

**Exploring the linkages
between child marriage & FGM
in the MENA region**


RAF members' online discussion

Tuesday, 6 February 2024,
the International Day of Zero Tolerance
for FGM

15:00 to 16:00
(Amman time - GMT + 3)

Sudan Presentation

We will see here the case for Sudan, where FGM predominates Child marriage however there is intersectionality between both practices, FGM 87%; CM 60% (S3M 20219/20)



Observation from the Field on the correlation between child marriage and FGM

- Hawa has three daughters, ages 9-11-13 . “There is no schools here , no work, the economic situation is harsh, and there is no security, we are always on the move, what shall I do if I get a good husband for my daughters who will protect them and support them financially, I will definitely marry them, and there are many women who do the same thing. Our tradition here is to marry young”. Fatima asked: “Are your daughters circumcised? Haw answered "" If I had not circumcised them, how would I marry them? They are circumcised. Even if the man who wants to marry my daughter asks me to circumcise them, I will do it again. (A pastoralist family from rural Soderi locality, in NK state, June 2023).
- “My eldest daughter, thank God she was cut when she was 8 years old, so often sick and weak. Now is 15 years old, well built in body. She looks older than her age. I want her to get married. From what I saw in Khartoum, girls were being raped in front of their families. It is better to protect her from being raped in front of my eyes. Her husband can take care of her”. (IDP family in gathering point in Gedarif state, December 2023)

Existing approaches to tackling child marriage and FGM in humanitarian settings

Enforcing

Enforcing the renewed Child Act 2020 that includes child marriage and FGM chapters

Rolling

Rolling the road Maps for ending FGM and CM according to the tow approved National Action Plans (2020-2030)

Innovative approaches to tackling child marriage and FGM in humanitarian settings

Using of local dialects and messages for wider outreach of different ethnic groups.

Case-management and the Early Warning System

Diversifying outreach tools - mobile cinema (Partnership with Red Crescent)

Scaling up CM advocacy and expand in targeted women centres for CCMT

Targeted advocacy with the judiciary system including Imams at a local level. This helps prevent local magistrates from overruling imams.

Key advocacy messages for stakeholders concerned by FGM and child marriage

Advocating for social norm change: We have benefit from (Saleema Initiatives) Methodology in joining between FGM and CM, because Saleema allows us discuss the cultural justifications of the harmful practices in addition to the historical challenges connected with social gender norms. So, the messages of the positive social change relates to FGM and CM will be considered as positive values.

Coordinating approaches: FGM and CM ending become commitment to the Coordination Mechanisms to Change Negatives Social Norms at all levels (National, State, Localities, Administrative Units)

Creating a supportive legislative framework: Due to the efforts made to criminalize FGM (Article 141 – Criminal Law) this paved the way to decided the minimum age of marriage to 18; reviewing the Personal Status Law 1991 and in the draft of Child Act 2021 should continue

Key advocacy messages for stakeholders concerned by FGM and child marriage



Improving access to multisectoral services: Due to the efforts exerted by Federal Ministry of Health to end FGM and CM, a social norm training manual developed to introduce health cadre to social norm perspectives in Born Saleema health facilities seven States.



Earning community support: Saleema facilitators can be recycled on specific CM content, Saleema already includes CM messages, Engaging youth movements, Y-Peers, medical students, OBS/GYN, and introduce **Adolescent** life-skills