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The Next Round Is For the Young Men/Women

The world celebrated the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) on the sixth of last February, which captured the attention of the Sudanese young men and ladies who demonstrated awareness of the seriousness of this obnoxious habit and their intention to work for its elimination altogether. I touched this when I participated in the ceremony held by Ana Lan Initiative (I am not), commemorating the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting (FGM/C) i.e. female circumcision on Saturday, 06 February which was declared by the United Nations as international day to celebrate abandoning the worst anti-human practice in history, which is cutting and mutilating the female genital parts

The celebration was held by the Global Initiative at Khartoum International Preparatory School (KIPS) and since the initiative is originally a youth initiative and, of course, most of the participants were youth, who presented segments of their own groups' activities, whilst others came, same as did I, to participate and celebrate and spend some time with friends

The manner of their celebration was different, their perception of the issue and sense of the gravity of the problem and their swift response and adoption of issue. Their performance on the theater was vital and full of activity reflecting their awareness of the seriousness of the problem and the danger it posed to the health of the child-girls and the women and mothers of the future. The theatrical performance was wonderful and sincere and presented the message honestly with tangible solutions actively and energetically

Some grasped the opportunity and introduced themselves to the visitors and talked about their groups' various activities in the field of health and the fight against breast cancer and the call for early detection, and in the sphere of combating violence against women and underage marriage of child-girls and everything relating to violence against the child-girls. No doubt that many of these young people organized themselves and helped others so the groups of activists spread and have and still are playing supportive social roles like Nafir Group, Al-Hawadith (Accident Hospital) Street Group, Wosool, and Education Without Borders groups, which are all working under no tutelage and played noble roles in bridging the gaps as they decided not to stand idly and handcuffed to offer as much as they can

I also touched such at the sites of Saleema rounds and activities at the universities and the different communities whereas the young people constitute the propelling spirit for engagement in work and organization effectively and tirelessly for the events and showed a lot of initiatives that they can work on

Here we believe that this strong will that has emerged amongst the young people need the support and encouragement of the actors in the fight against the female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C) at the level of the official bodies and the civil society organizations (CSOs) operating in the field, by encouraging them to engage in the process of education and awareness within their institutions and surroundings through health convoys to promote the values they are advocating so they can be true partners in the process of the social change, especially with regard to the fight against harmful habits and in particular the female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C) and underage marriage of child-girls

Saleema

El Gezira Celebrates FGM Abandonment Day, Feb. 6

Medani

The National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW) General Secretariat celebrated, in collaboration with the Child Welfare Council in El Gezira State, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and partners, the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation in El-Gezira Club in Wad Medani, Monday 15 February 2016. The celebration was honored by NCCW General Secretary, Ustaza / So'ad Abdel Aal, the NCCW and Khartoum State Child Welfare Council members, the Minister of Social Welfare in El Gezira State, El-Fatih Hashash, Legislative Council's Social Affairs Committee Chairman, Abdullah Dheirais and El Gezira State Child Welfare Council Secretary-General, Ustaza Enaam Aldoleeb in addition to the Family and Child Protection Unit, Um Kalthoum School for the Deaf and Girls Education Administrations in Great Medani Locality, Eastern El Gezira Locality, Southern El Gezira Local, El-Kamlin Locality, El-Hassa Hissa Locality and Um Al-Qura Locality. The festivities will continue until next Thursday to include visits to the localities and workshops in the framework of the abandonment of female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C) i.e. female circumcision. The celebration started with a march of children led by the Minister of Social Affairs, in which they expressed their rejection of female genital mutilation .



The Secretary-General of the National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW), Ustaza / So'ad Abdel Aal addressed the celebration, saying in her speech, that the national dialogue will lead to results to enhance the childhood issues, saying that the purpose of the celebration is to participate with the international community to promote the children issues and social protection and create a sustainable vision to voluntary abandon the female circumcision and the harmful habits so the children in Sudan will enjoy security and safety in a suitable environment. She said: "this celebration is a measure and action we are accustomed to hold to find out the problems and see the previous achievements and challenges, and to discuss how to move forward at a faster pace and probe the possibility of achieving social protection for our children who are our responsibility before God, so they must be protected from these harmful practices to enjoy good health and wellbeing", noting that all the constitutions provided for the fight against harmful habits besides the political commitment to do so was translated to many initiatives at the scope of the country's 18 states

She noted that Sudan adopted, along with partners, a specific vision for sustainable development from 2016 to 2030 which are the years for work on women and children wellbeing and to abandon the harmful practices such as the female genital mutilation and the underage marriage of child-girls, saying: "We are endeavoring to create a generation free from these practices, and we promote such work through education, the media, the youth and practical dialogues among girls and with our partners across the public and private sector, the official and non-official organs and the civil society organizations and activists so all the girls of Sudan will be Saleema (sound and healthy), besides we are moving ahead, at the local, regional and international levels, in monitoring progress and launching initiatives. Saleema is one of these initiatives, which Sudan sent to the regional community and has received praise and interest from recipient communities whereas some communities declared abandoning female circumcision and adopting Saleema initiative, and we will through this celebration hold a consultative meeting of the main priorities of the states' childhood councils issues and all the outputs of this consultative meeting, headed by the El-Gezira State Governor, Mohammad Tahir Eailla and will establish a working group in the field of childhood, besides we are here to meet with all those who are working with us in the field of children's issues to come up with recommendations for the best interest of children and push them forward" .

Meanwhile, Ustaza Enaam Aldoleeb, the Secretary General of El-Gezira State Council for Child Welfare, confirmed the state society rallying in support of the Initiative and the complete abandonment of female genital mutilation by 2018 to reach a safe and stable childhood with the participation of the local communities and the Council Secretariat and the partners so the children will enjoy a dignified and safe life.

El-Gezira State Minister of Social Affairs, El-Fatih Hashash also address the ceremony and stressed the state government concern with the issues of childhood and pointed to a number of international requirements for the protection of children which will be fulfilled, praising the role of the National Council for Child Welfare for choosing El Gezira State to host this celebration, stressing the need to come up with a project prohibiting the female genital mutilation in El Gezira side by side with all the Council's programs and efforts for child protection. He said: "We are directly responsible and we are working hard to enact a law to protect the child-girls to be presented to the legislative Council for ratification as per Article 13 and execute all programs at all levels, besides we are ready to work hand in hand with the National Council. Moreover I would like to thank the partners and the children participating with us today and those supporting the issue materially and morally, we are in the state greatly appreciate the exerted efforts for our children welfare and protection from harmful practices in Sudan" .

The State Legislative Council's Social Affairs Committee Chairman, Abdullah Dheirais also addressed the ceremony and wooed attention to the children in rural areas and educating parents and getting them involved in making the right decisions, noting that El Gezira state has the largest countryside and biggest number of localities in Sudan, reiterating the state commitment to the enactment of a law criminalizing the practice of female circumcision and protecting children. He also urged for concerted efforts of the institutions, the civil society organizations and El Gezira Child Welfare Council so our children will enjoy protection and safety

El-Gezira State Legislative Council's Social Affairs Committee Chairman, Abdullah Dheirais also addressed the ceremony and thanked the audience and promised to protect the child-girls from any harmful practice

The celebration included a cultural program of songs and performances presented by the child-girls of several schools participating in the celebration from a number of El Gezira State localities calling for the protection of the children rights and urged the communities to leave them Saleema (sound and healthy) and chanted the Saleema Initiative logo which says: Every girl is born Saleema, let her grow up Saleema .





The Preliminary Results of Saleema Initiative evaluation study

Dr. Douglas: In-depth information dig out and analysis and interpretations in next stage

Dr. Douglas, an expert of George Washington University, presented the preliminary results of the evaluation study survey of Saleema Initiative for Communication in a briefing workshop on social norms and priorities for implementation to the secretaries of the states childhood councils and information administrators at the Hall of the National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW) on 29 February 2016.







The study focused on the impact of Saleema programs on the viewers of Saleema's products messages in the mass media and and the degree of acceptance of Saleema messages in the different states of Sudan. Dr. Douglas said the rating covered all Saleema programs including the community dialogues and publicity and their effect on the social norms.

The quantity measurement took place in the 18 states of Sudan, topped by the most important measurement, which is the measurement of Saleema brand and mark and the quality of all presentations using indicators of of the public understanding of Saleema messages and the importance of the linkage of the demographic characteristics to measure the extent of change and the extent of Saleema measurement use the extent of knowledge and awareness of the verity and thoughts for abandoning female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C).

Dr. Douglas said the design of the survey study is based on multiple stages, saying the baseline survey was conducted in 18 states and the survey campaign will continue, however it is difficult to find neutral groups taking in consideration the influence of different indigenous effects so the study was conducted in phases to measure the difference of exposure to the mediums and messages of Saleema to know the degree of the positive effect.

He said the study and the collection of information will go on for two years to come with the same groups from whom the information was gathered on consideration that they have enough information to gauge the effect of Saleema programs.

The sample was scientifically designed by statistician and expert Dr. Siddig Mohammed Ahmed. It simultaneously covers 18 states by selecting two localities for gathering the fundamental data, whereas the sample consists of 1346 households from which the data will be gathered during the next three years. The sample is representative and was formulated in a scientific way and is linked to the national system for measuring the information management system.

One of the design data seeks to follow any activity through five questions:

Who implemented the activity?
The type of the activity
Its timeframe
The number of attendees (audience), and
The local partners .

In addition to the qualitative survey, which covers the intensive discussion groups and the individual interviews with the community leaders and government employees to measure the development in receiving the Saleema messages?

One of Saleema tools is audiovisual playing the sound and the picture then feedbacks are gathered from the recipients who represent the different community members and know their understanding of the message and the extent of Saleema a role in the process of change in the local community, whereas 20 audiovisual messages are played in the different locations in the sample areas as a measurement indicator. Some results and initial characteristics of the sample are gender-based and covered 54.2% men and 41.37 women, mostly with below secondary education, 74 married and 25 unmarried, however there is a difference in the age groups whereas less than 37% are youth.

Dr. Douglas said that it was clear that most of the people who knew Saleema expressed their admiration of it, noting that the effect of age was evident for the younger the better the admiration and loving of Saleema Initiative. The bottom-line of the study is to know the efficacy of Saleema product and whether there are positive results and a public acceptance by answering a yes or no queries however the answer not in favor of Saleema idea with neither knowledge nor practicing isn't indicative so we need healthy outcomes based on interactive dealing with the audience, thus putting in mind the different intentions we made the study measurement gradual by asking two questions about Saleema (to either strongly agree or strongly disagree) to measure the highest and the lowest so the talk about the intentions was honest whereas the majority expressed their strong consent saying they strongly agree. There was a clear effect of age and wealth but the responses were clear. Some indicators were meant to measure clinging to norms and habits however there were contradictory responses in talking about the relation of customs with the practice of FGM/C in the communities. The young people said there is the old practice is declining but a new method of FGM/C is replacing it rather than the complete abandonment.

Dr. Douglas said through the qualitative studies and the formal dialogue sessions a lot of information appeared, which he said was summarized in five frameworks of results showing Saleema as:

1 / Inclusive of all people
2 / Helps maintain the integrity of the family and the society
3 / Shows the women s high participation in the society
4 / Need be supported with the law
5 / Achieves the right social values

Mr. Douglas said that in-depth research and gathering of information will take place in the future along with in-depth analysis of the results and explanations and justifications of the interpretations, noting that the most important phases of the next study will gather additional monthly information coupled with an expansion and concentration of Saleema programs so the measurement will be linked to the same places in which the evaluation is carried out, saying the information and reports will be accessible and the reports will continue with the continuation of the survey, asserting that the information will be gathered in May 2016.





Kosti Youth Center celebrates the International Day for Zero Tolerance of FGM/C

The young men and women are real support to elimination of FGM/C

Several parties and entities in the White Nile State celebrated at W Kosti Youth Center of the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation, on February 6 every year which the international community dedicated to raising awareness on the gravity of the FGM practice and its dire consequences on circumcised girls. The celebration was part of project of FGM elimination supported by Plan International Organization of Sudan in collaboration with the Child Welfare Council, Child Rights Welfare Association and Youth Rehabilitation and Training Center in Kosti and the Reproductive Health Administration in the State.

The celebration was honored by the Minister of Social Affairs, Ustaza/ Rahma Musa, the members of the State Legislative Council and the leaders of government departments, civil society organizations and various state organs and State mechanism for fighting female genital mutilation and a number of anti-FGM artists, activists and poets.

The youth presented excellent music and drama disseminating the positive messages of Saleema initiative in impressive and attractive manner .

The ceremony was addressed by the Director of Youth Rehabilitation and Training Center, Abdullah Bashir who welcomed the attendees and all youth activities and events as a real support to the efforts to eliminate this practice. The ceremony was also addressed by the representative of the Child Rights Welfare, Ustaz/ Mansoor Bukhari who indicated their strong partnership in the training of young people and lauded the valuable efforts of Plan International in the State of the White Nile.

Mohammed Hussein also addressed the audience and spoke about the appreciated efforts of all partners in the state and commended the continuous work of Plan International Organization hand in hand with the youth and community groups to achieve the objectives of the national strategy for the elimination of female genital mutilation within one generation. Ustaza/ Samia Hassan, the Secretary-General of the State Council of Childhood explained to the celebration the idea for signing Al-Taga (full roll of cloth) and the signing of the young men, ladies and girls to leave girls Saleema i.e. sound and healthy as created by God.

The Minister of Social Affairs announced full support and backing of all Saleema Initiative activities and started the signing of Al-Taga declaring her stand against the practice of female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C), then she was followed by attendees in signing Al-Taga committing themselves to join the fight against the female genital mutilation to leave the girls Saleema i.e. as sound, intact, pristine and healthy in body and mind as created by God.

Raik Shino Competition

Saleema Initiative launched, in collaboration with the dialogue platform Raik Shino, a contest for the young people to find out their views on the issue of the female genital mutilation/ cutting in commemoration of the International Day of Zero Tolerance to FGM corresponding to 06 February.

Female circumcision must be recognized as a crime and apply a severer punishment against it. To fight urgent and vital measures should be taken with wide partnerships with all the society sectors.

The Coma of Circumcision

From the studies it became clear that the change is very slow and there is no difference between the educated and the uneducated since they all succumb under the pressure of customs and traditions.

- **Considering circumcision as one of the customs and traditions that we rush to follow, it is inevitable to focus on the influential persons in the society especially the tribal elders and communities' leaders such as the sheikhs (elders) as an entrance to the community and convince them in terms of religious while taking into account the traditions of the community in addition to the development of the communication skills with them.**
- **Also a network of associations and locals must be formed since such has a big role in bringing about change in the countryside to change all the negative aspects in the field of health and educate people on their risks**
- **We need partnerships between the religious leaders (clerics) and those interested in the development of women and the community to target students in universities and secondary schools with the involvement of researchers and academics in conducting research and studies with the activation of the family and child protection laws by the councils.**
- **Bringing the young people on-board in the fight against harmful habits and spreading awareness in partnership with the competent agencies and develop an integrated plan in participation with the targeted number to be in touch with community while benefiting by the religious side.**
- **The role of the media is almost non-existent in this case. We must intensify work directly with the community and activate the role of visiting midwives and spread awareness on the social and health impacts on female circumcision, and hold lectures and seminars in neighborhoods and residential complexes, because I think the awareness campaigns against the female genital mutilation must start by awakening the mother from her coma to pay attention to the protection of her daughters**

The Challenge Question:

How can you, as a young man/lady, stop FGM/C practice in your community surrounding?

The youth interactions with the challenge/ contest indicated the awareness of the perimeter of the young men and women towards the issue. The respondents' answers evolved around the focus on the youth as the most receptive segments having impact on the family and to stop the old ways, which used to aim at the adults and old people (grandmothers) which they deemed as ineffective ways.
Some youth also suggested that the awareness begins at an early age besides devising and innovating appropriate methods for each age group. There was special emphasis on the importance of the role of audiovisual and read media and the arts in the delivery of Saleema message smoothly to the community.



حذيفة القيل

Member since 2nd of December 2015

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غيبوبة الختان

لابد من الإقرار بأن الختان جريمة ويجب تشديد العقوبة ولمحاربتها لابد من الشروع في اتخاذ تدابير عاجلة وحيوية وشراكات واسعة مع كل الشرائح المجتمعية .
اتضحت من الدراسات أن التغيير بطئ جدا ولا يوجد فرق بين المتعلمين وغير المتعلمين كلهم تحت ضغط العادات والتقاليد .

●وباعتبار ان الختان يعتبر من العادات والتقاليد التي نهرع لاتباعها لابد من التركيز علي الأشخاص المؤثرين في المجتمع بالاخص أعيان القبائل وسادة الجتمعات خاصة الشيوخ باعتبارهم مدخل للمجتمع وإقناعهم من ناحية دينيه مع مراعاة تقاليد المجتمع وتنمية مهارات التخاطب والتواصل مع هؤلاء .
●ايضا لابد من تكوين شبكة من الجمعيات والأهالي لأن هذا له دور كبير في التغيير في الريف لتغيير كل الصور السلبية في المجال الصحي والتوعية بمخاطرها .

● نحتاج إلي شراكات بين رجال الدين والمهتمين بتنمية المرأة والمجتمع لاستهداف الطلاب في الجامعات والمدارس الثانوية وإشراك الباحثين والاكاديميين في البحوث والدراسات مع تفعيل قوانين حماية الاسرة والطفل الصادرة من المجالس .

●استصحاب الشباب لمحاربة العادات الضارة والتوعية حتي تكون مشتركه لجهات ذات الاختصاص ووضع خطه متكاملة باستصحاب العدد المستهدف والاحتكاك بالمجتمع واستصحاب الجانب الديني .
●دور الإعلام يكاد معدوم في هذه القضية فلا بد من تكثيف العمل المباشر مع المجتمع وتفعيل دور الزائرات والتوعية بالآثار الاجتماعية والصحية ، وتنفيذ محاضرات وندوات في الأحياء والمجمعات السكنية ، لأني أرى في الحملات التوعوية المناهضة للختان بداية إفاقة الأم من الغيبوبة لتهتم بحماية بناتها .

Comment (2)