

Eritrea Launches a National Campaign to End Child Marriage

Asmara, 11 June, 2016: The Ministry of Health in collaboration with the National Union of Eritrean Women, UNICEF, African Union and UNFPA launched a national campaign to end child marriage in Eritrea. The event attended by the African Union Social Affairs Commissioner, Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Koloko, senior government officials and diplomats was opened by H.E. Ms. Amina Nurhussien, Minister of Health. Her Excellency, in her opening remarks noted that this monumental event marks the strong will and commitment of government and partners to work in concerted effort to end child marriage in Eritrea.



H.E. Ms. Amina Nurhussien, Minister of Health

During the event, Mr. Emmanuel Kamuli presented the key note address on behalf of Dr. Suleiman Braimoh UNICEF-Eritrea Representative. He highlighted “Child marriage is detrimental for the holistic development of the girl child.” He continued, “These multiple violation of children’s rights include rights to health, nutrition, education, freedom from violence, abuse and exploitation and it deprives the child of his/her childhood.” He underscored the importance of multi-sectoral intervention to stop the practise.



Mr. Emmanuel Kamuli, Chief of UNICEF Education and Child Protection Programme



Ms. Teka Tesfamicheal, President of National Union of Eritrean Women

Ms. Teka also added the initiative to end child marriage started during the struggle for independence. Since then, Eritrea made great strides to put legal instruments in place, to sensitise communities and ensure services are made available for victims. “Today as we stand here” she continued “We will not only recommit ourselves to end the practise but also ensure that the legal instruments are enforced”

Religious leaders as partners of change attended the launching event. Speaking on their behalf, Reverend Yosief noted, “We commit to work together to end child marriage, but to reach our destination, our long walk should start now.” Emotional recount of victims were also presented.



Religious leaders attending the event

Multitude of students bearing the slogan “End Child Marriage” marched through the city to show their support for the event. Cultural troupes performed drama skits and songs depicting the stifling effects of child marriage on girls and the society at large.

Pictorial



Dignitaries at the event



The accomplished 27 years old Mihret Beraki



Drama skits by Wari Drama Group



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