



Implemented by



**FGM-Prevention
Programme**

Report

Delegation Trip of the GIZ Regional Programme
“Improving the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation in Eastern Africa”

November 5th to 12th, 2022 Germany, Berlin and Frankfurt



Delegation in Berlin at Weibervirtschaft

1. Agenda

Date/Time	Agenda Point
<u>Monday</u> 9.30am- 11am	The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katrin Buder Pelz, Department 412 (Gender Equality) • Luisa Bergfeld, Department 103 (Population policy and Social security) • Uta Simon, Department 212 (East Africa) • Laura Storch, Regional Department 210 (Africa)
2.30pm- 4pm	Bundestag (German Federal Parliament) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with representatives of The Committee on Economic Cooperation and Development <p>Visiting Reichstag Building (English Guide)</p>
<u>Tuesday</u> 9.30am- 12pm	Workshop with Somali diaspora activist Fatuma Musa Afrah “The Power of Change Makers” - How can we empower one another as a community to fight & End FGM/GBV and Empower our Women and Girls to have a voice”
1.30pm- 3pm	Meeting Berlin Coordination Center against FGM/C <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Constanze Hach Gynecologist (Specialist in providing medical care and gynecological consultation for FGM_C survivors, Family Planning Center – BALANCE) • Mohamed Issa Mahmoud (CHANGE Agent / Community Expert on FGM/C) • Julia Thierfelder and Anna Grewe (Project Coordinators)
4pm- 6.30pm	Terres des Femmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with the FGM Division • Discussion “CHAIN” Project and Diaspora engagement on FGM • Meeting with Multiplicators of diaspora community
<u>Wednesday</u> 9.30-11am	Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSJ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGM in Germany and Project Countries • Diaspora and FGM/Protection Letter against FGM
<u>Thursday</u> 9am – 12pm	State Parliament Hessen/ Ministry of Social Affairs Exchange Meeting and Discussion with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGM Network Hessen (ProFamilia, other representatives of this network) • Gender Focal Points from the political parties
3pm – 4.30pm	Visit and exchange with FIM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intercultural counselling center for migrant women and their families in Frankfurt • Experience on the protection letter in diaspora communities
<u>Friday</u> 9.30am - 2pm	GIZ Headquarter Eschborn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming Africa Supra Regional and Horn of Africa Department • Delegation Pitches Thematic inputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning department (The topic of Gender in GIZ – Feminist Approaches in German Development Cooperation) • Religion and Development Programme (Involving religious actors in the area of FGM Prevention) • End FGM Network Europe

2. Outcome of the Delegation Trip

The study trip and exchange lead to several outcomes:

- Discussion and experience sharing of previous FGM interventions and their results, identification of best practices and lessons learned among all stakeholders involved
- Increased understanding and appreciation of the key issues, challenges and opportunities regarding FGM prevention in the project countries, diaspora communities and among all stakeholders involved in the delegation trip
- Increased cooperation in addressing issues of FGM and other harmful traditional practices

3. Summaries Agenda Points

Monday November 7th, 2022

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

The first item of the program led the delegation to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the commissioning party of the GIZ Regional Programme “Improving the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Eastern Africa”.

The delegation was welcomed by Katrin Buder-Pelz (Department 412: Gender Equality) and other BMZ representatives. Ms. Buder-Pelz addressed the delegation members as important actors who offer valuable insights into the realities on the ground and are crucial for the success of support to FGM prevention. She further pointed out to the importance of human and women’s rights in BMZs engagement in development cooperation. Ms. Buder-Pelz and her colleagues also showed appreciation for the ongoing commitment of the partners despite the challenges they are facing in the region and encouraged them to continue with their work. She acknowledged the partners’ lead on the topic and that they are in the “forefront of change”.

Uta Simon (East Africa Department) spoke to the delegation about the ministry’s engagement in the Horn of Africa region. With challenges such as displacement, the drought, the ongoing food crisis and the consequences of armed conflicts, Ms. Simon summarized the situation as a “crisis in governance”. Economies in the region have not been able to recover from the recent internal and external shocks and it is especially women that can’t fulfill their full economic potential.

All representatives of the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development stated that the goal is “Better protection of women” and that to advance in this domain they need partners on the ground. Svenja Schulze, the recently appointed minister for development cooperation has

declared the term “**Feminist Development Policy**”¹ as the priority leading her legislation period. After a consultation process with civil society from the Global South and other partner countries, BMZ is developing a strategy on the issue and a Gender Action Plan will be launched in 2023. The objective of this new Feminist Development Policy is to “transform power structures” as Katrin Buder-Pelz stated in her input. Following a human-rights based approach and looking deeper into discrimination and especially intersectional discrimination, the ministry is aiming to work on the root causes of exclusion and inequality.

The representatives from BMZ were committed to listening to the experiences shared by the delegation. During the round of introduction, several topics were discussed, for example the issue of social security for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, the challenge in politically volatile contexts to still be able to address gender-based violence (GBV) and female genital mutilation (FGM) and provide basic health services, especially to pregnant women and during birth, but also the question about possibilities to achieve the envisioned social norm change in view of prevailing harmful traditional practices.



Exchange Visit in the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, 7th November 2022

¹ [Feminist development policy | BMZ](#); [Feminist Foreign Policy - Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik \(swp-berlin.org\)](#)

Deutscher Bundestag (German Federal Parliament)

The meeting in the German Parliament was chaired by Knut Gerschau (Liberal Party, FDP) from the Committee for Economic Development and Cooperation. He was joined by other members of the parliament: Cornelia Möhring (Left Party), Nadja Sthamer, (Social Democratic Party) and Derya Türk-Nachbaur (Social Democratic Party) from the Human Rights Committee). During the meeting, many topics were discussed, with the parliament's members showing interest in the status of activities on the prevention of gender-based violence and female genital mutilation in the three countries (Somalia, Sudan, and Ethiopia). Further, the advocacy on the criminalization of FGM and GBV was discussed and the possibilities of the German government to support this engagement. The parliamentarians had just returned from a journey to Sudan and were very interested in the implementation of the SALEEMA campaign as one good example of FGM prevention work. Success factors and challenges of the campaign were discussed, and the question was addressed to what extent it can be used as an effective method to abandon the FGM practice within the respective countries.



Overall, the members of the German parliament were interested to know how the cooperation with religious actors is working in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan and whether it is a fruitful strategy to engage them. Furthermore, the parliamentarians wanted to know which prevention measures are effective in the countries. Another point related to all countries, was the role of men in the fight against FGM and if the delegation members had any best practices regarding this issue. At the same time, the delegation members from Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan showed their interest in further understanding the feminist development policy, and to which extent they could implement it in their countries. All political parties clearly stated that women empowerment and the eradication of harmful practices such as FGM and Child Marriage are a priority of the German government and efforts will be intensified in the future.



Impressions of the meeting in the German Parliament, 7th November 2022

Tuesday November 8th, 2022

The Power of Change Makers Workshop by Fatuma Musa Afrah

Fighting for equality, equal opportunities, and better health services and treatment options for women and men in a patriarchal society is a very challenging responsibility. Inequality exists in communities all over the world, harmful practices tend to strike women far more often and strongly than men. Thereby the gender gap increases. This gap is visible in communities with a strong culture and religious affiliation. Ms. Fatuma Afrah², an activist for women's and girl's rights delivered her workshop on the topic of "The Power of Change Makers" intending to provide mechanisms for taking care of oneself and empowering one another."

Fatuma Afrah is an outspoken, experienced activist for women's and girl's rights and advocates especially among Somali and Eastern African diaspora for the abandonment of FGM. She herself is a survivor who made her experience the basis of her strong voice against discrimination but also addresses the trauma and psychological bearing that her experience and that of many other women cause. During the session, she encouraged everyone to travel back to the memories of their first job and explain to the others what position it was, where the assignment was, and, most importantly, what each participant's lesson learnt was from that experience. The discussion sparked many stories from the delegation members and made them experience the power of story-telling as an advocacy tool. At the same time, the sharing of lessons learnt was a crucial moment of networking for the delegates from the three countries where insights into personal growth and failures were exchanged.

² [Fatuma Musa Afrah](#)



Fatuma Afrah leading the workshop on the power of change-makers, 8th November 2022

Ms. Fatuma shared her experience of a burnout after years of fighting for gender equality and reminded the delegates of the importance of taking care of themselves and the people around them. She outlined some methods to relieve stress to not be affected by the day-to-day struggles in this line of work. Since FGM is a sensitive topic and requires a lot of personal engagement of the delegates, the workshop was supposed to encourage them to keep going and remind each other of the achievements they have already made in their specific work contexts. At the end of the session, the delegates were motivated to do more for their community as well as to ensure their own personal well-being to stay strong, healthy and able to continue the fight against FGM in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan.

Berlin Coordination Office against FGM/C

During an exchange meeting, the GIZ delegation was able to speak to different representatives and cooperation partners from the Berlin Coordination Office against FGM/C³. They advise, accompany, and empower women in all issues concerning Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting

³ [Koordinierungsstelle gegen FGM. C Berlin \(koordinierungsstelle-fgmc.de\)](https://www.koordinierungsstelle-fgmc.de)

(FGM/C). Their team of experts from various disciplines advocates for the right to physical integrity through prevention, counselling, and health care.

One of the Cooperation Partners of the Berlin Coordination Office is the Desert Flower Center in Berlin. They offer reconstructive surgeries to survivors of FGM, as well as gynecological, urological and psychological care. Reconstructive surgeries offer the reconstruction of the clitoris and labia. The surgery is being performed at the Desert Flower Center⁴ in the hospital Waldfriede in Berlin Zehlendorf since February 2014 under the direction of Dr. Uwe von Fritschen.

Dr. von Fritschen informed the participants of the delegation trip about the possibilities of reconstructive surgery. On the one hand, the surgical measures improve the quality of life of the women and, on the other hand, counteract the dangers that women who have undergone FGM face during pregnancy and birth. With the surgical reconstruction of the clitoris and the labia, women gain back the possibility to experience a painless and pleasurable sexuality. Accompanying the surgery, the Desert Flower Center offers sexual therapy counseling and support for the woman (and her partner).



Dr. Constanze Hach introducing a model she is using to explain the female genital organs to her clients, 8th November 2022

⁴ [Desert Flower Center - Desert Flower Foundation](#)

Dr. Constanze Hach, a gynecologist from the Family Planning Center BALANCE, is supporting women who have undergone FGM. Many of the women she is taking care of have not had access to proper health care before and are not aware of the fact that they have been cut. Due to the complexity of the consequences of circumcision and the sensitivity of the topic, a specialized, gynecological counselling and care is needed. The Family Planning Center BALANCE combines psychological counseling, sex education and gynecological care under one roof. Dr. Constanze Hach supports the women with the gynecological assessment during the asylum-seeking process. She works with vaginal models made from fabric to sensitize the women about their genital organs. Since this is not an approach yet followed in the project countries of the Regional Programme “Improving the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation”, the Ethiopian, Somali and Sudanese delegates were very keen on learning more about it. Furthermore, Dr. Hach discussed with the participants about the urgency of including FGM and the consequences of it in the medical trainings in Germany; the Berlin Coordination Office developed several guidelines for gynecologists, medical students and midwives to prepare them for working with girls and women who have undergone FGM. Anna Thierfelder, the project coordinator of the Berlin Coordination Office against FGM/C, emphasized the goal of their office is to bundle and develop services for survivors, but also to raise public awareness on this very significant issue.



Delegation visiting the Berlin Coordination Office against FGM/C, 8th November 2022

Exchange Meeting with Terre des Femmes

The delegates also met with representatives from Terre des Femmes⁵, a German non-profit-organization committed to human rights for girls and women. The vision of the organization is a world in which all people are equal, independent and free, irrespective of their gender. Since its formation in 1981, Terre des Femmes has grown into one of the largest women's rights organizations in Germany with over 2000 members. Terre des femmes strives for international networking with other women's rights organizations, supports women in consulting, and supports projects, organizations and initiatives by women for women from abroad. They work in the area of FGM, violence in the name of honor (forced marriage, honor killings), trafficking, forced prostitution and sexual and domestic violence. A presentation was made by Sina Tonk who is leading the department on Female Genital Mutilation. During her input she presented the activities performed by the organization to create awareness among the African and Asian communities residing in Germany. One of the methodologies they used to create awareness was producing a video showing the difference between cultures that need to be celebrated and kept by the communities and those that are harmful to women, children, and the communities in general. One activity Terre des Femmes has been implementing in the past years is the training of so-called multipliers. These are members of the respective diaspora communities that are trained by the organization to raise awareness among their peers. Mohamed Issa Mahmoud, a CHANGE Agent and Community Expert on FGM/C with a Sudanese background, reported about the activities they are doing in the Sudanese diaspora community in Germany and how they address the topic of FGM. After the presentation, topics like the availability of criminal law, reports of FGM practice, and the documentation of reported cases in Germany were discussed.



Sina Tonk introducing the work of Terre des Femmes, 8th November 2022

⁵ [TERRE DES FEMMES - Menschenrechte für die Frau e.V. - Startseite \(frauenrechte.de\)](https://www.terredesfemmes.de/)

Wednesday November 9th, 2022

Another highlight of the delegation trip was the visit of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. They introduced the “Letter of Protection against Female Genital Mutilation”. It is a tool that ministry adopted in 2020 to the occasion of February 6th, the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM. It is a passport-style blue booklet and is available in several different languages, for example English, Arabic, Amharic and Somali. The Protection Letter provides information on the criminal liability of FGM, including when carried out abroad, and on the possible loss of the residence permit. Above all, it protects against FGM in the countries of origin during holiday periods and can be carried in the passport. The protection letter can help families face social and family pressure in their countries of origin. The main target group is the girls at risk and their families. However, the protection letter also serves to raise awareness in general. The purpose of this protection letter is to break the taboo through awareness-raising and prevention. It is used to sensitize the communities which, in this case in Germany, practice FGM, without stigmatizing them, or discriminating them, but by protecting their daughters. It also includes a support section with a list of ways for girls to access help. This section includes websites and phone numbers of the police, local youth welfare offices and counseling services. Gwladys Awo, an Expert on FGM/C and project coordinator for a programme called "Men Standing Up for Gender Equality" reported on her experiences with the protection letter; she stated that the responses from the different diaspora communities are very positive. Gwladys Awo furthermore spoke about the plans of creating a child-friendly version of the Protection Letter that could be used for further awareness-raising.



Anne Dahlbüdding and Naile Sulejmani-Hoppe sharing the experience with the BMFSJ’s protection letter and awareness-raising activities linked to its development, 9th November 2022

Thursday November 10th, 2022

State Parliament Hessen/ Ministry of Social Affairs

Under the leadership of the Ministry for Social Affairs and Integration, the federal state of Hessen is actively engaged in the fight against FGM. During a visit in the State Parliament, the delegation was welcomed by the Deputy President of the State Parliament, Mrs. Karin Müller, and two Gender Focal Points from the liberal party and the green party. Further the FGM Network Hessen was represented by two of their member organizations. The state government wants to create greater social awareness of this problem. Since 2018, the state government has been funding the profamilia project "Improving protection and care for women and girls affected or threatened by Female Genital Mutilation in Hessen". The FGM Network Hessen developed a website that is available in 6 different languages, including Arabic, Somali and Tigrinya. On the website one can find telephone numbers and addresses of people and counseling centers, help for girls and women who are in pain, feel threatened or don't know how to talk about the subject or how to protect their daughter, sister or girlfriends. Furthermore, there is information on the website on what FGM is, what consequences it has, why and where it is practiced. Hessen is also a member of the federal-state NGO working group on effectively combating FGM, which is chaired by the Federal Ministry for Women's Affairs in German.



The political partners of the GIZ Regional Programme “Improving the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation in Eastern Africa” presented the activities regarding FGM (Prevention) that they conducted in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. The participants from the parliament were specifically interested in the intervention chains in the countries: what are the steps when someone hears about a case of FGM or a girl/woman being under risk. During a Question and Answer session, it was also discussed what role the diaspora can play and how a law itself is not enough to protect girls and women since there are not many cases reported and law enforcement actors are not well trained on the topic.



Exchange with the representatives of the State Parliament of Hessen and visit of the historic building, 10th November 2022

Meeting with FIM-Frauenrecht ist Menschenrecht e.V.:

On 10th of November 2022, the delegation members had a very successful meeting for two hours with FIM – Frauenrecht ist Menschenrecht e.V. FIM⁶ is a counseling and information center for immigrant women; the meeting was moderated by Tanja Wunderlich, FIM's director for public relations and advocacy. During the meeting, a very comprehensive explanation was given about the FIM target groups and the approaches the center uses to provide services. Two counselors, originally from Somalia and Ethiopia, described in detail the obstacles and complications faced by migrated women, particularly FGM survivors, as well as the options and opportunities found by undergoing a plastic FGM repairing surgery and how this type of operation has successfully changed their lives. The delegation members examined the sensitivity of FIM's intercultural counseling approach during this meeting, and when FIM shared its experience with the protection letter in diaspora communities, the two groups -- FIM and delegation members -- agreed it was a very good opportunity to collaborate and realize the importance of exchanging and sharing information in this regard.



Exchange with the representatives from FIM, 10th November 2022

⁶ [English Version - FIM Frauenrecht ist Menschenrecht \(fim-frauenrecht.de\)](https://www.fim-frauenrecht.de)

Friday November 11th, 2022

Visit of the GIZ Headquarter and exchange with the department 1700/Unit 1710

The delegation team spent their last day in Germany in Eschborn at the GIZ Headquarter. They were welcomed by Tobias Gerster, Head of Division, Africa Supra Regional and Horn of Africa and Dr. Annette Mummert, Head of Unit Africa Regional Programmes. After the welcoming speeches, GIZ's activities and support in Africa was presented by Annette Mummert: The presentation outlined that GIZ implements 50 regional projects in Africa intending to enable cross-border cooperation in the region, as well as 20 bilateral projects in Ethiopia.

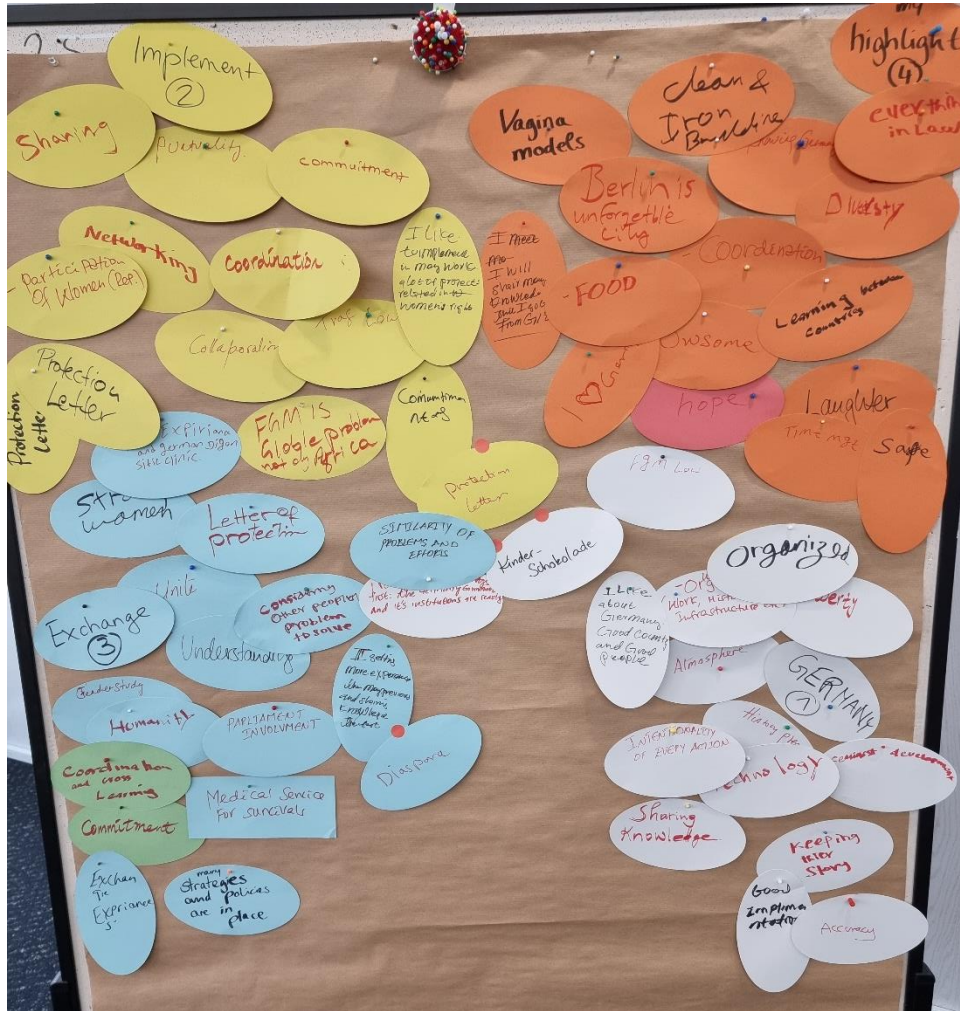


Dr. Annette Mummert, Head of Unit Africa Regional Programmes introducing the Unit 1710 and its projects to the delegation, 11th November 2022

An input on "Religion Matters, partnering with faith actors to overcome Female Genital Mutilation" was presented by Mona Hein from the Sector Programme "Religion and Development". The presentation showed GIZ's experience in collaboration with religious leaders to bring sustainable development and the achievements on different topics. Ms. Aminata Bah, Co-president of the End FGM-Eu, presented the network's effort in advocating and creating awareness to eliminate FGM across Europe. Nora Pistor (Planning Department) gave an overview of GIZ's involvement on Gender Issues and explained the plans for GIZ as an implementation agency to include the newly announced Feminist Development Policy. Following these, all three delegations from Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan presented their countries' efforts, the achievements, and future plans towards the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation and Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM).

During the meeting, different issues were raised and discussed between the delegates and the GIZ representatives:

- Collaboration of GIZ projects in implementing areas
- Possibility of a multisectoral approach to eliminate FGM, Child marriage, and GBV in general
- Sustainability of changes in behavior and practice of harmful practices



Reflections on the study trip

As a conclusion for the weeklong study trip, the delegates were asked what they liked regarding their visit to Germany and would like to implement in the country. The most prominent answers were on the one hand advocating for reconstruction surgery service for survivors of FGM, which is not accessible to women who went through the practice that is causing multiple re-infibulation every time the women gives/gave birth. The other important issue was the adaptation and distribution of the protection letter as information material in the community, especially for the girls and women that are at risk of being cut.

4. Lessons learned/Discussion points

Feminist development policy was one of the crucial subjects that was introduced in detail and covered in depth throughout the study trip. The representatives from the 3 countries asked about the implementation of the policy and asked that this significant chance be turned into an action to help project state members.

The delegation's members and the project itself are conscious of the value of the protection letter and the important role played by FGM-prevention actors in the countries and diaspora communities. They want to disseminate the letter and use it as a highly effective tool for preventing FGM practices.

Most FGM prevention activities implemented in the three countries, whether by the government or local and international NGOs, have a multi-sectoral approach. To make the changes tangible and sustainable, the coordination and collaboration among the different sectors should be strengthened, and there should be a strong commitment by the leaders of each sectors.

Having a criminal law against FGM is a crucial step for the countries, and there should be a methodology for the enforcement of these laws. Additionally, for the effective enforcement of criminal law, there should be a change in the social norm of the community. For this vigorous and continues awareness creation sessions should be implemented.

The danger of FGM is not only at the time it happens; for type 3 FGM the cutting also continues every time the woman has a baby. the survivors get cut open during labor and sewed up again after the baby comes out. To reduce the unmedicalized de-infibulation and re-infibulation process: the delegates believed that reconstruction surgery services should be available for survivors.

5. Participants

	Country delegation	Name	Institution	Position
1	Somalia	Faisal Noor Farah	Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development (Federal Government of Somalia)	Admin and Finance Director
2	Somalia	Sadia Mohamed Nur	Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development (Federal Government of Somalia)	Head of Gender Department
43	Somalia (PL)	Abdi Ahmed Ali	Ministry of Women Development and Family Affairs (Puntland, Somalia)	Gender-Based Violence Advisor
4	Somalia (SL)	Sadia Allin	Plan International Somalia	Head of Mission/Country Director
5	Ethiopia	Zebider Bogale	Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (Ethiopia)	Advisor to the State Minister
6	Ethiopia	Seleshi Tadesse	Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (Ethiopia)	Executive Director for Women's Rights, Protection and Response
7	Ethiopia	Getachew Alito	Ethiopian National Alliance against FGM and Child Marriage	Executive director for Child Right Protection and Response
8	Ethiopia	Zemzem Shikur Muhammed	Ethiopian National Alliance against FGM and Child Marriage/ UNICEF	Child Protection Specialist UNICEF Ethiopia
9	Ethiopia	Mengistie Tegenie	Ethiopian National Alliance against FGM and Child Marriage	Gender-Based Violence Advisor

10	Ethiopia	Fatuma Hanfare	Regional Bureau of Women and Social Affairs (Afar Region)	Women Participation and Mobilization Director
11	Ethiopia	Zahara Abdi	Regional Bureau of Women and Social Affairs (Somali Region)	Women Empowerment Director
12	Ethiopia	Selam Endale	GIZ Ethiopia	Advisor GIZ FGM-Prev
13	Ethiopia	Jana Wegmann	FGM-Prev	Head of Programme GIZ FGM-Prev
14	Ethiopia	Hanna Lena Reich	GIZ Ethiopia	Advisor GIZ FGM-Prev
15	Sudan	Hind Mahmoud	Sudanese Women Health Organization Sudan	Director General
16	Sudan	Ilham Mustafa	Journalists for Children Sudan	Programme Manager
17	Sudan	Dr. Tyseer Elhadi Omer	Gender Studies Institute University of Khartoum	Director General
18	Sudan	Enass Muzamel	Madania Organization	Director General
19	Sudan	Enas Salh	GIZ Sudan	Advisor GIZ FGM-Prev