12 / 13 NOV |

BRLAB Impact Distribution Workshop, with Sarah Moses, Together Films – London

12 DEC |

Closed screening session at the Human Rights Forum - NDIS (Center for Diversity and Social Identities) | Federal University of Pernambuco



2021

18 FEB |

Cláudia Magazine promotes the official trailer of the film on social networks

20 / 24 FEB |

Preview screening sessions in Fernando de Noronha with the participation of director Joana Nin and characters from the documentary

4 MAR |

Closed screening session at the Women's Lawyer Association | OAB Pernambuco

7 MAR |

Live Stream CEPHEC - Historical and Cultural Research Center of Fernando de Noronha

25 MAR |

Closed screening session for the Florescer Group - Understanding the Feminine Cycles (Chapada Diamantina) and ESCTA - School of Ancestral Knowledge, Culture, and Tradition (Salvador)

27 MAR |

Participation in *Circuito Infinito* - Women+ Filmmakers Festival

7 APR |

The TV show *Metrópolis* (TV Cultura Channel) shows a special report on the documentary

15 APR |

Premiere in movie theaters in accordance with pandemic regulations and guidelines

1 / 5 MAY |

Premiere on Globoplay and GNT channels

5 MAY |

The group *Jornalistas Livres* (Free Journalists) holds a debate session about the documentary with guests from feminist organizations

20 MAY |

International premiere - One World - International Human Rights Film Festival - Czech Republic

22 MAY |

Proibido Nascer no Paraíso scores 10 in Patrícia Kogut's column (O Globo newspaper)

22 JUNE |

The film premieres on several streaming platforms, among which NOW, Vivo Play, iTunes, Looke, and Google Play

05 OCT |

A tourist Woman gives birth on the island of Fernando de Noronha

27 OCT |

First in-person screening session of the impact of the documentary - Community Education for Young People and Adults at Santo Inácio School (Rio de Janeiro)



2022

22 JUNE |

The Impact Distribution project obtains sponsorship from Copel through PROFICE, a tax incentive program of the Culture Secretariat of Paraná

14 SEPT |

Sandra Nodari, researcher and screenwriter of the film, presents a session in Santarém/Pará

20 OCT |

Theatrical release of the film at Cine Passeio, in the city of Curitiba – one week in theaters

22 OCT |

Extended debate session of the documentary at Cine Passeio - Curitiba/PR

25 / 26 OCT |

Impact sessions in Maringá/PR - CAC Márcia Costa and OAB Women

02 NOV |

Debate session at Cortina Film Club- São Paulo/ SP - followed by screening sessions in movie theaters on the SPCine circuit

04 NOV |

The film is made available online on the Taturana Mobi Platform - for non-commercial collective screenings anywhere in Brazil

16 NOV |

Debate session at OAB Paraná - Curitiba

14 NOV / 1 DEC |

Debate sessions in cities in the Paraná countryside, such as Iriti, Fazenda Rio Grande, and Foz do Iguaçu, among others. The film opens in movie theaters in these cities.

23 NOV |

Debate session at Facha College - Rio de Janeiro/RJ and at the Afro Carioca Film Center

01 DEC |

Debate session in the city of Campo Mourão – in partnership with the Attorney General's Office for Women and Flor do Ventre Collective

05 DEC |

Debate session in Campina Grande/ PB - with the participation of women doctors Melania Amorim and Claudia Bianka Manhães

08 DEC |

Debate session at Cinema do Porto, in Recife/Pernambuco, featuring Edleuza Santos, which the film pays homage to, attorney Maisa Oliveira, and Iole

Leão and Babalu, characters from the film, on an online streaming session direct from Fernando de Noronha, in addition to director Joana Nin



What is the film about?

Topics: Pregnancy and childbirth, obstetric violence, human rights, women, right to choose.

Childbirth Banned in Paradise follows three pregnant women from Fernando de Noronha and investigates why for nearly two decades, pregnant women – even local women – have been forced to leave the island to give birth away from home.

Synopsis

The documentary film **Childbirth Banned in Paradise** chronicles the saga of Lone, Harlene, and Babalu, pregnant women in Fernando de Noronha, state of Pernambuco, in their journey to become mothers. In 2004, Brazil's only inhabited ocean island suspended maternity services at the sole local hospital. Since then, women are required to leave their home 12 weeks before their baby is due. Not even the native women are exempt, and are forced to leave even when expressing their desire to remain on the island. Over the years, tourism has become a growing priority in Fernando de Noronha, pushing traditional families to compete and dispute the land that once belonged to their ancestors. Babies born today may become the adults advocating for their rights tomorrow.

TRAILER



Commercial release & impact campaign

MAIN RESULTS - 2020 TO 2023

Phase 1

BUDGET

R\$1k

distributing company

AUDIENCE

may to dec 2020

. official: -

. impact:

about

2.500 people

22 entities

related to the topic of
the documentary were
involved in the premiere

Phase 2

BUDGET

R\$35k

distributing company

AUDIENCE

feb to june 2021

. official: 54

. impact:

about

1.000 people

1.283

total audience in movie theaters

Phase 3

BUDGET

R\$200k

recursos incentivados:
Profice/PR – Copel

AUDIENCE

sept to dec 2022 and
início de 2023

. official: 1.229

. impact:

about

4.000 people

7.500

estimated impact audience

The impact campaign alongside the commercial
theatrical release, developed with the assistance
of the tax incentive grant in 2022, increased
the film's official audience by

2.300 %

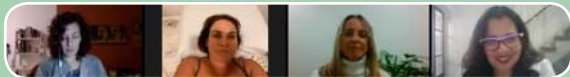
*Circa
7.500 people
watched and discussed the film
in non-commercial screening
sessions, both in-person and online.*

The documentary was screened in **16
movie theaters**
in **9 different cities**,
with **18 in-person debate
sessions** with the director's
presence, in addition to a significant
interest in screening sessions at
schools, universities, and closed groups,
held independently by those interested.
independente pelos interessados.

How did the impact campaign begin?

Phase 1 - online | may to december 2020

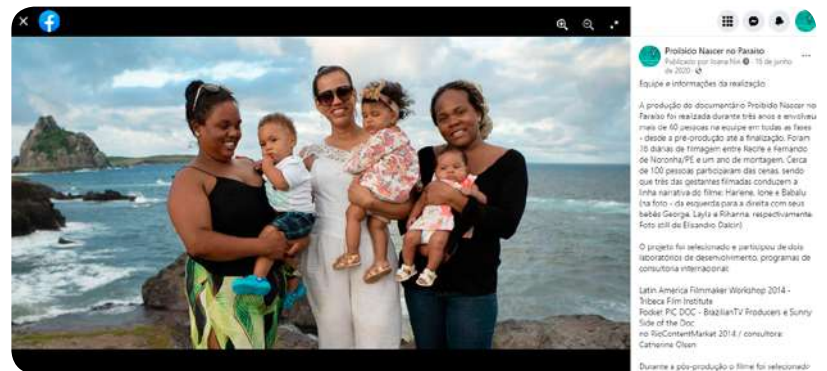
Fiocruz Rede Rehuna
OAB Mulher
B2Mamy



In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, unable to release the documentary as envisioned in the distribution project, **director Joana Nin** and **impact producer Rossana Giesteira** decided to operate in the only feasible manner at the time: **online**. As a general rule, films released with a social strategy begin the campaign with in-person debate sessions alongside the **target audience as well as activists and other people passionate about the film's cause**. However, with everyone confined in their homes and global social distancing guidelines, we had to be creative and find new solutions. **We forged partnerships with various entities focused on women's issues, pregnancy and childbirth**, a list that ultimately included 22 organizations at the end of the project, such as Fiocruz - Projeto Nascer no Brasil, OAB Mulher, Rede Rehuna, and B2Mamy. The screening sessions took place through a digital platform contracted by the partner distributing company, **Boulevard Filmes**. The **debates** were **heated!** From north to south of Brazil, **those who wished to see the documentary film thrive**, as it **converged with their own personal interests and social causes**, were **joining forces** and attracting other audiences. Director Joana Nin participated in online sessions to discuss the film as well as the BrLab Workshop on impact distribution.

How did the impact campaign begin?

The launch of the film's social networks – Instagram and Facebook – in May 2020 marks the beginning of this campaign.



How did the impact campaign begin?



Media coverage was **vital** to **augment the success of the impact campaign**. Some media stories gave plenty of **exposure** to the film, generating interest among a growing group of people.
(in Portuguese only – campaign carried out in Brazil)



Commercial release

Phase 2 - in-person and online

february and june 2021

The **local community of Fernando de Noronha/PE** was the first to have **special screenings**, held in **February 2021**, as a **preview** ahead of the intended theatrical release on March 11.

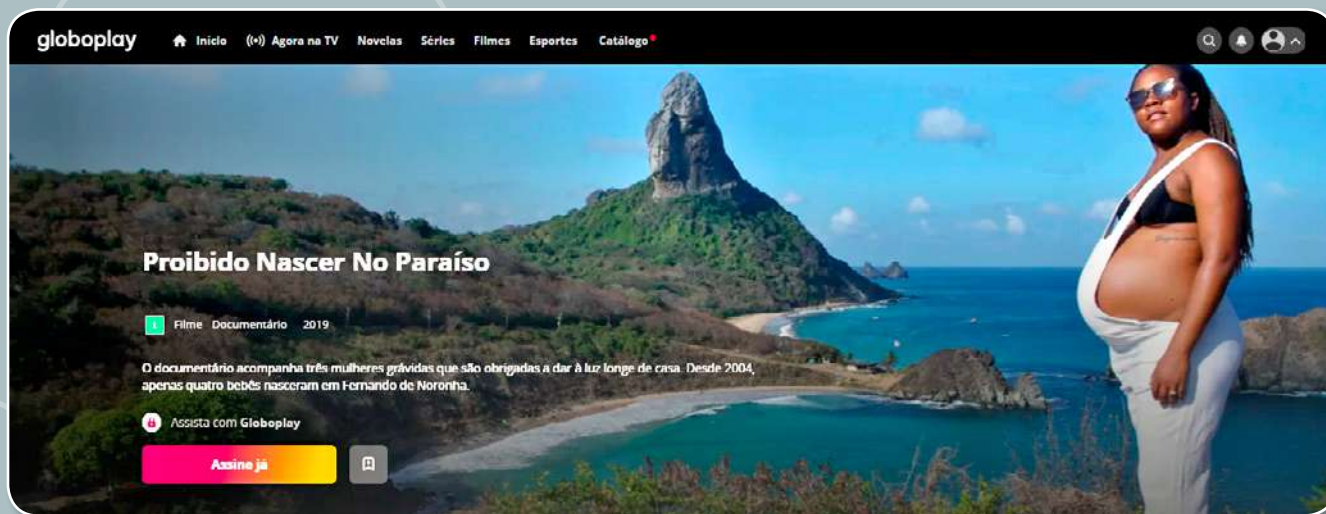


Commercial release

The film's **commercial release** had to be pushed back by just over a month, as we were experiencing the second wave of Covid-19 and all theaters were closed again. **Cine Paradiso**, in the city of Florianópolis, held the **first cine week** of the film only from 04/15/2021. After a

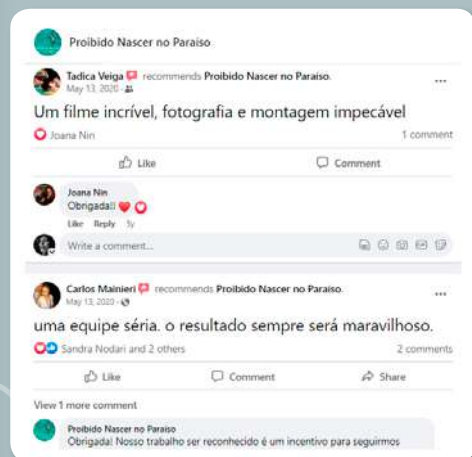
hiatus, we began to transition to digital format.

On May 1, 2021, a week before Mother's Day, the documentary premiered on Canal GNT and Globoplay.



Commercial release

During this period, **the campaign on social networks gained momentum** with a special focus on producing content for the film's release. **Audience engagement** was very significant. We received comments, shares, and **many, many messages from people interested in the film.**



Impact Campaign & commercial re-release

Phase 3 - in-person and online

june to december 2022 and early 2023



The **impact distribution project** of the documentary film ***Childbirth Banned in Paradise*** had been selected in the **ProfiCE-PR public notice** for raising funds through ICMS tax exemption in the State of Paraná since 2020, but the pandemic also delayed many fundraising activities. It was only in June 2022 that **we managed to gather the necessary funds to complete the campaign**. The sponsorship from **Copel** enabled several actions to **increase public interest in the film**. After two months of preparation, ***Childbirth Banned in Paradise*** arrives at **Cine Passeio** on 20/10/2022, in the city of **Curitiba**, with a packed **screening session and debate panel!**

Impact Campaign & commercial re-release

9 cities in the state of Paraná hosted **screening sessions with a debate panel**, almost all with the presence of director Joana Nin – Curitiba, Londrina, Maringá, Foz do Iguaçu, Irati, Fazenda Rio Grande, Campo Mourão, Campo Largo, Medianeira. Furthermore, the film had a **theatrical run in 6 of these cities**.



Impact Campaign & commercial re-release

But we didn't stop there. We **toured the documentary film with debate sessions in other states: Rio de Janeiro/RJ; São Paulo/SP; João Pessoa and Campina Grande/PB; Natal, RN; and Recife/PE.**



Impact Campaign & commercial re-release

Our **social networks** were once again **buzzing** with **offers to screen the film** – including on the Taturana Mobi platform, **for non-commercial collective screenings**. There were **many debates** and **interactions with many different audiences**.



TATURANA
Indústria Social

HOME FILMES AGENDA CONTATO CADASTRE-SE LOGIN

Documentário 2021 80 minutos Brasil Joana Nio Sambaqui Cultural

PROIBIDO NASCER NO PARAIÃO

Há 17 anos mulheres de Fernando de Noronha/PE são forçadas a se afastar de casa para terem seus bebês. As que se recusam são coagidas a sair; nem mesmo nativas podem optar por ficar. A proibição coincide com a explosão do turismo na ilha e gera conflito entre empresários e aqueles que têm direito à terra: o filme acompanha a saga de três gestantes de famílias tradicionais da gravidez até o parto.

FICHA TÉCNICA

Produção:
Sambaqui Cultural

Distribuição:
Boulevard Filmes

Fórmula:
Ancinet/SA/BRX

Incentivo (distribuição):
Copa, Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ODS), Paraná Profões, Secretaria de Comunicação e Cultura do

POR QUE ACENDER UMA SESSÃO?

"Quem é que faz as regras?" - pergunta uma das três gestantes que empresta sua história ao filme. Dona de uma pequena lapicicaria,

Impact Campaign & commercial re-release

In **December 2022** we ended the tour, but **the film remained available on the Taturana platform**. We all left with a feeling of **contentment in our hearts**, knowing that the **combined efforts of our team had been worthwhile**. Every single one of us put in our best efforts to ensure the documentary ***Childbirth Banned in Paradise*** reached a wide audience and was **seen and talked about by many people**. And the hope that one day we may **give birth and be born more respectfully**.



Some comments from participants in the impact discussions



In various places around the world, there are women giving birth in small locations, with health professionals attending and selecting those with complications. (...) There are ways to know what happens in other places where women are more respected so that our Brazilian women can also be respected and give birth where they live. I think this is feasible, and it has been feasible outside of Brazil.

Maria do Carmo Leal Coordinator of the “Born in Brazil” Study, ENSP FioCruz.



The revolution will never arise, develop, and succeed within the medical field. This is unrealistic; nowhere do you see a revolution, a change of model, induced by the oppressors, that doesn't exist. Therefore, the revolution must come from women because it will be feminist, or it won't be.

Dra. Melania Amorim MD, PhD, University Professor, Gynecologist and Obstetrician.



Some comments from participants in the impact discussions



Women need to be part of this decision. Thus, often even in situations where it's indeed necessary to go to the mainland, this will be accepted in a more peaceful way because she was part of that decision. Not exactly the way the film shows, as something veiled, saying that a woman doesn't care about her baby. This strategy is used on all women, used on upper-middle-class women to convince them to undergo a cesarean, for example. We need to guarantee the right to quality information so that she can fully exercise her right to autonomy over her own body.

Maísa Melo Prosecutor and creator of the “Childbirth Humanization” Project of MPPE.



I've met Obstetrics professors who would casually state, 'look, childbirth is a very simple thing: engine, object, and path.' The “engine” is the woman's uterus that pushes, the “object” is the fetus, and the “path” is the vagina. So, against this mechanical view comes the proposal to humanize, to remind that a woman is not just a uterus, she is a human being; the fetus isn't an object exiting the woman; and the vagina isn't just a path, it's part of the woman. And neither is the healthcare professional the mechanic who will fix this “engine” if it has any problems or “breaks down.”

Daphne Rattner Doctor, professor at UNB, and President of ReHuNa Network.

Some comments from participants in the impact discussions



Here in Pernambuco, the Women's Lawyer Commission watched this film in a private session. All the members of the commission - I think there were more than 50 - who watched this film, all were astounded regarding what happens on the island. But it's not just on the island, it's essential to say that thousands of women, in fact, can't make essential decisions about their bodies. (...) It's a national issue, it's a planetary problem.

Fabiana Leite President of the Women's Lawyer Commission of OAB/PE.



I found the documentary extremely important; it's necessary to keep talking about this issue, about obstetric violence, about how women have their rights constantly distorted and threatened by the State. So, what we see there is yet another attempt to control female bodies. It's very important to allow these women to give birth where they choose, to have this autonomy.

Mayara Abdul-Khalek gynecologist and obstetrician, activist for humanized childbirth.

REVIEW

Childbirth Banned in Paradise Distribution case

**Commercial Release &
Social Impact Campaign** - 2020 to 2023

Lessons learned

- Impact campaign actions can and should start even before the film has funds for distribution, provided that there are people willing to organize and propose activities to organizations associated with the social cause.
- The proposed campaign for phase 3 of the project needed more time to yield better results. The programming of official theaters does not synergize with the other impact actions; hence the campaign has to kick off before the cinema programming team is involved.
- Advertising and promotion continue to be the chief obstacle for disseminating social documentaries, despite the proliferation of social networks and the participation of activists, citizens, and organizations.

Our motivations

- Encourage changes in mentality and further respect for the ancestry of local peoples and women's rights during pregnancy and childbirth.
- Denaturalize 'violence disguised as assistance' inflicted on pregnant women and offer a more respectful approach and treatment.
- Promote empathy to combat obstetric violence and promote increased awareness and respect to the personal decisions of each individual woman during pregnancy and childbirth.

Pregnancy has been used as a pretext to take away women's autonomy over their own bodies, rendering the State a sort of "guardian", making decisions for us that commonly run counter to our interests, desires, and aspirations.

Due to the special nature and singularity of Fernando de Noronha, State intervention becomes particularly conspicuous and decisive.

Childbirth Banned in Paradise Distribution case

Impact Sessions Guide

prepared during our impact campaign and freely available to anyone who wishes to organize and promote documentary debate sessions.

DOWNLOAD THE IMPACT SESSIONS GUIDE



Childbirth Banned in Paradise

Distribution case

Concluding remarks by the filmmaker

The force behind my work is the desire to make **films that are capable of changing something in society**, or at least reveal something that was hidden. Whether minor or structural, this is what I believe **filmmaking is all about: transformation**. When it comes to documentary films, however, the obstacle is as vast as it is despairing: **The challenge of making our films known to the public**. I am not at all satisfied with this situation, after all we don't make films to leave them inside a drawer for eternity. And it was this feeling that drove me towards the worldwide and growing movement regarding the **impact documentary**. Since the release of my first feature film, in 2015, I've been researching ways to work to attract an audience. I devoted my master's research to this subject, and in August 2022 I concluded the thesis **Films to Change the World: production and distribution of social impact documentaries (PUC-RJ)** (in Portuguese only as of now). I sought to investigate this **new distribution methodology works**, an **association** between social engagement and strategic communication, focused on social transformations. We have seen many successful cases in England and the United States, where documentaries can, in fact, encourage debates and incite changes that will **positively impact** the lives of



different people and **transform different settings**. So, I believe that yes, it is possible to make documentaries that have public appeal. The major challenge is to devise ways to bridge the gap and **promote the encounter between film and audience**.

In Brazil, we have been “experimenting” with how this works in practice. I decided to test this method in the impact campaign of my film ***Childbirth Banned in Paradise***. This all began with a few questions. **How is it possible that women can't even choose where and how they want to have their babies? What are these rules that prevent us from deciding about our own bodies, merely because we are pregnant?** The questions urged us to draw in more people and hear their thoughts, because once the screening session ends, **these questions cannot be left unanswered**.

We need to **encourage reflection** and draw attention to something that exists and is hidden in many tourist “paradises” across Brazil and around the world. I hope that the film has somehow contributed to further this debate. I express my appreciation to everyone who joined us in this journey.

Joana Nin - 2023

UN Sustainable Development Goals — SDGs met by the film



Goal 3 | Good Health and Well-Being
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.



Goal 5 | Gender Equality
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.



Goal 10 | Reduced Inequalities
Reduce inequality within and among countries.



Crew

Distribution Team - Impact Campaign & Commercial Launch

Direction and Executive Production **Joana Nin** | Launch Production **Letícia Friedrich** and **João Saldanha / Boulevard Filmes**
Theater Programming **Letícia Santinon, Elói Pires** and **Talício Sirino (PR)**
Impact Production **Rossana Giesteira (coordenação)** and **Linda Marina** | Local Articulation **Carolina Damião**
Local Articulation Assistant **Fabiana Motooka** | Campaign Graphic Designers **Marcellus Schnell** and **Martha Barros**
Press and Social Media Relations **Paula Ferraz** and **Txai Ferraz (fase 2), Larissa Biscaia** and **Beatriz Ponte (fase 3)** | Executive Production Assistant **Sabrina Trentim** and **Paty Muri**
Creation of the Impact Session Guide **Sabrina Demozzi** and **Matheus Coimbra** | Acknowledgment **Andreza Rodrigues**
Impact Screening Partnership **Taturana Mobilização Social** | Text Translation **Paulo Scarpa**
Landing Page **Rogério Mosimann - Infomedia**

Film Specs - Childbird Banned In Paradise (78', BR, 2021)

Production **Joana Nin** and **Ade Muri / Sambaqui Cultural** | Direction **Joana Nin**
Script **Joana Nin, Sandra Nodari** and **Julia Lea de Toledo** | Research **Sandra Nodari**
Direction Assistant **Julia Lea de Toledo** | Executive Production **Joana Nin** and **Chris Spode**
Cinematography **Rafael Mazza, Elisandro Dalcin** and **Cosmo Roncon Jr.** | Additional Photography and Drone **Fábio Borges**
Direct Sound **Roberto Oliveira** | Production Direction **Paula Alves** | Editing **Nina Galanternick**
Post-Production Producer **Ade Muri** | Original Soundtrack **Fábio Nin** | Graphic Design **Marcellus Schnell**
Sound Editing Supervision **Miriam Biderman, ABC.** | Sound Design and Mixing **Ricardo Reis, ABC.**

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www.sambaquicultural.com.br