



**Interview with Bafing Kul, artist/singer from Mali, who has been engaged with his music for an end of female genital mutilation for 10 years:**

**Bafing, why did you decide to support a campaign which aims to protect girls who are marketed as "sponsored girls" by organisations like PLAN International, WorldVision, Kindernothilfe and ChildFund Germany from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation?**

**Bafing: Providing sponsorships for girls is in fact, not a bad thing. But it is not right – and even defraud – when the organisations do not provide more efforts to protect the girls within their projects against this practice. It is 10 years now that – with my music – I dedicate myself against female genital mutilation. So, I could not do anything else than to give my support to all actions which are really fighting this practice.**

**Isn't it a big progress and help already, when the girls get vaccinations or access to clean water or the possibility to go to school even when they are not protected from FGM?**

**Bafing: This might be a progress – but only very limited. Because the girls do have a right to get education, they have a right to good health – but they also have a very clear right to bodily integrity.**

**Why is it so important that the girls are protected from violence like Female Genital Mutilation?**

**Bafing: Female genital mutilation has devastating effects on the girl's life and health: They can bleed to death, get infected with Tetanus or even HIV. FGM leads to painful menstruation and of course, when they get older, they often are deprived of sexual fulfilment. But: These girls do have the same rights like all girls in any other parts of the world! These rights are guaranteed by many international conventions which have been signed and ratified by the concerned countries too – so they have to be respected!**

**What do you think, what is the reason why the mentioned organisations fail to actively demand and guarantee the girl s most fundamental rights to bodily integrity and dignity?**

**Bafing: I think that the failure of the NGOs partly results from their policy of compliancy and also because they might pay too much attention at the lip services of the governments who on fact do not take appropriate action. The NGOs, of course should be well aware of that – but they prefer to continue their present policy and fail to urge the governments to go for true results!**

**What does this campaign mean for you personally?**

**Bafing: We can fight for an end of female genital mutilation with many instruments – and first, we should urge the governments and NGOs to provide a strong-minded commitment. And I think that cultural performances like theatre and music will help especially the young generations to get aware and to condemn and to stop FGM. And we should never forget: This is NOT a problem of "colour" or "race" – it is a HUMAN problem that concerns us all – and that should strongly preoccupy us – no matter where we are!**