

A woman wearing a purple hijab and a patterned blue and white dress is kneeling in a lush green field of watermelon plants. She is looking down at a large, round watermelon that is growing on the ground. Her right hand is extended towards the watermelon. The background is filled with more green foliage and watermelon plants.

WOMEN RIGHTS PROGRAM(WRP)II

actionaid



<https://actionaid-kenya.org/>

© ActionAid International Kenya

December, 2022.
All rights reserved.

SUMMARY

05.

KAMUTHE WOMEN NETWORK



06.

MARYAN MOHAMED



08.

EBLA IBRAHIM



10.

ALI HASSAN ABDULLAHI



14.

ABDIRAHMAN MOLID



16.

SULEIMAN AFTIN



18.

YUSUF ABDI



21.

KISHUSHE WOMEN NETWORK



22.

SABINA NYANGE



24.

DORIS MWASARU



26.

DONALD MWAVASI



30.

WALLACE MULUMA



32.

PAULINE ATIENO

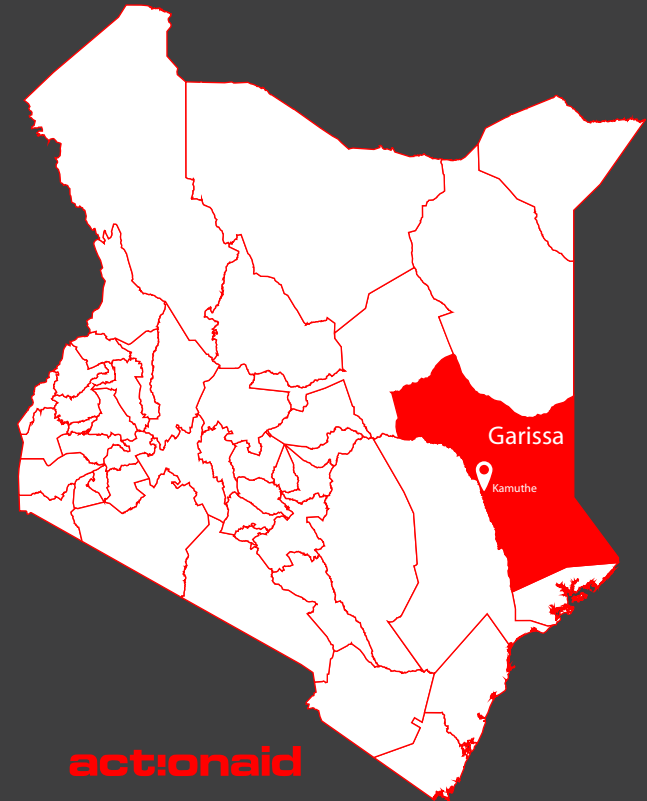




1

KAMUTHE WOMEN NETWORK

Kamuthe Women Network is the grassroots' partner for ActionAid Kenya under the program Women Rights Program (WRP) II in Kamuthe Location, Fafi Sub-County in Garissa County.





MARYAN MOHAMED



Maryan Mohamed is a young woman from Kamuthe Location, Fafi Sub-County in Garissa County. She is from the Abadua Sub-tribe of the Somali community. Among the Abadua, every girl is expected to undergo Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or female circumcision to usher them into adulthood and get ready for marriage. The community's culture hold that a woman who is not circumcised cannot make a good wife since she is not clean, prone to promiscuity and fighting with the ways of the ancestors.

Although, there is a ban on FGM in Kenya from 2011, communities such as the Abadua are yet to permanently abandon the harmful cultural practice that has since time immemorial subjected women to permanent scars of pain and hosts of after effects.



Lucky for Maryan when her parents took her to face the circumciser's blade, she took off into the safe arms of **Kamuthe Women Network** who sheltered her and assured her of safety and security. She, therefore, did not add to the bloated statistics of girls and women who have undergone the cut in her community.

Kamuthe Women Network is the grassroots' partner for ActionAid Kenya under the program Women Rights Program (WRP) II. WRP II is a three year program whereby ActionAid targeted actions to among other things the increase the safety and security of women and girls in the project sites including Kamuthe Location and the adjacent areas. The program worked to challenge gender-based violence perpetuated through harmful cultural practices such as FGM, and Maryan story is good case study for the programs achievements.

MARYAN MOHAMED

Kamuthe Location, Fafi Sub-County in
Garissa County



EBLA IBRAHIM

Now in her 70s, Ebla Ibrahim is a female genital mutilation survivor and a former cutter who has turned her back on the blade, fighting against the harmful practice and encouraging the younger generation to do the same.

Ebla credits her reformation to her engagement with ActionAid Kenya and Kamuthe Women Network through the Women Rights Program (WRP). The program trained her and gave her information about the negative effects of FGM on women's and girls' health.

EBLA IBRAHIM

Female genital mutilation survivor

The old lady, who learned the practice from her grandmother, said before dropping the blade, she had cut more than 100 women and girls. The women are now much older women, but her actions still weigh heavily on her conscience. Those girls did not – but should have had – a say in what happened to their bodies. At the time, she understood the practice as a mandatory rite of passage. “All the women in my generation had been circumcised, and it is something that the community embraced as a sign of womanhood. If you did not do it, you did not belong,” explained Ebla. She earned Ksh. 1,000 for each cut.

The practice was feeding her and taking care of her family, and putting down her tools was not an easy decision. However, through WRP, Ebla was trained on farming and dairy goat rearing, which earns her alternative livelihood. Together with her colleagues at Kamuthe Women Network, Ebla is practicing irrigated agriculture at the bank of River Tana. The program supported them with seeds and water pump.



Ali Hassan Abdullahi is the Assistant Chief of Kamuthe Sub-Location. He also acts as the area Chief. Mr. Abdullahi is taking no chance to ensure that the government ban on FGM remains 100% effective. Having been brought up in the community and having seen her sisters suffer the scourge of FGM, he has taken the front row advocating against the practice. He says that parents should encourage and support their girls acquire education instead of circumcising them and marrying them off to men much older than them. Through his barazas and other forums, Mr. Abdullahi has been consistent warning the community against subjecting girls to FGM saying anybody perpetuating the practice will not be spared from the wrath of the law.

Since his appointment as a government administrator in Kamuthe, the Chief has engaged very closely with Kamuthe Women Network and ActionAid to defend and promote the realization of the rights of women and girls in the area.

Thanks to that collaboration, cultural gate keepers are rapidly embracing the idea of abandoning harmful cultural practices like FGM and early marriages and women and girls can enjoy their rights to safety and security.

ALI HASSAN ABDULLAHI

Assistant Chief of Kamuthe Sub-Location

ALI HASSAN ABDULLAHI









ABDIRHAMAN MOLID



Although, the Government banned FGM in 2011, the fight to end the vice in Kenya is far from over, and the collective action and engagement of all in the community is essential. Abdirhaman Molid, a Muslim cleric working in Kamuthe embraced the call and is one of the leaders who have engaged with the women network to write a new story for women and girls in Kamuthe location and far beyond – a story of zero cases of FGM among the community where the practice is considered a rite of passage for girl into adulthood.

ABDIRHAMAN MOLID

Muslim cleric working in Kamuthe

Molid and his colleagues led the way educating fellow men and boys as well as the entire community to understand and appreciate the value of girls and respect for her body and reproductive health in line with religious values. He discount the belief among certain Muslims that FGM is a religious obligation otherwise known as suna. Working together with the women network and ActionAid, his work is making a huge impact in the community. People have appreciated that:

- FGM is a gender-based violence
- FGM steals girls' futures
- FGM extends poverty
- FGM can force girls out of school
- FGM leads to child marriage and teen pregnancy
- FGM can be traumatizing
- Young people know about their rights and bodies and want the tradition to end
- FGM is a violation of girls' and women's rights





SULEIMAN AFTIN (CULTURAL ELDER)

One of the lessons that has been ably demonstrated by the Women Rights Program II, is the idea that traditional leaders are in a strong position to work with their communities to address the harmful cultural practices that perpetuate negative gender norms and harm women's and girls' health and safety. Working with, rather than against, traditional leaders like Suleiman Aftin, ActionAid and Kamuthe Women Network has shown that it is possible to end violence against women and girls and promote women's empowerment.





Yusuf Abdi is a Local Rights Program Coordinator supporting Garissa and Embu Counties' in ActionAids Programs. Under the Women Rights Program (WRP) II, Yusuf coordinated activities in Kamuthe Local Rights Program to achieve its objectives. He says that the WRP II was a huge success in Kamuthe since it was able to increase awareness and enhance the capacities of law enforcement officers to provide better responses to violence against women and girls through increased access to comprehensive services. This contributed to a positive change for women and girls with reduced risks of harmful practices such the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) common in the Northern Kenya.

YUSUF ABDI





Yusuf further says that by providing alternative means of income through economic empowerment of reformed women circumcisers, the security and safety of women and girls in Kamuthe improved greatly. He believes that economic empowerment of women will greatly impact many households in the area by assuring their resilience to hard economic times.

YUSUF ABDI

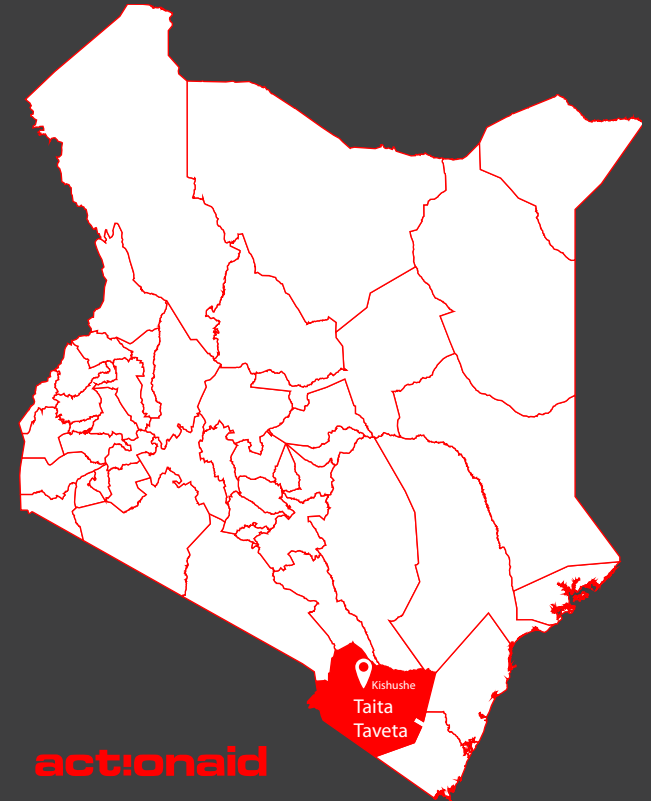
Local Rights Program Coordinator supporting
Garissa and Embu Counties'



2

KISHUSHE WOMEN NETWORK

Kishushe Women Network is the grassroots' partner for ActionAid Kenya under the program Women Rights Program (WRP) II in Kishushe Location, Taita Taveta County.



actionaid



SABINA NYANGE

Sabina Nyange is a resident of Kishushe Location in Taita Taveta County.

She passed through hardship in her childhood because of the culture of her community that perpetuates gender inequality with a bias to women and girls. When Sabina got married, the phrase “women are to be seen and not to be heard” best describes the kind of life she was living. Sabina’s place was in the home – performing every household chore – and with no time or opportunity to earn her own income. She felt unsafe, insecure and economically disempowered.

However, with the intervention of ActionAid Kenya and Kishushe Women Network through the Women Rights Program (WRP) II, she now feels safe, secure and economically empowered. Because of the training and awareness creation she received, Sabina engages actively in the community.



During the Covid 19 lock down, she was one of the beneficiaries of the program's cash transfer. With the money she received she bought a dairy goat, which gives her milk every day. The milk helps her to prepare breakfast for her grandchildren while the rest she sells for cash. With the proceeds from milk, Sabina invests in her local self-help group where they have programs like marry – go - round. She was able to borrow money from the group to build herself a house, which is an improvement from her previous status. Sabina's group has since started a Village Savings and Loaning Association (VSLA) with the prospect of enhancing their economic ability.

SABINA NYANGE

Resident of Kishushe Location in Taita
Taveta County



DORIS MWASARU

Doris Mwasaru like many other women in Kishushe did not feel safe and secure before the ActionAid and Kishushe Women Network's intervention in WRP II. Violence on women has been present in her society since times immemorial. The ethics, the values, the morals, the culture of the society was framed in such a way or structured to promote exploitation of women like Doris who are in reality the root of the society.

EBLA IBRAHIM

Female genital mutilation survivor

Doris experienced structural violence or a form of violence whereby social institutions harm people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs. Through the project's intervention, she has been empowered not only to know her rights but to claim them as well. She can now look after her goats as an economic activity and not as a duty she must perform because she is a married woman. In addition, Doris can now attend public forums and add her voice to important discussions including development of County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) etc.



For many decades, gender based violence (GBV) targeting women and girls have been the norm rather than the exception in Kishushe and the adjacent areas. To eradicate GBV and to amplify the voices of survivors, religious and cultural leaders have taken the lead using their voices to stand up against the vice and calling for fair treatment of women and girls through abandonment of outdated cultural practices and believes. As a respected cultural leader and having received training from ActionAid, Donald Mwavasi is working to educate, lobby and help hold accountable those who perpetrate crimes and injustices against vulnerable, women and children.

DONALD MWAVASI

Respected cultural leader

DONALD MWAVASI









Wallace Muluma is the Director for Gender, Youth and Cultural Services in Taita Taveta County. Wallace was engaged with the Women Rights Program (WRP) II and accounts that since 2017 when the program started a lot has changed in Taita Taveta County in as far as County's response to gender issues is concerned. He credits WRP II for empowering women, girls, men and boys to work together towards realizing of security and safety of women and girls in the county. He further accounts that through partnership with ActionAid, the County was able to develop a comprehensive Gender Policy that provides a clear roadmap for the county government to work to achieve gender equality, and more so the protection of women and girls from abuses.

WALLACE MULUMA

Director for Gender, Youth and Cultural
Services in Taita Taveta County

WALLACE MULUMA







PAULINE ATIENO

Pauline Atieno is a Local Rights Program Coordinator at ActionAid Kenya. Pauline was also in charge of the Women Rights Program (WRP) II implementation in Kishushe, Taita Taveta County. She is happy with the achievement of the program citing that the adoption and usage of the Capability, Opportunity and Motivation Behaviour Change model was a game changer that aided in achieving the program's core objects.

PAULINE ATIENO

Local Rights Program Coordinator
at ActionAid International Kenya,
Taita Taveta County

Pauline accounts that through that innovation (COM approach) the program was able to reach out to the hard to reach women and impact hugely towards realizing their safety, security and economic empowerment. She further says that through the program, ActionAid was able to build a strong network of men championing for women's rights. She cites the role of cultural elders and religious leaders in rallying the community in Kishushe and Paranga areas towards actions and behaviors that promote holistic advancement of women and girls rights.







act!onaid

<https://actionaid-kenya.org/>