



WHEN: 2018 to 2021

WHERE: Tharaka South and Igambangombe Sub-Counties in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya

CHILDFUND LIFE STAGES: 2 (6-14 years old) & 3 (15-24 years old)

REACH: Approximately 19,500 children

SUPPORTED BY: ChildFund Korea

IMPLEMENTED BY: ChildFund Kenya

EVIDENCE LEVEL: Preliminary

GOALS: • Increase the responsiveness of child protection (CP) mechanisms. • Build the capacity of community-based CP champions. • Increase participation of children in their own protection. • Decrease the number of girls adversely affected by harmful cultural practices, such as female genital mutilation (FGM).

HOW WE STUDIED THE PROGRAM:

- A one-group pretest-posttest study design.
- Data were collected with child and caregiver surveys, stakeholder key informant interviews and case studies¹³.

¹² Ondoro, K. & Osir, B. (2020). *Mid-term evaluation of the Jukumu Letu child protection project in Tharaka South and Igambangombe sub-counties*. Nairobi: African Research and Development Ltd. (ARD).

¹³ According to research conducted by Plan International Kenya, GTZ and the Kenya Bureau of Statistics, female genital mutilation is at 95 percent especially in Tharaka South and 58 percent in other parts of Tharaka Nithi county. <https://kw.awcfs.org/article/fgm-a-thorny-issue-for-tharaka-nithi-girls/>

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Increased reporting of CP issues and awareness of existing child protection systems:** Children who are aware of CP reporting mechanisms for incidences of child abuse and violence increased by 33% (from 35% to 68%). There was also a 15% improvement in children reporting cases of abuse (from 10% to 25%).
- **Increased children’s involvement in their own protection:** The highest increases were in children’s voices being considered on protection issues affecting them (about 91%), children empowered to actively speak out about child abuses (about 90%), and creation of avenues for children to air grievances and give their opinion on issues affecting them (about 82%).
- **Changing community perceptions of FGM:** There was a considerable decline in the positive perception of FGM. An aggregate of 97% of respondents affirmed that most community members will accept alternative rites of passage for girls instead of FGM compared to 16% previously, with change being highly attributed to education (99%).

LESSONS LEARNED:

- Given that most of the children preferred to report cases of abuse to caregivers, or close relatives, more targeted community awareness sessions and training should be directed to caregivers on child rights, child protection and care, existing systems, and reporting channels.

SDG CONTRIBUTIONS



“**Positive change** has been brought about by the efforts of projects like the “Jukumu Letu” educating parents on the **rights of children** frequently in meetings and the negative [effects] associated with harmful traditional practices such as FGM has on girls”

— *In-depth interview, female participant*