

# PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

6 October 2023

## **Feature Documentary Film *I Am Somebody* sheds light on a different World Cup in Qatar - with World Premiere in Brazil at the Festival do Rio.**

**With post-production now completed on the theatrical feature, *I Am Somebody*, produced by two-time Academy Award winning Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and directed by a female filmmakers collective led by Jamillah van der Hulst, the film will roll out at autumn festivals across the world from October. Project funding and lead services in the Executive Producer unit were provided by 5th Element Group PBC, with help from award-winning Executive Producers Mike Downey and Stephen Daldry.**

*I Am Somebody* tells the story of six street-connected children who are chosen to represent their country at the Street Child World Cup in Qatar. Some of them are from the streets of Brazil and Bangladesh, some come from poor families in Pakistan and another is from a refugee camp in Palestine. But there is one thing that all these children have in common: their lives will change forever when they participate in the Street Child World Cup.

The World Premiere of the film will be hosted by Festival do Rio (Brazil) and will be immediately followed up by screenings at Cambridge Film Festival (UK) and Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival (USA). Negotiations are currently underway for international sales and worldwide distribution in advance of the American Film Market in November.

Worldwide more than 100 million children live on the streets. With *I Am Somebody* the filmmakers inform, touch, and inspire the audience to contribute to better rights for street-connected children including the right on identity. The movie was filmed in five countries portraying the children before, during and after the Street Child World Cup that brought together 28 teams with more than 280 street-connected children from 25 countries from across the world for their own boys and girls international football tournaments, festival of arts and congress for their rights. With a special guest appearance from David Beckham, the film demonstrates the power of football to ignite hope and positively impact the lives of these young people.

*I Am Somebody* is directed by Jamillah van der Hulst from The Netherlands, with assistant director Dina Amin from Palestine and Rio unit director Maria Clara Costa from Brazil. Mike Downey, producer, and the chairman of the European Film Academy and a longtime human rights activist and defender of the rights of street children, and Stephen Daldry, nominee of three Academy Awards for Best Director, are among the involved Executive Producers of the film.

Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy: "Encouraging and rehabilitating street children, offering them a chance to thrive, is something that is commendable. Our journey to capture the stories of

these young talents on the streets of Pakistan, showcasing their determination to shine at the World Cup, and proving that they are just as capable as anyone else, serves as an inspiration for all of us. It's films like these that make you realize that it is so important to create opportunities for young people. We're excited to share the film with the rest of the world."

Director Jamillah van der Hulst on working with the main characters: "It is hard to imagine that over 100 million children live on the streets today. They often are neglected and forgotten. But these children show resilience and despite the extremely challenging circumstances they keep hope for a better future. The children in I Am Somebody opened up to us and their strong characters and touching stories are an inspiration to everyone they meet."

"As filmmakers we believe that cinema can play an important part in bringing attention to subjects often ignored and giving the voiceless a voice." say executive producers Downey and Daldry, "And having been involved in the Street Child World Cup as filmmakers since its inauguration in South Africa in 2010, we have witnessed the positive impact of the event and its movement on the lives and rights of street-connected children providing them with protection, identities and access to education and better healthcare."

I Am Somebody is independently produced by 5th Element Group (USA), Rebel with a Cause (USA), SOC Films (Pakistan) and JaJa Film Productions (Netherlands), with support in post-production by Amsterdam-based Media.Monks.

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[Link to EPK](#) | [Link to trailer](#)

A screener of I Am Somebody is available upon request.

Main credits:

Produced by: Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and Conrad Alleblas

Director: Jamillah van der Hulst

Assistant Director: Dina Amin

Unit Director Rio de Janeiro: Maria Clara

Editors: Rens Lelieveld, Edwin Roes and Daniel Correia

Executive Producers: Scott Rehmus, Scott Lewis, Ed Martin, Mark Sadovnick, Jim Van Eerden, Terry Torok, Mike Downey and Stephen Daldry

Producer: Faizan Ali

Associate Producer: Vivian Opsteegh

Directors of Photography: Murtaza Ali and Konstantin Esadze

Second cameramen: Khurram Victor, Mohan Pudusery and Elijah Genesis Torok

Soundman: Alaa Barghouthi

Post-production by Media.Monks