

Winile – Über Frauen in Swasiland

Winile, 31, arbeitet für eine lokale Entwicklungsorganisation in Manzini in Swasiland. **Champions for South Africa** sprach mit ihr über die schwierige Situation von Frauen im zweitkleinsten Land Afrikas.

CfSA: How did it come that you're now living and educating your children as a single mother?

5 **W:** Okay. I... It started in 1996 when I got my first child. And then the father of the child abandoned me. So I had to raise the first child alone. After that I thought that my life would be okay and I got a second child and after that the second father also abandoned me. We had some problems and then I had to raise my children alone. So it all started like that.

CfSA: What do you think, what made these two men abandon you? What was the reason?

10 **W:** Okay, the first one, I think he was running away from his responsibility. Because I was young and he was 40. And I was 21 and maybe he thought that I am too young for him. And the second one, he was having a lot of girlfriends and I couldn't tolerate that. So I had to leave him, because I was scared of these things that might happen like getting infected with HIV and all those sort of things. And this was a lot of stress so I had to leave and then I had to tell him that we had to separate and then he
15 abandoned me like that.

CfSA: What were your plans for your life before you children were born?

W: I always thought that I'm going to have three kids. And that I was going to get married. But first of all I wanted to be a doctor. An after that, get married and have three children. That's all.

CfSA: And then this smart handsome guy appeared and you couldn't resist...

20 **W:** (Lacht herzlich) No, I couldn't resist. But after the first one it took me four years to be in love again.

CfSA: How did you spend these four years? You had a little baby, you had to earn money. How did you manage to survive?

25 **W:** I was very lucky that my employer supported my further training. I was working part time. And I continued my studies. I was very busy looking after my child, doing a part time job and then schooling.

CfSA: You're an extremely ambitious person.

30 **W:** Oh, so far it was okay for me because it was keeping me busy and I couldn't think about my child's father. So every morning I used to take care of my kid and come to work. At ten o'clock I was at school. So it's a problem when you want to start but I managed.

CfSA: Then these four years were over...

W: Yes, the four years were over and everything was fine. I forgot about the men and then I fell in

love again. (Lacht wieder).

CfSA: And this guy betrayed you...

35 **W:** Yeah, he betrayed me. It was bad but it wasn't
bad like that because I was helped by my friend.
There is a friend of mine and she was there for me.
She used to encourage me. So it was bad not bad
40 like the first one. On the first one I nearly
committed suicide. Because that was my first time,
you know, all the things that you can think about
it. So it was okay.

CfSA: Did you trust this man? Did you think he'd
be faithful?

45 **W:** That's what I thought. I thought that he was
going to be faithful and, you know, when a person
is coming and telling you I'll do this and I'll do that
and then you just... You trust that person and you
tell him all your secrets, only to find that it...

50 Sometimes you take those mistakes you did and
then you shouted and said, Yeah, I made these mistakes on that side, and, well... I didn't know that he
was going to betray me one day.

CfSA: How old are your children now?

W: Ah, my first born is eleven years old and the second one is going to seven, six and a half years. And
55 they are good. They love each other...

CfSA: Boys or girls?

W: A boy and a girl. And I think I'm finished. (Lacht)

CfSA: What support do you have? What about your parents?

W: Unfortunately my mother died in 1999 and I've got my father who was working in South Africa in
60 one of the mines but he's back now. And I've got my siblings. So no one is supporting me. I am
supposed to support my siblings.

CfSA: Why? Are they unemployed?

W: Yes. Some of them are young. There are three of them I'm taking care of them, plus my kids. So
there are five of them.

65 **CfSA:** What do you think now about that all?

W: I know that men are selfish. They just think for themselves. They just use you and after that they



"If we earn money we can rule the men."

go. So if I was still young I was not going to be in love again. That's what I'm thinking. Because most of Swazi men, they are not honest.

CfSA: Why is it that in Swazi culture the husband rules?

70 **W:** In Swaziland they use to tell us it's according to the bible. The bible says that man is supposed to rule the home.

CfSA: Who tells that?

W: The constitution, I think. I'm not sure, but I think it's the constitution. But that's what they told us. The men are supposed to rule the women. But we're fostering equality.

75 **CfSA:** How do you do that?

W: It's just because women... We think that we can have more power than men. Especially, when we are educated and qualified.

80 If we earn money, if we got a car. Then we you can rule the men. (Lacht fröhlich)

CfSA: I'm wondering about this quotation of the bible...

85 **W:** That's what they say. They say, it says the man is the head of the home. Which means when you are the head of her you're going to rule their whole body. That's how they're using us.



Marktfrau in Manzini: Frauen sind die Stützen der Wirtschaft in Swasiland

90 **CfSA:** What do you think about it?

W: I think that should be changed. According to our rights it's not okay to be ruled by the men. The men just think that they can do whatever they want, whatever they like on the women.

CfSA: You've been privileged to do an office job like you do. Who paid school fees?

95 **W:** For my high school level it was my mother. She was earning money. So far I'm coming from a polygamist father. My father couldn't take care of us. My mother was looking for us and she was selling some mats¹ to pay our fees. It's like we were raised by a single mother while our father was still alive. He was looking after his second wife.

CfSA: So you never lived in the same place with your father?

W: Yes. We were staying together. But we had different rooms.

¹ Selbstgeflochtene Matten aus Gras

100 **CfSA:** Have you been friends with the other children of your father and his other wife?

W: Yes. We're trying to make peace. (Lacht leise) My stepmother used to fight with my mother. So they had some problems. But then our brothers and sisters from that mother came to make peace because you could see that it's not working to keep on fighting when coming from one father.

CfSA: Is it common in Swaziland that women of one husband fight each other?

105 **W:** It's common. They are fighting and finally they're bewitching each other. It's bad.

CfSA: Is it common that men have two or three women in Swasiland?

W: In Swaziland, yes, it is usual. I can say maybe seventy or eighty percent of the men in Swaziland are practicing polygamy. They are married to several women. When you are married, you call that „Tega“ in Siswati, it's a traditional word... So that one allows you to have up to ten wives.

110 **CfSA:** How many wives does the king have?



Seltener Anblick in Swasiland: Gemeinsame Hausarbeit von Mann und Frau

W: Thirteen, but they are eleven now. Two left.

CfSA: Is it usual that after work Swazi men come home and help their wives to do the washing and...

W: No! (Unterbricht lachend) Swazi men don't do that.

CfSA: Never?

W: Never. They sleep under the tree. They rest, because they are men.

CfSA: Thank you very much for this detailed inside view on yourself and Swaziland.

Fragen zum Text:

- 125
- Könnte Winiles Geschichte auch woanders stattgefunden haben? Oder ist es eine typische Geschichte aus Swasiland?
 - Wie stellt ihr euch euer eigenes Familienleben vor, wenn ihr selbst erwachsen seid? Falls ihr selbst noch nie darüber nachgedacht habt: Was würdet ihr Freunden raten, die eine Familie haben möchten?
- 130
- Seht euch noch einmal genau an, was Winile über Polygamie und eheliche Treue sagt. Entdeckt ihr einen Zusammenhang zur HIV-Prävalenzrate² in Swasiland von 38 Prozent?

² Prävalenz – Prozentsatz HIV-infizierter Menschen