



“DESERT FLOWER” The Incredible Story of Waris Dirie

- From the Desert of Somalia...to the Podiums of the Fashion shows -



WHO IS WARIS DIRIE?

Waris Dirie was born in a nomad camp in Somalia where she was a goat-keeper during her childhood. When she was five, she underwent an excision, as usual in her country and, at thirteen, her father wanted to marry her to a sixty man.

But **Waris** dreamed of a better life and she escaped far from her family.

She crossed the desert and, after many days, exhausted, reached Mogadishu, where her grandmother lived.

One year later, her grandmother sent her to London, where her uncle was a Somalia Ambassador. She worked there as a **cleaning woman**.

AN INCREDIBLE RISE:

When the Embassy closed, she was 18 and had to find another job in London, *until a fashion photograph drew attention to her*. After, step by step, she became a **famous model**, thanks to her beauty.



UNITED NATIONS AMBASSADOR TO HELP OTHER WOMEN:

During all these years, meeting a lot of women, **Waris** realised that Western women did not have excision. She knows that, in her country, many girls die because of that, and she had had serious health problems. The decision to defend this cause came when a journalist asked her:

“**What day has changed your life?**”

Since then, she had decided to make this cause her cause and, exploiting her celebrity, she multiplies the conferences so that, this awful mutilation will stop.

