



# QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Brighter Society Initiative



## TOP NEWS

We are thrilled once again to bring you the activities of Quarter 4 of the BSI-UNICEF impactful project of 2024. Quarter 4 being the final quarter of the one year project comes with great feedback of the successes of the project. As Brighter Society Initiative and UNICEF, we celebrate the impact we have made in making a difference,



## INSIDE OUR QUARTERLY JOURNEY

In our Quarter 4, we embarked on our annual monitoring and evaluation of the UNICEF funded project and also the creation of media messages in Tana River to increase awareness on the need to end harmful practices in Tana River. We engaged all stakeholders in the successive journey of making a difference in Tana River. From the survivor success stories to the call to action by key stakeholders like the County Commissioner and even Religious leaders.





# MEDIA AND VISIBILITY



In this quarter, we have been able to create media messages on various platforms to advocate for child protection issues in Tana River. The messages were tailored to increase awareness on cases of Gender Based Violence like teenage pregnancies, child marriages and even practice of Female Genital Mutilation on children and women. At the top of the media strategy was the use of radio show to share the created message to locals in Tana River. We did a Radio show through the Tana Broadcasting services in Tana River. The show was hosted by Denis Maithya. The guest of the show included our Executive Director Sadia Hussein, Dr. and 2 FGM Survivors.

The show was very engaging with listeners participating actively and asked questions as the show progressed. Sadia Hussein explained the need for focusing on Child protection especially in times of crisis. The two FGM survivors talked about the effects of FGM. Fatuma who is now a coach gave her testimony on how she had to leave her dream of being a footballer as a result of FGM

## WHY USE RADIO

The use of radio is an effective tool in making social change in Tana River County. Households and communities sit down under trees, in their homesteads, and even as they travel to listen to radio shows that are educative so as to shun away practices like FGM.

Radio is also cheap and easily accessible to most of the residents of Tana River from those seated in IDP camps to those in the village gatherings.

We have been able to tailor messages to specific audiences using the radio in Tana River. As a result we have more people coming out openly to talk about FGM and other cases of GBV.







## Radio Waves of Hope

In Danisa IDP camp in Tana Delta Sub-county, the residents there are sitting down under a tree listening to a radio show. For them, the session is an important one as it speaks on some of the crucial things that happen in their lives. The Radio show is the one that is actively streaming live from Tana Broadcasting Services. The guests of the show are the Executive Director of Brighter Society Initiative, A doctor, and two survivors one who was formerly a good football.

As the radio waves carried their voices through the camp, the listeners leaned in closer, eager to absorb every word.

## Inside The Issues

They learnt the effects of Female Genital mutilation as well as stories of dreams that were never realized as a result of the practice of FGM. The villagers also learn about important aspects of child rights and some of the effects of child abuse on children and society entirely.

At the end of the show which took an hour, the villagers sat down and deliberated on how best they can be able to end FGM and also face the challenges that arise as a result of floods, especially on the issue of Child Protection.

### MEDIA LINK

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/19xS0KyCNUYNPtylCqN2z1nv4XLzwWLRf/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/19xS0KyCNUYNPtylCqN2z1nv4XLzwWLRf/view?usp=drive_link)



“We have seen the challenges that women undergo especially in times of crisis. There can not be any better help than to increase awareness on issues of FGM using radio. Our people listen a lot to radio and this has helped make a change “ said the village elder.

The village elders of Danisa and Onkolde have embraced the use of radio to impact change in their community.





# THE CITIZEN STORY AND USE OF X



During Quarter 4, we have been able to leverage the use of mainstream media and also Social media to advocate against any form of GBV on children and women. Media is now the best way of creating awareness on some of the harmful practices while advocating for positive change. This is because of the large audiences that media can get to.

We were featured by Citizen Television, the National leading television with a wide audience both in social media and also using old media.



The stories that were streamed by the media were [MIKAKATI YAANZISHWA KUKABILIANA NA DHULMA TOFAUTI](#) and [VITA DHIDI YA DHULMA KAMBINI](#). NTV also featured our story with the headline [KUKABILIANA NA DHULMA ZA KIJINSIA](#).

The stories were shared through mainstream media and their social media platforms like X and also YouTube. They were aimed at creating awareness of FGM and other forms of gender-based violence that happen in Tana River County, especially in times of crisis like floods and drought.

Another way that we used to amplify the advocacy against FGM is through our social media platform X. We majored on X as compared to other platforms because the social media platform is where the majority of the youth who are change makers can be able to get the message and easily share of with their colleagues through their Whatsapp and even Facebook and Tiktok.

This made it easy to get to an even larger audience that has been able to access the information. Some of the links to the messages are listed below.

1. <https://x.com/BsiKenya/status/1830519714100957579>
2. <https://x.com/BsiKenya/status/1831252648525258896>
3. <https://x.com/BsiKenya/status/1822900390964199665>
4. <https://x.com/BsiKenya/status/1821896855694745950>
5. <https://x.com/BsiKenya/status/1820713081405686177>
6. <https://x.com/BsiKenya/status/1818707194918928624>



The use of both social media and mainstream media is a good way of advocating for social change and ending harmful practices. By leveraging media, we have been able to make change in Tana River County





Sports activities are a way of bringing people together. They entertain the old and the young, men and women, and even the rich and the poor. Therefore as a strategy to do a campaign to end FGM we got a jersey for a team in the Madogo area as a way to advocate against FGM and other harmful practices. The jerseys the team got have a special branded message that is used to amplify the key message of ending FGM in Tana River County.

During our monitoring, we realised that the jerseys we issued during the project had a tremendous impact. The use of branded jerseys is a walking media in making change in Tana River. The message as seen in the image reads, “#Sports to EndFGM. The message can be read by many people. The team engages in sports activities across the county and country in general. This makes it an effective method of using media to end FGM and all other forms of Gender Based violence.

The use of youth to make changes in their immediate societies while nurturing their talents goes a long way in changing societies to be better and ending vices that are a threat in the fight against FGM.



**We have also been empowering girls in schools to do sports. In Gafuru primary school, while doing monitoring with the country rep Ms. Shaheen we supported the girls volley ball team as well as the football team with jerseys and balls. The teams have since then been able to engage in games competitions in the zone and the county. The girls confidence and prowess at playing has become even better as compared to before. Making a positive change and ending harmful practices like FGM through use of sports is an effective strategy. The youth are the real change makers of today!**



UNICEF Country Rep  
Shaheen with  
students in Gafuru  
Primary



# MONITORING AND EVALUATION



Monitoring and evaluation is a key feedback strategy for knowing the effectiveness of the project.

Through out the quarter, we did monitoring while engaging several stakeholders.

Some of the stakeholders we engaged included religious leaders, County Commissioner, Bodaboda riders, students and even survivors of FGM.

## **COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S VIEW ON FGM**

During our monitoring and evaluation, we paid a courtesy visit to the County Commissioner of Tana River, Mr. Koskei at his office. The County Commissioner was thankful of the efforts of Brighter Society Initiative and UNICEF in the efforts to advocate against Female Genital Mutilation and all forms of Child abuse. He said because of the all approach of stakeholders, the county has been able to reduce the number of such cases despite it being affected by the flood crisis and even security.

The county commissioner specifically thank Brighter Society Initiative for the continued efforts in visiting villagers and IDP camps in Tana River to impact lives positively as well as create awareness of FGM. He also commended the efforts by BSI to have stakeholder engagements in the county and also even went ahead to train Child Protection volunteers in the county. He said that it is because of such efforts that the SDGs to ensure Gender equality can be able to be achieved.



He however insisted that there is need to increase even more reach to villages located in inaccessible areas. He said the main challenges were security and even enough financial support. With this, he said the government will partner with us as stakeholders to ensure a drop-down in the cases of FGM in Tana River from 60% to a lower percentage and indefinitely to 0% .





*Ustadhat Ralia-Female religious scholar*

## RELIGIOUS LEADERS

We had a one-on-one tet a tet with a female religious scholar, Ustadha Ralia, who is at the forefront of ending FGM in Gafuru.

Ustadhat Ralia who is in charge of a small madrassa in Gafuru normally has successive sessions with the women to discuss issues that affect them.



During the sessions, the women can share their challenges amongst themselves and come up with possible solutions. The BSI-UNICEF project has been using the platform to empower women to advocate for change through educating women on the negative impacts of doing FGM on their daughters and ways to economically empower themselves through women groups and getting funding from relevant government organs like the UWEZO Fund.

"We women always go through mistreatment in all sectors including religion, education, and FGM. We need to get help to stop all forms of GBVs." said Ustadhat Ralia. "But we do not have enough capacity," lamented Ralia.



*Sheikh Gudo- Head of Imams Kenya.*

The head of Imams Sheikh Gudo in Kenya also had his input. He vehemently condemned the practice of FGM in the pastoralist communities in Tana River. In a session with him, Ustadh Gudo highlighted the religious view on FGM, the impacts of FGM on women and girls, both physically and mentally and also some of the strategies that could be applied to end FGM.



*Sheikh Gudo during committee formation.*

Ustadh Gudo thanked the UNICEF regional office in Garissa and also BSI for the opportunity to be able to advocate against FGM in Tana River County through the platforms offered and even training that enabled him to get a better view on the harmful effects of FGM on women. He swore to never tire in the efforts to end FGM in the country.



# SURVIVOR STORIES



## **IMPACT OF COMMUNITY DIALOGUES TO SURVIVORS OF FGM IN THEIR HEALING AND ADAPTING TO WAYS THAT CAN EMPOWER THEM**

During our Monitoring and Evaluation, we engaged survivors of FGM in Gafuru village. The survivors who have been empowered through the BSI- UNICEF project were very thankful to the team and highlighted successes of the project and also places they said needed improvement.

Among the successes was the impact of village dialogues which led to increased number of girls going to school. The village dialogues highlighted the importance of education in making lives better in Gafuru better and making their economic lives better as a result of trained members that came from the village like teachers, doctors and even pilots. The success was confirmed by even Gafuru Primary school that was the best in the zone with a mean of?? And awarded during the last prize giving day.

Another success of the community dialogues was the zero practice of FGM in Gafuru as well as the economic empowerment of women through BSI's socio economic empowerment of women trainings of women groups. The women partake in economic activities like chicken rearing and smart gardening. The community dialogues also including the religious leaders have entirely change the view of villagers in Gafuru this being a positive change from what happened to be seen before where FGM on girls and children was at 100%.

On areas to be improved, the survivors asked for more economic empowerment through financial funding so that it can enable them to support their families and end cases of GBV that come as a result of lack of economic stability . The impact of the BSI-UNICEF project in Tana River County in ending harmful practices has bore fruit as the lives of survivors has changed for the better. Survivors have come out to share their stories and even better their lives as a result of the project. The survivors have all agreed that **"FGM happened to them, but not to their daughters."**



Fatuma is an FGM survivor living in Kalkacha, Hola. She is a talented footballer but had to stop her dream of playing for international team because of going through FGM that led to a traumatizing experience during giving birth. As a result, she is now a coach training young girls on how to play football.

"I couldn't continue playing football after giving birth. FGM is the main reason my dream was shuttered. I have decided to be a coach so that other girls do not go through what I went through." said Fatuma. The story of Fatuma is one of many other stories of shattered dreams of survivors. But all is not lost.



# YOUTH, EDUCATION AND SPORTS



## **IMPACT OF ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL MENTORSHIP IN GAFURU PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Academic and social mentorships have definitely changed the face of Gafuru. From a village that minimally encouraged education to one that has an increased population. Gafuru Primary is one of the schools that have made positive changes. The mentorships both at the school level and community level has enabled parents in Gafuru village change their perceptions on education. The parents are now at the forefront of advocating for the need of the girl child to go to school. Gafuru primary school was awarded as the best school in the zone. With improved track record, the school has this year been able to be the best. with a mean of 315.98 from 279.43.



This remarkable achievement has inspired neighboring schools to adopt similar mentorship programs, hoping to replicate Gafuru's success. Teachers have worked tirelessly to create a nurturing environment where children are encouraged to dream big and pursue their goals with confidence. The transformation in Gafuru is not just academic; it has brought about a renewed sense of community spirit and pride. Students are now more engaged in extracurricular activities, developing skills in sports, arts, and leadership that will serve them well in the future. The village has become a beacon of hope, illustrating the profound impact that collective effort and dedication can have on a community. .



Madam Teresia - Deputy Headteacher

The mentorship has been of big impact to our school. The mean has also risen. Another impact is increased confidence in our students. Because of the BSI-UNICEF project, we have an increased intake of students as a result of both community dialogues and school mentorships importance of education in making change."

We have recently not had any cases of girls going through Female Genital Mutilation since the school mentorships started.

I am proud of the achievements made so far through BSI-UNICEF.





BRIGHTER SOCIETY INITIATIVE QUARTER 3 NEWSLETTER

# THANK YOU FOR SUBSCRIBING!



WE EXTEND OUR HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO UNICEF KENYA FOR THEIR UNWAVERING SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THIS JOURNEY. TOGETHER, WE ARE MAKING A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN IN TANA RIVER COUNTY. AS WE LOOK FINALIZE OUR ONE YEAR PROJECT, WE REMAIN COMMITTED TOWARDS ENDING HARMFUL PRACTICES IN TANA RIVER. FOSTERING POSITIVE CHANGE AND CREATING A SAFER AND HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CHILDREN. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIP

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY BEING PART OF OUR NEWSLETTER FAMILY!

STAY TUNED

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## AN EMPOWERED SOCIETY BEYOND VIOLENCE