

STOP FGM

A girl's right to be uncut



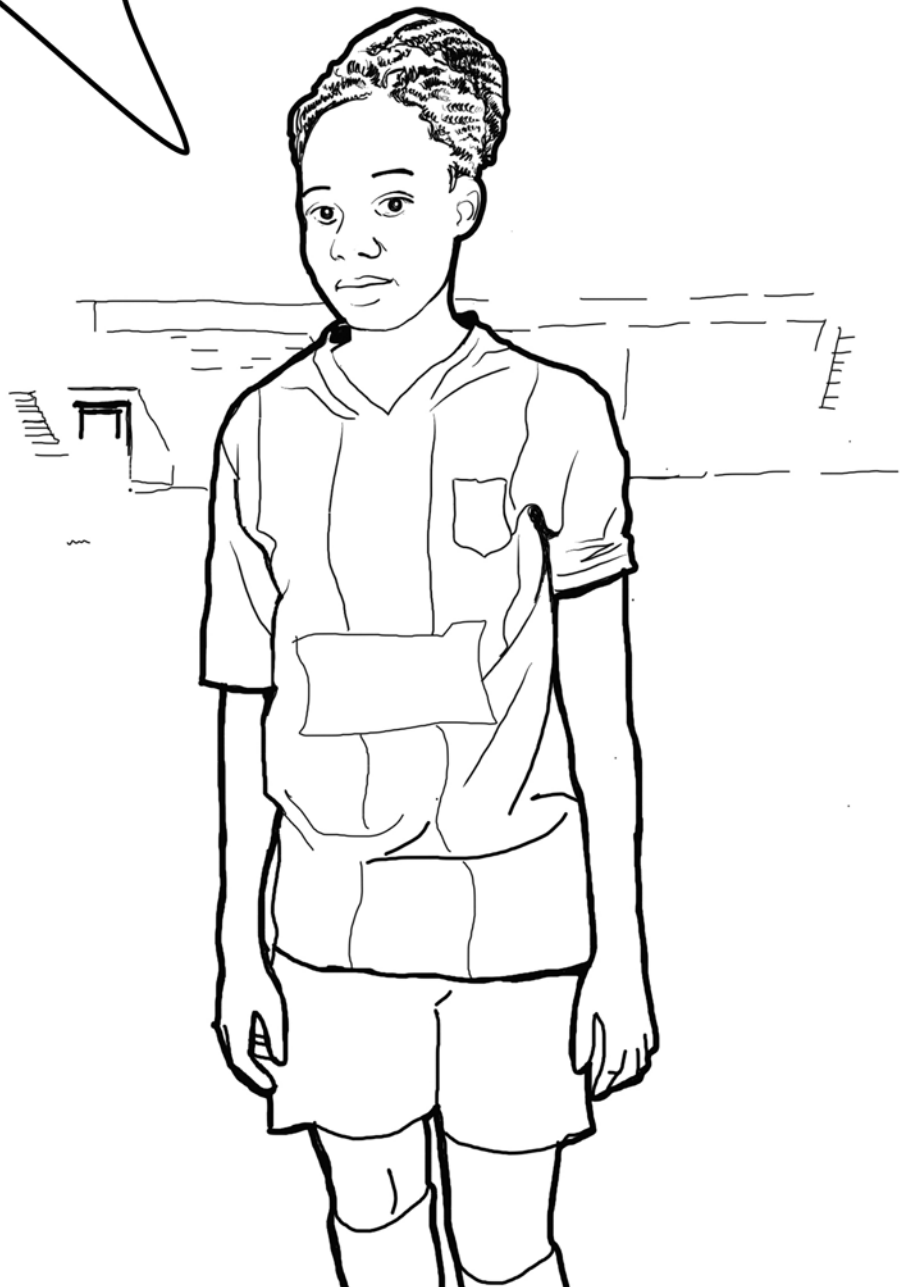
I am Balkissa Sawadogo; I am 18 years old and living in Burkina Faso my country of birth.

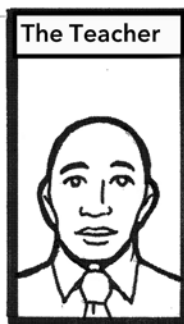
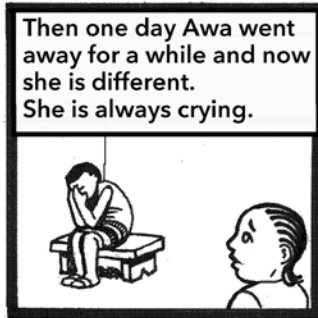
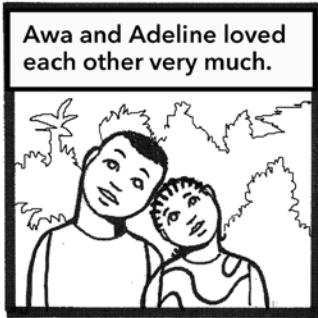
I am a football player who is playing as an attacking midfielder for Union Sportive des Forces Armées (USFA). I am also part of the national football team, stallion of Burkina Faso.

Despite the prohibition of excision, certain persons keep perpetuating the practice. This practice can have negative impacts on the physical, mental, and moral health of its victims and could even lead to death. It also goes against universal rights to health, the right to mental and physical integrity, the right to not undergo sexual discrimination, the right to life, etc.

Excision that is a bad practice is followed by many inconveniences and must be obligatory banished. On this line of ideas, awareness raising sessions and messages on excision can continuously be organized and delivered through football activities.

The phenomenon of female circumcision is a cruel and violent practice that must be buried. For female circumcision to be totally abandoned, it is necessary that all stakeholders collaborate and that formal as well as informal activities be organized.





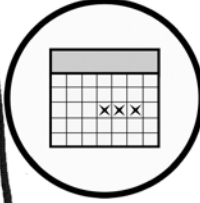


Excision causes much pain and is a shocking experience.



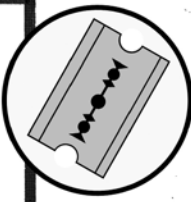
Girls who are cut become sad and depressed.

Girls who are excised become timid, sad and lose confidence.



When girls begin to menstruate they cannot expel the blood properly and suffer pain and infection.

A girl who is cut can find sex very painful.



When giving birth, a woman who has experienced FGM may need to be cut again so the baby can be delivered.

When girls grow they cannot enjoy sex with their husband and the marriage can suffer.



Sometimes girls die.

Giving birth is more difficult. The baby can get stuck and become distressed. A lack of oxygen can lead to defects in the baby.

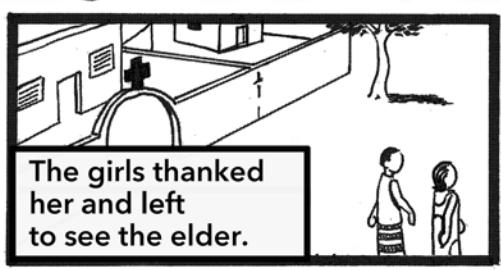


Girls can get many infections when they are cut.

Girls can lose a lot of blood and become very weak.



The HIV virus and hepatitis can be transmitted if the blades are infected.





You are brave girls to come to me with this question.

This practice was brought into our country and is not originally a Burkinabe custom.

There is no requirement for girls to be cut in any sacred religious text.

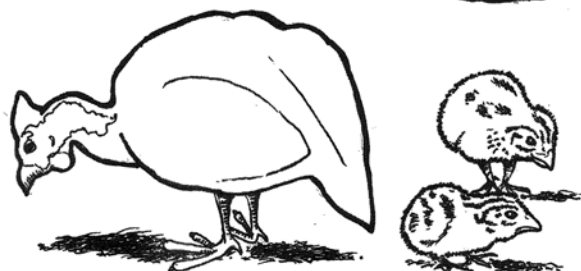
We have stopped the practice of some old customs because we learned that they are harmful.

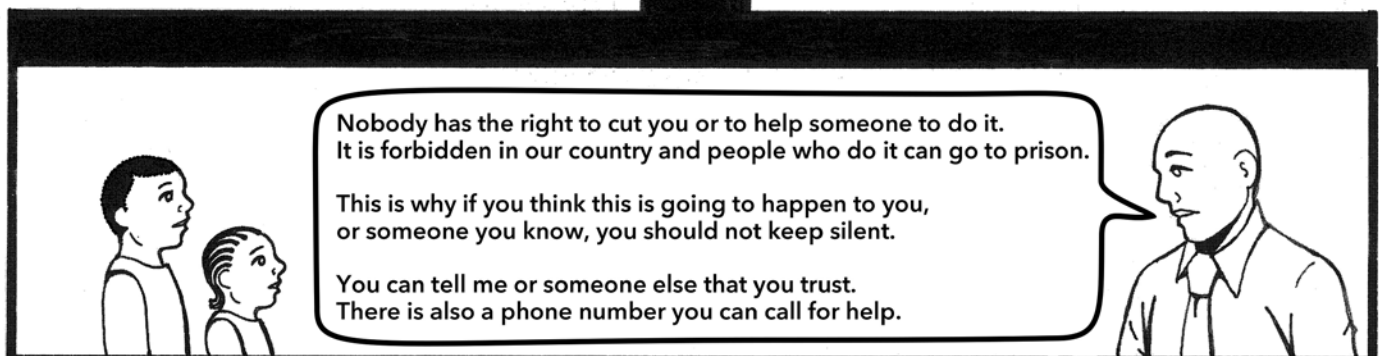
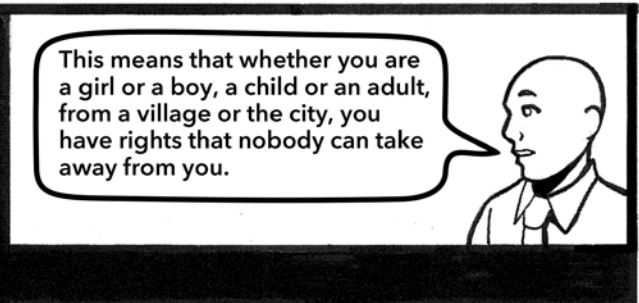
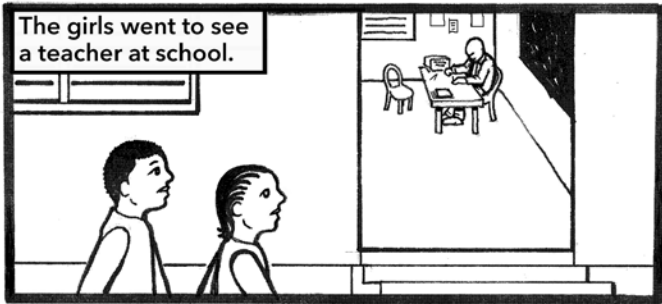
This too, is harmful.

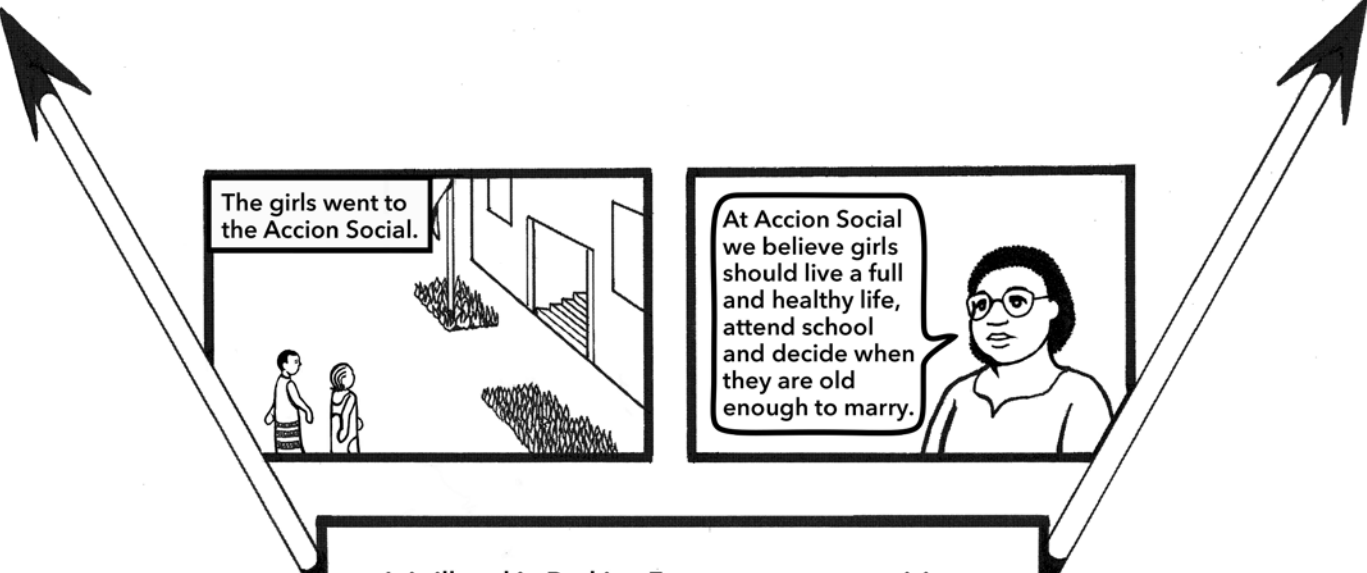
I have seen too many girls from our village suffer illness and pain and it is time for this to change.

A woman who is not cut is a good wife and mother and she will be healthy and strong and able to care for her family.

We need to stop doing this.







The girls went to the Accion Social.



At Accion Social we believe girls should live a full and healthy life, attend school and decide when they are old enough to marry.



It is illegal in Burkina Faso to carry out excision on girls or adult women. Our organisation exists to educate people about why this law exists and why families should not have their daughters cut.

The Government Ministry of Social Affairs has a department which works to stop FGM.

If you or anyone you know suspects a family is going to have their daughter cut, you can call this green number. You do not need to give your name.

When you call the number you will be asked to give some details about why you think a family is going to cut their daughter and they will go and visit the family. No-one will know who called.

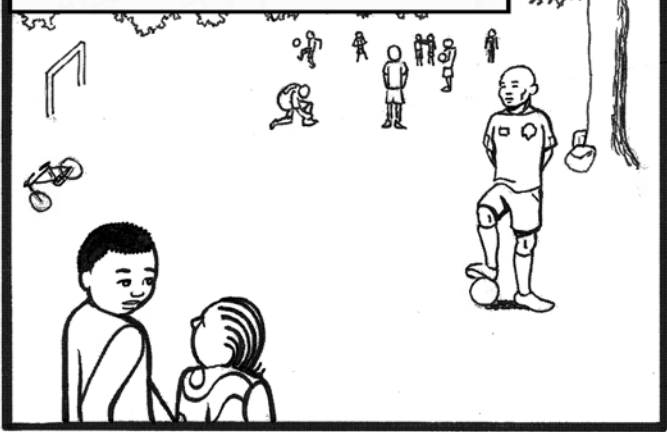
The Police always go with the staff from the Ministry to look into these cases.

The Green Number is:

80 00 11 12



The girls went to see Awas football coach.



We want to know if men believe that girls should be cut like I was.

You are brave girls to talk to people about this.



My daughter is not cut and I know that she will be a good wife when she chooses to get married. It is not necessary to be cut in order to be married.



I would like to play football too. Can I ask to join the team?

Sure, You are lucky that you can still play and be happy. That has gone for me.



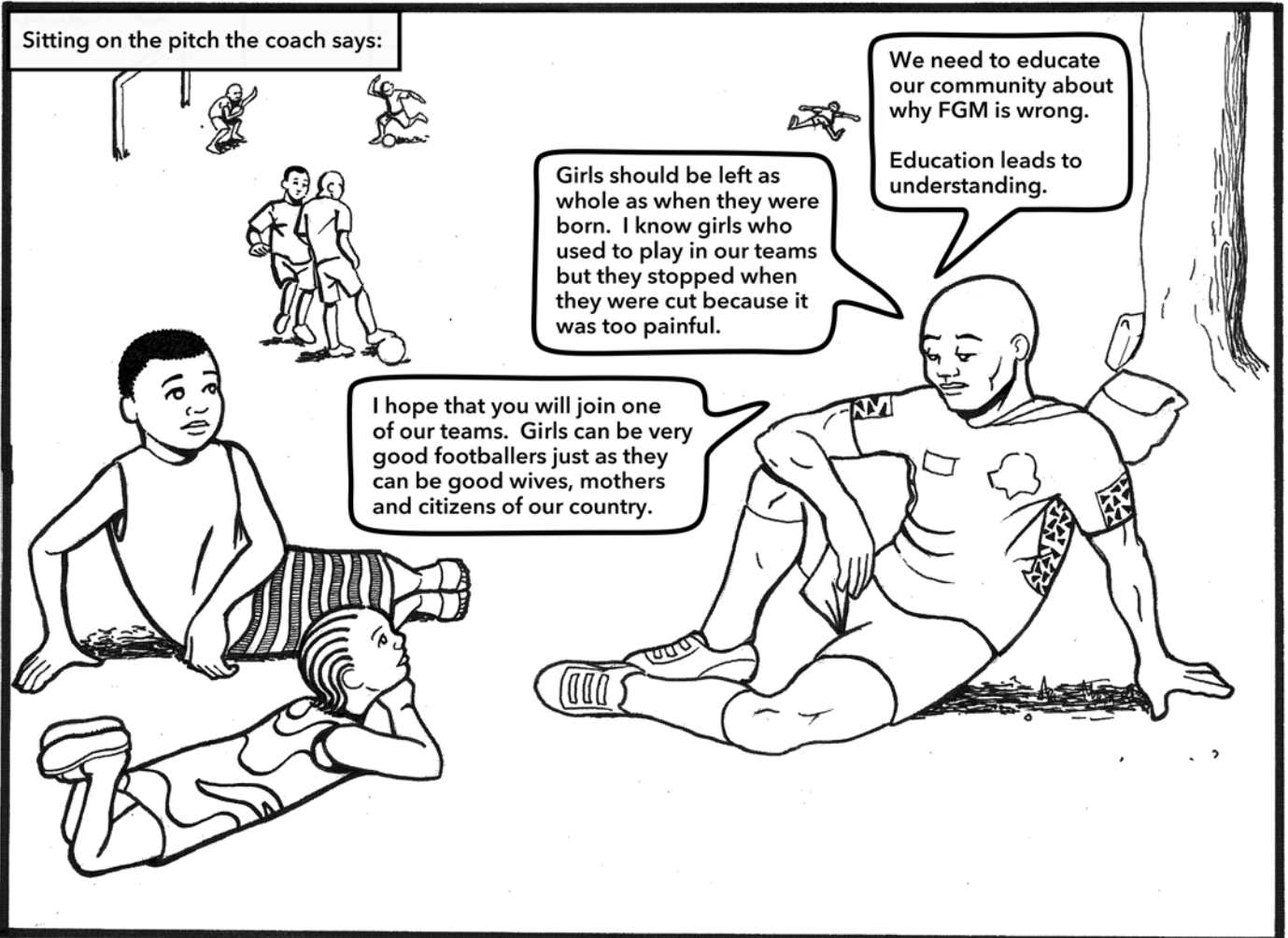
Sitting on the pitch the coach says:

Girls should be left as whole as when they were born. I know girls who used to play in our teams but they stopped when they were cut because it was too painful.

We need to educate our community about why FGM is wrong.

Education leads to understanding.

I hope that you will join one of our teams. Girls can be very good footballers just as they can be good wives, mothers and citizens of our country.



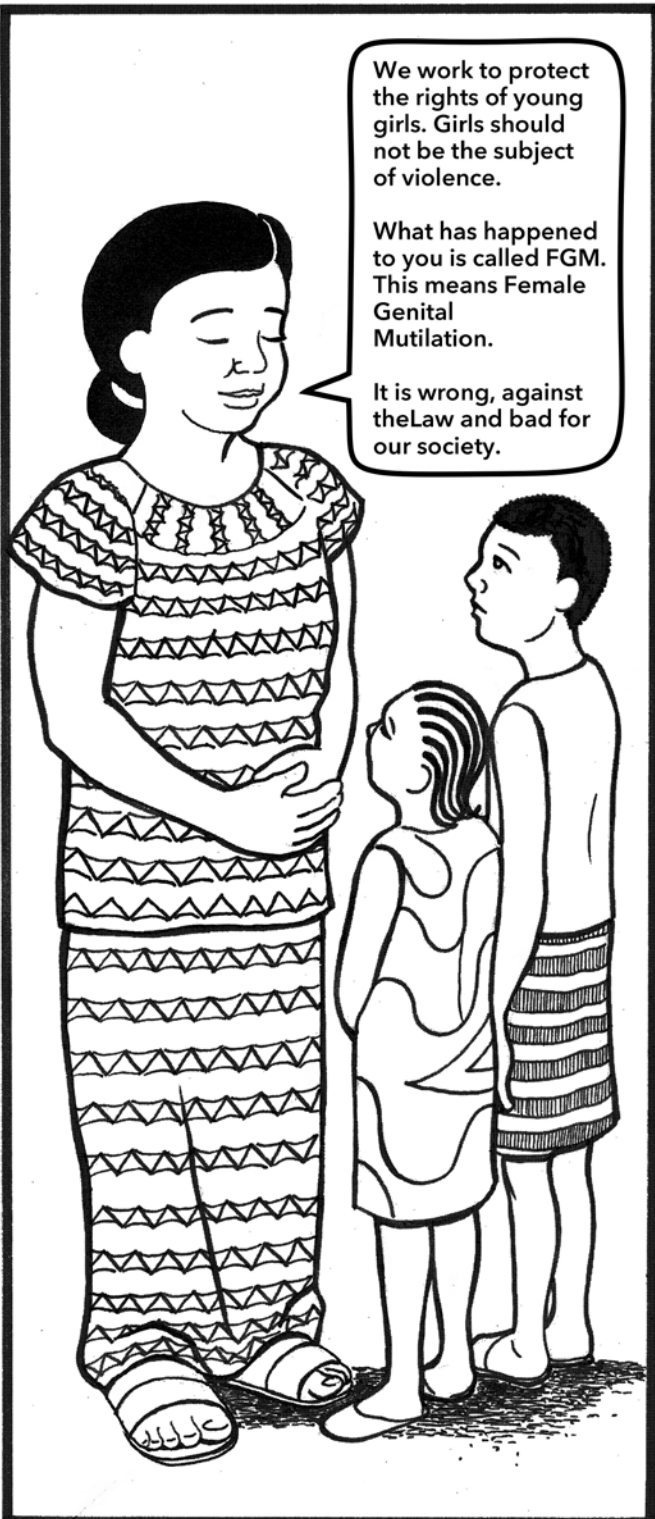


The girls go to visit a local organization.

I have heard Maia Bobo help girls like us.
Let's go and talk to them.



We want to know how we can make sure that my little sister does not have to be cut like I was.



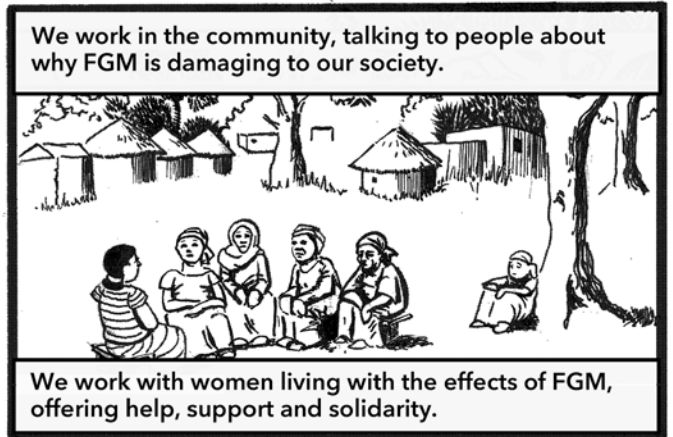
We work to protect the rights of young girls. Girls should not be the subject of violence.
What has happened to you is called FGM. This means Female Genital Mutilation.
It is wrong, against the Law and bad for our society.



At Maia, we start with the family and ask them why they want to have their daughter or wife cut.

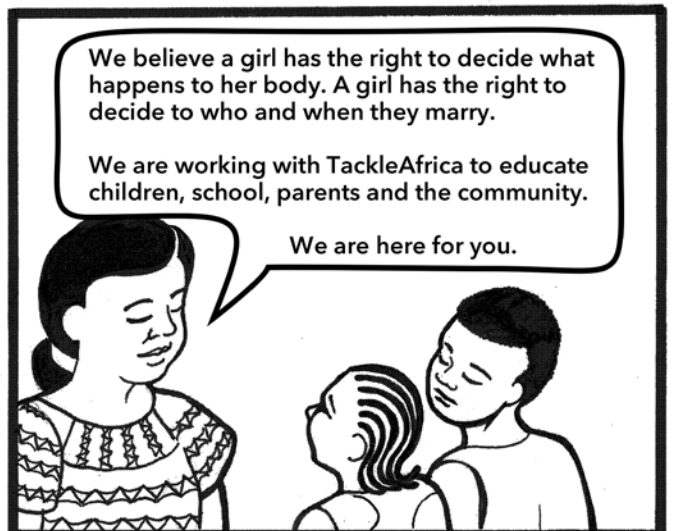
We also talk to the community to find out if they are willing to stop this practice.

We work with the government and other NGOs and agencies. If needed, we can go to the police but we believe helping people to understand why FGM is wrong is most important.



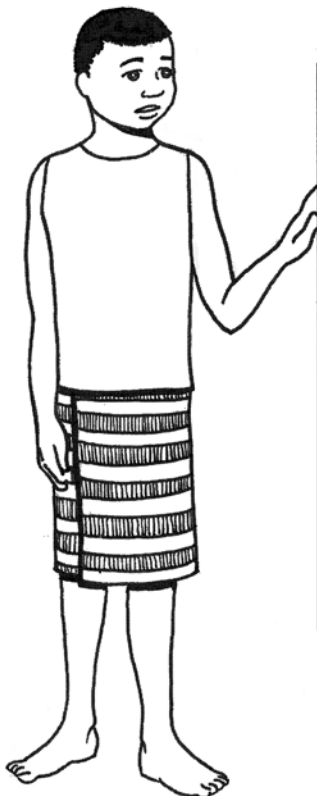
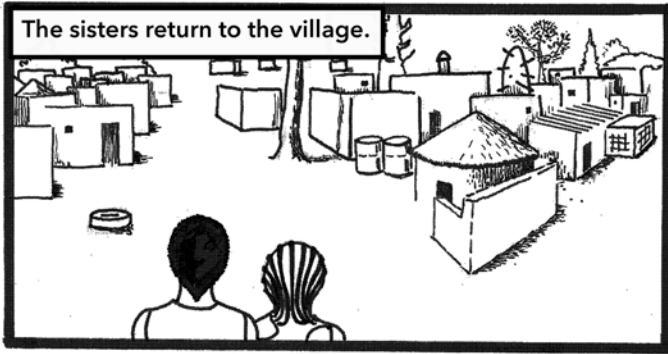
We work in the community, talking to people about why FGM is damaging to our society.

We work with women living with the effects of FGM, offering help, support and solidarity.



We believe a girl has the right to decide what happens to her body. A girl has the right to decide to who and when they marry.
We are working with TackleAfrica to educate children, school, parents and the community.

We are here for you.



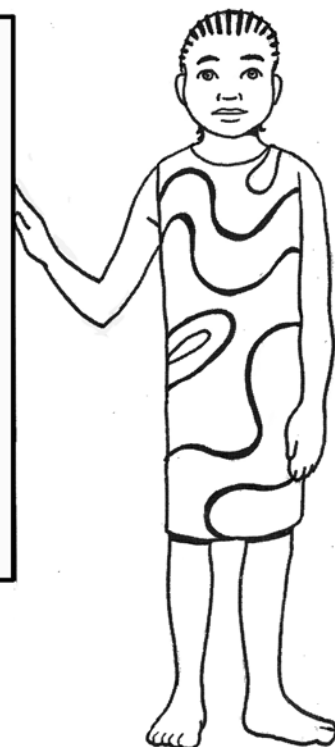
TackleAfrica and Maia Bobo oppose FGM because it is a violation of the rights of the girl child.

It has no medical benefits but is linked to serious physical and psychological health issues.

We believe that women and girls should be able to live healthy and happy lives with their fundamental human rights protected.

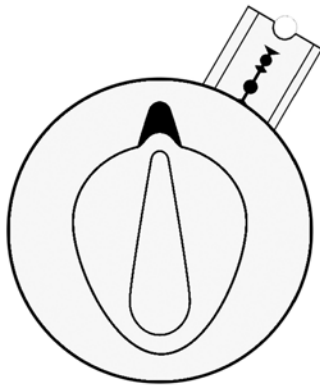
Girls who have undergone FGM lose their vitality, joy and their childhood is damaged forever.

They are destined for a life of health problems which affect their relationships and their ability to live a full and healthy life.



Types of Female Genital Mutilation

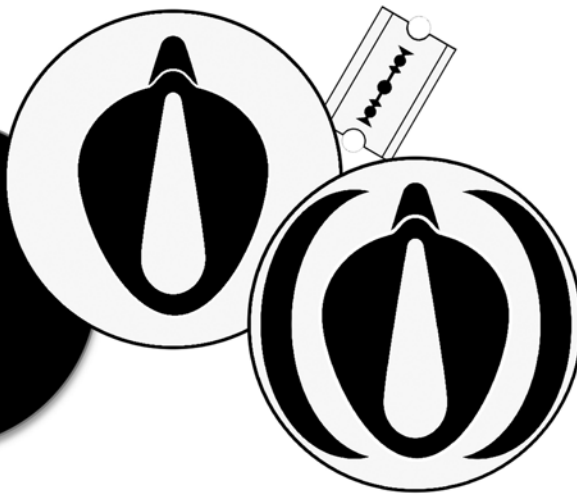
1



Type 1:

Often referred to as **clitoridectomy**, this is the partial or total removal of the clitoris (a small, sensitive and erectile part of the female genitals), and in very rare cases, only the prepuce (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoris).

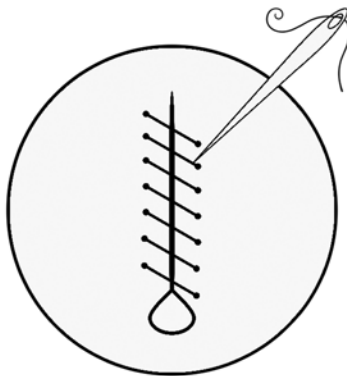
2



Type 2:

Often referred to as **excision**, this is the partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora (the inner folds of the vulva), with or without excision of the labia majora (the outer folds of skin of the vulva).

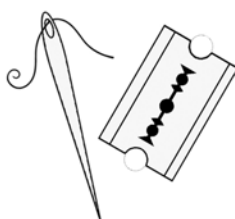
3



Type 3:

Often referred to as **infibulation**, this is the narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the labia minora, or labia majora, sometimes through stitching, with or without removal of the clitoris (clitoridectomy).

4



Type 4:

This includes all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g. pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterizing the genital area.

Legal Appendices

What are human rights?

Human rights are the fundamental rights common to all human beings, regardless of gender, age, nationality, place of residence, religion or ethnic or social origin. They derive from the inherent dignity of the human person.

In this sense, these rights are universal: each person, by the sole fact of his human condition, can claim them. They are also inalienable: no one can waive these rights, for oneself or for others.

Why do female genital mutilation (FGM) violate human rights?

The practice of FGM, including excision, violates a number of human rights.

- The right to physical and mental integrity: The practice of FGM often rests on the belief that the body of women is imperfect and needs to be corrected. Because they involve injuring and destroying women's sexual organs, causing them physical and emotional pain, FGM violate their right to physical and mental integrity.
- The right to reproductive and sexual health: FGM also affect the reproductive and sexual health of women throughout their lives. They prevent excised women from having a normal sex life and increase the risks to the mother and child during childbirth.
- The right to equality between men and women: Since FGM are only practiced on women and girls, violate their human rights and aim to control their sexual freedom, they constitute sexual discriminations, which violate the right to equality between men and women.
- The right to life: FGM may cause haemorrhages which, in the most extremes cases, can cause death. They also contribute to maternal and child deaths during childbirth. In all these cases, they violate the right to life.
- Children's rights: To the extent that FGM are frequently practiced on minors, they also violate the rights of children, including the right to protection from all forms of physical or mental abuses.

Human rights in Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso has ratified international treaties that recognise these human rights (including the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women). Burkina Faso has thus undertaken to protect and guarantee these rights in its territory.

Burkina Faso is also a member of the African human rights protection system which has been established by the African Charter on Human Rights. In particular, Article 5 of the Maputo Protocol obliges States parties, including Burkina Faso, to prohibit and condemn all forms of FGM, to protect women at risk and to provide the necessary support to victims.

Certain human rights are also enshrined in the Constitution of Burkina Faso of 1991, which guarantees equality between men and women (Article 1), the right to life and physical integrity (Article 2) and the right to health (Article 26).

The prohibition of FGM in Burkina Faso

Precisely because they violate the rights of women and girls, FGM have been prohibited in Burkina Faso since 1996. In particular:

- Under Article 380 of the Penal Code, it is forbidden to harm or attempt to harm the female genital organs, subject to a prison sentence of six months to three years and a fine up to 900,000 CFA francs.
- These penalties also apply to all accomplices, that is, to all those who have helped the excisor in one way or another: the parents who decided that a girl would be excised; the relatives who took the child to the excisor; the persons who immobilised it or who purchased the necessary equipment.
- If a health worker is involved, the most serious sentence applies and they may be forbidden to practice for at least five years.
- Finally, the mere fact of having knowledge of an FGM without informing the authorities is also punishable by a fine (Article 382 of the Criminal Code).

Organisations

Action Sociale

BP 268 Bobo-Dioulasso

Tel: +22620972062

ABBEF - Association Burkinabé pour le Bien-être Familial

01 BP 1313 Bobo-Dioulasso

Tel: +22620971459/20974053

Émail : abbefb@fasonet.bf

Secrétariat Permanent du Comité National de Lutte contre le VIH/SIDA et les IST

Antenne régionale de Bobo-Dioulasso

01 BP 6464 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: +22620985271

Émail : spcnls@fasonet.bf

Association MAIA Bobo-Dioulasso

01 BP 1400 Bobo-Dioulasso 01

Tel: (+226)20971816

GSM: (+226)76622789

Émail : aminata_diallo@hotmail.com

**Male Footballer
image and quote**

With thanks to the following:

