



Network against FGM/C IN SOMALILAND

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A statement on the Day of the African Child 16th June 2016 in Somaliland:

NAFIS calls for the Elimination of Harmful Social and Cultural Practices against the girl child

Hargeisa, 16th June 2016, NAFIS joins in commemorating the Day of African child under the theme **“Conflict and Crisis in Africa: Protecting all Children’s Rights”** and the local theme **“Effective Laws and Policies in Somaliland: Protecting all Children’s Rights”**. On this very special day, NAFIS would like to appreciate all the initiatives undertaken by the government of Somaliland in protecting, promoting and ensuring the rights of the children in Somaliland.

However, NAFIS draws the attention of all the stakeholders from the household to the national levels in Somaliland on harmful social and cultural practices especially against the girl children, which violate their rights to health, education, survival and development. Among which are child and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, defilement and rape. These harmful and violent practices especially the **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** have led to emotional, physical and mental scars to the girl children and in some instances have led to eventual death. We collectively need to ensure that necessary and urgent steps are taken at all levels by the various stakeholders to eradicate injurious, violence oriented and harmful socio-cultural practices against the girl children.

Call to Action: NAFIS calls upon:

1. The National Legislators and the relevant Ministries to enact the Anti- FGM law and adopt the policy against FGM so as to combat and eliminate the harmful practice against the girl children which have robbed them of their rights.
2. The government to ratify the following conventions which were adopted: The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
3. The Religious Leaders should take up leadership role in harmonizing the religious teachings about all forms of FGM in relation to the provisions in the Sharia Law and ensuring that the girl children are protected from any form of harmful practices.
4. The Civil Society to intensify in advocating and advancing the rights of the girl children by supporting Zero tolerance to FGM.