

GAMCOTRAP



Protect the Girl Child

**The Gambia Committee on
Traditional Practices affecting
The Health of Women and Children
(GAMCOTRAP)**



IAC-CIAF

PRESS RELEASE

**THE FIRST FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION CASE TO BE PROSECUTED SINCE
THE ENACTMENT OF THE LAW PROHIBITING FGM IN 2015 IN THE GAMBIA**

This is to inform the public that the circumciser in Central River Region MbaYassin Fatty who was caught circumcising eight (8) children within the ages of 4 months to 1 year in the village of Bakadagi-Mandinka, Central River Region North of Niani District of the Gambia, has been found guilty with two of the mothers whose children were circumcised. The mothers are Nano Jawla and Kaddijatou Jallow. The accused were found guilty and fined fifteen thousand dalasis each and in default will serve one year in prison.

The court process has three court appearances which were presided by Magistrate Kanjura B Sambou which started in July 26th, 9th August and 23rd August 2023 respectively. The Inspector General of Police (IGP) was represented by Banjugu Njie. In February 14th a press release was made by GAMCOTRAP reporting the case to the public about the incidence. Also, our partners were informed accordingly.

While all these efforts were made it was evident that support was not forth coming and GAMCOTRAP decided to engage the Urgent Action Fund -Africa Region who supported the process. We want to express appreciation for this rapid response to rescue these innocent children from FGM and ensuring the effective implementation of the law against FGM.

This is also a testament that the Gambia is committed to apply the law when the matter is brought before the courts and we appreciate the efforts made by the Government of the Gambia and the MARIBANTANG CHAMBERS for ensuring that justice is done to protect the girl-child and end FGM in the Gambia.

While this is progress in the application of the law a lot needs to be done to end FGM in the Gambia. We urge all other actors who are receiving funds from partners in the name of FGM to be committed to the cause.

It must be realized that the affected Circumciser broke the law banning FGM and oath she made in 2013 not to circumcise anymore. She was trained by GAMCOTRAP and was among the batch of circumcisers who declared to abandon the practice in 2013 among 30 circumcisers during the 4th Dropping of the Knife Ceremony in Wassu. She was given a bakery and her son was trained to operate it as an Alternative Employment Opportunity (AEO) to abandon the knife. She was given extra resources to address the challenges she was facing in her bakery. In a recent joint monitoring visit by UNFPA, NPC and Implementing partners she informed the team that there was no circumcision in her community.

GAMCOTRAP will continue to monitor closely all the regions and support the CBFs to continue engaging with their various cluster communities.

Over the years, GAMCOTRAP has been supported by the UNFPA/UNICEF Country programme to end FGM in the Gambia including other Partners and we want to express appreciation to them for the support to grassroots activism to end FGM in the Gambia. The public is hereby reminded that FGM violates the sexual and reproductive health rights of women and girls and the law bans it. It is a form of violence against women and girl-children.

Currently, schools are on holidays and it is brought to our attention that some families are taking their children from the greater Banjul Area to the Rural areas to be circumcised during the holiday period. GAMCOTRAP is intensifying the surveillance across all the regions of the Gambia. Anyone found to engage in practicing FGM on the girl-child will face the law.

Thanks

24th August 2023