



NAFIS NETWORK

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Network Agains
FGM in Somaliland

NAFIS *Newsletter*

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Website: www.nafisnetwork.net
Email: nafisnetwork@gmail.com
Tel: +252 2 570203 **Mob:** +252 63 4000692
Hargeisa, Somaliland

Issue

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Introduction



Abdirahman O. Gaas
Network Coordinator

Network against FGM/C in Somaliland (NAFIS Network) is a nationwide network for Anti-FGM/C stakeholders. NAFIS was established in 2006 by a number of Somaliland local NGOs working towards the eradication of FGM/C. Currently, NAFIS has a membership of 20 organizations operating in all the regions of Somaliland.

The main purpose of NAFIS is to combat all forms of FGM/C in Somaliland through coordination and networking for anti FGM/C efforts, lobbying and advocacy for decision makers to take action against it, research and documentation, capacity building for key stakeholders. NAFIS Vision is to visualize the society of Somaliland where all forms of violence against women and girls are eliminated.

The aim of this newsletter is to inform the FGM/C stakeholders, our partners and Somaliland community at large the developmental and efforts involved by NAFIS network, its member organizations and other key stakeholders which is to eradicate FGM/C practice in Somaliland and to enlighten the readers for the long term and short term consequence of FGM/C to the girl and women, and all efforts aligned to abolish this harmful practice.

For the last three years NAFIS involved to coordinate all Anti-FGM efforts carried out by civil society organizations and individual activists by conducting regular coordination meetings including monthly coordination meetings at ministry of labor and social affairs office in Hargeisa, regional and national level coordination meetings to unify the campaign messages and efforts against FGM/C practice in Somaliland by sharing information, experience and challenges.

We as NAFIS Network regarding to continue our strong kinship and cooperation to our member organizations, other civil society, Somaliland government and to acknowledge our potential and supportive donors. We particularly have a special thanks to Kindernothife Germany who supported this bi-annual magazine.

I would also like to thank to NAFIS staff, for their regular commitment and contribution to materialize this magazine, I'm grateful to Mr. Abdirsemed from Sagaljet who designed this smart layout.



What is FGM/C

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of a girl's external genitals. Her body is physically damaged when the healthy tissue of her genitals are cut away. There are no health benefits to FGM/C. Complex cultural and social reasons are often given about why it is practiced.

The UN estimated that worldwide 125 million women and girls are currently living with the consequences of FGM/C. a further 30 million are at risk of being cut in the next decade across 29 known practicing countries in Africa and the Middle East. However this figure under-estimates of girls affected, because other countries (e.g. Indonesia) are not include.

When a girl undergoes female genital mutilation, some or all of her external genitals are cut away. This can be part or all of her labia, part or all of her clitoris are part or all of her clitoral hood (the prepuce). In its most extreme form, all of her eternal genitals will be cut away. This often happens in very basic circumstances with rudimentary tools; it is unlikely that there is any anesthetic or that conditions are sterile.

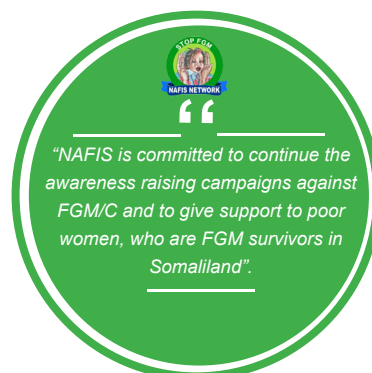
In the harshest form of FGM, the wound that is left may be sewn closed with thorns or string. As small hole is left for menstrual blood and urine. The wound then heals oven and the scar tissue "seals" her vagina. A girl will then have to be cut open, just enough for sexual intercourse. Then she goes into labour, she is cut open even more after this she may be re-sewn and cut open again every time she gives birth.

In Somaliland FGM is performed throughout the country, in rural areas, the mostly sever type have been practiced, while in urban is mostly practiced the Sunna type, which is somehow less sever then infibulation circumcission.

There were consecutive awareness raising and campaigns against all forms of FGM/C which implementing by civil society organizations, government and individual activists for last two decades. Unfortunately the religious leaders have different perspectives about the practice of Sunna type circumcission. Some sheikhs arguing to leave any form of it, since there is no professional health workers can do the Sunna circumcission as it is, while others insisting to continue the practice of Sunna Type, which makes a confusion to any campaign against FGM. On the other hand the decision and policy makers don't sense FGM as women right issue and belief its negative consequence throughout the lives of women and girl.

But, the situation is slowly changing as people talking more and more openly about FGM and its harmfulness, with some women rejecting the practice for themselves and their daughters by saying "we have experienced many problems in ourselves and some our friends died because of bleeding, therefore we shouldn't perform any form of it".

By. NAFIS Team



FGM/C AWARENESS

“Through Drought Mitigation Interventions”

A Combined Efforts

NAFIS network conveyed baseline survey in all regions of Somaliland. As a result of this baseline indicated that the majority of awareness raising campaign is limited to the urban areas. For the sake of this NAFIS initiated drought mitigation interventions to accelerate awareness programs that focused the least reached and grass root communities in remote areas which assigned to implement NAFIS member organizations.

The majority of the rural areas lack basic essential needs than FGM. Therefore NAFIS used drought mitigation interventions to address the first priorities of the community and FGM/C awareness as cross cutting issue. Since it was difficult to start FGM/C awareness campaign without addressing the community basic needs, the following priorities have been implemented; water harvesting, mother and child health awareness, nutritional activities, improving farming skills, promotion sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

However, the key results of drought mitigation achievements are:

- 1,260 household (Toon, Sharmarke, Darasalam, Baligacas, BaliAhmed, Benderwang, Kosaar IDP and Aden Hussein IDP) benefited from the above mentioned interventions.
- 6,300 persons have been given The FGM/C education and awareness.
- The decision makers of these communities promised to abandon FGM/C practice and voluntarily be part the efforts against FGM/C

Best Practice

NAFIS and its member organizations realized the effectiveness of FGM/C awareness whenever it amalgamating the priorities of targeted communities.

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Therefore NAFIS encouraging all stakeholders to address the priority of the community than FGM/C awareness as cross cutting

*Ugbad A. Hashi
Project Officer*

Self Help Group Approach (SHG)

Self Help Group Approach (SHG) is an informal association of poor (poorest of the poor) in a community with a common objective of working together for their economic and social development empowerment and also for their overall area development. SHG is peoples' institutions that build on the foundation of empowerment. The institution supported by three solid pillars which are social, economic and political empowerment. These pillars are required to enable the poorest to claim and realize their rights as human beings, citizens and equal partner in civil society.

In SHG approach there is a three levels of people's institutions first is Self-help group (SHG) second is cluster level association (CLA) and federation level. Self-help group is a small group of women (15-20 members) generally homogenous and members are bound by affinity. They meet once a week, the main activities they do in their meetings includes economic activities like Savings / internal lending, loan repayment transactions and Basic social issues in families and community, to strength their Social bond and Affinity.

In Somaliland Self Help Group (SHG) approach has introduced in 2013. NAFIS Network is the hosting organization and 11 SHG promoting organizations are involving the approach. The approach has been applied in two regions Marodi-Jeeh and Togdheer. Since its inception, the approach accomplished the following achievements:

- 150 SHG women grouped were formed.
- More than 100 poor women took a loan and started small scale business like grocery, small tea shops, charcoal selling, water selling, cloth selling, snack selling and merchandizing business.
- More than 8567 children have been benefited indirectly from the approach.
- Saving culture is developed & encouraged i.e. savings instead of consumption.
- Access to loan where poor women can decide on loan condition
- Decent work environment for women
- Women can raise their voice against harmful traditional practices and bring about change although traditional leaders try to impose these practices.
- Community members have the opportunity to come together to ensure that the local school delivers quality education for their children.
- Girl children are going to school and no more staying at home to look after younger siblings because of changes in gender perspectives.
- The group formation brought out the hidden talent and leadership qualities among the members.
- The long term impact of SHG approach can be realization of human potential and unleash Allah given.



"NAFIS Network is committed to continuity and sustainability of this approach"

*By Abdirisak M. Abdi
SHG National Coordinator*



Education and FGM/C Survivor Support centers

Introduction

NAFIS Network started Community Education and FGM/C Survivor Support program in March 2013, with the establishment of three FGM/C survivor support centers in Hargeisa, Borama and Burao Cities. The three centers were fully equipped with engagement of two Social workers for each center. The new staff were given induction and on job training about outreach activities; referral systems, documentations, reporting and psycho-social counseling skills. **The centers provides the following Services:**

- Counseling for FGM/C survivors
- General health education such as antenatal, postnatal and child care
- Provide necessary care for patients with FGM/C complications

- Referrals and documentation of FGM/C affected cases to the appropriate health service facilities
- Door to door counseling to the poor and IDP settlements
- Information collection and case findings
- Provide extra support for the very poor women with FGM/C complications that need treatment/ surgery.

So far the centers achieved to enlighten the consequences and harmfulness of FGM to the targeted communities and how it's necessary to abandon on it. The centers given awareness and support more the 15,000 (fifteen thousand) women, some of them were given only counseling and make referral while some of them were given medical treatments, such as operation on cysts etc

Amina Mohamed Rodol
Program Manager



Contacts of the three Centers:

① Hargeisa Center:

Magan Hospital Phone:+252 (0) 63 4161012
at Sheikh Madar Area Phone: +252 (0) 634491572

② Borama Center:

Sheikh Osman Phone:+252 (0) 63 4453301
MCH Phone: +252 (0) 634478883

③ Burao Center:

Farah Omar Area Phone:+252 (0) 63 4430830
MCH Phone:+252 (0) 63 4412489



“NAFIS is committed to continue the awareness raising campaigns against FGM/C and to give support to poor women, who are FGM survivors in Somaliland”.