

1ST AFRICAN SUMMIT

ON FEMALE GENITAL
MUTILATIONS AND
CHILD MARRIAGE



REPORT



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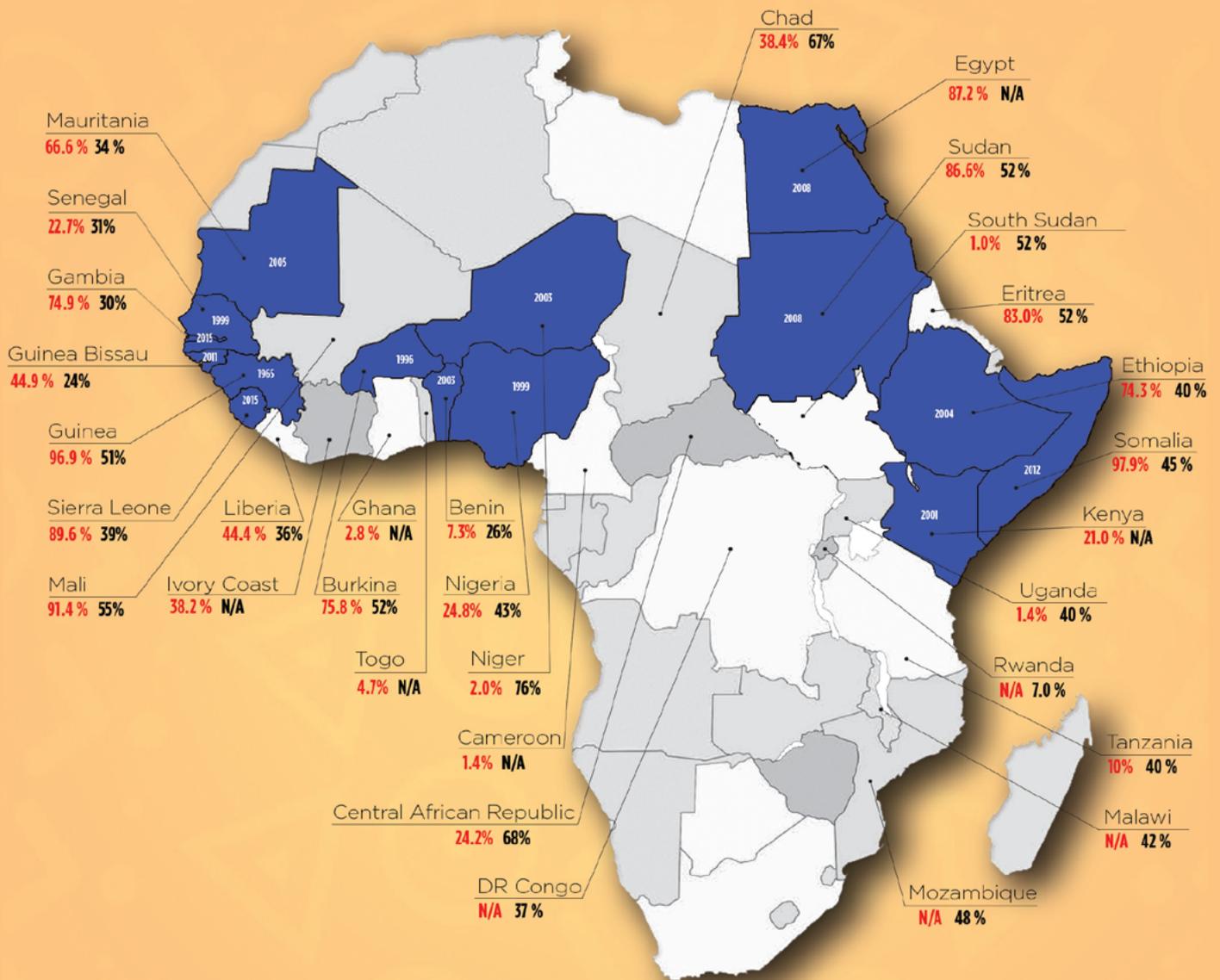




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Situation of female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage (CM) in Africa



- LEGISLATION ON FGM AND YEAR
- % FGM PREVALENCE BETWEEN FOR WOMEN AGED BETWEEN 15 AND 49 YEARS
- % CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE BEFORE 18 YEARS

Sources :

- 1 - Les mutilations génitales féminines, état des lieux et des connaissances : Armelle Andro et Marie Lascingand, Institut national d'études démographiques | «Population» 2016/2 Vol. 71 | pages 224 à 311,
- 2 - Le mariage des enfants en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre : Note d'information préparée pour la Rencontre de Haut Niveau pour Mettre Fin au Mariage des Enfants en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre (23-25 Octobre 2017 à Dakar, Sénégal).
- 3 - It's time For Africa To End Child Marriage, Girls Not Bride (Novembre 2013)
- 4 - 28 Too Many (2018) The Law and FGM : An Overview of 28 African Countries (September 2018) at <https://www.28toomany.org/Law>.



Welcome note

Dear participants,

The first African summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage is being held in Dakar on 16, 17 and 18 June under the leadership of the Governments of Senegal and Gambia, in partnership with Safe Hands for Girls. We are honoured and delighted to welcome you to this important event. FGM and Child Marriage cause severe effects to both girls and women and are part of the world's most barbaric cultures and traditions.

This summit comes at the right time because of the urgent need to use all available resources to eradicate these harmful traditional practices.

The theme of this summit is "Reinforcing the bridge between Africa and the rest of the world to promote an accelerated implementation of a zero tolerance policy on FGMs and CM, a major focus of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)".

We are convinced that this historic summit is the right place for such high-level and forward-looking discussions and for the unfolding of new and innovative ideas to address these problems.

An African position to "end to female genital mutilations and child marriage" will be adopted at the Summit. This will contribute to the advocacy of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) to bear witness to the strong political will of African heads of State and Government to fight these practices which affect thousands of girls (young and children).

By hosting this major Summit for Africa, Senegal and The Gambia wish to confirm their interest and commitment to the cause of our continent, whose present and future are so close to their hearts.

This high-level meeting is also an opportunity to lay the groundwork for the creation of a global alliance to end female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage (CM).

Convinced that Africa can take its destiny into its own hands, we hope that this summit will lead to concrete, and practical action in order to quickly achieve our objectives of eradicating these practices and to protect the lives of girls and women on the continent.

We wish you a pleasant stay in the Senegalese capital, hoping that this summit will meet the expectations and objectives set from the onset.

Thank you

The Organising Committee

Introduction

The first African Summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage was held from the 16th to 18th June, 2019 in Dakar, Senegal, with the participation of young activists, African religious and traditional leaders, NGOs, SCOs as well as strategic partners, especially technical and financial partners, in the presence of the vice president of the Republic of the Gambia, the president of Senegal's Economic, Social and Environmental Council, ministers and other eminent government officials, eminent representatives of the African Union, Agencies of the United Nations to collectively support the initiatives aiming at eliminating female genital mutilation and child marriage and suggest solutions.

This report highlights the impact of female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage (CM) on health, psychic of women and girls and on some of their fundamental rights. It also takes into consideration the efforts of the governments and national and international partners, identifies the major factors that restrain the efficacy of the measures adopted to combat these practices especially traditional cultures and a certain Islamic ideology.

The reports contains the analysis of the participants on FGM/CM and the common African position to "end female genital mutilation and child marriage" 'The reports concludes with recommendations to national authorities, technical and financial partners, civil society, customary and religious leaders and the international community with the view to strengthening the quest for the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Marriage (CM) by 2030.

Though the relevant regional and international legal instruments and the positive law of lots of countries prohibit the practices of FGM/CM, the said practices are widely spread in the world, especially in Africa. More than 650 million women and girls who are alive today got married before their 18th birthday. The number of girls who experience every year female genital mutilation has increased by half million since 1994, to reach 4.1 million in 2019. With the current trends, more than 50 million girls may be victims of female genital mutilation only in Africa by 2030, thereby reaching the total 68 million in the world. About 280 million of girls may get married before the age of 18.

280M
of girls may get
married before the
age of 18

These frightening figures is like a stab in the back and is one of the reasons why the first African Summit on female genital mutilation and child marriage was held in Africa, precisely in Senegal from the 16th to 18th June 2019 in order not only to strengthen the bridge between Africa and the rest of the world but also to accelerate the campaign for zero tolerance with respect to FGM and child marriage, one of the major aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This summit also witnessed the adoption of strong resolutions and important actions.



BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATIONS OF THE FIRST AFRICAN SUMMIT ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION AND CHILD MARRIAGE

Female Genital Mutilations (FGM) and Child Marriage are harmful practices deeply entrenched in traditional cultures and rooted in gender inequalities and poverty. Despite the resolution of the United Nations and Pan-African Organizations, as well as national laws criminalizing FGM in most of the African, these practices remain widespread in the continent. According to the African Union, Child Marriage is a customary, religious and legal marriage of any person under 18 years. It takes place before a girl or a boy is physically and psychologically fit to assume the duties /responsibilities of marriage and motherhood.

The World Health Organization defines female genital mutilation as any intervention resulting in the partial or complete removal of the female external genital organs or any other female genital lesion practiced on women for non-therapeutic reasons.

SOME STATISTICS IN AFRICA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD

More than 200 million women and girls suffer from the consequences of FGM throughout the world and Africa, current estimates suggest that 50 million girls may be victims of this practice by 2030. Around the world almost one woman out of four got married before the age of 18. Data from forty seven (47) countries show that generally median age at first marriage gradually increases whereas the rate of change is slow.

1 ON 4

women got married
before the age of 18

At this juncture it is important to note that eighteen percent (18 %) of women between the ages of, forty five and forty-nine were married before the age of 18. However, their proportion has dropped only to thirty five percent (35 %) among women between (20) and twenty four (24) years old. Child marriage is still a

reality with respect to millions of children, especially girls throughout Africa, which has the second highest rate in the world after South Asia with the related devastating consequences on their education, health and future prospects. West and Central Africa is closed to South Asia trend with two out five, about forty-one (41%) percent of girls marry before the age of 18. Cumulatively, the frequency of child marriage in Sub-Saharan Africa is above the global average of thirty-four percent (34%). Reports indicate that thirty-nine percent (39%) of girls in this zone get married before the age of 18, and thirteen percent (13%) before the age of 15.

Statistical figures can be alarming, but some of the South-Saharan countries strive to contain the phenomenon in the rural or urban areas, or in both. Twelve (12) countries at least have reduced the rate of child marriage by 10 percent (10%) or beyond. In some African countries advocacy and sensitization have reduced the prevalence rates of Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage. Irrespective of the prevailing positive legal environment, the impact of legal instruments is often in conflict with harmful traditional practices and religious beliefs promoted by religious leaders and/or community leaders whose influence is much stronger than restrictions imposed by the states. Nonetheless, there has been significant political progress in recent years. The 32nd Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union held on 10th and 11th February 2019 in Addis Ababa adopted a resolution that aims at “Strengthening Political Commitment for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation in Africa”. Similarly, the Second African Girl Summit held in Accra, Ghana, from 23rd to 24th November 2018, by the Organization of the Africa’s First Ladies against HIV/AIDS, condemned Child Marriage and FGM. Though these decisions are indispensable, the elimination of FGM and child marriage requires a radical change in beliefs and attitudes at community level as well as at investment and policy makers levels

To consolidate these achievements the Governments of Senegal and the Gambia jointly organized, in cooperation with the NGO Save Hands for Girls, the 1st African Summit on FGM and CM, which was held from 16th to 18th June 2019 in Dakar. This summit was the outcome of the meetings which were held within the same context in London in 2014

and Washington in 2018 respectively. The summit coincided with the commemoration of the 29th year of the African Child's Day coupled with the 31st Celebration of the National Child's Day.

It involved Heads of State and Government; technical and financial partners, religious and traditional leaders, civil society organizations, victim survivors and youth organizations, whose contribution is currently leading to the reduction of the rate of prevalence of the two harmful practices.

During the meeting, the discussions focused on the impact of these scourges in some countries in Africa, but also on the strategies to implement in order to eliminate these harmful practices, whose impact is negative on the health and wellbeing of children and girls. It also provided an opportunity to lay the foundation for the creation of a global alliance in order to end female genital mutilation and child marriage.

Other initiatives were propounded during the panels with the view to strengthening this dynamic and ensuring the inclusion of these themes: FGM and Child Marriage in the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the continental level, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and the Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) advocated for the incorporation of the issues of child marriage and FGM into public policies by the states. Indeed, these harmful practices hinder efforts made to improve the conditions of vulnerable groups. The adoption of a common African Position to "end female genital mutilation and child marriage", was proclaimed in order to attest the strong political will of the African Heads of State and Government to eliminate these harmful practices that affect negatively thousands of children and girls.

All in all the summit was an opportunity to achieve the following goal and objectives

GOAL OF THE SUMMIT

- To transform into action the commitment of State, religious leaders, traditional leaders, survivors, community-based organizations (CBO), the media, youths and women's organizations, and the civil society for the elimination of FGM and CM by 2030.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- **Specific Objective 1 :** To share the experiences and good practices noted in each country with respect to planning and implementation in order to end these harmful practices;
- **Specific Objective 2 :** To inspire states to create a conducive legal framework for the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Marriage by 2030;
- **Specific Objective 3 :** To identify innovative strategies for the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Marriage through concrete actions with grass-root communities;
- **Specific Objective 4 :** To set up mechanism for consensual coordination, monitoring and evaluation of States.

ACHIEVED OUTCOMES

- **Outcome 1 :** participants from the different countries shared their experiences and directory on good practices relating to Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage;
- **Outcome 2 :** on this point, participants made strong recommendations for the improvement of the legal frameworks for the elimination of FGM and CM by the States by 2030;
- **Outcome 3 :** innovative strategies were identified and shared for the elimination of the practices of FGM and CM through concrete actions with grass-root communities;
- **Outcome 4 :** at the end of the summit participants recommended the setting up of a coordination mechanism by states for the monitoring and evaluation of progress made.

Thematic panels relating to the exchange of strategies and decisive experiences for the harmonious protection and development of the child in Africa were held during the summit; to that extent, working groups were articulated and organized on the following three (3) points:

- Presentation on the situation of these harmful practices in each country and the specific tools that have been developed for the elimination of the socio-cultural beliefs and burdens ;
- Definition of essential family good practices for holistic and integrated care of survivors ;
- Development of avenues of partnership with the States, different donors with the sole purpose of the elimination female genital mutilation and child marriage.

Following their works, four groups made relevant for:

- the set up of alternative funding models dedicated to the mobilization of resources;
- the analysis of legal frameworks as prevention mechanisms by insisting on the obstacles and solutions to end FGM and CM in an effective manner;
- An efficient management of data on FGM and CM through the monitoring and evaluation of the production, the collect and the access of data and their dissemination;
- Last the fourth group highlighted the social norms and consequences for health while helping to deconstructing perceptions and beliefs in light of religious, social and modern norms.

The first African summit on female genital mutilation (FGM) and Child Marriage (CM) brought in innovations.



“ Strengthening the bridge between Africa and the rest of the world in order to speed up zero tolerance with respect to FGM and Child Marriage, one of the major aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”

LE CARACTERE NOVATEUR DU SOMMET

This summit was organized with the theme “ Strengthening the bridge between Africa and the rest of the world in order to speed up zero tolerance with respect to FGM and Child Marriage, one of the major aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” witnessed the participation of seventeen countries with around 500 participants.

The first African Summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage identified (3) challenges:



The fusion of two important themes: This summit ensured the combination of the reflection of the two themes, female genital mutilation and child marriage which have a common denominator: the violation of girls and women's human rights. This option facilitated the consideration of the bridge between the two related issues in diagnosis, reflections, and recommendations.



The creation of dialogue framework of African religious and traditional leaders. This summit ensured dialogue and sharing of experience between imams and intellectuals from various backgrounds - especially from the University of Al Azar - ,African religious and traditional leaders, church representatives to debate on the position of Islam and Christianity on female genital mutilation and child marriage. The positions are the same, Islam and Christianity condemn FGM and CM. Besides, the University of al-Azhar in Cairo, the highest religious reference in the Muslim World, had launched a fatwa in November 2011 against female genital mutilation.



The Meeting of youth and survivors: to make possible and fruitful the meeting with young African girls with survivors of FGM and CM.



PANELS, INTERVENTIONS AND WORKING GROUPS

OPENING CEREMONY

On the 16th June, 2019, in the conference hall of King Fad Palace (Dakar) Senegal , political leaders, ministers in charge of children and women's affairs, parliamentarians, survivors, activists, religious and traditional leaders, youths and female leaders, non-state actors; the media; African, regional and continental institutions; international specialists; technical and financial partners participated in the opening ceremony, in the context of the celebration of the 29th edition of the African Child and the 31st Children's National Week.

Those who took the floor were:



JAHA DUKUREH

President of the NGO Safe hands for Girls

Jaha deeply and with emotion thanked the governments of Senegal and the Gambia which contribution was essential to the organization of the summit. She expressed her gratitude to her family, friends, strategic partners but also and especially to Margaret and Elizabeth from the World Bank.

This achievement was not only due to her idea and talents but was also due to the goodwill of some actors and the survivor, Alimatu from Sierra Leone.



LOUISE CORD

Director of World Bank's Transactions

When she finished her words of thanks and greeting to the organizers and the participants, she reiterated the desire of the World Bank to eradicate poverty. According to her, poverty is fifteen percent (15%), the rate of poverty has dropped in Africa but is still a demographic challenge to meet. To her, all the actors participating to the summit were drivers in the fight against FGM and CM. There is still much work to do in order to change the situation, she added.

Mme Louise J Cord insisted that it was important to focus on women and girls given the fact that fifty five percent (55%) of workforce of the labor market are women. In Africa, fifty eight percent (58%) are entrepreneurs whose major challenge is education.

At the end of her mission in Dakar, she recommended that greater confidence should be given to women and girls. To her they they should also be empowered and to that extent, all the stakeholders (Religious, traditional and local leaders, activists and the international community) should be involved in the quest against FGM and CM.



FARIMATA LÔ

Children's representative

As a member of the advisory council of CONAF, she raised the issue of violence against children and urged the state to enforce the laws. She described FGM and CM as a flagrant violation of children's rights which compromises their health, development and prospects. She concluded her intervention by advocating for the fulfilment of children's dreams such as access to high quality education, the empowerment of girls, the sensitization and dissemination of the 2040 agenda.



AYA CHEBBI

Youth Envoy for of the AU

Aya was delighted with Senegalese hospitality. She said, “Senegal is always the host that organizes the most important meeting, especially with regard to children». In her speech, she pointed out that FGM and CM are practices that deprive girls of their dignity, progress and the fulfilment of their dreams. The quest against FGM and CM must be carried out by Africans on behalf of Africans. In her hometown the campaign started since the declaration of independence. In Tunisia activists are fully involved to ensure the continuity of the quest. She magnified the fact that around 500 people that came from 15 countries attend the summit with the will to address the need to address of a Trans African solidarity to achieve the goals on FGM/CM in the next ten years,

She insisted on the importance of involving the youths inasmuch as nothing can stop the youths and that they are never too young to act. She congratulated Jaha Dukureh as a survival and young woman of great personality and determination.

Aya Chebbi called on the African Union and the governments to trust the youths, turn their pledges into realities and urged them to take care of the survivors in their families and countries.

«All the leaders, donors, governments etc. must join the quest, “said Aya Chebbi.



DR SALEH ABBAS

Vice Imam of Al- Azar Mosque in Cairo

In his intervention, he bluntly asserted that the issue of FGM and CM is unambiguous, for it is obvious. Islam came for the welfare of everyone, the human being; it came to protect us against evil and whatever that has the potentials of hurting us. The Sharia law preaches for the preservation of our belief. This is why the Prophet (PSL) said that the believer, who is strong, is the one who is in good health.

Thus, no religion supports FGM and CM. This is the position of any institute that operates under the auspices of AL-AZHAR.

The practice of FGM and CM is a plague which is un-religious and a ridiculous tradition which has existed for years. Since 2008, this law which prohibits all forms of mutilation is based on legal opinions and also on attacks directed against women and girls, victims of injustice. AL AZHAR has explored this issue and argues that the practice has no religious backup. It is a harmful practice in many Muslim communities. For example, it is practiced in Saudi Arabia.

Regarding Child Marriage, the position of Al Azhar is also clear. There is no much difference. Under the law passed in Egypt, the marriage age is 18, marrying them before the age of 18, entrusting them with responsibilities provoke health problems and obliging children to desert schools or preventing them from completing their educational career.

CM is also a factor of divorces, since the child has no full control over his or her life. Child marriage should be banned. We must honor religious position and common sense as well. To this end, Dr Saleh Abbas suggested the promotion of children's education, especially girls in Africa. In this summit hall partnership is being built between the populations and the state, an excellent job which we magnify.



DEREJE WORDOFA

Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA

in his intervention, he expressed his gratitude and satisfaction to the Governments of Senegal and the Gambia and the NGOs that strived for organization of the summit. She stated that at least 200 million of girls and women who are alive have experienced genital mutilation and the practices of FGM and CM violate women's human rights and perpetuates the law status of girls. Married children are vulnerable to diseases and this can affect their life expectancy. According to Mister Dereje Wordofa "More than 650 million women and girls who are alive got married before their 18th birthday. The vulnerability of girls, economic difficulties, insecurity, especially in the context of humanitarian crisis are some of the consequences- irrespective of the reasons given in support of child marriage, the consequences are the same: child marriage violates human rights and disrupts their lives." This year, the international community commemorates the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which was held in 1994 in Cairo, Egypt.

25 years later, the rates of female genital mutilation and child marriage have decreased. This is good news.

Invoking an African Proverb which states that " not every closed eyes sleeping and every which is opened is not sleeping", he called on the participants and all the stakeholders to open widely their eyes in order to see the evil of female genital mutilation and child marriage. The elimination of these harmful practices requires our full commitment. This starts at the individual level. The solution is the solidarity between parents, communities, religious leaders, civil society, governments, national, regional, and global institutions.



DR PHUMIZILE MLAMBO NGCUKA

Executive Director of UN Women's Organization

celebrated with the youth and stressed on the acceleration of the realization of the objectives of sustainable development. She thanked all the religious leaders and all the members of religions groups that are engaged in the quest against the FGM and CM practices and expressed her supports to the positions of the religious leaders, "no religion supports evil against women and girls".

Those who engage in the ignoble practices of FGM and CM often rob women and girls of their imagination and entrepreneurial potentials. We must strive to eradicate these practices. FGM is in the SDGs, the

relationship between poverty, CM and FGM has already been explored and it must be eradicated. She appreciated the efforts made by the entire UN system in the quest against this scourge. To this end, nothing can be done concretely without the commitment of the youth, especially the girls. There was an interval, during which two young African musicians Eddy Kenzo and Astar who not only came to support the struggle of the girls and children but also made statements about the importance of preserving human dignity by engaging in the quest for the protection of human rights, women's rights and children's rights.



Un interlude musical a été servi par deux artistes africains, Eddy Kenzo, et Astar, venus défendre la cause des jeunes filles, des enfants mais qui, globalement ont lancé un message fort pour le respect de la dignité humaine et la lutte pour les droits humains, les droits de la femme, les droits de l'enfant.



HE MADAME ISATOU TOURAY

Vice-President of the Republic of the Gambia

representative of the President of the Republic of the Gambia. In her speech, she magnified the organization of the summit and called on all the actors and stakeholders to promote a zero tolerance policy for the elimination of FGM and CM

She recalled that a chain was made in order to achieve the sustainable Development Goals SDGs. Governments are aware that there can be no development without the empowerment of the majority of the population. However, the conclusions of the Women's General Assembly revealed some problems, including women's empowerment, FGM and CM. Despite the initiatives that have taken, the problem persists with gender based violence.

According to the report of the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) one third (1/3) of women are victims of gender based violence (GBV). Regarding child marriage, the rate has dropped but we must aware of early sexuality of youth, resulting in early pregnancies, dreams are shattered. She pointed out that demographic youth survey had shown that eighteen percent (18%) of them are already mothers. Women are proactive and productive when they are in good health. Consequently, FGM and CM practices hinder the ORD agenda, 2030.

Madam Isatou Touray asserted that women and girls must exercise their rights and should decide when they would like to have babies.



AMINATA TOURÉ

President of the Social, Economic and environmental (SEEC)

As a representative of the president of the Republic and the Government of Senegal, she welcomed and wished the guests of the summit a happy stay. She appreciated the fact that the issue passed from being a taboo into an issue of public concern but it should be stated that it is the outcome of a prolonged struggle. Thus, she identified two major issues relating to FGM and CM: the violation of human rights and legislative inadequacy. She explored all the legal instruments from Dakar to Beijing.

She paid a special homage to the children of Soweto and all the children of Africa on the occasion of the African Child and the National Children's Week. All the cultures advocate for the quest for knowledge. The practices which are deemed harmful will set back in the face of everybody's commitment. Thus, the key is an educational system which is based on the indivisibility of the human being and the inseparability of his or her needs. Though the legislative framework is significant, it is insufficient. It requires an open approach including all the actors and stakeholders. It is important and even necessary to opt for an inclusive approach based on diversity and intergenerational complementarities.

On these notes and on behalf of the President of the Republic of Senegal, she declared opened

PANELS ON THE CELEBRATION OF THE AFRICAN CHILD'S DAY

The 1ST African Summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage (FGM/CM) adopted a methodological approach based on thematic panels for the exchange of successful experiences and strategies for the harmonious progress of the African child.

The summit was organized within the context of double celebration; the commemoration of the 29th celebration of the African Child's Day in remembrance of the massacre of the children in Soweto in 1976 and the 31st celebration of the Child's National Week (CNW).

Choosing 16th June 2019 as the beginning of the summit on FGM and CE was not a coincidence and the theme of this year was "humanitarian action in Africa : the rights of the child first".

In addition to the theme of the day, the following themes were addressed during the first summit:

- Thème : Humanitarian action in Africa: children's right first
- Theme: How to use the law as a preventive mechanism to end female genital mutilation and child marriage in Africa?
- Theme: Young survivors: Protecting girls: what impact does the participation of the youth and survivors have on the campaign against FGM /CM?
- Theme: Social norms: cultural and/or traditional practices and FGM /CM?
- Theme: Islam, Christianity and FGM /CM
- Intergenerational Dialogue

During the first day, strategically important themes were discussed in very interesting panels (see above) with the contributions of specialists from the United Nations, senior Senegalese, Gambian and Egyptian officials as well as members of the civil society from Senegal, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, and Somalia as well as religious and traditional specialists, professors from Niger, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Senegal, and Egypt.



Humanitarian action in Africa currently deserves greater consideration for children's rights and needs; it should be carried out with the help of a larger number of African humanitarians.

According to Rony Browman of Doctors without Borders (DWB) humanitarian action involves three conditions:

- ✚ Intervene without using force;
- ✚ Intervene without discrimination;
- ✚ Intervene without imposing.

Humanitarian action in Africa currently deserves greater consideration for children's rights and needs...

Madam Awa Fally Kamara, of Plan International for Central and Western Africa said they are present in 14 African countries and in some of them, there are complex and recurring crises which require a strong request for humanitarian assistance. For instance, in the Republic of Central Africa, Mali, Burkina Faso most of those in need are girls. Lake Chad is full of child soldiers, girls who are under 18 carrying heavy weapons, are sexually exploited or married before their age of maturity. Thus, in these zones, parents prefer to get their children married very early due to security reasons. Unfortunately, the trend is based on mono chronic approach whereas people are different in relation to their age, needs, and their biological compositions cannot face the same challenges. Therefore, it is necessary to rethink a psychological and medical assistance for the victims, their access to secured centers, and the means to ensure access to education in times of crisis, women's hygiene etc. Plan strongly believes that the school is instrumental in the reconstruction of children's psychology. To this end, a combined approach of humanitarian assistance based on humanity, neutrality, and independence.

The presentations ensured a review of the Contingency Plan and its weaknesses with respect to the assistance given to children while in case of conflict, children may be separated from their parents or guardians, exploited, girls may be rapped or forced into marriages. Thus, crises can exacerbate fragilities and risks relating to boys and girls. Organizations such as Plan International provide child protection in the context of crisis with the help of the program on kid psychological support and security.

Senegal's Contingency Plan focused on:

- ✚ Conceptual clarification;
- ✚ Context;
- ✚ Rooster missions;
- ✚ Objectives;
- ✚ Strategic axes and priority actions;
- ✚ Expected outcomes;
- ✚ Challenges etc.

However, according to Mr. Mamadou Wane, member of the Senegalese Civil Society, countries should elaborate contingency plans, considering the vulnerability of our countries and the continent and consider humanitarian action as a priority issue.

Therefore, the contingency plan is a necessary tool for the rethinking of the issue. Nonetheless, there is a major problem in the distribution of food aid in the settlement camps of affected populations.

From the discussions and exchange, it stemmed the need to have a good system of governance at the national, sub regional and regional levels. Besides, women's access to decision making bodies should be strengthened.

Analysis of situation of FGM/CM

As the international community commemorates the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in 1994 in Cairo, Egypt; throughout the world, at least two hundred (200) million of girls and women, who are alive, have experienced genital mutilation. More than 650 million women and girls who are alive got married before the age of 18. The number of girls who experience female genital mutilation every year has increased by half-million since 1994, attaining 4,1 million in 2019.

In the same vein, due to population growth, the number of girls who are likely to get married in 2019 is 10.3 million, and it was more than 10 million in 1994.

With the current trends, more than 50 million girls are at risk of experiencing female genital mutilation in Africa alone by 2030, attaining 68 million in the world. About 280 million girls are likely to get married before the age of 18.

it stemmed the need to have a good system of governance at the national, sub regional and regional levels

Did Africa understand the statement of Ndèye Saly Diop Dieng? The Senegalese Minister of Women's Affairs, Family, Gender and Child Protection, in her remarks during the closing ceremony of the first African Summit on FGM and CM, emphatically said, "It has been proved and demonstrated that no society will develop and make progress without the contribution of its educated women and girls who must be in good health to interact with men and boys on the basis of the principles of cooperation, complementarities and co responsibility.

This indissoluble and indefectible link is enshrined in all human rights instruments and by all forms of international consensus in general and by the program on universal development in particular by 2030 and the 2063 Agenda of the African Union."

4,1M

girls experienced female genital mutilation in 2019

Nonetheless, it is obvious that the practice of female genital mutilation is cruel and in fact it does not only means the mutilation of our girls but also it inflicts lasting emotional pains and attacks the most vulnerable groups but potentially powerful members of the society, the girls.

This practice violates women's human rights relating to sexual reproductive health, physical integrity, non-

discrimination, and protection against cruelty. It is degrading practice, which exposes and relegates our daughter and wives to a lower social status. Given that it is a form of gender based violence, female genital mutilation should not be treated in isolation from the other forms of violence against women and girls, or other harmful practices such as child marriage.

The vulnerability of the girls, economic hardship, insecurity, especially in the context of humanitarian crises – whatever may be the reason for child marriage, the consequences are the same; child marriage violates human rights and disrupts lives. The least harmful consequence is that early marriage deprives children of the right to make a choice- with free and complete consent without constraint or fear- with whom to marry, and when.

Married children are increasingly likely to become pregnant before the maturity of their bodies, thereby increasing the risk of maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity. Married girls are also vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, and are also vulnerably to abuses. Married girls rarely attend school, thereby preventing them from realizing their full potentials. Girls are less capable of defending the wellbeing of their children in the future. In a nutshell, child marriage does not only shatter the dreams and opportunities of girls, but it also have a huge impact on the communities, the labor force, and the economy. The negative consequences affects several generations. Over the last 25 years, the rates of female genital mutilation and child marriage have dropped. This development is good news.

In the 30 countries where female genital mutilation is most prevalent, nearly half of the percentage of girls has experienced FGM in 1994, and at least currently, one third have experienced this harmful practice. In 1994, one third of young girls got married before the age of 18 as opposed to less than a quarter today.

Nonetheless, the elimination of these harmful practices does not keep pace with population growth.

Married children are increasingly likely to become pregnant before the maturity of their bodies...

Social Norms: Cultural and/or Traditional Practices and FGM/CM

No cultural reason, custom, religion, tradition related to the so called honors could justify the practice of FGM. It is reminiscent of Istanbul's belief.

The Senegalese Professor, Mr Lamane MBAYE explored the issue by evoking a book entitled «au Soleil des indépendances» written by Amadou Nkourouma in which the practice of FGM is one of the most essential themes. The tradition is if you are not excised in your marital home, when you give a drink to any of your in-laws, he will not drink it, and if you cook a meal, nobody will eat it.

When we talk about culture, we must sort it out. Pr Souleymane Bachir Diagne asserts, “culture is what is worthy to be transmitted and what is good to be transmitted, what is useful for today and tomorrow”. And with respect to this issue, it really seems that it is difficult to place it in the cultural context.

The major reasons inspire this practice.

- ✎ Control of sexuality, the preservation of male domination,
- ✎ Religious beliefs, even though no religious text recommends it,
- ✎ Mythical construction of imagination inasmuch as it is believed that women become more fertile.

What should traditional communicators do? These are people who have the ability to speak to the populations.

culture is what is worthy to be transmitted and what is good to be transmitted, what is useful for today and tomorrow

They have even the ability to influence the authorities of the state to change behaviors and mentalities. It is essential to prevent and, especially sensitize men who are from the beginning to the end of the entire process. It is important to note that this issue is examined by our literature.

We can illustrate this point with the help of some examples:

- ✎ Sous l'orage written by Seydou Bodian Kouyaté which is prescribed for form three students which examines early marriage.
- ✎ Le Soleil des indépendances written by Ahmadou Kourouma for sixth form students,
- ✎ Malado, written by Ousmane Sembène
- ✎ In 1985 we had Maya, Le Miroir de la vie, which deeply explores excision.
- ✎ 1988 Késo Barry, a Guinean, published his autobiography which reviewed the issue.
- ✎ Le collier de cheville written by Adja Ndeye Boury Ndiaye.

The interventions clearly state that «It is necessary that we, as traditional leaders, should involve in the quest because it is our ancestors who established this practice for us. «The voice of a traditional leader was heard, therefore, «the Catholic and Evangelical Church, Islam and the practitioners and all of us, organizations, must not be silent and we must be in the forefront in this quest».

Mansour Kané, who is a dignitary from Niger and Secretary General in charge of Public Relations of the Association of Traditional Chiefs in Niger affirmed that he had never seen or heard about FGM in his country, neither on the television nor on the radio. Niger has a population of 99% Muslims, but if Islam is the cause why is it that this practice does exist in their country? As far as he is concerned, Niger strongly militates against FGM. Regarding child marriage, in Niger, illegal marriages of girls are outlawed." I am the chief of the Tesawa County, I will never allow these practices in my jurisdiction "asserted Mr Kané. Nonetheless, the issue about the age of maturity relating to girl's marriage is debatable and it is a global concern, it can vary from one country to another.

M. Amirou Moustapha Diallo from Guinea Conakry stated that child marriage exists in all the communities even though much cannot be said about FGM. There has been regression in the practice thanks to the cooperation with the institutions of the United Nations, such as UNICEF. He said that FGM and CM are two phenomena with two inexhaustible sources: ignorance and poverty. Nevertheless, it is vital to focus on education, women's empowerment and economic development with the view to eliminating them. We can affirm at this juncture that the practices of FGM and CM have reached the peak of their existence given that they cannot resist the current global will and force.

In her intervention Fatoumata Djau Baldé, president of the national committee against harmful practices in Guinea Bissau asserted that the practice is carried out everywhere in the country but only by the Muslim communities, such as the Fulas, Mandingo, Diankhankés, Mandous, and the Tandasecht. The country is made up of eight regions; in the region of Tombadé, there is a rate of 53%excised women, in the region of Kinala the rate is 50%,Oyu is 44%, in bimombois 4,5%, in mabichanoa is 28%, in Bafata is 86%,in Gao is 96%, in Kachéwo is 16% and in Bissau is 32,7%.

The prevalence varies from one region to another following the ethnic groups that constitute the population of the region. This practice is concentrated in the east of the country where there are more Muslims; the practice is also carried out in the rural areas (50%) more than the urban areas (39%). The rate of the practice of FGM is much higher among uneducated women 48% as opposed to those who at least have primary and secondary education and 24%.

This why it is important to educate women and sensitize on how to combat these practices, she pleaded.

it is vital to focus on education, women's empowerment and economic development

In 2014, only 13% of women in Guinea Bissau supported the continuity of the practice. The country has made considerable progress in the quest against these harmful practices, indeed, all the organizations of the civil society, the government work together in the field of the protection and promotion of women and children.

Aside from the contribution of the government, the parliamentarians play a meaningful role by passing a law that prevents and criminalizes the practice

This was a considerable achievement. Besides, the country is a signatory to several conventions on the protection of human rights relating to the eradication of the practice of female genital mutilation.

It is important to state that considerable achievements had been made in the awareness campaign and the training of ex-excisers, who work as facilitators in training sessions at the community level, community radios.

It is important to state that considerable achievements had been made in the awareness campaign and the training of ex-excisers

Nevertheless, there are major challenges which include:

- ✎ Monitoring political influence in legal proceedings, and the sluggishness of legal procedures,

Testimonies given by survivors, such as Barsé Jatari provided a timely opportunity to share experience.

How can we use the law as a preventive mechanism in order to end female genital mutilation and child marriage in Africa?

Evelyne Calimoutou, Legal Adviser of the World Bank, focuses her intervention on the two issues:

- ✎ How to use the law in order to combat and eliminate FGM and CM?
- ✎ Elaborate a sensitization tool and a legislation compendium, as a free tool made available on the website of the WB.

A fact, twenty two (22) countries out of the (28) African countries that practise FGM have laws that prohibit this practice and forty three (43) African countries have specific laws relating to the minimum age for CM. Nevertheless, the laws of half of these countries contain exceptions. A brilliant example is Ivory Coast, for it is the first country that has cancelled the marriage of a child. However, in some countries, the absence of prosecutions is due to the lack of relevant financial resources, which will ensure the satisfaction of the needs of the victim. Nonetheless, the law is an efficient instrument to combat FGM and CM. Therefore, activities on awareness should be carried out in order to enable people to be aware of the existence of the laws. Therefore, it due to this reason that a legal manual has been developed in Guinea Bissau in order to facilitate the work of professionals. It is advisable to promote documentaries, handouts, and posters for dissemination and awareness raising among the populations on FGM and CM given that a picture is better than its words.

Madam Fatoumata Djau BALDE, President of the National Committee against harmful Practices, from Guinea Bissau, strengthened the position of the panellists relating to the responsibility of the State. Speaking about her country, she said that the government has not funded the struggle against FGM and the commitment of the practitioner community. In 2011, a law that prohibits the practice was passed. She argued that if this law is enforced, the practitioners will be discouraged.

She pointed out the necessity of a national strategy, specific public policies etc. It is important to highlight that that what has been more successfully is the increasing number of organizations that are interested in the issue.

Thereafter, Christine NANJALA, Deputy Director of the Attorney General of Kenya focused her intervention on the situation in her country.

Out of one hundred and ninety seven cases (197) of FGM, hundred (100) are pending. Yet, there have been convictions and acquittals, the commitment of the community and the government must be strengthened with especially a reporting system, an efficient strategy for child protection.

Regarding the situation in Senegal, the judge of the court of appeal, Mr. Abdoulaye BA, recalled that in Senegal there is a law and the constitution sanctifies the human being and declares him or her inviolable. Aside from the international conventions which Senegal has signed and ratified and which are against the practices of FGM and CM, the law grants to everybody the right to protect his or her physical integrity. Nonetheless, physical integrity includes the integrity of the female genital organ. Senegal passed in 1999 a law that prohibits FGM. A good law, according to the judge BA because breaking this law is punishable by six (6) months to five (5) years of imprisonment of whosoever, meaning any person who has violated the integrity of the genital organ of a woman by the partial or complete removal of one or several elements of the genital organ or by rendering it insensitive or by infibulations. This law also punishes health professionals who may have carried out or favored FGM. It imposes the maximum penalty. According to this law, all those who take part in the commission of the crime will be severely punished. This law is known but its content is not fully known. Therefore, there is a major challenge relating to the popularization of the law and its content.

However, it is well known that the actors change their method in order to escape punishment: they do not do it publicly, they go to neighboring countries where a similar law does not exist to practice FGM. Thus, these challenges are complex and numerous.

Out of one hundred and ninety seven cases (197) of FGM, hundred (100) are pending

The law should be disseminated and the population must be sensitized. To this end, it is vital to have efficient communication mechanisms in order to reach the relevant targets, all the actors and stakeholders trained, and the denunciation of the practice encouraged as well.

Two important recommendations were formulated:

- Extend the deadline of the ordinance until the girl reaches the age of maturity;
- Allow SCOs to engage in the legal proceedings by filing lawsuits.

H.E Abubacar M. Tambadou, Minister of Justice the Gambia, was moved and delighted to be there and he reiterated his personal commitment and that of the government to the quest against the practice of FGM/CM.

As far as he is concerned, the struggle should not only be the exclusively responsibility of women. He stated that efforts have been made at both the national and international levels by several stakeholders, Pressure groups, and the network against gender-based

violence inspired by the empirical requirements of the medium and long term consequences associated to FGM. Nevertheless, this has been supported by institutions such as UNICEF. There are also the reports on AIDS. The government of the Gambia has made a great deal of efforts to end FGM, but there is still much work to be done.

At community level, there are “Badianous Gox”, the network of practitioners of excision were associated. This development facilitates the understanding of the negative consequences of FGM. Unfortunately, from 2016 to the present day, one case was brought to the court. FGM is entrenched in our traditions. It is difficult to engage people in legal proceedings given that nobody denounces because of customs and habits and strong belief in social normality. In the event of the commission of an offense, no neighbor would like to testify. Besides, there is also lack of financial and human resources to engage concrete actions. Only the police conduct investigation, but the question is do they do right thing? Do they have the means, expertise, and experience that are required to achieve the expected objectives?

With respect to the difficulties pointed out by the Gambian Minister of Justice, Mme Christine Nanjala reiterated a firm will to combat FGM. She suggested that the law must be fully enforced and it is important to elaborate a plan for its enforcement.

99%

of women and girls in
Somalia are affected

In a nutshell, the challenges that emerged from this panel is the prosecution of the people who have committed these illicit acts. Nonetheless, there is a major challenge, which consists of dissuading doctors from relying on the seal of confidentiality, professional secrecy so that they may become stakeholders in the quest against FGM and CM.

Youth and survivors to end FGM/CM in 2030

Every generation should make its contribution in the quest against FGM, the inter African Committee against FGM was created in 1984, thirty five years (35) later, the expectations remain. A new generation of young people who participated in the panel, brainstormed about how girls could be protected. Which generation that is going to end FGM/ CM? Will FGM practices end before 2030? What is the wish of the international community concerning the issue? What can we do to end FGM by 2030?

All the panellists were optimistic and some of them such as, Alimatu Dimonekene, founder of the anti FGM ACEI project in Sierra Leone, called on the UN and other NGOs to fund Sierra Leone in order to end FGM. Many tribes and practice FGM. We will ensure everybody in the world participate at all the levels of intervention. We have not yet reached some villages but we will achieve our objectives.

According to Nimco Ali, 99 % of women and girls in Somalia are affected and that they had come to incite the debate and inspired decision makers with the dynamism of the youth.

Ifra AHMED, an activist and the founder of the organization “United Youth of Ireland” focused on women. She revealed the commitment of the president of Kenya to eradicate FGM in 2022.

According to Yacinthe COLY, President of the Network of Youth for the Abolition of Excision in Senegal, men had a misunderstanding of the

harmful consequences of FGM. He gave the example of the negative conception about the non-excised women who is regarded as impure and found it hard to get a husband. In partnership with the association "Don't Touch My Sister" and other organizations working on this issue said that they have sown the seeds and that they will soon germinate.

Today Survivors have become ambassadors and focal points for the sensitization and dissemination campaign on FGM and CM. We will not wait for 2030, since the deadline has been shifted twice. It must be stopped now is our slogan. In order to protect the victims or the survivors of FGM and CM, youth like

Alimatu Dimonekene, who described herself as a voice, and the voice that will represent all the victims or survivors, irrespective of the term, which is being used. Another activist who focuses on sensitization, opens her doors to whosoever wants to talk to her, she will be available.

Madam Djénaba Sidibe comes from the region of Tambacounda in Senegal, and she is a member of the National Committee that inherited the plan on the eradication of FGM in 2015. She wanted to know the number of women or people who are aware of the existence of these documents. We requested for the translation of these documents into national languages so that we might disseminate them and engage in a sensitization campaign for the elimination of FGM given that it is our commitment and ambition. Everyone should be involved if we want to reach the minorities and conservative ethnic groups.

Survivors have become ambassadors and focal points for the sensitization and dissemination campaign on FGM and CM

The Intergenerational dialogue was the peak of the celebration of the day and it was between Jaha DUKUREH, President of « Safe Hands For Girls » and Madam Phumzile MLAMBO- NGCUKA, Executive Director of UN Women's Organization. It was an opportunity for experience and approaches sharing between the two generations whose strategic positions are different but have the same objective: the dignity of the human being and respect for the rights of women and girls.

The young leader is an activist of the civil society and other woman is the executive officer of an institution of the United Nations. The discussion enabled Mme Phumzile to recall the work of the UN Women's Organization in areas such as the empowerment of women, the pooling and sharing of resources and experiences between the youth and professionals among others, and the allocation of resources to grassroots communities.

The lesson learnt from this dialogue is that there should be equality between generations who must discuss in a relationship of mutual trust and joint construction of societies. The lesson is also that even young, one can realize unbelievable dreams for one's people or community. One just has to believe and perseveres of course with the assistance of the elders who have wisdom, influence and power.

Dialogue of religious and traditional leader: Position of Islam and Christianity on female genital mutilation and early marriages

For a long time, female genital mutilation has been an issue of controversy in Islam.

In the belief of certain ethnic Muslim groups or non, it is believed that the non-excised women are «impure », and “defiled “. In the Gambia, they are called “Soulima” and they are victims of marginalization and ostracism and besides this exclusion, there are serious consequences on the health, and women and girls’ human development. The religion exists to preserve the soul, wellbeing and human existence. Indeed, the goal of Islam is the protection of the human being, human existence. It is a religion of values and as a result, it does not encourage the violation of physical integrity. Scientific progress should be a source of solutions for Muslims and this could be explained further by the illumination of Islam. The Quran recommends: «ask for the opinion of an expert if you are ignorant».

The religion outlaws murder and any attack on the psychic and physical integrity of a Muslim, in other words, FGM does not have a religious backup, it is just a harmful practice for women’s health. One hadith of Oumar ATIYA advocates for it, but it has no legal basis. The practice of FGM is a purely cultural and traditional issue.

In Africa especially in Sudan, Somalia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Gambia etc. female genital mutilation is widely practiced. In Senegal or Gambia, ethnic groups such as Mandingo, Diakhanké and fulas still practice early marriage and female genital mutilation. In Niger, though the Muslims constitute 99% of the population, there has never been a case of female genital mutilation, but there are cases of early and forced marriages.

The Islamic vision is that early marriage is a form of the degradation of the dignity of the girl since she is considered as an “object” given the fact that she is minor and irresponsible. It is necessary to avoid the materialization and swapping of the girl with money and other goods. Besides, the sacred Book as well as the teachings of the Prophet and his sayings constitute the two sources of Islamic Law. The highest reference in the Muslim World has launched a fatwa against female genital mutilation.

The great imam Mohammed Sayed Tantawi of the University al-Azhar of Cairo, the highest source of reference in the Muslim Sunni World explained during this conference that “Excision of girls is nothing but a cultural tradition and it has nothing to do with Islamic teachings”.

Excision of girls is nothing but a cultural tradition and it has nothing to do with Islamic teachings

According to the opinion of the religious specialist and that of 'Al Azhar, there is no difference in Islam. FGM practices do not originate from religion.

Dr Cheikh Saleh Abas from the University of Al Azhar, after magnifying the fruitful exchanges reaffirms that Al Azhar and its academies through the fatwa, which is supported by the Egyptian Law, prohibits all the practices of female genital mutilation since FGM and CM affect negatively women and girls' health. It comes from aesthetics and culture. In the same vein, imam Baba Leigh from the Gambia and Imam Fall from Senegal condemned female genital mutilation and child marriage.

Reverend Roger Gomis of the Catholic Church in Senegal bluntly stated that the Church is against child marriage and one of the reasons given is that the Bible regards the human body as sacred. The human being was created in the image of God. The Bible respects the human body.

Among the solutions proposed during the discussions and exchanges are:

- ✚ Uniting the strength and the expertise of the religious and traditional leaders in order to eliminate the practices of FGM/CM by 2030;
- ✚ Proceeding in the training of people in charge of disseminating the message;
- ✚ Working with the Ulemas especially those from the University of Al Azhar in order to disseminate the information and sensitize the most affected Muslim countries;
- ✚ Training political elites



WORKING GROUPS AND RECOMMANDATIONS

During the Summit the participants were divided into four working groups and they examined four major issues:

Working Group 1: Proposals on alternative funding strategies for the mobilization of resources

Working Group 2: Laws and legislations (Common law as a prevention mechanism: Obstacles and solutions)

Working Group 3: Data on FGM and CM (Overcoming the challenges in the production, access and dissemination of data)

Working Group 4: Social norms and their consequences on health

The working groups ensured in-depth substantive discussions, issues and recommendations for stakeholders.

At the end of their consultations, the working groups made the following recommendations:

Recommendations Working Group 1: **Proposals on alternative funding strategies for the mobilization of resources**

To activists:

- Demonstrate a high level of knowledge of capacities and evidences relating to their activities in order to attract funding from donors
- Focus on the visibility and transparency
- Create network at the national level in order to widen the scope of their activities
- Have a holistic approach in the implementation of their activities

To NGOs

- ✎ Promote digital transformation with regard to the actions of sensitization on the mistreatment of girls and testimonies of victims
- ✎ Supervise youth associations to enable them to obtain funding, seeing that the youth is doing an outstanding job
- ✎ Concerted efforts in the search for funding

To donors

- ✎ Fund activities everywhere
- ✎ Diversify their funding policies
- ✎ Fund all the training programs for children since children will have to defend their human rights later

The private sector

- ✎ Seek funding from companies since companies have programs on corporate social responsibility (CSR)

To states

- ✎ Solve the financial problems of people and organization proting the end of FGM and CM

Recommendations Working Group 2: Laws and legislations (Common law as a prevention mechanism : Obstacles and solutions)

- ✎ Vote a law on reproductive health,
- ✎ Inform women about the existing laws
- ✎ Ratify the 3rd optional protocol (OP3) which guarantees children's right to submit a complain to the United Nations bodies;
- ✎ Adopt the code on children which is being drafted since 2014
- ✎ Disseminate the 2040Agenda
- ✎ Assist female excisers to engage in alternative income generating activities
- ✎ Adopter child rights act;
- ✎ Harmonize the family code (relating to the age of marriage)
- ✎ Focus on the content of FGM , disseminate and translate into national languages ;
- ✎ Provide a toll free number for the denunciation and monitoring of perpetrators in case of incessant persecution of the victim;
- ✎ Ensure that the sentences are much more binding and the law is fully enforced;
- ✎ Integrate the laws into the academic cycle and the communities ;
- ✎ Train all the actors and the stakeholders (police, doctors, religious and traditional leaders SCOs etc.) to combat this scourge



**Recommendations Working Group 3: Data on FGM and CM
(Overcoming the challenges in the production, access and dissemination of data)**

- Create a national mechanism for the collection of data,
- Inspire and encourage the people to report,
- Integrated approach with different types of actors,
- Disseminate accessible data,
- Collect data managed by SCO,
- Ensure the protection of data collectors and keepers ,
- The government, local communities, SCOs and all the stakeholders should work in concert,

Recommendations Working Group 4: Social norms and their consequences on health

- Work with grassroots organizations;
- Educate children to enable them to participate in the sensitization of their peers
- Engage young girls and boys and girls who may serve as links to their grandmothers who practice FGM, given the fact that they can play an influential role in the quest against female genital mutilation
- Use the medical justifications, meaning to make the concerned people understand the dangers of this practice because of its harmful consequences on the health of the circumcised people



- Reconcile the victims with their parents, who are generally poorly perceived
- Treat FGM as an issue that concerns all the actors, who participate in the quest
- Create a school for husbands with the view to engaging boys in the sensitization campaign
- Create an association for the victims of FGM and ex - practitioners
- Proceed in the sharing of information between different countries to ensure the harmonization of the strategies relating to the quest against FGM
- Involve the religious leaders so that the actors may receive the most reliable information
- Ensure the participation of ex -FGM practitioners in important meetings so that their presence can produce greater impact
- Train media professionals so that they can better process information to ensure greater efficiency
- Assist ex -FGM practitioners in their social reintegration given that they have decided to abandon their reprehensible practices
- Call on influential people with the view to ensuring greater dissemination of the misdeeds relating to FGM.

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST SUMMIT ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION AND CHILD MARRIAGE

The first African Summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage was held in Dakar , Senegal , from the 16th to 18th June 2019, regrouping young activists, African traditional and religious leaders, in the presence of the President of the Senegalese Social, Economic, and Environmental Council, ministers and other senior government officials, senior representatives of the African Union, the agencies of the United Nations, NGOs and CSOs, as well as key strategic partners, especially technical and financial partners with the view to choosing the most efficient African strategies in order to eliminate Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Marriage before 2030.

This summit which has been initiated by Safe Hands for Girls, with



the support of the Governments of the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of the Gambia, following the deliberations on the outcomes of the Second African Girls' Summit which was held in Ghana in November 2018; the International Conference on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation held in Burkina in October 2018; the thirty second Ordinary Session of the African Union Conference (February 2019, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) and its "Decision relating to the efforts which aim at strengthening the Political Commitment for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation in Africa", and the support for AU Continental Initiative , sustained by the Saleema Commission.

This first African Summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage faced the challenges of fusing two important themes; female genital mutilation and child marriage which have a common denominator, the creation of a framework of dialogue for African traditional and religious leaders and the meeting of the young African activists and survivors for the elimination of FGM/ CM .

The youth, taking the lead in the quest, the activists; discussed about how to increasingly engage in the quest for the elimination of FGM and Child Marriage, how to translate into action the commitments of the States, traditional and religious leaders, survivors, community organizations, the media, the civil society with the view to contributing to the elimination of FGM and CM and urging the States to elaborate a specific legal framework relating to the elimination of FGM /CM before 2030.

The positions of religions in relation to child marriage and female genital mutilation, was an essential aspect of the first summit on FGM and CM, which was held in Dakar. The participation of imams, religious leaders and eminent religious intellectuals ensured the organization of a genuine and fruitful debate on child marriage.

Islam and Christianity are against child marriage. The Catholic Church denounces early marriage, like FGM, its position is based on the consideration of the human body as something sacred, which is unique and essential in the sight of God, it is neither a corpse nor a plastic coating, it inhabited by the divine presence. According to the Church, early marriage dishonors girls and violates their dignity.

Regarding Islam, the Sacred Book as well as the teachings of the Prophet and his sayings are the sources of Islamic Law. University of al-Azhar in Cairo, the most important Sunni reference in the Islamic World, has launched a fatwa against child marriage. The fatwa of Al Azhar and the different Egyptian intellectuals, who participated in the summit, confirmed that marriage in Islam is based on the consent of the two parties, especially the consent of the girl. Her consent requires her maturity and capacity to express her will. This will enables her to fully enjoy her fundamental rights to childhood, education, and the fulfilment of marital duties.

According to these Islamic scholars, the required minimum age of consent to marriage is eighteen (18) years and thus marriage before this age reduces the ability to enjoy the rights and honor the duties inherent in marriage. Allah said, “ Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity “ Quoran Al Baqarah: 2: 286.

Together, the participants reflected on the elaboration of new strategies for the elimination of FGM and CM by virtue of concrete actions carried out at national and local communities' levels



The discussions during the summit focused on human rights, laws and policies, social norms; the importance of collecting viable quantitative and qualitative data, the role of the different stakeholders, including through the participation of men, the crucial role of traditional and religious leaders, trans border practices and the efforts that should be made with respect to fundraising for elimination of FGM and CM.

Relevant suggestions and recommendations were made to the States and governments, especially those relating to the strengthening of the promotion of gender equality and girls' empowerment, promotion of safer and more egalitarian societies for both women and girls by promulgating laws and policies related to patrimonial and economic rights, family law and render more efficient the access to justice, medical, psychological and social assistance for victims etc.

Among the practical steps which the States and the governments should take, is the Summit's suggestion that legislations and policies should be elaborated in concert with the groups for the protection of women's rights, the organizations of the civil society (CSOs) and women's right activists.

They were advised to facilitate the creation of networks and alliances with human right activists, members of the civil society, religious and traditional leaders, young activists and the formal justice sector, and to closely collaborate with them. To resolutely and increasingly engage at the political level in order to incorporate the issue of FGM and CM into the national priorities by harmonizing the laws against FGM and their enforcement mechanisms at the local, national and sub-regional levels and allocate in the national budgets sufficient human and financial resources for the implementation of local, national, sub regional and regional action plans.

The summit suggested to the key stakeholders (parents, community leaders, teachers, media and medical experts) to adopt transversal communication strategies for social marketing and change with the sole purpose of combating the aforementioned harmful practices, participating in advocacy activities aim at urging government to enforce and elaborate laws and policies protecting children against early and forced marriage. Spread good community practices and replicate them throughout Africa in order to strengthening the role of traditional leaders and cultural authorities in the quest against FGM and CM at community level.

These key stakeholders should ensure the participation of girls and young women in important meetings on issues, such as CM, their causes and consequences that concern them directly or indirectly. Besides, girls should be the focus of the discussions on social changes in order to ensure a transformational change reflecting their desires or aspirations.

During this first African Summit on FGM and CM, the participants suggested to the Agencies of UNO, AU... to strengthening the capacity and the talents of African citizens, SCOs community based organizations and other NGOs to use their influence in the quest to end FGM and CM at the national and global levels through dissemination and exchange of information, and support a regional dialogue between the regional economic communities (REC) and the actors of the regional CSOs in order to promote and advocate for the creation of a favorable legal and political environment as well as best practices to provide relevant or important data enabling Member States to elaborate laws and policies protecting women's rights.

These strategic partners were called upon to invest in the education of youth and sensitize parents on issues relating to sexual reproductive health and sustain community efforts aiming at empowering girls and offer them careers in the technical, professional and entrepreneurial fields-these should be recognized and fully supported in order to enable the survivors of child marriage to be financially autonomous.



NGOs and CSOs were advised to strengthen the creation of platforms for African citizens and marginalized groups to urge policymakers to engage in issues relating to FGM and CM, all efforts should be made at the sub regional and continental levels to create and coordinate advocacy groups with the view to mounting pressure and advocating for the elimination of FGM and Child Marriage and thereby protecting the girls and women's rights.

It was recommended that the AU should be supported in the creation of distinctions for youth and CSOs in recognition of their innovation in the quest against FGM and CM (FGM and CM Innovation Price) in order to create sustainable models relating to the quest against sexual violence based on gender and harmful practices with sole purpose of promoting health and sexual reproductive rights.

Initiate and Sustain the creation of efficient working groups devoted to interreligious interventions both at the national and regional levels. The religious and traditional leaders should be key and active actors in the quest against FGM / CM. To this end, the NGOs, the Civil Society, the States and governments should strengthen the dialogue and synergy between the religious and traditional leaders in order to challenge century old ideas that support FGM and CM as acceptable practices.

The Summit placed the role of the youth and the survivals in the center of its reflection and strategies, which is why it urged the creation of mechanisms and spaces in order to enhance the advocacy capacity of the youth at the national, regional and continental levels but also to use the expertise of the young activists, who are engage in other fields, such as the fight against HIV/AIDS, sexual reproductive health or education, which is beneficial by virtue of the numerous correlations between these issues and early marriage.

Thus, this First African Summit on FGM/CM insisted on the active cooperation between the youth and African opinion leaders in order to engage other youth and provide them with the means to ensure their mobilization, to assert their position and denounce harmful traditional, religious, and cultural norms with the view to promoting positive pan African values.



RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE SUMMIT

DAKAR DECLARATION TO ERADICATE FGM AND CHILD MARRIAGE IN AFRICA BY 2030

We, the participants of the First Africa-led Summit on Female Genital Mutilations and Child Marriage - driven by young African activists, traditional and religious leaders, in the presence of the President of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council of Senegal, African Ministers and other high-level government officials, high-level African Union representatives, and United Nations agencies; representatives of Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) as well as key strategic partners including technical and financial partners - have gathered in Dakar, Senegal, from 16 to 18 June 2019 to collectively take ownership of the initiatives on Female Genital Mutilations (FGM) and Child Marriage (CM) and have African-led solutions.

The Summit was full of forward-looking solutions as well as recommendations on how young people and activists, can be better engaged in ending FGM and child marriage, with the strong desire

for sustained working relationships with adults instead of one-off interactions through workshops or campaign events.

We shared experiences and good practices. Our mission is to collectively help translate into action the commitment of States, religious and traditional leaders, survivors, community-based organizations (CBOs), media, youth and CSOs to contribute to the elimination of FGM and CM and encourage States to establish, by 2030, a legal framework that is conducive to the elimination of FGM and CM.

Collectively, we have brainstormed to develop innovative strategies for the elimination of FGM and CM through concrete actions with grassroots communities.

Young African activists, whose influence already helps to reduce the prevalence of these two harmful practices, have been placed at the forefront of the fight to eradicate the practices.

The discussions during the summit were based on human rights, laws and policies, social norms, the importance of collecting reliable qualitative and quantitative data, the role of various stakeholders, including male engagement and the crucial role of traditional and religious leaders, the cross-border practices, and the efforts to be made regarding funding to address the issue of FGM and CM.

This summit was following-upon the dialogue on the outcomes of the Second African Girls Summit held in Ghana in November 2018; the African Union-led International Conference on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilations held in Burkina Faso in October 2018, the Thirty-second Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly (February 2019, Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia) and its “Decision on galvanizing political commitment towards the elimination of FGM/C in Africa” and endorsement of the AU continental initiative led by the Commission to be known as Saleema.

We, the participants, would like to thank the Governments of Senegal and The Gambia, and their partners, Safe Hands for Girls, the Big Sisters Movement and all young people, especially girls, for being the reason why we gathered here.

- Acknowledging that FGM and CM are closely related to other forms of discrimination against women and girls; and the need to put into consideration the continuum between harmful practices and violence against women and girls: teen pregnancy, FGM, Violence against Children (VAC), gender-based violence (GBV), trafficking of girls. These are manifestations of the lack of value placed on women and girls;
- Recognizing that strategic investments targeting young people, especially girls, are fundamental to achieving the AU Agenda 2063 and the demographic dividend, reinforcing the views of the Second Summit of the African Union Commission to end to early marriage
- Recognizing that “a one size fits all” approach to ending FGM and CM that can be replicated in multiple settings will not work, because of complex and variable patterns;
- Understanding the specific social, cultural, economic, religious and political factors that contribute to the practice of CM and gender-based inequality is a critical first step for building an effective intervention;

- Recognizing that our States continue to bear the burden of public health expenditure for the victims of both FGM and CM practices and that the human development indicators in our countries are affected by high rates of maternal mortality due to the complications related to FGM.
- Acknowledging the importance of seeing improvements in the measurement of social norms change that reflect the wide contextual variations between and within countries and the differences in the nature of interventions; a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators need to be included which can measure progress towards changing knowledge, attitude and practices.
- Recognizing that religious and traditional leaders play a critical role in mobilizing communities to change social norms related to child marriage by engaging their communities, including through dialogues;
- Reaffirming the commitments made by States across Africa to accelerate and coordinate efforts to end child marriage, through regional and global frameworks including African Union Agenda 2063, the African Common Position on Child Marriage, for Strengthening National Child Protection Systems to prevent and respond to Violence, Abuse and Exploitation against Children in Africa; and the Sustainable Development Goals whose target calls for an end to all harmful practices, including child marriage, by 2030
- Acknowledging that although the practice of child marriage is rooted in tradition and culture, these are man-made practices that can be changed and updated. There is hope for ensuring change and putting an end to these harmful, damaging practices on girls & women;
- Acknowledging that clandestinely and cross-border practice of FGM and CM is a trend that should be curtailed - this is acknowledged by regional bodies such as West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Inter-African Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices (IAC). The regional character of this practice makes it a common concern
- Recognizing that Youth participation is an effective and important way of addressing child marriage at the community level. Failing to engage young people in efforts to end child marriage is a missed opportunity to achieve results at a large scale;
- Recognizing that effective responses to the complex and multiple causes and consequences of child marriage & FGM must be multi-sectoral, integrated, sustainable, evidence-based and taken to scale, combining approaches that aim to empower girls, mobilizing families and communities, providing quality education, protection and health services, including sexual and reproductive health services to married girls and girls at risk of marriage, and establishing an enabling policy and legal framework;
- Recognizing that in countries with plural legal systems where customary, religious and indigenous laws exist alongside formal law, major concerns remain about the application of discriminatory laws and practices, despite formal laws enacted to protect women and girls from violence and thus FGM and CM.

- ✦ Acknowledging that women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination are often overlooked throughout the process of developing policies and legislation on violence against women and girls (VAWG), and other relevant laws are often discriminatory towards them
- ✦ Recognizing that providing such responses requires a partnership between various sectors including health, education, justice, and between key actors including governments, civil society, regional and continental institutions, UN agencies, development partners, religious and traditional leaders, the media, men and boys, and most importantly girls and young people themselves.

To States and governments: We call on

- ✦ To strengthen the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of adolescent girls to enjoy a childhood free of child, early and forced marriage, thus contributing to SDG Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and specifically to SDG target 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation;
- ✦ For stronger political commitment and the mainstreaming of FGM and CM in national priorities: harmonize anti FGM laws and their implementation mechanisms at country and sub-regional levels;
- ✦ To promote more equitable societies that are safer for women and girls through laws and policies related to asset ownership, economic entitlement and family law. Girls need access to justice through legal aid and paralegal professionals who are educated on the issue of FGM and CM and the needs of married adolescents and survivors of FGM;
- ✦ Allocate adequate financial and human resources in national budgets to implement regional, sub regional and national action plans developed in an inclusive manner with all stakeholders involved;
- ✦ Develop Financing and costing models and tools to standardize methodologies for financing the elimination of FGM and CM;
- ✦ Help establish a new form of social dialogue for the abandonment of FGM and CM;
- ✦ Ensure coherence between violence against women and violence against children laws and policies to ensure age-appropriate, culturally relevant addressing of violence against girls and the intergenerational impacts on children of violence against women (VAW);
- ✦ Advocate and support the allocation of a budget for the implementation of relevant laws and action plans;
- ✦ Support the development of protocols, guidelines, standards and regulations, including standardized forms, for the comprehensive and timely implementation of the legislation;
- ✦ Ensure that legislation and policies are developed with the participation of women's rights groups, CSOs and women's human rights defenders, including those representing groups facing multiple forms of discrimination;

- ✎ Support networks and alliances among human rights defenders, civil society, traditional and religious leaders, youth activists and the formal justice sector;
- ✎ Implement the AU Initiative on Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation “Saleema”,
- ✎ With a focus on social norms and cultural dimensions addressing cross border practice of female genital mutilation.

To CSOs, NGOs, UN Agencies, the AU...: We call on to

- ✎ Strengthen the capacity and ability of African citizens, CSOs, CBOs and other NGO formations to influence on ending FGM and CM nationally and globally through Information dissemination and exchange;
- ✎ Create platforms for African citizens and marginalized groups to engage policy makers on FGM and CM;
- ✎ Support a regional dialogue between Regional Economic Communities (RECs)& Regional CSO’s actors to promote and advocate for an enabling legal and policy environment and best practices to provide evidence to influence Member States to develop laws/policies that guarantee women rights;
- ✎ Undertake sub regional & continental level coordinated CSO movements for lobbying and advocating for the elimination of FGM and child marriage and protecting the rights of girls and women;
- ✎ Invest in educating young people and raising parents’ knowledge of sexual and reproductive health issues;
- ✎ Encourage community efforts to empower girls and provide technical, vocational and entrepreneurial career paths – these must be recognized and fully supported towards the financial empowerment of survivors of child marriage;
- ✎ Support AU in establishing Awards for the Youth and CSOs for Innovations on FGM and CM to build sustainable models on the elimination of violence against women (EVAW), sexual and gender-based violence/harmful practices (SGBV/HP) and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR);
- ✎ Prioritize allocation of resources to innovative, home grown and grassroots initiatives to ending FGM and CM;
- ✎ Help to provide an enabling environment for change, with other reform strategies that encourage positive change in communities through proposed alternative rites of passage;
- ✎ Encourage the establishment of robust inter-religious interventions working groups both at national & regional level. Religious & traditional leaders are encouraged to initiate/ reinforce within their circles dialogue to question the long-held perspective of FGM and CM as being accepted.

To key stakeholders that are our parents, community leaders, teachers, medical professionals and the media: We call on to

- ✎ Use of media, including social change and communication and social marketing, to convey stories of individual and community experiences, raise awareness of human rights and legal frameworks and available services;

- ✎ Community leaders to engage governments to enforce and implement laws and policies that protect children from child marriage;
- ✎ Inform and equip youth activists with sound knowledge of laws and instruments that promote their fundamental Human rights. Girls, especially survivors of child marriage, must be at the forefront of the fight;
- ✎ Create spaces where young people's views and ideas on child marriage are heard and valued;
- ✎ Systematize the development and use of a male engagement strategy to be integrated into behaviour changes interventions;
- ✎ Intensify efforts on heightening adolescent economic livelihoods and negotiation skills while addressing the roots causes and the harms of FGM and CM;
- ✎ Educate boys and girls to ensure that they are enlightened enough to postpone marriage and denounce FGM and CM in their communities;
- ✎ Scale up working community impact bylaws and replicate them across Africa to increase the role of traditional leaders and cultural authorities in FGM and CM at community level;
- ✎ Engage girls and young women in major discussions and decisions that affect them directly or indirectly such as CM and its underlying causes and consequences;
- ✎ Help showcase girl's own initiatives and interventions in FGM and CM as active participants;
- ✎ Putting girl's voices at the centre of the social change ensures transformational change that addresses the needs of girls;
- ✎ Help systematize the use of U-Report, a social media-based platform for youth and adolescents to express their aspiration.

To Young people: We call on to

- ✎ Request for developing safe spaces for girls to voice their concerns about early marriage and pregnancy and to express their aspirations. It means encouraging child brides to tell their stories to ensure that their experiences are taken into account in community decisions on child marriage;
- ✎ Activists to be transparent in the use of funds including proper book keeping;
- ✎ Draw on the expertise of young advocates who are active in other fields, such as HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive health or education, which is beneficial due to the many links those issues have with child marriage;
- ✎ Help develop mechanisms and spaces to leverage the power of youth advocacy at the national, regional and continental level;
- ✎ Make Calls to Action and policy demands more daring and more creative;
- ✎ Engage with African bloggers, influencers to mobilize and empower other young people to stand up, speak and challenge harmful socio-cultural, religious and traditional norms and promote positive pan African value.

Adopted in Dakar this June 18th, 2019

STATEMENT OF GRATITUDE

Statement of gratitude to the authorities and peoples of the republics of Senegal and the Gambia

WE, delegations representing 15 countries, participating in the 1st African Summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage,

Considering the fraternal and warm welcome shown to us by the authorities and the peoples of the Republics of Senegal and The Gambia;

Considering the special attention given to us by our guests from the two sister republics, during our stay and throughout the work of the Summit from 16 to 18 June 2019;

Considering the teranga, fraternity, serenity, rigor and frankness that characterized the work of the African led Summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage in Dakar;

Considering the remarkable and decisive role that Republics of Senegal and The Gambia have always played in the fight against FGM and child marriage;

- ✎ Express our gratitude to the President of the Republic of Senegal, His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, the President of the Republic of The Gambia, His Excellency Adama Barrow and the NGO Safe Hands for their invitation of 15 African countries to come and hold the 1st African Summit on Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage in Senegal, and the good working conditions in which they put us;
- ✎ We pay fitting tribute to the President of the Republic of Senegal, His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, for his evident leadership among his African peers;
- ✎ Give thanks to the Senegalese people for its legendary hospitality, the Teranga, whose reality we have just experienced during our stay;
- ✎ Hope that relevant conclusions from this Summit will be implemented and that their impacts will be felt by all African peoples, especially women and girls.

Delivered in Dakar June 18, 2019



FATWA PROJECT OF AL AZHAR UNIVERSITY OF EGYPT

Marriage in Islam is based on the consent of both parties, especially the girl. The minimum age required to consent to marriage is eighteen year old.

Consent required that the girl is sufficiently mature and able to express her will to marry. That in turn guarantees her full enjoyment of her fundamental rights to childhood, education and the ability to meet the responsibilities of marriage. Marriage before that age limits her ability to enjoy these necessary rights and to meet the responsibility of marriage

Allah said **“God does not place a burden on a soul greater than it can bear”** Qur’an The Cow: 2:286

The prophet (peace be upon him) said: **“What I have ordered you (to do) do as much of it of you can.”**

The minimum age of marriage for boy and girl is eighteen age hold according to the law in Egypt and in line with international conventions. Allah knows best



CHILDREN'S STATEMENT

His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Senegal,

Your Excellency, Madam the Vice- President of the Republic of the Gambia,

Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Madams and Misters, Representatives of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council,

Madams and Misters, HonourableDeputies,

Madams and Misters, Representatives of the Supreme Council of Local Government Authorities,

Madams and Misters, Representatives of theWorld Bank,

Madams and Misters, Representatives of theUnited Nations System,

Madams and Misters , religious, traditional, customary and community leaders ,

Distinguished participants, honouored guests, my peers , children and youth,

My name is Farimata LO, I am 17 years old. A fifth Form Student and member of CONAFE's Children and Youth Advisory Council in Senegal, I represent the children and youth of Africa.

First of all, i would like to wish you a successful and happy Afrcan Children's Day, and then thank you for inviting us to this important African Summit to explore the theme 'Strengthening the bridge between Africa and the rest of the World in order to facilitate zero tollerannce for FGM and Child 's Marriage, one of the major aspects of the Objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals'. Coupled with the commemration of the ACD whose theme is 'Humanitarian Action in

Africa : the rights of the child first'

These two themes are so important that they once more remind us that children are one of the key priorities of the Sustainable Development Goals2030 and the 2063 and 2040 Agendas of the African Union.

This summit is taking place within a context of increased violence against children, women and girls.

Rape, sexual abuses and other forms of exploitation frighten us and we call upon the States for the adoption of laws or their effective enforcement.

Madams, Misters, honoured guests, distinguished participants, beloved children and youth,

Female Genital Mutilation and child marriage , two of our most harmful traditional practices consitute gross violations of our human rights in Africa and the world. How many children, youth especially we, the girls, are victims of these practices that compromise our educational career, health and future prospects? The causes are many but we can mention : the lack of sexual educationwithin the family sphere, the inappropriate understandingof the consequences, family vulnerability , the lack of or insuffecient penalties , which encourage perpetrators to reoffend.

Which is wy, we, the children and youth,we avail ourselves of this solemn opportunity, in front of us, to vent out our heart felt cry : we are children, we are not wives capable of carrying the family burden . We want to enjoy our childhood and be protected against harmful cultural practices such as FGM and Child Marriage .

Therefore, you policymakers, who are our fathers, our mothers, our uncles, our aunts and our grandparents, it is high time to end these practices.

We recommend :

- ✎ *The strengthening of the legislations of our States through especially the adoption of a children's code and the enforcement of the law*
- ✎ *Ensuring the access of children to good quality education ;*
- ✎ *Strengthening the leadership and the empowerment of girls to enable them to actively participate in the quest against Child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation ;*
- ✎ *The sensitization of the communities to ensure a change of behavior ;*
- ✎ *The dissemination of the 2040 agenda;*
- ✎ *The allocation of sufficient resources for the elimination of FGM and Child Marriage*
- ✎ *Ensuring the participation of children and youth in the monitoring of the recommendations of this summit.*

On behalf of all the children of Africa, we would like to thank you for your kind attention.



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Press Release

June 18th, 2019 - Jaha's Promise, the award-winning documentary about the life and activism of Jaha Dukureh, can now be seen in Africa, the Middle East and Asia for free on [YouTube](#). The film is also being released in the United States and Europe on iTunes, Amazon and Vimeo — where a portion of the rental fee will go to the grassroots campaign against FGM and Child Marriage.

Jaha's Promise is a moving and dramatic film that tells the story of the Nobel Peace Prize nominee from her west African childhood, her child marriage in the United States and her return home to the Gambia where she organized a successful campaign to ban FGM and child marriage.

Dukureh said, "I hope that people will watch this film and be inspired by it to build a future where our girls can live lives that are free of violence. Africa has unlimited potential but we can only achieve that if we unleash the amazing abilities of our girls and women. Jaha's Promise is all about the power of girls to change the world."

Dukureh has emerged as an international leader in the campaign against FGM and child marriage. UN Women named her as their first Goodwill Ambassador to Africa and she has been honored for her work across Africa, Europe and the United States.

The campaign organization that Dukureh founded, Safe Hands for Girls, convened the historic Africa4Girls2030 Summit in Dakar in June 2019 and is working with grassroots organizations across the continent to end FGM and child marriage. They are leaders of a new wave of young activists with an Africa-based strategy for ending gender violence against women.

ns ensemble pour promouvoir l'abandon
utilisations génitales féminines et
riage d'enfants en Afrique d'ici 2030

18 JUIN 2019
KING FAHD PALACE
DAKAR, SÉNÉGAL



Avec le soutien de





FIRST AFRICAN SUMMIT
ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATIONS
AND CHILD MARRIAGES

Design : AMA Global