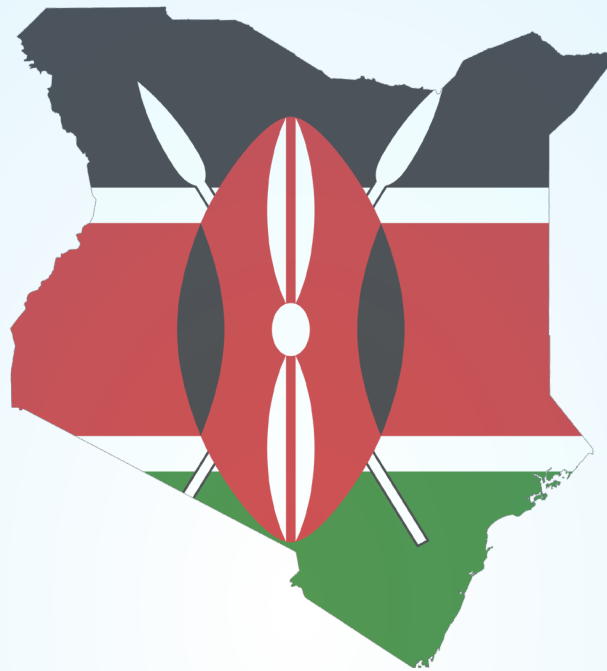




Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa
Programme des Relations Islamo-Chrétiennes en Afrique



**THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD:
STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO THE WELFARE OF THE GIRL
CHILD BY RELIGIOUS LEADERS .**

ISILOLO COUNTY, KENYA.

12th October 2020



We Christian and Muslim religious leaders having met today, the 12th day of October 2020 to mark the International Day of the Girl Child, in Isiolo County under the auspices of The Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) in conjunction with The Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA), and The Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa (CAPA), to deliberate on the challenges faced by the girl child with a specific focus on the unprecedented accelerated phenomenon of girl child pregnancies in our county and the entire Republic of Kenya, precipitated by the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown which has led to loss of jobs and livelihoods.

Having listened to the girls and other stakeholders expression of the vulnerability of the girl child 'stay-at-home' amidst COVID – 19, and the challenges and contributory factors responsible for teenage pregnancies in Isiolo County as presented in their speeches and poems;

Being conscious that poverty, obnoxious cultural practices, coupled with poor parental guidance, and moral decadence greatly contribute to the challenge of teenage pregnancies;

Very much concerned about the development of the girl child as future custodians of the development of women in society;

Having carefully reflected and discussed comprehensive and substantive mechanisms to curb the challenges of teenage pregnancies in the county;

Recognising and being very appreciative of efforts of national and county governments, non-government and civil society organisations efforts in the fight against teenage pregnancies in Kenya;

Convinced that the girl child is the future of the county and the nation, and must be allowed to maximise their full potentials without being discriminated because of their gender;

Understanding that as religious leaders we must at all times embark on moral education and ensure that we serve as examples for the wider society to emulate;

DO HEREBY PLEDGE AND COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

- ◆ Reject any harmful faith and traditional beliefs and practices used to justify abuses meted on the girl child;
- ◆ Break the culture of silence by raising awareness continuously on the plight of the girl child in the communities in Isiolo;
- ◆ Enlighten communities and families on the potentials of the girl child;
- ◆ Educate Christian and Muslim parents on good parenting, through programmes coordinated by the Isiolo Interfaith Network;



- ◆ Consciously instil morals on the girls, via teaching and sermons, using the platforms of the churches and the mosques in the county;
- ◆ Harness and use religious texts (Bible and the Quran) to interpret religious beliefs and practices that discourage discrimination against the girl child;
- ◆ Create safe spaces in the churches and the mosques for the girl child to share their stories;
- ◆ Work and collaborate with the county and national governments to end abuses and violations on the girl child;
- ◆ Consciously work with PROCURA, FECCLAHA, CAPA and other religious organisations and agencies to ensure that the girl child in Isiolo is considered to be more than just of a different gender;

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THESE, WE ACCORDINGLY:

- ◆ Entreat parents to ensure that they take proper responsibility of the girl child;
- ◆ Call on county and national governments to provide quick justice to girl child when violated;
- ◆ Appeal to religious and traditional leaders to re-examine harmful religious and traditional practices and beliefs that discriminate against the girl child;
- ◆ Implore religious leaders to remain good examples and provide protection for the girl child even within religious premises and institutions;
- ◆ Beseech PROCURA, FECCLAHA, CAPA to consciously partner with the Isiolo Interfaith network to help them overcome all sorts of violations and discriminations against the girl child;
- ◆ Express our gratitude to the county commissioner, the speaker of the Isiolo county assembly, security agencies and other stakeholders for their collaboration and support;
- ◆ Express our profound gratitude to PROCURA, FECCLAHA, CAPA for implementing the project and reaching out to our girls with health kits.

We reaffirm our commitment and determination to be in solidarity with all stakeholders, and employ our moral authority as religious leaders, to end all forms of violations and discriminations against the girl child.

For Religious leaders

Signed By: Bishop Stephen Kalunyu
Sheikh Ahmed Set

Done: 12th October 2020