Tradition or Faith?: A qualitative research on FGM/C in Kayes region,Mali

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INTRODUCTION

- 200 million women and girls have undergone FGM/C in more than 30 countries
- 91.4% of women and girls aged 15-49 years undergone FGM/C in Mali
- 94.7 % of women and girls undergone FGM/C in Kayes region, Mali

OBJECTIVES

- Document and assess practice of FGM/C in faith communities
- Assess potential of faith to end FGM/C in Kayes region

METHODS

- Qualitative approach
- Key informant interviews
- Informal conversations
- Focus Group Discussion

RESULTS

- FGM/C practised in both Christian and Muslim communities
- FGM/C linked to tradition

"Some do it because they found their parents, grand parents have done it. It is a tradition left by ancestors" Pastor from Kayes

- Misinterpretation of holy scriptures

FGM/C is a religious requirement but must be done "the right way"

- Lack of faith response
- Survivors' voices

"FGM/C happens in our churches and mosques. We need to stop this practice because it is a matter of someone's life" Survivor from Yélimané

CONCLUSIONS

- Faith leaders are respected in their faith groups and wider community
- Faith leaders have unique mandate to speak on issues affecting communities
- Faith leaders must be recognised as key allies in the prevention and response to FGM/C
- Faith leaders must be mobilised and equipped to respond to FGM/C