

Abstract

Worldwide, every day 6000 girls undergo circumcision. Thousands of children find their death or suffer from pain for the rest of their life. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) refers to the partial or total removal of the external female genital or other violations to genital organs.

The population of Burkina Faso justifies and continues the custom FGM uninhibitedly for cultural and traditional reasons, although international organisations advocate an immediate abolishment, as it conflicts with international human and children rights treaties.

Although FGM became officially a crime in Burkina Faso in 1996, no decrease of the number of circumcisions is to be identified. What is the cause for that continuation? Do modern laws clash with the indigenous reality? Do international organisations have the right to fight against traditions? If yes: How is it possible to implement strategies against FGM, which are accepted by the population and at the same time respect their cultural heritage?

The aim of this paper is to develop a strategy to abandon FGM, while integrating the local reality of Burkina Faso. Instead of imposing “western” ideologies, the strategy is to respect and adopt traditional values of the indigenous Burkinabé. For this reason, the cultural relativism debate on FGM is essential, as well as an analysis of already existing strategies in the country.

A main outcome of this work is a film “L’EXCISION. UN THEME DE TOUT LE MONDE.”, which combines “Ciné Débat” (“discussion- cinema” in rural areas) and the so-called “parenté à plaisanterie” (a worldwide unique way of disputing and debating between ethnics). In the future, local associations in rural areas of Burkina Faso shall use the film for awareness raising campaigns. Challenges and effects that occurred within the development process of the film are analysed within this thesis.

Key words:

FGM – Burkina Faso – development of strategies – Ciné Débat – Parenté à plaisanterie – cultural relativism – film