

CARE affair

№ 10



Intimate



Photos: Daniela Glunz (Cover and left)

"I'll let you be
in my dreams
if I can be
in yours."

Bob Dylan

8



So very close
What's intimate to us?
A try at explaining the
different facets of
intimacy.



19



Where Love is Illegal
Women who love women. Men who
are women. Robin Hammond portrays
individuals who are discriminated
against, even persecuted.

24



A wound that never heals
Female genital mutilation or cutting –
meet the women and men who stand
up against this practice in Somaliland.

36



My smartphone, my life
We've asked a politician and a Syrian
refugee to show us what is in their
pockets. And how their smartphone
helps them navigate their life.



38



Bloody Business
Blood, each month. And again. How do
Cambodian women and girls deal with
their menstruation?

46



Turning sh** into gold
Is that possible? We are taking a
proverb quite literally and look at
the scientific facts.

48



Letters from India
Far away from home in a strange
country, yet closely supervised: Leah
writes emails back home.

52



Money and death. Two big taboos
Time to talk about it: with a legacy
marketing expert and a private donor.

57



Writing contest: "Shame on you!"
CARE proudly presents: The winners of
this year's contest and their entries

66



It's running!
A journey through the wonderful world
of bodily fluids – and how they are being
put to use around the globe.

69



Open doors, open words
May I come in? Anica is visiting Malawi
and meets Melesiya. An encounter, two
perspectives.

72



Error
We all make mistakes. Humanitarian
aid is no exception. Intimate confession
from Haiti, Nepal and Uganda.



76



How we poop
Muslim Yusef, 40 years old, toilet man
in Jakarta. We paid him a visit.

78



Oh Shit
Toilets are unsexy but important.
A journey to Ghana, Nepal and Syria.

- 84 ← “Something’s up”
Head over heels in love with a colleague – and then? Marina tells her story.



- 88 ← Let’s talk about sex?
Not easy in rural Niger. We’ve met those who promote reproductive health.

- 96 ← Vigilantes de la Vida
She is at a woman’s side during the most intimate moment of her life: the midwife. But childbirth remains very dangerous in many countries around the world.

- 104 ← What do you need my address for?
CARE board member Stefan Ewers talks data security, transparency and rules.



- 107 ← A long walk for a few cents
Asho’s job: she fetches water. We meet the young woman in Dadaab refugee camp, the biggest in the world.

- 111 ← Behind the Scenes
Take a look at the creative process of producing this magazine with Art Director Jens Mennicke

- 112 ← “People are like the weather”
Your hormones take over and you are far away from home. We spoke to teenage refugees in Germany.



- 116 ← Whatever happened to ...
Rose Ejulu from South Sudan whom we interviewed in 2013 for CARE affair.

- 118 ← Contributors
Who are the people behind CARE affair? Meet them here.

- 120 ← Kiosk & Dialogue
You want to praise, criticize or order some more copies of CARE affair? Here’s how to get in touch with the editorial team.

Editor-in-Chief & Project Lead	Sabine Wilke (wilke@care.de)
Art Direction	Jens Mennicke (mennicke@studiomennicke.com)
Editorial Staff	Johanna Mitscherlich, Daniel Al-Ayoubi, Anja Engelke, Ninja Taprogge, Lennart Kirchhoff
Design	Studio Mennicke
Printing	Imprimerie Centrale, Luxembourg

CONTRIBUTORS

Anika Auweiler, Nicole Brune, Jenny Conrad, Carina Eitel, Josh Estey, Stefan Ewers, Daniela Glunz,
Robin Hammond, Leah Bibi Hanraths, Anica Heinlein, Christina Ihle, Thomas Knoll,
Beryl Magoko, Arndt Peltner, Alexander Postl, Mia Veigel, Britta Wiese

A BIG THANK YOU TO

Janina, Jenny, Nikolas and Toni for an intimate photo shooting.

This magazine is published by CARE Germany-Luxembourg,
represented by the board of directors: Karl-Otto Zentel, Stefan Ewers.

This publication is printed on paper that was bleached without chlorine
and comes from sustainably managed forests.

CONTACT

CARE Deutschland-Luxembourg
Dreizehnmorgenweg 6, D-53175 Bonn
T: +49 228 9 75 63-0
info@care.de, www.care.de

THE CARE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION

CARE Australia (www.care.org.au), CARE Canada (www.care.ca), CARE Danmark (www.care.dk),
CARE Deutschland-Luxembourg (www.care.de), CARE France (www.carefrance.org),
CARE India (www.careindia.org), CARE International Japan (www.careintl.jp),
CARE International Secretariat (www.care-international.org),
CARE International UK (www.careinternational.org.uk), CARE Nederland (www.carenederland.org),
CARE Norge (www.care.no), CARE Österreich (www.care.at), CARE Perú (www.care.org.pe),
Baks Thai Foundation/CARE Thailand (www.raksthai.org), CARE USA (www.care.org)

Copyright © 2017 CARE Germany-Luxembourg.
CARE® and CARE Package are registered marks of CARE.

EDITORIAL

Milestone birthdays are always something special. The first of their kind is celebrated when we turn 10 years old. It's the beginning of the time when girls become women and boys become men. We can remember this time ourselves and/or go through it with our own children today: Everything is suddenly so embarrassing. The bodily changes, head spinning. A phase of upheaval and reorganization from which we then emerge adults.

This magazine called CARE affair is celebrating its tenth birthday. In 2007 a team in CARE Germany decided that we would tell the stories that matter to CARE in a visually interesting way, hopefully sparking interest and involvement in our readers. We chose print because it allows for reflection and a haptic experience. Print also offers more room for the impressive photography that we are lucky to assemble across the world in CARE's work, through talented photographers and our own staff.

We were proud to share each edition of CARE affair across the international CARE family, but one reaction was always sure to come: "This looks great, but I can't read German!" This is why for the 10th birthday of this magazine, we decided to produce both a German and an English version. And we are very excited about it, as you can imagine. Some stories relate back to the German or broader European context, others reflect universal feelings and situations that hopefully many readers regardless of their origin can relate to.

So CARE affair is now becoming a teenager. And it is developing, both visually and in its format. We introduce a new column called, "What ever happened to ..." which revisits past protagonists. "Behind the Scenes" shows the creative process that our Art Director Jens Mennicke has been leading since the very first edition, putting a lot of hard work, skills and love into it. But we also keep beloved formats: For the last four years, the production of CARE affair has been accompanied by a CARE writing contest for young adults. "Shame on you!" was the slogan that participants should reflect on in their writing this time. The best entries about this topic come from Mia Veigel for the 14 to 18 age group and from Carina Eitel for the 19 to 25-year-olds and they are published in this edition. CARE affair also continues to invite guest authors from around the world. Arndt Pelter describes how it feels as a man to speak to Somali women about genital cutting. And CARE's very good friend and photojournalist Josh Estey visited a public toilet in Jakarta, Indonesia and spoke with the guardian of the golden throne. He also contributed a lot of fantastic photography from Cambodia to Niger to Malawi for this issue.

The topic of this edition might seem strange at first. But we were thrilled by its multifaceted nature: Intimate is much more than it seems at first glance. We tell of mistakes no one likes to admit. We talk about how people deal with money and death. We take a look at how people in foreign countries "do their business". We ask women what challenges they face once a month during their menstruation. We meet a couple who fell in love at the workplace and follow midwives during childbirth, women while they fetch water and volunteers during sex education campaigns. We get to take a look at a member of parliament's phone and that of a Syrian man who fled his country. We think outside the box when it comes to dealing with bodily fluids, meet young refugees in Germany and learn that even intimacy is always something that must be negotiated.

We hope you spend some quality time with this milestone anniversary edition of CARE affair.

PS: You want to comment on an article, have something critical to say or maybe some praise? We love to hear your feedback, so please drop us an email: redaktion@care.de ●

So very close

By Sabine Wilke

Collage: Jens Mennicke, Photos: Daniela Glunz

Please no more digging, it is really too personal for me. And to be honest it's also uncomfortable. Embarrassing. It is nobody's business. And if I do share it with anyone, then only with you. Don't dare tell anyone else. Please. Just thinking about it makes me blush. Awful. To expose myself like this. Standing here naked, so to speak. Please go away. Don't turn back around, forget everything I showed or told you. I'll just quickly turn the lights off. Turn the music up. Be alone. In a safe space. Anything else would be unbearable. Ugh. Being this close goes too far.

Intimate. A big word, and at the same time there is something sterile, dirty and beautiful attached to it. Private parts. It is like some childish expression for our genitalia. You could just say penis or vagina. Or maybe better not? Sex, the greatest thing in the world that no one publicly discusses. Privacy – that space reserved only for those we truly want to let in. Secrets, confessions, weaknesses – but also something beautiful, this closeness, and the unguarded? To open yourself up without reservation, your innermost self, just sharing that which is most intimate with another person. As an expression of love, right?

CARE affair's new issue is entitled "Intimate." Strange. What does that have to do with the work of a relief organization? We tossed around some ideas during an editorial meeting. The tenth edition, an anniversary: The magazine's topic should definitely be something special. The room starts buzzing with words and ideas. There is talk about sex, bodily fluids and excretions. Be provocative for a change and talk openly about things that are really no secret at all.

Can we go there? The mood vacillates between serious and silly. Opinion one: "Well, CARE really does do a lot for hygiene and sanitation. Building toilets. Maintenance. Training hygiene promoters in refugee camps. This is important work, but it is never really "sexy" enough for a story. Let's find a name for this issue that is linked to toilets." Everyone nods. Opinion two: "But hygiene is also a topic for women having their periods. Just focusing on excrements doesn't really reflect this." And what about everything that has to do with the body and the soul but doesn't end up in the drainage system? Female genital cutting, violence against female bodies and girls who become pregnant too young? Right, that's also somehow a part of it. Opinion three: "And it would also be interesting to hear about how people are taught about

Privi



lège

Privi



lège

sex and family planning in other parts of the world.” So obviously enough “body-related issues” to fill a magazine. Opinion four: “It’s also somehow about things you don’t want to disclose. Mistakes for example. They happen in development projects too. And what about everything we share about ourselves in the Internet, whether voluntarily or not?”

And how does this all fit together then? With a word that makes us curious: Intimate. For this edition we asked around in many corners of the world in order to get a better idea of the complexity of this term. Particularly because intimacy, in the truest sense of the word, is a matter of personal definition. We talked to young CARE employees from around the world: from South Sudan to the Arab world, from Nepal to the Philippines. Their quick and detailed responses surprised us: Each of them was happy to participate in our little survey about sex and sex education, embarrassing moments, customs and cultural peculiarities. They all had an opinion, an anecdote and an interest in taking part in the discussion.

So what are we talking about when we say something is intimate? To understand a word’s meaning it’s best to look at its definition:

Intimate (from Latin intimus “innermost”), ... characterized by or involving warm friendship or a personally close or familiar association or feeling ... engaged in or characterized by sexual relations ... characterized by or suggesting an atmosphere conducive to privacy or intimacy; warmly cozy ... (Dictionary.com)

Characterized by or involving warm friendship or a personally close or familiar association or feeling.

“Don’t take it personally when someone doesn’t look you in the eyes for very long. We consider that impolite, especially if you are younger than the person you are talking to,” reported a young man from South Sudan. “Keeping a one-meter distance is good, especially if you are a man and standing across from a woman. I was so shocked the first time I traveled to Europe and went to Holland: People were openly kissing each other on the street!” “Oh yeah, the public kissing shocked me too,” said a young woman from the West African country of Niger. The same response followed by several exclamation marks also came from the Philippines, Nepal, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Arab world and Rwanda. Western accep-



Fresh is a French Kiss

tance of public displays of affection became prevalent during the 1960s and 1970s alongside the sexual revolution. This remains an absolutely unacceptable act in many parts of the world today. Still, even within the same country closeness and distance are interpreted differently: “The Tuareg communities in northern Niger express their feelings much more openly,” one colleague explained. There it is normal for a man and a woman who are not married or even in a relationship with each other to lie together on a bed while having a conversation. “This is absolutely unacceptable in other parts of the country!” And sometimes ignorance also causes confusion: “The first time I was in Malaysia and went for a walk in an Indian neighborhood I took many of the men to be gay,” a young man from the Philippines reported. “Someone had to explain to me that holding hands among men is a normal gesture of friendship.”

Closeness and distance, friendship and foreignness, private and public: Intimacy is always something that is negotiated within a society, and the interpretation of what is intimate and what is not is influenced by the cultural context you are in. “Don’t talk to people about politics, especially not in Juba,” says a South Sudanese man. “This is an area of tension and much too personal. And don’t speak English to people. It makes them feel ashamed when they have to admit that they don’t understand this language.” However, a man from the Arab culture considers other topics much more taboo: “You should never talk to a young woman about love. That would be like an insult. Questions about your income or your work in general are also a bit too personal. But many people are curious and ask them anyway!”

So what actually is private, legally speaking? If we look at Germany, for example, Articles 1 and 2 of the German Basic Law protect every citizen from prohibited attacks by a third party, even by the state itself. It states that, “Every person shall have the right to free development of his personality,” as long, of course, as this does not, “offend against the constitutional order or the moral law.” But then it gets complicated because the “moral law” being quoted is not a written legal text, but simply the sum of the norms that the community as a whole recognizes to be right and binding. German philosopher Immanuel Kant coined the term in his treatise on the categorical imperative. In short: One should always act in a way that all members belonging to the community feel is lawful and right.

Privacy and public – with the strengthening of pluralistic democracies, these two terms have become strongly interrelated during the course of the modern era. For one, the public means the political arena and refers to all of those areas reg-

The Doors

of

Perception

The Doors

of

Perception

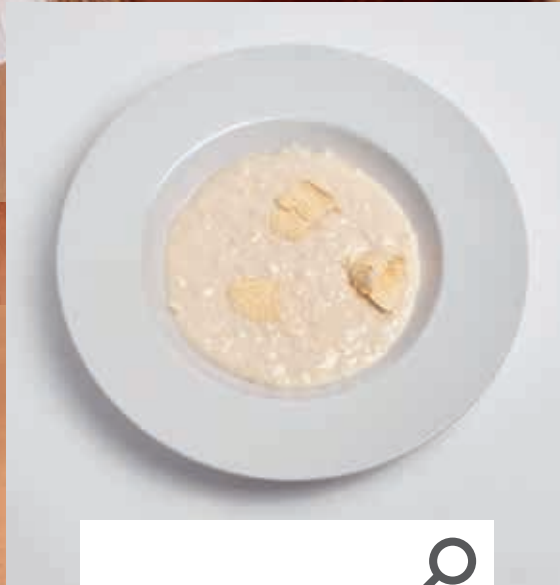
13



6



Tinder Love



660 

Love me Tinder

ulated by laws and institutions. But the public is also a generally accessible space for communication that is open to participation by all. Classic mass media dispatch this publicity while the digital revolution makes boundaries blurry again. Privacy is often described in contrast to the political public as being everything that is “non-governmental” which can therefore be decided upon on an individual basis.

In democratic systems the protection of privacy is highly valued, as the dignity of the individual – and with it, their right to live as they so wish – is given the first priority. Whereas before monarchs could command their subjects to do as they deemed fit, today a citizen of a state under the rule of law has the right to live as they like within their own private life. We can dance on the sofa naked, dye our hair green, knit a sweater for a house pet and hum Italian arias in the park while lying on our backs in the sun. No such behavior or life choice, no matter how unusual, is forbidden as long as it doesn’t involve committing a crime or infringing on the basic rights of another. Everything is a private matter.

Yet millions of photos of family outings, bedtime reading, the latest success with a risotto recipe, vacation flings and the poster on the wall of a child’s room are redefining the boundaries of what is private: People all over the world voluntarily decide to share their private moments on digital platforms like Facebook or Instagram. There they not only invite real friends into their proverbial living rooms, but also those with whom their friendships only exist in the virtual world. Is this about a need for validation? For keeping up with distant friends and relatives? Is it naiveté? The Internet has disrupted the boundaries between what is private and what is public. Digitalization makes capturing moments with photos, videos and sound recordings so easy that by now all of our hard drives are flooded. A transformation has been brought on by digitalization and the increasing interconnectedness of the world. One that affects each individual’s identity, the very portrayal, role and visibility of our ego, thus blurring the boundary between intimacy and publicity.

“Many people use fake names and photos on the Net. They create a web-self through whom they can say and do things they would never think of doing in “real life”. This a double-edged sword,” a young woman from North Africa reports. A woman from the Democratic Republic of the Congo also sees the Internet as a threat: “Marriages fall apart because men and women search for lovers on the Internet.” In the Philippines online dating has now replaced the traditional way of courtship: “Before, a man visited the family of the woman he wanted to marry. He was even tested by the family and had to go collect firewood or water for them to prove himself worthy. Today young people meet each other on the Internet.” Facebook and Co. have also revolutionized communication in Nepal. “People here are very open about what they share: from weddings to birth announcements to family celebrations – everything is shared via social media,” says a young Nepali woman. Even in the most remote parts of the country there is now Internet. So one has access to information and people they don’t actually know personally. “And of course everyone uses it to find out about sex. It’s not openly discussed in families and suddenly there are all of these pornographic websites you can secretly look at. This is totally taboo in our society! Incidentally, cyber crime is also on the rise. The Nepali police has created a department to deal with this.” A young woman from Rwanda tells about the desire for fame and fortune that can supposedly be satisfied through the Internet: “Here a lot of young girls make connections with rich men from West Africa through the Internet, the so-called “sugar daddies”. And a lot of personal information is disclosed: selfies, daily life, all in hopes of becoming an Internet star.”

Engaged in or characterized by sexual relations.

This definition for “intimate” which can be found in the dictionary is probably the first thing people in our cultural circles associate with it: Sex. Nudity. Our private parts. And for all the taboo, there is still a growing supply of products for the enlightened consumer and their area “down there”. If you look up the terms

“intimate” or “private parts” on the Net, you are given suggestions for words to go with it like “waxing, epilating, lasering, shaving and hair removal”. There are intimate hygiene products and intimate jewelry. And intimate cosmetic surgery that promises to give you the perfect penis or the ideal vaginal lips. On the other hand, there is also a lot of gruesome mutilation of private parts: little girls who undergo forced genital cutting at a young age because it’s just “always been done this way” or because religion supposedly calls for it. About 200 million women and girls suffer from the consequences of this worldwide. The genital area is private and political at the same time. Sexuality, in all of its forms, is a personal decision. But whether it is tolerated, supported or persecuted, that depends on each society. In 72 countries in the world homosexuality is illegal. In 13 countries it is even punishable by death.

“Untenrum frei”, which loosely translates to “Naked Down Below”, is the name of a book from 2016 by journalist Margarete Stokowski. According to the publisher, she writes “about the dirty little things and big questions of power”. A feminist book that openly states that apparently, even in the liberal Germany of the 21st century, there is a need to talk about behavior between the sexes both in the bedroom and in public. A grandmother in the Democratic Republic of the Congo finds “Naked Down Below” shocking and refers to her granddaughter’s miniskirt: “She complains if my daughter wears a short skirt. She says it makes her a prostitute,” says a Congolese mother who has to mediate between the generations. “For her, the way someone dresses is a direct expression of that person’s character.” Clothes make the man, and which body parts should be covered is not the same everywhere in the world: “The cattle herders in South Sudan wear clothes that just barely cover their genitals. This is uncomfortable for other people here. They feel ashamed at the sight of it,” our local colleague tells us. In Nepal, however, shame is connected to the style of the piece of clothing, a young woman from Kathmandu recounts: “Western clothing that bares the belly and the lower back is not well-received. But our traditional saris show the exact same body parts. In that case though, it is acceptable for young women because they are honoring tradition by the way they dress.”

A young girl’s honor is very highly valued in many countries of the world. She must remain innocent, a virgin, until she enters marriage. But girls are seldom prepared for what awaits them next: “As a teenager I once asked my mother how she was taught about sex,” a young Muslim man tells us. She simply said: “Not at all until I was married.” My mother first married in her mid-30s and had lived in different countries and contexts before that. But it was never explained to her what sex is. It sounds surreal but it is no exception.”

In many countries sex education is part of the curriculum. But curriculum is one thing. How openly questions can be asked is always strongly dependent on societal norms. And who really wants to ask their teachers questions when they want to know something specific about sex? Whether in Germany or in Niger, that’s where the Internet comes in again. In 2015, after a high number of young men from Arab countries came to Germany, the Federal Center for Health Education started a new website: information about what is “OK” in Germany, how men and women behave towards one another and the roles that sexuality and sexual freedom play in society. This portal called Zanzu.de is available in thirteen languages. The computer doesn’t laugh at the questions asked or tell anyone about them, and it provides answers that one’s own parents might not be willing or able to give.

But young people also talk about intimate issues offline: In Rwanda there is a magazine for girls that is available throughout the country. “Ni Nyampinga” gives them a voice, and talks about sexuality, gender roles and other topics that interest girls. “This is good because our parents’ generation was taught too little about sex. Usually it was a young woman’s aunts, sisters or mothers who passed on “the important parts” to them. But that didn’t always necessarily include formal education about things like contraception and such. It was more about certain sexual practices that are known

Free

Hugs

Free

Hugs

Free

Hugs



in Rwanda. And our mothers also learned a little bit about their menstruation,” a young woman told us. A young man from South Sudan emphasizes that sex education is not only important for having fun, but it is also a matter of life and death. “150,000 people here are HIV-positive and of them, about 18,000 are even younger than 14. Only half of the children in this country can attend primary school. That’s why many relief organizations cooperate with churches and other groups so that sexual health, contraception and similar topics are talked about.” “You have your period now and are getting breasts. Stop playing with the boys.” Our colleague in Niger didn’t have much more than this in terms of pamphlets. She told us that most of the young people do their own research outside of school to try and understand how sexuality “functions”.

*Characterized by or suggesting an atmosphere conducive
to privacy or intimacy; warmly cozy.*

“The audience loved the intimate atmosphere of his concert.” This is how articles in the arts section read when they want to describe a special mood in the public arena. So, intimate can also mean something cozy, in a small setting. Intimate lighting creates a comfortable atmosphere. An intimate setting provides security and openness. Physical closeness doesn’t always have to have a sexual connotation. Intimate also means feeling comfortable, a sense of security and belonging. The desire for physical closeness and a feeling of security seems to be growing more important again. Our opportunities for connection via the Net are boundless, yet often remain virtual in nature.

“Free Hugs!” – these words were held high on a sign in a shopping center in the Australian city of Sydney: So began the “Free Hugs Campaign” in 2004 that found many imitators worldwide. A hug, free, without ulterior motives or consequences. Intimacy at the push of a button, in public spaces and in the form of a “Happening”. The so-called “cuddle parties” in various big cities around the world follow the same principle, inviting people to lie around together and touch each other. This is also not about sex, but about experiencing warmth and physical contact. It’s supposed to be good for the soul.

Where does this need come from? In many industrialized countries, society has changed drastically over the last century. From multigenerational houses where grandparents, parents and children all lived together to a country of people living alone: About one third of households in the European Union today are single households. According to surveys, people sought this out themselves and are satisfied with living alone. But despite all of this independence, a free hug here or there nonetheless seems welcome.

In Nepal on the other hand, several people and generations still live under one roof. “I find it inappropriate when foreigners ask me why I still live with my parents and even with my in-laws. It is none of their business and it’s just our way of living together.” says a young woman from Nepal. In most African societies it is also normal to live together in extremely small spaces. Everyone knows everything that goes on, there are no secrets, decisions are made by the head of the family and there is close-knit social monitoring: This is not such a pleasant image for us in Western societies. We really value our freedom to make decisions and our individuality. But an intimate space, a home, can also provide protection and guidance. Many people do not get to decide for themselves where the boundaries between intimacy and publicness lie. But whether they find this disturbing or restrictive depends a great deal upon the experiences they have had and the societal context within which they live. And in the end it is always a question of personal preference.

It is really nice, so close, so open. I am afraid to let this happen. And at the same time I do want it. Please don't take advantage of me letting you into my world. My most personal parts. I trust you. And want to know everything about you. Tell me everything. Show me everything. There are no limits. We are intimate – it doesn't get closer than this. Close is not unpleasant, it's the opposite. Unless, of course, you hurt me one day. Then I won't be able to stand it, all the things I shared with you. And will want to delete it. Irreversibly. Then my intimacy won't be open to you anymore. I will have new secrets. Please no more digging. Thank you. ●

Where Love is Illegal

Text and Photos

by

ROBIN HAMMOND



Uganda: A posed portrait of 25-year-old Miiró, who describes being evicted from his home because, he says, he is gay: “We heard people stoning the door and windows while shouting, telling us to immediately leave the house because they were tired of us, claiming that we are curse to the village, and even to the teenagers in the village ... After a while of storming the door, it broke and we were pulled out, thrown on the ground, beaten and flogged for almost an hour. We were half dead. And they burnt all things in the house in the process. The leader of the village intervened and they decided to take us to the police station for life imprisonment.” Miiró spent four days in police cells before being released by human rights lawyers. He went into hiding for two and a half months. He received 160 US dollars relocation money from a non-governmental organization but he says it wasn’t enough to start a new life.



Russia: A posed portrait of Lesbian couple “O” (27, right) and “D” (23, left). They were on their way home late at night when they were attacked: “F***ing lesbians” a stranger yelled. He then turned and punched “D” in the face. “O” tried to defend her but was punched in the face too. “O” screamed: “what are you doing? We are just sisters.” He replied, “Don’t lie, I saw you kissing and you are spreading LGBT propaganda.” He continued to kick and punch “O” and “D”, screaming “No LGBT” and finally “If I see you again I will kill you” and then left. All this time a man was filming the attack with his phone. “The real fear I experienced was not for myself, it was for the one I love”, says “O”. “The fear struck me when I realized I couldn’t do anything to protect her. Now, in Russia, holding hands is dangerous for us. But if the goal of these attackers was to separate us, they failed. They only made our relationship stronger.”



Photos: Robin Hammond (Noor)

South Africa

A posed portrait of 28-year-old Lindeka. In 2007 Lindeka was out with a friend, she went to buy cigarettes and started walking back to her friend's house. A man approached her and said he would show her a shortcut. He asked if she was a lesbian. "Do you date girls?", he said. When Lindeka said "yes", the man pulled out a gun, put it to her head and said "I'm going to show you you are not a man, you are a girl." He dragged her behind some toilets, pushed the gun to her temple and raped her. "I was scared. I thought he was going to kill me", she said. When he was finished, the attacker ran away. "After that day I hated guys," says Lindeka. The rapist was arrested and sentenced to ten years in prison. "God has helped me to get over the rape, but I'm still afraid. I don't go out at night."

Malaysia

A posed portrait of 47-year-old transgender man Mitch Yusmar, with his partner of 17 years, 39-year-old Lalita Abdullah, and their adopted children, 9-year-old Izzy, and 3-year-old Daniya at home outside Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Mitch is the Senior Manager of Seed, an NGO that caters to the needs of homeless people in Kuala Lumpur. Lalita is the Regional Learning and Development Manager for an oil and gas company. Their relationship is not legally recognized and they live with the insecurity that their family could be torn apart should something happen to Lalita who is the only recognized parent.

South Africa

A posed portrait of "B", a 32-year-old gay man from Kenya. He met David in 2008 on a beach in Mombasa, Kenya, "It was love at first sight". That same day David proposed to "B". They decided to meet "B's" parents but they would not accept his sexuality. "B" and David decided to go ahead with the wedding anyway. At their pre-wedding party, guests heard shouting from outside: "Kill those shoga (gays) they are doing what is not African." 10 people stood outside shouting, holding Molotov cocktails. Everyone fled, the house was set on fire. The next day, at work, "B" received a phone call from his neighbor telling him David was in the hospital, he'd been stabbed in the chest. David was severely injured, but survived. His family took him from Nairobi to Mombasa. "B" had to leave his job and went into hiding. "B" had heard that South Africa was a safe place to be. Fearing for his life, he organized a visa and flew to Cape Town. Life in South Africa was not easy though. "B" faced xenophobic and homophobic abuse. His work permit expired while he was ill and the South African government refused to renew it. He lives in poverty in a tin shack in Cape Town. He frequently dreams of David.

Uganda

A posed portrait of Bad Black, a 25-year-old transgender woman sex worker in Kampala, Uganda. "At the age of 16 in 2005 I was caught red handed kissing with my boyfriend. My father asked me to leave his home if I don't want to be killed. I left home and came to Kampala where I started doing sex work for survival. In 2009, I found out that I was HIV-positive. I have been sexually harassed by the police multiple times on the streets. The police arrested me several times for no reason. Early this year I was kidnapped by three men who tortured me for seven hours. They beat me up and fixed a beer bottle in my behind smeared with hot pepper. The kidnappers took my phones and money." Today Bad Black volunteers for an organization that supports other HIV-positive sex workers.

captions are positioned clockwise

Hargeisa, Somaliland.
“When someone lets a healthy child bleed it has nothing to do with culture. This is simply a crime against the child.”

These words from Edna Adan stay with me on my journey to the Horn of Africa and remain on my mind even after my return home.



Photos: Arndt Peltner (left), Beryl Magoko (right)



A Wound That Never Heals

How women and men in the Horn of Africa fight against an unspeakable crime against women's bodies: Female genital cutting

It all started last year when I traveled with CARE to Somaliland and Puntland, two autonomous provinces of the country of Somalia, where I went to collect on-site information about the refugee crisis. Many young men and women set out from here day in day out to begin the dangerous journey through Ethiopia and Sudan all the way to Libya to then cross the Mediterranean in some flimsy vessel in order to reach the promised shores of Europe. Many die, are kidnapped, tortured or fail along the way. In many conversations in the villages, communities and refugee camps in Somaliland and Puntland one topic was repeatedly brought up: FGM – that stands for female genital mutilation. Young and older women spoke openly about this thousand-year-old procedure and how it affected their lives.

Back at home and after working on my report on refugees, I began to read more and more about these three letters: FGM. Until then I had been far removed from this topic. I knew that something like this existed but I was not familiar with the details and the full extent of this brutal practice. I learned that there are three types of mutilation, as it is called

By ARNDT PELTNER

Photos: BERYL MAGORO

by the World Health Organization (WHO). Between 220 and 250 million women worldwide are affected, predominantly in African countries north of the equator. Basically every woman in Somalia has been “circumcised,” as it is falsely called locally. And here the worst version is most common: Type III, infibulation or pharaonic circumcision. Type III means: The clitoris and the labia minora and labia majora are removed, and then everything is sewn back together so that only a teeny-tiny opening remains for the flow of urine and for menstruation. Estimates say that 92 to 98 percent of the women in this region of Africa between the ages of five and ten will have been cut.

Since the women I had previously met had been so open, I came to the conclusion that it might be possible for a male journalist with a Western and Christian background like me to pick up this “story.” The German Foundation for World Population (DSW) supported me with a travel stipend. In addition, the local CARE office assured me that they would support me in my research. And it quickly became apparent that this assurance was actually my only chance. Hodan Elmi, a CARE employee and my travel companion, was a savior for me as a reporter. She not only opened doors to local organizations, she also “opened” up many of the women we talked to who told their very personal stories. Hodan, born and raised in England, returned eight years ago to Somaliland, the country her parents are from. She was open to my questions and explained the culture, religion and the traditions of Somaliland to me. “Genital cutting is a taboo topic. Women seldom speak about the health consequences. It is important for the women to understand that what was done to them was not their fault, that is it is not part of the Islamic culture or



religion. That in fact, it is a negative cultural practice that has been carried out for thousands of years in Somalia and in several other African countries.”

In numerous conversations with affected women, I was seen as little more than a microphone holder during the course of the interview. They spoke with Hodan, looked at her when they answered and I just kept asking a few questions now and then.

The language, the cultural, historical and religious background showed me my limitations as a man, a Western visitor and above all as a journalist. I became the silent observer and attendant of a story that also pushed me to my own limits.

Female genital mutilation: This is the name that is supposed to be used. And it becomes clear why

when you listen to Edna Adan, the founder and head of the Edna Adan Hospital in Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland. She described to me the case of an eleven-year-old girl with Down syndrome who was brought into the hospital by her parents. The girl had been “circumcised” in the morning and was finally brought to the hospital 12 hours later. “They had just cut everything off. I have seen

many accidents in my lifetime, traffic accidents, those wounded in a war ... I just started crying. Because this poor child ... they just cut off everything down to the bone. We couldn't find a single piece of flesh to sew it together. The urinary tract had been hit and the labia were gone. The child must have been defending herself and the grandmother just took over and cut everything off at one time like a raw piece of meat."

As Edna Adan describes that evening you can still see her pain and anger. She says: "It took us three hours to stop the bleeding. When I came out of the operating room I asked the mother how she could have possibly done this. She answered, that she had only wanted to "purify" her daughter. That made me so angry. A child with Down syndrome is as pure as the day it was born. Innocent and lovable. What do you want to 'purify' about it?"

Edna Adan has been fighting against genital cutting in her country for over 40 years. The 79-year-old has her office in the first floor of the hospital, right next to her bedroom. On the walls there are dozens of pictures from the life of this very busy woman. Adan was the wife of the former Somalian president (1967–1969) and later president of Somaliland (1993–2002) Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal. In the photos you see Edna Adan with U.S. Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and Bill Clinton, with former German Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger, with former Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan and with many other famous politicians. The pictures don't show the difficult times that she and her husband had to live through under the dictator Siad Barre. Haji Ibrahim Egal ended up in prison several times under the Somali ruler.

When she notices me looking at the photos on the wall, Edna says that she

has lived the good life. She dined with presidents, slept in the world's best hotels, and celebrated while she had the chance. She was the Health Secretary and Foreign Minister for the young Republic of Somaliland, worked for the WHO and was a sought-after speaker at many conferences. But it is here that she has now found her purpose in life. She built this hospital herself and it was opened in 2002. She used her own pension as seed money and raised money through donations as well. Her valuable contacts both at home and abroad were put to good use for this project. There is even an "Edna Adan Hospital Foundation" in the USA that supports the work in Somaliland from afar. And she never stops.

Gabilye is a small town about an hour west of Hargeisa by car. A bumpy country road past herds of camels and goats leads there. Three women wait in a cultural center for the Western visitor. A darkened room keeps some of the midday heat away. Kamila Noura is one of the three women. The 50-year-old is known in Gabilye for conducting circumcisions. She has no training but she learned the technique by watching. How should I imagine this, I want to know, and what does she need for the procedure? Just a razor blade she says. A lot of it depends on what the family wants, what kind of circumcision they seek. But it is almost always the pharaonic method, and for that she also needs thorns that she sharpens herself for when she finally closes up the girl being held down by the women in her family during the procedure. She receives between five and twenty US dollars for her work. It's just a job, says Kamila Noura, just as if she ran a shop on the side of the main street. "My husband died and this is the only income I have to feed my family."

Beside her sit Halima Hassan and Hawia Abdullah, both well into their 50s.



Sheik Ahmed Abdi Horre (above) and Jama Abdullahi (right) are religious and traditional leaders in Somaliland. They are important voices to educate communities about the danger of female genital mutilation.

They talk about how it was back then when they were “circumcised”. Everyone has her own very clear memory of this day. Halima says today she can still feel the thorns that were stabbing her inner thigh. And then there are the longterm consequences; she has had to repeatedly fight off infections and this continues still today. Every trip to the toilet is painful. “I had to be opened on my wedding night. Then again for the birth of my children. The pain never stops and that’s why I am standing up against it today.” Both women nod in agreement. They are fighting against forced genital cutting and are trying to convince other mothers and grandmothers that this old and brutal practice has nothing to do with Islam and therefore, must not be carried out.

This is the struggle they face because it is a fallacy to believe that genital cutting is based on the Koran. The activists in Somaliland are going up against precisely this belief. And now they have found important allies. Sheik Ahmed Abdi Horre and Jama Abdullahi are two of them. They are religious and traditional leaders in Somaliland. I meet the two of them in the office of Nagaad, a network of numerous women’s rights groups. The Sheikh tells of how he himself long believed that the “circumcision of girls” was prescribed by the Koran. “It was seen as something good and for protecting a girl’s virginity. We believed it was for the best, both for the girls and for the whole community,” he explains. The women from Nagaad had approached him, sought a dialog with him and showed him that there is no mention of this in the sacred texts. Now he is a self-proclaimed opponent

of genital cutting and speaks about it in the villages and at meetings. Jama Abdullahi, the traditional leader, adds: “I have always known that it was wrong. Because I saw the pain and suffering of the girls who went through it. But it was only much later, once I had taken over a leadership role in our community that I was able to put it into words and was then listened to.” The women’s network Nagaad follows a two-pronged approach. On the one hand, is the work of convincing the country’s religious leaders to commit to joining the struggle, which is a definite must. And then there is the effort to spread this important message across the country through specific women’s support projects, namely that genital cutting is wrong and is not based on the Koran. “It is a women’s rights issue,” explains Amahan Abdisalaam, the president of Nagaad. “It is a procedure with all kinds of consequences that concerns woman and girls. It is carried out when they are young but the consequences last a lifetime: in daily life, in the marriage and during childbirth. Sometimes it leads directly to death when the girls bleed out. Genital cutting holds massive health risks for a woman’s entire life.”

Farah Achmed Elmi is 50 years old. She is also part of the Nagaad network. She speaks of that day, of her day of being cut. She still thinks about the torture she had to endure. Farah Achmed Elmi tells how she asked her mother back then why she did this to her. “I was told that this is our culture, our tradition. If we are against it we are not honoring Allah. My mother said that if she didn’t allow it to happen I would have no

husband or family. She said she was protecting my honor, my virginity and was guaranteeing me a future marriage. That was the answer I was given when I asked.”

But for her, the pain didn’t end with the circumcision as a child, Farah Achmed Elmi recalls. “The worst was when I married and was opened up again. It was so painful. Then when I gave birth to my children I was cut open again each time. It has had an impact on my whole life – my youth and as an adult. I was cut open and sewn back together repeatedly until I bore my last child. When I had my first child, a son ... the pain, the cutting open, the sewing up. I swore that if I should ever have a daughter I would never do this to her. I made this decision then and there. None of my daughters is circumcised.”

70-year-old Hauna Noura also has a story to tell. She was ten years old when it happened. With no anesthesia, she was held down by the women in her family and then her grandmother cut everything off with a knife and closed up the bleeding wound with thorns afterwards. Hauna Noura’s legs were bound together so



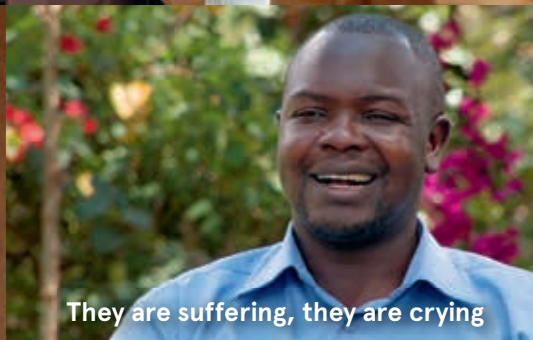
that she couldn't walk or move. For days she lay there like this and the only thing she knew that it had to happen or else later she would have no husband. That's what she was told. "Today I am an old woman but I still feel the pain from back then. I have kidney problems because of the infections. I struggle with this every day. What was done to me is something I will never forget." But Hauna Noura only realized much later that genital cutting is wrong. She has six daughters and let the oldest be "circumcised." "When I saw how painful it was for her to go to the toilet I decided that I would never allow it again." Her five other daughters remained untouched. Hauna Noura tells us she has apologized to her oldest daughter and said she was driven by the devil when she allowed the procedure to take place.

Today Hauna Noura is actively taking a stand against genital cutting in Somaliland. The number of the opponents of this old traditional procedure is constantly growing. However it is difficult to reach the nomadic population in the countryside. That's why the number of affected women in Somaliland is sinking so slowly. "Havayoco" is an organization that has an unusual way of broaching this subject in villages and nomadic settlements. First they excite the inhabitants with

"I was told that this is our culture, our tradition. If we are against it we are not honoring Allah. My mother said that if she didn't allow it to happen I would have no husband or family. She said she was protecting my honor, my virginity and was guaranteeing me a future marriage. That was the answer I was given when I asked."

a circus show so that afterwards they can then open up discussion of this serious topic. According to Kamal Hassan of Havayoco, this is how to get the conversation started. They even write their own songs for these performances. He begins to sing and then translates: "Genital cutting is the genocide of girls and we have come to tell you to stop ... stop ... stop." Back to Hargeisa, in the Edna Adan Hospital. There is a huge black board on the roof. Midwives are also trained here. Her "soldiers on the ground" in the fight against genital cutting, as Edna Adan calls the young women. After their training the midwives go out into villages across the country to help educate people about the dangers of cutting. The eloquent senior citizen knows that a law is not enough and that the prohibition of genital cutting won't come over night. So she is also calling on the international community to do more than just say that this is an "African" or "cultural" problem.

Edna Adan believes it would be a great deterrent if the immigration authorities of other countries would support her fight against genital cutting. In the Horn of Africa the dream of emigration is widespread. There was no danger too great that has kept young people in particular from risking their lives to be able



to start all over in Europe or North America. “Anyone who wants a visa for another country should have to fill out two lines in their application,” Edna Adan demands. “And it concerns entire family: Do you understand that genital cutting is a criminal act in this country, whether in Sweden, Germany or the Netherlands? And below that is should read: Do you understand that if you break this law your entire family can lose its residence status? I purposely say the entire family because this includes the little boys who are valued, the fathers and all of the men in the family. That way it’s not just the little girls and the mothers who are punished.”

The United Kingdom is already way ahead of other European countries in this respect. Kamal Farah who works for CARE in Somaliland can speak about this. He lived in England with his wife for a couple of years. She is circumcised. And her first daughter was born there. “Three days later a social worker came to our house and said she had received a report from the hospital that the mother had been cut on her genitals and had to be helped during the birth. Several more cuts had to be made because giving birth naturally was not possible. The social worker told us that our daughter was born here and was therefore a British citizen. That according to the law this was not allowed to be done to her. And that we were legally responsible for making sure that this neither happened to her in the U.K. nor that we allowed her to be circumcised in Somalia.”

Kamal Farah and his wife have worked actively against genital cutting for years. They explained that

to the British social services. “Now my daughter is seven years old and I have another little girl. Neither of them will have to suffer through what their mother and grandmother had to when they were little girls.”

The fight against female genital cutting in the Horn of Africa continues. But the direction it is taking is not the one that activists want. They are calling for a zero-tolerance policy that should and must reject all forms of genital circumcision and cutting. But Type I in which “only” the clitoris is removed is gaining more and more acceptance. This means a “light form” of genital cutting? That’s why it is clear to Edna Adan and many other active women and men in Somaliland that their fight against this crime against women’s bodies in this still young republic is far from over. “There’s no magic wand,” says Edna Adan. “It’s a lot like whittling: You have a piece of wood and you just keep chipping away at it until it’s finally the shape you want.” It’s not time for Edna Adan to retire yet. There is a lot of work that still lies ahead. ●

The images in this article are extracted from the documentary “The Cut” by Beryl Magoko which has received numerous awards. Beryl Magoko produced the film as part of her diploma for the Kampala University Film Class. For the research and filming, she returned to her home village in Kuria, Kenya. The familiar environment as well as intense research made it possible both to create an intimate ambiance and to get exceptionally close to participants – proponents and opponents of the deeply entrenched tradition: Young girls, elderly women, circumcisers and a number of activists – mostly supported by the church. Beryl Magoko was not welcome everywhere. In some instances, she and her team were attacked. But some women also showed the courage to speak about their own experience. With her film, Beryl Magoko impressively conveys the pressure of Kuria’s society, so the audience is able to witness the girls’ hopelessness, however without stereotypically condemning their culture. Beryl Magoko currently lives in Germany and works on her diploma film for the Academy of Media Arts, Cologne. She focuses on reconstruction surgery for women.

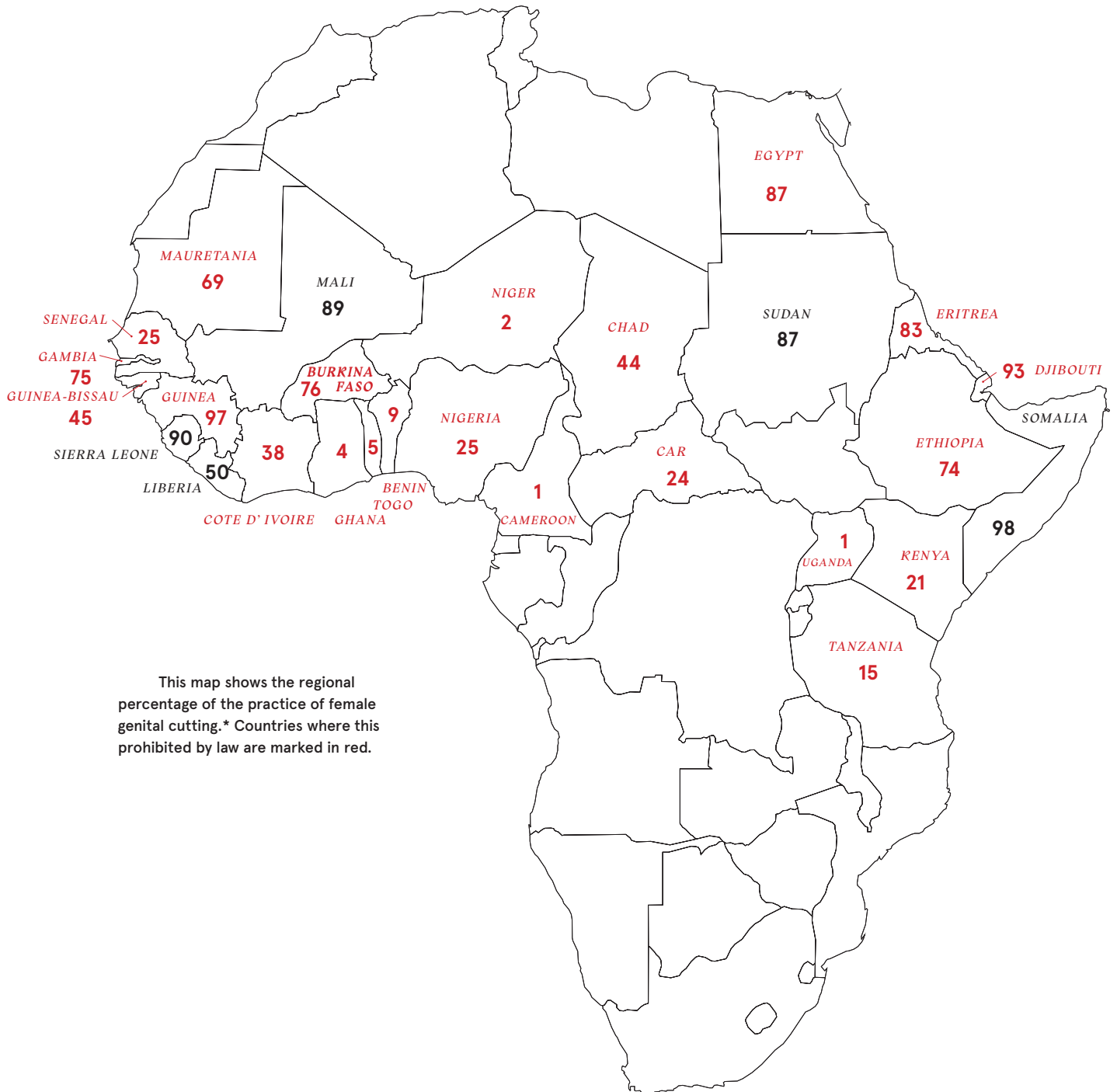


The state shall ensure the elimination of every discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of the woman and the child (...).

● Article 18, 3: African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981)

AN OVERVIEW

Countries in Africa where
female genital cutting is still practised.



TRAVEL APPS

I travel a lot for work, both in Germany and worldwide. These apps for the train and various airlines help me manage my travels.

ALARM CLOCK

One of the key features of my job is an early start. I can't manage without my alarm clock, but sometimes, when it's before 6 a.m., I wish it would go away.

TELEPHONE

I manage a lot of issues on the phone because in many cases, a direct conversation makes it easier and quicker to find solutions.

NEWS APPS

I use several news apps, from local to international media. I find it important to get my information from a variety of sources so that I can form an opinion based on diverse perspectives.

BÄRBEL'S SMARTPHONE

0049-----



MAIL

I get most of my information by email. That's a good tool, also to keep in touch with my team when I'm not in the office.

SMS

Since I'm on the road so much, SMS helps me stay in touch with my family and friends.

Dr. Bärbel Kofler has been a Member of the German Bundestag since 2004 and since 2016 she is the Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid. Kofler has a doctorate in philology. After a vocational training in a bank, she obtained her high school diploma and studied computer science. Her focus areas are economics and human rights, tax justice and sustainable development.

My smartphone, my life

A small device that knows a lot about us: our smartphone. What do we keep on it, how do we use it? We've asked Dr. Bärbel Kofler, Member of the German Parliament and Basheer Alzaalan, originally from Syria and today at home in Germany.

MUSIC

I don't listen to a lot of music but Fairuz is on top of my playlist. The singer is known as the "mother of Lebanon" and an icon in the Arab world. I listen to her in the morning on my way to work.

PHOTOS

I came to Germany in 2015 because it wasn't safe to stay in my home town of Deir Ez Zoor. I didn't capture my dangerous travels with this exact smartphone, but it was the same type. The photos I still keep on here remind me of the long, exhausting route to Germany in the winter.

GOOGLE TRANSLATE

A very important app for me. It lets me translate words or sentences from Arabic to German and vice versa. Last year, I attended a German language course in my new home region close to Bonn. Today, my German is quite improved and I can actually help other refugees with administrative procedures.

BASHEER'S SMARTPHONE

0049-----



AL-MOAZIN

Al-Moazin: is my prayer app. It lets me know which way to turn towards Mecca when I want to do my prayers. This app is indispensable for me.

GOOGLE MAPS

Google Maps is my trusted companion. I've used this on my journey to Germany to know where I was and where I needed to go. This app really helped me a lot.

Basheer Alzaalan, 30, is originally from Syria and fled his home country to seek shelter and safety in Germany. In his home town he worked as an English teacher. Today, he is part of CARE's integration project "KIWI" and helps teachers and students to welcome new classmates who have fled their homes.

ENAB BALADI

This Syrian newspaper keeps me up to date. I read their online version daily because things change so quickly in this conflict. If something happens, I know about it immediately.

WHATSAPP

One of my cousins is currently in Turkey, another one in Austria. My brothers are in the Netherlands and one still in Syria. Other relatives live in Kuwait. Whatsapp lets me keep in touch with them.

Suddenly there is blood
and the girl has no idea what is going on.
A story from the 1950s?
No. Cambodia in the year 2016.



14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

Bloody Business Business Bloody

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

By JENNY CONRAD

Photos: JOSH ESTEY

“When I started my first period, I was fourteen years old,” says young Klem. She lives in Cambodia and belongs to the Tampuan minority who live in the North of the country. “I felt so scared. I was angry and sad, then confused,” she says. “I didn’t dare to talk with my friends about it. I didn’t want them to find

out. I thought I was the only one this happened to. I wondered if I would die because of all the blood coming out of me.” A fourteen year-old woman tells us: “The older women in our village were whispering. No one explained to me what menstruation means or what was going to happen to me.” Even worse were one’s own thoughts, the puzzle pieces that were put together, reported another woman: “I thought a leach had bit me and was now sucking my blood.”

The experiences Klem and the other women had are testimonies to ignorance, fear and a big



taboo: menstruation. To find out how women of all ages in rural Cambodia deal with their period, we let them speak for themselves.

Menstruation is a very intimate topic in Cambodia. If at all, women only speak about it with other women in their family. One woman even reported that she secretly burns used pads behind her house. However, pads are a luxury: Many women use old clothing and scraps of fabric. They wash them in secret and are ashamed. In our conversations we heard tales of fear, shame and ignorance. But also of new ways and slow change that is making young women in Cambodia more self-confident and bringing them more freedom – on every day of the month.

Ratanak Kiri, in northeast Cambodia, is a remote, rural region. Here, every second inhabitant belongs to an ethnic minority. Cambodia is thought to be a very homogenous nation. The national language is Khmer and over 90 percent of the population belongs to the Khmer group. But it is estimated that there are 24 other language groups. These ethnic minorities now make up 1.4 to 2 percent of the society. Six ethnic minorities call Ratanak Kiri home. Lacking language skills and a good connection to the

country's economic center, these communities are literally cut off from development. As always, women and girls are doubly excluded: because of their ethnicity and because of their sex. That's why CARE gives special support to indigenous women and girls so they can also benefit from societal advances and still be able to maintain their identity and way of life.

Menstruation, menstrual bleeding, period: Three words for an absolutely natural process that literally creates life. After all, a woman's cycle means that she is fertile and able to bear children. So why the taboo?

The women in Ratanak Kiri often wear multiple layers of trousers and skirts to obscure menstruation and will bathe several times a day. There are actually neither negative nor positive cultural practices for girls at the beginning of puberty in Cambodia. But many girls tend to act differently once they have their period. They shut themselves off from others, often encouraged by their peers or their mothers. "I bathe alone, down in the stream, separate from others," one of the older girls we talk to discloses. In some communities it is advised not to have contact with children when you have your period. They say that this could be especially dangerous for children with skin rashes. This is neither medically proven nor does it make any sense. But the isolation of women during their menstrual bleeding is so strongly rooted that it is difficult to dispute this false information.

Many Cambodian women may also shy away from religious events when on their periods. During this time Buddhist women refrain

Ashamed to be seen, many girls and women take a bath by themselves when they have their period – at a stream or somewhere else. This is dangerous after dusk. Because in the open, they are not just subject to snake bites, but also an easy target for male attackers.



from offering food to monks as they usual would. And those from indigenous communities choose to keep a distance from their community's religious ceremonies. While these may be views perpetuated by women, one young woman interviewed linked this to men's attitudes: "I was told that as a Buddhist I should not go to the pagoda when I was on my period. It sounded like my

menstruation was a sin. But I think men are just disgusted by us."

In many parts of Cambodia, society is a lot different from what is considered normal in Western countries: like having sex education and biology as part of the school curriculum. And there is hardly any information for girls about what to expect before they have their first period. This discrepancy is of course

connected to education. In the remote Northeast, school retention rates are some of the lowest in the country. In 2015 only 24 percent of girls in Ratanak Kiri province completed lower secondary school. And had they continued to attend, their body and its development would have been left out of the teaching completely. But slowly, there is change.

"My generation was very embarrassed and afraid of their period. But now it's not like that anymore," said a 32-year-old Cambodian woman. Many young girls are now developing a very different attitude, they are more self-confident. This makes a teacher we spoke with very happy. "Things have changed; I feel it was more difficult for us when we were young. Now the girls have more knowledge and information than previously and they can take better care of themselves." Open communication, especially in schools, really makes a difference.

Rachana (not her real name), 15, is not much younger than Klem but her experiences when it comes to the topic of menstruation were much different. She is a student at a lower secondary school in Ratanak Kiri. Here CARE promotes the education of girls to prepare them for the future. Rachana's curriculum included the topics puberty, reproduction and sexual health. So when she got her period for the first time, she already knew what was going to happen to her. "I didn't have to ask the others about it. Most of what I knew about it I learned in school." Rachana deals with it easily. "I just use pads and soap to wash myself regularly. I have never missed school because of my period."

Rachana

15



15-year-old Rachana deals confidently with her menstruation. Her school curriculum in Ratanak Kiri includes topics like reproduction and sexual health. This open conversation pays off: Rachana knows she has nothing to hide and doesn't feel isolated like many other women do.

Srey Oun

26



There are lots of other girls like Rachana in Srey Oun's school. She is the only female teacher at the lower secondary school in Ratanak Kiri. She is also the housemother in the boarding school and responsible for the girls who move away from home so they can study. She uses her own knowledge and the curriculum she received from CARE to teach her students about reproduction and sexual health. For Srey Oun it is important to be there for her pupils. "After all they are far away from their mothers and aunts and can't just ask these relatives they trust about what they want to know. I am happy to share my knowledge with the girls and help them not to feel alone," the teacher explains.

But can all of these changes be reconciled with the traditions and the ways of life of the many ethnic groups in northeast Cambodia? Promoting societal change requires patience and that the voices of all are heard. Development organizations can not and should not approach communities with a prefabricated template and present them with a prescription for how they should talk about certain things from now on. What was then most remarkable and helpful about our conversations

Srey Oun (26) is Rachana's teacher. In school she talks openly about sexual health and female body issues. She encourages the girls to ask questions. Her pupils appreciate her as a role model and confidante.



Fetching water is a woman's chore. 74 percent of households in Ratanak Kiri don't have access to safe drinking water at home and only 10 percent of the population in Northeast Cambodia have a latrine.

with these women was their positive and open perspective on change. "I think girls should be supported by their teachers and their relatives at home so menstruation doesn't limit their lives so much," as one of the pupils put it. Almost all Cambodian women are in agreement about this.

Given the remote locations of many of these communities, improved education is not only impacting the younger generation. When they return home girls are sharing their newfound knowledge from school with older members of their family to improve the health and well-being of more women in their community. A 15-year-old girl from the Kreung ethnic minority spoke of how her sister's understanding has influenced their mother: "My mother now uses sanitary pads because my sister spoke to her about all she had learned of hygiene to prevent infections."

The women see how the girls understand their own bodies better and how they can make their own decisions. And that they are clean and healthy. Some women would even like to take this progress a step further and combine it with sex education and family planning – an even bigger taboo in many communities. "It should be mandatory to teach about menstruation in all schools. And it would be best for the girls to

also be taught about how they can avoid unwanted pregnancy."

For women in Europe, Australia or North America, it is unthinkable not to have a toilet, running water or a door that can be closed and locked during their period. For the majority of the women in northeast Cambodia this is their reality. A CARE study found that only 10 percent of households interviewed in Ratanak Kiri province had access to latrines. 74 percent of respondents reported their households had no direct water source. Instead they collect drinking water from sources such as ponds or streams. Fetching water falls on women. Nine of ten women living in Ratanak Kiri named fetching water as one of their duties.

Besides their familial responsibility, girls and women also have to collect water for their own bodily hygiene. They wash themselves in streams or go into the forest if they do not have a latrine or private bathroom. At night it can be very dangerous for women: snakebites are a constant threat and some male villagers unfortunately see the darkness as an opportunity to attack women. No matter what ethnic group the women belong to, they are unified in their desire for privacy: A 30-year-old Tampuan woman's hope for the future is to have a clean bathroom and, "a comfortable bathroom that no one can

look into.” A woman from the Phnong community agrees: “I hope and would like for girls and women to have their own personal space.” A 20-year-old woman also demands clean water. One of her teachers takes it a step further and also demands a better waste disposal system: “We need access to clean places where we can store dirty laundry and then dispose of them.”

As of 2015, half of the schools in Ratanak Kiri had no toilets, while 3 out of 4 schools were lacking direct access to water. Where schools did have some form of toilet, water still had to be pumped from wells and carried to the toilets. These facilities were often dirty and there were not enough toilets to accommodate all of the students. Rachana’s school faced the same issue. For one hundred girls there was one toilet. “During the breaks there was always a long line and never enough water so the toilet was very dirty. I often just held it in until I was back home.”

CARE is working to build more sanitation systems in the schools in Ratanak Kiri province. This will directly promote girls’ school attendance. Rachana’s school got two new toilets and now she doesn’t have to wait quite so long anymore. A rainwater tank was also constructed; it feeds into a hand washing station beside the toilet so students can wash their hands and girls have

water for keeping clean during their periods. This also caught the Cambodian government’s attention. Chun Thear is an official for the Province Administration for Education in Ratanak Kiri. She hopes that the government will also take action on this issue. “When I got my period I

was unable to go to school or work,” says Chun. “As a young girl I did not know that this is all very natural. We never talked about it at school. Luckily, now girls know much more. I hope that the Ministry of Education included this topic in the state curriculum, from primary school all the way to secondary school, so that all female pupils can benefit from it.”

No girl should feel discouraged or uncomfortable about going to school because of her period. Instead more privacy, knowledge and healthy self-confidence can support young Cambodian women to deal with the situation that reoccurs every month. After all, menstruation is nothing to be ashamed of. ●



A modest desire: All that women in Cambodia wish for is a clean bathroom and a little bit of privacy.



Turning Sh** to Gold

By ANIKA AUWEILER

Photos: MENNICKE/ZARHAROV

These four words describe the ability to create something precious from something of little value. It is not clear when the saying first came into use. Presumably it originates from the 15th century. Back then the alchemists tinkered about trying to convert simple metals into gold. They were not successful in doing so. This transformation would theoretically be possible today, but only by using the appropriate equipment and expending very large amounts of energy. But it's not worth it. Remember what we learned in Chemistry class: An atom is made up of protons, neutrons and electrons. To put it in simple terms, the number of protons in an atom's core determines the type of material. Gold's nucleus contains exactly 79 protons. To convert another substance into gold, one would have to either inject any missing protons into or filter any surplus protons out its nucleus until the number 79 was reached. But in order to produce even a single gram of gold, one would have to convert 3.06×10^{21} atoms. This process would cost far more than the gold it was used to create was actually worth.

However, we are more likely to succeed if we literally use sh** to attain something more valuable. A healthy person's feces contain many important nutrients. If properly stored – without too much moisture or chemical exposure – our excrements can be used to produce a rich humus fertilizer upon which valuable produce can flourish. Several companies and universities are already working on compost toilet systems that hygienically collect human excrements, neutralize their odor and prepare them for reuse. If you are already disgusted by this idea, you should skip reading the next one: A couple of years ago a Japanese researcher presented what he considered to be the sustainable meat substitute of the future: He pressed hamburger patties from proteins he extracted from human feces. Yum.

Animal dung is also full of potential. For example, for centuries now it has been used as plant fertilizer. In the meantime, methane, the gas that forms when dung begins to ferment, is also being used for the production of biogas. And 0.1 kilowatt-hours of electricity can be obtained from an average-sized cow pat. Even

Disclaimer: This headline quotes a German saying.

The author would surely never use such a vulgar expression to describe human excretions.

the digestion processes of some animals are extremely valuable. Kopi Luwak is the name of the coffee beans that have traveled through the digestive tract of the Asian palm civet. They command prices in the four-figure range.

It is not uncommon for artists the world over, both past and present, to be told they have no talent, for their art to be disregarded or to even simply be described as crap. In 1961, Piero Manzoni took this criticism literally and packaged his own waste in tin cans, all nice and neat. He called this work “Merda d’artista”. Today you would have to pay up to 30,000 Euro for one of these cans.

The multi-talented German entertainer, Rocko Schamoni, also recognized the value of droppings. In collaboration with designer Jonathan Johnson, he introduced his first line of jewelry bearing the melodious name “Scheiße by Schamoni”. You can choose from golden toilet brush pendants and toilet paper amulets. But the top selling item is a necklace with lettering that simply reads: Scheiße.

A far less lucrative job is that of a gold hunter in Calcutta. Nothing illustrates our saying quite so literally: Those hit hardest by poverty submerge into the underground waste of this megacity in search of minuscule gold particles that were washed down the drain by the city’s goldsmiths during the day as they worked. Highly poisonous chemicals are used to extract whatever gold dust lies within the sludge which is then collected and sold. Though the earnings are meager, they are still double that of a rickshaw driver.

And now for one last, highly explosive fact: Under certain conditions the dried excrements of penguins and other birds can be used for the production of dynamite. This happens particularly when the birds defecate onto calcium-rich grounds causing a chemical reaction that transforms their feces into a phosphate mixture. The sale of this natural fertilizer and explosive material, also known as guano, is what once made the island nation of Nauru in the South Pacific very rich. ●

A Japanese scientist called Mitsuyuki Ikeda has invented a meat substitute for the future: he creates burger patties made of proteins that he extracts from human feces. Yum.



Belgian artist Wim Delvoye took another direction: He designed “Cloaca”, a machine imitating the human digestion process and actually producing excrements. His sh** has been on display in museums around the world.

The weekend began at four o'clock on Friday after class with a bus ride — adventuresome as always — to visit our student Reshma who had invited us to Deepavali, the Hindu festival of lights. Once we arrived at Reshma's we were greeted with tea and to celebrate Deepavali, there

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Dear Pia,

[...]

Over the last few weeks I have also observed a way of dealing with privacy when it comes to social media that is very foreign to me. Many colleagues share warnings for children and women in India. Unfortunately these warnings often come as a result of something that just happened. Last week Vinoda, one of the older colleagues in the project, shared a video about the dangers of street traffic that showed a woman with severe injuries. The woman had been hit by a bus and died right at the scene of the accident. The video didn't just show the woman's covered body and a pool of blood, but instead went as far as to show someone holding up the cloth so the woman, her injuries and her face were clearly visible. This was really shocking to me because such images are not shown on social media or in the news in Germany. In India it doesn't seem to bother anyone.

[3]

Leah

Money and death. Two big taboos

—> It's time we talked about them: With Britta Wiese, philanthropy consultant at CARE and in this role also responsible for legacy gifts. And with Alexander Postl. He volunteers on CARE's donor advisory committee and has included the organization in his will.

_____ Mr. Postl, describe the moment that you decided to write your will.

AP I started thinking about death 25 years ago when I was preparing to travel to what were considered to be some of the most dangerous regions in the world. Death has been on my mind a lot ever since. Perhaps it's because I continually try to face my fears. The topic of dying is important to me because it is the only thing in life we can really be sure of. Only the when and how are unknown. It is hard for many people to think about their own mortality or to talk about death with others. We are afraid of the unknown; like what happens after we die? You can try to avoid the topic. But as soon as it comes up all of the fear returns. For me, thinking about my will kind of "automatically" came with it. This has to do with my wish to leave something for certain people, groups or issues and to set this up before it is too late. But I think that contemplating death is difficult for us culturally. Many other cultures deal with death more openly than we do.

_____ Ms. Wiese, what questions do people have who contact you about this topic?

BW To start with they are primarily concerned about questions of inheritance laws and formal requirements for a legally binding will. In that case I can offer them free and non binding legal advice that is independent of CARE. Many interested have already familiarized themselves with CARE. But we also talk about what effect a charitable bequest can have and I answer questions about the organization and the work we do. Of course family members also contact me, for example, when we create a community of heirs with them. Then I speak with those in mourning and the conversations can be very emotional, for both sides.

_____ How do people react when you approach them about their legacy? Why is so-called legacy marketing important?

BW The reactions are mostly of a positive and interested nature. Of course, we don't impose ourselves upon anyone we speak to if they would rather use their will to provide security for their family. However, if someone is interested in the opportunities for helping I openly explain why we seek to speak with them: As a humanitarian organization, CARE is dependent on donations.

Without regular support, especially that of private donors, we can only provide limited, short-term help. CARE of course also applies for public funding from the government and other institutional donors. But naturally we want to avoid making ourselves dependent on state funding so we can help in those in places which might not be on the public radar or a political focus. Our individual donors decide for themselves when, how and to what extent they would like to help people in need. Leaving a donation in one's will is probably the most personal way to leave a lasting mark. This shows a trust in us and our work that we greatly appreciate. However, we discover time and again that many people simply don't know about the options of legacy giving and all its possibilities. I personally enjoy having conversations with people about these options. Perhaps the famous saying "do good and make it known" really applies to the work we are doing, to the donor dialogue.

_____ Mr. Postl, how did you first hear about the possibility of legacy giving?

AP About ten years ago I saw an ad for a nonprofit organization on this and I thought: What a great idea: I can still live well today and ensure that those dear to me will be well off after I have left this earth. But at the same time some of my money can then help a disadvantaged community to overcome poverty. Helping people to help themselves – I really liked this idea.

_____ How do you talk to people about the subject of their will?

BW By mail, over the telephone and on our homepage we offer a non-binding consultation and an information brochure about bequests and the opportunity to make a legacy gift. In order to spread the word beyond our regular supporters we place ads in print and online media, often at a cheaper charity rate. And then there's September 13th, the day proclaimed as the "International Legacy Giving Day". A great occasion for us to get the word out through various channels and to give a reminder about opportunities for legacy giving.

AP I personally feel that social justice is one of our most important values. It is important to me to promote charitable bequests and to make this issue "socially accept-

able”, if you will. It would really be wonderful if more and more people would say with joyful satisfaction: “I’m going to put my fortune to good use after my death.”

_____ Is one obliged to make a will in Germany?

BW

No. If the legal hereditary succession falls exactly in line with my wishes it is not necessary for me to write a will. Legal hereditary succession in Germany regards blood relatives, adopted children, spouses and domestic partners as possible heirs. If none of these exist everything goes to the state. If someone wants additional people to be considered they must write a will. A will gives me the opportunity to plan and to decide for myself what I leave behind and to whom. One can decide who their beneficiary should be and divide up their assets through bequests. This includes, for example, sums of money, real estate, jewelry or art collections left to loved ones or simply left – in part or wholly – to a charitable organization.

_____ So those want to make legacy gifts need a will?

BW

Correct. With their will a donor decides to what extent one or several organizations will receive a legacy gift. The organization can be named as a sole beneficiary or as part of a community of heirs along with relatives and friends. There can also be a bequest through which, for example, the organization receives a specific percentage of the fortune, the capital from a life insurance policy, a piece of land or real estate. Whereby even small amounts donated from a bequest can still make a huge impact. This in no way renders legal hereditary succession, as it is set forth in the German civil law code, inoperative. Children, spouses and parents remain entitled to their compulsory portions of the bequest. Incidentally, after the death of a loved one, legal heirs often pass on part of their inheritance to nonprofit organizations. If this takes place within 24 months of the inheritance this sum is also exempt from inheritance tax.

_____ Can a nonprofit organization claim more than what was stated in the will? Or can a family deny it this inheritance or legacy?

BW

No. The wishes of the deceased are binding for the heirs and must be carried out either by them or the execu-

tor of the will. Here it makes no difference whether the heirs are relatives, friends or a nonprofit organization. If it is the donor’s last will that a certain amount go to people in need in order to improve their living conditions then this must be fulfilled. The compulsory portions, of course, remain intact.

_____ One’s own will is a very private matter.

Do you have to be informed if CARE is being named in someone’s will?

BW

Well over 90 percent of the charitable bequests we receive come as a surprise. Often they come from long-standing donors who, however, never sought to get in touch with us personally. Sometimes we even receive a legacy gift from a person who had never before made a donation to CARE. Of course no one who names CARE in their will has to let us know about it. But we are glad whenever people do want to talk to us about their choice. That way we can find out how the donation should be used and about which projects our supporters would like to be kept up to date on over the course of their lifetime.

_____ What tips do you give people who want to use their inheritance for a good cause?

BW

We already touched on that a bit: For many people, the thought of writing their will is very upsetting. Talking about it with their loved-ones isn’t always easy. Still, it is important to make provisions for one’s own legacy. We can only legally record our last will and testament while we are alive so that we can ensure that after our death everything will be handled according to our wishes. We recommend that our donors talk to people they know when other heirs or legatees are to be included in their will. People have their own personal reasons for why they want to leave a part of their legacy to their best friend, their neighbor, a certain family member or even to a charitable organization. By having a conversation while still alive, they give their family the chance to understand these reasons. For us as an organization this means that it doesn’t come as a complete shock to the family or other heirs who had been counting on this inheritance when they suddenly have to share it with CARE. This can help to avoid a possible conflict during this already difficult time of loss and mourning. You can

imagine that this is very important to us once we are in touch with the relatives.

_____ Mr. Postl, do you speak to those close to you about your will?

AP To a certain extent I have, since clarity is important to me. I would really love to talk more about my charitable legacy. But honestly I am still very afraid of negative reactions: It could result in misunderstandings and many uncomfortable situations if the person I talk to isn't interested or has different opinions about the subject. Generally I am more reserved when it comes to this and only broach the subject if I have the feeling that the person I talk to is generally interested and shares my thoughts on the matter.

_____ From whom does CARE receive charitable bequests?

BW Those without children are generally more likely to be willing to name charitable organizations in their will. In our case legacy donors can, for example, be survivors of the Second World War who themselves once received a CARE package. Many CARE package recipients from back then make donations today for people who, just as they once did, have had to flee or have lost everything because of war. They want to give back the help they once received and are creating their own CARE package for future generations.

AP And many parents know their children are already taken care of or have financial reserves enabling them to give generously to their relatives and loved-ones. Understandably, it is important to many people that those dear to them can live comfortable, secure lives. When that has been taken care of, they often think about those who aren't as fortunate as we are to live in prosperity and peace.

_____ What other motivations are there for using one's legacy for a good cause?

AP Sometimes the legal hereditary succession doesn't match a person's individual situation. Luckily in such cases the German law allows for a certain amount of personal say in the matter. A will makes a lot of sense for unattached individuals whose fortune would otherwise fall to the state and who do not wish for it to follow the general distribution of state funds. One might consider some people, regardless of their nationality, as "family" and therefore want to help extremely disadvantaged countries that have either a very poor or no social welfare system to speak of. For me the notions of social justice and international solidarity are at the heart of this. My personal motivation stems from the fact that there are billions of people in the world who don't have it as good as I do. But since I am still alive and also want to live well and am not sure how things will go for me, I currently do not donate as much as I certainly would if I were financially secure no matter what might happen. This means taking responsible personal precautions which I consider absolutely necessary and justified with respect to our social welfare state. But after my death I would definitely like to pass on a bulk of that which my life bestowed upon me. Furthermore, while you are alive it is definitely a wonderful feeling to know that you can indirectly make a big difference after you have left this earth.

BW There are so many different reasons for including a charitable organization in one's will. For many people it's the same as with Mr. Postl. Besides those close to them, also including the organization they trust and have already supported for many years while alive in their will is a matter close to their hearts. They want their commitment

19

3.1

20

percent of retired people in the US and the U.K. make a charity legacy.

trillion Euros are going to be inherited in Germany between 2015 and 2024.

percent of individual giving in the Netherlands is legacy income.

to live on. The fact that charitable organizations are exempt from paying inheritance tax can also play a role in this decision because this means the entire amount goes to a good cause that they themselves chose.

AP Another thing I think plays into it is that some people have received help in their own lives and have experienced how wonderful it is and what it means to be supported or rescued. Perhaps even despite their heritage, nationality, beliefs and so on. And without the expectation of repayment or even knowing that this will never come. They want to pass on this help even after they are gone. For me this is what “universal love” is all about. This positive dynamic continues to live on.

_____ As a legacy donor, how can I be sure that the money really goes toward helping those in need? It is not like I can check on it myself.

BW We openly disclose how CARE allocates all of the funds it receives in our annual report. CARE Germany-Luxembourg is a member of the German Donation Society and has been repeatedly honored over the past few years for its transparent reporting. Trust, transparency and efficiency are the guiding principles most important to us. Our projects are independently audited, as are our yearly balance sheets. Regular evaluations of our projects help us with our planning and with improving the quality of our work.


_____ What about you, Mr. Postl? Why CARE specifically?

AP That’s easy – I trust CARE. It is also necessary to have some trust in life and our modern social system. I gain mine through CARE’s transparency and the regular organizational audits it undergoes as a nonprofit. You also have to ask yourself the opposite question: What do I do if I don’t trust any aid organization with my money? Do I travel to the world’s crisis zones and distribute relief items myself? First of all, this is difficult to do and secondly, it’s very unprofessional. There is a reason why there are jobs for trained professionals who help both in disaster situations as well as long term. One has to be familiar with a country’s context and society and develop methods that have sustainable impacts. As far as I know, CARE works in a professional, disciplined, effec-

tive, strategic and dedicated manner. CARE helps people in need or in disadvantaged situations and achieves more balance and justice. All of the CARE employees I have been able to meet so far are wonderful and very dedicated people. I also want to support all of them and their ideas.

_____ What kinds of encounters move you in your professional life, Ms. Wiese?

BW When I open the morning mail to find a copy of a life insurance policy that benefits CARE, this is a special moment for me. This decision, usually made many years ago, expresses a trust in our organization that shouldn’t be taken for granted and this really moves me. But I am also moved by the openness of our donors, like Mr. Postl, who speak openly about their commitment. When people tell me about their very personal postwar experiences, these are often very moving conversations. I am in my early 30s and can only imagine the kinds of things that are coming full circle here: 70 years ago people in Germany were given hope through CARE packages. Lard and powdered milk saved children from starvation. These children are senior citizens today and remember exactly how lucky they felt back then when they were being helped. And it is exactly this feeling that they wish to pass on. This is very beautiful to me. ●



“Shame on
you!”

Photo: Daniela Glunz

The Winners.

CARE
Writing Contest
2017

“Shame on you!” Three words that make every one of us flinch intuitively. As children and teenagers, we have heard or still hear these words when our behavior somehow does not meet expectations. “Shame on you”, parents or teachers would tell us off, and then we blush and feel very small ...

After the decision had been made to call CARE affair’s 10th edition “intimate”, we were looking for a suitable topic for the accompanying CARE writing contest. It has become a tradition, now in its fourth year, for CARE to encourage young writing talents to contribute to CARE affair with their own work. The winning entries are published in CARE affair and in addition, we produce a best of booklet containing all finalists’ contributions. In a festive ceremony, the finalists do a reading of their texts and receive their awards.

But back to our challenge. Choosing a motto for the writing contest is not easy: We want to keep it as broad as possible to foster ideas about everything and anything. And at the same time, we try to encourage a thematic bridge to CARE’s work and mission around the world. Intimate ... Secret ... Forbidden ... Shame on you! That’s what we came up with in the end. A claim so well known, a phrase that could harbor endless ideas and opinions.

The CARE writing contest is open to young people aged between 14 and 18 and young adults between 19 and 25 years. A jury including German bestselling author Kerstin Gier (The “Gem”-Trilogy) chooses the best entries. This year, Ms. Gier

was supported by TV journalist and anchor woman Valeska Homburg, Philipp Kienzl from the online portal ze.tt and CARE Germany’s President Hans-Dietrich Winkhaus.

We received more than 200 entries from Germany and Austria. “Shame on you!” was interpreted quite manifold: stories about transgender people, racism, family secrets, social judgments and much more. The young writers showed a lot of courage and a strong personal opinion: on polyamory, poverty and wealth, on sexual freedom, on the female body, on war and violence and everything people can feel ashamed about – or be shamed for, whether reasonably or not.

We are extremely proud to present to you the winners of the 4th CARE writing contest: Mia Veigel (18 years) with her text “Recognition” and 20-year-old Carina Eitel with “Everything can change”.

Congratulations!



Recognition

By Mia Veigel

Slowly the sun rises. The sky turns from a red-range into a bright grey-white. The clouds are hanging low, they seem to lick the high mountains. The Apu. Makes me think of my grandfather. He always told me: "Listen carefully, Moisés: These big mountains that surround us, the Apu, are our protection. They are bigger and a lot more powerful than we are so never try to put yourself above them." I look at the giants for a bit, then crawl out of my simple sleeping accommodation and run down the icy stairs.

I tremble with cold but my grandmother's quinoa drink warms me from the inside. I do not have much time though. My grandmother is already in the fields and I need to hurry to help her at work. The work is tough. Since my older siblings are no longer around, it is even harder. They have gone to town to make some money. "And like most, they never come back again ..." I think aloud while ploughing the soil with a rusty spade and all of a sudden the image of my mother vaguely appears in front of me. Why should they come back? To the endless, cold and empty highlands ...

It is incredibly lonely here. Often we don't have enough to eat and my grandmother does not know how to pay my school fees. I have not been to school for a while now, even though it is my biggest wish to become a doctor. Thinking about this, I must swallow down a lump in my throat. I see him lying on the mattress in the kitchen. He who taught me so much. He who could not be saved. Neither could a doctor be found for my grandfather, nor could we pay one. Suddenly, I hear a train's whistle.

My grandmother pauses for a moment and looks up. We exchange looks and both know it. There they are again. Since I was little I am filled with anger when this train carelessly speeds through our country. And there I see it already in the distance. Blue and shining of prosperity.

Shame on you, I think.

Shame on you for travelling across our lands and for believing to know something about us.

Shame on you for owning so much more than we do.

Shame on you for taking away the little we have.

Shame on you for spending more on a train ride than my family is spending in an entire year.

Shame on you for not respecting nature and the mightier.

Shame on you, damn it.

All of a sudden, a feeling of flaming anger takes over me. It seems as if inside of me there is a seething rage and it threatens to burst me. I reach for a small rock at my feet and with all my strength I throw it to where the train passes in the distance. The moment the rock leaves my hand, all the energy runs out of me as well. I feel endlessly empty.

I feel tears of anger and despair running down my face, making their way across my sun-burned cheeks. And they run and run and do not come to an end. Just like this injustice does not come to an end.

Green mountains, bizarrely shaped, and endless vastness pass by Teresa. Her journey through the deep valley is accompanied by the rattling of the train. Past rivers and cornfields, unfinished houses and a few cows. Old women are working in the fields, wearing colourful clothes and large hats. Together with her travel companions she stands at the rear of the carriage and looks out to the breathtaking scenery and the people who seem to have emerged from a picture book.

It has been a couple of weeks now that Teresa is on the road. Changing landscapes and new impressions make her forget the old habits, the endless repetitions. She feels free. The click of a photo camera lets her awake from her thoughts and she takes note of all the other travelers who are gathering around her, waving at the local villagers. It's like a game. Whenever one of these foreign and at the same time fascinating people waves back, it feels like a little triumph.

Teresa has not run away from home. She wanted to discover something new, something unknown. She wanted to travel far away, to return home as a

storyteller. She closes her eyes. The airstream blows through her sun-bleached hair. Little strands tickle on Teresa's chin and forehead, fluttering back and forth.

As she opens her eyes again, something has changed. At first she does not know what exactly and for what reason this feeling spreads throughout her whole body. Then she hears the other travelers say: "He just dropped his pants! He showed his naked butt", a woman says loudly, evoking laughter around her. Teresa can't help but grin a little as well. But when she sees the boy running away she notes his depreciative hand gesture. And there for the first time she realizes the people's serious, almost hostile glances. An old woman sits on a broken wooden bench, along with a little boy. As the train which runs directly through the village passes her, she pulls her flat hand over the throat. Teresa startles and needs to swallow. "She want me to die", she whispers. Whether old or young, the locals look at them with hate-filled faces. And then the scales fall from her eyes. This is not a game. And if it was one, it would not be fair. Suddenly she is being looked at by a pair of dark eyes. She loses herself in these eyes and feels as if she is looking straight to the bottom of the other's soul. And she feels anger. Feels hate. Feels despair.

The rock bounces right next to her against the train metal. She steps back but when Teresa sees the boy's face again, the world seems to stop turning for a moment. The despair and emptiness of his face touch her deeply. And the strange feeling she had the whole time suddenly has a name: shame. ●

Everything can change

By Carina Eitel

Exhaling little white clouds, I walked towards my parent's house. The cab driver had dropped me off at the wrong address, so I took a 20-minute walk through my old neighbourhood.

How things can change in ten years.

The big villa at the street's entrance was still there – gorgeous as ever. I just noticed that the Christmas lights were different and a new car was parked in the gateway. One could glimpse through the big windows of the living room where a family was sitting, looking at the fireplace. Apparently the elderly couple that had lived in the house before was gone.

I shook my head and put my hands back in the pockets of my coat. Christmas Eve was not a night to be sad. Not this year.

My hands cuddled into the soft lining of the inside pockets when I felt something thin in the right pocket. The letter. I pulled it out and for what seemed the thousandth time, read the name on the envelope: Jack Holmes. The handwriting was clean and almost too perfect. As if someone had put a lot of effort into writing correctly. A smile crossed my lips and I put the letter back into my pockets.

The snow crunched under my boots and the cold winter air tugged at my face. My thoughts went back to the family in front of the fireplace and I longed to feel the same warmth.

Next down the street was the house of an old friend. Dozens of light chains were dangling from the windows and in the small front garden there was Santa Claus with all his reindeers. She had always loved Christmas decorations. The thought of her let me pause for a moment. We were considered inseparable, best friends who went through thick and thin together. But when I needed

her most, had told her everything, and had sought her assistance, she let me down. My legs moved again and I passed the house, away from the past.

I could not change the way things had been, but I could look forward to what was expecting me.

Even after ten years the small village had not managed to fix the little lantern in front of our house. I quietly laughed about the gentle flickering of the light and walked up the slightly snowed-in drive to the front door. When I got to the door step, I lost my nerves. My hands trembled and my pulse accelerated.

Easy, Jack. You know you are welcome here, I told myself. My right hand clutched the letter in my pocket and with the left hand I rang the doorbell. A three-tone sound announced my arrival and I could hear steps and voices behind the door.

“That’s Michelle!”, a joyful, young female voice exclaimed. *Sarah, my little niece, I thought.* She must be 15 years old by now. How excited I was to finally meet her again.

“Sarah, remember what we told you. Michelle’s name is now ...” Emily, my sister seemed to explain something to her but I did not pay attention to it anymore as the door opened and I was welcomed by warm, brown eyes and a smile. After ten years we looked into each other’s eyes again.

“Welcome home, Jack”, my father said to me.

“I am back.” With a smile on my face and with the last sentence of his letter in my head, I stepped into my old home and greeted my family.

“Michelle ... Jack. I am no longer ashamed of my son.” ●

It's Running!

By DANIEL AL-AYOUBI

Illustration: JENS MENNICKE



“It’s running!” This is usually an expression of acknowledgement towards the addressee meaning that they just have been very successfully in achieving something. But if the achievement was jumping in a lake at freezing temperatures, the expression could hint at something entirely different in the days to follow. Saying, “It’s running!” to someone sick with a cold would probably result in them searching their pockets in somewhat of a hectic and embarrassed way and digging out a maybe already partially crusty handkerchief. Because this is how we handle this here, in the West. Nasal mucus is certainly not something to celebrate.

But there are also other bodily fluids that are not particularly appreciated in our society when they make their moist way to the surface: Saliva, carelessly spit on the pavement. Urine, shamelessly splashed on someone else’s beech hedge. Or snot, sent up the pipes from the unfathomable depths of our own body, like a rocket ready for take-off, and blown out our noses with the power of a sneezing elephant.

People consist up to 80 percent of various fluids. It’s actually a miracle how we manage not to constantly expose this flood of excretions to the public here. But what about other countries? Is snot frowned upon everywhere? Is the mélange of saliva and food on display when someone smacks their dinner with their mouth wide opened only something we consider gross here? Let’s dive into the world of the indecent, the world of slime and snot. Whereby, I ask that you not take “dive” literally here ...

“Why don’t you fart nor burp? Wasn’t the food to your liking?” This remark, often falsely attributed to Martin Luther, would be more likely to have originated from Confucius. This may be the impression a traveler in China has when they sit down to a meal with the locals who take the sentence above quite literally and behave accordingly: Bodily sounds at the table, from smacking and slurping to burping, are considered good manners in many parts of the East Asian country as they show that you find the food really delicious. But as a matter of fact, this way of savoring food can not be traced back to the Chinese philosopher Confucius, but rather to Mao’s Cultural Revolution. At that time, the Chinese people were forced to adopt “rural” behaviors, including table manners – those which were considered as “rural” at the time.

What may seem rude compared to Western table manners, of course has its own rules and customs: In many Asian countries, including Japan, Korea, India and China, burping and smacking are allowed, but blowing your nose at the table is absolutely inappropriate. While the sound of women and men of all social classes deliberately blowing their noses constitutes an unmistakable part of everyday life in the cafés of sophisticated city centers in Europe or North America, it is an absolute taboo in the aforementioned Asian countries. In China, for instance, it is absolutely imperative to blow your nose away from the table (but by no means using the same tissue twice!). In India the general rule is to suck the snot up your nose and spit it out at a later point in time.

While we’re on the subject of snot: The widespread rejection of public nose blowing and the favored use of tissues in the so-called Western world is not without reason: The commonly accepted explanation refers to the end of the 18th century when tuberculosis cases in Western Europe were at their peak. This disease, which is still widespread in many developing countries to this day, was almost always fatal back then. The invention of the disposable handkerchief dates back to this time. Its use was ordered by the highest authorities and was quickly adopted by many for whom it provided protection from the dreaded disease. The tissue has thus not only been said to have an aesthetic use for blocking the sputum from sight of bystanders, but it also has explicit hygienic advantages: It prevents a cloud of droplets and germs with speeds well over a hundred kilometers per hour from being emitted into the immediate surroundings.

While we’re on the topic of sneezing: From Egypt to Madagascar, from Germany to Ghana, from the Zulu people to indigenous groups in North America, everybody seems to share the habit of not letting this function go uncommented, whether your own remarks or those of the people around you. Reactions range from an expression of gratefulness, like that of the Zulu, to a blessing as it is given in Madagascar, to a quickly

said prayer in Egypt. Researchers are divided as to why we have been able to observe this behavior globally and in the most remote parts of the world since early human history. One explanation for the western part of Europe is very simple and refers to the reason for the introduction of disposable handkerchiefs: The German expression “Gesundheit!” which wishes someone good health, stems from the days of deadly, rampant diseases, when sneezing was taken as the first sign of someone’s impending doom. The Church commanded people to say a quick prayer for someone who was sneezing, resulting in the still omnipresent “(God) bless you!” of the English-speaking world which, in the meantime, has been abbreviated to the quick “Gesundheit!” in German.

Everybody’s sneezing is accompanied by a funny grimace, whether we like it or not. This makes us think of the different meanings of facial expressions and gestures around the globe. In some societies, consciously controlled body language (as opposed to instinctive body language) is as unique as spoken language and writing. One’s own bodily fluids can very well be part of this gesticulated language, with one of these juices being of particular consequence: Saliva, or better still in this context: Spit. The act of spitting can be a sign of anger or disdain, but it can just as well be the marking of territory not unlike in the animal kingdom, and thus a sign of strength. Then again in some parts of Eastern Europe, like Romania or Moldova, where negative thoughts and discomfort are simply spit out, spitting is a sign of self-purification

and is thus acceptable. And let's not forget the fun factor: Whoever has yet to participate in such a competition with friends should be the first to spit the cherry pit or melon seed. It's always possible to spit farther!

There can also be religious reasons for acute spitting: If you are hanging around in Muslim countries during Ramadan, you can come across many a believer who is fasting and subsequently also doesn't even want to swallow their own saliva, so they spit it out. There are some forums on the internet where Muslims get advice from religious scholars on how to deal with the saliva mentioned and other body fluids, for instance, the nasal mucus of a cold during the month of fasting. The answers are not always unambiguous. As is often the case with religions, there are different interpretations. They can lead to rather pragmatic approaches (just swallow it, we continually produce saliva anyway) or to religiously motivated constraints (you may swallow absolutely nothing!).

Such things can be unsettling for people and brings up a different important topic: In some places, dealing with one's own body and its excretions definitely comes with its own set of problems. Public defecation, for instance, poses a high health risk in many countries. CARE addresses this risk by educating people on the topic of hygiene and by constructing sanitary facilities. At the same time, many women in large parts of the world suffer from stigmatization and exclusion because of their menstruation.

So remember: We don't have to hold on to everything so much. There are things that our bodies

produce on a daily basis which are worth disposing of. For better or worse, the processes and the sounds that come with them are necessary, whether they are plainly visible or shamefully hidden, and whether they are accepted or rejected by society. Living conditions, one's own upbringing, customs and traditions, and even a respective country's history can influence these things. Individuals can't be talked out of being disgusted at the sight of certain substances or frowning upon certain noises at the table. And they don't have to be, either.

But what so often helps in every case of intercultural understanding is the knowledge that we shouldn't judge these processes based on our own perceptions. Think outside of the box; or better yet, use that box as a bowl you lift to your mouth, loudly slurping up what's inside. Then allow your body to produce from it the most amazing fluids and then, let them go. Let them run. ●

Dialogue: ANICA HEINLEIN & MELESIYA MACKSON

Photos: JOSH ESTEY

Advocacy is the element that links the projects of aid organizations with political decision-making. Through advocacy, we seek to give a voice to affected communities and make recommendations for political action that, in the best-case scenario, improves people's lives. So when an advocacy expert visits projects, they collect information in order to boost global facts with local voices. This is how it goes:

Before someone visits a village in a project country, they find out what projects CARE has there and how many people are reached by CARE's work. They know the content, the strategic goal and the desired results. Our on-site visits serve the purpose of filling these facts with life, with the fates and faces of people that can be reported in our respective home countries, to members of parliament, government officials and other stakeholders. Project visits, therefore, consist of asking people lots of questions and those are far from what's considered small talk. Because we want to know what impact CARE's work has on people, how they envision their future, but also what doubts and problems they have.

Considering its aims, a project visit is always a balancing act. Hardly any village visits last more than an hour – that makes it almost impossible to build a trust relationship with the people we talk to. Especially when you are a visitor from a foreign country, speak no common language and are not there day in, day out like our local colleagues. Nevertheless, you ask highly personal questions – you actually have to ask them so you can carry them back to the parliaments of

Ndindi B is a small village in poorest countries in the world. More malnourished. In Ndindi B, CARE supports families by helping them take better care of themselves. A part of this are community gardening initiatives and training on how to eat a bal-



powerful countries. Questions about situation, extremely intimate things.

Malawi in Southern Africa, one of the poorest countries in the world. More than a third of the people here are malnourished. In Ndindi B, CARE supports families by helping them take better care of themselves. A part of this are community gardening initiatives and training on how to eat a balanced diet. It also means education about contraception and family planning. Because every pregnancy costs energy and emaciates the body. This village is a good example of long-term development cooperation: No acute need is being alleviated here, but instead the community is being helped to make simple changes in their behavior so they can have better and healthier lives long term. Just such projects show how successful development cooperation can be. CARE Germany's Advocacy Manager Anica Heinlein thinks that's also something the members of parliament in Berlin should know. There is still a bad feeling about it: How does it affect the village people when someone just shows up and asks them a bunch of intimate questions?

If you don't ask you'll never know. So we just kept digging and listened: To Anica Heinlein herself and to Melesiya Mackson, a woman who sells tomatoes in Ndindi B.

Two women, two perspectives, one conversation.

Anica Heinlein

36 years old

A d v o c a c y M a n a g e r

no children

We arrive in Ndindi B and as always the first thing we see are the children running up to meet the car. The place is visibly poor and only consists of a couple of huts and a village square – it is nothing like any village you might imagine from your own upbringing. The people greet us dancing and singing, and the song text takes getting used to: “Thank you, Germany, thank you so much.” To be honest: I find this a bit embarrassing.



I can hardly imagine how this situation must feel to the people here. Here comes a group of white people from a foreign country in all their visible wealth. And then they ask questions. Questions, mind you, that I myself would not answer for some stranger. Yet just a little while later I ask Melesiya: “Do you use contraception?” and after that “What kind of contraception do you use?” In the same moment, inside I ask myself: “What business is this of mine anyway?” But instead of responding to me with exactly that, she answers me openly and with kindness. She explains to me that five kids were enough, that she is tired from all the pregnancies. And then Melesiya opens the door to her house for me so I can see how she lives. She proudly presents me with the tomatoes she sells and introduces her husband and children to me.

I am aware that we are dependent on her answers for being able to plan our projects more effectively and to better support people. And I also need Melesiya’s answers to be able to explain to politicians and the media through personal examples why CARE’s work is so important. Nevertheless, I am constantly aware that I am invading her privacy in ways I would hardly accept if it were me. Melesiya and all of the other people who answer my

questions do so because they receive our support. They sing when we come to their village, “Thank you, Germany, thank you.” Do they really have the freedom to decide to close their doors to me and not answer my questions? Or is this the price they pay for receiving help from organizations like CARE?

Because of these questions that I keep asking myself, I try my best to blend in and make sure that everyone I meet feels treated with respect. That is easily said, but it’s never clearer to me than in these very moments how different the situations are that we live in, how unfair chances are being distributed in this world. Still, I hope that I am at least a bit successful with my visit: Melesiya received me so kindly; hopefully she will forgive me for my rude questions.

Melesiya Mackson

30 years old

T o m a t o S e l l e r

five children (15, 10, 8, 3, 1 year old)

From time to time people from other countries visit our village. I am always happy when we find out that someone is coming to see us in Ndindi B. It is a nice distraction from our everyday life because I don't own a mobile phone or a television. The visitors make our lives richer and I thank God for that.

When a delegation comes, the whole village is waiting. I put on my nicer dress and we sing to welcome the guests and dance towards the cars. It's not at all boring for us to tell what our life is like from time to time, even if the questions are mostly the same.

Anica is the first one who wants to see my house and that makes me very happy. Normally the visitors don't want to come over to our house, but I am proud of my house and like to show it to guests. I also like talking with her, there are no questions too personal for me. I am free to answer, no one forces me to. And I am that way. You can ask me anything and I gladly answer. And why not? This is my life, this is who I am and I have nothing to hide. And I have to laugh when she understands that I was just 15 when I had my oldest son, but this is normal here. Now I and don't want to be pregnant anymore. I have an implant in my upper arm that I use for contraception. Men are more embarrassed to talk about such things, but not me. Anica is also a woman, why shouldn't I talk with her? However I have to laugh when I hear that she has no children and I feel a bit bad about that. So old and no children ...

Yes, there are people in our village who aren't interested in visitors and who also don't want to dance or sing. But whoever doesn't want to talk to our visitors simply stays home. Sometimes these people just don't see that it is important to meet with the guests. Every time I talk with them I learn something new. That's why it's important to go to these meetings. And for me it's also a way to be happy. As long as the people are there I forget my worries and enjoy their visit. It clears my head of all the things I normally have to take care of.

The visitors make changes happen. When they ask us things it means they are interested in us. This is also a motivation for me. I really want to tell about the positive changes in my life that have happened ever since I've had a little garden and can sell tomatoes.

It makes me so grateful that Anica wants to see and hear all of this. I hope she visits us again. ●



404 Error

Aid organizations sometimes make mistakes.
And what happens next?

By ANJA ENGELKE

Illustration: JENS MENNICKE

“Development assistance doesn’t help or even does damage to people.” Aid organizations are frequently confronted with these presumptions. There are whole libraries filled with assessments and criticism of various programs. But we learn from our mistakes and this also holds true for the development and humanitarian sector. A fundamental example is the wording of what we do. Most organizations now prefer to call it cooperation and not aid. Because we seek to overcome suffering and poverty by working side by side with communities, by hearing about their needs and designing programs according to the local context. 95 percent of CARE’s hard-working staff is local. This sometimes conflicts with the image of the “white aid worker saving children in Africa,” that still dominates in the Western world, but we have a good reason to rely on local expertise: Having grown up with it, local personnel have the best knowledge of the culture, language and religion of the respective countries or regions they work in. They start their work only after having had extensive meetings with the local population and different stakeholder groups like women, different professional groups like farmers or traders, with adolescents and traditional leaders. This is how CARE identifies the real needs: Is a well really what is most needed here? Or rather safer containers to transport the water? Do child marriages really need to be tolerated for cultural reasons? Or are there groups in the village whose voice needs to be reinforced in order to convince everybody that the education of girls and women is an investment in the future? The obstacles to development can be most various in nature. Thus local needs must be accurately analyzed. Nevertheless, humanitarian organizations can also make mistakes. It is then important to handle the situation in a transparent way, to find solutions and to learn from it. The following three examples from Uganda, Nepal und Haiti show what went wrong in some CARE projects and how similar mistakes can be avoided in the future.

Thus local needs must be accurately analyzed. Nevertheless, humanitarian organizations can also make mistakes. It is then important to handle the situation in a transparent way, to find solutions and to learn from it. The following three examples from Uganda, Nepal und Haiti show what went wrong in some CARE projects and how similar mistakes can be avoided in the future.

404 Error

404 Error

Uganda — Safety First

—→ What happened? From the late 1980s until 2006, Uganda was suffering from a civil war that caused many people to flee from their homeland. They were accommodated in refugee camps by several different humanitarian organizations. In 2003, CARE intended to improve the water supply with a well project in the North and planned to involve the refugees for support. Men from the region were trained to be pump mechanics in order to build and maintain water lines. But in many African countries fetching water is typically a women's task so the men didn't take their job seriously. Some didn't show up or even came to work drunk.

So CARE changed its strategy and trained women instead. They were more motivated and completed their tasks more diligently. It worked so well that women from neighboring communities were being recruited. But how would the trained women get to the other villages? They didn't know how to drive and there was no public transport. Bicycles proved to be the solution. The women strapped their toolboxes to the bike racks and started out, their bikes heavily loaded. Soon after, the military took notice of them because women riding bicycles is not something you often see in Uganda, much less riding alone and loaded with heavy tools. When the soldiers stopped the women, they didn't believe their explanations. Some women were even put in jail for a short period until CARE personnel obtained their release.

—→ What did CARE learn from it? The example from Uganda is over ten years old. Since then, many aspects of CARE's operating principles have changed and we continuously strive to institutionalize these learnings. Cooperation with the local communities, governments and other organizations and institutions has improved. Relief efforts are planned conjointly to avoid misunderstandings. Also the quality standards have been adjusted. Before a project begins, the particular challenges and risks it involves are evaluated as precisely as possible. During ongoing long-term support, quality assessments are repeatedly being conducted internally as well as by external auditors and our institutional donors. This ensures that the humanitarian aid we deliver is neither counterproductive nor does it aggravate existing conflicts and conditions.

404 Error

404 Error

—→ What happened? On April 25, 2015 Nepal was hit by the strongest earthquake in 80 years. Close to 9,000 people died, many thousands were injured. The destruction was most severe in remote mountain villages.

CARE packages with the most essential relief supplies were to be distributed to those affected, including clothing for women and girls. As a Nepalese CARE staffer opened one of the ordered parcels in the warehouse, he discovered that it contained red saris, a traditional piece of clothing for women. Many women in Nepal own saris in bright colors. So far, so good. The actual problem with the order was the following: Some colors, including red, are only worn on special occasions. Red, on the one hand, stands for joy and is worn at weddings or when a child is born. On the other hand, in Hinduism, women are wrapped in a red sari when they are dying. It means that they are ready to leave earth. Considering the many families who lost loved ones in the earthquake, red would be perceived as an inappropriate or even disrespectful color. CARE removed the red saris from the packages and replaced them

with other colors. CARE also distributed long skirts and t-shirts to the women in the small mountain villages because the tightly wrapped saris are rather impractical for traveling in the mountainous regions.

—→ What did CARE learn from it? The foundation of any project and all of CARE's work are interviews with the people. This is the best way to understand who needs what most and which requirement hasn't been satisfied yet. To ensure that the people receive relief supplies that they know from everyday life and that comply with their culture, CARE purchases everything on site if possible. At the same time, this supports the local economy and avoids high shipping costs. So goes the theory. In the wake of the devastating earthquake in Nepal, after the needs assessment, CARE procurement officers just wanted to help as quickly as possible. To them, any color sari would do. But in case of a disaster, it is still important to consult the expertise of the local colleagues in seemingly unimportant details. They can assess the needs better and can provide important tips about cultural particularities.

Nepal — Red is Not the New Black

April 25,
2015

—→ What happened? On January 12, 2010, large parts of the Haitian capital and its surroundings were destroyed by an earthquake registering 7 on the Richter scale. Around 220,000 people lost their lives and another 1.5 million became homeless. Since CARE had been active in Haiti for several decades, there was already personnel on the ground who could immediately start with planning and the distribution of aid supplies.

Many humanitarians from all over the world flew to Haiti in the days, weeks and months following the quake to support the local team. In such a situation it is very challenging to act quickly and efficiently while at the same time avoiding to go over someone else's head. It is important to involve local aid workers who speak the language and know the culture. But local CARE staff are often affected by the natural disasters themselves, and additional staff are urgently needed to help on-site. That is why CARE experts from all over the world then set out for the location as fast as possible. In Haiti, the acute emergency assistance went on for several months. Many foreign staff went in and out of the CARE office. This repeatedly led to frustration, misunderstandings and stress situations. For instance, the Haitians didn't feel adequately appreciated and respected by some of the international staff. The reason was that some colleagues from abroad were – in their eyes – carelessly dressed and wore their “field attire” in the office. Still in their dirty t-shirts and shoes caked with dirt, they went directly from a food distribution site to the office to talk to the finance department. In contrast, despite all they had suffered, the Haitian colleagues took great pains to go back to normal life as quick as possible. For them a big aspect of this was a proper dress code. They showed up daily to the office in a freshly ironed white shirt, with clean shoes and their hair neatly styled, despite the fact that many of them were living in makeshift tents, with hardly any access to water and having lost many of their valuables including clothing in the earthquake. So they also expected their international colleagues to wear an appropriate outfit to the office.

—→ What did CARE learn from it? Respectful interaction with the local population is important, no matter if they are colleagues or those affected by a situation. Adaptation and flexibility help to avoid friction between international and local emergency aid workers. To overcome the crisis, returning to a normal life is important for the local people – and that includes our colleagues. International staff who join a project for a certain amount of time should keep this in mind. It is important to organize and constructively moderate team meetings and open forums at regular intervals that enable everybody from the driver to the office manager to have their say. In Haiti, CARE also organized a photography exhibition for the one-year mark of the earthquake on the office grounds. This gave administrative staff the opportunity to clearly see what had been accomplished “in the field” and this shared pride in the achievements helped to bond local colleagues and the staff from abroad. ●

Haiti — Dress to Impress

January 12,
2010

How we
...
poop



in

JAKARTA, INDONESIA

The first time I wandered into Kampung Pulo, fifteen years ago, people would gather along the riverbank and visit one of the countless bamboo rafts moored against the fast moving currents of brown water known as the Ciliwung. On the front of these geteks (bamboo rafts) women would wash dishes, or men would brush teeth. On the aft end there was a low fence from which one would squat and poop straight into the river, while in full view of the whole community. Children would swim in the water and household trash would be dumped into the fast flowing current of the Ciliwung, one of thirteen major rivers bisecting The Big Durian, aka-Jakarta, Indonesia.

Greater Jakarta is the world's second largest megalopolis with roughly 23 million souls. And though the city has enormous wealth, the vast majority of people still live in kampungs, which are essentially neighborhoods. Residents of developed countries would consider them slums.

Today the city government is "cleaning up" Jakarta, the bamboo rafts are gone and the river has been hemmed in by a vast concrete wall, which should help mitigate the annual flooding of the world's fastest sinking city.

Behind the concrete walls and within view of vast high-rises, the towering symbols of the nation's development, and the financial center of the world's fourth largest country, one can still find crowded neighborhoods like Kampung Pulo.

With tiny homes packed so tightly together the sun is blocked out at high noon, the sweltering heat of Jakarta's tropical weather is

Text and Photo

by

JOSH ESTEY

compounded deep in the bowls of the kampung's gang-gang (alleys).

I navigate the area with my bicycle as it's the fastest and simplest way to enjoy the city. Passing old women who ask where I am going, upon which I say the WC umum (public toilet), which causes subtle humor and jokes. In all my years in Jakarta I have never had a problem in these kampungs, proving the power of a smile and politeness can help us all navigate the world a little easier.

I arrive at a public bathroom and find the cleaner. I introduce myself and ask if I can interview him for a German magazine. It's probably the oddest question he has heard all day, but being a polite Javanese, he agrees. I park my bike and though I see signs of afternoon rain in the sky, the temperature inside the maze of toilets is climbing so high sweat pours from my brow like a fountain. By the time we finish the interview I am soaked through, and it appears I have jumped straight into a mandi (a tub that holds bathing water). As I cycle out after the interview I am sure the locals figure why I was asking for the public toilet, apparently I needed a bath.

"My job is simple, I keep these toilets clean. My name is Muslim Yusef, I am 40 years old, and originally from West Java. I came to Jakarta about 15 years ago and have worked as

a toilet cleaner in Kampung Pulo ever since. I live here, sleep on that mat over there. We are the public toilet for two RT's (neighborhoods), which consist of about 200 people. This place is always busy, people coming and going. We have toilets, a place to mandi (an Indonesian cistern for bathing) and a place to wash laundry. You pay what you can, but generally it's 500 Rupia (50 cents) to use the toilet and 1,000 Rupia (1 US dollar) to bath."

"Nothing naughty goes on here because part of my job is to keep an eye on things. Make sure everything is under control. If someone has been in a toilet too long, I go down and check on them. No, the teenagers don't come in here to have sex because I keep an eye out for mischief. Plus the community is so small if someone causes trouble here everyone would know in the neighborhood."

"This public bathroom was built before I was born, sometime back in the 1970's. Only fivepercent of families have toilets in their home in this neighborhood. There are more TVs than toilets here."

"This is a privately owned toilet, the government doesn't fund us and we get our water from a pump in the ground. We close at 10pm and open again at 3am. If someone really needs to go in the middle of the night they knock on the door and I let them in."

"Do I like my job? I am happy with my life, it's fine." ●

Oh
Sh***

2.4

*billion people worldwide have no access
to sanitary facilities.*

946

*million people have to defecate
in the open.*

280

*thousand people die every year from
diarrhea caused by bad hygiene conditions.*



Just going to freshen up. Taking care of a pressing matter.
There are plenty of metaphorical phrases for using the facilities.
A taboo topic even though every person on average spends
about three years of their life on the toilet.

By NICOLE BRUNE

You quickly close the door behind you, lock it and are alone. There are two sides of the human digestion system: the intake of nourishment and the excretion of the remains of food in the form of feces and urine. In wealthy societies, going to the toilet is a trivial matter that is done privately. At most, an annoyance when a public toilet is dirty and the sign in the restaurant on the market square inconveniently reads: "Customers Only". Otherwise, we can retire most anywhere and rest assured that we will be able to flush and that the water faucets will take care of our necessary hygiene – in the office, at home and in public buildings. A true luxury, because 2.4 billion people worldwide have no access to sanitary facilities, not even to simple latrines, without even talking about proper flushable toilets. Even worse: It is estimated that 946 million people have to relieve themselves in the open, as in behind bushes or temporarily erected tents. This is the alarming record published by the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding open defecation, as it's officially called.

An intimate moment becomes a very public one with grave consequences: Animals, from domestic livestock to the smallest fly, all bring feces to the fields and, in turn, to people. This contaminates many watering places and surrounding fields causing worm diseases to spread rapidly. People are able to cultivate less food, resulting in malnutrition. It is also easier for illnesses like diarrhea and cholera to spread more quickly. In densely populated city districts, open defecation is a double injustice: Inhabitants of slum-like areas have no access to toilets. And what's more, waste water from districts that are better off is drained to those places without being filtered first. According to the WHO, poor hygienic conditions are the main reason for 280,000 deaths

caused by diarrhea each year. Without a proper toilet, there isn't any possibility for washing one's hands either – another major factor for the spread of diseases.

There is a lot of shame in even having to relieve oneself so openly, especially for women and girls. This creates a vicious cycle: They often wait until nightfall to go in order not to be seen. But in the cloak of darkness women can more easily be harassed by men or even bit by snakes or other wild animals. For women who are old or ill the walk to the bushes becomes even more dangerous. This causes serious damage to their health. So why don't more places have latrines? How are these even built in poorer regions and how do they change people's lives? We went to Ghana, Nepal and Syria to find out.

“It’s not enough to build millions of latrines. People have to understand why they are necessary.”

GHANA



Putting an End to that Crap

As if in slow motion, the sun slowly rises on this August morning in the Northwest of Ghana. Peter and Eunice Surranakum are working in their field. It's a race against time, or rather, a race against the heat. Already they are both soaked in sweat. However, it's still quiet in their little village of Kambaa Tangzu, but not completely silent. Their pickaxes thud against the ground.

Peter and Eunice work together and this is something new. At the same time, Baby Yelfaabasoglo in the neighboring village Brifo Maal is a reminder of how women there used to be viewed. As second class residents who

had to travel long distances to the watering places, but who otherwise barely had any rights. Today she is able to pay her children's school fees herself. What do Peter, Eunice and Baby have in common? There is no longer open defecation in their villages and they all played an active role in making this happen.

"Before, there were feces all over the ground. We couldn't plant anything near our houses. Often the pigs died and the children got diarrhea," says Saabom Sebastianin. He is the head of the neighboring village Tabier. But why did those three villages go so long without latrines? Resident Beborb soberly explains: "We didn't know

anything about them." What is an obvious solution in many countries was simply unknown here in northern Ghana. People didn't know where to do their business.

And then came a strict Ghanaian policy: Since 2010, individual subsidies are no longer allowed. Development organizations can finance public latrines, but not the private ones in people's homes. But this is the most important thing for making sure illnesses don't continue to spread. However, Beborb's message makes clear that what counts in the long run is knowledge of proper hygiene. "It's not enough to build millions of latrines. People have

to understand why they are necessary," Issifu Adama gets straight to the point. He heads a program for water and sanitation facilities in West Africa. With this project CARE supports better access to water and improved sanitary conditions. "In Tabier, Kambaa Tangzu and Brifo Maal, we spoke with village residents

and their leaders about open defecation and worked with them to find possible solutions: Each village would get a watering place, each household a latrine. We would train people to do the maintenance work and create small savings groups to finance this." "Defecation sinners," or people who have relieved themselves outside and put everyone's health at risk, have to pay into these accounts.

One solution: the pit latrine. It is a bit more than 1.8 meters deep, and in addition to a concrete floor and a drainage pipe, it has solid walls made of clay bricks, a door and a roof. A small station for hand washing was installed next to



In Tabier, a village in Ghana, open defecation was what people were used to. There simply weren't any latrines. The reason: The community wasn't aware of the importance of latrines and how they could be built. Today, CARE works with 22 villages like Tabier to ensure that every household has their own latrine. This helps improve the sanitary conditions for all.

it and was lovingly given the name “tippy tap” since the water tap can actually be tipped. Since June of 2014 they have the first market for sanitary items in the area: In the Tamale community, various examples of latrines and hand washing stations are on display so that the residents can familiarize themselves with them. Individually designed solutions complete the selection.

CARE ensured that the women of the villages were very much involved in these projects.

“The dynamic between the sexes can either be helpful or hindering. Over half of Ghana’s population is female. If we exclude this huge part of the population we have a problem,” states CARE expert Issifu. This involvement paid off for Baby, Peter and Eunice. There is no more open defecation in their village since August 2015, nor in 21 others. They threw a big party to celebrate this.



It was a difficult and painful walk out to the fields, her knees hurting while she did her business. 80-year-old Buddhini is very happy about the latrine built by CARE which gives her back some autonomy and dignity.

NEPAL



A Trip to Independence

How do people cope when they have no toilet from one day to the next? When they are used to relieving themselves at home without the help of others? This is exactly what happened to Buddhini Ghale from Nepal. When two big earthquakes occurred in rapid succession in April and May 2015, they completely destroyed her house in Barpak and her toilet along with it. For the 80-year-old lady this meant a long way to walk and a lot of pain. She had to walk for twenty minutes before reaching an open field where she could relieve herself. Her poor old knees could barely make it. Where she had once been able to hold onto the walls of her house, she now was dependent on her daughter for help. “It was hard for me to relieve myself in the open. Every day my daughter had to come with me,” she says. No wonder that with each forced emission she also lost a piece of her independence. Buddhini is no exception. The relief organization HelpAge estimates that around 600,000

elderly people were affected by the impact of the earthquake in Nepal. In the meantime, Buddhini now has an age-appropriate toilet that CARE built. The old lady is very happy about this. “This also helps us to ensure that infectious diseases aren’t able to spread.” She is no longer dependent on her daughter. Now she can hold on to the handles of her new toilet by herself.

SYRIA



They call me “Mister Latrine”

Before the civil war, Syria was a developed country with median incomes, functioning schools and hospitals. Households were connected to the public water supply and drainage systems. Houses often had several bathrooms. It is very different today. Around 6.5 million Syrians are displaced within the country. The infrastructure is completely destroyed and many families who were used to modern homes with sanitation sys-

“Usually 17 to 20 people have to share a latrine.”

tems now must find their way in the wilderness. Osama AlGhssen works as a civil engineer for one of CARE’s partner organizations in the South of Syria, the only latrine manufacturer in the region. Until now, over 270 latrines have been built.

Osama reports:

“It is a catastrophic situation. In the barren landscape there are people who basically don’t own a single thing anymore and they have to somehow come to terms with that. They are forced to relieve themselves in the open. There is no water, and there is only rarely food or toiletries available, depending on whether the relief organizations manage to come here or not. For women it is especially difficult. Without latrines they must travel long distances just to find some place that gives them some privacy. They are worried for their safety. They often find nothing at first: the area is barren and you can see for miles. There’s not even a single stone for them to hide behind. All they have are the nights and waiting all day. Women with health problems really suffer. Therefore, in some communities the women set up little tents out of tarps. But the wind quickly blows them away. It’s humiliating. One moment they have their own homes and can even choose between different bathrooms – and in the next they are forced to squat down in the desert.

For one year I have been working for a Syrian partner organization of CARE. We visit various

villages in the South of Syria and supply them with water, hygiene sets and emergency latrines made of steel and corrugated sheets of metal. They usually last for six to twelve months and are each equipped with an antiseptic basin that kills bacteria. But the best and most important thing about them is their mobility: Families can just take them along if they are again forced to flee because of fighting. Usually 17 to 20 people have to share a latrine.

In the beginning we only found a few families. Today they contact me themselves, write me via WhatsApp and call me ‘Mister Latrine’. Unfortunately we are the only latrine provider in the South of the country. When you think of war in general, the first thing you probably think of is people’s safety. But their hygiene maintenance is also important; it is essential for their survival. Every day there are more people in need of aid. Only once the war is over, will we be able to rebuild our lives. Until then, there are only short-term solutions such as these emergency latrines.” ●

“Something’s Up”

As told by MARINA STARČEVIĆ CVIKO

Written by JOHANNA MITSCHERLICH

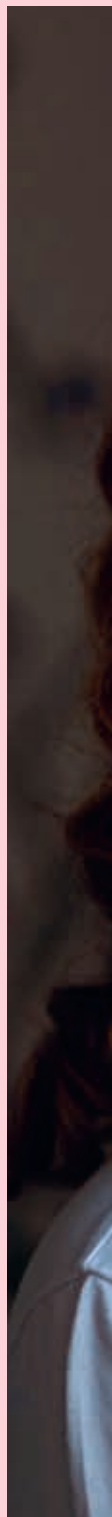
Photo: BRANKO BIRAČ

No romance on the job? Difficult when you fall head over heels in love at work. A love story without borders.

“Something’s Up!” I’ve had that thought more than once in my professional life when I saw certain colleagues together. Sure, you spend the majority of the day together, you joke, go to lunch together and get a little carried away in the relaxed atmosphere at the company party. A lot of people meet their partners in a work setting. Theoretically I always knew that this could happen. Only I was absolutely positive it would never happen to me. The first time I saw Adnan there were no fireworks at all. It wasn’t love at first sight, quite the opposite. “Who is this guy? How in the world can someone laugh and speak so loudly?” I thought when I saw him in the Hotel Terme in Sarajevo. He was sitting on a red couch in the lobby with tons colleagues crowded around him. I didn’t know him yet at that point in time. I just knew that I would have to work with him. I was annoyed and asked myself how in the world this was going to work.

I have been working for CARE in Serbia for over ten years. After a long time of working in youth projects and assignments to curb human trafficking, I have served as the coordinator for our “Young Men Initiative” since 2008. Our efforts focus on counter-ing questionable ideals of masculinity and violence against women and girls. We train youth group leaders and teachers so that topics like peace, gender equality and non-violence are given the attention they deserve both during extracurricular activities as well as in schools. We promote peace and are working to overcome ethnic segregation, stereotypes and distrust in the Balkan region. In many places the civil war has left deep marks on everyday life and in the minds of the people.

So Adnan and I met up with several other colleagues in Sarajevo to discuss the progress and expansion of our work in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. Adnan worked as a project coordinator for our Bosnian partner organization. During our meeting that day I still thought he was too loud and told too many jokes for my taste, but I quickly learned to value him as a colleague. Adnan was enthusiastic, diligent, had good ideas and he was very easy to work with. We worked in close coordination with each other over the next few months. Hardly a day went by without us talking to each other. The “Young Men Initiative” was not just work; it was also our life. We were happy about the changes we were able to achieve within our communities. We argued and laughed a lot. Still, never had it occurred to me that Adnan could be more than a colleague. I was in my early thirties and had left a few disappointing relationships behind me. At that point I was seriously done with men. And anyway, Adnan was nine years younger than me and I was his superior for this project.





And then the day came, March 22, 2010. We were visiting a project in Sarajevo and Adnan asked me if we could go to dinner together. Sure, I thought, why not. I was hungry and had hardly eaten all day because of all the work. But when I arrived in the restaurant, it wasn't my colleague Adnan standing before me, but instead a man named Adnan: A man who was wearing a nice shirt and suit trousers. Whose aftershave smelled so good. And then the thought hit me, "Uh-oh, it's a date! Wow, you look really fancy! Any special reason?" I said instead. He answered, much quieter than usual: "Yes: You." All at once everything had changed. I felt inhibited and he was visibly more shy than usual. After dinner we went to a club. We danced the night away and I didn't know whether to be happy or shocked about the feelings I was having. Suddenly I was out dancing to Balkan pop with my colleague who was nine years younger than me, reported to me in the office and with whom I was obviously in love. Back in the hotel I laid in bed and it was as if I was electrified and paralyzed at the same time. What was I supposed to do now? We almost kissed each other! My thoughts were racing. I am his supervisor! What exactly are the rules about this? What are CARE's guidelines? And what if it's nothing serious anyway? I didn't get a wink of sleep that night; thoughts spun wildly through my mind. The next morning was a nightmare: I had an official meeting with him and our project leader who had traveled to Bosnia. All the way to the office I seriously hoped Adnan wouldn't be there. That he would call in sick. That something would keep him from coming. But of course he was there. And he acted differently, he was reserved, quiet and shy. I was hyper, loud, blushed like a teenager and broke out in cold sweats. It was one of the worst work days of my entire life.

We acted like everything was the same as always. I tried to push what had happened out of my mind and to be fully concentrated on our project. It went well until Adnan called me in June to tell me he had been removed from

our project. From now on he was supposed to lead a health project in Bosnia. I was so upset. What horrible news! After all, didn't he play a key role and wouldn't this jeopardize all of our work with the "Young Men Initiative"? It all came bursting out of me until he interrupted me laughing. "Yes, but see the bright side of it. Now we can be a couple!" I hung up abruptly. This was too much news to handle all at once. I was supposed to lose my best employee and instead get a man by my side?

Two days later we saw each other at a regional meeting for CARE and our partner organizations on the Croatian peninsula of Krk. I tried to avoid him, but that was of course impossible. Our team is big and I had to moderate the meetings. He caught up with me after the first workshop. "Marina, we have to talk. Please!" "Is it about work?" I asked, though it was more of a desperate plea. "No," he said, loud and clear. I went to my room. I was trembling. I felt like crying and squealing at the same time. I was happy and also felt like I was losing my mind. Like a mantra, I kept repeating to myself that I would soon no longer be his boss. That soon we would no longer be colleagues. How is it that after such a long time, someone can fall head over heels in love in a matter of seconds?

We met on the beach that evening. It was a mild summer day. I am not a big fan of romance, but we took a long walk along the sea. He told me he wanted to be with me, that he had fallen in love with me. I listed all my reasons for why it could never work: Because we were good friends, because he was much too young for

me, and what's more he was Muslim and I was Serbian Orthodox, because he was Bosnian and I was Serbian, and because he lived in Sarajevo and I was in Belgrade. And yeah, neither of us had prejudices against the other ethnic groups. But how would they see us? What would his mother say? A woman whose husband – Adnan's father – had been killed by a Serbian grenade? Adnan didn't respond to my questions and merely asked me to give it a try with him. So that is what we did starting on that summer day. It was June 22, 2010. And that was it for me. I was crazy about him. Not a second passed without me thinking about him and we wrote each other text messages all day long. At first we kept it to ourselves. We wanted to protect the delicate flower of our love from the outside world. For nine months Adnan took the bus to Belgrade every Friday. Seven hours there and then on Sunday he took the night bus back, had a quick shower and went straight to the office. It was a beautiful time full of lightness and pounding hearts.

At some point we then told our colleagues. Because we wanted to share it with them, but also because my colleague John wanted to hire Adnan as an external consultant. Then he could move to Belgrade! No more weekends spent traveling back and forth! I was ecstatic, but also insecure. Telling others would also mean taking our relationship to the next level. It would mean we were officially in a serious relationship. John's jaw dropped: Marina, the serious, sensible woman from Serbia and Adnan, the much younger, bubbly, and constantly joking Bos-

I just got into the bus, will arrive in the evening. I can't wait to see you.

Safe trip! I am waiting for you at the station. Kiss

I am entering Belgrade ... see you in half an hour :)

I am in the car, coming to get you :)))



Wanna hear some good news?

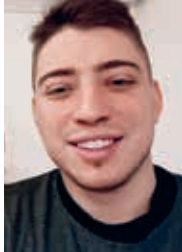
Oh yes, from you especially

I found a good apartment for us and I rented it. I can't wait for you to see it

That is fantastic! I will try to come earlier on Friday. Love you!



Miss me?



Oh yes, miss you very much. Looking forward to Friday :)

Me too. I packed all my stuff, it is not too much :)



What did I forget now? Are you OK?

You have just become a father a few minutes ago. Everything ok

OMG! LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!

nian? Still fully shocked, his second question was: "What will your mother have to say about this, Adnan?"

In April of 2011 we moved into our first shared apartment in Belgrade and were colleagues once again. However, he no longer reported to me and our work had very little overlap. We even worked in different offices. It was perfect because being together at home and at work would really have been a little too much.

We have been married since 2012 and are no longer colleagues. He, the Bosnian, started his own business in Serbia. He sells "Bosnian Delights", a traditional sweet from his homeland. Now he has his own company and shops all over Serbia. At first I was really worried because it is not at all easy for a Muslim to open his own business in Belgrade. I didn't know how people would react. It has not been that long since the war and some of the memories are still fresh in everyone's minds. Adnan has always been optimistic and he himself truly lives everything he once passed on to others in our CARE projects for peace and reconciliation. Today, after three years of hard work, Adnan is successfully self-employed. It never made a difference to us that he is Bosnian and I am Serbian. And his mother is the best mother-in-law I could have ever dreamed of having. We face the same challenges other couples face: Work, money, and raising our now three-year-old daughter, Lana.

Lana is an international name. No one can tell what group she belongs to. Someday she should decide for herself whether she wants to be Muslim, Orthodox or maybe even Buddhist or Jewish. We celebrate

the Muslim holidays like the Festival of Breaking the Fast and the Festival of Sacrifice, but also Christmas and Easter. Lana is learning so much about tolerance and different cultures. We are teaching her what we live. She is directly inheriting her lessons about peace and intercultural understanding; you can say it's what she cut her teeth on.

We love to share our story, especially with the teenagers involved in the "Young Men Initiative". We are very open about it and the young men have many questions for us. We want to show them that people can live together peacefully and that reconciliation between ethnic groups is where this begins and ends. Sometimes we joke that we are one of the case studies for the CARE project and that Lana is its best possible outcome. We hope that friendships and marriages between various ethnic groups will become something normal in the Balkans and that there will be many more stories like ours to come. And that Lana can continue to lightheartedly celebrate different religious celebrations and that she never has to experience the pain of feeling that her Bosnian-Serb, Muslim-Orthodox identity is something out of the ordinary. This is also what I stand up for through my work for tolerance and peace at CARE. ●

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX?

By JOHANNA MITSCHERLICH

Photos: JOSH ESTEY







3.9

is the average percentage the population of Niger grows each year. The country ranks lowest worldwide in development and highest in population growth.

7.6

billion euros are needed annually to provide contraception to all women who want to have access to it globally.

44

percent of children in Niger are chronically malnourished.

Sex education somewhere in Germany. Some thirty students in an 8th grade class wiggle around in their chairs while the teacher tries to get them to listen. Because every time he says the word “sex”, the teenagers either giggle to themselves or make faces in embarrassment. No easy subject, but an important one. According to a study from the Federal Center for Health Education in Germany, one in eleven girls and one in ten boys in Germany is 14 years old when they have intercourse for the first time. This is why teaching sex education has long been mandatory in Germany and many other countries. There’s no longer a question of “whether” to talk about sex, only the question of “how much” and “how soon”. Various sexual practices, homosexuality, abortion – is all of this a part of sex education lessons and is it perhaps better to take a cross-curricular approach? Should it be something taught as early as kindergarten? And how do

parents speak to their children about it? In the age of the Internet, children and adolescents have better access to information about sexuality than ever before. Gone are the days of Mr. Stork and the birds and the bees.

With all the discussions about the how and all of the shame and embarrassment, one thing remains certain: Sexuality is a part of our lives from the cradle to the grave. Even in Niger, 6,000 kilometers away from Germany, it is no different. But until now this topic has seldom been discussed here, “Talking about sex openly is taboo. Traditionally, it is quite often mothers who teach their children about it, usually indirectly by using symbols, stories and by hinting at it. Adolescents learn how babies are made in school, but more from the scientific side of things. The rest is not part of the teaching.” This is what Lantana tells us while sitting on a straw mat in a small house made of clay. Her face is framed by a plaid head scarf of blue, green and white. The 30-year-old volunteer health educator works hard in her village Dan Taro in the South of Niger to make sure that, in particular, girls and women have access to the most important information. She is supported by 31-year-old Garba, a tall, slim man. Their common aim: Sex education, better family planning and healthy mothers and children.

Niger is not only the poorest country in the world, but it also has the highest population growth at 3.9 percent annually. At the same time, 40 percent of its children suffer from chronic malnutrition. Every tenth child doesn’t live to see its fifth birthday. Population growth in Niger has a lot to do with poverty, malnutrition

Niger ranks highest globally in teenage pregnancies. 206 out of 1,000 girls between the age of 15 to 19 become mothers.

In Germany, this number stands at six.



Lantana (right) and Garba (left) are volunteering in their village to promote reproductive health and family planning. Each week, they pay a visit to 20 families on average. By now they have reached 300 men and women with their messages and information about sex and contraception. They set a good example themselves: One has three children, the other one. For Niger that is a rather low number.



Photo: Johanna Mitscherlich (bottom)

and child mortality. "It's a vicious cycle. Young women, in particular, have neither information nor contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancies or becoming pregnant at a very young age," Lantana further explains. "They already have their first child as teenagers, are married too young and quit school. They are at very high risk of dying during the pregnancy or childbirth. And they are often too young to know how to best feed their children. The consequences are malnutrition and a high child mortality rate." In no other country in the world are there as many teenage pregnancies as in Niger: 206 out of 1,000 women from age 15 to 19 years old. In contrast: In Germany this figure stands at six. "Family planning and healthcare are the keys to less poverty and hunger," emphasizes Lantana's colleague Garba. He's only had one son until now. Lantana has three children. She laughs, "That's a small number for Niger. But we see ourselves as role models. After all, we want to set a good example." The government of this West African country has also recognized the high birth rate as an impediment to development. It is an important aim of President Issoufou for girls to attend school longer and to be protected from forced marriages and pregnancies at too young an age.

The right to self-determined family planning is a human right – it has been for 40 years. Even so, only one in every four women worldwide who wants to use contraception is able to do so. In developing countries alone, around 80 million women per year have unwanted pregnancies. One in five women in a developing country already has at least one

child by age 18. The risks of dying as a result of pregnancy or childbirth are especially high for young women without medical care. What can be done? It would cost an estimated 7.6 billion euros per year to give all women worldwide the option of using contraception. That's 3.8 billion euros more than what is currently being invested. In many places, particularly in rural areas, people are lacking access to even basic health care, never mind contraception.

The village of Dan Taro is fortunate: For four years Lantana and Garba have made sure that a total of 300 families not only receive information about the topic of sexuality, but also get contraception. Every week they visit about 20 families. They stay for at least 30 minutes because these are not easy conversations to have. "We have to be very careful about how we go about it. We usually split up. Lantana speaks to the women, I talk to the men. This requires a lot of sensitivity and understanding for the culture and religion of the people here in the village. We don't want to just blurt it out," Garba explains.

Usually they start out by first talking with the families about less delicate, but nonetheless important topics like how they can best keep their houses clean, how to build latrines and how it is important to wash their hands to avoid illnesses. And then they talk about children and how there are ways of planning pregnancies or avoiding them altogether. "Every woman should be able to decide how many children she wants to have. We don't say to parents, 'Have less children,' that's not our place to say. But it is indeed important to us

that a mother doesn't have a child on each hand, two more bound to her stomach and back and yet another on the way. Not only is this exhausting for her, but it is also dangerous for the children." Lantana and Garba's experience goes to show that malnutrition is a particularly big problem for families when the parents have several children, one after the other. Many women are still nursing when they become pregnant again shortly after the birth of one child. Simultaneously they have to work in the fields while caring for other younger children. This is a huge undertaking that can barely be managed.

In this vast, semi-arid country in the Sahel region, climate change also plays its role in making the situation for women and children more difficult. In the past few years they have had to manage with less and less water as the rainy seasons became shorter and more difficult to predict. A disaster for Niger, since only 15 percent of the country is even suitable for raising cattle or food cultivation, but 80 percent of the population makes a living from agriculture. Severe droughts in recent years led to crop failure and the highest rate of malnutrition and food insecurity worldwide. More than 44 percent of all children in Niger are chronically malnourished, meaning they don't have enough healthy and nourishing food to eat.

That's why Lantana and Garba speak with parents about how important it is to leave some space between pregnancies and they show them various types of contraception: Condoms, the pill or hormone implants that can be inserted into the upper arm.

“WE NEED MORE FOOD



FOR
FEWER CHILDREN”,
SAYS GARBA

They help them fill out applications at the local health station so they can receive this contraception. Every couple of weeks they walk to the health post seven kilometers away to pick up medication and contraception for the village community. CARE has trained volunteers like Lantana and Garba in 79 villages in Niger. Each team always consists of one man and one woman. CARE also involves religious leaders in this educational work, because they are important voices within the village communities. At the same time, CARE helps communities adapt to climate change with improved agricultural production methods and

drought-resistant seeds. They offer the villages cooking schools to promote a nutrient rich diet and they support clinics for mothers and children.

Much has changed in Dan Taro in recent years. Only rarely does a women become pregnant without wanting to and the times when children had to be brought to the nearest clinic to be treated for malnutrition are also in the past. Even though Garba and Lantana mostly speak in pictures and metaphors, as is the beautiful tradition in Niger, and perhaps, just like some German teachers, they sometimes dance around using the word “sex”: They get their message across. “We are very proud of what we are doing for our village. We see it as an opportunity to help our country. We are the poorest country in the world and every single day climate change and drought

make our lives harder. We need more food for fewer children,” says Garba. “Only when every woman can decide for herself how many children she wants to have and when she will get pregnant, only when parents are able to raise healthy children who are really strong enough to go to school at five, only when more children see their fifth birthday and many more to come, that’s when we’ll know that we have achieved our mission.” ●





Vigilantes de la Vida

Midwives support women during the most intimate moment of their lives: the birth of their child. Their job is to be caregivers, to manage complications and to save lives. At the same time they stand by women during a moment of complete vulnerability. A moment when their private parts are made public and the workplace of a whole band of helpers.
Not so easy.

By CHRISTINA IHLE

“Don’t panic. I am going to throw myself onto your stomach. You push!” Have I ever seen this man before? – that’s what’s going through my mind. And the fact that he looks damn heavy. A glance to my midwife. She nods. Everything’s OK. Then the contractions come rolling in, the colossal weight of a doctor lying on my stomach, what feels like a thousand hands all over and inside of me, ripping and being almost numbed by the pain – then suddenly silence. Breathing. A clear cry. My daughter is born. She is healthy. We are both alive! Not something to take for granted considering all of the complications during these last days of the pregnancy and this birth.

The shame I feel when during the contractions all of the floodgates are opened, how I am robbed of my control over any bodily fluids or functions. The moment I feel totally helpless as I lie there like a bug on its back so they can measure my heartbeat. All these feelings quickly fade away and this is all thanks to my midwife, her words and acts of empathy and encouragement. After the birth she firmly forced everyone out of the delivery room and gave me, my husband and my newborn daughter a half hour alone to get to know each other as a family. Following those nine long months and 23 hours of pain, waiting and worrying, this for me is still the most intimate moment of my life thus far.

In our world it is a privilege to have such competent support while giving birth. To have a midwife by one’s side who not only makes sure that it is medically safe, but who also protects the dignity, rights and privacy of the one giving birth is truly a gift and

to them more difficult,” says Ute Wronn, Midwife and a member of the German Midwifery Association. “That is why there is sometimes too little respect for individual needs, the right to informed consented care or a disregard by medical



should never be taken for granted. “The economization of giving birth often results in lacking personnel as well as exhaustion and burn-out among medical personnel and midwives. This can make the careful treatment of the women entrusted

personnel of the humiliation and pain felt by those giving birth.”

In 2010, a study presented by doctors Diana Bowser and Kathleen Hill of the Harvard School of Public Health showed that this must change. By conducting a worldwide survey of

women giving birth the authors collected data about “disrespect and abuse in facility-based childbirth” as it is called in the report. Their aim: to find out why so little progress has been made in fulfilling the 5th United Nations Millennium Development

prefer to give birth at home instead of a nearby clinic. According to the study, this is on the one hand due to lacking financial means for transportation and the clinic stay as well as the concern of not being allowed to carry out their own cultural birthing

parts of Asia described how being hit or slapped in the face during childbirth was normal. Women from Yemen reported being strapped down against their will in the hospital. In some countries women underwent cesarean sections and sterilization without being informed or asked about it beforehand. Members of minority groups often reported that they were refused medical attention. In almost every country in the world, the study recorded verbal abuse such as derogatory comparisons to an animal giving birth, malicious comments about the woman’s behavior while in pain as well as continuous threats and accusations.

“These are all serious violations of human rights and of a woman’s right to a safe pregnancy and delivery,” says Ute Wronn. “Even in Germany women report rights violations; however, they are usually less severe. Many women lose their trust in medical facilities after that and prefer to give birth at home.” In some Western countries there are alternatives to clinics available like deciding to give birth in a birthing house or at home supported by a midwife. In contrast, in developing countries that don’t have a good medical healthcare system, women have no choice as to how they give birth. Often they are left completely alone. 820 women still die daily due to complications during pregnancy or while giving birth and 99 percent of these deaths occur in developing countries. The majority of these deaths could be prevented by proper medical attention. So how can we strengthen pregnant women’s trust in medical institutions?

Gisma (left), is 19 years old, lives in South Sudan and is expecting her second child. “I can feel that it’s coming tomorrow. I have light pains, but otherwise I’m doing fine. Hopefully it will be a boy. My first son is named Mayik”, she says. The hospital managed by CARE has 10 staff and a surgery room. Before, patients had to be brought to the town of Bentiu, 120 kilometers away.

Road conditions in South Sudan are very difficult. Due to the ongoing conflict, many roads are blocked and the rainy season makes unpaved roads impossible to travel. Maternal death is very high in South Sudan due to the lack of medical facilities, pre-natal care and social as well as economic barriers for women.



Goal of reducing the number of maternal deaths worldwide since its passing in the year 2000, although access for pregnant women to medical institutions has since greatly improved. And why so many women, despite the great risks involved, still

practices. On the other hand it is due to the unsettlingly frequent experiences of women who were not treated respectfully by medical personnel during the birth of their child or had even been abused. Women in Kenya, Peru, South Africa, Tanzania and large



Ju Sar Mi works as a birth assistant in a health post in Pan Hone, Myanmar. Women trust her during a very intimate and vulnerable moment.

The White Ribbon Alliance, a coalition of non-governmental organizations and active midwives worldwide, drafted the “Charter for the Universal Rights of Childbearing Women” as a response to Bowser and Hill’s study. Drawing on extracts from established human rights agreements, the Charter legitimizes women’s rights to a healthy and safe pregnancy and sets forth seven maternal health rights:

1.
freedom from harm and ill treatment,
2.
the right to informed consent and refusal during maternity care,
3.
confidentiality and privacy,
4.
dignity and respect,
5.
equitable care,
6.
the right to timely healthcare and to the highest attainable level of health as well as
7.
self-determination and freedom from coercion when choosing or leaving a medical institution.

As a result, what has emerged are essential guidelines for the practical and political work of medical stakeholders, associations and organizations who aim to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity. The World Health Organization is one of the

most prominent players in this coalition now fighting for the charter's implementation. CARE is also a part of this effort.

In 51 countries CARE has a very hands-on approach to improving mother-child health through the expansion of birth clinics and providing training and supplementary qualification for medical personnel. Above all, it is about reinforcing the rights of women during pregnancy and childbirth. For example, in the remote Andes region of Ayacucho, Peru, maternal mortality was the highest in the country. The indigenous Quechua women living here felt that the predominantly Spanish-speaking doctors and midwives in childbearing facilities did not respect them so they gave birth at home under highly dangerous conditions. CARE began training volunteer monitors in Quechua communities. Since then, these “Vigilantes de la Vida”, in English “Vigilantes of Life”, accompany pregnant women to their medical visits and during childbirth in the hospital. As trusted individuals, these women fulfill a monitoring function. The vigilantes make sure that the needs and rights of pregnant women are respected and upheld. A part of that, for example, is being allowed to give birth standing up as is Quechua tradition. They report violations to clinic heads and government agencies “At first, maternity ward staff wasn’t too happy about our presence,” says Inkasisa from Ayaviri, who herself is a vigilante of life. “They felt like they were being inspected and they were right about that. But more and more they began to understand that we are also there to be of help to them and



Eugenia Itme is a “Vigilante de la Vida” in Peru. Each week, she rides her bicycle to remote health posts to support women during the delivery. It sometimes takes her two to three hours. Often the medical personnel doesn’t speak the indigenous language or is simply overwhelmed with the number of patients. Eugenia helps translate and mediate. Many women are told they have to pay even though medical care is free in Peru. Without Eugenia’s support, they wouldn’t know how to claim their rights.



their work. We translate, build bridges for mutual understanding

and have great influence on how a birth goes.” In a very short time, maternal mortality went down by 50 percent in Ayacucho.

This approach has also proven successful in other regions of the world such as in Sierra Leone. Here the village birthing companions for pregnant women who were trained by CARE creatively solved the transportation problem: In remote areas in the North they established a hammock ambulance which, under their supervision, carefully takes women in labor from mountain villages down the steep hillsides to the nearest medical center or clinic.

In Malawi, India and Tanzania, CARE introduced a so-called “community score card” as a monitoring instrument. This card enables women giving birth to anonymously rate their clinic stays based on various criteria as well as to draw attention to any shortcomings. Communities, clinic staff and healthcare agencies were involved in the introduction of this feedback mechanism and are present at the regular evaluations of the “score card”. In the Ntcheu region of Malawi, for example, over 70 percent of pregnant women have access to health centers, but barely use them. “Score card” evaluations showed 13 shortcomings that kept pregnant women away. One example: Women were forced to clean the delivery room themselves after giving birth even when they were not physically able to do so. Together communities, clinics and healthcare agencies resolved this problem by, for instance, investing in cleaning staff. Trust in medical facilities has increased due to this process. More women give birth under medical care and maternal mortality in the region has dropped dramatically.

In Western countries, violence and the violation of boundaries and rights that take place might be more subtle than in Malawi or Peru. But this does happen. This issue is slowly becoming even more relevant to us. Many groups now take part in the “Roses Revolution Day” on November 25th, which sees women laying down roses and their reports of giving birth in front of the delivery room doors behind which they had experienced violence or injustice. Year after year the number of participants grows. Year after year the event gains more attention. “In Germany we midwives are the ones who enjoy the trust of pregnant women,” says Ute Wronn. “Trust that involves the responsibility to protect those we accompany from injustice or disregard for their needs during that moment when they are in labor and have no control whatsoever. In order to do this, midwives need good training and the support of a healthcare system that makes pregnant women and their needs a priority. Luckily, this is becoming more and more the focus of research, practice and training thanks to the work of midwife organizations and development organizations working to improve maternal health.” ●

A so-called “hammock ambulance” helps pregnant women to reach the nearest health post. This easy yet very helpful method is being used in rural Sierra Leone.



It takes women hours to get to the nearest health post or clinic in rural Sierra Leone. This is particularly challenging when they are in labor.

Maternal mortality in Sierra Leone stands at 1.4 percent: in 2015, 3,100 women died during pregnancy or the birth. In Germany, this figure is estimated to be around 0.006 percent.



data protection

data protection act

data protection manager

data protection directive

The best way to do this is through a bank transfer, because in return you receive a donation receipt that you can then use for tax purposes. Of course you only receive this confirmation if you also share your address with the organization. In the future some cases may only require an email address and then an electronic confirmation will be sent. But even for that you need to share your name and postal address so that the tax authority can later ensure that the right donor receives a tax benefit.

So far so good, but what actually happens to my address and what other data of mine does the relief organization have? What do you do with this data? Isn't it perhaps much too personal to disclose this information or is it maybe also dangerous to do so? What protection do I have from its misuse?

If you don't need a donation receipt you can of course give donations without sharing any of this information. The money helps just as much. But at a certain donation level CARE would really like to know who the donation is coming from. For example, we would like to ensure

What do you need my address for?

By STEFAN EWERS

A common question when someone makes a donation.

CARE board member Stefan Ewers has the answer.

Helping those in need is an act of humanity. This is most easily done through a monetary donation to a nonprofit organization. But how do I give my money and make sure that it actually arrives where it is supposed to without having to hand over too much data about myself?

that we don't receive any money from companies who engage in environmentally damaging behavior or from those who earn their money through the arms or sex industries. As a rule, we are particularly careful about examining donations from companies. Apart from that, a donor's name and address are stored unless the person objects to it. But only a very small group of CARE employees have access to this data. They have all signed a data protection confidentiality agreement and can only access the database with a special password.

But of course we would like to use these addresses to keep our donors informed of what CARE has achieved locally and what our plans are for the future. This way, in addition to information about projects for certain relief campaigns, we can also send them our annual report. Not only does this show the work CARE does, but it also provides them with a transparent financial report. And naturally we would also like to show donors other projects and issues for which CARE still needs support and donations so that we can continue

to effectively help people in need. If someone doesn't want this, they must simply send us a short letter or give us a call to let us know. From that moment on they will only receive the information that interests them or even none at all, if they so wish.

However, there are also donors who are happy to receive a phone call every once in a while or who would like to receive information regularly per email. We are also able to cater to those wishes and this data will be stored just as securely as their name and address, and will only be used by specially authorized employees. We take particular care to ensure that the circle of people with access to this data is kept as small as possible. Incidentally, CARE's secure use of personal data is monitored by a so-called "external data protection officer" who is not beholden to CARE, is completely free to act according to his own judgment and is only bound by the data protection laws of Germany. These regulations apply to anyone who handles or stores personal data and they effectively protect all donors' rights to privacy. The data pro-

tection officer works to ensure that, at CARE, all data protection requirements are complied with and that our processes function accordingly. He is supported by one of our own employees who functions as a data protection coordinator. This person is available for in-house requests and has been trained in the implementation of data protection regulations.

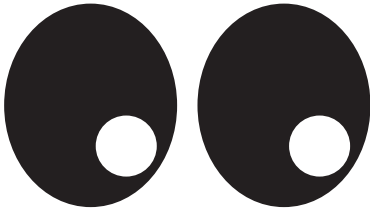
An affordable and efficient way to give support is through setting up a direct debit scheme for giving regular donations. The administrative costs for this form of support are especially low. To do this, the donor gives CARE their banking details which are held just as securely as all other donor data. The legal regulations for storing this kind of personal data are especially strict and the data protection officer also closely monitors to ensure CARE follows them diligently.

Of course we don't send all of our donor letters ourselves, but instead work in cooperation with external service providers. But even these partnerships and the contracts they are based on must first be examined and authorized by our external data protection officer before cooperation begins. Furthermore, the amount of provided data must be strictly aligned with the assignment. Only data that is absolutely necessary for achieving its purpose may be used. Data processing is to be limited to the phase necessary for achieving its purpose. For example, after a donor letter has been produced and sent, the external service provider may no longer use the address data. And naturally we also have a special data protection agreement with these service providers.

The other way around, there is also a data storage obligation. For instance, we must store certain details in our database for the tax authority whether we want to or not, at least whenever we have previously issued donation receipts. There are specified legal regulations for nonprofit organizations for this. That's why there is a "storage period" for the storage of donor names and donation amounts. In the case of doubt, this is to help uncover cases of tax fraud that use false donation receipts. The tax authority holds the relief organization responsible if it can't provide evidence of correct accounting for donations and correct storage of data. We would, of course, like to avoid this. We would much rather spend the money entrusted to us on aid projects than for paying the tax authority.

As a donor, I should be able to decide what personal data I disclose. Then I know what data the relief organization has and can request its deletion if I want to. But can CARE also get my data from other sources without my knowing about it?

Each usage of personal data is an infringement of the basic right to self determination with regard to data processing. A usage is, therefore, only permissible when either the legislator or the affected person has approved it with respect to the amount and purpose. The legislator approves it, for example, in order to be able to verify the accuracy of donation receipts. Should the donor give their own consent to allow data handling, this must be informed consent and take place voluntarily. A person can only verify whether the data handling is legal and exercise their rights if this



Above and beyond its compliance with legal regulation, CARE also submits itself to additional strict rules for the protection of donor data. That's why we are a member of the German Charity Council and have pledged to abide by its principles. Thereby, we are equally bound to the greater good and to donors. The principles clearly exclude the sale, leasing or trading of donor addresses. And CARE's executive board has to turn in an annual statement with regards to the principles of the German Charity Council. If CARE commits a serious violation of these principles its membership in the German Charity Council will be terminated immediately.

As a relief organization CARE is dependent on private donations. For this purpose we write our donors at regular intervals, present our projects and request support. In order to gain new donors we also send out so-called third party mailings. For this CARE leases "foreign" addresses from a so-called list broker. The addresses are then only available for a single use for a call for donations. The list broker delivers the external addresses to a neutral service provider who then processes the lists for CARE. We don't come in contact with these lists ourselves. Before the mailing, the lists are compared with the so-called "Robinson list". Anyone who registered themselves on this list does not want to receive commercial advertising. Additionally, it is ensured that no people remain on the external list who have already informed CARE that they do not wish to receive advertisement mail. Only recipients who then give us a donation end up in our data bank and can be contac-

ted by CARE again. The rest of the addresses remain unknown to us.

What interest does CARE have in following all of these regulations and keeping voluntary obligations?

Every year we publish a risk report for our members' annual assembly in which we give an account of all of the kinds of risks that could threaten our work and our success. And we report on measures we want to take to effectively address these risks. Reputation damage and loss of trust are usually the biggest potential risks we face. We are reliant on the trust of our donors to an exceptional degree because a donation is a voluntary act, and no one supports an organization they can't trust. For this reason it is particularly important to us to treat the people who support CARE with their money with fairness and appreciation. Even a single dissatisfied or poorly treated donor is one too many. Thus we take special care of the protection of and dealing with the data of all donors. And anyone who just wants to find out more about CARE's work without disclosing any personal data can best do this by visiting our homepage. On this platform, CARE only saves the IP address temporarily for the purpose of analytics and deletes it shortly after. ●

data handling is transparent for them. Without transparency all donors would effectively be without rights. Hence, we are only really allowed to record this data when coming from the person themselves. They must be informed of the data entry and have the right to information.

It is totally fine for CARE to use my data to keep me informed about projects, but who says that this data won't be passed on to a third party or even sold?

A long walk

...

Photo: Frederic Courbet (Panos)



By NINJA TAPROGGE

...

for a few cents

In many cultures fetching water is a daily chore reserved for women and girls. This also holds true in Dadaab, the world's largest refugee camp located in Kenya. Here, this job is predominantly carried out by the Somali women who have sought shelter in their neighboring country. There are discussions about a potential closure of this camp, but in the meantime, life goes on.

It is five o'clock in the morning in Dadaab, home to about 261,000 refugees. For 21-year-old Asho Abdi Noor the new day begins even before sunrise. In the middle of the desert, in the Northeast of Kenya, a long, dark path lies before the young mother of a two-year-old son. Her home, an improvised hut, is about six kilometers away from her workplace. She walks about one and a half hours each day in order to reach her customers. Asho earns her money with water.

Every day the thin young woman fills large canisters with over 100 liters of water. Seven families pay her about 15 US dollars per month for this. "From my pay I buy baby food such as powdered milk; my income secures my son's survival," explains the young Somali woman.



Photos: Ninja Taprogge

“Once a month I receive sorghum, corn and beans from the World Food Programme. I usually eat twice a day, but there are still days when I go to bed hungry.”

In 2011 a famine in the Horn of Africa forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee. Asho was one of them. An extreme drought destroyed her family’s fields in Somalia. The sale of grains had come to an end, supplies were quickly used up and cattle perished. In the end it was the neighbors who died before the family’s eyes. “We had no other choice but to leave our homeland. We had lost everything. Kenya was the last hope we clung to,” says Asho.

Once they arrived in Dadaab, the family received a roof over their heads, access to clean water and food from relief organizations like CARE. Back then there was still rice, pasta and meat on the nutritional plan. That has been over for a long time. After first cutbacks in food over the last few years came the terrible message in December 2016: Due to funding shortages, rations had to be cut by 50 percent for all refugees.

But Asho is not giving up. She never has before. For years she had fetched and carried water to take care of her family – 365 days a year if she could. But once a month the young woman has to take a work break. When her menstruation begins she has no choice but to stay at home. Not only due to the pain that makes it nearly impossible for her to carry the weight of the water, but above all because there are no sanitary pads available. “If I don’t have any pads

I can’t fetch water,” the young woman explains. “I usually miss out on earnings for two days because my fabric-lined pants are only able to catch all the bleeding afterwards when my period becomes weaker.”

It’s not just the money, but water also runs low in her household when Asho can’t go fetch it. No one in Asho’s family can take over her work. Because fetching water is a woman’s job. Traditionally it is the Somali women who feed their families and that includes providing water for drinking, cooking and washing.



That’s why watering points have long become more than just a supply source. It’s where women have time for themselves; they talk to each other about childrearing or the household. This chore brings them together even if there are sometimes problems. “The women in the community all have their own character. Often the ones who came to the water source last are the ones who cut at the front of the line so they can fetch water faster. But we don’t allow that,” says Asho with a firm smile on her lips.

Asho is a strong woman even though she never got to go to school.

She has always had to help out in her family’s household. When she was 18 she was married off to a man 45 years older than her. She had a son with him. Shortly after the birth her husband died. Now Asho lives alone with her child in a self-constructed hut made of sticks, tarps and other material she was able to find in the middle of the desert. “My husband was 65 years old when he died. He was very ill. I have always been the sole provider for the family,” says the 21-year-old. “So nothing really changed. Now it’s my brothers who protect me and my baby.”

Every morning Asho patiently waits for hours at one of the water points installed by CARE with funding by the European Union in Ifo, the third biggest of the five camps of Dadaab. It takes her about 20 minutes to deliver one load of water to her customers. Altogether she works for seven different families. One of them is Janay’s family. The mother of two sons is too weak provide water for her husband and children. Ever since the family came to Dadaab after fleeing the civil war in Somalia six years ago, both sons suffer from a serious psychological illness and have to be cared for by their mother around the clock. “I am happy that I can support Janay’s family,” says Asho. “Janay’s appreciation gives me the strength every day to keep going.”

Nevertheless the strain of the daily hauling leaves its marks on Asho. For years she has been suffering from bad back pains, but there is no money for treatment. “Only when I can no longer stand the pain do I visit

one of the health stations in the camp. But that rarely happens,” stresses the young water carrier. “I just can’t afford to get treatment.” Asho also only sees her son for a couple of hours per day. Neighbors take care of her baby while she works. After work, when she returns home completely exhausted, the 21-year-old goes about her household duties: preparing food, cleaning and taking care of her small son.

Around 6.6 million people worldwide have not access to safe and clean water. This is supposed to change by 2030 with the help of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The ambitious goal: Clean water and safe sanitation systems for all. In Dadaab, together CARE and the Euro-

pean Union are doing everything they can to maintain this goal. “In spite of the debated closure of the Dadaab camps, the existing water systems must be maintained as long as people are living here,” explains Rod Volway, Director of Refugee Operations for CARE Kenya. “It is equally important that we continue to invest in training of refugees. They already maintain the water infrastructure in the camps and can take their knowledge of water quality and sanitation systems with them if one day they can return home safely or relocate to another place.”

By taking care of families in the camp, Asho also makes her own contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, if only in a small way. It is still her wish that water will one day cease to serve as her income, and can instead just be

something she uses daily. “I never had the chance to go to school, but this is my biggest dream,” says the young woman. “If I had enough money I would become a business woman. I would get my back treated, send my son to school and have enough time to play with him in my free time.” Until then a long, difficult path lies before her. But Asho doesn’t give up hope that one day, in the morning dawn, she will have finally arrived in the place she always wanted to be. ●



Janay is very thankful to Asho that she carries water for her. Janay herself has to take care of her sons. Since they came to Dadaab from Somalia, having experienced the war and a lot of violence, they both have psychological problems.

[illegible][illegible]

The collage features several images related to the artist Rodin and his work. At the top left is a book cover titled "RODIN" by Philippe Baudouin, published by Taschen, showing a sculpture of a man and a woman. To the right is a black and white photograph of a man and a woman, with the number 4 in a black circle. Below the book cover is a large photograph of a modern interior space, likely a studio or office, with a desk, a lamp, and a bookshelf. The number 1 is in a black circle. To the left of the interior space is a crumpled white plastic bag with the number 6 in a black circle. Below the bag is a black and white photograph of a man lying down, with the number 5 in a black circle. To the right of the bag is a black and white photograph of a man and a woman, with the number 7 in a black circle. Below the man and woman photograph is a black and white photograph of a man and a woman, with the number 8 in a black circle. At the bottom right is a black and white photograph of a man and a woman, with the number 5 in a black circle. A red arrow points from the number 7 to the photograph of the man and woman.

6 Not every idea goes to print, some goes to the waste bin. 7 Eat, sleep, CARE affair – Jens at work. 8 Happy faces, 120 pages CARE affair No. 10: Sabine, Jens and Johanna (from left to right) in February 2017. Hooray!

By THOMAS KNOLL
Photos: JENS MENNICKE

It smells like
teen spirit ... but
how do you cope
with puberty in
a foreign coun-
try? We spoke
to young people
who have fled
their home coun-
tries and are now
finding their feet
in Germany.

“PEOPLE ARE LIKE THE WEATHER”



Here in Grefrath, a small town close to Düsseldorf, a local school has taken in quite a few young people who are new to Germany. They fled from poverty and lack of prospects, very often also from war and violence in their home countries. The young women and men come from places like Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq as well as from Guinea and Eritrea. In the beginning of 2016, CARE started a project called “KIWI” to support schools and communities with the integration of young people who have fled their homes. The acronym stands for the German terms for culture, integration, values and initiative – the competencies CARE wants to encourage in youth. At the heart of this project is a curriculum with about 150 exercises as well as workshops for topics like gender roles, respect and tolerance, but also some for career guidance and for increasing the adolescents’ opportunities for participation. Along with teachers, CARE helps to make integration easier for young people, especially in the school setting. This is why this project is not exclusively meant for teenagers who are refugees, but local students are also welcome to participate in the workshops. Thus KIWI creates a meeting place in schools for its participants. The project is inspired by CARE’s work in the Balkans to promote gender equality and peace, the “Young Men Initiative”. Global learning. South to North.

Today is now the fourth time we, CARE’s KIWI team, are guests in the Grefrath school. There are two so-called international classes here, which are predominantly made up of students who have had to flee their

countries. They are almost all boys with just two girls among the almost 50 students of both classed combined. Horea is one of these girls. She is from Afghanistan, 17 years old and has already worked for two years as a translator in her home country. The fact that the girls make up the extreme minority here is no exception. Of the 300,000 to 400,000 school-aged children and youth who came to Germany over the last two years, 80 percent are boys. Mahdi and Kassim (both 17) and Sajjad are also from Afghanistan. Boubacar is from Guinea



Horea (left), 17 years old
Sajjad (bottom), 16 years old

and joins our little group today. Like Sajjad, he is only 16 and like most of the boys he lives in a building next to the school, a small boarding home.

During our last visit we talked a lot about the differences between boys and girls and also about what they have in common. First we collected all of the terms we associate with either boys or girls. Everything was allowed, from physical characteristics to interests to “typical” behaviors of boys and girls. Afterwards we switched up the labels and discussed whether they were still true. Judging by their active participation alone, we could see how much this topic seems to occupy the teens. What was actually surprising was that the class was relatively quick to agree that there are barely any noteworthy differences between the sexes beyond their physical attributes. Longer discussion ensued with it came to the topic of polygamy. A student explained that the Koran imposes strict conditions on men who want to have several wives. For instance, they have to guarantee that they can care for all of their wives and children to the same degree. The majority of the boys were of the pragmatic opinion that this requirement was too hard to fulfill anyway.

Today we are talking about first interpersonal experiences and the conversation we have with the teenagers turns out to be full of surprises. “It is difficult to make friends here, very difficult,” says Mahdi, but he has been successful in the meantime. Sajjad, on the other hand, very quickly found a friend in Moritz, but now Moritz is spending six months in the USA. They write each other regularly and Sajjad can’t

wait for Moritz's return. Sajjad is also the only boy who has had any experience with a German girl. It was all very promising to begin with and he even visited her at home. Her parents were also nice and open. Over time it came out that she also wanted to "be friends with other boys" and that wasn't going to work, said Sajjad.

Now he agrees with the other boys: They can deal with girls two years from now at the earliest. "First we have to get to know the culture," says Kassim, otherwise it won't work. A lot of the others agree with him. Anyway, they don't really have time for things like that. For now they have other things to worry about – like learning German. Still, partnership and love remains an important issue to them. It is pretty strange to see others their age walking hand in hand on the schoolyard or even kissing, the teenagers say. "We've gotten used to it," says Boubacar, but for them this is out of the question. At a KIWI professional development day for teachers we discussed this topic from their perspective. Some teachers confirm what we learned from the teenagers: "They are putting the matter of finding a relationship on hold for later," as they put it. A vocational teacher reports, however, that some of his students ask him for advice, hope to get relationship tips from him or want to know the best way to talk to or meet a girl. And the school principal adds: "What we sometimes forget is that the German girls are often very interested and curious about their new classmates." The discussion gets livelier when the topic of homosexuality comes up. "Our god forbids this," says Horea,



the only girl in the group who comes across as very confident. Mahdi has a different opinion. He thinks it's good that Germany is such a tolerant country and that you are allowed to have a different sexual orientation. It was much different in Afghanistan. Steffen Groth, a German actor, joins the discussion. He is with us today to lead a few role-plays for the kids. Steffen has been actively involved with CARE for years. He once travelled to Kosovo to organize a theater workshop with

male adolescents. On the subject of homosexuality, Steffen says that even in Germany, people have vastly differing opinions. Many people are basically tolerant, he says, but it becomes difficult for them as soon as it touches their personal life or circle of friends. And the boys in our group have a similar perspective. They have a very keen sense of what is socially acceptable and understand the values that this is based upon. But that doesn't mean that they don't come to very different conclusions of their own. Everyone we speak with today really appreciates Germany for its tolerance and for its laws that make diversity and plurality possible. Because this means for them to be able to live and practice their religion as they wish, without fear of persecution.

The biggest challenge for now is to read the behavior of Germans. "At first a lot of people laughed when you made a mistake when speaking," says Boubacar. He doesn't think that's right and now many German kids he hangs out with are more careful when it comes to this. And, as he puts it, "People don't look each other in the eye very often." But this is so important because, after all, you also speak with your eyes, Boubacar says.

Horea notes that people in Germany often behave in a conflicting manner. One day you are really close friends and talk with each other for a long time, and then the next day it's suddenly: "I don't have any time, I have to go." In the beginning, the young Afghani thought she had done something wrong until she learned that people in Germany are often in a hurry. She finds this strange: "I am always there for my

Kassim (left), 17 years old
Boubacar (right), 16 years old

friends, no matter when, and no matter how long it takes.” But it’s different in Germany: “People are like the weather – different every day.”

Horea was lucky and had attended school in Afghanistan. In many German schools that participate in the KIWI project, we meet teenagers – especially girls – who have never seen a school from the inside before. In our discussions with teachers and parents in different schools who participate in the KIWI project, an Afghani couple reported that the Taliban had threatened to kill them if they let their daughter go to school. Now she is in Germany and in safety, but it seems unimaginable that she could make up for a lifetime without schooling at the age of 16. One teacher tells the story of a young man in her class: He is 17 years old and came to Germany alone as a so-called “unaccompanied minor” and he has had no schooling whatsoever. Now there are signs that he might be homosexual. She is afraid that the

young man could suffer even more exclusion because of it. And there is the case of a girl who is too ashamed to wash herself in the communal shower of the shared accommodation. It’s noticeable at school and now no one wants to play with or sit next to her. Many adolescents still live in these kinds of shared accommodations which have too few places to retreat to, areas to play or to concentrate and study; they lack a safe space for childhood and adolescence. Living in this state of emergency has become normal for these girls and boys.

Here in Greifrath it’s much different and we are impressed by how strong the sense of solidarity is among these young people although, or maybe even because, they also spend so much of their free time together in such close quarters. Unfortunately, this is not the case everywhere. Many teachers tell of conflicts that arise in international classes when teenagers who are refugees meet others their age whose families came to Germany for much different reasons. It’s not uncommon for an international class to have students from war and crisis zones



like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan on the one side, and some from African countries like Eritrea and Guinea on the other side, as well as those from various Balkan countries. Then there are students from Italy, Mexico or China who have been socialized in a completely different way and have a different idea of what school means. They don’t like being taught in the “refugee class” and want to be treated like “normal” students. Sometimes they are embarrassed to be mistaken for refugees. But normalcy is something that the students who have had to flee also desperately need in order to gain their bearings again. Because in the end, the conclusion we came to from our discussions with them is that, aside from their difficult past as refugees, they all have the same issues and worries that every other teenager going through puberty is dealing with. ●

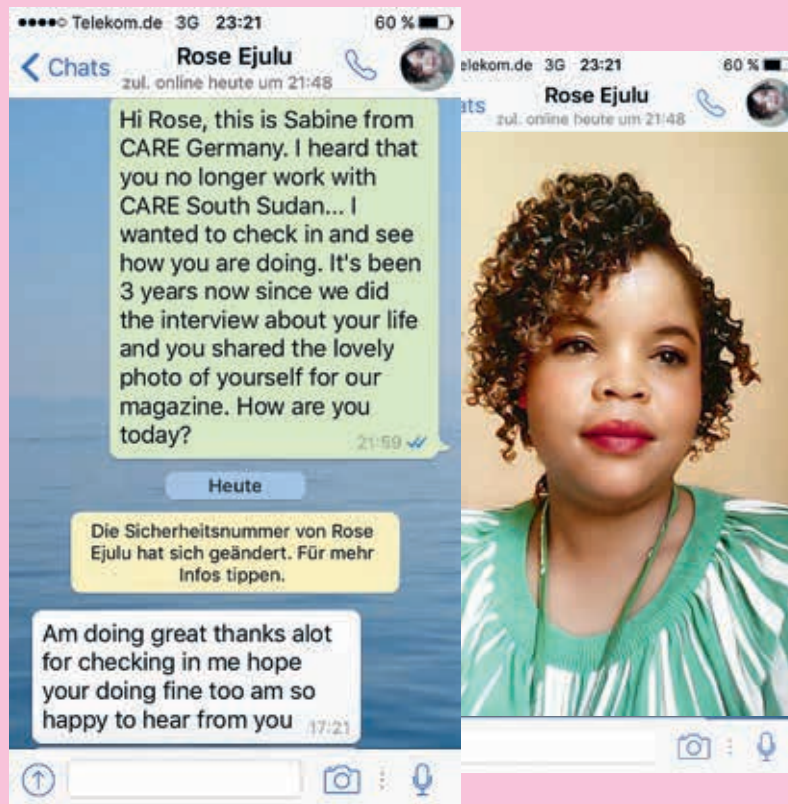


Photo: private

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO ... ROSE EJULU?

By SABINE WILKE

"I want Desire to grow up in a peaceful country." When we spoke with Rose Ejulu in 2013 her homeland of South Sudan was only two years old. The country had gained its independence from Sudan in 2011. CARE affair #7 was entitled "Young" and therefore, we wanted to know how people in the world's youngest country were doing. We spoke with Rose via Skype back then and she told us about her daily life, her little daughter and her hopes for the future. But what about today?

I ask around in the CARE office in South Sudan. Rose now works for another relief organization but a colleague has her mobile number. And in the age of WhatsApp, this is a quick way of crossing continents and time zones. So I write Rose and ask her how she is doing. "Last seen online Thursday," her status tells me. And for now there is only one green

check mark. Not delivered, not read. I wait a few days and nothing happens. A week later, suddenly there's a message: "Am doing great, thanks a lot!" I ask if she can tell me a little more about how life has been treating her. A short answer: "OK, in my free time I will do that." And then came a long message a few days later:

"I have CARE to thank for the strength I have inside to achieve everything I was able to do up till now. For being able to realize my full potential as a woman even though the opinions and ideas of women count very little in the society in which I live. I am making my way through this chaotic life. Today I work as a project manager at a relief organization called the Catholic Medical Mission Board. I oversee one project about maternal health and another for malnourished children. I see myself as an advocate for mothers and children; I want to support their voices and help them.

I know now that I can achieve anything I put my mind to. I possess the knowl-

edge and abilities to lead my own life. Today I am no longer afraid to stand up for myself and to state my opinion. I am following my dream and just have to fight for it. And to raise its voice. When I look at my daughter, who is now four years old, I want her to have all of the opportunities in life. She is brilliant. What I truly appreciate about CARE is the chance and support for women in leadership positions. It is not a given that women can also become project managers. And I got this chance. I am really proud to be a good 'product' of CARE in that sense."

The hope Rose expressed in 2013 for a peaceful future for South Sudan has unfortunately not come to pass. In December of that same year, a conflict erupted between rivaling political groups that goes on still today. There are dramatic consequences that prevent development of any kind: Almost two million people are internally displaced in their own country. Over one

million fled to neighboring countries. 2.4 million people suffer from severe starvation and rape is being systematically used as a weapon of war. Relief organizations like CARE provide assistance, for the most part, through local aid workers like Rose. But humanitarian aid in South Sudan is dangerous: Armed attacks and traffic accidents have become a part of everyday life. Aid workers like Rose Ejulu are heroes. They help their fellow citizens without losing their humanity. And that's why we, too, must continue to have hope and to provide support to South Sudan. ●

AUTHORS

*Meet the women and men who contributed
to this edition of CARE affair.*

Jenny Conrad

is Communications

Advisor for CARE Cambodia.

Pulling the article on “Bloody Business” together required the input of many team members. Five different project teams in Ratanak Kiri helped with interviews; the Resource Production Officer from the field office helped collate stories and photos; the Senior Information Management Officer in Phnom Penh assisted with translation; and there were even had a few CARE staff members answer questions about their own personal experiences. Jenny then pulled all the different strands together from the U.K. before sending on to CARE Germany, so this really was a global effort!

Anika Auweiler

is CARE’s Events

Manager and also a musician. For this edition of CARE affair, she was happy to dig deep into the digestion tract to find if there is anything of value that can come out of there. It is not too often that dealing with sh** can be fun, she thought.

Daniel Al-Ayoubi

is CARE Germany’s

Online Communications Officer. As the son of an urologist, he has heard the wildest stories about bodily fluids from an early age on – at the family lunch table.

Nicole Brune

studies Political

Science and Sociology in Bonn. She is fascinated that the average study time to receive a Bachelor’s degree is almost the equivalent to the average time each person spends on the toilet in the course of their lifetime.

Anja Engelke

studies Media Science

and French in Bonn. When she did her research about errors in humanitarian aid, she learned to better not wear her rubber boots to the office – no matter in which country.

Josh Estey

Josh Estey’s son tells

his friends that his dad is “the poor people’s photographer”. Josh lives in Indonesia with his three amazing kids and has shot photos in over 50 countries. For the last 15 years, he’s been shooting them with CARE.

Stefan Ewers

is CARE Germany’s

Deputy Secretary General. In his circle of friends, he is often asked why you get so much post mail from aid organizations. He likes to refer everyone to CARE’s E-Newsletter then, which doesn’t produce any paper waste: care.de/newsletter

Robin Hammond

is a photojournalist

and focuses on human rights and development issues in his work. He has received multiple awards, including the “World Press Photo Prize”, the “RF Kennedy Journalism Award” and the

“W.Eugene Smith Award” for his photography that has taken him to many countries all over the globe.

Leah Bibi Hanraths

Kurmoo

works in CARE’s team

for schools and volunteers and studies at the University of Bonn. When sitting on the toilet, she enjoys reading books about women’s rights and female political movements. She has been passionate about these issues ever since her volunteer year in Southern India.

Anica Heinlein

is Advocacy Manager

for CARE Germany. When she lived in Palestine for four years, she sometimes would have wished for more restraint on intimate topics: Hearing in detail about the digestion process of colleagues wasn’t such a pleasure.

Christina Ihle
works as a Marketing and Communications Officer with CARE. During her research for the article on midwives, she was encouraged by how obviously relieved every one of her interviewees was to break taboos and talk about mistakes and hurt intimacy during birth – an important first step to create change.

Lennart Kirchhoff
works as a volunteer for CARE and always feels like Julius Cesar when writing about himself in third person.

Thomas Knoll
is the Project Coordinator for CARE's integration initiative KIWI in Germany. When hearing the topic of this issue, he was reminded of his childhood in Southern Germany. To encourage him to do his "business", his parents bought a potty shaped like a blue elephant and put him in front of a TV. Depending on the outcome of this session, his parents would applaud him.

Beryl Magoko
currently lives and studies in Germany and works on her Master thesis, a film about reconstructive surgery for women who have experienced female genital mutilation. Her goal is to continue to advocate on behalf of women and girls worldwide – artistically and if possible also in collaboration with an NGO.

Jens Mennicke
is a designer and journalist and has been leading the creative process of CARE affair since the very first edition. His ambition is to find the right visual tone for the passionate stories that CARE tells. With the second edition of CARE affair, focused on water, he won his first design award. Since then, his work has received over 30 awards. Jens lives and works in Cologne.

Johanna Mitscherlich
is CARE Germany's Deputy Media Director. When she was 13 years old, Johanna had plans to write a book about all the embarrassing stories that happened to her. Almost two decades later, she is hardly ashamed of anything anymore. Instead,

she wishes for every person in this world to never have to feel ashamed for their gender, sexuality, their body, origins nor their wishes and dreams.

Arndt Peltner
has been living in Oakland, California for 20 years. After he sent the feature manuscript about his trip to Somaliland and female genital mutilation to the editor of a public news station, she wrote back that it had been very difficult for her, as a woman, to read this script. Arndt responded that it wasn't easier for him, as a man, to listen to the stories the women had told him. Female genital mutilation is not and must not be solely a women's issue.

Alexander Postl
has been travelling the world for the last 25 years and has witnessed wealth and poverty side by side. He is an active advocate for the environment and development. He works as a volun-

teer on CARE's donor advisory committee and has included the organization in his will.

Ninja Taprogge
has recently worked as Emergency Communications Officer in Kenya, Uganda and Serbia. In her discussions with female refugees, she was very impressed with their openness to talk about personal hygiene – and that something as simple as a sanitary pad can mean so much more freedom for women and girls.

Britta Wiese
has been working for CARE since 2009. During her research about legacy gifts, she came upon a traditional folk band from the German area of the Erz Mountains – they call themselves "De Erbschleicher", meaning "the legacy hunters".

Sabine Wilke
is CARE Germany's Media Director and has the pleasure to manage the production of CARE affair. She was quite happy to be able to curse loudly in the office over the last few months, because in fact, this would simply be a quote from an article: "Oh sh**"...

KIOSK

Read them all: 10 years of CARE affair.

If you are interested in past editions, we are happy to send you a few copies via mail.
Please note: All past editions are only published in German. Simply send us an email
to redaktion@care.de.



#6
Frauen



#7
Jung



#8
Geld



#9
Heimat



No. 10
Intimate



#1
AIDS



#2
Wasser



#3
Lernen



#4
Hunger



#5
Sport

DIALOGUE

You want to get in touch with the authors? Give your feedback, praise or ideas for this magazine? You want to order more copies? We are happy to hear from you on all channels:

f CAREDL @care_de ✉ redaktion@care.de
www.careaffair.de



A big thank you to Imprimerie Centrale, Luxembourg
for their generous support in printing CARE affair.

IMPRIMERIE / CENTRALE

Founded in 1945, CARE is a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty and providing life-saving assistance in emergencies.

CARE places special focus on working alongside poor girls and women because, equipped with the proper resources, they have the power to help lift whole families and entire communities out of poverty.

Last year, CARE worked in over 90 countries around the world to assist more than 80 million people improve basic health and education, fight hunger, increase access to clean water and sanitation, expand economic opportunity, confront climate change and recover from disasters.



Enjoyed reading this magazine?
If you donate 3 Euros, we will know you did ... Thank you!
www.care.de/spenden

