



Radio Session/Update Reports in West Pokot I_REP

01 Talk 10.11.23

In today's insightful radio session, we welcomed two esteemed elders, **Mr. Musa and Mrs. Mary Lorwama**, shedding light on the origins of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) within the Pokot community. Fascinatingly, they revealed that the practice was adopted from neighboring nomadic pastoralist communities to safeguard women during prolonged separations from their husbands.

Originally performed on young girls marrying their peers, the narrative has taken a distressing turn, with young girls now being married off to older men due to shifting community dynamics, driven by greed and economic interests. Elders expressed concern over the illegal practice of FGM and child marriages, emphasizing the need for parents to prioritize their children's education, particularly girls.

Mrs. Lorwama, reminiscing about her upbringing, highlighted the transformation in the FGM landscape, underscoring the urgent need for change. Both elders passionately conveyed that FGM is a violation of human rights. They are actively collaborating with organizations like I_Rep Foundation to bring an end to these harmful practices in West Pokot County.

Let's join hands to amplify their message, raising awareness and advocating for the protection of children's rights. Together, we can contribute to eradicating FGM and child marriages, fostering a safer and more inclusive future for the Pokot community.

02 Talk 14.11.23

Today's radio session featured Ms. **Irene Cheruto**, our **Child Protection Officer** and frontline activist against FGM and child marriage. The community received valuable insights on various laws related to FGM, Human Rights, and child protection. Key components discussed include legal frameworks, human rights principles, and measures for preventing FGM and child marriage. The session aimed to empower community members with knowledge to actively contribute to ending these harmful practices.

03 Talk 20.11.23

During our radio session yesterday on the drivers of FGM. We hosted **Steve Siwa**.

Steve Siwa is the Youth representative of UNFPA in West Pokot. He sits in the UNFPA Youth Advisory Panel representing West Pokot County Kenya. He is well versed in SRHR and FGM topics. He also trains Youth on digital skills. Currently he is also the digital skills expert in charge of the government youth empowerment center in West Pokot.©

Yesterday's radio session with Siwa Steve shed light on the critical issues surrounding FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) in West Pokot county. Siwa, a passionate youth advocate and frontline activist, shared insights into the drivers of this harmful practice, as voiced by the community:

- 1. Poverty:** Economic challenges contribute to the perpetuation of FGM in West Pokot, highlighting the need for holistic development approaches to address underlying issues.
- 2. Cultural Perception:** FGM is deeply entrenched as a cultural practice, emphasizing the importance of culturally sensitive interventions that respect traditions while promoting positive change.
- 3. Women Stereotyping Fellow Women:** The role of internalized gender stereotypes in perpetuating harmful practices within the community came to the forefront, stressing the importance of empowering women to challenge and reshape these perceptions.
- 4. Peer Pressure:** Social dynamics play a significant role, with peer influence driving individuals to conform to cultural norms, showcasing the need for community-based strategies to shift social attitudes.
- 5. Lack of Education and Awareness:** A glaring gap in knowledge about the adverse effects of FGM was identified, underscoring the urgency of educational initiatives to raise awareness and promote informed decision-making.

These insights provide a comprehensive view of the challenges faced in combating FGM in West Pokot. It calls for collaborative efforts involving community leaders, educators, and advocates to address root causes and foster a safer, more informed environment for women and girls.

04 Talk 17.11.2023

Just had an enlightening radio session with **Lucy Lorot discussing Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** in West Pokot County. From forms to reporting, we're breaking the silence on GBV. Let's unite against it and create a safer community.

05 Talk 22.11.23

During the session held yesterday, my colleague **James Rutto and I** (Sutö Ngat) delved into the significant role men can play in eradicating these harmful practices. Notably, we highlighted the unique situation in West Pokot County, where FGM has often benefited men through dowry receipts, and men are also consumers of this tradition.

The conversation sparked engagement and resonance among our listeners, as reflected in the encouraging feedback we received. It's evident that the community is committed to putting an end to these practices, signaling a positive shift in attitudes.

Key Points Discussed:

- 1. Men's Active Role:** Emphasized the active involvement of men in the campaign against FGM and early child marriage, breaking away from passive roles.
- 2. Community Impact:** Addressed the impact of these harmful practices on the community, fostering a sense of collective responsibility.

3. Economic Implications: Explored the economic aspect, acknowledging the unintended benefits men receive and the economic consequences for the community as a whole.

The feedback from our listeners has been overwhelmingly supportive, underscoring a shared dedication to ending these practices. It's heartening to witness the community's commitment to positive change.

06 Talk 26.11.2023

Later, we headed to North Rift Radio for a dynamic radio session. I joined our special guest, **Marcelo Owon, an obstetrician, registered nurse, and midwife** from Kapenguria County Referral Hospital, graced the airwaves to shed light on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

Our expertise illuminated crucial topics, starting with a profound discussion on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and its medical implications for women, girls, and the entire community. The session was not just informative but a platform for fostering awareness and understanding within our community.

The audience actively participated, contributing valuable insights and feedback. This collaborative approach is integral to our mission of imparting knowledge and building a supportive community around these vital issues.

07 Talk 27.11.2023

Today we hosted Rev. Ronald Chumum from Evangelical Ministries and the Chairperson of West Pokot Pastors. He enlightened us on the pivotal role of the church in ending FGM and GBV. Drawing from the Bible, he emphasized that while male circumcision reflects a covenant with God, the scriptures do not endorse Female circumcision.

The response from callers was incredibly encouraging!

Encouraging all the church leaders to help fight GBV and FGM.

08 Talk 29.11.2023

Reflecting on our insightful radio session with **Mr. Matala, retired chief of Mosop Location**, representing Mr. Lokeris.

He shed light on positive parenting, emphasizing the crucial role of parents, the specific needs of children, and the vital involvement of fathers in ensuring the well-being of their daughters.

Mr. Matala passionately urged all parents to prioritize education, urging a collective effort to ensure no child is left behind.

He stressed the importance of parents making time for their children, encouraging closeness and meaningful connections.