

25 January 2022. PRESS RELEASE FROM FORUM AGAINST HARMFUL PRACTICES (FAHP):

POST-MORTEM OF 21-YEAR-OLD WOMAN IN BONTHE DISTRICT CONFIRMS DEATH DUE TO FGM

On Monday 20th December 2021, 21-year-old Maseray Sei died in the bondo bush after undergoing female genital mutilation (FGM/C), in Nyandahun village, Imperri Chiefdom, Bonthe district. She is survived by two children: 1 boy aged 4 years and 6-months old baby boy. Her death was entirely preventable.

A post-mortem was conducted on 14 January and confirmed the cause of death as haemorrhaging (profuse bleeding) as a result of clitorrectomy. Clitorrectomy is the removal of the clitoris during FGM/C

The Forum Against Harmful practices (FAHP) holds the view that FGM at any age is a fundamental abuse of the rights of women and girls, is dangerous to health of women and girls, and offers no medical benefits. As in this tragic case, age is no protection against the harmful consequences of FGM – physical, sexual, emotional. FAHP and its partners call for the total abandonment of this harmful practice for all women and girls of all ages through a ban on FGM/C. Uphold the Bondo heritage but drop the FGM/C.

FAHP has been supporting the family of the deceased and, alongside the family, applaud the Sierra Leone Police for the arrests made and the ordering of a post-mortem to ascertain the cause of death. FAHP and the family are seeking for justice for the death of Maseray and call on Government through the Judiciary to hold those responsible to account. We also call on the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to provide the necessary support and welfare assistance for Maseray's two surviving children.

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Executive Secretary - FAHP

