Ministerial Sub-regional Consultation
on the implementation of UNGA Resolution 69/150
banning female genital mutilation
Dakar, 26-27 April 2016

PARALLEL SESSIONS OUTCOMES
Health Sector

1. Ensure a clear normative framework requiring that health care professionals and others who work with children within the health sector report suspected cases of FGM, or cases where FGM is suspected to be about to happen, to the relevant authorities, including social welfare and legal authorities.
2. Ensure that the funding dedicated to the health sector is sufficient to ensure comprehensive care for victims of FGM.
3. Review teaching protocols to ensure the inclusion of skills relevant to identifying FGM and addressing it, including during particularly during antenatal and postnatal periods.
4. Ensure any professional development of members of the health sector includes the ban against FGM and that any protocols applicable to public health services and any applicable codes of ethics reflect this ban, including in respect of disciplinary procedures for misconduct.
5. Develop a national plan for information-sharing within the health sector that addresses FGM and its incidences, allowing the assessment of data disaggregated by relevant criteria that can help in the work to prevent and respond to FGM, including any necessary revisions of protocols applicable to health care professionals.

Justice Sector

1. Stress the importance of a law explicitly banning FGM that is widely disseminated through a targeted outreach campaign.
2. Stress the importance of sufficient resources and budgetary allocations to enable justice sector actors to play their role in implementing the ban against FGM.
3. Stress the importance of collaborating with different sectors, groups within society and other countries in the sub-region, to share best practices and strengthen the search for solutions to common challenges.
4. Ensure a clear normative framework requiring that legal, justice and law enforcement professionals and others who work with children within the justice sector report suspected cases of FGM, or cases where FGM is suspected to be about to happen, to the relevant authorities, including social welfare and legal authorities. This could, for example, be incorporated into existing frameworks for dealing with child abuse.
5. Ensure any professional development of members of the justice sector includes the ban against FGM and that any applicable codes of ethics reflect this ban, including in respect of disciplinary procedures for misconduct.
6. Develop a policy for the prosecution of those suspected of having committed FGM that takes into account the social impact of prosecution, including deterrence, and prioritise the prosecution of this crime within broader prosecution strategies, including on extra-territorial jurisdiction.
7. Review applicable laws and procedures for mutual legal assistance and the recognition and enforcement of judicial decisions to ensure the widest possible cooperation is extended in respect of cases involving FGM, whether during investigations, prosecutions or enforcement of sentences.
Women/Gender Sector

1. Develop a national plan for community engagement and awareness-raising on the ban against FGM also reinforcing existing mechanisms, that engages all sectors of society, including all young people, men and boys, and ensure sufficient funding is available for the implementation of the plan.

2. Ensure a clear normative framework requiring that professionals within the women/gender sector to report suspected cases of FGM, or cases where FGM is suspected to be about to happen, to the relevant authorities, including social welfare and legal authorities.

3. Identify all the stakeholders in the fight against FGM at the national level in order to facilitate a formal coordination unit whose leadership will be provided by the supervising Ministry.

4. Develop plans for cooperation between sectors for the provision of essential services to victims in which individual victims have one clear referent, who will both be their advocate and their bridge to whatever medical, health, psychosocial and legal services may be required.

5. Build and strengthen alliances and strategic comprehensive partnerships to create a formal framework for exchange within the ECOWAS space, including monitoring / evaluation mechanisms.

6. Ensure the establishment of a mechanism to monitor the cross-border practice.

Prevention

1. Ensure a clear normative framework requiring that those who work with children report suspected cases of FGM, or cases where FGM is suspected to be about to happen, to the relevant authorities, including social welfare and legal authorities. This could, for example, be incorporated into existing frameworks for dealing with child abuse, which should be reviewed and their applicability extended to encompass all persons working with children.

2. Involve all relevant sectors (including Justice, Health, Gender, Interior, Education among others) in the development and implementation of public information and awareness-raising on the Ban against FGM, including strategies and elements on the most effective conveyers of messages acting in different sectors, such as engaging nurses to discuss FGM within schools or engaging police officers to discuss FGM within health clinics.

3. Establish information-sharing modalities between sectors to create an early warning system when cases of FGM are suspected to be about to occur, to share best practices and to provide essential services to potential victims who may be at risk of negative social, economic or other consequences of not having undergone FGM.
Response

1. Ensure a clear and comprehensive response plan and cooperation agreements, among sectors and within the sub-region, to ensure all actors know their roles and to provide a rapid and coordinated response when FGM has been committed, or is suspected of having been committed, that includes enforcement of the law and provision of essential services free of charge to victims, including medical, health, psychosocial and legal services.

2. Develop a national action plan to raise public awareness about what should happen when FGM has occurred, including reporting obligations, that includes as a specific target girls and women at risk of being subjected to FGM.

3. Enhance information-sharing between sectors and within the sub-region to ensure each sector is in a position to provide the best possible response, including sufficient evidence to support prosecutions or supporting those providing essential social services to identify and respond to physical or mental health risks.

4. Ensure sufficient and explicit budgetary resources to provide the whole range of essential services to victims, including medical, health, psychosocial and legal services, and to support the investigation and prosecution of those suspected of having committed FGM.

5. Recognise the role of civil society in supporting State actors to provide a proper response to FGM, including through advocacy and awareness-raising at the community level.

6. Ensure alternate sources of livelihood, such as micro-credit schemes, to encourage sustainable abandonment by those carrying out FGM.

7. Harmonise models for response and laws banning FGM, also through ECOWAS institutions.

Assessment

1. Establish cross-sectoral and sub-regional mechanisms to develop best practices for the collection of information that can be easily disaggregated, collated and analysed to provide a comprehensive picture of the impact of work against FGM and the identification of improvements to that work.

2. Set up a harmonized system for routine data collection incorporating all sectors, including research institutions (social networks, community workers, health, justice, security and education professionals).

3. Develop indicators that can facilitate the analysis of the impact of work against FGM and allow different sectors and donors to the work against FGM to assess what is having a positive impact and what is having unintended negative consequences that may be setting back implementation of the Ban against FGM.

4. Establish a sub-regional Working Group to prepare data that can be shared with the United Nations to strengthen their capacity to report on the root causes and contributing factors to FGM, its prevalence and impact, progress to date and recommendations for eliminating FGM, as the Secretary-General is requested to provide in UNGA Resolution 69/150.

5. Develop a national and regional monitoring and evaluation plan which includes all the relevant indicators (including education, poverty, and literacy).