

Knowledge Sharing Workshops on FGM/C

Policy and programme implementation

June 2018

Hargeisa, Somaliland



The FGM/C Research Capacity Building project's main purpose is to provide high-quality research-based evidence to support Norway's 2014–2017 strategy for intensifying international efforts to eliminate FGM/C.

The project is led by Population Council, Nairobi and funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) providing support and building capacity to generate and use research evidence amongst Norad partners - Somaliland Family Health Association based in Somaliland, Norwegian Church Aid and Save the Children in Ethiopia and Norwegian Church Aid and Save the Children in South-Central and Puntland Somalia.



SOFHA works in the field of reproductive health in Somaliland as well as all of its cross-cutting issues. In Somaliland, there is no issue more interwoven into women's health than FGM/C. SOFHA is determined to see the end of FGM/C in one generation and is working with local and international partners to develop and implement evidenced based interventions.



Orchid Project has a vision of a world free from female genital cutting (FGC). Orchid Project was set up in 2011 to pursue this vision and works as a catalyst for change to foster and accelerate the abandonment of FGC. As a UK charity with global reach Orchid Project works through partnering, sharing and advocacy to end FGC worldwide. www.orchidproject.org



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This report was written by Dr Katy Newell-Jones, Independent Consultant at Orchid Project, following a series of Knowledge Sharing Workshops in Hargeisa in December 2017 and June 2018 to disseminate recent research on FGM/C in Somaliland.

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Abbreviations

ANPPCAN	African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect
ASAL	
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CHW	Community Health Workers
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development
EAH	Edna Adan Hospital
EAUH	Edna Adan University Hospital
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation / Cutting
FHW	Family Health Workers
GAVO	General Assistance and Volunteer Organisation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
KSW	Knowledge Sharing Workshop
MESFA	Ministry of Employment, Social and Family Affairs
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MORA	Ministry of Religious Affairs
NAFIS	Network Against FGM/C in Somaliland
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NORAD	Orchid Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OP	Orchid Project
PAP	Parent Action Plan
PC	Population Council
PSI	Population Services International
SAYS	
SHG	Self Help Group
SOFHA	Somaliland Family Health Association
SONYA	
SOWDA	Somaliland Women Development Association
SOYDAVO	
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SWLA	Somaliland Women Legal Association
SYS	
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
TGG	The Girl Generation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNJP	United Nations Joint Programme
VOSOMWO	Voice of Somaliland Minority Women Organisation
WAAPO	Women's Action Advocacy and Progress Organisation
WARSAN	Women Action for Rights and Safety Normalisation
WHO	World Health Organisation
WORDA	Women Rehabilitation and Development Association
Y-PEER	Y-Peer Youth Network

Summary

In 2016/2017 the FGM/C Research Capacity Building project implemented by Population Council (PC) Nairobi and funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) carried out research into FGM/C in Somaliland. One of the main objectives of the project is to strengthen the capacity of Norad partners to generate and use evidence for decision making related to FGM/C. As part of this initiative, Population Council is exploring a range of ways of disseminating research findings to promote their incorporation into policy and programme decision-making, including using knowledge sharing workshops led by Orchid Project.

Two sets of knowledge sharing workshops took place, in December 2017 and June 2018, hosted by Somaliland Family Health Association (SOFHA). The aim was to pilot a new approach to disseminating research findings so as to increase their impact on decision making in programme, policy and investments in FGM/C.

In December 2017 two pieces of research and UNICEF's Six Elements of Abandonment were used as stimulus materials to generate dialogue and exchange among and between organisations and line ministries working to end FGM/C in Somaliland. Each CSO and line ministry developed action plans of how they would incorporate their learning from the evidence presented into their work to end FGM/C.

In June 2018, a further 3 days of workshops took place bringing together the same organisations to review the impact of the dissemination of the research findings.

The workshops, have been successful in providing a forum in which ministries and CSOs working to end FGM/C in Somaliland have engaged with recent research and begun the process of embedding their learning in their own programmes.

The extent to which the research evidence has influenced policy making is limited, due to the relatively short timescale and the recent changes in government. However, the workshops provided a unique forum for exchange and dialogue between the different actors which was greatly valued by all and resulted in increased understanding of the priorities and activities of each ministry and organisation working to end FGM/C.

The impact of the workshops at the programme implementation level has been significant with evidence of radical changes to programmes implemented by participating CSOs. Almost all CSOs have made significant changes to their programmes based on the research findings and/or the UNICEF Six Elements of Abandonment. The most significant change in programme implementation since December 2017 is a reported move from a focus on educating specific stakeholder groups in communities to an increase in trying to engage a wider range of stakeholders, especially youth, in dialogue and decision-making in relation to FGM/C. The call by participants at the end of the workshops to promote more community-led initiatives echoes this change in perspective of many of the CSOs.

It is too early to identify the impact of these changes, however, the CSOs involved feel that they have extended their reach significantly through integrating FGM/C across their programmes, including livelihoods and health clinics, rather than seeing it as a separate discrete topic. CSOs report that communities are engaging more with their work to end FGM/C, that trust is beginning to build and that youth in particular are keen to use social media and peer-to-peer dialogue to bring about change within the next generation.

This series of knowledge sharing workshops has resulted in 20 CSOs working to end FGM/C in Somaliland being more aware of the recent research on FGM/C and having increased their capacity to engage with this research, consider the implications and to make some significant changes to their programmes. This approach is highly flexible and could be adapted to suit different contexts. Further evaluation would be useful in identifying the medium to long term impact at organisational and community level.

1. Introduction

Population Council (PC), supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), has been implementing the ***FGM/C Research Capacity Building*** project which seeks to strengthen the capacity of Norad partners to generate and use evidence for decision making in relation to FGM/C. Through this project, two key pieces of research have been undertaken in Somaliland in 2016/17, one by Orchid Project (OP) in partnership with Somaliland Family Health Association (SOFHA)¹ and the other by PC researchers².

As part of this initiative, Population Council is exploring a range of ways of disseminating research findings to promote their incorporation into policy and programming decision-making. Orchid Project has been using knowledge sharing workshops in Kenya and Tanzania and it was decided to pilot using this approach to disseminate research findings and to increase their impact on decision making in programme, policy and investments in FGM/C.

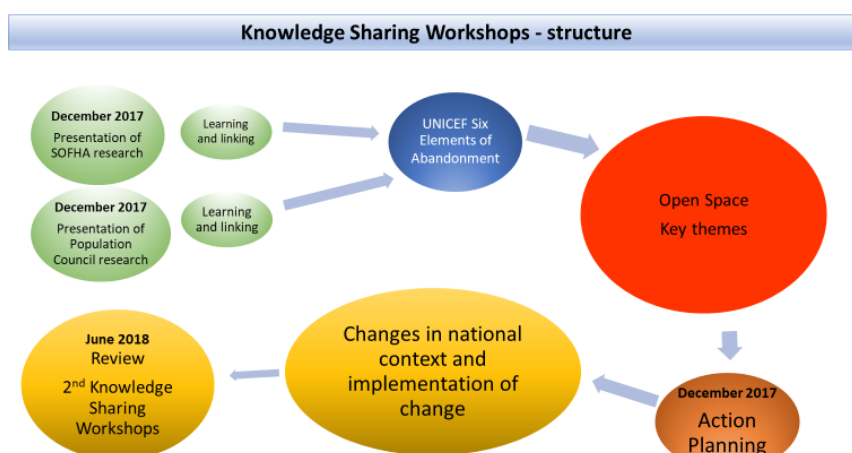
In December 2017, the initial knowledge sharing workshops³, hosted by Somaliland Family Health Association (SOFHA) took place in which the two pieces of research and UNICEF's Six Elements of Abandonment were used as stimulus materials to generate dialogue and exchange among and between organisations and line ministries (MoH, MoE, MoRA and MESFA, formerly MoLSA) working to end FGM/C in Somaliland. During these workshops, all participating CSOs, academic institutions and line ministries developed action plans of how they would incorporate their learning from the research evidence into their work to end FGM/C.

In June 2018, a further 3 days of workshops took place to bring together the same organisations to review the impact of the dissemination of the research findings.

The specific objectives were

- To strengthen networking among organisations working to end FGM/C in Somaliland
- To share knowledge and experiences on:
 - the current national context of FGM/C
 - changes at policy and implementation levels
- Report on progress on action plans proposed at the December Knowledge Sharing Workshops.

Fig. 1 The Knowledge Sharing Workshop model



¹ https://orchidproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FGC_Somaliland_baseline_assessment_Orchid_Project_SOFHA_Population_Council.pdf

² https://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/2018RH_FGMC-Somaliland.pdf

³ Report available from Population Council and Orchid Project

2. Workshop process

The workshops took place at the Ambassador Hotel, Hargeisa, Somaliland over three days, June 21st, 23rd, 24th 2018. The lead facilitator was Katy Newell-Jones from Orchid Project, UK, supported by Amal Ahmed and Mohamed Abdi and the team from Somaliland Family Health Association (SOFHA) and Chantalle Okondo and Mohamed Yussuf from Population Council,

The knowledge sharing workshops were designed to follow a sequence of first reviewing what participants had taken away from the first workshops in December, then to consider the current context of FGM/C in Somaliland as there have been significant challenges and changes in the last 6 months. Following this, time would be given to exploring:

- the policy context, looking back at the action plans made by the MOH, MOE, MESFA (formerly MOLSA) and MORA, identifying progress made and considering the extent to which the research has been influential in these changes
- the ways in which CSOs, NGOs and academic institutions have changed/adapted their approaches as a result of their learning from December 2017.

Initially, the workshops were planned to use open space as in December 2017, however, it became clear that participants felt strongly they lacked opportunities to engage in dialogue with the line ministries in relation to FGM/C. The approach was adapted providing more time for ministry representatives to explain their stance on FGM/C, their response to the recent Fatwa and to also answer some challenging questions from CSOs.

Workshop timetable appendix 1

3. National context of FGM/C

Since December 2017 there have been considerable changes and challenges in Somaliland which have influenced the context of FGM/C.

In November 2017, the general election brought about a change in government which has resulted in the restructuring of ministerial departments, including the re-configuring of the lead ministry for anti-FGM/C activities from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) into the new Ministry of Employment, Social and Family Affairs (MESFA). There is a new female head of Social and Family Affairs, who appears committed to ending FGM/C. There is also a new commitment to increasing women's participation in power with the target of 30% of parliamentarians being women in the forthcoming elections.

During the election, all political parties pledged their support to ending FGM/C, which indicates how much more acceptable it is to talk about FGM/C and also the general acceptance that people want to see change. Although the new President declared his commitment to ending FGM/C prior to the election, it is too early to see whether this will make a substantial difference to the focus or resource allocation at government level.

In February 2018, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) released their much-anticipated Fatwa on FGM/C. Some hailed the Fatwa as a breakthrough in the campaign to end FGM/C as it states clearly that all cutting which involves the removal of flesh or which requires stitching is non-Islamic, is not permitted and where it takes place should result in punishment and the girl being compensated. However, the Fatwa equally clearly states that the 'sunna', the pricking with no stitches required, is obligatory. Hence the Fatwa and the draft FGM/C legislation are in opposition to each other. Currently there is confusion, considerable frustration and evidence of tensions between and within ministries and CSOs in relation to the end goal and the way forward on FGM/C. MORA has also published a Fatwa on rape which has been universally applauded and welcomed.

In recent months, a national youth conference has taken place to end FGM/C, attended by young people from across Somaliland. The Girl Generation has funded an additional 10 small initiatives to end FGM/C at community levels, over half of which have been to participants of the knowledge sharing workshops and

the decision-making process for the allocation of these funds has been influenced by the research presented in December 2017.

There have also been factors which have acted as barriers to change in relation to FGM/C. Over the last year, Somaliland has suffered a severe drought and humanitarian crisis. The drought has impacted on FGM/C in several ways. Firstly, at community level, the lack of water for basic hygiene and people's reduced immune systems from inadequate nutrition, leads to a slower rate of healing and an increased risk of infections among those who have been cut. Secondly, the drought has resulted in a decrease in the overall prioritisation of funds to activities to end FGM/C and, in some cases, the actual re-allocation of resources originally designated for anti-FGM/C related activities to providing emergency relief instead. Whilst these changes in funding priorities are understandable they have contributed to an increasing funding gap between planned activities to end FGM/C and what can take place in practice.

In conclusion, there is pressure for change from both CSOs and ministries, however, the policy framework is not in place to support change and the resources available to implement programmes to end FGM/C are severely limited.

4. Impact - policy decision-making

At the beginning of the workshops, participants identified the key themes from the December knowledge sharing workshops of **priority policy development and implementation** which were

- MORA to consult fully with other line Ministries and then finalise a Fatwa on FGM/C which is published and disseminated at national and community levels
- Complete the passing of the Sexual Offences Bill through parliament
- Finalise and approve the draft Anti-FGM/C Policy and Bill
- Publication of Anti-medicalisation policy and codes of conduct
- Inclusion of FGM/C in child rights, child protection policies
- Inclusion of FGM/C in health and family policies
- To harmonise policies on FGM/C to provide a consistent and clear message of abandonment.

These priorities did not directly link to the research presented in December. However, they did fall under the **enabling environment** category of the UNICEF Six Elements of Abandonment as they were focused on creating a policy environment which supported an end to FGM/C.

Progress by the line Ministries

The time since the December 2017 is relatively short in policy making terms and has also been one of considerable change in Somaliland (see section 3), including a change in government. Consequently, most of the line ministries in relation to FGM/C have made limited progress, although conversations have taken place internally within ministries. There does not appear to have been significant dialogue on FGM/C between ministries.

MORA

MORA published a Fatwa on FGM/C in February 2017 which states that the sunna is mandatory but all other forms of cutting are non-Islamic and should not be allowed. It also states that if a girl is cut with any of the forms of cutting which remove flesh or require stitches then the person responsible should be punished and the girl compensated.

This Fatwa was developed by MORA through consultation with a range of stakeholders. However, it was developed relatively quickly. Over two thirds of the workshop participants broadly agreed with the Fatwa, although most would prefer to see the sunna as optional, not obligatory. Most stakeholders, including line ministries, CSOs and academic institutions feel the consultation process was too short and narrow.

The research indicated that religious leaders could play a stronger role in ending FGM/C and this action is in line with the research findings.

The workshops have provided an open forum for exchange between line ministries, and between CSOs and MORA.

Through the forum, CSOs called for

- MORA to work more closely with other Ministries, UNJP etc
- Greater consultation in future with a wider range of ministries, CSOs, female health professionals etc
- Greater clarity on the Fatwa, in particular a clear definition of what constitutes 'sunna'
- MORA to amend the Fatwa so that the 'sunna' is optional and therefore people can choose to leave it
- Information on the MORA's action plan for the dissemination and implementation of the Fatwa

MOE

In December 2017, MOE committed to developing curriculum materials on FGM/C. Since then, the department has, in theory, agreed that a short curriculum could be developed and introduced. The representative from MOE stated that they lack the resources and expertise to develop these materials and are looking for partners.

The research identified that most schools and teachers require support to play a strong role in the abandonment of FGM/C. These findings were reflected in the actions called for by CSOs.

Through the forum, CSOs called for

- Greater recognition of the importance of integration of FGM/C into activities of MOE and schools
- Teachers to be supported in being change agents in schools in relation to FGM/C
- FGM/C to be included in the teacher training curriculum
- FGM/C to be included in the syllabus/curriculum of formal and non-formal education
- FGM/C Curriculum materials to be developed and disseminated to schools, both primary and secondary on FGM/C
- MOE to work more closely with other Ministries, UNJP etc
- Specific MOE budget to be assigned to support anti-FGM/C activities.

MOE would benefit from a partner able to support the introduction of FGM/C into the teacher training curriculum and the development of whole school strategies in relation to FGM/C.

MOH

MOH are strongly opposed to the Fatwa and feel that insufficient consultation took place with MOH during its development. They favour a Zero Tolerance approach and have previously drafted anti-medicalisation strategy and begun a programme of awareness raising on FGM/C among midwives and nurses.

Through the forum, CSOs unanimously called for

- MOH to work more closely with other Ministries, UNJP etc
- Support and training for midwives and nurses as well as other health professionals
- Greater focus on supporting survivors of cutting
- Increased collaboration between MOH and CSOs etc
- Curriculum materials on SRHR which include FGM/C
- Empowerment of traditional cutters and TBAs to stop cutting

There were differences, however, among participants about the role of health professional in implementing the Fatwa and in ending FGM/C which resulted in calls by different participants for both of the following:

- a. Increased focus on the anti-medicalisation codes of conduct and strategy in collaboration with other ministries to ensure approval in parliament
- b. Training of health professionals to cut safely within the guidance of the Fatwa on FGM/C.

NOTE: The training of health professionals (b above) was strongly supported by a minority of CSO representatives and equally strongly opposed by others. Orchid Project, Population Council and SOFHA all support the total abandonment of all types of FGM/C and totally oppose the involvement of health workers as cutters.

MESFA

MESFA, was the only key actor who did not participate in the workshops. This was due to the timing as they have recently undergone restructuring and have new leadership.

MESFA lead the development of the anti-FGM law in Somaliland and it is unclear what impact, if any, the Fatwa will have on the draft policy or the process of ratification.

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There is no evidence that the research findings have specifically influenced the actions of any of the line ministries in relation to FGM/C within the last 6 months. However, policy change takes time and the knowledge sharing workshops, both in December 2017 and in June 2018 provided an extremely valuable forum for dialogue, exchange and challenge between ministries, CSOs and other organisations working to end FGM/C in Somaliland.

5. Impact – programme decision-making

Representatives from 20 CSOs participated in the workshops, mostly the same as in December, however, there were 4 new organisations (appendix B).

At the beginning of the workshops, all participants identified the key learning from the December knowledge sharing workshops under the categories of **knowledge attitudes and perceptions** and **potential successful approaches for abandonment** (appendix C).

The themes identified, in order of frequency, were:

- **Change is happening**
Recent research provides information on the prevalence of FGM/C, which remains high, however, it also provides strong evidence of a change in the type of cut from pharaonic to intermediate and sunna.
- **How organisations work with communities is important, not just who and where**
UNICEF's Six Elements of Abandonment suggest adopting a non-judgemental approach, using community conversations and dialogue, linked to aware raising about human rights, promoting collective change. However, there is concern that the Six Elements are promoting a Zero Tolerance approach and are therefore incompatible with the recent Fatwa.
- **Engagement with ALL**
Research suggests that approaches which engage **all** stakeholders, including men, religious leaders, health workers etc not just girls and women are likely to be most successful
- **Collaboration and strong partnerships**
Strong platforms and coalitions against FGM/C to raise awareness should be established.
- **Youth**
Young people are more informed than expected and most want to be involved in activities to end FGM/C. Therefore, there should be an increased involvement of young people as agents of change and in youth groups, including university students.
- **Rural-urban divide**
Rural areas have tended to receive less attention and change in relation to FGM/C is slower than in urban areas. Therefore, CSO should extend their work to more rural communities.

- **Schools and education**

Schools and teachers are not seen as important places to promote abandonment of FGM/C. CSOs should use interactive ways to raise awareness in schools. In addition, there is also a need to target those who did not go to school.

- **Legal framework**

The majority of those interviewed in the research would like to see a strong legal framework in relation to FGM/C.

As can be seen, participants have taken key lessons from the research and the UNICEF Six Elements which are relevant to their own programmes. There was one suggestion which was not supported by the research, which was alternative incomes for TBAs. This was discussed in the group with the majority of participants feeling that traditional cutters should be included in community dialogue but that resources should not be diverted to provide alternative incomes.

Progress by CSOs, academic institutions and other organisations

Each organisation produced a poster of the changes they have made in their programmes to end FGM/C *since December 2017*. Many also completed the Action Plan template giving further details of their activities and the outcomes.

There is strong evidence that CSOs have made substantial changes as a result of their learning in the December knowledge sharing workshops. Most of the changes have taken place within existing programmes i.e. organisations have adopted new approaches and adapted their existing plans, using existing resources. Several organisations have sought funds for new initiatives, with 5 small grants being awarded by TGG, whose selection criteria are 'fully aligned with the SOFHA baseline survey and the Six Elements of UNICEF...and include capacity building of youth and collecting positive stories of change from target communities' (TGG Somaliland Coordinator).

The changes which CSOs have made fall under several categories

Community dialogues and awareness raising and trainings

All organisations said that they have increased the amount of community awareness raising and dialogue in relation to FGM/C. For most the focus is on awareness raising with a greater range of stakeholders, including religious leaders, youth, women, parents, teachers and health professionals. In addition, several organisations have introduced community dialogue. One example is SOWDA which has begun community conversations with groups of women, youth and men where people are invited to talk about a range of 'hot topics' identified by them. This resulted in the establishment of a community panel on FGM/C.

Youth Engagement

The greatest change in terms of stakeholder groups was the increased engagement of youth in initiatives to end FGM/C. Fifteen of the 18 organisations now actively engage youth. Some, including Y-PEER and ASAL Youth, are youth oriented. Others have made an active policy change to involve youth more. WORDA, for example, work with a range of stakeholders in their communities and have actively started to involve youth in peer conversations about the health risks of FGM/C. EAUH has been involving their university students in outreach community work on FGM/C as part of the project work for their courses.

Schools

At least 5 organisations are now actively working with schools and teachers. SOFHA was interested in collaborating with schools previously and has used the outcomes from the research to improve their capacity building for teachers. SONYO has introduced FGM/C into school committees and is also providing teacher training on FGM/C. WARSAN is distributing leaflets on FGM/C to schools. Y-PEER is using drama in both primary and secondary schools and promoting peer-to-peer dialogue around FGM/C.

MOE are concerned about organisations engaging with schools or producing materials for schools without formal authorisation from MOE. They would like to be more fully consulted prior to interventions involving schools.

Media

At least 6 participating organisations have increased their focus on the media over the last 6 months. Initiatives include

- the production and distribution of materials on FGM/C by WARSAN and Candlelight
- training of women as media advocacy agents by IRADA
- message development for anti-FGM/C on social media campaigns by sms and Facebook by Y-PEER
- active engagement with the media including TV talk shows and radio talk shows by NAFIS and Y-PEER

With this increase in the use of the media inevitably come challenges. Traditionally, some of the images used in anti-FGM/C materials are used to shock. These triggered some useful discussion about the use of different types of images with most preferring to encourage the use of positive images.

Integration / Mainstreaming

The final category of change is the integration of FGM/C dialogue and activities into mainstream activities. Candlelight, for example, have introduced FGM/C into their livelihoods programmes. SOFHA have begun to have conversations about FGM/C with all clients at their maternal and child health centres. WORDA, WAAPO And GAVO all now include FGM/C in their meetings with community SHGs. ASDAL Youth are integrating FGM/C into their tailoring projects and Y-PEER now include FGM/C in their youth and school health programmes alongside HIV/AIDS and other health issues. This move to normalise conversations about FGM/C seems to have been welcomed among community members.

Enabling environment

The publication of the Fatwa on FGM/C in February 2018 is being seen as an important event in creating an enabling environment for change in relation to FGM/C. NAFIS, WORDA, Action Aid, SOFHA and others have been involved to varying degrees in the consultation process with MORA. Collaboration between CSOs is seen as an important aspect of the movement to end FGM/C. However, currently, there is tension among and between CSOs about the transparency of the consultation process with some CSOs feeling excluded from the process.

These workshops have provided a forum for the tensions between CSOs to be aired and discussed, resulting in renewed calls for greater collaboration at implementation as well as at policy level.

It is too early to gauge the impact of these new initiatives or changes in focus. However, organisations report that community members are engaging well and that they are reaching greater numbers of community members than previously when they were going to communities to educate and inform community members specifically on FGM/C.

6. Future strategic development and research

Participants identified the following priorities for future strategic development and research

At a policy / strategic level

1. Lobbying MORA to amend the Fatwa to make the sunna optional, not obligatory
2. Revise the draft anti-FGM/C bill, act and law to be in line with the (revised) Fatwa
3. Revise and pass the anti-medicalisation policy in line with the bill and revised Fatwa
4. Increase resource allocation, including the development of specific budgets within each line ministry for FGM/C
5. Develop a national strategy for research into FGM/C in Somaliland coordinated at government level to involve collaboration between line ministries and CSOs
6. Establish a research centre for FGM/C funded centrally and involving all line ministries

7. Revise the process of developing national indicators (bench markers) for FGM/C and for MESFA to continue to lead this process
8. Identify the research gaps / themes through a collaborative process
9. Provide capacity building for ministries on undertaking research into FGM/C and also on using research findings to enhance policy-making

At a programming level

1. Harmonisation of the programmes to minimise duplication and improve knowledge sharing across the sector and collaboration between CSOs
2. Share existing research through an established network (or the national FGM/C research centre) giving open access to all CSOs working to end FGM/C
3. To provide capacity building for CSOs on undertaking community research
4. To provide capacity building on using research findings to enhance programme development and implementation
5. Continue to use the research findings to enhance programmes, including
 - promoting more community-led initiatives
 - involving all stakeholders, including men, youth, religious leaders, teachers, health workers
 - increasing use of mass media and social media platforms

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SOFHA took the opportunity to use the workshops as a means of testing and disseminating their increased capacity in research methodology by carrying out a survey on the recent Fatwa among workshop participants using mobile data collection. The survey showed that not all participants were familiar with the Fatwa and that there were a range of interpretations of the details. In addition, a third of those interviewed thought the Fatwa would make little difference to FGM/C in Somaliland. Although by no means a scientific survey, this demonstrated SOFHA's enhanced capacity and generated further discussion.

Participant feedback

The feedback at the end of the workshops was extremely positive. Participants rated the success of the workshops on Likert scales (0-10) as follows:

To what extent has being involved in the knowledge sharing workshops resulted in

- increased networking of your organisation? (average score 9.4/10)
- increased knowledge in relation to FGM/C? (average score 8.9/10)
- changes in how you work on FGM/C? (average score 8.7/10)

Participants identified the following as particular strengths of this second series of workshops

- ***Open dialogue between line ministries and CSOs***
The workshops provided significant opportunities to discuss the Fatwa on FGM/C together with policy-making on FGM/C. This dialogue was, at times, highly specific and challenging, however, it resulted in increased knowledge about the Fatwa and opinions relating to its development, dissemination, implications for the future and the challenges now posed to policy-making in Somaliland on FGM/C.
- ***Reinforcement of the research evidence and the implications for programming***
Participants said they found it useful to revisit their own understanding of the research findings, to reflect on how their programmes have changed and the rationale behind this. This process helped them to see their programme in the wider picture of the movement towards abandonment in Somaliland and the need to use the evidence available to enhance their programmes. They were excited to share not only the changes they had made but also the positive response from the communities.

- **Extended / strengthened networks**
The exchange of details of programmes to end FGM/C has helped to share good practice, for example around techniques to engage youth and the use of non-judgemental community dialogue. They also helped strengthen networks, forging new potential partnerships among CSOs and has also served to inform line ministries and CSOs of current activities to end FGM/C.
- **Facilitation techniques**
Participants felt they had gained new facilitation approaches and techniques which they intend to use in community forums and workshops to enhance participation and engagement.

There were three main items of feedback from participants.

Several participants thought that it was too early to assess the full impact of the workshops and suggested that further follow up should take place, perhaps after a further 6-12 months. In addition, several requested future workshops on the UNICEF Six Elements Abandonment and an opportunity to explore how they relate to the context in Somaliland and whether they fit with the recent Fatwa. Finally, participants from the ministries and CSOs suggested that there is a need for an on-going forum for exchange between ministries and CSOs and that these workshops should continue in the future.

Conclusions

The two sets of knowledge sharing workshops, in December 2017 and June 2018, have been successful in providing a forum in which ministries and CSOs working to end FGM/C in Somaliland have engaged with recent research and begun the process of embedding their learning in their own programmes.

The remit for the workshops was quite broad, with two distinct functions: firstly, bringing together representatives from the ministries and CSOs in dialogue and secondly, using open space to explore the research findings and their relevance to the programme implementation work of the CSOs.

The former provided a unique forum for exchange and dialogue between the different actors which was greatly valued by all and resulted in increased understanding of the priorities and activities of each ministry and organisation working to end FGM/C. All the line ministries fully engaged in the December 2017 workshops, however, MEFSAs, were not able to participate in the June 2018 workshops, given the changes in the Ministry. The role of the line ministries in relation to FGM/C is fluid. All are involved in the drafting of anti-FGM/C policy, the anti-medicalisation strategy and the Fatwa. The key recommendation at policy level is for greater consultation within and among ministries in relation to FGM/C.

The impact of the workshops at the programme implementation level has been significant with strong evidence of radical changes to programmes implemented by participating CSOs.

Almost all participating CSOs have made positive changes to their programmes based on the research findings and/or the UNICEF Six Elements of Abandonment. A quarter have secured new funding for fresh initiatives, however, most have introduced changes in existing programmes using existing resources.

The most commonly reported change is a move from a focus on educating specific stakeholder groups in communities to an increase in trying to engage a wider range of stakeholders, especially youth, in dialogue and decision-making in relation to FGM/C. This has been characterised by a shift from calling community members together for them to listen, to finding opportunities for CSOs to listen to the community. The call by participants at the end of the workshops to promote more community-led initiatives echoes this change in perspective of many of the CSOs.

It is too early to identify the impact of these changes, however, the CSOs involved feel that they have extended their reach significantly through integrating FGM/C across their programmes, including livelihoods programmes and health clinics, rather than seeing FGM/C as a separate discrete topic. CSOs report that communities are engaging more with their work to end FGM/C, that trust is beginning to build and that youth in particular are keen to use social media and peer-to-peer dialogue to bring about change within the next generation.

In conclusion, this series of knowledge sharing workshops, taking place over 6 days, in December 2017 and June 2018, has resulted in 20 CSOs, working across Somaliland to end FGM/C, being more aware of the recent research on FGM/C and having increased their capacity to engage with this research, consider the implications and to make some significant changes to their programmes.

Although the Somaliland context is unique, this approach, of using knowledge sharing workshops to disseminate research findings is highly flexible and could be adapted to suit different contexts. Further evaluation would be useful in identifying the medium to long term impact at organisational and community level.

The participating CSOs see this initiative as the beginning of a process, rather than the end. They appreciate the value of community research on FGM/C and see it as something they can understand and use to enhance their programmes. They are looking for further opportunities to get involved in carrying out research, in learning from the research carried out by others and most importantly, in adapting their programmes to be more effective in the move to end FGM/C in Somaliland.

Appendix A Timetable

Knowledge Sharing Workshops on FGM/C in Somaliland

HARGEISA, SOMALILAND - Thursday 21st, Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th June 2018

DAY 1 Research and policy Thursday 21st June		
9:00-9:30	Welcome and opening remarks Rationale for Knowledge Sharing Workshops	Amal Ahmed Executive Director, SOFHA Chantalle Okondo Population Council
9:30-9:45	Introductions and expectations of participants	Amal Ahmed Executive Director, SOFHA
9:45–10:00	Overview -Knowledge Sharing Workshops Aims and outline timetable	Katy Newell-Jones Orchid Project
10:00-10:45	Review: key learning points from the presentations from December 2017 Group activity: carousel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge, attitudes and perceptions • Potential successful approaches • Priority policy areas 	Katy Newell-Jones Amal Ahmed Hamda Yussuf Mohamed Yussuf Mohamed Abdi
10:45–11:00	Plenary discussion	Katy Newell-Jones
11:00–11:15	BREAK	
11:15–11:45	Changes in the National Context of FGM/C Small groups, cascading to whole group	Katy Newell-Jones / Amal Ahmed
12.15-13.15	LUNCH	
13:15–13.45	Policy making: Conclusions and action plans on policy from December 2017	Amal Ahmed
13:45-14:15	Policy making progress: Ministry of Religious Affairs –update	
14:15–14.45	Policy making progress: Ministry of Education –update	
14.45–15:15	Policy making progress: Ministry of Health –update	
15.15 -	Questions for Ministries	
15:00-15:30	Plenary	Katy Newell-Jones

DAY 2 Research and programme implementation		
Saturday 23 rd June		
9:00-10.00	Organisational overview of change Each organisation prepares a summary of the changes they have made as a result of the knowledge sharing workshops	Katy Newell-Jones Amal Ahmed Mohamed Abdi
10:30 -11:15	Gallery Walk 1 Walk around the room, looking at Cluster 1 posters with 5-7 mins for each organisation to present, followed by brief plenary discussion	SOFHA WARSAN VOSOMWO
11:15–11:30	BREAK	
11:30–12.15	MORA Responses to questions from the group plus further exploration of the Fatwa Participant open survey on agreement / disagreement with the Fatwa	
12:15 -13:15	LUNCH	
13.15 – 14.00	MOE and MOH responses to post-it questions	
14.00 – 15.00	Gallery Walk 2 Walk around the room, looking at Cluster 2 posters with 5 mins for each organisation to present, plus brief plenary discussion	SAWDA EAUH WORDA(ANPICAN) WAAPO SWLA
15:00-15:30	Plenary and review	

DAY 3 Implications for the future		
Sunday 24 th June		
09:00 – 09:15	Review and aims for the day	Katy Newell –Jones
09:15 -11.00	Gallery Walk 3 Walk around the room, looking at Cluster 2 posters with 5 mins for each organisation to present, plus brief plenary discussion	NAFIS ASAL Org SOYDAVO SONYO SYS
11.00 – 11:15	BREAK	
11.15 – 12:15	Gallery Walk 4 Walk around the room, looking at Cluster 2 posters with 5 mins for each organisation to present, plus brief plenary discussion	Y-PEER (Action Aid) TGG GAVO Candlelight
12:15- 13:15	LUNCH	
13.15-14:00	Themes of change among CSOs	Amal Ahmed
14:00–14:45	Recommendations	Katy Newell-Jones
14:45 – 15:15	Review of the process of Knowledge Sharing Workshops to disseminate research findings	Katy Newell-Jones Amal Ahmed
15:15 – 15:45	Final plenary and closing ceremony	Katy Newell-Jones

Appendix B Participants

Organization	Name	Title	Policy / Programme
Action Aid	Hibo Adam Ahmed	Project officer	Programme
ANPPCAN	Noura Osman Mohamed	Project Assistant	Programme
ASAL ORG	Khader Hasan		Programme
ASAL ORG	Farah Mawlid		Programme
ASAL Youth	Abdishakur Sulus		Programme
Candlelight	Amoun Aden	FGM/C PM	Programme
Edna Adan University Hospital	Abdirisaa Osman Mohamed	Research Assistant	Programme
Edna Adan University Hospital	Abdiaziz Ahmed		Research
GAVO	Hono Aboker Haibi		Programme
MOE	Ayaan H Yousuf	Director of Gender Department	Policy
MOH	Fowzia Mohamed Hussein		Policy
MOH	Safia Dualeh Farah	Family Health focal point / FGM/C	Policy
MOH	Ugaso Jama		Policy
MORA	Mahamed Abdilalii		Policy
MORA	Jimale Alrahman Madar	Head of Research	Policy
MORA	Xaasin Mahomed Muse	HR	Policy
MORA	Khadar Mohamoud Hussein	Programs	Policy
NAFIS	Hibu Mohamoud Abdi	Program Officer	Programme
	Barwaago Ahmed Abdi		Programme
Population Council	Chantalle Okondo	Programme officer	Programme
Population Council	Mohamed Yussef	Researcher	Policy
SAYS	Nour Adam Shido		Programme
SOFHA	Amal Ahmed	Executive director	Programme
SOFHA	Mohamed Abdi	Programme officer	Programme
SOFHA	Khadan Abdilahi Yusuf	Clinic Manager	Programme
SOFHA	Hamda Yusuf Jama		Programme
SOFHA	Khadra Ahmed		Programme
SOFHA	Jama Muse Haibi		Programme
SONYA	Amina Hassan		Programme
SOWDA	Ibrahim Mohamed Ismail	Program Manager	Programme
SOYDAVO	Ahmed Abdilahi Omer		Programme
SWLA	Mohamed Ahmed	Executive Director	Programme
SWLA	Yaashiin Abdi		Programme
SYS	Mohamed Adan		Programme
The Girl Generation	Abdifatah Mahad Kasin	Country Program Officer	Programme
VOSOMWO	Faisa Abdilahi Dirie	Protection	Programme
VOSOMWO	Hibo Muhamoud Ali	Protection Field Monitor	Programme
WAAPO	Abdalle Mohamed Jama	Director	Programme
WAAPO	Farhis Mohamed Alhalii		Programme
WARSAN	Zahra Abdiwahab	AD	Programme
WHO	Mariam Dahir	Medical doctor	Policy

WORDA	Musa Jama Essa		Programme
WORDA	Kinzi Hussein Qowden	Executive Director	Programme
Y-PEER	Abdirahman Mohamed Eiman	Project Officer	Programme
Y-PEER	Ibrahim Ahmed		Programme
ORCHID PROJECT	Katy Newell-Jones	Lead facilitator	Programme

Appendix C Learning points from the December workshops

Under the heading of *potential successful approaches for abandonment* the following there were identified

- Establish strong platforms and coalitions against FGM/C
- Engaging all stakeholders, including men not just women and girls
- Bottom up approach, empowering communities to change through positive messages and awareness raising campaigns
- Six Elements of abandonment social and family change, non-judgemental approach, social participation
- Community conversations and exchange
- Encouraging dialogue in the home and between homes
- Increased involvement of young people as agents of change and in youth groups, including university students
- Increased awareness of the complications of FGM/C
- Increased involvement of health committees, CHWs and TBAs
- Increased health services for survivors and to encourage dialogue
- Extending programmes to include more rural areas
- Use interactive ways to raise awareness in schools, but to also target those who did not go to school
- Education manuals, including materials in Somali, as well as use of social media
- Social Communication for Change from TGG
- Legal framework of punishment for those who cut
- Lobbying government to create an environment for change
- Use evidence based to influence decision makers
- Target religious leaders through capacity building
- Income generation for FGM/C practitioners
- Creating community platforms to share health information of FGM
- Storytelling is the best way to change people's attitudes

Under the heading of *knowledge, attitudes and perceptions* the following there were identified

- There is now research into the level of FGM in Somaliland
- Attitudes are changing towards the sunna
- Pharaonic types is almost abandoned according to the research
- There are also intermediate types of cut which are confusing and not-Islamic under Shaafici
- Need for supplementary courses about FGM/C to learn more about the complications
- Youth have a lot of knowledge about FGM/C and we need to integrate them more
- The Six Elements of UNICEF, non-judgemental, human rights approach, enabling environment
- Six Elements of UNICEF seem to be opposition to the Fatwa and are based on Zero Tolerance
- Six Elements need to be revised as they do not fit with the Fatwa
- Mass media is not used as it might be
- Human rights approach to share the harmful consequences of FGM

FGM should be added to the curriculum in primary school