



STATEMENT AT THE WORLD AIDS DAY, 2016 COMMEMORATION

Date: 1st December 2016

The Network against Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting (NAFIS Network) joins other Somalilanders and the International Community to commemorate World AIDS Day, 2016.

We would like to thank the government of Somaliland for its commitment to end AIDS by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Network acknowledges its collaboration with the Government to abandon FGM/C practice which increases the vulnerability of girls and women to STI infections including HIV. Together we are making strides. **“Ending AIDS is possible only if we join hands”**.

In this year’s World AIDS day Global theme; **“Hands Up on HIV Prevention”**; NAFIS Network in collaboration with the government of Somaliland are **Joining Hands to scale up HIV Prevention**. In order to end AIDS in Somaliland there is need to scale up investment in evidence based HIV prevention strategies and addressing harmful norms and practices that increases the risk of HIV infection in children, girls, boys, women and men as detailed below:

NAFIS Network calls upon:

The Ministry of Education to:

- Review and include FGM/C and HIV in the Somaliland National Education policy
- Review and include FGM/C and HIV in the school curriculum
- Establish school initiatives to engage students, teachers and parents in the discussions about HIV and the effects of FGM/C on girls’ performance, retention and completion of formal education.

The Ministry of Health to:

- Review the national education curriculum for midwifery and nursing and include FGM/C and HIV.
- Include FGM/C and HIV in the module for training of the female community health workers and allocate resources to facilitate community sensitization about the complications of FGM/C.
- The health-care providers to prevent medicalization of FGM/C.

- Accelerate the good practice of institutionalizing FGM/C support centers established by NAFIS.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to:

- Facilitate FGM/C and HIV mainstreaming by line-ministries (MOLSA, MOH, MOE, MOJ, MORA, MOY, MOA, MOFP, and MOI) in the new National Development Plan and budget allocation for responding to FGM/C issue in all sectors of the national and provincial budgets.
- Support creating enabling policy and legal environment for gender equality. Engage the line-ministries to adopt the Anti-FGM/C policy and facilitate the legislators to outlaw the practice which increases girls and women's risk to HIV acquisition.
- Ensure that FGM/C is included on the national agenda given its complexity and the magnitude of the impact it creates on the development of Somaliland.

The Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Religious Affairs to:

- Commit and collaborate on the passing and adoption of Anti-FGM policy.
- Consider in the plan of MOJ and MORA, make budget allocation for sensitizing the public about FGM/C from the religious and legal perspectives because there is a lot of misconception on FGM/C, yet the girls and women continue to experience severe life-long complications and disabilities with huge magnitude.
- Provide technical support to the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Social Affairs to harmonize the 2 drafts or proposals for Anti- FGM/C Bill and facilitate the process for enactment of the Anti-FGM/C law.
- Include in the sector plan and make budget allocation for sensitizing the public about the constitutional and the legal provisions relevant to promoting gender equality and prevention of violence against women including FGM/C.