



## Interview with Max Ray Ibrango, artist/singer from Burkina Faso, who is engaging himself for an end of Female Genital Mutilation:

**Max, 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?**

**Max:** Well, I decide to support this campaign to protect girls because I believe that it is time to stop all kinds of violence that we men, humans, traditions, ignorance, different wrong believing systems are doing on girls. I think that we need to be wise to discern what tradition can bring to us. If some African traditions are designed to abuse and violate the rights of girls and women like female mutilations, we have to stop that kind of tradition; because tradition may help us to live in peace and love with others; to develop human being life – and not to destroy it.

**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?**

**Max:** I personally think that it is not a progress, it is not a help because it is so painful to see all the best life conditions that girls can get - but then they are suffering in their bodies, minds and thoughts of any illegal physical or sexual operations consequences. Female Genital Mutilation is a crime, a human crime that we all men and women have to stand up and fight against it. It causes to girls bad consequences during all their life.

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

**Max:** Because boys and girls – any human – needs to be respected in their physical and sexual integrity and dignity. Why to mutilate female genitalia? This causes lots of physical, mental suffering, like sexual problems, difficulties to give birth; aids and others diseases. The most of family divorce in Africa are due to sexual problems and when we try to find the reasons, we see that many of them are due to sexual violence like Female Genital Mutilation.

**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?**

**Max:** Well, the main reason I think, first maybe communication was not quite good, because there are different ways of understanding girls most fundamental rights to bodily integrity and dignity. Secondly, it depends on the strategies that they use, the way and the time to approach. It is a wrong believing system that we have. Take it away and change it, to get a good understanding and meaning.

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

**Max:** The campaign means for me first, to inform the public on the realities concerning the bad consequences of Female Genital Mutilation, second to give them an idea of how to react to that situation; They can bring some suggestions, so they can feel personally concerned and implicated about the real problem. The campaign is not only to make them afraid, but to create a mental shock in their minds with images, video – and that mental shock can bring changement. They can feel that it is painfull. Because the right thoughts cause the right feelings; and right feelings create right actions. The goal of the campaign is to bring people to act in the good way – to protect girls. And after to tell them that they are hope; that things can change if we all, in unity will fight for the safety of the girls.