

Deutsche Welle, Learning by Ear 2011– Girls’ Rights, Episode 4

Learning by Ear – Girls’ Rights

Episode 04

Title: Inheritance - A story of Girls’ Rights

Author: Njoki C. Muhoho

Editors: Andrea Schmidt, Katrin Ogunsade

Proofreading: Michael Lawton

Characters:

SCENE 1 MAMA CIRO’S HOMESTEAD

Narrator - Male - 30s
Cheptoo - Female - 15 years
Ciro – Female - 15 years
Fatuma - Female - 14 years

SCENE 2 MAMA CIRO’S COMPOUND ELDERS’ MEETING

Uncle Babu - Male – 60s
Mama Ciro - Female - 40s
Ciro – Female - 15 years
Narrator - Male - 30s
4 elders – Male and Female – 50-70 years

SCENE 3 SCHOOL PLAY FIELDS

Ciro – Female - 15 years
Fatuma - Female - 14 years
Cheptoo - Female - 15 years
Narrator - Male - 30s

SCENE 4 GIRLS’ PARLIAMENT ON THE PLAYING FIELDS

Cheptoo - Female - 15 years
Fatuma - Female - 14 years
Abdi - Male - 16 years
Narrator - Male - 30s
Group of students (parliament)

SCENE 5 GATHERING WITH TEACHER MONA – CLASSROOM

Teacher Mona - Female - 35 years
Fatuma - Female - 14 years
Cheptoo - Female - 15 years
Abdi - Male - 16 years
Janet Social worker - 30s
3 Boys
2 Girls (including Ciro) 2
Narrator - Male - 30s

INTRO

01. MUSIC: THEME MUSIC

02. NARRATOR

Hello and welcome to Episode **Four** of our “Learning by Ear” **Girls’ Rights** series. In the last episode, the friends, Ciro and Cheptoo and Fatuma, learnt how to identify sexual harassment and how to prevent it. The girls were warned about encouraging the harassment when they mistake it for boys’ and men’s admiration.

In this episode, the girls debate inheritance issues. Listen on.

SCENE 1: MAMA CIRO HOMESTEAD

03. SFX: FARM NOISES

04. SFX: CIRO IS CRYING

05. CHEPTOO

(COMFORTING) CIRO, please don’t cry. Take comfort.

06. CIRO

(CRYING) I am so sad. My father is gone!! He is gone!

07. **FATUMA** CIRO our friend. Take comfort. We are all here. Your good friends, Cheptoo is here...
08. **CHEPTOO** ..and Fatuma is here. We came to see you and comfort you. Don’t cry, CIRO
09. **CIRO** (CRYING) He stayed away most of the time, working in that far-away city. Now he is dead and Uncle Babu is in charge.
10. **CHEPTOO** At least your Uncle Babu is here to take care of you and your mother. Where is your mother?
11. **CIRO** She is with the elders. They are outside there planning our future.
12. **FATUMA** Lets go and hear what plans they have for you.

SCENE 2 : MAMA CIRO’S COMPOUND ELDERS MEETING

13. **SFX: ELDERS MURMURS INCREASE (studio)**
14. **UNCLE BABU** Attention everyone. It is sad that my elder brother has passed on. May the Almighty let him rest in peace.
15. **ALL** Ameeeen.

16. **UNCLE BABU** But life must go on. We must now care for the living. Mama CIRO and CIRO. You are the women in this family. We intend to take care of you. My brother would have wished for that.
17. **MAMA CIRO** (SNIFFLING) ooh he has gone too soon. At least we have the farm and the home.
18. **UNCLE BABU** CIRO, come over here. You need to hear what plans that we the elders have for you. Where are you, young girl? Come right here.
19. **CIRO** I am here, uncle.
20. **UNCLE BABU** CIRO, Mama CIRO, I do not want you to ever worry about your livelihood. I, as the elder brother to your father CIRO, God rest his soul, will do all possible to make sure your future is taken care off.
21. **MAMA CIRO** (SNIFFLING) Thank you so much. CIRO and I are so happy that we have you. You have always kept an eye on us when my husband was working in the faraway city. (CRYING) I still can’t believe he is gone.

22. **UNCLE BABU** Don’t cry, Mama CIRO. I have you covered. From tomorrow, I will take responsibility for the farm. You and CIRO will move into my home.
23. **CIRO** (ALARMED) Move from our home? Why? This is our home.
24. **UNCLE BABU** Young lady, you do not understand these things. You need a man to take care of your farm and your home, and also to protect you. I will be taking care of the land and home
25. **MAMA CIRO** Elder Babu, I understand tradition but we should live in our own home.
26. **UNCLE BABU** As the tradition dictates, from now henceforth, my younger brother's properties pass on to me. It is our inheritance law. Mama CIRO and CIRO, as the women in the family, you also come under my care.
27. **CIRO** (ALARMED) Uncle, you can’t own us. We should stay in our home and continue managing our farm.

28. **UNCLE BABU** (ANGRY) Girl, you do not know our traditions. As your Uncle, I inherit your brother’s property. My son Abdi and I will make sure your needs are taken care off.

29. **CIRO** Mum and I can take care of ourselves.

30. **NARRATOR** It is shock and horror to Ciro to learn that she and her Mother do not inherit her father’s property. All the property goes to the male members of the family.

How will Ciro’s friends, Fatuma and Cheptoo take this?

SCENE 3 SCHOOL PLAY FIELDS

31. **SFX: PLAY FIELD NOISES**

32. **CIRO** (CRYING) I am so sad and confused, Fatuma. Where will Mum and I live?

33. **FATUMA** CIRO we are so sorry about your father. Cheptoo and I are here for you.

34. **CHEPTOO** You and your Mum should insist on staying on in your home. I am so afraid that uncle of yours might decide to marry your mother as a fourth wife.
35. **FATUMA** ssssh.Cheptoo, you make it worse for her. What are we going to do now?
36. **CHEPTOO** Let’s call a parliament. I see Abdi coming, let’s invite him and his friends.
37. **NARRATOR** As usual, when the girls are faced with confusing issues, they summon their parliament. This time, they ask a few random friends to join them, right there on the playing fields for a short parliamentary discussion.
- They do not know what the solution to the current problem is, but they sure want to know what the others think.

SCENE 4 AT PARLIAMENT ON THE PLAYING FIELDS

38. SFX: MUMURS OF STUDENTS

39. **CHEPTOO**

Attention everyone, we have a few minutes to discuss an issue with you. You all know CIRO’s father passed away. Now, their house and land has been taken over by her uncle. It is said, this is according to tradition.

We have asked you boys to join us so we can debate this issue.

I propose the motion that: ‘CIRO and her Mother should remain in their family home and take care of themselves’

40. **FATUMA**

On behalf of all the girls here, I second the motion.

41. **ABDI**

On behalf of all the boys here, I oppose the motion.

42. **CHEPTOO**

Let’s debate. Fatuma?

43. **FATUMA**

CIRO needs to live in the house where she was brought up.

44. **ABDI**

It is not her house. She is a girl. It belongs to her father.

45. **CHEPTOO**

She and the house belong to each other. She has a right. Her mother has a right to the house.

46. **ABDI** CIRO is a child, she is the responsibility of my father, her Uncle.
47. **FATUMA** She is the responsibility of her mother first.
48. **ABDI** Women do not have property rights!
49. **CHEPTOO** Says who? Her mother has been tilling the land and taking care of the home for all these years, then suddenly she has no right.
50. **ABDI** She does not own even the chicken in that compound. It all now belongs to my father. He has inherited it.
51. **CHEPTOO** (UPSET) Abdi, can you listen to yourself? CIRO and her mother are human beings. They have a right!
52. **ABDI** A right to be taken care of.
53. **CHEPTOO** Taken care of! They have not asked for help.
54. **ABDI** They are women.
55. **CHEPTOO** (ANGRY) You disgust me!! You are stupid
56. **FATUMA** Cool it Cheptoo.. cool it you two.

57. **ABDI** That is the problem with you girls. You don’t listen. You are weak, you need taking care of and you are so stupid you don’t even see it.

58. **SFX: SCUFFLE (studio)**

59. **CHEPTOO** (ABDI) You.. you.. you are the one who is stupid, you boys think you know and own everything... I ...will

60. **SFX: SCUFFLE**

61. **FATUMA** (ALARMED) You two, stop it.. stop it...

62. **SFX: LOUD CRYING BY CIRO (studio)**

63. **FATUMA** Now see what you have done! We are supposed to help CIRO and now you made her cry even more.

64. **SFX: CRYING CONTINUES**

65. **CHEPTOO** (APOLOGETIC) I am so sorry CIRO, I was only fighting for you....I did not wish to make you more sad.

66. **SFX: CRYING CONTINUES**

67. **ABDI** You see, that is why you girls can not manage properties. You are so emotional.

68. SFX: SCHOOL BELL RINGS

69. FATUMA CIRO, let’s go back to our classrooms. We have to seek guidance from Teacher Mona. Come, let’s go, our teachers are waiting.

70. NARRATOR This did not go well. Who is right and who is wrong? Who knows? Let's hear how Teacher Mona finally guides them on this important issue. Listen on....

SCENE 5: GATHERING WITH TEACHER MONA – THE PARLIAMENT

71. TEACHER MONA Girls and Boys, first, let us offer our condolences to our friend CIRO. As you all know, her father passed away. Lets start with a moment of silence in prayer for the soul of CIRO’s father.

SILENCE

72. TEACHER MONA The ‘Girls' Parliament’ has been summoned to debate on the issue of women's and girls' inheritance. CIRO and her mother are on the verge of losing their property to the male elders in the family.

I have invited Janet the Social Worker as we need her input in this debate.

Fatuma, you called us, state the motion please.

(FIRMLY) I warn everyone to be sensitive to CIRO’s delicate state. She is mourning. I also want you all to keep your tempers in check. Fatuma?

73. **FATUMA**

Our motion today is ‘Women and girls should be allowed to inherit and manage their fathers’ and husbands’ properties.

74. **TEACHER MONA**

Opposing motion, Abdi, can you state for us?

75. **ABDI**

Women and girls should not inherit. It is the responsibility of the male members of the family to inherit, manage the property and take care of the women and girls.

76. **SFX: GIRLS SNEERING**

77. **TEACHER MONA**

Order, order. Let’s discuss this logically. Cheptoo.

78. **CHEPTOO** It is clear, woman and girls are equal human beings. They have a right to property and they can manage it.
79. **ABDI** Women and girls are care takers. They nurture families. They should leave the hard task of property management to the men.
80. **FATUMA** What do boys have that the girls don't?
81. **ABDI** We can manage, make tough decisions and can handle money.
82. **CHEPTOO** Excuse me, the Liberian President is a Woman, there are women who head big banks, Ministers of Finance, successful business women, the list is endless.
83. **ABDI** (STUTTERS) Well... well
84. **CHEPTOO** (SNEERING) Well what? Say it, well what?
85. **TEACHER MONA** Order.. order... let's hear some words of guidance from Janet the Social Worker.

86. **JANET** Thank you. First, this is the 21st Century and not the stone age. Women have their own education, formal or informal. They are well exposed. They are not the hunters’ wives and daughters who stayed home when the men went out to hunt.
87. **GIRLS** Hear, hear
88. **JANET** But this is not a competition. The men and the boys have also grown up in an environment where they were told many times that they will inherit and take care of their mothers and daughters.
89. **BOYS** Hear, hear
90. **JANET** But today is today, not yesterday. Laws have changed and are changing. It is a fact, women have in most societies a right to property.
91. **CHEPTOO** There.. there... tell.. them.. tell them Ms Janet.

92. **JANET**

Cheptoo, girls, boys, although this is a debate where you expect winners or losers, this is not an issue about who wins. It is an issue of changing our attitudes and appreciating we are all equal.

93. **TEACHER MONA**

Boys and Girls, there you are. You now know inheritance is open to both the boys and girls. Our Social Worker Janet and I will be visiting CIRO’s Uncle and the other elders to deliberate on this issue with them. Fatuma, please close the debate.

94. **FATUMA**

In our debate on whether or not women and girls should inherit, the answer is YES. But we all have the duty of educating all those around us. Motion closed!

95. OUTRO

96. NARRATOR

That’s all from Learning by Ear for today! Girls against well entrenched traditions. We’ve just heard, that they can inherit, indeed. Join them in our next episode and find out what other motions they debate at their parliament.

If you want to hear the programme again or tell friends about it, please visit our website at [D W WORLD DOT D E SLASH L B E](http://DWORLD.DE/LE). Your comments are most welcome.