

GOOD PRACTICES TANZANIA

Intensifying rights-based programming to end female genital mutilation in Mara Region, Tanzania

A large number of Tanzanians are affected by FGM: 15 percent of women in Tanzania have undergone female genital mutilation; this varies across regions with one region reporting a prevalence rate of 71 percent. **Many are affected at a very young and vulnerable stage of their lives:** Nationally, 32 percent of girls are subjected to the practice before reaching the age of one; these cases are on the increase with a ten percent increase since its criminalization in 1998. **The situation is not improving as fast as it should:** The overall national prevalence remained at 15% in the last two Demographic and Health Surveys (2004/5 and 2010) and some regions such as Mara and Singida, have reported slight increases in prevalence. **The women who are affected are often also vulnerable in other ways:** In Mara region the contraceptive and intimate partner violence prevalence rates are the most challenging in the country: Mara CPR 11.9% is the lowest of the mainland regions, 57.5% of women experience physical violence often or sometimes, this is 7.9% more than the region with the second highest prevalence in the country. Of concern is the fact that FGM prevalence actually increased from 38.1% to 39.9% in the region between 2004/05 and 2010. (All data TDHS 2010)

The practice and prevalence of FGM has been highlighted as an area of concern in Tanzania by CEDAW, CESCRC, CRC and the Universal Periodic Review. UNFPA Tanzania as a part of the One UN leads the support to the Government of Tanzania to intensify the effort to end FGM.

The UNFPA FGM programme engages relevant ministries including Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children; NGOs such as Children's Dignity Forum (CDF), Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA), Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP); FBOs including Daughters of Charity Masanga Centre and Tanzania Interfaith Partnership (TIP); other UN agencies notably UNICEF.

The work takes a human rights-based approach to end FGM, i.e. working with duty bearers to increase their capacity to respond to and prevent FGM; to increase their accountability through strengthened evidence-based policies; increasing rights holders knowledge of FGM; provision of alternative rites of passage for girls at risk and increasing demand for justice where FGM has occurred. The programme is informed by and aligned with the global UN Joint Programme on FGM/C: Accelerating Change.

Mara is one of the priority regions for UNFPA not only in FGM response but also in addressing low contraceptive prevalence rate, the high levels of intimate partner violence and child marriage among other GBV issues. Progress towards ending FGM is now evident: increasing numbers of girls attend the alternative rites of passage during the month of December. Although the role of police continues to be predominantly in prevention of FGM, cases have also been successfully prosecuted.

The following pages offer an overview of the most successful strategies that have been implemented since July 2012.

Key Strategies

1. Strengthening the capacity of legal sector duty bearers in ending female genital mutilation

Why?

To increase the number of reported cases taken to court and prosecuted through strengthened capacity of legal sector. This is due to the previously low level of reporting and challenges faced in investigation processes.

How?

- ❖ Tanzania Police Force has established 417 Gender and Children's Desks throughout the country. With support of partners including UNFPA and UNICEF, these are being strengthened through Standard Operating Procedures, Guidelines, a standard training package and IEC materials. UNFPA supported the development of the GBV including FGM modules of the training package, the IEC materials and the training

of Mara police.

- ❖ Strengthening of Police Gender and Children's Desks to respond to FGM cases has been done through rolling out standard training package to priority regions. Careful selection of best possible trainers has been ensured: medico-legal experts from the Ministry of Home Affairs as well as the High Court of Tanzania judge trained on FGM.
- ❖ The Police Gender and Children's Desks in Mara were equipped with computers for data management and communication.

What's next?

Capacity of judiciary to provide timely justice in SGBV including FGM cases will be strengthened by having special sessions for these cases. The national piloting is planned for Mara in December 2014, the month when FGM is traditionally carried out in the region. As part of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region's commitment, UNFPA and UNICEF will support the judiciary to scale up implementation nationally. UNFPA conducted advocacy to this end including directly with Tanzania's Chief Justice.



Honorable Sophia Wambura, Judge of High Court of Tanzania, training representatives of legal sector on FGM in Mara region 09/2013

2. Strengthening the accountability of duty bearers in responding to female genital mutilation

Why?

To ensure that duty bearers at all levels and the public at large are informed of the current situation of FGM in the country which is also expected to increase the supply and demand for duty bearers' accountability.

How?

- ❖ A **Critical Issue Brief** was compiled by UNFPA on the situation of FGM in Mara using national data and civil society reports from the area, as 4000 girls were at immediate risk of FGM in December 2012. This was done at the request of Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs to provide them with early warning for response. The Ministry quoted UNFPA in the directives for a stepped up response and the directives were also published in national media after two days of being circulated.
- ❖ Development of mutually agreed indicators of progress: As a part of the training of police and judiciary in Mara the following results for 2013-2014 were agreed upon:
 - Reported cases of FGM up by 20%

- through community policing and public sensitisation;
 - Cases that are successfully taken to court increased by 20% as a result of enhanced evidence collection and interview skills;
 - Successful prosecutions up by 20% due to more solidly prepared cases.
-
- ❖ Strengthening role of education sector in ending FGM: Training of teachers and students in 120 schools in Tarime, Mara on the harmful impact of FGM and to encourage reporting of FGM cases to the police. Each trained school now has a support club and a representative who can refer girls for alternative rites of passage and who have already accompanied girls to ensure a safe passage to the camp.

What's next?

An **advocacy package for Parliamentarians** on FGM and child marriage based on the findings from the investigative journalism conducted by TAMWA in areas with high FGM prevalence is under development.



Police preparing their action plans during 09/2013 UNFPA supported training

3. Using media to increase the demand for justice by rights holders in cases of FGM/C.

Why?

In order to create open dialogue on the practice; to increase visibility of underreported forms of GBV especially FGM; to make these crimes unacceptable; to ensure that rights holders and their families know that they are not alone and know the correct procedures for accessing justice.

How?

- ❖ The capacity of journalists in gender sensitive reporting on GBV cases has been strengthened through development of training manual and subsequent trainings especially in the regions most affected. The forms of violence that have been focused are FGM and child marriage. 90 journalists were trained in 2012/13 and a further 100 will be trained 2013/14.
- ❖ Support to investigative journalism and publication of findings (in the Sauti ya Siti newsletter of TAMWA) has led to increased visibility of FGM including new types of FGM - such as using soda ash instead of blades.
- ❖ Development of TV and radio spots has increased public awareness of FGM including the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act 1998. This work has involved partners from the local level and included focused messaging that promotes men as partners in this effort.
- ❖ Linking up with trusted individual journalists has led to their work being recognized at the global level: Citizen journalist Sammy Awami won the prestigious Gordon N Fisher Fellowship Award for his work on FGM and child marriage reported at the beginning of 2014.

FGM Activists say more needs to be done

4,000 girls

This is a huge number, bearing in mind that the district has a population of less than a million, according to the 2002 census, which registered just under 500,000 residents

By Sammy Awami
The Citizen Reporter

Dar es Salaam. It is November. But down at a village in Tarime District, this is not just another month in a calendar, it is a season of celebrating girls initiation.

A report has it that this time around, if nobody is going to do something, 4,000 girls as young as nine onward are set for this gruesome 'culture' experience. While their parents, relatives and neighbours alike will celebrate after months of savings and preparations, for these girls, it's about their life on line.

The excision of their private parts will draw them closer to death, but when they survive, they will already be introduced to the community as ready for marriage, making them vulnerable to pregnancy at a very tender age.

Mr Joram Wimmo, Children's Dignity Forum (CDF) project coordinator, told *The Citizen* that as shocking as this year's number of girls set for the cut may look, the number is actually dropping compared to past years. "It is from these ugly statistics that we are calling for more actors to intervene", he urges.

With the district having a population of less than a million, (the 2002 Tanzania National Census records the population to be 492,798, with female 259,497 in number), the 4,000 number can certainly not be underestimated, by any measures. In other words, a little more than 1 per cent of the girls are set for FGM.

The UNFPA three page issue brief titled "critical issue of 4,000 girls in Tarime", calls for "an urgent intervention for the protection of 4,000 girls from undergoing female genital mutilation (FGM) this November."

“When the girls see their fellow students in front of them showing her story of captivities them more and more and more of them that they show an determined for a safer path for their health”

JORAM WIMMO,
CHILDREN'S DIGNITY
FORUM PROJECT
COORDINATOR

An excerpt from 1-page article appearing in Citizen 9 November

4. Increase community awareness to prevent FGM and increase demand for justice among right holders.

Why?

So that communities themselves decide to end the practice of FGM, so that abandonment of the practice is from within and is final.

How?

- ❖ Provision of alternative rites of passage has been supported. To date 1367 girls have attended the camp at Masanga Centre in Mara region since 2008. UNFPA has supported this work in 2012 and 2013. UNFPA also supported provision of psychosocial counselling during the camping.
- ❖ Camp opening and closing has been used strategically for provision of information. Thousands of community members attend the graduation ceremonies each year. In 2012, over 2000 people attended the camp graduation and the Minister of Labour and Employment together with the Attorney General acted as the guests of honor.
- ❖ Regular engagement of religious leaders: Representatives of CSOs and religious leaders from Mara and Shinyanga were supported to attend the 2013 Gender Festival in Dar es Salaam, which enabled them to network and to build their capacity in FGM programming.
- ❖ The establishment of Community Resource Centres that will have library services and will act as a hub for community meetings and trainings is ongoing in Tarime through the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme.



Religious and political leaders at the 2013 alternative rites graduation at Masanga Centre in Tarime District. The 2013 camp had a record number of participants, total of 450 girls



UNFPA supported police and judiciary training on evidence collection and handling in GBV cases in Mara region 09/ 2013

Summary of Results

Goal 1: Laws and Policies against FGM implemented;

- 47 Mara police officers and 8 magistrates trained on FGM response in collaboration with Judiciary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Tanzania Gender Networking Programme
- Development and use of a standardized GBV/FGM manual for police (Gender and Children's Desk manual) which incorporates FGM.
- More systematic record keeping by Police Gender and Children's desk in Tarime due to enhanced capacity

Goal 2: Local Commitment to FGM Abandonment;

- A total of 1367 girls have undergone an alternative Rites of Passage supported at Masanga Centre, Tarime.
- 40 teachers and 120 Tarime schools trained on ending FGM are now helping girls access alternative rites instead of FGM
- Awareness of rights holders raised through participation at 2013 Gender Festival.

Goal 3: Media Campaigns and Other forms of Communication;

- 90 journalists nationally trained on FGM/child marriage/GBV response and reporting have greatly increased the visibility of the issue nationally
- Evidence-based advocacy derived from investigative journalism and published in

Sauti ya Siti newsletter has been distributed nationally to further increase visibility

- Advocacy and behaviour change communication has been conducted through radio and television through the work of TAMWA: TV and radio clips were aired nationally in 2012/13.

Goal 4: Integration of Prevention and Care of FGM/C into Reproductive Health Services;

- Masanga Maternity Center is being strengthened to contribute to prevention of FGM
- 20 Mara Region health managers' sensitized on National Medical Management of GBV Guideline.

Goal 5: New and Existing Partnerships with Religious and Traditional Leaders and other Institutions;

- Support coordination and work of Tanzania Interfaith Partnership and Tearfund on FGM response and dialogue with traditional leaders on harmful cultural practices.
- Human rights training and community engagement training to CBOs, FBOs and including traditional leaders through the work of Gender Training Institute.

Goal 7: Strengthened National Dynamics for the Abandonment of FGM/C and child marriage;

- Participation in Gender Festival 2013 and Sixteen Days of Activism advocating against FGM.

Partners

Awareness raising; media training and investigative journalism:

Tanzania Media Women's Association, nationwide including Zanzibar
Dar es Salaam office
Tel: +255 22 277 2681

School based human rights education; engagement of traditional leaders and FGM practitioners in FGM prevalent areas:

Children's Dignity Forum
Tarime office: +255 715 267 550, +255 784 267 550
Dar es Salaam office: +255 22 2775010, +255 768 638 182

Tailor made courses on human rights and FGM response for rights holders and duty bearers:

Gender Training Institute (GTI)
Dar es Salaam
Tel: +255 22 244 3450

Police response to FGM nationally:

Tanzania Police Female Network (TPFNet), Ministry of Home Affairs
Police help line: 116, 111, 112

Faith based organisations' response to FGM:

Tanzania Interfaith Partnership
Tiptz2012@gmail.com

Police and judiciary training on GBV/FGM/C and human rights training in Tarime District:

Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP)

Provision of alternative rites of passage for girls at risk of FGM in Mara region:

Sisters of Charity
Masanga Centre
Tarime
Tel: +255 784 503 126

Lessons Learned

- ❖ ***The enforcement of the law needs to be a holistic effort.*** This includes education campaigns and sensitization of traditional and political leaders; training the police, judiciary and other civil servant; encouraging girls to report to police and supporting them to prepare personal safety plans; engage and support parents for change.
- ❖ ***Alternatives rites of passage programmes for girls in practicing communities should be created and promoted.*** This will prevent ending FGM leaving an unfilled vacuum in the lives of the girls and hence efforts to end the practice will be less likely to fail. This works where FGM is part of a social rite of passage and where it is accompanied with community sensitization. Parents should be involved in the programme, and be supported to resist the pressure to cut their daughters.
- ❖ ***Engaging and using the media is important.*** Airing public discussions can help communities openly question and confront this traditional norm. Journalists from practicing communities need to be supported to ensure they are not in the receiving end of an unbearable backlash.
- ❖ ***Qualitative and quantitative data*** from the local level should be collected to monitor progress and to inform locally relevant responses.

Recommendations

- i. *Government should prioritise scaling up of multisectoral mechanisms that protect adolescent girls: The strengthening of District Child Protection Teams is a good framework for doing this.*
- ii. *Police to upscale nationally the training of Gender and Children's Desk officers and fully equip these desks to better respond to needs of women and children seeking justice and protection.*
- iii. *Police should prioritise the protection of adolescent girls in FGM prevalent areas due to threats the girls may face from family members and the community.*
- iv. *Judiciary to conduct special court sessions for SGBV cases in Mara in December when FGM/C seasons take place, to send warning signals to practitioners and to ensure timely justice to survivors.*
- v. *Local CSO trainings of traditional leaders and FGM practitioners in human rights and laws of the country must be scaled up.*
- vi. *Media interventions should be increased to reach the most vulnerable. Information should be clear so that most vulnerable people are informed of their rights and where to seek protection.*
- vii. *Development partners to continue holistic support and to prioritise alternative rites of passage providing organizations that protect girls and their parents who voluntarily refuse to undergo FGM.*

