



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL *BCA*

EXCHANGE, ENLIGHTENMENT AND EMPOWERMENT IN THE PANKOW DISTRICT CENTRE

On October 18, the Behaviour Change Activities (BCAs) finally went into the next round. This time with Habiba Al-Hinai, community trainer in the project Join our CHAIN. A total of twelve participants came together at the Pankow District Center to learn more about the topics of "Female Genital Mutilation" and "Early and Forced Marriage".

After some initial technical difficulties, the event started with a presentation of the project over tea and coffee before moving on to the serious topics. Within the group of participants, of which most already knew each other from a German course, a wide range of cultural backgrounds were represented. In order to be linguistically considerate to all participants, the event was held in both English and Arabic. Habiba also acted as an interpreter and translated what was said into the other language.

In addition, copies of the presentation in German were handed out to the German-speaking participants.

Despite all challenges, Habiba remained calm and skilfully guided the participants through the various topics of the day. There was great interest, especially in Female Genital Mutilation, but also incomprehension and indignation about the practice. Questions and comments were also repeatedly asked and made on the topic of Early and Forced Marriage. Discussions were allowed and controversial and critical opinions were listened to as well.



When a participant stated that some girls simply grow up faster than others, Habiba stated very firmly that:

**“THEY MAY GROW FASTER
WITH THEIR BODIES, BUT
NOT WITH THEIR MINDS.”**

Habiba’s attitude towards both discussed practices was not only backed up by powerful statements, but also with information about the legal situation in Germany and possible negative consequences for those affected. It was particularly enriching that some participants decided to share their own experiences and contacts with Early and Forced Marriage.

After lively discussions and a lot of information, the event ended after a good two hours with a joint meal. Traditional Arabic dishes invited to conversations also outside the event topics and provided a harmonious end to the BCA. It was certainly a very informative event, which not only enlightened, but also encouraged reflection and critical questioning of one's own values and culture.

All in all, another succesful BCA. Thank you Habiba!

