



***A Society free from female genital mutilation***

## **PRESS STATEMENT ON THE POSITION OF THE ANTI-FGM BOARD ON THE FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) ISSUE THAT HAS BEEN CIRCULATING ON MEDIA PLATFORMS.**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a cultural practice associated with immediate as well as long-term health, psychological and physical complications. It is one of the worst forms of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and human rights violation.

The Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS, 2014), estimates the prevalence of FGM among girls and women in Kenya aged 15-49 years at 21%. This represents a steady decrease from 27.1% in 2008/09, and 32.2% in 2003. The decline can be attributed to aggressive campaigns mounted by the government and non-governmental organizations in the recent past.

On the issue concerning FGM screening of girls in Narok County that has been circulating on both mainstream and social media for the last few days. The Anti-FGM Board took time to do its own investigation and these were the findings:

- I. The Board confirms that all girls in Narok County are back to school in accordance with the Ministry of Education (MOE) calendar.
- II. The Board hereby confirms that No girl has been paraded for FGM screening as per the allegations that have been circulating in the last few days.

The Anti-FGM Board confirms that it has been working very closely with the Provincial administration through the office of the County Commissioners in different counties to create awareness on the Prohibition of FGM Act, 2011 and to create awareness on the negative effects of FGM.

Since July 2018, the Board has engaged the provincial administration focusing on law enforcers and community members in a number of FGM hotspot counties.

The counties the Board visited and created awareness include: Baringo, Narok, Elgeyo Marakwet, Isiolo, Laikipia, Marsabit, Bungoma and Migori.

In Narok County, the Board visited the six sub-counties which include Narok East, West, North, South, Kilgoris and Emurua Dikirr. During this awareness creation the Board in collaboration with

the office of the County Commissioner was able to reach out to 350 chiefs, assistant chiefs, sub-county commissioners, nyumba kumi and 930 women, men and youth.

In Migori County, the Board visited both Kuria East and Kuria West reaching out to 730 duty bearers. In Isiolo County the Board visited two sub-counties and reached out to a population of more than 5,000 through a road show which was aimed to create awareness on the Act and the negative effects of FGM. In Marsabit County, the Board engaged 200 duty bearers from the whole county.

In Elgeyo Marakwet County, the Board created awareness to more than 3,000 youth, women, men and duty bearers before and during the celebration of the International Day of the Girl Child.

In Bungoma County, Mt. Elgon constituency, the Board created awareness to more than 2,000 youth, women, men and duty bearers during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence.

In Baringo County, the Board engaged and created awareness to more than 2,000 duty bearers, women, men, girls and boys in all the sub-counties. In Laikipia County the Board created awareness among 200 duty bearers who were selected from the whole County.

The Board's interventions are geared towards protecting women and girls from FGM before it happens as clearly stated in the Board's Mandate.

The Board recognizes and appreciates the role played by different stakeholders in complementing the government's efforts in the FGM campaign, but we want to reiterate that all interventions must uphold the rule of Law.

This is also to bring to your attention that the Board is planning to hold the 2nd annual National END FGM Conference in Narok County between 4 and 5 February 2019 and celebrate the International Day of Zero Tolerance to FGM on 6 February 2019 in Loita Division, Narok County. This will create a forum for further engagement and discussion by different stakeholders on the best strategies to be used in the campaign to End FGM by 2030.

**PAMOJA TUKOMESHE UKEKETAJI**