

Message from the chair anti-FGM board

The chair of the anti-FGM board Dr. Hon. Linah Jebii Kilimo was called upon to give her remarks as highlighted below:

"I am humbled to stand before the participants and happy that the forum is mostly for people in the medical field hence you know well the effects of FGM/C. As the chair of the national oversight body for initiating programmes on prevention and eradication of the practice which is also mandated to advise government and support other agencies charged with fighting FGM/C, I am making a sincere appeal in the forum to the medical practitioners to contribute in the abandonment of FGM by preventing medicalization of FGM. I would like to thank ACCAF which is based at the Obs/Gyn department in the University of Nairobi for providing a platform to discuss these issues which will go a long way in abandonment of FGM/C."

She said that many women who have undergone FGM go to seek for medical assistance from the hospitals hence the RMHSU under the Ministry of health can be using videos and films of FGM consequences to sensitize many from the practice. She added that pictures speak volumes while recognising that anything that borders on health is usually taken seriously in the communities. She requested them to be communicating to their clients against the practice in the clinics and to make use of public forums and other strategic places to convey the message.

She was cognisant of the fact that communities listen to fellow community members hence health care providers should advocate against the practice, and since doctors refer to things the way they are, they are better placed in talking against the practice while recognizing that the communities represented do not talk about FGM practice since it is considered a taboo. "If the doctors can talk about FGM, especially on its consequences it can be taken seriously. They can engage themselves by showing the communities/clients fistula pictures which are as a result of the practice of FGM/C that was carried out to them while they were young. If you relate the problems encountered especially in their reproductive system to the practice of FGM/C, many will start questioning the practice and will lead to a reduction in the practice."

The next person who was given a chance was the representative of the Ministry of Devolution and Planning Ms. Jane Keeru and promised to work together with both the Anti- FGM board and ACCAF in all that will be put in place in order to support all efforts that aimed at eliminating FGM.