

Original Research Article

On the fight against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): an Analysis of Cultural Substitutes as Strategies for Collective Change and Abandonment in Côte d'Ivoire

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Abstract: In Côte d'Ivoire, a review of data on FGM revealed that the repression of any attack on the integrity of a woman's genitals, by way of total or partial mutilation, excision and mechanisms put in place by the state in order to curb or contain the phenomenon by law n°98/757 promulgated on 23 December 1998. Despite this normative provision, the practice of excision still persists today and Côte d'Ivoire has a prevalence rate of 36.7% (MICS, 2016). This study, which will be carried out in 2021 and updated in 2022 on the basis of the MICS 2016, aims to examine the effectiveness of the policy to combat FGM and the institutional capacities of stakeholders to strengthen the effectiveness of their interventions in order to initiate the process of abandoning FGM. In terms of methodology, the study took place in Côte d'Ivoire, specifically in 20 villages in the health districts of Bouna, Bondoukou, Kong and Dabakala. 1120 people, 255 in Bouna, 259 in Bondoukou, 321 in Kong and 285 in Dabakala, took part in the interviews on the representations of FGM and the opportunities and possibilities of abandoning the phenomenon. Through an analysis of the content of the interviews, several interacting variables explain the persistence of the phenomenon, notably the clandestinity of the phenomenon, cross-border excision, the supernatural or mystic factors, ignorance of the law and the establishment of community mechanisms and their limitations. In short, the use of cultural substitutes is a possible and sustainable strategy for change.

Keywords: Female genital mutilation, struggle policy, cultural substitutes, Ivory Coast.

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INTRODUCTION

The national strategy to combat gender-based violence adopted in March 2014, which includes the issue of combating female circumcision, is based on an approach based on cultural and social change in behavior that promotes the collective abandonment of female genital mutilation convenient. This includes the engagement of all community groups, women, men and girls themselves.

This strategy is also based on legislation (Law No. 98-757 of 23/12/1998) and national policies to combat the practice with the active participation of decentralized specialized structures for health, social protection, education, security, justice and community mechanisms for monitoring and preventing GBV/FGM.

Despite the strategies put in place supported by the law, the phenomenon of female genital mutilation is very widespread in Côte d'Ivoire since 36.7% of women have undergone this practice and more precisely 70% in the north and north-east. affects both urban and rural areas, but varies according to religious affiliation (animists 48.5%, Muslims 61.5%, Christians 11.8%, other religions 12.9%) [¹].

This situation is observed in the North-East regions (25%) in Bondoukou, (69.92%), Bouna; North-West (75.2%) in Kong and Center-North (42%) in

¹MICS. (2016). Fifth Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of Côte d'Ivoire, presentation of methodology and main indicators. INS-UNICEF.

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Dabakala [2] where precisely since February 2021 a study has been carried out there in order to show the persistence of the practice of GBV/FGM in the aforementioned localities but also see opportunities for a dynamic of change and abandonment through the exploitation of cultural substitutes for FGM.

In view of the diagnosis set out above, this article responds to a fundamental concern, namely to explain the persistence of the phenomenon and to show the possibilities of a dynamic of possible change through the exploitation of cultural substitutes, despite the existence of law, legal and judicial institutions, structures organizations, actions of the United Nations and NGOs in the fight against FGM.

The study mainly aims at the different results social photography on the state of the situation of GBV/FGM. Thus, the objective of this article is to examine the effectiveness of the policy against female circumcision and the institutional capacities of stakeholders to strengthen the effectiveness of their interventions in order to initiate the process of abandonment of FGM. This will specifically involve reporting on the situation of FGM/Cu in the districts of Bouna, Bondoukou, Dabakala and Kong, describing the state of operation of state mechanisms (VBG platform), the civil society (GBV/FGM monitoring committee) for GBV/FGM prevention in Bouna, Bondoukou, Dabakala and Kong, to analyze alternatives of cultural substitutes likely to lead to the abandonment of FGM.

METHODOLOGY

In the methodology of this study, the sites of Bouna (Panzarani, Bidjindou, Assoum 1, Djorgnardou, Teguidou), Bondoukou (Sôkô, Sorobango, Borokponko, Tambi, Zagala), Kong Kobada, Paraka, Kongolo-Tolo, Djegninnin, Titoulé and Dabakala (Safolo, Kongobanadougou, Tagbonon-Bambarasso, Djèdjoudougou, Kafoudougou) are the geographical anchors. This is justified by the border proximity to areas favorable to the practice due not only to the settlement of certain ECOWAS communities (Mali and Burkina-Faso) but also to the difficulties of access to the various villages, due to the poor road conditions. A sample of 1,120 people including 255 in Bouna, 259 in Bondoukou, 321 in Kong and 285 in Dabakala were interviewed in focus groups, community consultations and semi-structured interviews. The survey conducted among the target populations of the study (village chiefs, community leaders, women's and youth organizations, survivors, etc.) was essentially qualitative. It aimed to collect information on the state of operation of GBV platforms and other mechanisms, the inventory of FGM and possible religious alternatives and substitutes. To this end, the semi-structured interview was used as a collection technique.

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The data analysis was done in the form of a content analysis of the discourse delivered by the informants during the interviews. This analysis focused on (i) the inventory of GBV/FGM, (ii) the balance between human rights, school-schooling, health of young girls-FGM laws and risk, (iii) the state of functioning of State mechanisms (GBV Platform), of civil society (GBV/FGM monitoring committee) for GBV/FGM prevention, (iv) the search for cultural substitutes in the various localities visited.

RESULTS

1. State of play of FGM in the Departments of Bouna-Bondoukou-Dabakala and Kong: between clandestinity, cross-border excision, ignorance of the law and supernatural factor

1.1. The clandestinity of the phenomenon as a source of perpetuation of this practice

According to the information collected, the ceremonies have disappeared and this is partly due to the lowering of the age of girls at circumcision and denunciation. As translated by the following words: *"Today, in Bouna here, it is the babies who are excised so that we don't know* (Exchange, women's group, circumcised woman, Bouna, February 2021). ". *" In Dabakala, given the repression, it is not only late at night that this is done but also on 2-week-old babies* (Exchange and information session with the PFLVBG, struggle actor, Dabakala, March 2021). Several pretexts for celebration appeared such as the baptism of the newborn or either the engagement of the young girl or even the excision practiced by the circumcisers more commonly called "Haoussa" (in Bouna, it is a man who excise the girls), since there are no denunciations. This clandestine operation generally escapes the structures for the fight against GBV/FGM which had set up monitoring committees in the villages. It is a discrete operation which makes it possible to escape social and judicial control. In other words, excision continues in different forms in an attempt to escape the law, existing community prevention and monitoring mechanisms.

The lack of will coupled with the absence of denunciation is justified by the insufficiency of the resources of the judicial actors. This situation reduces interventions because of the poor condition of the roads which are in fact unreprofiled village tracks. The following speech illustrates this position:

"Here, people do not have the culture of denunciation. The villages are remote and difficult to access. The roads are almost impassable. There may be female circumcision but within the communities...Police interventions are difficult in these remote villages because of the bad road conditions and the reduced number of police officers. Between 2013-2016, we had many cases of denunciation in villages like Bambarasso, Kaholosobara, Bokala

etc...and series of excision could be interrupted. But most of the people who denounce have been threatened with death, especially with the case of the former Sub-Prefect, the Gendarmerie is afraid to intervene and I, you see, have been threatened several times, but like the Baptist community is opposed to them so I rely on them to continue my awareness (PFVVBG exchange, wrestling actor, Bouna, February 2021).

To this constraint of the fight and argument for the maintenance of FGM is also added the evolution of the practice through cross-border excision in the area of Bouna, Bondoukou and Kong and the question of the supernatural or the mystical in the Department of Dabakala.

1.2. Cross-border excision as cement for the disarticulation of the struggle

The ECOWAS countries bordering Côte d'Ivoire are refuges for excision trafficking. On the one hand, we are witnessing the excision of children from neighboring countries in Côte d'Ivoire and those from Côte d'Ivoire neighboring countries and vice versa. On the other hand circumcisers from neighboring countries who have been contacted to circumcise children from Côte d'Ivoire and who, once their task has been accomplished, leave with children from the host country to circumcise them in the neighboring country. The following analytical corpus bears witness to this: "*Kossami is a village in Doropo which borders Burkina-Faso. When you get there, all the girls tell you that they were circumcised in Burkina.* » (Exchange community leaders, Bouna, February 2021. ».

It is noted that it is mainly the border villages that practice border excision. These populations move to neighboring countries because the promulgation of the law aimed at criminalizing FGM is still late.

1.3. "supernatural or mystical" factor as a form of threat vis-à-vis actors involved in the fight against FGM

During this study, an idea came up a lot in the interviews, it is that of the *supernatural*. It is important to emphasize that the actors of the fight inform the populations about these practices by showing them the harmful effects in order to put an end to these mystical beliefs. In the fight against mutilation, the actors of the fight are most of the time confronted with the question of security, with several types of threats ranging from verbal to physical and even to the mystical during sensitizations. These actors involved in the fight are not supported by the gendarmerie or the police. The following corpus translates the idea:

"In Kafoudougou, in 2011, I was threatened with death after showing images of the medical consequences of

FGM. The mothers present thought that I had humiliated them through the sensitization and threatened to eat the salad by the root (Focus group, group of women leaders, Dabakala, March 2021). According to another actor: "Repression is a problem. In Bambarasso, excision is done in full view of everyone. When you talk about it, women threaten you with death. Here in Dabakala, when we talk about excision, the gendarmerie is afraid and retracts (Exchange and information session with the PFLVBG, struggle actor, Dabakala, March 2021).

In Africa the fear of people's eyes and of black magic is deeply rooted in beliefs. For followers of this thought, blood was once a sacred liquid that bound men together and consecrated them to divinity. Thus, mutilations have not been established in the fanciful imagery of men, priests and poets but are religiously preserved memories, fierce mores of the past. Excision is therefore a means for them, through the blood of innocent people, to adore their fetish. Organs removed by circumcisers are used for occult practices. They are sold to witch doctors or healers who dry them, pound them and reduce them to powder so that they serve as protection like anti-bullets, to establish any supernatural power or as aphrodisiacs for men in search of seduction. The blood allows them to invoke their god. Thus, according to the Chief of the village of Kôtôlô, the biggest obstacle in the fight against FGM is the mystical side, it is witchcraft. It states that:

"In no village can excision be done without the consent of the men. Excision here is based on witchcraft because it is a well-organized society. (Exchange and information session with the PFLVBG, Chief of the village of Kôtôlô, Dabakala, March 2021).

1.4. Ignorance of the law

Côte d'Ivoire, like most countries in the sub-region, has ratified the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and Violence against Women as well as several other international and regional conventions proclaiming equality, the dignity and rights of women/girls. According to the UNFPA Gender Program Officer, a new resolution has been passed by the United Nations. This resolution has been translated into three local languages: Malinké, Yacouba and Wê and reproduced in several copies for its popularization. These international and regional legal instruments prompted the Ivorian State to pass a law prohibiting the practice of FGM throughout the national territory (special law n°98-757 of December 23, 1998 on the repression of forms of violence against women) "*I don't know the law in Côte d'Ivoire but I know that in Burkina-Faso, it's forbidden* (Exchange, Notability, Djorgnardou, Bouna, February 2021). The law is

unknown to the populations who find it too rigorous, ineffective, inapplicable.

The information collected showed that the populations have all heard of the law, but claim not to fully understand its content.

“The Human Rights people have already been here to make us aware of this. There are women who have refused to quit and there have been cases of quitting. They were transferred to Katiola. People continue to sensitize so that they stop. Until now, there are women who do it in secret. (ESD, Village Chief, Djèdjoudougou / Dabakala, March 2021).

As noted during the study, the decision to circumcise is taken by the community at different levels of responsibility and therefore the sanction cannot apply to the circumciser alone insofar as there are female candidates in excision, the family is therefore involved. Excision is a cultural fact and the circumciser is rarely denounced. An actor interviewed mentions it:

“All the circumcisers in this village died a long time ago except for one who is paralyzed and blind. She can no longer leave the house. (Semi-structured interview, community leader, Sôkô , Bondoukou, February 2021). “The cutter is part of a caste and it is with my generation that female circumcision stopped in our village” (ESD, Village Chief, Paraka / Kong, March 2021).

2. Functioning status of community mechanisms (GBV platform and GBV/FGM monitoring committee) for GBV/FGM prevention in Bouna, Bondoukou, Dabakala and Kong

In order to have information on the state of operation of the mechanisms for combating GBV/FGM, two approaches were used, in particular information by the secretariat of the GBV platform of the evaluation matrix and the organization of a working session with GBV platforms in Bouna, Bondoukou, Dabakala and Kong.

2.1. The institutional framework for the fight against GBV/FGM

In Bouna, Bondoukou, Kong and Dabakala, the prefectural and administrative authorities oversee the Ministry of Women, Family and Children, which has the lead in the response to the fight against GBV/MG through the application of law no. °98/757 promulgated on December 23, 1998 which provides that any attack on the integrity of the genital organs of a woman, by way of total or partial mutilation, excision is condemned. This Ministry (MFFE) is supported by the other technical Ministries (Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, the police and the gendarmerie, National Education), NGOs and community leaders

within the framework of platforms for the fight against GBV/FGM.

Overall, the GBV platforms are functional, but the statistical data available and the results of the interventions recorded in the GBVIMS relate more to GBV and there is less updated statistical data on the evolution of FGM. On the other hand, qualitatively, the platforms have information on the practice of FGM and the prevention activities in the health districts, areas and villages of high prevalence that the NGOs carry out on a daily basis in these localities.

2.2. The non-functioning of watch committees

Monitoring and awareness committees were generally created during and after the observation of several flagrant and unreported cases of GBV. Their mission was to sensitize the communities on the practice of GBV/FGM and then to denounce cases of GBV/FGM. This is how they organized awareness campaigns in the villages where they were settled. Actors interviewed say that:

“Caritas has set up monitoring committees in 10 villages suspected of continuing the practice of FGM (Exchange, wrestling actor, Bouna, February 2021). These committees have been very active in the fight against FGM “to fight against cross-border excision, the committees met with community leaders in order to raise their awareness and since then, we haven't heard anything about it (Exchange, wrestling actor, Bouna, February 2021).

However, according to the data collected, most of these monitoring committees no longer exist or are disappearing. As a result, they are down in business as argued by a wrestling actor. Several reasons explain this situation. The first explanation for the dissolution or disappearance of these mechanisms is linked to the clandestinity of the phenomenon. Indeed, the families have succeeded in developing new strategies allowing them to circumvent social control and this escapes the vigilance of the monitoring committees. But the case of Dabakala differs because here, what makes the committees non-functional is the fear of the supernatural and the death threats.

“These committees are disappearing because there is no involvement on the part of the populations. In addition, they are still waiting for money from the Social Center or the MFFE Regional Office. (Exchange, women's group, Bondoukou, February 2021). “Here in Dabakala, it is the witchcraft component that drives committee members away because mysticism is very present followed by verbal threats. (Exchange,

group of women leaders, Dabakala, March 2021).

2.3. Impact of monitoring committees

According to the testimonies of the key informants interviewed, the monitoring committees after their establishment carried out remarkable actions. Through their activities in the field, they prevented several excision ceremonies.

“The monitoring committees have played an important role in prevention. In Sôkô, these village committees have helped people to make the practice of excision a generational celebration. This has contributed to lowering the prevalence” (PLVBG exchange, fight actor, Bondoukou, February 2021). “In Dabakala, since the Kôtôlô affair in 2011, we women leaders had set up an awareness committee made up of 07 people. We raise awareness indirectly by focusing on reproductive health, maternity and maternal deaths. (Exchange with women's group, Dabakala, March 2021).

Thus, organized community activities are seen as a form of prevention against FGM because, through these mechanisms, denunciations have been made and series of excisions stopped. Thus, the involvement of monitoring committees are effective means of curbing the phenomenon. What must be remembered is that excision is a cultural phenomenon attached to a way of life. It is an integral part of the social organization and constitutes a social given of the type of collective life specific to the feminine world of the community. In order to reduce the prevalence of FGM, cultural substitutes have been identified by the communities.

3. Abandonment of FGM: cultural substitutes as alternatives for change

On the principle of cultural dynamics and the evolution of the practice over time, in the villages, and faced with the law repressing FGM in CIV, it was

important to seek out from the respondents their opinions on the evolution of the culture, the existence of other practices of rejoicing, of educational practice of the girl, the identification with the communities of the alternatives or possible cultural substitutes for the process of socialization of the young girl

The quest for surrogates is based on the one hand for the communities, on sensitization, the fear of prison, the training they have received and on the other hand on the specter of the death of a circumciser and another vision girls' education by some members of the community. These words bear witness to this:

“Cutting stopped because the circumciser died. The Chief of the village warned all those who wanted to take his place. Our sons from the village who went to the hillside told us that we could educate our daughters differently” (Community consultation, Panzarani, Bouna)

For the different female communities, it is rather the mockery of men, the stigmatization of other women and the difficulties of childbirth followed by several medical consequences that have prompted them to seek substitutes. “The men of this village laugh at us and say that they prefer uncut women because with them there is more pleasure (Community consultation, Djedoudougou, Dabakala).

These attitudes and these social and medical consequences (stigma, mockery, death, fear of prison, etc.) are all reasons that have pushed communities to substitute the practice of excision while emphasizing festive dances and valorization of the young girl, sexual education of the girl, the cultural and traditional rites and the social symbols of the abandonment of FGM. Even if from the outset, some informants recognize that these dances alone cannot replace excision, others, on the other hand, think that they can constitute credible cultural alternatives to promote gender and the education of girls and women. female. The sum of the cultural substitutes is recorded in the following table:

MGF Substitute Alternatives	Results
Girl's revelry and sex education dances	Bouna: Tchitchrekouripre; the sankrushitchrekuripre, the karagbe Bondoukou: kpligbola, gnatô-tegnan, zêbê-zêbê Dabakala: Yagba Kong : the Tchitchrêkuriprê, the sankroutchitchrêbanan All these dances signify the end of excision or never again will a woman undergo excision. These dances according to women will replace the practice of excision. From now on, it is important to retain only education transmitted and abandon the act of cutting. And to mark this end, they will dance at the very time of excision, namely just after the cashew nut harvest.
Cultural and traditional rites	the load of the big water canary, sharing feast and covering white shroud by pubescent girl replace excision and these rites mark the young girl's puberty and her transition from adolescence to adulthood.
FGM abandonment social symbols	placards or rain panels with images and writings of no to excision implanted in the villages Posters with images of no to excision,

MGF Substitute Alternatives	Results
	T-Shirts with "no to female circumcision" writing the women's march on 06/02/22 on the occasion of the international Zero FGM day to the various Regional Prefectures in order to show everyone that giving up means giving up
Adoption of religion as an alternative to FGM abandonment	The Christian and Muslim religion with committed religious guides who also drive the dynamics of the abandonment of FGM, as was the case in the village of Kôtôlô

Source: Study carried out February 2021-March-April 2022

According to some communities, there are other ways of educating young girls apart from the practice of excision. For them, parents can talk with their daughters of puberty age or go to a health center for better support (safe space with the SWEDD project).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results of the study validate the hypotheses, namely that excision is first experienced as a fact of culture, that is to say as a natural fact of the life of populations (women). Herzberger (2000: 1-22) maintains that female circumcision is a ritual and centuries-old practice which has been integrated into certain cultures and whose motivations are diverse. It is a custom that has been passed down from generation to generation and constitutes a ritualization of the passage to adulthood, it is more of a cultural marking, that is to say an action of society. To mark/identify its members with a desire to control their sexuality. Opadou K, Traore F and I, Bakayoko (2015) show that the attachment to cultural values gives credit to excision and to the circumcised girl or woman and that this helps to better understand the persistence of the phenomenon. Thus, the communities carry out initiation ceremonies relating to excision. In other words, excision allowed reunions and reconciliations. Beyond excision itself, as a biological operation carried out in the genitals of girls, there is a whole organization and a dynamic of society which mark people's minds and which are linked to the practice of excision as as a social phenomenon of social rapprochements.

These ceremonies as they were observed before no longer exist because of the penalization of the practice. For Isabelle Gillette-Faye (2018), since the 1980s, gradually, in a migratory context, the practice has become rare and the risk of being circumcised on French territory is very low, although zero risk does not exist. On the other hand, it may persist during trips to the families' country of origin. Moreover, parents can also be prosecuted as accomplices when the mutilation was committed abroad. More clearly, the fact of sending one's little girl to the country of origin of the parents in order to have her circumcised is an act of complicity. This act exposes those responsible to legal proceedings in France. Thus, the arguments to decide an excision based on local traditions are not accepted on the legislative or legal level, only if necessary by way of case law. Many trials have taken place in France.

These resulted in the conviction of parents and three circumcisers. Significant and firm sentences have been pronounced against women who have practiced MSF. Some parents were punished with suspended prison sentences, prison terms and heavy fines.

And it is this criminalization of FGM that will lead to its clandestinity and its cross-border nature. The 28toomany FGM Foundation ... Let's end it (2018) argues that Côte d'Ivoire shares common borders with other countries, including Guinea and Mali, where the prevalence of FGM remains high and the existence and enforcement of laws vary widely. The increase in cross-border movements for the practice of FGM, or in order to flee legal proceedings, may be a direct consequence of law enforcement. Young girls living in border communities are particularly vulnerable to this phenomenon. However, the main law governing FGM (law no. °98-757 of 23/12/1998) does not take into account these cross-border movements. It is the Ivorian Code of Criminal Procedure (instituted by Law No. °60-366 of November 14, 1960) which governs crimes committed by Ivorian nationals in another country, specifying. This therefore suggests that cross-border FGM would only be punishable in Côte d'Ivoire if the practice is also considered a criminal offense in the country where it takes place.

Marie Gisèle GUIGMA/DIASSO (2012) during a communication for the Network of Women Parliamentarians of Burkina Faso pointed out that the creation of the National Committee for the fight against the practice of excision on May 18, 1990 was very beneficial for Burkina -Faso. This committee was the forerunner of the fight and enabled certain departments and villages to set up fight committees to strengthen the effectiveness of the fight and achieve the objectives assigned, namely the adoption of a law repressing the practice excision (November 18, 1996) to guarantee respect for human rights. From the birth of the institutional mechanism, will arise the community mechanisms (platforms and monitoring committees), it is therefore important to strengthen their capacity by revitalizing the monitoring committees through cascade training of the communities with an emphasis on prevention techniques, advocacy, social dialogue and technical support for multisectoral platforms for the fight against GBV/FGM, in particular on the approach to abandoning female circumcision through social and cultural norms and also through the establishment and

animation community mechanisms (GBV/FGM monitoring committee in villages and municipalities).

According to UNICEF, field experiences have shown that when groups of people speak out in favor of abandoning FGM it is the result of a collective process involving access to new information and openness to possible alternatives, debates within the social group, organized dissemination and public statements or other demonstrations in favor of a new social rule. This finding is consistent with the predominant theoretical framework: for a social norm to change within a community or a social group, social expectations must evolve: "The abandonment of female circumcision normally begins with a first group of individuals who set in motion a dynamic of change. For Emile Durkheim (1922), education is a "methodical socialization for the young generation" that is to say that education is not limited to instruction *stricto sensu* which would relate only to pure knowledge and know-how. It also aims to ensure that each individual develops all his abilities (physical, intellectual, moral and technical). Thus, this education will allow him to face personal life, to manage it by being a responsible citizen in the society in which he evolves. It is a powerful agent of change. It improves health and livelihoods, contributes to social stability and stimulates long-term economic growth. The more girls advance in their studies, the more it benefits them, their families, their communities and their countries. Thus, education will promote decision-making and critical thinking. She will emphasize their right so that they can defend themselves against excision. Girls in school learn values, morals and ways to solve problems. They have the ability to make important decisions and consider all possibilities. Education can then change their future. So going to school not only impacts the future of children, but the future of their families, friends and communities. As girls are educated, the world becomes a brighter place. The school will therefore contribute to the social, emotional, psychological and physical health and well-being of children and young girls and provide physical protection and supervision, routines and stability. It will serve as entry points for families in accessing health services and more specialized needs. Teachers and school staff will be able to provide a level of supervision and a first line of defense for children and girls at risk of GBV such as FGM.

Thus, the education of girls is an effective means of combating female circumcision. Educating girls means investing in their knowledge, their skills and in the transmission of this knowledge within their families and communities. It is therefore important to include girls, women, boys and men in this gender equality work in order to break the cycle of inequalities. Therefore, the school plays a fundamental role in the protection against FGM.

CONCLUSION

At the end of this study, remember that the objective was to be able to examine the effectiveness of the policy to fight against female circumcision and the institutional capacities of stakeholders to strengthen the fight and identify cultural substitutes capable of replacing the practice of female circumcision and continuing the process of socialization of young girls. Thus, each society has a specific culture which translates into different norms and values. This socialization is therefore a dynamic and interactive process resulting from instances such as the family. It will lead to social reproduction where families will no longer be locked into a deterministic logic and will have the ability to determine roles themselves. To want or not to accept the practice of excision and to facilitate the process of socialization and the construction of social identities. It is also essential in order to initiate change and fight effectively against FGM, to have a common program with neighboring countries with regard to the cross-border practice and to establish mechanisms for collaboration and coordination at all levels for more effective law enforcement. It is appropriate to recall that the paradigm on female circumcision is mutating. If before this one was perceived as an institution, accompanied by several social openings: engagement, marriage, motherhood and therefore social consideration and family honor, today it is seen differently. It tends to disappear after several sensitizations made by NGOs, by the Prefectural Authorities. The new generation doesn't even know what it is.

In addition, excision often considered a tradition of Islam, a hadith which would have been recommended by the Prophet, some believers have put an end to these ideas by approaching the Imams to have a much more precise idea. So the option of religion is a decisive choice to put an end to the practice and this will also open up other socialization options for the young girl who will take place throughout the social course of this one (young girl). The aim here is to teach him the norms and values necessary for his successful integration into society. In other words, the young girl will have to learn and internalize the norms of her culture and acquire the skills to evolve in society. This will allow him to build his own identity through contact with others. In a nutshell, it's about cultural socialization which here will represent a set of mechanisms by which the young girl will learn about social relations between men and assimilate the norms, values and beliefs of a society or a community. According to a village chief, when the law against FGM was passed, it was up to the Ivorian State and these decentralized entities to go to the communities (the canton chiefs, traditional chiefs, village chiefs, community leaders, etc.) so that all substitutes can be found to replace the practice of excision and thus continue the process of socialization and sexual education of the girl without having to cut any organ.

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