

**CHILDREN'S DIGNITY FORUM (CDF) and
FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (FORWARD
UK)**



**PEER RESEARCH REPORT ON CHILD MARRIAGE
IN TARIME DISTRICT, MARA REGION, TANZANIA**

MAY 2009

Funded by:

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CDF AND FORWARD UK

**PEER RESEARCH REPORT ON CHILD MARRIAGE IN TARIME
DISTRICT, MARA REGION, TANZANIA**

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Table of Content

Table of Content	iii
Local Vocabularies	v
Abbreviations	1
Acknowledgement.....	2
Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
1.1 Background Information about the research	4
1.2. Tarime district profile.....	5
1.3. Background of the problem.....	5
1.4 Legal framework	6
1.4.1 International legal regime of children rights	6
1.4.2 Tanzania national legal regime	6
1.4.2.1 Child marriage.....	7
1.4.2.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	7
1.4.2.3 School girl pregnancies	9
2. Research Methodology.....	10
2.1 Participatory Ethnographic Evaluation Research (PEER).....	10
2.1.1. PEER research training.....	10
2.1.2 Data collection	11
2.1.3 Data analysis	11
3. Qualitative Research Findings (Themes and Illustrations).....	12
3.1 Daily Life	12
3.1.1 Farming	12
3.1.2 Keeping Cattle	12
3.1.3 Collecting firewood	13
3.1.4 Traditional dance	14
3.1.5 Traditional brew.....	14
3.1.6 Roles and Responsibilities	15
3.1.7 Hard life.....	16
3.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	16
3.2.1 Background	16
3.2.2 Reasons for practicing FGM	17
3.2.3 Myths and beliefs on FGM	18
3.2.4 Religion and FGM.....	19
3.2.5 Decision making on FGM	19
3.2.6 Experiences of FGM.....	20
3.2.7 Peer pressure towards FGM.....	21
3.2.8 Attitude towards FGM	22
3.2.9 Consequences of FGM.....	23
3.2.10 “Ngariba”	23
3.3 Child marriage.....	24
3.3.1 Age for marriage	24
3.3.2 Consent to marriage	25
3.3.3 Education and child marriage.....	26

3.3.4 Attitude toward marriage.....	27
3.3.5 Power relations in marriage	28
3.3.6 Sexual relations and child marriage.....	28
3.3.7 Violence and child marriage.....	29
3.3.8 Bride price and child marriage	30
3.3.9 Reasons for child marriage	31
3.3.10 Husband and wife relationships.....	32
3.3.11 Roles and responsibilities of husband and wife.....	32
3.3.12 Relationship with the in-laws	33
3.3.12 Polygamy.....	33
3.3.13 “Nyumba ntobu”	34
3.3.14 Pregnancy.....	34
3.3.15 Delivery	35
3.3.16 Child motherhood.....	37
3.3.17 Knowledge of the law.....	38
3. 4 Broader Issues.....	39
3. 4.1 Women’s rights	39
3.4.2 Awareness on sexual and reproductive health	40
3.4.3 Cohabitation and sexual activeness	41
3.4.4 Pregnancy out of marriage	43
3.4. 5. Testimonies from girls on delivery and cruelty	44
3.4.6 Young women’s aspirations	46
3.4.6 Their recommendations	47
4. Way forward, recommendations and Conclusion	48
4.1 Recommendations.....	48
4.2. Way forward.....	49
4.3. Conclusion	53
7. Bibliography	54

Local Vocabularies

Dagaa	Small fish
Gongo	Traditional brew made of coconut or cabbage leaves and bananas and left over “ugali”
Kimpumu	Tradition Brew
Kukuza mji	Let the family grow, have many children
Litungu	Kurya traditional dance
Marua Gabongwe	A traditional god believed to be in a form of a snake, which before conducting FGM they ask permission from this god from a special tree found in Kewanja Village
Matobe	Type of tree grown for charcoal in Tarime district
Mbege	Traditional brew made from fermented millet and bananas
Mnanasi	Traditional brew made from fermented pineapple
Mnazi	Traditional brew made of ripe bananas and coconut
Msagane	One who has not gone through FGM
Nyumba Ntobu	Women to Girls Marriages
Ngariba	FGM practitioners
Saro	The period when FGM is conducted
Ugali	Thick cooked paste made out of boiling water mixed with maize flour
Wanzuki	Traditional brew made of coconut or cabbage leaves and bananas and left over “ugali”
Wazee wa mila	Traditional leaders

Abbreviations

ACHPR	African Charter on Human and People's Rights
ACRWRC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Children
CAP	Chapter
CBO	Community Based Organization
CDF	Children's Dignity Forum
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FORWARD	Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development
GN	Government Notice
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
LHRC	Legal and Human Rights Centre
LMA	Law of Marriage Act
NOLA	National Organization for Legal Assistance
PACHPRRWAP	Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
PEER	Participatory Ethnographic Evaluation Research
R.E	Revised Edition
SDA	Seventh Day Adventists
SOSPA	Sexual Offence Special Provision Act
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendants
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

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Research partners

The Foundation for Women's Health, Research and Development (FORWARD) is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) that campaigns for and supports the advancement and safeguarding of the sexual and reproductive health and human rights of African girls and women, particularly those at risk and affected by female genital mutilation. FORWARD was established in 1985.

Children Dignity Forum (CDF) is a civil society non-governmental organisation based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, which focuses on children's rights. CDF was registered in March 2006 under NGO Act no. 24/2002, and officially launched in June 2006. CDF's mission is to create a working forum to empower children and their families and society at large. It also aims to promote and reinforce children's rights.

Executive Summary

This report is the product of participatory ethnographic evaluation research (PEER) Research conducted between January and June 2009 to explore the impact of child marriage in Tarime district, Mara region of Tanzania. The overall aim of the project was to advance and protect the rights of girls and young women in Tanzania particularly those who are at risk of and affected by child marriages. The PEER Research project focused on the experiences of child mothers who are affected by child marriage in Tarime, Mara region of Tanzania. It assessed the extent of child marriage in Tarime; explored its root causes and the risk factors leading to child marriage; identified the possible solutions and plans of action for the community; local and national decision makers and other key international stakeholders.

The project included conducting focus group discussions with young women in order to explore their perceptions and views on child marriage and interviewing key community stakeholders including teachers, community leaders and decision makers and Non-governmental organisations working in Tarime.

The research focused on three main themes. The three themes are; life in Tarime; child marriage (what it means for the girls) and finally the impact of child marriage. The research findings produced a real understanding of the key risk factors leading to child marriage and raised awareness of the prevalence of child marriage in Tarime. The project explored the key issues that child brides deal with in their daily life and identified their needs to tackle the problems. Most of the child mothers involved in the research was comforted by the knowledge that many other girls faced the same challenges. Therefore, they recommended staying in touch with their peers after the project was finished in order to support each other. As a result, they established a girls' network named 'Tunawenza girls' network'. Tunawenza in Swahili means 'we can'.

An evaluation workshop to analyse the research data and summarise young women's recommendations was organised after the research was completed. A community consultation with participating local authorities (ward executive officers), and other key stakeholders was also organised to share the research findings and engage them in supporting the girls in the district.

This pilot project also set the foundations for a long-term framework in order to mobilise social, economic, cultural and legal reform and to effect changes.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background Information about the research

This participatory action research report focuses on child brides, child mothers, and girls at risk of child marriage in Tarime district, Mara region, Tanzania. The project was designed as a result of consultations and recommendations based on the previous child marriage survey report conducted by CDF and FORWARD in Dar es Salaam, Coastal, Mwanza and Mara regions. The survey emphasised the complexity in understanding the root causes of child marriage, due to the diverse traditions and customs practiced by the different tribes in the region. Due to time and resource constraints, the survey mainly focused on the overall issues of child marriage in the region and indicated that a thorough study exploring its root causes is crucial¹. Therefore, the survey proposed that reliable and more accurate findings can only be obtained when researchers have more time to spend in the field, studying child marriage, their effects and the difficulties experienced by the child brides themselves.

The research therefore assesses the extent of child marriage in Tarime; explores its root causes and the risk factors leading to child marriage, based on the perspectives and experiences of child mothers affected. It also identifies the possible solutions and plans of action with the community, local and national decision makers, and other key international influential stakeholders. It should be noted that this pilot project report was aimed at increasing awareness on the impact of child marriage; sets a basis for a long-term framework to mobilise the social, economic, cultural and legal reform and changes in Tarime district, Mara region.

The essence of the peer research was to empower the girls who are affected by child marriage to express their feelings, their understanding and perception of such marriages so as to let such voices heard and to use their voices as a catalyst towards the ending of child marriage in the Tarime district, Mara region and Tanzania as a whole. The research was conducted by child mothers trained to interview their own peers in their villages. Therefore, actual cases, testimonies, and propositions offered are rooted in the experience of girls who have experienced child marriage and those who are living within child marriage with all of its repercussions on their lives.

This report therefore, looks at the real lives of girl children in marriages, highlighting their duties and responsibilities as wives, the challenges they face and strategies suggested by the girls themselves to end child

¹ Report on Child Marriage Survey conducted in Dar es Salaam, Coastal, Mwanza and Mara regions (CDF 2008), 53

marriages in Tarime district. The report is divided into categories, namely; the daily life of girls; the influence of female genital mutilation in changing their lives; the impact of child marriages on the girls; challenges they face during pregnancy and child rearing. It finally highlights the recommendations and conclusions.

1.2. Tarime district profile

Tarime District is found in the Lake zone of Tanzania. It is a district of about 11,150 km square and about 7,250 km square is covered with water from Lake Victoria. Tarime District is among the five districts of the Mara region. The geographical location of Tarime is bordered in the North by Kenya, in the West by Lake Victoria. The Eastern and Southern part is bordered by the Serengeti District. It has 20 wards.

The dominant tribe in Tarime district is Kurya. There are other tribes in the district such as the Luya, the Simbiti, the Ryeli, the Luo, the Kine and the Iregi. The main activities of the people of Tarime district include agriculture, animal keeping and fishing for those living along Lake Victoria. Crops grown in Tarime district include maize, sorghum, millet, cassava, bananas, coffee, beans and different types of fruits.

1.3. Background of the problem

Society considers marriage as an institution that is entered by adults regardless the age the person. Adulthood which signifies readiness for marriage is perceived differently. In order to identify child marriage as different from other marriages a clear definition is required. Child marriage is any marriage carried out below the age of 18 years, before the girl is physically, physiologically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and child bearing.²

Worldwide there are greater concerns about child marriage. Efforts to end the problem include the existing Human Rights framework which provides more sustainable and effective interventions. These frameworks are Article 16 of the UDHR of 1948, Article 2 and 16 of the CEDAW of 1979, Article xxi of the ACRWC of 2000, Article 16 (a), (b) and (d) PACHPRRWA of 2003, Article 2 of the 1965 Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage, Article 23 (3) of the ICCPR and Article 10 of the ICESCR. These frameworks highlight the practice as a violation of rights and provide a more complete analysis than demographic, population and health approaches. The frameworks take a holistic analysis of the causes and consequences of child marriage and recognise child marriage as a part of gender discrimination against girls. It also establishes the fact that child marriage is a “public” and not private matter.

² Ending child marriage. A guide to global policy action, 7

Despite the international concern for child marriage, UNICEF reports that an estimated 52 million girls below the age of 18 years were married in 2002. They go further to provide that 25,000 are being married each year and estimate that by 2012 about 100 million girls will have been married³. Tanzania is no different, with child marriage incidences more common in the rural areas than in the urban areas.

In Tanzania, children constitute approximately 50 percent of the Tanzanians population⁴. The Declaration on the Rights of the Child stipulates that a child by reason of his physical and mental maturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth. Despite this declaration and other international efforts, there is still violation of children rights. One of the many violations of children's rights in Tanzania is the sanction of child marriage in law which leads to the majority of girls being denied their rights to education, economic development, and social advancements.

1.4 Legal framework

1.4.1 International legal regime of children rights

Child rights are those rights that are inherent to a child. They are recognised both regionally and internationally as rights that are distinct and different from human rights. These rights need to be promoted, protected and defended for the benefit of children.

Tanzania has ratified a number of international conventions that provide for these rights. Some of the key conventions that provide against child marriages internationally and regionally include;

- Article 16 of the UDHR of 1948
- Article 2 and 16 of the CEDAW of 1979
- Article xxi of the ACRWC of 2000
- Article 16 (a), (b) and(d) PACHPRRWA of 2003

All these laws provide for a child below the international recognised and accepted age of 18 years. However all these conventions have not been domesticated in Tanzania which still uses outdated and different laws which have different criteria for the ages of children. This is a significant obstacle in realizing children's rights within the country.

1.4.2 Tanzania national legal regime

Tanzania has ratified all the international Conventions that provide for the rights of the child as stated above. The country ratified the CRC on 10th

³ CDF, Report on child marriage survey, 3

⁴ <http://www.50campaign.org>

June 1991 and it entered into force 30 days later⁵; The ACHPR on 18th February 1984, entered into force after 30 days and the ACRWC in February 2003. Despite ratification, Tanzania has not domesticated many of the provisions of the conventions, neither has it reviewed its existing laws and amended them to suit the conventions. For that reason there have been problems in addressing the rights of children both in law and in practice. This was reflected in some of the issues that this research pointed out, for instance in:

1.4.2.1 Child marriage

The law in Tanzania has many shortcomings when addressing the needs of the child. Among the many problems of the law is the definition of what constitutes a child, a factor which is very important in addressing child marriage. Different laws in Tanzania say different things:

The Children and Young Persons Act which defines a child as one who is less than 12 years of age;

The Evidence Act provides a child of tender years is one who is below 14 years of age;

The family and marriage relations in Tanzania are governed by the LMA of 1971 which is CAP 33 of Revised Edition of 2002. This also is no different with the other laws that define a child, for instance:

Section 13 (1) No person shall marry who being male has not attained the apparent age of eighteen years or being female, has not attained the apparent age of fifteen.

Section 13 (2) The court can use its discretion in an application for leave can award a marriage were parties are of fourteen years of age.

Section 17 (1) A female who has not attained the apparent age of eighteen years shall be required to obtain the consent of the parent or guardian.

As is evident from these examples, these ambivalent laws allow for child marriages. This has been a challenge in addressing child marriages. There is thus a need for the government to amend these outdated laws and domesticate the principles of the international conventions that Tanzania has ratified⁶.

1.4.2.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Tanzania is one of the 28 countries that practice FGM in Africa. In Tanzania according to a research done by Legal Human Right Centre

⁵ NOLA, Using the Law to protect children's rights in Tanzania, 2004, 109

⁶ LHRC, Tanzania Human Rights Report 2008, 87

(LHRC), FGM is practised in all regions except in Kigoma. However some regions have a higher prevalence than others⁷.

FGM refers to a range of procedures which involve the total or partial removal of the female genital organs. Four different types of FGM have been classified by WHO while recognising that the actual practise of FGM by unskilled practitioners may not fit into the types as described⁸.

WHO Classification of FGM types

Type I: Excision of the prepuce, with or without excision of part or the entire clitoris (clitoridectomy).

Type II: Partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora (excision).

Type III: Narrowing of the vaginal orifice with creation of a covering se by cutting and a positioning the labia minora and/or the labia majora ora, with or without excision of the clitoris (infibulations).

Type IV: All other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for no medical purposes, for example: pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterisation.

In Tarime, the research identified that type I is practiced and FGM is used as a passage of rites from childhood to womanhood. FGM is also key passage to marriage among many tribes; therefore, stigma is attached to the girls who do not get married within two years of going through FGM. FGM is a public ceremony that takes place every two years in November after harvest time, despite the fact that FGM is illegal in Tanzania. The Sexual Offence Special Provision Act (SOSPA) of 1998 specifically addresses sexual abuse and imposes severe punishments for offenders. In particular FGM⁹. SOSPA provides in;

Section 169A (1) Any person who having custody, charge or care of any person under 18 years of age, ill treats, neglects or abandons that person or causes female genital mutilation or carries or causes to be carried out female genital mutilation or procures that person to be assaulted, ill treated, neglected or abandoned in a like manner likely to cause him/her harm suffering or injury to health including injury to or loss of sight, hearing or limb or organ of body or any mental derangement, commits the offence of cruelty to children.

The law goes further to provide for punishment for;

⁷ LHRC, FGM A Human Rights Abuse Veiled in Customs and Tradition, 1999,35

⁸ LHRC, FGM A Human Rights Abuse Veiled in Customs and Tradition, 1999, 2

⁹ LHRC, The Legal Process can it save Girls from FGM?, 2004, 5

Section 169A (2) *Any person who commits the offence of cruelty to children is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than five years and not exceeding fifteen years or a fine not exceeding three hundred thousand shillings or both a fine and imprisonment and shall be ordered to pay compensation of an amount determined by the court to the person in respect of whom the offence was committed for the injuries caused to the person.*

It is evident that the law is not enforced in Tarime district as no one has been prosecuted for the practice despite open FGM celebrations and ceremonies. Thus there is a need for the government to take bold steps in enforcing the law against FGM and those practising it.

1.4.2.3 School girl pregnancies

The Child Development Policy of 1996 is silent on the pregnancy of a school girl but rather it directs that laws be reviewed to protect children on acts that curtail their studies. G.N No 265 provides for punishment for people who impregnate and marry school girls. There are penalties for the offences as established in the *Education (Imposition of penalties to Persons who marry or impregnate school girls) Rules of 2003* which came into force on 5th September 2003. Examples of the sanctions are:

- *Rule 4(1)* provides for the punishment of any parent who aids, abates or solicit a school girl to marry while pursuing a primary or secondary school education
- *Rule 4 (2)* a person who marries a school girl
- *Rule 5* A male person who impregnates a school girl

There is also the *Primary School (Compulsory Enrolment and Attendance) Rules G.N No 280 of 2002*. This rule provides for one to be liable for causing a child not to attend school regularly until the completion of *Primary education Rule 4 (2 of G.N No 280 of 2002)*. The regulations are not clear on what will happen to the girl when she is pregnant and or to the baby. However, being pregnant is not a reason for one to be expelled from school as provided in the *Education (Expulsion and Exclusion of Pupils from Schools) Regulations G.N No 295 of 2002*, but entering into wedlock is according to rule 4 of the G.N.

However, most people are not well aware that being pregnant does not entitle one to be compulsory expelled from school¹⁰. As a result, girls are forced to leave school when pregnant due to lack of awareness and the stigma attached to it. And yet the person who impregnated the girl is free from legal prosecutions or stigma. In this way, the girl is seen to be at fault. Whether pregnant girls should be allowed to continue school or not

¹⁰ Shivji Issa Et al, *Constitution and Legal Systems of Tanzania*, 2004, 209

also remains debatable as the Ministry of Education does not support the idea of in order to 'discourage teenage pregnancy'.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Participatory Ethnographic Evaluation Research (PEER)

PEER research is a qualitative participatory research method investigating beliefs, perceptions, and experiences of young women affected by child marriage and motherhood. The purpose of the research was to gain in-depth insights about the extent of child marriage in the life of girls in Tarime, Mara region. The study used PEER research led by the Children Dignity Forum (CDF) and FORWARD. The PEER research helped the young women to articulate problems and priorities from their point of view, enabling dialogue on these difficult to discuss issues.

The research method is based on training the groups in the methods of carrying out in-depth conversational interviews with their peers, mothers, and others in their own social network.

The research was conducted through three main stages of i/training 26 young women on the methods of conducting interviews based on the three key thematic issues; ii/collecting data; iii/ analysing the data including debriefing the peer researchers as is explained below.

2.1.1. PEER research training

- 26 young women were recruited as peer researchers from different wards in Tarime District. Their selection criteria were that they were affected by child marriage and motherhood, aged between 16 to 24 years of age, and they should represent their community as far as possible. Six of them were recruited as supervisors and twenty as peer researchers.
- The girls took part in a 4 days participatory training workshop so as to understand the objective of the research and their roles in addressing the key issues around child marriage in the region. The training was conducted in the Swahili language; translation was made through a traditional language i.e. "Kurya". This was because recruited peer researchers and supervisors were fluent in the Swahili language and in "Kurya".
- Facilitators, supervisors and peer researchers worked together to establish key areas and developed questions under each theme of the research. They also trained ways to guide in-depth conversational interviews around the key themes.

2.1.2 Data collection

- Each Peer researcher carried out three interviews with two friends on the three key themes namely life in Tarime, child marriage and the impact of child marriage on their life (resulting in six interviews in total). The interviews were carried out in the third person: e.g. 'What do people in your community say about...?' No names were used. They were encouraged to share stories or examples they heard.
- Peer researchers were asked to make brief notes of key issues or stories immediately after interviewing their friends (if they felt comfortable doing this). If not, they would share their findings with their supervisors at the end of every week.
- Supervisors met with the peer researchers to collect their findings, and wrote detailed notes on a weekly basis.
- In the third week, the supervisors met with the research team to discuss the progress of the research and make sure the data is collected accordingly.
- The data collection was followed by an in-depth interview made with each peer researchers and supervisors. This allowed the research team to probe in detail and ask for additional explanations needed for data interpretation and fill the gaps. Their detailed notes were used for the final analysis.
- Finally, an evaluation workshop for the peer researchers was organised to identify and analyse what they have learned from participating in the research and bring forward their recommendations to improve their life as well as others in the same situation.

2.1.3 Data analysis

Data was analysed thematically during the final peer researcher workshop, where emerging themes were assigned codes and explored further and triangulated. The key themes and key issues that emerged from the research are:

1. Daily life of women in Tarime: the young women suggested that farming, cattle herding, collecting firewood, traditional dances and making brew (a local alcoholic drink), were activities that emphasised the difference between the roles of girls and boys in the community. They also pointed to FGM as a main issue in their lives. However, since the issues linked with FGM were broad the team decided to put it as separate theme.
2. Female genital mutilation (FGM)
3. Child marriage and its impacts
4. other broader issues: this include unwanted teenage pregnancy, awareness of sexual reproductive health and rights,

The data was printed out, cut into text units (paragraphs and stories) and arranged under the coding framework, then re-read and a proportion of

quotations were selected to capture the essence of each code. The research team then worked together to read the data, and refine findings.

3. Qualitative Research Findings (Themes and Illustrations)

3.1 Daily Life

The first theme was intended to capture the general daily life in Tarime. This was considered important as it would inform the basis on which the experience of girls would be explored. Life in Tarime was normal it was explained by those interviewed. The life involves both family and economic activities for the married girls. Activities highlighted in the daily life in Tarime district include:

3.1.1 Farming

Farming is the main economic activity among the community in Tarime district. Most people have home gardens where they grow food crops for family use, and larger farms at a distance where crops are grown mainly for sale. The cash crops grown include tobacco, coffee, millet, maize, beans, bananas, sweet potatoes, peas and cassava. As one respondent said;

“There are two farming seasons, which is during the long, rains in January where we prepare the farms, February we plant and June we harvest. Then there is preparation of farms in July planting in August and harvesting in December for the short rains”.

It was evident that farming is the main economic activity for many families in Tarime and mostly done by women, as reflected by those interviewed. For instance one child mother highlights;

“Mostly women farm and cannot tell men to go with them to the farm for fear of battering. Men mostly harass women, that’s why men do not farm. At times men assist during harvesting but this is not all the time”.

Hand hoes are used for the home gardens and a cow pulled plough for the big farms. People usually go to the farms very early in the morning from around 5.00 am to about 10.00 am. Therefore, a married girl child is expected to get up early in the morning to work on the farm, and then return to the house to finish the house chores.

3.1.2 Keeping Cattle

Cattle are a source of wealth, for farming, and means of family income in Tarime. As is the case with many patrimonial societies, men own the cattle even though the women look after them. This includes cleaning the shed, milking the cattle and taking them to graze from 10 am to 6 pm. Sometimes the women have to take the cattle further to access the best

pasture; this exposes them to danger from thieves and other risks. Most respondents highlighted the fact. Some mentioned that;

"...mostly it is women and children who take care of cattle and it is them who know when the cattle are grazed, the time to milk and to clean the shade. If women do not take care of the cows they are usually beaten by their husbands and at times even chased from their homes. It is not easy for men to take care of the cattle. They only do that if the woman is sick, travelled or she has taken a child to the clinic"

When women are tired or unable to take the cattle for grazing, they face serious consequences as explained by those interviewed that;

"If women do not take care of the cows they are beaten and chased from their husbands' home"

The men take control of any income generated from cattle sales and sometimes use it for marrying another woman and drinking local brew. One girl sadly pointed out;

"...women don't get anything from selling a cow and if they do it is mostly money enough to buy kerosene, washing soap and small fish "dagaa"

3.1.3 Collecting firewood

Firewood in Tarime is used for cooking and selling so as to raise money for use. The firewood collected is at times used to make charcoal and the good big firewood is usually sold to make money. Firewood is collected from forests that are far away from villages. Some girls explained this as;

"Firewood is collected at a distance of about 3 hours on foot. Sometimes the distance is 3 to 5 kilometres and one can leave in the morning and come back in the evening. At times we cut trees called "Matabole" that we use as firewood"

Traditionally women and girls are responsible for collecting firewood as one girl explained below:

"Normally it's the work of women and no Kurya man can ever collect firewood. I think it is normal for women to collect firewood as they are the ones who are cooking and thus they should collect firewood. It is not normal for men to collect firewood if they do others will call him dense".

The above statement shows that women and girls have many responsibilities in the community which are very hard to deal with for a newly wed girl child.

3.1.4 Traditional dance

Like any other tribe, the Kurya tribe also have a traditional dance which is commonly known as “Litungu”. The dances are usually done on special occasions. The peer researchers highlighted that it normally takes place in open spaces such as Nyamisangura B and Mugamaga in Regu Village, or at the “uwanja wa mbuzi” or a football field. The dance usually starts at 3 pm and ends at 6 pm. In the dance ceremony, both boys and girls of the same age make two lines and dance in parallel. This is normally danced during weddings and “saro”

In Tarime district, “litungu” is danced on special occasions and the FGM ceremony is one of them. Some girls acknowledged;

“After FGM the dances are done so that one can advertise themselves as being ready for marriage. Girls dress up for the dances as they are going to look for market for themselves. Mostly it is girls of 14 years of age and after that one gets a husband if you are liked”.

These dances are a source of entertainment and a tradition for social gatherings. They are usually attended by everyone including youths between 13 to 18 years old; “Litungu” is a dance that is greatly enjoyed by all in the community, to celebrate a good harvest as well as the rites of passage to adulthood.

3.1.5 Traditional brew

Traditional brew in Tarime district is mostly made by women. The research discovered that although it is made by women, it is drunk by men who later end up being violent to the women. There are different traditional brews made in Tarime using different means. As one respondent indicated;

Most of the traditional brew is “gongo”, “wanzuki”, “kimpumu” and “mnazi”, which is made of very ripe bananas and coconuts. These are traditional brews made of coconut, left over “ugali”, fermented millet and very ripe bananas. They use maize and cassava which we dry then boil and leave to ferment.

Most women prepare the brew for sale in order to cover their domestic expenses and support their children. However preparing the brew has some side effects as explained by some of the girls:

“...the making of the brew is dangerous to the women as it can cause liver damage and skin discolouration. Sometimes one can get hurt from making the brew due to the strength of the brew - the containers that are used for making the brew can burst and thus spilling the brew leading to loss and even one can get burnt badly by the brew. Sometimes the brew can make bubbles which when they burst they can seriously burn a person”.

Generally the traditional brew is made in areas where there is plenty of water such as near rivers. It is mostly made and drunk during end of the year celebrations, weddings, FGM celebrations as well as used for social gatherings after farming. Traditional brew however has serious effects in the society as is quoted by some respondents:

"Benefits are to those who are selling as they get money to use but for those who drink it can lead to fights even people cutting each other with machetes. Also for a man who is drunk he can beat and chase away his wife and children from the house".

Another girl commented;

"People here take the traditional brew so as to reduce stress and to be merry. The brew has effects especially if one drinks too much such as he can rape adults or children and also insult other people".

Due to the effects most of the traditional brews are banned by the government but some women still make them illegally to earn some money. Therefore, alternative income generating schemes may help these women to stop preparing the brews.

3.1.6 Roles and Responsibilities

All of those interviewed evidenced that women, unlike men in the community, have a lot to do from the time they wake up in the morning (usually at 5AM) to the time they go to bed at mid night. Girls start supporting their mothers at the age of 5 and they are expected to run the house chores independently by the time they are 10 years old. Therefore, they will be ready for marriage when they are 11 -12 years old.

As one girl portray her daily schedule;

"I wake up in the morning and go to the farm with my husband. Then I come back to make some porridge for the kids, go to fetch water, and then I take the cows for grazing. In the afternoon I come home to make lunch for the family and take back the cattle for grazing".

Another girl said;

"I wake up in the morning, clean the house, and then I go to the farm with my husband. When we return I have to cook for my husband and then take the cows for grazing and milk them".

Another child mother highlighted that;

"I clean the house, cook, tend the farm and milk the cows. I used to wake up at 3 am in the morning taking the cows to feed and then walk to the farm at 4:30pm. We used to go together with the husband".

The research highlighted that often women go to farm early in the morning and get back from the farm about 10am to start cleaning the cow shed before taking them for grazing as well as finish the rest of the house chores. This imbalance of responsibilities between women and men is felt by most of those interviewed. One girl said;

"...men don't graze cattle as they think that women and children are there to do all the work, they just play chess. Women do most of the work because men feel that because they have paid dowry for them, they should do all the work".

Men spend most of their time after farming in recreational activities and socializing while women do all the house work including selling farm products in the market and looking after their children.

3.1.7 Hard life

All of the young women interviewed explained burden of the responsibilities makes their life very hard. One girl for instance stated that;

"Life here in Tarime is really hard as all the work is being done by us women, farming, taking care of cattle, cooking etc. It is really difficult; take my example , I was married at 15 years and it's been 3 years now and I have no children but I am so tired of this life".

Another child mother said;

"I am a farmer and my life is very difficult, as I have to support my mother and my child. So it is very difficult"

Life in Tarime is not easy for women and girls as they are expected to do all the hard work with minimum assistance or support from their husbands and sometimes with no assistance at all. They still have to work twice as hard to take care of their children and at times even their parents and in laws, even after divorce or separation from the husband. There is no doubt how difficult it is for a girl child to be married and take on this burden at an early age. This highlights the great importance of awareness-raising in gender equality and empowerment programmes to support women and girls in Tarime.

3.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

3.2.1 Background

FGM is used as a rite of passage for one to move from one stage of life to another. The community considers it as a rite of transition from childhood to womanhood. Once the girl has been through FGM, she is considered to

be ready for marriage. This enables her family to receive a dowry from a potential husband. The younger and harder worker the girl is, the more the dowry will be. FGM is now practised to children from the age of 10 to 16 years. One girl responded;

"...mostly girls go through FGM when they are 10 years old and circumcision for boys when they are 12 years, they do so at an early age so that girls and boys can get married early".

Traditionally, FGM is mostly practised after the end of every two years. It is a ritual that is done at night from 1pm to mid day the next day. After it the girls who have gone through it rest for a month, and then if a girl is not in school she is married off. It was evident that, FGM was primarily practiced to marry off the girls. As one respondent commented;

"Most of the times after FGM children are married off. Taking children early through FGM results to child marriages".

3.2.2 Reasons for practicing FGM

The practise of FGM in Tarime district is mostly linked to the Kurya tribal customs and traditions. The main reasons for practicing FGM are:

- To reduce women's sexual desire. This is raised, although in the research some girls who go through it still have sexual desire.
- To get a husband and get married. Some girls highlighted that girls who are not circumcised will not get a husband in the Kurya tribe, unlike the girls who have undergone FGM. The amount of dowry also depends on whether she is circumcised or not.
- To be honoured in the community and get gifts after the ceremony. According to the custom, families and relatives bring gifts to the girl after the ceremony.
- To prevent stigma. Girls who are not circumcised are not welcome among their peers and can be stigmatised. For example, girls have the custom of going to the river in groups for a bath; they will not let girls who did not go through FGM to take bath with them.

The same is reflected by those interviewed:

"FGM cannot end as it is driven by deep rooted beliefs and a society that upholds them believes that those who are not are despised and insulted by relatives, parents even their peers and by so doing girls are willing and happy to go through FGM".

The key findings of the research in relation to FGM include:

- **Links to early/child marriage**: Girls are supposed to get married within the 2 years after going through FGM. If not, it is considered as bad luck. In order to avoid this, parents force the girl to marry whoever requests first, including elderly men and/or for a very low dowry price. This also has an impact on marital relationship as the girl is considered as an unwanted object. Some cases even show that girls who are married in this situation experience more domestic violence and oppression in the house.
- **Exposure to early sexual practice and teenage pregnancy**: after going through FGM ceremony, the girls are considered to be adults. Therefore, they are entitled to start sexual relationships at a very early age. This exposes them to teenage pregnancy as well as sexually transmitted diseases including HIV & AIDS. In order to avoid this, parents prefer to marry the girls off as soon as possible.

Therefore the research highlighted the correlation between child marriage and FGM practice that need equal attention as both practices affect the wellbeing of women and girls in the community.

3.2.3 Myths and beliefs on FGM

There were a number of myths and beliefs in the whole practice of FGM that influence peoples' thinking and perception of FGM in the Tarime district community. Among such found in the study include:

- During the FGM ceremony one is not to wear a red dress; should be Kurya, and circumcised to attend. If one breaks these rules it is believed that one will go mad.
- It is bad luck to get married before circumcision.
- If an uncircumcised girl gets married the husband's relatives feel that she is not clean enough to cook for them.
- Girls of the same age group normally go to bath in the river together but if one has not gone through FGM she cannot take a bath with those who are circumcised.
- Married women who have not gone through FGM are not allowed to open the door of the cow shed as it is believed to be bad luck to the rest of the family who will pass through that door during the course of the day.
- The practise of FGM is associated with the traditional belief that first permission is to be sort from "*Marua Gabongwe*" so as to have a good and successful FGM season.

These myths and beliefs also extend to when one dies from FGM. This is reflected by most of those interviewed. They hold that;

“According to traditions if one dies due to FGM there is no funeral ceremony conducted for her. It is felt that it is bad and that the dead corpse will bring bad fate to the village and that it will kill all the girls circumcised in that year. Due to this the corpse is thrown away in the bushes or in another tribe or village area. If the other clan realised that there is a corpse thrown in their area they also throw it back to where they think the corpse came from. This can happen back and forth until the corpse is eaten by wild animals. Nowadays they take the body, the gifts given during FGM and even other things that belong to girl and throw all of them away. It is believed that there is a need to throw all of them away, as throwing one body will help save 20-50 other people in the village”.

3.2.4 Religion and FGM

Religion plays a big part in Tarime district in the fight against the FGM practice as most churches advocate against the practise and refer to it as satanic. It was evident that;

- Seventh Day Adventists (SDAs) do not practice FGM, because FGM is ordered by traditional leaders
- The Catholic Church is very strong against FGM and is even one of the first churches to advocate against it. Despite this, some members of the congregation still follow the practice.

The study found that the community is more accommodating to those who are religious followers who do not go through the FGM practice. They are accepted more freely and are not usually despised or discriminated against and even end up getting married, compared to those who are not strict followers of religion. This is an indication of some degree of community acceptance and change on the perception of FGM. For example one respondent reflected;

“...FGM has changed nowadays it has started to cool down because the SDA and the Pentecost churches are advocating against it. So in the next 6 years there will be a great improvement toward the end of FGM in Tarime district”.

3.2.5 Decision making on FGM

Parents and the elders in the family play a major role in the FGM practice. They influence the girl's perception of the practice and make the final decision on when she has to go through FGM. This was reflected by some girls who responded that;

“..It depends on the father so if he wants her daughter to go through FGM and if she refuses to do so her life will become so hard. She can even be chased out of the house”.

"...it's the father of the girl who decides when the girl is to go for FGM and if the girl refuses then the father feels he has been embarrassed when he sits with his friends in the local pubs".

"...fathers normally decide to send their daughters through FGM; also the aunties and grandmothers also enforce the father to do that".

Thus the study found out that parents play a major role in whether their children go through FGM or not. This signifies that the destiny of the girl child lies in the hands and dictates of the parents and guardians like grandmothers, aunties. Targeting them in the future would have a significant impact on securing girls welfare as they would make rational decisions for their girl children.

3.2.6 Experiences of FGM

Those who have gone through FGM have different experiences of how that day was. Most of those interviewed gave painful testimonies of their experiences on the FGM day. One girl depicts the reality by saying;

"...only women are present during the cutting itself but the traditional leaders are usually nearby during the cutting. On that day people come to the house eat and drink and celebrate the ceremony and the girl is awarded presents. Then in the evening the aunties wash the wound of the girl with hot water and herbs".

Another girl shares her experience, saying that;

"...other girls after mutilation endure the wound for more than one month. The wound is cleaned by a witness (a person who attended the circumcision with the girl, usually the mother or the auntie). Because it is very painful so some of the girls want to wash it themselves, but because of the pain, they sometimes don't even wash to avoid the pain. So they end up smelling badly. The situation becomes worse during "litungu" where they only cover half of their bodies, and when they dance they sweat and the men they dance with also sweat; together with the many number of people present the smell becomes terrible".

Movingly, a girl explained her experience of FGM after she was forced to go through the practice by her fathers and brothers. She said;

"...my father brought a "ngariba" at home and asked the brothers to hold me down. One of the brothers sat on my chest while the others held my legs apart so that the "ngariba" can cut me. They told me that if I screamed the father would have to pay the "ngariba" one cow, as she was asked to come to do the cutting at home. So I had to keep very silent despite all the pain I felt. The cost of the cutting is 4,000 shillings but you have to add something else according to what you have. She cut only a small part. After the cutting they put in some local medicine in powder form which was so painful. I stayed for 3 weeks to heal; passing urine was

so painful, the “ngariba” had put in medicine but when I walked bleeding started again, but not a lot”.

Despite of the testimonies provided, most of the girls who have gone through the FGM practise do not like to talk about it. Some of them feel ashamed to speak about their stories, as they consider it as a secret and some do not want to remember the pain, because they went through physical and psychological effects which they needed to forget.

3.2.7 Peer pressure towards FGM

Some of the girls who undergo FGM practise have been mostly influenced by their peers who have been through the same practice. As one girl explained:

Her older sisters really wanted her to go through FGM, so she went to the village to visit their grandmother and she did it there. She remembers when her sister talked about all the presents, the money she got and so on and also wanted to go through it.

Another girl vividly depicts;

“...some girls run away from home and go through with it, staying at their grandparents or aunts until they are healed, then come back home to their parents. They want to go through it because of peer pressure, attracted by the gifts and attention they get from the process. It also depends on the girl herself even if the father refuses she can go to the aunties and convinces them to go through FGM”.

In Tarime district, the research found that, some girls have undergone FGM due to the fear of peer pressure, stigmatisation and discrimination. This was explained by a certain girl who said;

“...the Kurya tribe do FGM because it is their tradition. I did not experience such discrimination because my mother was sick for a long time. I couldn't go out a lot but I knew girls who were not circumcised and they had a tough time as other girls would fight with them and call them names such as “Msagane” because they were not circumcised. The Seventh Day Adventist girls do not care, but the others when called names, fight and when the FGM season comes they go for the circumcision...if a girl is not circumcised she is usually shunned by society and discriminated against and at times even her parents can chase her away from home as she is a disgrace”.

Peer pressure plays a big role in affecting young girl's perception of FGM and forces the girls go through the practice so as to fit in with society, particularly that of people of her own age group. This is necessitated by lack of self awareness of the girls and their community.

3.2.8 Attitude towards FGM

There are different attitudes and perceptions of FGM among girls and the community as a whole on why the practice continues to be conducted and why the community still encourages girls to go through it. The following attitudes have been captured during the research:

- Girls who have undergone FGM have a higher chance of getting married. Immediately after FGM boys start coming to the house asking for the girl's hand in marriage.
- FGM is a guarantee of marriage because men desire to marry a woman who has undergone FGM.
- Normally one gets a husband within the two years before the next FGM ceremony. If not the community feels that you have bad luck. If you are not circumcised, it is seen as the reason why the girl does not marry, as it is not considered you should be anyway.
- For instance: One man had asked her hand in marriage and she had said she wanted to finish her schooling. The man laughed at her and told her no one will marry her as she is not circumcised and that he was doing her a favour in asking to marry her.

For those who have not gone through FGM and are married, they still have to face problems with their in-laws and even friends. This case was explained by one girl that;

"...my ex husband friends used to laugh at him as I was not circumcised. Even my in-laws used to call me 'msagani', making my relationship with my ex husband difficult. I used to cry a lot and would go back home and tell my father about it who used to say that I should blame my mother for it as she was the one who refused for me to go through FGM, as she is from another tribe which does not practise FGM".

It is interesting to note that escaping FGM before marriage doesn't guarantee the girl has to undergo it after marriage. As was portrayed by one respondent:

"...most people prefer to get married to girls who are mutilated. Even if they marry someone who has not gone through FGM, they would insist the girl joins the next ceremony. I was constantly insulted and discriminated against by my in-law because I had not gone through FGM s. Because of the problems I was facing I approached a traditional birth attendant, so that she can cut me to do away with the problems. After going through it my father in law and my husband's relatives were very happy and even slaughtered a cow in my honour".

3.2.9 Consequences of FGM

FGM has a number of consequences to the girl, both physically, psychologically and socially. In capturing the effects from the girls themselves, some express the effects overtly. A good example is one girl who stated that;

"...the only difference is the cutting. There is no pain during the menstrual periods. The only pain is when they cut you and when they wash you after the cutting. Aunties come and check if they have cut you properly before they wash you and if not they can even cut you properly themselves".

Another girl who learned from her friend's experiences said that;

"I refused to go through FGM because I knew other friends who were mutilated and had bled heavily and one had died, so I was scared that if I went through the ritual I might die and dreaded the fact that the bodies of those who die during FGM are just thrown away".

Complications during delivery and heavy bleeding become part and parcel of the FGM. As one girl child explained;

"...the effects include heavy bleeding and disease. For the bleeding they are given local medicine to clot the blood and if this fails they call doctors to the home and pay them for an injection of medicine to reduce the pain and help the blood to clot. There is also great tear during delivery and if one has gone through FGM the tears happen on both sides".

Although talking about FGM sometimes is very difficult, the effects cannot be hidden. One peer research respondent asserts;

"Some friends who have undergone FGM do not talk much about it. My sister in-law had gone through it before when they used to remove the whole part (FGM type 3); the remaining skin became like a corn (very dry skin) so she has had difficulties during delivery and having sex is very painful, she had told her".

It is evident that the interviewees agree that FGM is harmful to their health, especially during delivery, but also during the course of their marriage, as they tend to lose sexual desire. One thing to note here is that, FGM can have a long term effect on a girl child. It can disrupt the entire psychological, physical and mental development of the child. Therefore, it needs urgent intervention in order to secure girls' health.

3.2.10 "Ngariba"

This is the name of the FGM practitioners in Tarime district. They are much respected members of the community and even feared. One respondent confirmed;

"...the women who do the FGM are respected and feared. If one antagonises them they can hurt your daughter or even cut her badly during FGM".

It should be noted that the role of FGM practitioner is hereditary. If one's mother is a "ngariba", then one of the daughters can also be a "ngariba". Traditionally, before the FGM is done, there are some preparations. It was explained by a girl that;

"..The traditional leaders, "wazee wa mila" are the ones who plan the days and months for FGM to be done. They also pick the "ngariba" who will do the mutilation. Normally a village can have up to about 30 "ngariba's". The "ngariba" has to pay the "wazee wa mila" a part of the fee paid for cutting. "Ngariba's" cannot cut a girl without the permission of the "wazee wa mila" as the "wazee wa mila" feel that FGM is their business. There are different fees charged for FGM. A girl is mutilated for a fee of 3,000 shillings while a boy for 5,000 shillings".

The "wazee wa mila" are very important people and have great influence in all issues that happen at community level, including the FGM practice. Thus any intervention to end the practice needs to involve them.

3.3 Child marriage

Child marriage is a problem to many of the children in Tanzania especially those of rural areas. The same is reflected in Tarime district where children get married as explained in the study at a very young age.

3.3.1 Age for marriage

It was revealed that children get married off as early as 11 years of age in Tarime district. One girl narrates her story and says;

"...my father was at the forefront of arranging the marriage despite my young age of 11 years. This was immediately after undergoing FGM. I have had three children with my husband but one of them died. After she died my husband chased me away from the home because he wanted to marry another wife. I told my father-in-law about it and he told me because his son is rich he can marry another wife and I should go back to my parents and return his dowry. I tried staying with him for a while but faced so much hardship that I had to leave and go back home".

Another girl portrayed;

"...I did not go to school as my father saw it as no use to take a girl to school, so after FGM I was married off. My father had taken the dowry and thus forced me to get married at the age of 12 years. My mother agreed with me that I was small but she could not go against my father for fear of being beaten. I am still with my husband because of the children otherwise I would have left as life is really

difficult - lots of quarrels and he doesn't take care of the family so I have to farm and do small businesses to be able to survive with the children".

Sometimes, a girl is forced to get married in childhood so as to provide for her brother to get a dowry in order to marry. As one responded said;

"...I was still in school at the age of 14 years but I was married off as my brother wanted to marry and he did not have cows so they married me off so that they can get cows for him. I was the fourth wife. I have had five children with him but because of the troubles we were all facing we have all left him. My children and I are now making a living by doing small businesses so that we can survive".

Although some of the girls themselves agree to get married at a young age, most of them are faced with hard circumstances which have a great affect on them. As one girl highlights:

"...I got married at 14 years with my own consent because of the hardship at home. I have now 3 children and am still married. My husband does not provide for the family but at least he does not hit me".

3.3.2 Consent to marriage

Despite the fact that the law establishes the requirement of consent before a marriage is contracted, the same is not observed in practice. The research revealed that most marriages are contracted by the parents of the girl and particularly the father while there are marriages where girls consent by themselves to be married. One girl witnesses:

"In our Kurya community, previously a girl child was highly valued because she was considered as an investment as she was married off with huge "mahari" like 30-50 cows. Thus a girl child had no say in refusing her parents' decision to get married. Also, a girl child could not make decisions on who she should get married to; instead fathers would choose husbands for their daughters".

Additionally, another respondent said;

"...there are two sides that contribute to this: parents and the girls themselves. Parents make the decision for their daughters to get married, since they are faced with a number of challenges, like shortage of money to fulfil the daily basic needs of their family, like food, clothes and shelter. Alternatively, they force their daughters to get married so that they can get money. Sometimes girls decide to get marriage due to the poor life that they are living and the belief that exists that marriage rescues them from the difficulties of life".

As indicated above, there are those girls who decide by themselves to get married due to the hardship they face at home. This however does not

guarantee that they will have a better life with their husbands. A good example was depicted by the girl who narrated that:

"...I was very happy to get married because I knew my husband before and I was the one who told my parents that I wanted to get married, but now I am not happy as life is difficult especially after getting my second child".

The consent of marriage also goes with the acceptance of bride price. Interestingly however, frequently girls are not aware that a bride price has already been paid for them. This was affirmed by a girl who said;

"I was not aware of my marriage arrangement. My father and one of my uncles received the bride price and arranged the marriage. I got to know it when the man came home and my father and my uncle told me that the man you see here has paid the bride price, therefore this is your husband (my husband)".

The research revealed that arranged marriages are commonly practiced in the district and the father plays great roles. A certain girl said;

"My father had agreed to my marriage with the father of my husband. Normally if the marriage is agreed by both parties they would make a ceremony. But for me, I was forced into it. I had managed to escape not to be mutilated by running away to my grandmothers, but for the marriage my father and uncles were insistent and my father had intimidated and threatened to kill me if I tried to do the same thing and escape".

Although these are a minority of cases, it was also learnt that parents play an important role in the success of their children's marriages especially if the girl is married at a young age, as portrayed by one girl:

"...If a forced marriage lasts longer there must be assistance from the parents especially parents of the girl. For instance myself I am married and I have a happy marriage. This does not mean that my husband provides everything needed in the family but my mother comes to my house and when she comes she must bring something for me or for my family".

3.3.3 Education and child marriage

The research revealed that there is little emphasis given to the education of girls in Tarime district. Most men consider that it is better to educate boys and can even go to the extent of selling their cows to get fees for their education. One respondent said;

"...education is not given priority; especially girls are not taken to school compared to boys. Parents say that when you educate a girl child she will get married to another family therefore there is no advantage of educating women".

Significantly, the research revealed the positive role of parents in the case of children who receive education. It was acknowledged by one girl that;

"...parents cannot force an educated girl to get married because parents know that educated girls know how to argue about their rights, for instance the right to education".

In Tarime district, the majority of the girls get married after attaining primary education up to standard seven. However the situation is different for those girls who do not go to school. In their case, they get married without education, as long as they have undergone FGM.

In addition, it was revealed that if the girls do not pass and get themselves into a government secondary school they will be married off. This was explained by those interviewed; when a standard seven leaver gets married to a man who later goes to school, the husband tends to abandon the first wife and marry another educated girl like him. Therefore, education has a great role in either facilitating or avoiding child marriage.

3.3.4 Attitude toward marriage

Society considers marriage as a union that is meant to last forever, although the interviewees pointed out this is not the case for most child marriages. It was explained that child marriages tends to break down due to the problems faced. One girl explained;

"...most girls married at a young age get divorced and return back to their homes. You may find some parents are too harsh and they can run away and roam in towns doing prostitution to meet basic needs. Some stay at their parents and when they get another man they get married to try their luck. The big percentage remembered the beating and humiliation they faced during their previous marriage and get discouraged to get married at all".

The research revealed that society's perception is that girls once married cannot go back home to their parents, despite the hardship faced. Normally their families are reluctant to return the bride price thus they are forced to remain in abusive marriages. This was evidenced by one girl

"...it depends on the family, as some families allow the girls to stay with them and even let them go to school. While some chase them out and even return them to their husbands".

In addition, due to the problems faced by the girls most of them rarely agree to be married again. While others either marry older men and even to "nyumba ntobu" (marrying older women), in order that they can get out of their family homes. When the girls return home, their lives are very difficult and they are seen as a burden to the family and less important.

3.3.5 Power relations in marriage

Married life for the girl in a child marriage is hard as she cannot make decisions on issues that concern her life and or that of her children. The research revealed that there is contradiction within the relationship, where child wives are dependent on their husbands, but at times have to make independent decisions for the good of the family. This contradictory relationship tends to lead to violence, as when the wife makes an independent decision that does not please her husband. One interviewee gave an example which she came across:

“A woman who was selling goods in her small shop without the support of her husband: her legs were cut off because she refused to give some of the money she made to her husband. The husband used to ask for money and go drinking”.

Although most men do not provide an income for their wives and family after marriage, they have greater authority within the marriage. A girl in the research commented:

“...women do not get essential needs from their husbands. The situation is bad here at the village because women have to work and make their money for their essential needs so as to maintain her children and husband”.

Those interviewed suggested the best way to support the girls in child marriages is by involving the girl's family and relatives. This can ensure that husbands do not intervene in the girls' business and also enable her to get financial stability to maintain her children and herself.

3.3.6 Sexual relations and child marriage

Child marriage contributes to unequal sexual relation between husbands and wives, as does lack of knowledge of sexual and reproductive health. Those interviewed gave their personal experiences on how this contributed to stress and marital rape. A child mother said:

“...I had no information about marriage but when I got married I thought that I will try. It was very difficult especially when sleeping with my husband and it took time for me to get used to it. I realized later that there was a problem during sex as a result of FGM as I was not enjoying sex with my husband. I heard from my friends who were not circumcised that they really enjoyed sex, but I did not have any such feeling”.

Showing lack of knowledge on sexual and reproductive health, another girl revealed;

“...before marriage I had no information or knowledge on marriage and sex. I had also not known any man before in that way. The first day after the wedding I refused my husband, I told him I was still young. He told me, you should ask your

uncle who married you off. Then he forced himself on me and beating me when I tried to push him away. During the sex I felt pain on penetration and also after finishing, I felt sick even wanted to go to the hospital as I felt the pain on my back, stomach and the calf. But he refused and said he had no money and that I should ask my uncle to give me the money”.

There were differences in responses on sexual relations, as one girl explained that;

“...some days I enjoyed sex more than others. It usually depended on the day and how my husband approached me. Sometimes he was rough but others he was good”.

Parents and relatives give the girls very little essential information, although they are involved in the preparation and arrangement of their marriages. Girls do not know what to expect from their marriage and relationship with their husbands. As one girl sadly explained:

“...I thought that the husband would be like a brother who would help me...”

The effects of marriage on child brides are evident from this testimony. They do not have equality in negotiating sexual relations nor do they have control over their bodies. It was explained that those who get divorced remain single for a long time, because of what they experienced in their previous marriages. Thus child marriage distorts their whole life.

3.3.7 Violence and child marriage

Beating of women is common in Tarime district. It was found that the Kurya women used to believe that if they are not beaten they are not loved. To some extent, this has changed as women no longer think so, but the men have not changed and still beat them. Beating is a continuous cycle, as it happens between spouses, sometimes a brother also beats his sisters if they do not do house work or they do something wrong. Some of the girls acknowledged;

“...battering of girls is a normal thing, a father beats the mother, and the brothers will see this and will feel this is the normal thing....the behaviour makes women scared of their husbands, children scared of their fathers and because of this fear the woman is unable to live well with herself and even neighbours”.

This trend of violence still continues and is reflected in the testimonies of those interviewed. A good example can be drawn from the girl who said;

“...I got married when I was 15 with my consent and I have one child. My husband beats me most of the days and at times he throws me out of the house. I would go back to my parent’s home. My parents would send me back to him as they can’t pay back for the bride price”.

Another girl holds that;

“...I got married after class 7 with my consent to a man I had known for a while. The man is an Adventist. He does not beat me but one day he did. After that, he asked his friends to speak to me and apologised that it was his fault and he promised not to beat me again. He has not since then”.

These testimonies show the situation which girl children face in their marriage. Beating is their daily life, particularly if they fail to fulfil their responsibilities. Importantly, this has a significant impact on the girls' lives. Community involvement needs to be enlisted to change perceptions.

3.3.8 Bride price and child marriage

The bride price is what is given to the parents of the girl as a way of thanking the parents and her relatives for taking care of the girl. It was revealed as one of the reasons that girls suffer much in their marriages. It was explained that it is the cause of the violence and even the harassment they face from their husband's family and relatives. In explaining bride price, one girl highlights;

“...I think the reason that men are cruel to their wives is because some of them pay so many cows as dowry. So the men feel that the woman deserves everything she gets. Also it is because when a girl gets married the parents tell her that she should not come back and that whatever problem she faces she should talk it over with her husband. Thus the husband beats her because he knows she doesn't have any place to go”.

Another girl underscores this:

“...I got married at 14 years after being forced by my father because he wanted to get some cows. The man who married me paid 8 cows. But I no longer live with my husband because he used to beat me a lot. So I chose to go back home and my mother supported me to stay but my father insisted that I should return to my husband because he did not want to return the cows he got as my dowry”.

The research identified that bride price is the cause of many problems, whether it is paid or not. Men who do not pay bride price tend not to value their wives. Meanwhile, the more the bride price the more value woman has to the man. If there is no bride price men insult and beat their wives as was reflected;

“...If bride price is not paid men feel they got the girl for free. Normally the value of the wife is attached to the number of cows paid as bride price. If a man has more than one wife, they would always compare the wives and the value of the women would be on the number of cows given”.

The other girl said;

"...I was 15 years and fell pregnant after the completion of standard seven. So as not to shame my parents, I went to live with the man who impregnated me who later married me. But shortly after, he started beating me telling me I came by myself as he did not pay for a bride price for me. So we later had to separate and I thus returned to my parents place".

Another child girl explained the cause for her battering;

"...one day I went into a hut where people pay to watch video shows. There I met this man who later I started living with as my husband. The man has now started beating me saying I am a prostitute as he found me in the television hut and he did not pay anything for me..."

Bride price plays a great role in perpetuating violence to girl children. This shows that there is a need to raise the awareness of parents. Although it has not been established whether the bride price relieves the family from poverty, the reality is that most parents, once they have received the bride price, feared to give it back, especially in the case of a divorce, because they find they have nothing to give back.

3.3.9 Reasons for child marriage

According to the research, poverty was explained to be the main cause of child marriages in the community. This is due to the fact that parents consider their daughters as a source of wealth and thus decide to marry them off so as to get cows. One respondent highlighted;

"...the problem of child marriages is mostly people's perception of poverty and the traditional belief that girls are meant to bring wealth. A girl of 12 years can marry a man of 30 years, and the parents do not interfere as the parents just want the bride price".

In addition, peer pressure was highlighted as other reasons why they entered into child marriage. As a girl explained;

"...I got married because my best friend had gotten married before me and I wished to have my own baby. I thus consented to get married".

It was evident that, some of the people at the community seem to recognise the issue of child marriage and reasons for it. This is why they suggested the need for advocacy and awareness raising for the people to recognise its effects and end the practice.

3.3.10 Husband and wife relationships

In Tarime, women don't express their views and have little role in decision making for the family, especially if they are much younger than their husbands.

The research revealed that women are considered to be for reproduction and also as providers for the family. They maintain the home, caring for the husband and the children. Marriages thus overload the young wives.

This was explained by an interviewee;

"After men marry they do not do anything. They leave all the work to their wives. All they want is the woman to have a child each year but they do not do anything to feed, educate or clothe those children. They leave everything to the woman".

3.3.11 Roles and responsibilities of husband and wife

As was explained earlier, the responsibilities of husbands and wives are unequal. Women are the bread winners and home makers in the community, while men spent most of their time socialising. For that reason it was found that young married girls find it hard to cope with all the work, as they still are children. As one girl said;

"...the main reason is girls are married without knowing the meaning of marriage. You may find that the married girl is a child; she cannot fulfil her responsibilities and she finds it a burden and decides to go back home. Children suffer because they do not know how to handle a husband, for example a girl of 12 years can get married to a man who is much older than her and who already has another wife thus the girl ends up being harassed".

Most of the time men in the marriage do not work nor do they bring any income into the family apart from going to the farm during the preparation of the farms. As a result the women are over worked. The following testimonies reflected this reality;

"...I was very happy to get married but now I am not, because life is very difficult now as I have to do the entire house work. I have to bring income into the family, feed and clothe the kids. While my husband just goes to his friends and talks most of the days and at times goes to the mine and does odd jobs to bring income but not always. Most of the men in my village are small miners (illegal mining). When the security is tight at the mining site they just sit and drink".

Another respondent said;

"...the work of women includes doing house work, cooking, and washing, taking care of the family and going to the farm, grazing and feeding cows. Here in Tarime women do all the work from morning to evening, as such women have no time to rest during the day. She has to make sure there is food because if she does not then the man becomes quarrelsome".

The above evidence shows that there is inequality in the roles and responsibilities between husbands and the wives. And this has its roots from tradition and customs which define the roles to be performed by a husband and wife. There is a need to change the situation.

3.3.12 Relationship with the in-laws

According to most traditions and customs in Africa, in-laws are very important in the strength and even the breaking of marriages. Tarime district is no exception. Most of the young married couples tend to relate closely to the parents and relatives on the husband sides. Sometimes they live with them for the first years of the marriage and sometimes permanently. Girls married at very early age face a lot of interference from their husbands' relatives due to their immaturity and inexperience that has an impact on their marriage life.

In-laws can be a positive benefit in child marriage by assisting the young wife and mediating with the husband when things go wrong. On the other hand they can also make things worse by meddling in the affairs of the family and reporting to the husband their dissatisfaction with the wife, so making her life even harder.

"...my husband used to always quarrel and I would go to my husband's sister to complain. She would then talk with him and I would return back to my husband. Then things started getting worse as he began hitting me. It was then when I decided to leave him".

3.3.12 Polygamy

In Tanzania the civil and traditional marriages are potentially polygamous according to the law of marriage. However, polygamous marriages were deemed to be more difficult for young wives and were not perceived by those interviewed as an ideal marriage. As one girl describes;

"...men here are cruel to women because they have more than one wife and give a lot of dowry for each woman- that is why they are cruel and they end beating, harassing and letting them to do all the hard work".

In addition to the above, another respondent said;

"A woman, who was married to a traditional healer in Bunchari for a number of years, explained her ordeal when her husband recently decided to marry another woman as a second wife. This was a lady who the husband was treating and was staying at their house. The woman used to take care of the lady while she was sick. Then the husband decided to marry her without her consent. Now she said her life is very difficult as the man no longer listens to her nor respects her".

The research revealed that, men like to marry many wives as prestige and the perception that he will have many kids as a way of "kukuza mji". Also

there are other men who own lots of cows and thus like to marry many women so that they can take care of the cows.

3.3.13 “Nyumba ntobu”

“Nyumba ntobu” is a Kurya tradition to guarantee the succession and continuation of a clan’s name. This is done by old women who have wealth but no children. Such women pay the bride price for a girl whom she will consider as her wife. The girl will then have to either pick a relative of the woman or any man to impregnate her. The child born of such marriage is the child of the old woman who paid dowry for the girl. This thus guarantees the continuity of the woman’s family line and denies both the girl and the man who impregnates her any right over the child. Similar cases occur for a woman who has only girls. She then marries a girl who can give birth to boys. This is known as “Nyumba mboke”. A girl narrates her story;

“I was married at 13 years and have two children. The woman who married me paid 12 cows as my pride price. She chose me at the FGM dance and there was a wedding done where a man stood as a groom. Despite that, the older woman beats me and I cannot leave since if I do I have to leave my children with her. Also if I leave, my parents have to return the bride price which they do not have. Thus I persevere with the situation”.

Another girl describes the situation of “Nyumba Ntobu” and “Nyumba mboke”. She said that;

“...I got married to a “nyumba ntobu” at 13 years and have 3 children. I am still married to the old woman who paid 18 cows as the bride price. The woman who married me has died and her husband is very old. If he dies I will inherit everything as I am the only woman in the family. But if you are married to a “nyumba mboke” and you have only girls, the relatives will chase away the wife and keep the children. If one has been chased she cannot go back to her parents because if you are married they say that you are no longer part of their family. Even the parents of those who were married by men accept them back when they are chased off from their husbands’ place, while others do not. It is worse for “nyumba ntobu” it is the tradition that one is not accepted back home”.

The women who marry in such marriages pay more cows as a bride price than ordinary men marrying girls. This is partly because the women want to be known in the village and to get many children from the wives. This practice therefore, makes it very difficult for the girls to leave as the parents are unable to return the bride price.

3.3.14 Pregnancy

Pregnant women need extra care and support to enable them to have good health and deliver a healthier baby. Unfortunately pregnant young

wives involved in the research reported lack of such care. This was explained vividly, as one girl said;

"...when a girl is pregnant her life becomes more difficult as in my case I was used to work the usual routine until the last minute of delivery with my mother in-law. When I was working in a sorghum farm I had to bend down so I used to get a back ache but the mother in-law used not to believe me. So on the day I had my labour pains I had to send a message to my mother who on the next day took me to hospital and I delivered straight away".

Some of the situations which a pregnant young woman experiences are very tragic. One girl narrates her experience;

"...I was pregnant with my first child and that day I had taken the cows to feed and I started labour pains. So I decided to take the cows back home and then go to the hospital. When I got home, I rested for a while for I felt very uncomfortable. As I was resting my husband sent one of his brother's younger sons to ask me to prepare some water for him so he can take a bath. Because I was not feeling so well I asked the boy to tell him to wait a bit as I have started labour pains. After a while he came and asked why I was ignoring him as he has asked me to prepare some water for him and I am still sitting down! Then I told him that I have started labour pains and that I was trying to get some rest before going to the hospital and was feeling bad. As I was getting up he held me and pulled me to his side and stabbed me with a knife in my chest [the wound was under the clavicle]. I screamed and called my husband's uncle to come and he came and removed the knife from my chest. As soon as he did it I started bleeding, as well as the labour pains got worse so we went immediately to hospital".

The research revealed that pregnant girl children, despite their condition do not get any special treatment, but rather, they are treated with the same degree of cruelty and expected to do the same amount of hard work. This affects their pregnancy and some face complications.

3.3.15 Delivery

It is dangerous for children to deliver at a young age as their bodies are not well developed to handle the child-bearing process. However there are those who have had a good delivery with the assistance of parents. The same cannot be said for the majority of girl children who cannot make decisions on where they deliver their babies and have to trust the elders to make that decision for them. This was evidenced by one girl who said that;

"...I delivered in the hospital and my mother told me to go to the clinic for follow up and have antenatal care. I had a normal delivery. I asked my mother about what will happen during giving birth and my mother explained that I will be able to tolerate the pain because I am a woman and that the nurses will explain the whole process".

Another girl explained;

"...I was supported by my friend who was also married at a young age. She informed me on how I would feel and that I should follow up at the clinic. So when it came to delivery I knew what to expect. When I had labour pains I went to the hospital, but my friend had not told me that I should take some things such as baby's diapers, some cloths for the baby. I also did not know that I had to be admitted first so I went straight to the labour room, where I was told I was not ready and had to stay and relax, do exercises. Another friend came and donated a kanga to cover the baby when it came as I had nothing to cover him".

There are also those who explained their tragic experiences. For example a girl told the researcher that;

"...I had problems during delivery because I had gone through FGM so during delivery I got another wound and scarring, as I had a tear that did not heal until after two months. Those who have gone through FGM face problems such as lots of bleeding and fistula. They also take a long time to recover after delivery and by so doing they end up bleeding again. There are those who 3 days after delivery have to go to farm, fetch water and start working. As there are no people to take care of them, she cannot fully recover before starting to work".

The research highlighted that, due to their ages some of the girls have no control on where they are to deliver and the elder women around them end up making the decisions for them. As a respondent sadly explained her story;

"...I use to get very sick when I was pregnant and I was advised to deliver in the hospital but when I went into labour I was taken to a traditional birth attendant (TBA) by my mother in law. As a result I had prolonged labour and I was unable to deliver and was taken to the hospital and found the baby had died as a result".

Another child girl said;

"...during my pregnancy I used to get malaria and back pains and during clinic the nurses advised for me to deliver at the hospital. When the time came for delivery my husband and mother in law took her to the TBA, who checked everything and gave me some herbs so that the labour pain can start and I had pains from Wednesday till Friday that is when I gave birth. The baby was very weak but the TBA said I can go back home. When I did I had severe pain that did not stop so I went to the hospital where they told me that I had tear during delivery and I needed some stitching. After the stitches at the hospital the pain stopped".

Delivery experienced by girl children was frequently problematic, as the following account illustrates:

"...my grandmother is a traditional birth attendant and had delivered my sister's baby. As a result my sister had prolonged labour and had suffered a lot. She even had infections, because she did not clean her very well. So I wanted to deliver in the hospital instead to make sure I delivered safely. I had to go early to the hospital before my grandmother realised that I was going through labour pain as she would have insisted on delivering the baby".

She concluded;

"...I couldn't sustain labour pains and my legs touched the baby and she died..."

Child marriages lead too many problems during delivery as the girl's bodies cannot sustain labour pains. Also because of the pain they are unable to follow the nurses' instructions properly, thus leading to Obstetric Fistula or the death of both the mother and baby during delivery.

3.3.16 Child motherhood

Children married at a young age are pressurized to conceive as soon as possible by the husband and the in-laws. Often they fail to do so as their body is not fully developed. This may lead to divorce. One girl describes the story of her friend;

"...one girl of 15 years of age got married at 14 years. She had one child who died at 9 months When the child died the girl was not able to conceive the following yea rand as a result the husband left her".

The situation is worse when the child fails to conceive, as it was declared that;

"...sometimes if a girl does not conceive her husband and his relatives may chase her away from the home, divorce her or the husband can decide to marry another wife".

The research revealed that, lack of children in marriages leads to child wives being insecure since children are seen as security in such marriages. Additionally, having children means girls have to maintain those children and their husbands. Unfortunately, girls are often unable to do so because of their age and lack of maturity, which leads to violence and harassment in their marriages. One girl said;

"All the men want is the woman to have a child each year but they do not do anything to feed educate or clothe those children - they leave everything to the woman. If a girl is unable to maintain the children the husband will beat her, but other men chase their wives from the home and tell them that they should go back to their parents and learn how to live with their husbands and take on the responsibilities of a family. The wife has the responsibilities for taking care of the

family. She at times fails to take care of the family properly because she is young and even at times she cannot explain to the doctor what her child is suffering from when she takes him/her to the hospital”.

It was very sad noticing that;

“...child mothers suffer a lot as they are unable to know how to take care of their children. They cannot feed them properly and don’t know when their children are sick or not and as a result children can die”.

However, the research notices that, with support from the relatives and older women there are those girl children who get to enjoy being mothers. It was evident that there is a need for support systems from the community to enable the child mother to take care of her children, provide for them and also maintain her home and husband. As one girl said;

“...it is not a problem raising children because I am working and can get money to support them”.

To the other girl, the situation is different. She said;

“...It feels good being a mother and I love my child. It becomes hard to raise him only when he gets sick and I do not have money to take him to the hospital”.

The other girl said;

“...it is normal having a child. I feel good raising her despite the difficulties. I am lucky now that I no longer stay with my husband as I am staying with my brother and my sister-in-law helps by giving me advice and my brother also supports me financially. I also work hard at home, so they give me some money which helps me to buy clothes for the child”.

The research revealed that, the most difficult thing in raising children is lack of financial security by the child mother’s particularly single mothers. This contributes in their failure to provide adequate clothing, medication and proper nutrition for the child thus affecting the child and the mother’s wellbeing.

3.3.17 Knowledge of the law

The law in Tanzania is one of the major hurdles in ending child marriage as it allows girls from as early as fourteen years to get married. However there are laws that provide against violence and the problems being faced in marriages. Girls in such marriages can use such laws to enforce their rights and protect themselves against such violence. However, it was explained by those interviewed that there are problems in enforcing such rights, as described;

“Girls get problems in their marriages but they feel ashamed to report their husbands to the authorities because amongst Kurya’s a man is everything. There

are those who go to the community welfare officers and speak with them and they will try to help them out. Most of those who do so are mainly from the Sukuma tribe from Mwanza region.

But showing the difficulties in the practicality of following up violence, one girl said that;

"...if you are battered you cannot report to the police because you have nowhere to go and if you report your husband and he gets to know of it, he can even kill you".

The law goes further to provide for the rights of the woman when divorced, such as the rights for maintenance of the woman and the children born in marriage and the division of matrimonial assets. The procedure for divorce is known by the community, but the process was usually not followed. The research identified that;

"...the woman is not allowed to get anything apart from her clothes when she leaves her husband's home. It is only when they go through a legal divorce then she can get some of the things and the court can order joint custody of the children".

Unfortunately, despite such knowledge, it was revealed that the court proceedings take a long time and also require one to have money in order to pursue them. Most courts are distant and also one has to finance witnesses for evidence and require a lot of follow up. The issue of corruption in the court system was another obstacle to justice as those who have money and wealth can easily bribe officials, leading to one losing his or her rights.

3. 4 Broader Issues

3. 4.1 Women's rights

Radios and televisions are a very good means of information to communities. Those interviewed acknowledged that they listened to women's rights' issues mostly from the radio and television. For example, most of them are informed on the rights of women to own land as a basic right, as was explained by the Professor Issa Shivji Land Commission in the nation-wide survey done during the enactment of the Land laws of 1999. Those interviewed pointed out the issues of women's rights as linked to the brutality and violence that faces women. They have a certain perception on rights, for instance;

"...a right is to be free and not to be harassed by your husband. Girls have the right to protection against abuse but what amazes me is in Musoma district and Tarime district girls do not have such rights".

Another girl explained that;

"...people speak about human rights and women's rights but for me this is not the reality. Women and men are not equal in Tarime as everyone should be free, but men beat women and especially their wives".

In addition to the use of mass media as a means of raising awareness on women's rights, the interviewees also get information from locally based organisations, government officials and institutions. As one girl commented;

"...some women know of their rights while others do not, but one can get information from the courts. Though at times when they follow the courts' advice and report to the police, especially on issues of battering, they will tell them that they should go back to the husband and try to solve their problems at home".

Additionally;

"...the government helps if you want to leave your husband because he is cruel to you. One can go to court, explain the situation and the court can rule that your husband should stay away from you. Then the woman is free to live her life in peace".

However, their knowledge of the laws and procedures are meaningless when the young women have to face reality. Therefore, most of them opt for legal redress as a last resort against such treatment. According to Kurya tradition the community feels that men are not to be taken to the police or to court and a woman who does so is shunned by the community and sometimes even her whole family. One's sisters can even end up not being married as the community says *"don't marry from that family they take their husbands to the police"*. It is considered as a taboo to do so. This ensures many women suffer in silence. Even others have been murdered by their husbands' because of the silence and lack of action being taken against such treatment.

3.4.2 Awareness on sexual and reproductive health

Public awareness on reproductive health and rights is relatively poor in Tanzania. Most of the time such information is made available to pregnant women when they go for pre natal and post natal clinic. For those who do not, they have no direct access to such information. Thus most of those interviewed only refer the use of condoms to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS rather than a means to prevent sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies.

As one girl declared;

"...first time I had sex I did not use any protection, but after that I used the calendar as a way of family planning. Other girls use condoms to avoid HIV/AIDS".

Another girl shared her experience;

"...3 men had wanted to sleep with me but only one of them accepted to go for a HIV/AIDS test after I asked him to. The others tried to persuade me not to bother with the test but I refused to sleep with them".

Those interviewed identified the fact that when married to an older man the girls have no say on reproduction and cannot voice their concerns on the use of contraception as a means of family planning and controlling unwanted pregnancies. It was evidenced that;

"Those girls who are married to a much older man do not know the previous life of that man. Often the older men have had a number of sexual partners. Thus some end up getting sexual transmitted diseases such as gonorrhoea and even HIV/AIDS. Child marriage is a source of HIV infection as the girl is a child and she cannot take precautions. She also affected psychologically because you find a girl of 14 years having sex with a 40 year old man".

The research identified the knowledge gap on sexual and reproductive health information to the girl child. Despite being in the unsafe position of getting married while a child, girls don't have enough information. Thus there is a need to spread adequate information on sexual and reproductive health in order to create a sense of self awareness for self protection.

3.4.3 Cohabitation and sexual activeness

Girls become sexually active at a very young age leading to unwanted pregnancies and loss of their education opportunities. Unwanted pregnancies are enabled for various reasons, including lack of adequate enforcement of the SOSPA of 1998 and contrary to the law against impregnating school girls. In Tarime district, the research revealed that cohabitation and sexual activity plays a significant role in pregnancies and school dropouts. As one girl explain;

"...I met my husband when I was in standard 7 and I got pregnant. He took me as his wife. I was able to finish my standard seven because the teachers did not know that I was pregnant. Then I miscarried, I just reported to school that I was sick and when I recovered I went back to school again. But I was already married so I finished my standard seven exams and passed to continue with secondary school. My husband allowed me to study up to form four. But I was unable to complete all the exams as the environment for studying was not good. He used to beat me often".

The other girl has more or less the same story;

"She was a student in form one and had a sister who was married. The sister always told her about the friend of her husband who was selling kerosene and that he is well off and lives in Arusha and that he could be an ideal husband for her. So one day when she was returning home from school, her sister, her husband and

her future husband all went by bus to the man's home. It got dark and she was afraid to return home and on what she would tell her parents. So her sister offered to go back home and tell their parents that she was married and that they should go to her new home to see her and her husband and claim her bride price. So the mother sent her brother to go and see where she lives, and he asked for 9 cows as her bride price from the man who paid it and now they are still married and living in Tarime district".

Cohabitation sometimes affects the girl side, as one girl explained;

"I was living with a man for two years from when I was 14 years and we have a child together. When my father was killed by robbers my mother died of the shock as a result. Then the man whom I was living with brought my bride price to my uncle. According to Kurya traditions if the father of the woman you are living with or married dies and you haven't paid all the bride price the man is suppose to pay the bride price immediately to the relatives as its considered part of the estate of the man. Thus when he did so my uncles refused and said my mother's last wish was for me to go back and live with my brothers and sisters at home. So I left my husband and took my child to live with my siblings. Now the husband only comes to visits his child now and he has no more relations with me".

The research identified that, the issue of cohabitation and being sexually active in school children is at times very challenging to parents despite their efforts, especially if the girl chooses not to continue with her education and runs off with the man. During the research we came across a case where;

A 15 years old girl who was in school ran away to live with a man. Her family did not know where she was. They started looking for her. When they found her, they took her to continue with her schooling but she was already pregnant. The family decided she should abort the baby so that she can continue with her studies. Despite that, she still ran away to live with the man again as she did not want to continue with school. So the family married her off to the man.

Girls who cohabit with men at a young age have no idea that what they are in is a marriage. Since they start cohabiting at a very young age they tend to associate themselves with men. That is why when the man leaves they are unable to continue living by themselves. Thus despite the problems they faced in their previous relationships they end up cohabiting with another man and even having kids with other men repeating the same violent cycle.

This indicates that increased education on confidence building as well as on their sexual reproductive health and right is very crucial.

3.4.4 Pregnancy out of marriage

Pregnancy out of wedlock is one of the contributory factors in child marriages. This is due to the society's perception of pregnancy, parents' outlook on the girl who is pregnant and the perception of the girl herself on the situation she is in. Despite that, girls still get pregnant out of wedlock. As was evidenced by girls in the research;

"...in the community it is considered shameful to get pregnant without marriage. I was ashamed when I was pregnant and wanted to get married to any man who was willing to marry me because of my condition. That was not possible as I had to take care of my sick mother..."

The consequences of marriage out of wedlock are many, including being out cast. For example;

A 14 years girl got a baby at 13 years but the man refused to marry her as he denied he was the father of the child. Her family threw her out from the house because she was pregnant without marriage. She now works as a housekeeper so as to maintain her and her child and lives with the family she works for.

Another girl commented;

"...having a baby before marriage is unacceptable in the community, nowadays though teenage pregnancy is very tradition is changing because girls watch films and soap operas that affect their attitude and morals. They become easily tempted by men who provide them material things such as money and cloths".

Despite of that, the community still does not look lightly to pregnancy out of wedlock. That is why most of the girls who fall pregnant end up moving in with the man who impregnated them. One girl said;

"...girls who get pregnant out of wedlock bring shame to their families. It is a shame for an unmarried pregnant girl to remain at her parent's home. This leads to girls who pregnant at home having their brothers or fathers taking them to the prospective father of their baby".

Pregnancy out of wedlock is very detrimental to the girl child. She is forced into child marriage, thus denying her the chance of education. As a result, both the girl and her parents particularly the mother tries everything to enable the girl to continue with her education, including seeking an abortion.

Abortion in Tanzania is a criminal offence according to the Penal Code CAP 16 of the R.E 2002 and thus abortion is done secretly, leading to illegal and sometimes unsafe abortions which can result in health complications and even becomes life threatening to the girl. Some girls highlighted the environment they face during abortion, by saying;

"...they use dangerous methods in abortion such as taking drugs, drinking poisonous substances and inserting local instruments into the uterus. Sometimes they bribe doctors at the hospital...there are those who use local medicines so that the baby can die in the womb but this does not lead to a miscarriage, so they have to go to hospital for the doctors to remove the baby".

The research identified that girls have information on abortion in their areas. As one girl said;

"...abortion is common in Tarime district. Mostly the mother and daughter go to the hospital without letting the father know so that the girl can continue with school. Most people prefer to do it in hospital than with the traditional healers because there is a high chance of dying with the traditional healers".

Despite abortion out of wedlock being frowned upon by the entire community, the research revealed that those who get pregnant often ended up in forced marriages. Thus a forced marriage regardless of the age seems to be the primary solution to them. Therefore, this practice signifies the need to provide adequate information to the community on how to seek to prevent the problem, rather than cure it, a situation which is not practiced in the community.

3.4. 5. Testimonies from girls on delivery and cruelty

Delivery: Testimony 1

"My husband used to lock me in the house every morning when he goes to work. On the day when I started my labour pains, I thought it was a normal pain but they continued. I asked my neighbour through the window and she told me that I have started labour pains and I said that I will wait for my husband to come and open the door. When he arrived, I told him I have started labour pains and he said I should wait for the evening and went out again. He returned at 9.00pm and I reminded him that I was having labour pains and he said I should wait till morning. In the morning he went out and left me still locked me up in the house without taking me to the hospital. My waters broke and I screamed and called my neighbour, who told me that I would die if I do not go to the hospital, but I had no money and no way to go out of the house. So the neighbour brought some keys to try and open the door. She tried one of the key until finally the door opened. The neighbour then gave me money to go to the hospital. When I arrived at the hospital the whole process took 30 minutes. I was discharged after 2 days when I went home. I asked my husband to give me money that the neighbour had given me for the hospital and he refused saying it is not his business as I am the one who took the money".

Delivery: Testimony 2

"...I became pregnant when I was still in school. When my mother realised the situation, she advised me to abort the pregnancy so that I can continue with my studies. I was very scared that I would be in trouble if my father realises my

situation. So I agreed with my mother who took me to the hospital where the doctor accepted to conduct the abortion but he gave us an appointment to come after one week. I told my then boy friend about it and he told me that according to their clan rules if a girl aborts a baby from their clan the girl dies. I was very scared. One day before the appointment of the doctor I told my mother that I am going to visit my aunt and I will be back soon instead of visiting the aunt I went to my boy friend's place. I told him the full story and he said that we should run away to Musoma district immediately. When I was in Musoma district and 8 months pregnant my neighbours gave me some medicine and my labour pains started. They took me to the hospital and I stayed there for one week. The doctor told me to go back home because those were normal pains and not labour pain. After one month I started labour pain and went to hospital again. During the delivery process I saw the head of my baby. I was so scared and tighten my legs. The nurse helped me and pulled the baby out but the baby had already died. I really regret when I remember my child".

Cruelty: Testimony 1

"...when I got married my husband used to beat me because he used to give me many duties to do before he goes out and if he returns and finds me still working he beats me up in that I hasn't finished the work. I had no knowledge on marriage and when we went to the bedroom my husband beat me when I refused sex, and he forced himself onto me. During the sex it was painful and afterwards I had pains on my back and stomach. The husband brought me panadol tablets for the pain. I did not like sex because my husband was so demanding and wanted sex every day. I used to keep quiet because if the husband found out he would beat me again. I decided to go back home as I was always tired all the day working and when I goes back home my husband wanted to sleep with me. I was living far away from my in-laws. I had one friend, who is still with my husband they had a hard life and brings other women to her home, and he apologizes and the parents insist that she returns, she is also beaten by her husband frequently. My friend some advice and I told her to go back to her parents but for the friend her mother didn't want her to come back so I advised her to tolerate her husband and remain with him".

Cruelty: Testimony 2

“Her husband used to batter her very much. He used to live in Mwanza so she had to take care of all the house hold. The in laws used to complain a lot that she doesn’t do any job. So when her husband comes back he used to beat her. One day he came from Mwanza and started to beat her and told her that he is tired of her behaviour. She was unconscious so he was scared and runaway with the baby. Since then she is living with her family and never saw her husband and her baby for 1 year. Her baby will be 3 in July, being single: it was difficult to begin with but it is very difficult. She thinks a lot about her baby... but now she is getting over it. There is no means to get her baby back - may be the court may help her deciding”.

Cruelty: Testimony 3

“She got married at 15, has currently separated during the interioiew process. She has two children. She married willingly; she consented due to peer pressure. Her husband used to beat her up, and a few weeks ago he beat her up until she had a fracture of the bone of her leg. She returned back home to her parents and after recovery returned to her husband as her parents said they cannot pay the bride price (saying that this is our life, you are a woman and you have to be patient). When she was with her husband he started beating her again, and stayed for 3 months. She then decided that she has to go back home. Although her father is away so they are waiting for his decision and most probably will make her return back to her husband because of the issue of bride price”.

Cruelty: Testimony 4

“One incidence that occurred to her was that once he beat her and her eye was injured seriously to the extent that she was admitted to hospital to be treated. She had to report it, as at the hospital there is a pf3 (police form 3) which needs to be filled in before someone is treated and this is when someone comes to the hospital beaten. She had to fill the form in and she reported her husband. He was taken to prison and stayed for a few days, but because the police were corrupt he was bailed out by his brothers. At that time she was in the hospital and when she came out she found that he had already come out. Unfortunately her uncle did not have any money, thus in order to follow up the case, she went and worked in making bricks and selling them in order to pay fees for the case. In the end her uncle told her that because she has recovered and they don’t have money to cover the expenses for the case that it might be best if it is dropped”.

3.4.6 Young women’s aspirations

The young women involved in the research have many aspirations. Regardless of their varied situations, positions in society, illiteracy and literacy level, lack of exposure and different experiences in their young lives, the girls in child marriages don’t give up. They have a variety of aspirations.

It was evident that majority of the girls wished for the opportunity to go back to school and finish their education. They dreams of careers, such as;

- To be a prison guard just like her father who has passed away and there is no one who has taken after him in her family.
- To be a Magistrate so that she can make judgements against those who degrade girl children and eradicate child marriages.
- To be a community worker so as to provide information on the effects of child marriages. to the villages where information does not reach
- To be a tailor
- To be a nurse
- To be a successful business woman

It is very important to note that the secure and meaningful empowerment of girl children lies in the basis of appropriate education. This would lead to financial stability and independence, and guarantee noticeable changes in their lives, including reducing violence and cruelty. As one girl declared;

"...if I am educated I will forget everything, because I will get a good job and will find a good man. But if I remain as I am the whole cycle will occur again and I will have to marry a Kurya man and will be beaten".

Another girl explained her dream that;

"...if I have a daughter I want her to go to the University so that she will support herself and me..."

3.4.6 Their recommendations

There are a number of suggestions given by the interviewees, peer researchers and supervisors on what to do in eradicating child marriage problem in Tarime district. They propose:

- A school for girls whereby they could get training in different skills so that they continue schooling instead of getting married.
- A CBO to provide information on issues concerning women and girls that can be an avenue where women and girls come together to support each other in order to build women's confidence and to have open discussions on sexual and reproductive health issues.
- Setting up CDF branches in Tarime district to help victims of child marriages and address other children issues.
- Women and girls' groups or clubs to educate married children and those children who are at risk of being married. Members of the clubs should be of different classes, professions and different levels of education. For instance, if there is a member who is a nurse or doctor she can teach others. Alternatively trainers may be invited from outside the network.
- Income generating projects such as farming or poultry for the child mothers where they can get to work together and enable them to get income to support their families and children's.

- Awareness raising training to the influential members of the community and an emphasis on education for all.

It was evident that girls need support structures that would increase their security socially and economically. These suggestions should be used to support girl children in child marriages to address issues that affect them as reflected in this report. Thus, urgent efforts are required in effecting the stipulated suggestions in safeguarding their welfare.

4. Way forward, recommendations and Conclusion

4.1 Recommendations

I. Awareness raising and discussions with communities at all levels

There is a need for extra efforts in awareness raising and community mobilization and engagement as they are central in ending child marriages in Tarime district. Additionally, there is a need for the increased engagement of key stakeholders at both government and NGO level, including local informal organizations. This will require coordinated actions and a commitment to provide resources to support community consultations, information sharing and improved linkages with government institutions at the local level.

The research findings indicate the need to break the cycle of silence on the plight of women and girl children in Tarime district. This would be an important step in moving forward with community solutions on addressing issues around child marriages, violence and brutality to women. Issues that have been highlighted in the report which would benefit from a more open dialogue and discussions within the community include;

- The need to capture men's voices, especially those that counter the assumption that the bride price does not contribute to the value of a woman.
- Questioning the traditions and customs surrounding FGM
- Working with parents (both mothers and fathers) and grandparents of young girls who are making decisions about their daughters' FGM and marriage.
- Forming greater linkages with teachers and other service institutions to work with young people and parents in the community, so as to have an open dialogue on issues relating to FGM and child marriages.
- Coordination of government departments and institutions on pro-activeness on issues concerning FGM and child marriages such as police, District Council, Magistrates, Community Welfare Officers and local government leaders.

II. Advocacy and lobbying on change of law and policies

Establishing a coalition at national and regional level is needed to instil a political will to a change of law and policies concerning children's protection in Tanzania, in order to have meaningful programs on children's rights in the country. The following are some of the issues found in the research that need advocacy and change;

- The law on marriage to address the issue of the age of marriage which allows for the marriage of girl children.
- Enforcement of the law against FGM and allocation of resources to enable the police to follow up and investigate the perpetrators of FGM.
- Policy change to allow girl brides who have had children to go back to school so that they do not lose their chance at getting an education.
- Arresting parents who marry off their daughters at a young age or those who marry young girls. Those that are arrested would provide a deterrent and act as a warning to others.
- Enforcement of laws and punishments to those who impregnate children.

III. Service delivery

- Empowerment and confidence building trainings and provision of sustainable livelihood for the young women
- Providing Legal advice/services for the women affected by child marriage and domestic violence
- Assisting directly in some small projects initiated by girls and child marriage key players such as the Ngariba and Traditional leaders.
- Para health services

4.2. Way forward

This research has highlighted girls' voices and experiences in child marriages. It is evident that they have a unique experience in marriages and FGM practices. Based on the research findings, it seems that the situation needs urgent intervention in order to end child marriage and FGM practices in Tarime district and Tanzania at large. Because they have expectations and dreams for their future lives, girls were able to propose actions that could be effective in ending the practice and also in improving their welfare. Some of these activities will have a long term impact while others will have a short term impact. But the inclusion of all of them will consequently establish a new approach towards child marriage and FGM and reverse the situation in which the girls live in now. Thus the following needs to be done in order to end child marriage and FGM:

1. More grounded research replicated in other districts of Tanzania in order to concretize the data to inform policy makers at all levels and solicit the community to support all girl children who have been affected and/or are at risk of child marriage and FGM. This is

essential as it will depict the extent and magnitude of the problem in Tanzania (as a whole) and thus the efforts to end it all over the country will materialize.

2. Awareness raising on the effects of child marriage and the importance of community mobilization in ending child marriage. This is crucial because it targets the child marriage key players and other stakeholders, mainly from the government and NGO's, to establish coordinated action and demonstrate a commitment to providing resources and actions towards ending the problem. Thus it needs community consultations, information sharing and improved linkages with local government institutions in Tarime district. Furthermore, awareness raising should include preparation publishing and distribution of information, education and communication materials such as brochures, leaflets, newsletters, T-shirts, booklets and reports on child marriage, FGM, children rights and contradictory laws governing children rights in Tanzania to facilitate advocacy campaigns in Tarime district.
3. In order to break the cycle of silence on the plight of girls in Tarime district, it is very important to organise community dialogues to capture men's voices on bride price, violence against women; to question and debate the traditions and customs surrounding FGM and child marriage; dialogue with parents and other key decision makers at family levels on FGM and child marriage. Community dialogue is the best avenue for the discussion of harmful practices and to find community based alternatives (like alternatives for FGM and the importance of leaving their children to school). These actions will capture the grass-root views of the problem and throw up possible solutions from the community point of view. Furthermore dialogue and training for religious, local and traditional leaders is very important to supplement the general community dialogues.
4. Establishing effective and workable coalitions with teachers, other service delivery institutions. Coordinating government departments and institutions such as the police, district council, magistrates, community welfare officers, and local government leaders to work with young people, parents, and the community and to be proactive on issues concerning child marriage and FGM. The actions of such coalitions will consequently safeguard the best interests of the girl child, because currently she is the victim of a loose/weak cooperation between these important stakeholders.
5. Advocacy work at the district and national levels, to ensure the political will on changing the laws and policies concerning children's' protection in Tanzania; to address the law on marriage that provides for the marriage of children; enforcement of the law against FGM and allocation of resources (at the district level) to enable the police to undertake regular follow-up and to investigate

the perpetrators of FGM. This should include arresting parents who marry off their daughters at a young age or those men who marry young girls, or who impregnate school girls and the children. Additionally advocacy should target policy change to allow girl children who have had children to go back to school (to exercise the right to education). Advocacy work will include media advocacy on child marriage, FGM, children rights, and girls' empowerment. Media can reach more people, even outside the Tarime district, particularly those who will not be involved in the community consultative meetings and dialogues. Thus active programmes can be organised to allow more people to contribute and share their ideas and perceptions of the problem and ways to end it at community level.

6. Maintenance and strengthening of the community support structures such as Tarime Girls Network (TGN), child mothers, child widows and child brides' networks. The network will act as an avenue in which girls themselves can speak out freely and organise strategies for their welfare and be able to move forward the agenda. Additionally, community child marriage committees (CCMC's) should be maintained because they are the watchdog of child marriage and FGM in Tarime district. They oversee all cases of child marriage and FGM, they advise local authority in making by-laws on child marriage and FGM, they make regular follow-up and enforcement of the formed community by-laws, and other laws on FGM and child marriage; they raise community awareness on children's' rights particularly during the village meetings and other district related meetings. The CCMC's can respond rapidly to critical issues pertaining to child marriage and FGM in Tarime district, documenting testimonies and other lessons learnt in the course of ending child marriage. Finally they can receive, find, preserve and bring reliable information on the experience of married children to CDF and the child marriage network.
7. Empowering girls through direct training in various skills including life skills, livelihood skills, leadership and participation skills, communication skills, decision making skills, income generating skills, sexual and reproductive health skills, HIV/AIDS education, assertiveness skills, how to run and maintain their networks and clubs, advocacy and lobbying techniques, self capacity building skills and other skills which they will propose to suit their surroundings. In order to extend the training coverage in the district, some of the trainees should be prepared to train other girls who have been affected or at risk of being affected by child marriage. Basically the ToT's will work as role models to their peers in the empowerment training programmes at the district level.
8. Establishment of an office in Tarime district to ensure prompt action on matters pertaining to child marriage, FGM and gender

based violence. The presence of an office in the district will facilitate the close monitoring and follow-up of the work done by the child marriage network, the CCMC's, the girls network and other coalition networks at the district level. Channelling the information and coordination of the CDF works at the Tarime district will be relatively easier.

9. Legal advice/services. As we saw in the research report, socio-economic constraints impact on the girls in the realization of justice. Because of poverty, or the community traditions which are rooted in the perception that it is bad to send your relatives or husband to the police or courts, girls' ability to realize their rights are compromised. Therefore the establishment and maintenance of the paralegals in Tarime district is a necessity. It will provide legal aid, advice and protect child girls against FGM, child marriage, battering, and other kind of domestic gender based violence, which is a way of life for many of the married girls in Tarime district.
10. Poverty is a significant influence on marriage and FGM. Therefore there is a need to supplement training by income generating activities giving some direct assistance to small projects initiated by the girls and child marriage key players, such as Ngariba and Traditional leaders. Some of the girls for instance suggested the establishment of small gardens for flowers and vegetables which could be a source of income. Supported can be in the form of working tools such as harrows, hoes, wheelbarrow, forks, water canes, spades, seeds and important insecticides. This is important because, the income generated can be used to improve their lives within their groups and to sustain their clubs and networks in Tarime district. As they usually meet regularly in their network, for the planning and organisation of awareness raising sessions at a district level. Therefore, the income will assist them in fulfilling their vision of raising awareness in their communities on the effects of child marriage and FGM.
11. Para health services. Accessing health related services' including information is a big problem for most of the girls in Tarime district. Therefore, Para-health services should be established in order to provide appropriate and reliable universal information on sexual and reproductive health, pregnancy and delivery, sexual transmitted infections, family planning/contraceptives, counselling and voluntary testing, access to maternal and child care; psychological counselling and information on access to VCT to girls. This programme will equip girls with important information from the resource centre under the Para-health services at the district level.
12. Facilitate the provision of formal and non formal education. During the research some of the girls show greater interest of going back to school in order to improve their wellbeing. Therefore, facilitating

the access to basic education and vocational training to girls is essential. The aim is to help and sponsor those girls who want to rejoin school. The programme therefore should provide uniforms and other educational materials so that girls will be able to continue going to primary or secondary school, or could even be offered vocational training, such as cookery and sewing, so that they can engage in their own income-generating activities. Vocational training to girls should be provided free and be practical-skill focused. For those who have dropped out either through marriage or pregnancy, they should be assisted to rejoin formal education in the same school or in an alternative school and they should be closely monitored to ensure that they remain in school and that the learning environment becomes more conducive to their education.

4.3. Conclusion

This research provides for an in-depth outlook at the problem of child marriage in Tarime district. It puts forward the voices and experiences of the children in child marriages and child widows; and the community perception of child marriages. The research revealed the persistence of child marriage; its root causes; extent and the way forward in ending the problem. The research gives insights to the local government structures and institutions that are strategic partners to be engaged in ending child marriages in Tarime district.

Furthermore, the research has provided the need for more participatory research studies on child marriages in other parts of Tanzania. This is crucial because through peer research, personal experiences can be shared to reveal violence and harmful practices existing at community and family levels. The recommendations provided here are intended to inform policy makers at the national and local level to recognise the multi faceted nature of child marriages; increase actions in ending child marriage at all levels to support affected children; improve their health, education and wellbeing and finally to partner better with communities to safeguard girls at risk of child marriages.

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