

MEMO ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH/FAMILY PLANNING (RH/FP) AND ANTI-FGM PRIORITIES IN NAROK COUNTY.

To: The Clerk , Narok County Asssembly

From: JASIRI Youth Champions Pathways Policy Institute.

Date: 19th DEC 2024

Subject: Advocacy for Increased Budget Allocations and Enhanced Youth Engagement in RH/FP and Anti-FGM Initiatives

1. Introduction

This memo highlights the urgent need to prioritize Reproductive Health/Family Planning (RH/FP) and Anti-Female Genital Mutilation (Anti-FGM) initiatives in Narok County through increased budgetary allocations and the integration of youth in planning and implementation processes. While progress has been made, gaps in funding, program delivery, and stakeholder involvement especially among the youth persist, hindering sustainable development and social transformation.

We, the undersigned JASIRI youth champions from Pathways Policy Institute, urge the county government to act decisively in addressing these challenges.

2. Key Issues and Challenges

2.1. Reproductive Health/Family Planning (RH/FP)

High teenage pregnancy rates: Narok County records some of the highest rates of teenage pregnancies in the country, contributing to school dropouts and limiting economic potential.

Maternal health concerns: Inadequate access to skilled birth attendants and family planning options increases maternal mortality rates.

Unmet need for family planning: A significant proportion of women and adolescents lack access to contraceptive methods due to cultural stigma, limited resources, and low awareness.

Limited funding for Reproductive Health/Family Planning services: Many health facilities lack the resources to provide consistent and reliable services.

2.2. Anti-FGM Efforts

Prevalence of FGM: Narok County has one of the highest FGM rates nationally, with many cases going unreported due to cultural acceptance and fear of reprisal.

Weak enforcement of laws: Despite national and county-level policies criminalizing FGM, enforcement remains inconsistent.

Insufficient community education: Persistent cultural beliefs and misinformation fuel the continuation of FGM practices.

2.3. Youth Involvement in County Planning

Limited representation: Youth are underrepresented in health and gender-related decision-making processes.

Barriers to engagement: insufficient funding, skills training, and advocacy platforms restrict youth participation.

Missed opportunities: The absence of youth perspectives limits the effectiveness of policies aimed at addressing RH/FP and Anti-FGM issues affecting this demographic.

3. Proposed Interventions

3.1. Budgetary Recommendations

Increase Reproductive Health/Family Planning funding: Allocate more resources for contraceptive procurement, maternal health programs, and awareness campaigns to address the unmet need for family planning which is at 52%.

Boost Anti-FGM funding: Dedicate a budget line to FGM eradication efforts, including community dialogues, legal enforcement, and survivor support services.

Youth-focused programs: Establish a dedicated budget for youth-centered initiatives, such as advocacy training, peer education, and health entrepreneurship.

3.2. Programmatic Recommendations

Reproductive Health/ Family Planning Programs: Scale up outreach programs targeting adolescents, women, and men to normalize family planning.

Strengthen health systems: to ensure full access to skilled birth attendants and contraceptives.

Collaborate with community leaders to break cultural stigma around RH/FP services.

Anti-FGM Programs; Enhance grassroots education on the health and legal consequences of FGM.

Train law enforcement officers and health workers on handling FGM cases with sensitivity and professionalism.

Establish safe spaces and support networks for FGM survivors, offering psychological and medical care.

3.3. Youth Engagement Strategies

Representation in decision-making: Include youth representatives in county health and planning committees.

Capacity-building: Provide funding and training for youth champions to enhance advocacy and program implementation skills.

Community platforms: Develop forums where youth can engage directly with policymakers to influence decisions that impact their lives.

4. Expected Outcomes

Increased access to RH/FP services and a decline in teenage pregnancies and maternal mortality rates.

Significant reduction in FGM prevalence through education, law enforcement, and survivor support.

Greater youth participation in county planning, resulting in inclusive and effective policies.

Strengthened community partnerships to support sustainable health and gender equality initiatives.

5. Conclusion

We urge the Narok County Government to prioritize these recommendations and commit to actionable solutions. By increasing budgetary allocations, strengthening RH/FP and Anti-FGM programs, and fostering youth engagement, the county can set a benchmark for sustainable development and gender equality.

We look forward to your leadership in implementing these recommendations and affirm our commitment to supporting these efforts.

Signatories:

JASIRI Youth Champions Pathways Policy Institute,

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County Secretary, Narok County.