

We can eliminate FGM in Uganda

Gertrude Chebet Chelogoi had just completed her Primary Leaving Examinations in 1974 when she got news that the ancestral spirits had chosen her to join other girls in the village for the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) rituals. At this time, religion had not penetrated deep into communities where FGM was common.

According to Chelogoi, FGM rituals were then perceived as acts of worship. But as the elders were busy carrying out FGM on girls in the name of ancestral spirits, the church had embarked on a mission to end the practice. The daughters of the clergy went to school, completed studies, got employment, got married, supported their families and communities and even had daughters who were not subjected to FGM.

The struggle that started in the homes of the clergy has now taken over communities all over Sabinio land. With the 2010 FGM Act in place, Female genital mutilation rituals are no longer public events. Young girls are no longer afraid and hundreds are spreading the anti-FGM message among their peers.

The practice is now concentrated in 'isolated communities' where it is secretly carried out. Let us support the church to end this practice.

**Umar Weswala,
Media Practitioner**

LETTER C

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