



Walk on My Own

2018

26:25 minutes



13-year-old Ndèye Fatou Fall illuminates the cultural shift in Senegal that has allowed her to remain in school and to make decisions about her own future.

In her film, 13-year-old Ndèye Fatou Fall tells how her life has been affected by profound changes that occurred in her village a few years before she was born. In 1998, Keur Simbara, Senegal was among the first communities to publicly abandon the traditions of Female Genital Cutting (FGC) and child marriage, traditions which had been practiced for centuries.

More than 700 million women living today were married as children and F.G.C. has impacted an estimated 200 million girls and women in 30 countries worldwide.

Mentored by Emmy-winning filmmaker, Elizabeth Hummer, Ndèye Fatou takes us on the journey of a cultural shift which fundamentally changed the course of her life and those of her peers. We learn how the women of Keur Simbara and the surrounding villages were inspired by the teachings of Tostan, a human rights non-profit based in Senegal, and how they, with the help of their Imam, were able to change deeply entrenched social norms.

She records the story of a woman who lost two daughters from complications of FGC and learns from another what it was like to be forced to marry a friend of her stepfather at the age of 12. Through these interviews we see how the hardships these women endured helped create an inner strength that inspired them to become advocates for the empowerment of women.

The wave of change in villages like Keur Simbara has ushered West Africa into a new era. Ndèye Fatou's film richly illuminates that she is part of a new generation of African women who are, for the first time, able to complete their education, marry whom they want and make their own decisions.

Mentor Elizabeth Hummer is committed to helping children tell their stories and be understood. Her work in children's media has earned to Emmy awards and four nominations.

Young people are in a rapidly evolving state of making sense of their worlds and their place within it. By helping youth to tell their stories authentically, BYkids assists them to become more grounded in their personal truth and confident about their place in the world – locally and globally. I am proud to be a shepherd to the individual wisdom of young people on behalf of BYkids. Nothing is more effective in bringing peace to the world than this exchange of self-knowledge.

Elizabeth Hummer

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My film is about the changes that have occurred in my community. Today, these social changes are of great importance, especially for children. If I'd been born in 1990, I would be married by now. Many communities still do harmful practices, like child marriage. Tradition is very strong, and to abandon these practices is difficult. When people from other countries watch the film, if they are still practicing child marriage and female genital cutting, they will wake up after they see this film and will want to stop doing those things.

Ndèye Fatou Fall

ABOUT BYKIDS

BYkids mentors teens to tell their stories through film and share the realities of global inequality and injustice on the world stage. Kids learn citizenry through empathy, using film as a starting point for cross-cultural conversations. **BYkids'** films are viewed and discussed by 248 million teens, educators and their families, creating understanding through storytelling. Join us at BYkids.org.