Saleema

Saleema and Raising Communities Awareness in South Darfur

The National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW) launched, with the support of the UNICEF Sudan, programs to address the female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C) and The National Strategy for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is an objective response to all official and voluntary efforts exerted to eradicate this heinous custom all over the Sudan to reach the goal of FGM/C Free Sudan. The South Darfur State's Child Welfare Council trained community leaders to facilitate community dialogues of Saleema Initiative for Communication during the period from 01 August to 01 November 2017, by training trainers to raise the community awareness through the community dialogues to bring about change in the behavior, practices and trends on the FGM/C issue. A training manual was prepared on Saleema Initiative for Communication package targeting 80 male/female trainees in Nyala, in the two Localities of North and South Nyala.







The two-week workshop left a great impression with the trainees and witnessed an active interaction and a high spirit for tackling very sensitive taboo issues in our local communities throughout the Sudan, specifically South Darfur.

The training aimed to implement the National Strategy to address the FGM/C crime and raise the society awareness of its damages and the benefits of abandoning it and the underage marriage of child-girls and to provide the communities with scientific information, effects and damages resulting from FGM/C and raising the community health and religious awareness of FGM/C and child-girls marriages.

Community Awareness Through Community Dialogues in South and North Nyala:

The community dialogues in the state of South Darfur started by a group of 80 community leaders trainees (men and women) from South and North Nyala, respectively on the Saleema Communication Package Training Manual a period from August to October 2017 until (2) October 2017, whereas the trainees after being provided with Saleema Toolkit, developed a detailed work plan. They were divided into region-based groups to cover (the schools, health centers, markets, public places and women religious schools (khalawi) which includes in South Nyala, for example, Souk Al-Wahda Janob, and Khalwat Al-Sheikh Musa, Shamous Hall, Sakali Camp, Al-Safia Primary School, Al-Beheer Theater, Hajir Academy for Qur'an Memorization and West of Radion M10/N and in North Nyala includes for example, Souk Al-Malaja, the Friendship Al-Sadaga School, Shamous Hall, Attash Camp, Al-Beheer Theater and Khalwat Hai Al-Imam (Al-Imam Neighborhood).

The programs are prepared by the concerned neighborhood's representative in coordination with the local authorities, whereas (20) community dialogue sessions were held in South and North Nayala by 40 facilitators each, divided to their sites, targeting 6000 trainees, however (6,200) and (6000) showed up including (4423) and (4500) women and (1777) and (1500) men, respectively.

The facilitators managed to reach the target number before the specified time due to the desire of the community in the dialogues and the provided materials, especially the health and religious, besides the numbers of attendees were large in the dialogue sessions. The facilitators used (lectures, discussions and questions, drama and theater, psychosocial support and mentoring opportunities) in training.

Lessons learned and Behavior Change:

A counseling and psychosocial support session was held on FGM/C psychological and social dangers to the family of the girl of (Qirba Village) in Al-Radum Locality during her treatment at Nyala Teaching Hospital for sustaining severe bleeding caused by FGM/C with the participation of the Council and the facilitators. The family pledged not to practice FGM/C anymore and communicate the message to the rest of the family members, besides breaking the barrier between the communities and the facilitators to talk about FGM/C as a sensitive taboo by dramas as an entry to societal dialogues, in addition to hearing the voices of women, girls and young people who used to be silent by brainstorming and addressing sensitive taboos, besides the advocacy, advertising and training sessions left an impact and caused a major change in the local communities and showed the presence of active partners in dialogues management so these dialogues were crowned by a positive outlook from the community towards change as stated in the dialogues and discussions aimed to create a positive discussion environment.

Saleema and Success Stories:

The case of the child girl of the Kalima IDPs Camp who refused FGM/C supported by her father's refusal and when the mother insisted the girl fled until her father came back and stopped FGM/C, thence the information about the damages of FGM/C was communicated to the mother who was convinced and vowed to abandon the practice. Active partners were discovered to voluntarily facilitate community dialogues. The State Council for Child Welfare (SCCW) and the facilitators participated in Nyala Annual Flowers Exhibition, in which Saleema pavilion achieved the top rank in terms of visitors and the interaction with Saleema positive message.

Realistic Challenges:

The low budgets allocated to dialogues due to the high prices and the long distance between regions and neighborhoods, and the lack of Saleema toolkits and materials like clothing, headscarves and posters,,, etc., the little numbers of male participants in the community dialogues and the lack of budget for the media and programs associated with the dialogues resulting in the lack of tools for documentation like cameras, MP3s and loudspeakers and more effective means of advertisement through the mass media.

Recommendations for Activating the Initiative:

Holding Saleema exhibitions in all mass events and festivities and establishing a Saleema monthly newspaper in South Darfur, in addition to the proposal to hold forums in the cultural and social clubs in the neighborhood of Nyala, and holding a Saleema consultative forum to communicate Saleema Initiative message and activate it in schools and we propose the issuing Saleema wall newspapers in secondary and primary schools and create internet and Facebook pages for Saleema of South Darfur and support the theatrical and media works as they have a key role in sending Saleema positive message and carry out a visit to the area of Qirba in the Locality of Al-Radoum, which witnessed the circumcision of a 10-year-old girl who had a psychological shock and severe bleeding causing damage. The visit is for raising awareness of Qirba Village and neighboring communities.







Inside Wad Nubawi Health Center and Umm Dawan Ban Hospital



Saleema Website Team made a field visit to Wad Numawi Health Center in Omdurman and Umm Dawan Ban Hospital in Eastern Nile, Bahri during the two days (Thursday, October 30 and Wednesday, November 01, 2017 to see the type of work with the medical team and the nutrition and immunization team and the extent of families commitments to leave their daughter Saleemat (uncut, sound and healthy). The visit was appreciated by the midwives, doctors and nutrition and immunization teams, who stressed that the Initiative is constantly developing and ongoing discussions within Born Saleema Centers amid the acceptance by the families of the idea of the Initiative despite the challenges arising from the social norms, customs and traditions in the countryside (Umm Dawan Ban) but the constant sessions of discussions, education and awareness raising organized by the midwives in the centers and hospitals and the efforts of the health visitors to households are expected to achieve positive results. Born Saleema is a subsidiary initiative of Saleema Movement being implemented in the public maternity hospitals and primary health care centers. The Initiative was launched from the Ministry of Health in Khartoum State in cooperation with UNICEF Sudan and the National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW) in 2010 and expanded in 2013 to include other six states, namely: Northern, Kassala, Gadaref and North, West and South Darfur States). Born Saleema Initiative aims to welcome the incoming of newly born baby girls, raise the awareness of mothers and fathers to keep their newborn daughters Saleemat i.e. uncut, sound and healthy throughout their entire lives, and collect commitments from families to pledge to leave their daughters Saleemat. Born Saleema Initiative's units are hospitals or health centers with staff trained to provide reproductive health information and guidance on Saleema campaign and encourage families and communities to commit to leaving their daughters Saleemat (uncut, sound and healthy) and create a supportive environment for Born Saleema Initiative through giving gifts to the families who pledge to leave their daughters Saleemat.

By: Tahani Sa'dan

The Specifications of the Health-Friendly Unit of Born Saleema Initiative

The health-friendly unit is a clean and comfortable health unit (with chairs, stools, sofas…etc.) for counseling, discussion groups, health awareness sessions for mothers and child supervisors, and have health professionals trained to provide advice on female genital mutilation / cutting (FGM/C) using Born Saleema Initiative approach, whereat consultations and advice to recipients in a place that ensured the privacy of the information, with the availability of Born Saleema's toolkits and aids were also generated intact (TV screen, flex banner, Saleema pledge poster …) in addition to giving the gift set of Born Saleema to the baby-girls born to families committed to keeping them Saleemat i.e. healthy for life.

Saleema Website team polled the viewpoints of a number of female health workers in the Nutrition and Vaccination Departments in Wad Numawi Health Center along with a team from the Ministry of Health including the Directress of Women and Children Health Care Department and the Supervisor of Health Centers and Hospitals.

Batol Abdul Rahman, the Directress of Women and Children Health Care at the Department of Maternal and Child Health Care, Khartoum State's Ministry of Health, spoke about Born Saleema Initiative saying: It is a branch initiative of Saleema National Campaign, whereas the idea came from the Family and Child Health Care Department, the UNICEF Sudan and the National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW) to communicate Saleema basic message which is (Every Girl Is Born Saleema, Leave Every Girl Grow Saleema) and make it a value in all communities, health units and hospitals to leave baby-girls Saleemat.

Born Saleema Initiative aims to activate the role of health workers in raising awareness for leaving baby-girls Saleemat. It started in 2010 by targeting public maternity hospitals with (3) hospitals and (6) health centers, which are the Saudi Hospital in Omdurman, the Turkish Hospital in Jebel Awliya'a Locality and Alban Jadeed in Eastern Nile).

Born Saleema Initiative also aims to stimulate and move the feelings of the mother and father when a new baby-girl is born to them by sensitizing and raising their awareness of the importance of external female genitalia and urging them not to amputate them and leave their daughter Saleema.

They education, awareness raising and guidance is done by the midwives in the delivery room trained health staff in the nutrition and immunization departments. The guidance continues after the child-girl leaves the hospital at the vaccination and nutrition visits in the health centers by informing them of the natural benefits of leaving the baby-girl Saleema (healthy) for life by not subjecting her to FGM/C to reap the benefits as a child-girl, a wife and a mother, after receiving guidance and the mother consent, the female-guide gives a simple gift to the newborn baby-girl (Born Saleema Bag) and family awareness leaflets.

Batol Abdul Rahman cited Saleema Colors as one of the methods of spreading awareness (signs in Saleema Colors spread in Born Saleema Centers). She said Born Saleema Initiative expanded in the Eastern Nile in 2016 and included (10) health centers and (2) hospitals, which is an evidence of mothers and fathers tendency to leave their daughters Saleemat (uncut, sound and healthy).

On the other hand, the Ministry of Health linked the health educators at the health centers to the community to enter the homes for more guidance and community support to effect a forward shift by using Saleema positive message so the benefit shall be reaped by all mothers and fathers to leave their daughters Saleemat.

The Ministry of Health and the Supportive Ongoing Supervision of the Initiative

Sahar Othman: Supervisor of Saleema Campaign in Health Units

Sahar Othman said: "We have 9 centers in Jebel Awliya'a Locality, which include the Turkish Hospital, Al-Guba Health Center, Umm Oshar Center in addition to Umm Dawan Ban Hospital, the Sudanese Charity Health Center and the International Corporation Health Center in the Eastern Nile Locality.

In Omdurman we have the Saudi Hospital, Wad Nubawi Health Center, and in Karary Locality we have Al-Hara17 Health Center besides the expansion in the Eastern Nile Locality in 2016, which included 10 health centers and two hospitals.

She added that the supervision is carried out through monthly forms by a personnel qualified and trained on Saleema Initiative wearing Saleema Colors and supervise Saleema screens in the centers and hospitals which operate throughout the day displaying Saleema Logo and informative video clips and the banners distributed in the waiting, immunization rooms and the health visitor's office and supervise the registration book and households visits by the health visitors and supervision over Saleema Pledge and Seal the baby-girl follow-up card signed by the mother or father to leave their daughter Saleema. The Seal carries the logo: (because my mother is kind and protective and to me, I am Saleema) she called on all the working groups in health centers and hospitals to support and improve the Initiative.

Wad Numawi Health Center in Omdurman and an Integrated Community Health Role for Healthy Girls

Dr. Rana Abdo, Medical Directress of Wad Nubawi Health Center cited the success stories of Saleema saying now there are mothers who are Saleemat i.e. uncut, sound and healthy mothers, which strengthens their role in keeping their daughters Saleemat. Explaining the conceptual change of idea of Saleema, Dr. Rana Abdo said "I am one of the doctors affected by the Initiative which changed in my conceptual idea about the need to abandon FGM/C and leave the girls Saleemat/healthy, for I used to see otherwise and insist on not giving up FGM/C as one of the traditional customs and norms until I was invited by the Ministry of Health to a training course of the health cadres on Saleema Initiative which corrected my idea and turned me to support the idea within the medical community and my small and large families and I conduct guidance with the health educators and a participant in all awareness and advocacy workshops for Saleema is a symbol of joy and a symbol of the happy family". Dr. Rana Abdo cited the challenges facing them in Wad Numawi Health Center include the high turn in of families to the center which covers all the area of Omdurman and its outskirts, which places a burden on the existing health staff who cannot counsel all mothers especially in the immunization and nutrition departments and we are trying hard in partnership with the Ministry of Health to develop solutions to the problem.

The mother of Saleema girl-child (Reem), Naha Mukhtar who supports the Initiative said: "I support the idea of Saleem so Reem and her 7 year old sister are both Saleemat. I found Saleema an innovative and sincere initiative in Wad Numawi Health Center which convinced not to circumcise my daughters, who are now Saleemat and I call on all mothers to leave their daughters Saleemat (healthy)".

Sakina Abdulaziz, a health and nutrition educator in Wad Numawi Health Center described the Center as one of the important centers in Omdurman especially with regard to the primary health care provided to the children below five years of age, noting: «We have the Expanded Immunization Department and the Primary Health Visitor Department, which counsels mothers and encourages them to leave their daughter Saleemat and we besides providing health care and follow up, inform the mothers of Saleema Initiative and its Logo (As She Was Born Saleema Leave Her Grow Saleema) and we give Saleema Health Card and informative and guiding leaflets and most of the women who come to the Center healthy mothers (Saleemat).

Saleema Leaflets and the Medical Benefits of Leaving the Girl Saleema:

Hanan Abdel Wahab, a Vaccination Technician in Wad Numawi Health Center talked about the information in Saleema Leaflet which gives the meaning of Saleema, which means perfect and physically and mentally healthy as created by God, and the benefits of leaving the girl Saleema with healthy and cleaner body to enjoy a happy marriage, better privacy and safer maternity. The leaflet also contains stories and experiments of Saleema talking of happy marriages and healthier and cleaner woman body as "Every Girl Is Born Saleema, Leave Every Girl Grow Saleema".

Badriya Yaqoub, a Health Visitor in Wad Numawi Health Center, said: "I have been working in Family Control, Pregnant Women Section since 2010 and I love my work which is mothers' counseling to leave their daughter Saleemat. The mother liked the idea amid the reluctance of the fathers, but they nevertheless do a great job and diligence to change their families behavior, promote the Initiative Idea and keep their daughters Saleemat which I verify in each visit and make sure they are on the right path".

Umm Dawan Ban Hospital in Eastern Nile and the Health Value of Saleema:

Saleema Website Team polled a number of female workers in the nutrition and vaccination department in Umm Dawan Ban Hospital and came out with the following information:

Mashai'r Al-Faki Hamed, who works in the Department of Nutrition and Immunization (Department of Obstetrics) in Umm Dawan Ban Hospital, spoke about Saleema Campaign which started in 2010, confirming that the Campaign found a great and remarkable response in the department through the prenatal and postnatal counseling to leave the child-girl to live Saleema in a clean and healthy environment to enjoy healthy and safe maternity, saying soon after the mother is convinced of we give a gift to the newly born baby-girl, which is (a Saleema Bag consisting of a dress, bathrobe, towel and diapers), then the other signs Saleema Pledge, gives her address and a photo of the Saleema baby-girl is taken.

She pointed to the challenges facing their work as health counselors, namely, the lack of conviction of some families of the Initiative because of the grandmothers, especially since the idea is linked to marriage in all the Eastern Nile localities and all Umm Dawan Ban area and its countryside areas, saying the hospital covers all the localities of Eastern Nile wherein the lake of knowledge and poor awareness is very high so "we need more efforts in continuing the dialogues and awareness drive for healthy girls (Saleemat).

One of the successes stories told by Mashai'r is the story of a father who pledged to leave his daughter Saleemat and became an active participant in awareness and guidance campaigns and is facilitating entry to several areas and communities to spread the idea and positive messages of Saleema Initiative.

Nariman Bakhit El-Taher of the Vaccination Section in the Department of Nutrition and Immunization praised Saleema Initiative as a meaningful and distinctive initiative that helps keep the girls Saleemat, saying "we, in the immunization section, provide information to mothers on the meaning and benefits of Saleema to leave the girls as created by The Almighty God, besides it means security and safety to the child-girls and when they become mothers, as well when they enjoy happy marriages, fertility, safe motherhood, and giving births without pain and suffering.

One of the challenges indicated by Nariman Bakhit is the opposition by some mothers to the idea of leaving their daughters Saleemat especially as they are pushed by grandmothers, noting that despite the difficulties, but there are stories of success of mothers who thanked our efforts in convincing the grandmothers so they had left their daughters Saleemat besides some grandmas joined the household and community counseling teams after we successfully convinced them.

Bodor Abdul Salam Hamed of the Nutrition and Immunization Section at the Department of Health Care

described her job which includes weighing babies and categorize them in normal, simple medium and acute case, as the latter is referred to the Immunization Department. She said: "We have Saleema Initiative which we introduce to the mothers and encourage them to adopt it and leave their daughter Saleemat however some mothers require the consent of aunts and grandmothers to leave their daughters Saleemat.

Bodor said Saleema has received big response in banquet halls and social events specially by graduate mothers who said «What was applied to us, we will not apply to our daughters i.e. FGM/C.»

Raba'a Al-Adawiya Mohammed a Clinical Psychologist at the Psychiatric Clinic in Umm Dawan Ban Hospital. She said she has an active role in the community as a whole and in Umm Dawan Ban Hospital, in particular, saying she worked in educational and awareness workshops with the medical team and with midwives and nurses in the Hospital and in different areas. She cited the positive response from the families; however, the countryside needs more awareness in clubs, homes and neighborhoods. She said although the mothers receive sufficient education inside the hospital, but when they return to their areas, they find rejection and opposition from the families and the position of the mother is always weaker because of the intervention of the fathers or grandmothers. At the awareness gatherings, we receive promises and pledges to leave the girls Saleemat, but the follow-up indicates a retreat from the commitment as evidenced by a mother whom I educated and at the follow-up visit we discovered that she did not honor her pledge and attributed it to the pressure from the family so we need more awareness and education in all peripheral areas. She cited success stories in parallel to the challenges like the story of our success with a relative of hours who challenged his mother and protected his daughter from FGM/C and vowed to report to the police of anyone who commit the crime against his daughter, who is now Saleema, which encourages others to follow suit.





The Department of Personnel Department in Umm Dawan Ban Hospital Supports Saleema Initiative:

Shadia Mohammed of Umm Dawan Ban Hospital's Personnel Department praised Saleema positive and said:" I have two daughters who are Saleemat, healthy, married and are giving births safely, and Saleema is a useful and beautiful campaign. Through my experience there was opposition from the grandmothers but I and my husband refused categorically to subject our daughters to the crime of FGM/C and we kept them healthy and now they are healthy, and one of them works in health education and awareness on a Saleema Initiative.

We came out believing that Saleema Initiative is a societal value and will prevail in all societies for its substantial benefit and will dominate by the right commitments and making the best use of the good body and mind health given by God because for Saleema means the small and big commitments as a real addition and step forward to creating a better society. Besides, there are many components of the families and the entire communities to keep their daughters Saleemat, and at the heart of this commitment is to fulfill the pledge to protect and preserve the girls as God created them, to stay healthy, perfect and pristine and not exposed to harm and the right decisions the logo "Every Girl Is Born Saleema, Leave Every Girl Grow Saleema" will prvail.

Tahani Sa'dan

Saleema Website Work Team held, in collaboration with the Association of Wad Sulfab Students at Universities and Higher Institutes, Saleema Initiative Forum in Wad Sulfab Administrative Unit, Al-Hassaheissa Locality in El Gezira State, Saturday noon, 25 November 2017. The Forum was attended by 48 young women and men. It aimed to introduce the Saleema initiative at the Wad Sulfab unit and promote the idea of communication and dialogue from within the local communities and identify the challenges facing the process of change and transmit Saleema›s fundamental message calling for leaving child-girls Saleemat i.e. uncut, sound and healthy.

Report by: Tahani Sa'dan

saleema Forum in Wad Sulfab Unit, El Gezira State,,

Interaction and Commitment to Saleema Goals



Saleema Initiative ... The Idea and Goals:

The Forum was started by Ustaza/ Nafisa Al Zaila'ei, Saleema Website Administrator, who explained the idea of the initiative and its beginnings, whilst, Ustaza/ Tahani Sa'dan of Al-Alag Center for Press Services also introduced the initiative, its goals and positive messages with special emphasis on the new discourse that makes families and communities key partners in the Initiative.

Ustaza/ Tahani Sa'dan said: Saleema is all about child-girls from childhood to adulthood, noting that the initiative began in 2008 so the ideal idea of keeping child-girls Saleemat i.e. uncut, healthy and sound spread all over the Sudan and raised the interest in neighboring countries such as Somalia and Egypt. She said Saleema›s model of positive communication is the gift of Sudan to the girls and women to have a better future wherever are, explaining that the Initiative added a new discourse around the female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C), which includes positive communication approaches at all levels, as well as the used language. The initiative, Tahani said represented a shift from focusing on the problem to focusing on the solutions, whereas, the associated feelings have a high degree of confidence, optimism and positive involvement of the others in the dialogue and the process of change.

The Initiative aims, according to Tahani, to promote the use of positive expressions to describe the non-circumcised girls, and encourage discussion around the female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C) so Saleema makes the girls confident, solicits welfare and protection for mothers to enjoy safe maternity so the mother will live a good life full of social homogeneity and harmony and helps bring about the positive and nice change for women and girls of all ages and reflects the positive aspects of the family and the society and works to make people feel comfortable, willing, communicating and supports and encourages families.

Saleema Messages:

Saleema messages include the good decisions through the positive messages which produced by the society, such as 'I am Saleema because I am strong in my decision', 'I am Saleema because people change to the better' and 'I am Saleema because I am not afraid of change', as Saleema›s fundamental message says (Every girl is born Saleema, leave every girl grow Saleema)›

The Initiative also aims to provide a favorable and orderly opportunity and a supportive atmosphere for the families to leave their young daughters Saleemat throughout their entire lives. The Initiative works in hospitals in the Sudan to collect the family›s commitment to Saleema and to welcome the incoming of their newly born baby-girls who will remain Saleemat i.e. uncut, sound and healthy throughout their entire lives.



Community Commitment and Dialogues:

It is worth mentioning that a significant number of attendees committed to leave their daughters Saleemat, in addition to the families that separately announced the abandonment of FGM/C then the floor was opened for discussion which was started by Dr. Mohammed Abdel-Rahman, a doctor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Al-Hasaheissa Hospital who hailed the Initiative as one of the initiatives that work to bring about the social change from within the families and promote positive decisions for women and girls. He said: »On the medical side, we have faced several problems caused by FGM/C, and there is a question we must ask, which is: What is the benefit of FGM/C and what harm it does to the cut genitalia?

He added: "We have many problems because of the FGM/C especially at giving births, for the circumcised women face various forms of complications and difficulties and pain, such as postpartum hemorrhage, which is one of the most important emergencies In the Obstetrics And Gynecology Department, noting that some hospitals do not have a blood unit to be even worse for rare blood groups which puts the prospective mothers at greater risk.

A significant number of the attendees agreed that they had benefited from Saleema Initiative especially their involvement and hearing their voices in a case that had exhausted them for many years and supported the idea of Saleema to provide support by raising awareness, citing lesser FGM/C practices for the societal health awareness of the danger of the practice in addition to the higher rate of education.

One of the attendees named Saida Yahiya, who is one of the Saleemat i.e. uncut, sound and healthy ladies from Wad Balol Slum. She said: «We do not practice FGM/C and we are healthy, and our women are not at risk of delivery. I am proud to be Saleema i.e. uncut and healthy and I hope that all the regions will follow suit and leave their daughters Saleemat i.e. uncut and healthy».

The rate of maternity deaths in Wad Balol Slum is reportedly lower compared to the other regions in El Gezira State. We consider Wad Balol Slum women lucky women who enjoy safe normal birth.

Experiences and Interaction with Saleema:

The story of Ustaza/ Aida Ali, a Directress of a school for girls who said: I got married at an early age and I did not give birth for six years because of FGM/C. During that period I was constantly following up with doctors. After I was treated, I gave birth to a child by a caesarean section. The baby died and again I gave birth to two girls who are now 11 and 13 years old who are now Saleemat i.e. uncut, sound and healthy so I call all mothers to leave their girls grow Saleemat, safe and secure.

Child-girl Moshriga Nur El-Din is one of the FGM/C victims. She interacted with the Initiative bitterly screaming, and asked to send a message to the mothers to leave their daughters Saleemat, and offered to adopt the Idea of the Initiative to educate her colleagues at the school by reading Saleema Book to them to raise their awareness and introduce Saleema Initiative for Communication to them to help keep her friends Saleemat.

At the end of the Forum, the participants pledged to continue the dialogue from within their various communities and contribute to the process of change. They signed The Taga (the roll of cloth) to reiterate their commitment to keep their daughters Saleemat (healthy).

Wad Sulfab Students Association Deputy Chairperson, Ustaza/ Sakina Abdul Rahman announced a weekly forum on the Saleema Initiative within Wad Sulfab Students Association House in Wad Sulfab for further societal knowledge and awareness to get all the families in the region onboard for a collective FGM/C abandonment. She said that although the slums around Wad Sulfab did not use to practice FGM/C , but they were affected by the practicing communities and they lately started to practice FGM/C. She cited a phenomenon of well-educated mothers who get their daughters circumcised as an indicator of no correlation between the practice and the level of education, but rather the level of awareness instead. She said: «We at the Association of Wad Sulfab Students at Universities and Higher Institutes are keen to hold a weekly forum to discuss and highlight the dangers of FGM/C through the Saleema Initiative for Communication.

Kassala

Community Dialogue Promotes Opportunities of Child-Girls Protection,,,

A Novel and Advanced Method of Work and Awareness

The State of Kassala completed in the middle of this year 2017 community dialogue sessions in partnership, co-operation and coordination between the official and popular efforts and international assistance to improve the protection opportunities and strengthen the capacity of state›s social institutions to improve mechanisms of the protection process, whereas the community dialogue sessions provided an integrated approach to measure the attitudes and views of the local communities towards the female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) issues especially in the difficult environments of children and women health compromising practices.

Official and popular entities participated in launching the community dialogue session like the Minister of Social Affairs and the Commissioner of the Localities of Aroma, North Delta, Rural Kassala and Khashm Al-Qirba and Ustaz/ Abdul Ra'ouf Al-Siddig, the Director of Protection at the UNICEF Sudan and the people›s and societal leaders in the State's different localities.



The State Child Welfare Council (SCCW) created a new approach to shed light on FGM/C issue based on the elements of excitement to a cause deeply rooted in the soil and consciousness of the local society.

The sessions saw extensive discussions and dialogues that formed an appropriate platform for launching the battle for the FGM/C elimination. (2880) sessions were held with (720) sessions in each of the four selected localities in addition to the selection of four communities from each locality, and holding 180 sessions per community aimed at conducting an extensive and comprehensive dialogue on FGM/C issues in the four localities including (17045) men and (16780) women.

In the Locality of Rural Kassala 720 sessions were held with the participation of 4,555 men and 3,165 women, including the communities of Karti, Qulsa, Awadh and Amara. The sessions dealt with FGM/C related subjects in 449 times by 62% and underage child-girls marriages in 271 times at 38%, which is an evidence of the prevalence of FGM/C in Rural Kassala so the area is still in urgent need for further discussion and awareness about the risks of FGM / C.

The community dialogue sessions in Rural Kassala showed that (1822) listened to Saleema Program on the radio versus (5898) who did not, which prove the lack of information about the FGM/C risks besides the low number of listeners is also attributed to the low culture of listening in general, therefore this situation requires further dialogues and deep studies from all perspectives. (not listening to Saleema Radio).

In the North of the Delta Locality, in the northern part of the State bordered by the Red Sea State from the north, Rural Aroma Locality from the south and the two Localities of Teluk and Hameshkoreb from the east and the River Nile State from the west. 720 sessions were held with the participation of 3547 men and 4170 women covering the communities of Metateb, Al-Tadamun, Al-Wihda, Digna and Kloltab with the average of ten participants per session which dealt with FGM/C subjects 416 times at 58% and underage marriages in 304 times at 42%. The phenomenon of FGM/C is so rampant in the Locality which needs more sessions of discussion and awareness about the FGM/C risks. The interventions in the coming days will focus on FGM/C caused damages and problems.

In Rural Aroma Locality located in the northern tip of the State of Kassala bordered by the North Delta, the River Nile in the northwest, the Atbara River in the west, Hamshkoreb Locality in the east and the Rural Kassala Locality from the south 720 session were held with the participation of (4638) men and (4182) women, covering the communities of Al-Nasr, Al-Salam, Al-Sagolab and Tindlai). The community dialogue sessions recommended the continuation of the public dialogue sessions for further awareness and education and extensively shed light on the dangers of FGM/C and underage child-girls marriages.

The Conclusion :–

The conclusions and recommendations of the community dialogue sessions in the State of Kassala showed that the integrated approach to community dialogue is one of the most effective approaches to measuring the attitudes and opinions of the community towards FGM/C and underage marriage issues. The number of participants in the community dialogue sessions in the four municipalities reached 33825 participants representing 6% of the 571691 total populations of the four localities. The spontaneous sessions in the social events and festivities houses achieved better results than the other sessions due to the depth of the dialogue that took place. The sessions showed the tangible results of SCCW efforts and the donor organizations in the field which positively reduced the phenomenon of underage marriage in the communities concerned, due to the high awareness of the risks of child-girls marriage.