



The Role of Audience Monitoring Surveys (AMS) In Strengthening Radio Talk Shows (RTS) By Unicef Ethiopia on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) And Child Marriage Programs

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ABSTRACT

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child marriage (CM) are some of the worst harmful practices rampant in Ethiopia. Population Media Center-Ethiopia (PMC-E), in partnership with UNICEF and UNFPA, have been broadcasting radio talk shows (RTS) in select regions of the country to address these issues. The main objective of this study was to establish the popularity and relevance of these shows in addressing the issue of FGM and CM. Specific objectives were establishing respondent awareness of the shows, analyzing the knowledge gained from the issues raised in the shows, establishing the convenience of RTS broadcasting times to listeners, and offering suggestions for improvement. The study used a cross-sectional population-based household survey design in which men and women aged 15 – 49 years were interviewed in two phases. A total of 860 respondents in Phase I and 741 in Phase II were interviewed using questionnaires. Data was analyzed descriptively. Findings show that the reach of RTS was not good, attributable to lack of access to radio, mobile phone, or/and lack of electricity or time to listen to the shows. The content, time and presenter skills and creativity were convenient to listeners and the popular topics discussed were FGM, CM, and gender equality. There was a significant difference between people who listened to the shows and those who didn't in regard to understanding FGM and CM issues. The study recommends government of Ethiopia subsidize the cost of radios purchased by people in target areas as well as promote the use of alternative media to present topics discussed in the RTS.

Keywords: Radio Talk Shows, Female Genital Mutilation, Child Marriage, Audience monitoring, Harmful practices

INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

Harmful Practices (HP) against women have significant adverse impacts on the physical as well as mental health of the victims. Due to their very nature of promoting gender inequality, these practices are a violation of the rights of girls and women further increase the risk of gender-based violence, and threaten the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child marriage (CM) are some of these harmful practices rampant in some parts of the world. Globally, close to 200 million women have been circumcised, and two million girls are estimated to be circumcised each year [1] while an estimated 15 million girls marry before the age of 18 [2]. In Africa, FGM and CM are highly prevalent practices. While the marrying age has been rising across the continent (Africa), over a third of women are married before their 18th birthday [3]. In Ethiopia, HPs are widely practiced as four in ten young women are married or get into union before the age of 18 while six million girls were married before the age of 15 [4]. With its high national incidence rate (65%), Ethiopia also has the world's second-largest total number of women and girls who have experienced FGM, next to Egypt [5].

In order to eliminate HPs, the Ethiopian government has put in place various legal and policy frameworks and institutional structures that support the implementation of these frameworks. The country has adopted internationally binding documents such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). At the national level, the

constitution extends to women the guarantee of freedom from HPs, while at the state level, they are guaranteed the right to be free from harmful customary practices [6].

Due to the concerted efforts of all stakeholders in terms of the adoption of successful strategies such as broad-based participation and targeted interventions, encouraging results have been witnessed, and progress has accelerated in recent years [7]. Although these results are encouraging, it should be noted that the problem is still persistent in the country, more in some parts than in others. Recognizing this problem, it is imperative that all concerned stakeholders scale up their efforts. The government, UNICEF, UNFPA, Non-government organizations (NGOs), and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are putting concerted efforts to end FGM and CM by 2030. As part of such efforts, Population Media Center-Ethiopia (PMC-E), in partnership with UNICEF and UNFPA, has been broadcasting radio talk shows (RTS) that address these issues by reinforcing the intensive community level activities like community conversation as well as reaching the unreached by the various community projects implemented by other support organizations.

PMC-E has been broadcasting three unique radio talk shows (RTSs) in Oromia (*Ofiishiif*), Afar (*Mano*), and Somalia (*Himilo*) regions of Ethiopia since April 2021. Later, PMC-E also started broadcasting another RTS in the SNNP region in September 2021 called *Yalaleke Guzo*, which makes a total of four RTSs. The first three RTSs (*Ofiishiif*, *Mano*, and *Himilo*) began broadcasting in April 2021 and will end in September 2022, while the fourth RTS (*Yalaleke Guzo*) began broadcasting in September 2021 and will end in September 2022. All broadcasts were done through accessible radio stations across Ethiopia. The Audience Monitoring Survey (AMS) was planned to strategically assess all four RTSs over two data collection rounds (Phase I and Phase II) whose combined timelines are from April 2021 to September 2022. The potential target audiences for the RTSs include people within the ages of 15 years and above including men and women of reproductive age (15 – 49) in the intervention Woredas.

Objectives of the AMSs

The main objective of the AMS was to assess the popularity and relevance of RTSs among residents of select broadcasting regions/ Woredas in addressing the issue of FGM and CM.

The specific objectives are:

- To establish respondent awareness of RTSs in their native languages.
- To analyze the knowledge gained from the issues raised in the RTSs.
- To establish the convenience of RTS broadcasting times to listeners.
- To obtain suggestions on how to improve RTSs.

Scope of the AMSs

The Audience Monitoring Surveys for the radio talk shows were done in selected projects in the Woredas of Oromia, SNNP, Afar, and Somali regions of Ethiopia. Phase I and Phase II of the AMS were conducted in different Woredas of the project regions. This report covers the findings of both phases. The AMS was planned to strategically assess all four RTSs whose combined timelines are from April 2021 to September 2022.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a cross-sectional, population-based household survey, a method of collecting information by face-to-face interviewing using a structured questionnaire on a tablet or Smartphone. The target population was members of a household (men or women aged 15 - 49s) from randomly selected Kebeles of the 4 selected intervention Woredas. The project targeted a total of 16 specific zones and Woredas across the four regions. The locations for Woredas were randomly selected for each phase of the AMS and no selected location was revisited in the subsequent phase. Thus, Woredas / Zones considered for Phase I and Phase II of the AMS were different. For both phases of the project, four Woredas were randomly selected in consultation with PMC-E. Each targeted zone has one targeted Woreda and from that target Woreda, urban and rural Kebeles were randomly selected to be included in the study. Comparable numbers of rural and urban participants were recruited to participate in the surveys. The sample size was calculated using the single population proportion formula ($n = ((Z_{\infty}/2)^2 * P(1-P))/d^2$). Calculations assumed a 5% margin of error for a 95% confidence interval and a 5% level of significance, resulting in a sample of n=384 respondents. Further, the design effect of this sampling technique was taken into account by multiplying the calculated sample size by a factor of 2, resulting in n=768 respondents. The 2017 projected population data at the Woreda level by Ethiopia's Central Statistical Agency (CSA) were used to calculate sample respondents at regional, zonal, and Woreda levels. Considering the non-response rate using the formula $n/(1-NR)$, where NR is a non-response rate of 10%, the final sample size was determined to be n=860 respondents. The number of sample respondents within each Woreda was determined based on the probability proportional to Size (PPS) method, size being the number of Woreda population. Thus, in Phase I, a total sample of 860 respondents participated in the survey, and using the same formula and approach a total sample of 741 participants was chosen for Phase II from the four randomly selected project Woredas as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Sites and Participants

Region	Phase I					Phase II				
	Zone	Woreda	Samples			Zone	Woreda	Samples		
			Rural Kebele	Urban Kebele	Total			Rural Kebele	Urban Kebele	Total
Oromia	East Hararghe	Haromaya	Dire Qabsu (297)	Adele (82)	379	West Hararghe	Doba	Ifa AMan (126)	Doba 01 (122)	248
SNNP	Sidama	Dara	Meahiso Geter (177)	Kebado Selam (28)	205	Hadiya	Duna	Somicho (109)	Ansho (109)	218
Afar	Zone 1	Mille	Hintimegeta (70)	Haris (56)	126	Zone 1	Chifra	Shekay Boru (87)	Chifra 01 (87)	174
Somali	Gode	Gode	Kunka (88)	Gode 08 (62)	150	Qorahe	Shegosh	Karindabayel (51)	Golhowley (50)	101
Total			662	198	860			373	368	741

Various sampling methods were used to arrive at the final sample size. At the first (regional) stage of sampling, the four regions– Afar, Oromia, Somali, and SNNP were purposively selected, project intervention being the criteria for selection. At the zonal level, four Zones were randomly selected from the target regions and 4 Woredas were randomly selected from the zones. From each Woreda, Kebeles were stratified according to rural or urban while random sampling was used to select the specific targeted Kebeles. A total of 4 rural and 4 urban Kebeles

were included in each phase of the study. The PPS method was used to determine the number of sample households within each Kebele. In order to select sample representative households from each sampled Kebele, a cluster random sampling technique was employed based on the settlement of households in the Kebele. In each selected Kebele, urban and rural Kebeles were further clustered into villages/Gottes. In each Kebele, villages were randomly selected for the study. Once the total number of households and the proposed number of sample respondents in each village were determined, households were randomly selected. This procedure provided greater assurance that every household was adequately represented in the final sample and thus generally resulted in an increased sampling reliability. After households were determined, only one individual respondent was selected from the sample households. In the case where more than one eligible respondent was found in the household, the *Kish Grid* technique was employed, allowing the interviewer to randomly select an eligible respondent from the list of household members.

In phase I, a structured 8-section questionnaire, which took 50-60 minutes per respondent, was used to gather reliable information relevant to address research objectives. In Phase II, a similar questionnaire in structure, but with 5 sections, was used. Both questionnaires were translated into local languages (Amharic, Afar, Oromo, and Somali languages). *KoBoCollect* app available on mobile phones and tablets was used to administer the questionnaire/collect data. A professional Data Manager ensured the quality of the collected data. Collected data was cleaned to get rid of outliers, errors, and incompleteness and encoded into the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS). Descriptive outputs including frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviations were used.

RESULTS

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

In phase I, the majority (77.7%) of the participants were recruited from rural locations and 23.3 from urban areas, 59.0% were female and 41% were male, while the majority of 34.4% were aged 26-35 years, and the rest were aged 15-25 years (19.7%), 36-45 years (25.5%), and 46-49 years (3.1%). Thus, the majority of those who participated in the study ranged from adolescents to youthful adults (adults below 45 years). Around 80% of participants have an educational level of primary education and below. Almost three-fourths of participants were found to be married and of the Muslim religion, while Protestants were 19.3%. Finally, about 74.2% of participants were parents. In Phase II, 33.5%, 29.4%, 23.5%, and 13.6% of the total study participants were recruited from Oromia, SNNP, Afar, and Somali regions, respectively. Compared to Phase I, an increment in samples is observed in the SNNP and Afar regions. Very comparable numbers of rural and urban participants participated in the study (50.3% rural vs. 49.7% urban). However, the gender of respondents in Phase II (62.2% Female vs. 37.8% Male) shows that more women than men participated in Phase II of the study compared to Phase I indicating that more of those found to fit the purpose of the study in Phase II were females. Other demographics are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Data

Categories	Characteristics	Phase I	Phase II
Region	Oromia	44.1%	33.5%
	Sidama / SNNP	23.8%	29.4%
	Afar	14.7%	23.5%
	Somali	17.4%	13.6%
Location	Rural	77.7%	50.3%
	Urban	22.3%	49.7%
Sex	Female	59.0%	62.2%
	Male	41.0%	37.8%
Age	15-25	19.7%	42.9%
	26-35	34.4%	32.3%
	36-45	25.5%	20.6%
	46-49	3.1%	4.2%
Education	Uneducated (not able to read or write)	32.2%	21.9%
	Informal Education (Religious, Adult education)	10.1%	14.2%
	Primary	36.0%	32.5%
	Secondary	15.9%	20.5%
	Tertiary (College Diploma)	4.1%	4.3%
	Degree	1.2%	6.2%
	Advanced Degree (masters or PhD)	0.5%	.1%
	Other	-	.1%
Marital Status	Single	18.6%	20.6%
	Married	72.4%	68.3%
	Divorced	4.8%	4.9%
	Widowed	3.8%	5.0%
	Separated (not together for different reasons)	0.3%	1.2%
Religion	Orthodox	3.5%	3.8%
	Islam	77.1%	66.9%
	Catholic	0.1%	.4%
	Protestant	19.3%	28.9%

Awareness of the RTSs

Access to Media Infrastructures:

Table 3: Access to Media Infrastructures

Access to...	Phase I		Phase II	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Working television	14.7%	85.3%	25.1%	74.9%
Working radio	30.0%	70.0%	44.4%	55.6%
Mobile phone / smart	19.9%	80.1%	39.3%	60.7%
Mobile phone / feature	70.8%	29.2%	79.6%	20.4%

The first phase of AMS established participants' lower access to media infrastructures. The majority of the participants did not have a working television (85.3%), a working radio (70%), and a Smartphone (80.1%). However, about 70.8% of the participants were found to own feature mobile phones. In the second phase, the study found similar results as the majority had

no access to a working television (74.9%), working radio (55.6%), and mobile, or Smartphone (60.7%). However, a larger number of participants in Phase II than in Phase I accessed a mobile feature (79.6%) and had better access to media infrastructures than participants in Phase I.

People Aware of RTS:

As shown in Table 4 below, in Phase I, out of the total respondents who participated in this study, 24.5% from Oromia had heard of *Ofiishiif*, 18% from SNNP (Sidama) had heard of *Yalaleke Guzo*, 63.5% from Afar have heard *Mano*, and 42% from Somali have heard *Himilo*. This implies that program awareness is high for *Mano* compared to the other programs. Overall, about 31.7% (N= 273 out of 860) have heard of the RTS broadcasted in their respective areas. However, a marked difference was observed in Phase II of the survey. Overall, about 80.7% of the study participants (N = 598 out of 741) had heard of the RTSs. Specifically, about 84.3% of respondents from Oromia (West Hararghe – Doba), 83.9% of respondents from SNNP (Hadiya - Duna), 71.3% of respondents from Afar (Zone 1 - Chifra), and 81.2% of respondents from Somali (Qorahe - Shegosh) have heard of *Ofiishiif*, *Yalaleke Guzo*, *Mano*, and *Himilo* RTSs, respectively. Relatively, the least figure has been seen in Afar mainly because the data collection was undertaken after months of armed conflict in the area and subsequent government and community system failures.

Table 4: Number of Study Participants who have heard about the RTSs

Have you heard of...	Phase I (N = 860)						Phase II (N = 741)					
	Yes		No		Doesn't Know		Yes		No		Doesn't Know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Ofiishiif</i>	93	24.5	264	69.7	22	5.8	209	84.3	39	15.7	0	0.0
<i>Yalaleke Guzo</i>	37	18.0	164	80.0	4	2.0	183	83.9	25	11.5	10	4.6
<i>Mano</i>	80	63.5	46	36.5	0	0.0	124	71.3	50	28.7	0	0.0
<i>Himilo</i>	63	42.0	78	52.0	9	6.0	82	81.2	16	15.8	3	3.0
Overall	273	31.7	552	64.2	35	4.1	598	80.7	130	17.5	13	1.8

Concerning the reasons why respondents failed to hear the RTSs, the findings indicated that in phase I of the AMS, across all locations, not having access to radio was the main reason for not hearing about the shows. Respondents lacking time to listen to the shows was the second main reason for not listening to the shows. The inability to access a phone was the third most common cause of respondents failing to listen to the shows. In Phase II, the results were similar to Phase 1; Lack of access to a radio and unavailability of time to listen to the show were the first and second causes of failure to listen to RTSs. However, different from the result in Phase I, the third reason for failure to listen to the shows in Phase II was the lack of electricity. These findings cut across all regions and RTSs.

Listenership of the RTSs:

The AMS attempted to identify the proportion of participants who listen to the RTSs among those who have the opportunity to hear about the RTSs in their respective communities.

Table 5: Number of Study Participants who have heard about the RTSs

RTSs	Do you listen to the RTSs?							
	Phase I				Phase II			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Ofiishiif</i>	65	69.9	28	30.1	192	91.9	17	8.1
<i>Yalaleke Guzo</i>	24	64.9	13	35.1	117	63.9	66	36
<i>Mano</i>	43	53.8	37	46.3	87	70.2	37	29.8
<i>Himilo</i>	37	58.7	26	41.3	75	91.5	7	8.5
Total	169	61.9	104	38.1	471	78.8	127	21.2

Accordingly, during Phase I of the AMS, 61.9% of participants who heard about RTS were found to listen to the shows. *Ofiishiif* and *Mano* had the highest number of listeners while *Yalaleke Guzo* had the least although the total reach of this program was small (37 people). Proportionally, the highest numbers of listeners were observed among those targeted by *Ofiishiif* (69.9%) and *Yalaleke Guzo* (64.9%). During Phase II, a significant difference was observed both in terms of number and proportion to respective RTSs. Overall, compared to phase I, a larger number of participants, 78.8% (471) were found to listen to the RTSs. Specifically, a significant proportion of listeners were found in communities targeted by *Ofiishiif* (91.9%) and *Himilo* (91.5%). The least listenership in percentage terms was observed among communities targeted by *Yalaleke Guzo* (63.9%). However, in terms of number of listeners, *Himilo* had the least (n=75).

Degree of Listenership:

Table 6: Degree of Listenership to the RTSs

How often do you listen to the RTS?	Phase I					Phase II				
	<i>Ofiishiif</i>	<i>Yalaleke Guzo</i>	<i>Mano</i>	<i>Himilo</i>	Over all	<i>Ofiishiif</i>	<i>Yalaleke Guzo</i>	<i>Mano</i>	<i>Himilo</i>	Over all
<i>Always</i>	6.2%	29.2%	27.9%	16.2%	17.2%	10.9%	7.7%	2.3%	2.7%	7.2%
<i>Very Often</i>	21.5%	12.5%	37.2%	51.4%	30.8%	60.4%	28.2%	20.7%	16.0%	38.0%
<i>Sometimes</i>	50.8%	20.8%	23.3%	16.2%	32.0%	25.5%	37.6%	55.2%	73.3%	41.6%
<i>Rarely</i>	21.5%	37.5%	11.6%	16.2%	20.1%	3.1%	26.5%	21.8%	8.0%	13.2%

As shown in Table 6, Phase I, of the AMS established that the overall majority (32.0%) listened to RTSs 'sometimes' while the least number of listeners (17.2%) listened to the RTS always. The study found that the majority (50.8%) of the listeners to *Ofiishiif* listened to the show 'sometimes', the majority (37.5%) of *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners listened to the show 'rarely', while the *Mano* and *Himilo* shows were listened to 'very often' by the majority (37.2%) and 51.4% respectively. In Phase II, marked differences in listenership status were observed. Overall, about 38% of listeners listened to the RTS "very often" and 41.6% of listeners listened to the RTS "Sometimes." Comparatively, unlike in Phase I, *Ofiishiif* RTS got better listenership status (60.4% listened to the RTS "Very often") while *Mano* and *Himilo* experienced the least number of listeners. However, a large number of listeners targeted by *Yalaeke Guzo* (26.5%) listened to the RTS to a "rarely" extent.

With Whom Listeners Usually Listen to RTSs?

The survey has also attempted to establish with whom listeners usually listen to the RTS in their respective areas.

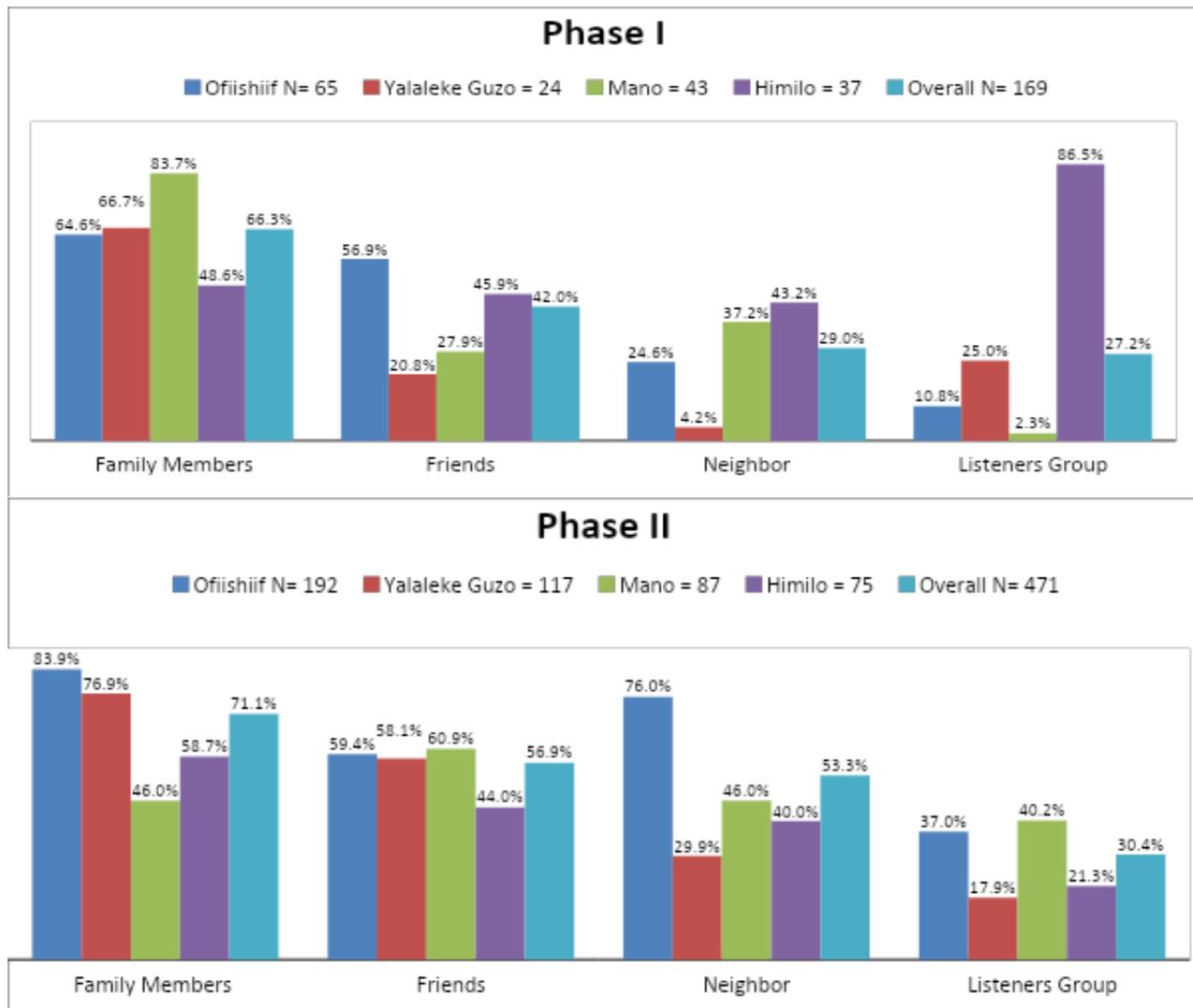


Figure 1: With Whom Listeners Usually Listen to RTSs?

In phase I, most listeners of *Ofiishiif* (64.6%), *Yalaleke Guzo* (66.7%), and *Mano* (83.7%) listened to RTSs with their family members while a significant number of *Himilo* listeners (86.5%) usually listened to the shows in their listeners' group, followed by *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners (25%). In Somali, listening to the *Himilo* RTS with friends (45.9%) and neighbors (43.2%) has been found to be common. Similarly, listening with the neighborhood was a common feature of listeners targeted by *Mano* (37.2%). In phase II it was found that most respondents listen to the RTSs at home with family members (71.1%); followed by friends (56.9%), neighbors (53.3%), and listener group (30.4%). In both phases of the AMS, listening with family members was reported frequently and the lowest report was with listener groups. Specifically, listeners of *Ofiishiif* were found to choose family members (83.9%) and neighbors (76.0%) to listen to the RTS most importantly. *Yalaleke Guzo* is mostly listened to with family members (76.9%) and friends (58.1%). *Mano* listeners had the least listenership experience with family members.

Convenience of RTSs

The AMS also examined the degree of convenience of the RTSs to the respective listeners in terms of content, time, and mode of transmission. The findings are presented as follows.

Table 7: Convenience of RTSs

Items	Phase I					Phase II				
	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
<i>Contents are relevant and appropriate</i>	49.7%	47.9%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	34.0%	63.7%	1.9%	0.4%	0.0%
<i>Date of transmission is convenient</i>	45.6%	46.2%	5.9%	1.8%	0.0%	27.2%	59.9%	5.7%	7.0%	0.2%
<i>Time of transmission is convenient</i>	39.1%	45.0%	5.9%	5.3%	4.1%	22.7%	57.3%	6.2%	13.4%	0.2%
<i>The RTS has been transmitted in a radio station that is highly preferred.</i>	39.1%	47.3%	9.5%	2.4%	0.0%	27.0%	64.3%	4.2%	3.8%	0.2%
<i>Language spoken by actors / presenters is culturally congruent and understandable.</i>	43.8%	49.7%	2.4%	2.4%	1.2%	22.5%	62.2%	4.2%	8.7%	2.1%
<i>Actors/ presenters have good artistic skills required.</i>	43.2%	54.4%	1.8%	0.6%	0.0%	28.7%	66.2%	3.2%	1.5%	0.4%

In both phases, the majority of the responses were “Strongly Agreed” or “Agreed” on all listed items. Thus, it was found that the RTSs contents are relevant and appropriate, as reported by 97.6% of Phase I listeners and 97.7% of Phase II listeners, and that the date of transmission is convenient, as confirmed by the sum of 91.8% of Phase I listeners and 87.1% of Phase II listeners. The time of transmission is convenient among 90.6% of the respondents in Phase I and 80% of participants in Phase II. Regarding the convenience of stations/channels of

transmission where RTSs are broadcasted, a significant majority (86.4% of Phase I and 91.3% of Phase II) confirm that it is convenient and suitable. Likewise, the language spoken by RTS actors/presenters was found to be culturally congruent and understandable, as reported by 93.5% of Phase I and 84.8% of Phase II. Finally, it was found that RTS actors/presenters have good artistic skills required of them. This was confirmed by 97.6% of Phase I and 94.9% of Phase II listeners.

Awareness of the Contents of the RTSs

Table 8: Overall Focus of the RTSs

What is the overall focus of the RTS?	Phase I					Phase II				
	<i>Ofiishiif</i>	<i>Yalaleke Guzo</i>	<i>Mano</i>	<i>Himilo</i>	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Ofiishiif</i>	<i>Yalaleke Guzo</i>	<i>Mano</i>	<i>Himilo</i>	<i>Overall</i>
Ending Child Marriage	100.0%	100.0%	97.7%	100.0%	99.4%	99.5%	77.8%	89.7%	96.0%	91.7%
Ending FGM/C	96.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.8%	99.5%	100.0%	95.4%	98.7%	98.7%
Gender Equality and Women Empowerment	55.4%	29.2%	0.0%	56.8%	37.9%	71.9%	6.0%	20.7%	68.0%	45.4%
Total	84.10%	76.40%	65.90%	85.60%	78.70%	90.30%	61.27%	68.60%	87.57%	78.60%

In both phases of the AMS project, across all target locations, listeners mentioned ending FGM, ending child marriage, and gender equality and women's empowerment as the major focus of the program. Thus, better awareness and knowledge of listeners about the major focus and objectives of the RTSs was evident. Specifically, in Phase I of the AMS, almost all listeners were able to mention ending child marriage and ending FGM as a major focus of respective RTSs. However, gender equality and women empowerment have been underreported (37.9%). Overall, about 78.8% of listeners were able to report the three focus areas of the RTS programs. *Himilo* (85.6%) and *Ofiishiif* (84.1%) listeners had better awareness as compared to *Yalaleke Guzo* (76.4%) and *Mano* (65.9%) listeners. During Phase II, an almost equal level of overall awareness has been found, 78.6% of listeners reported correctly. Listeners had better awareness about ending child marriage, as reported by 98.7% of the listeners. Compared to Phase I, gender equality and women empowerment issue was reported better during Phase II (37.9% in Phase I vs. 45.4% in Phase II). Similar to Phase I, *Ofiishiif* (90.3%) and *Himilo* (87.57%) listeners had better awareness levels while *Yalaleke Guzo* (76.4%) listeners had the least awareness level. Furthermore, participants were also asked to list specific issues covered by the RTSs, and the finding is documented in the table below.

List of Issues Covered in the LTS:

Participants were asked about which program they most recalled listening to often in the RTSs and the findings in Table 8 were given. Child marriage (CM) and its impacts, FGM and its impacts, Women's access to social services, Gender equality issues, and "Legal action on FGM and CM were the top four issues that were recalled by respondents across both phases of the

project. In both rounds “FGM and its impacts” got the highest level of the report (91.1% in Phase I and 97.2% in Phase II), followed by CM and its impacts (88.2% in Phase I and 84.5% in Phase II). Overall, the awareness level of listeners contacted during Phase II of the AMS was found to be higher in almost all issues presented.

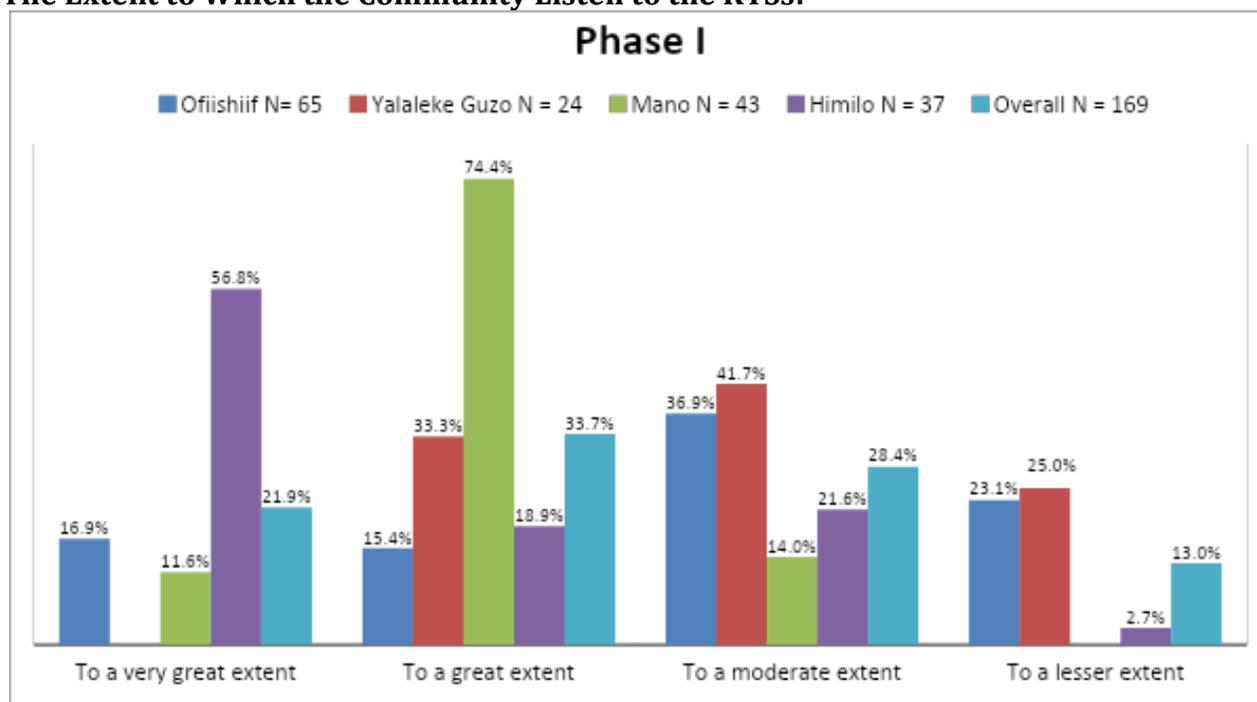
Likewise, participants were asked about which issues or broadcasting programs they believe are most popular within the community because of the RTS broadcastings. Thus, in Phase I, “CM and its impacts”, “FGM and its impacts”, “Gender Equality”, “Women’s access to social services”, and “Legal action on FGM and CM” were the top five issues most popular among the listeners/community. Especially, the first two were most popular among the listeners/community, with 85.2% and 82.2% reports for “FGM and its impacts” and “CM and its impacts” respectively. Issues such as “Reporting FGM and CM cases” and “The role of community agents in fighting FGM and CM” was reported to have no popularity at all, while the majority of the issues entertained in the RTS got the approval of less than 5% of the total listeners participated in Phase I of the AMS project. In Phase II, the highest popularity was reported “FGM and its impacts” issue, with confirmation given from 95.8% of listeners. Next was “CM and its impacts,” which was reported by 85.1% of the listeners. “Women’s access to social services” (38.4%), “Gender Equality” (35.3%), and “Legal action on FGM and CM” (16.8%) were also issues popular among the listeners/community. A thoughtful look into each overall score can help us understand that Phase II fetches better popularity over RTS programs than Phase I. Only three issues have got the approval of below 5% of RTS listeners. What is more, the study also found that the awareness of these issues as drawn from RTS was found to create a better understanding of the risks of FGM and CM among listeners compared to their non-listener counterparts.

Table 9: Awareness of Issues Covered by RTSs

List of Issues Covered by RTSs	Phase I					Phase II				
	<i>Ofiishiif</i>	<i>Yalaleke Guzo</i> N= 24	<i>Mano</i> N= 43	<i>Himilo</i> N= 37	<i>Over all N = 169</i>	<i>Ofiishiif</i> N= 192	<i>Yalaleke Guzo</i> N= 117	<i>Mano</i> N= 87	<i>Himilo</i> N= 75	<i>Over all N = 471</i>
	N= 65									
<i>CM and its impacts</i>	96.90%	87.50%	72.10%	91.90%	88.20%	95.80%	71.80%	87.40%	72.00%	84.50%
<i>FGM and its impacts</i>	89.20%	100.00%	88.40%	91.90%	91.10%	98.40%	100.00%	89.70%	98.70%	97.20%
<i>Women’s access to social services</i>	30.80%	8.30%	4.70%	18.90%	18.30%	67.20%	4.30%	23.00%	50.70%	40.80%
<i>Gender Equality</i>	53.80%	8.30%	14.00%	48.60%	36.10%	49.50%	10.30%	26.40%	52.00%	35.90%
<i>Legal action on FGM and CM</i>	15.40%	50.00%	51.20%	18.90%	30.20%	31.80%	4.30%	18.40%	29.30%	22.10%
<i>Role of religion on fighting FGM and CM</i>	6.20%	8.30%	23.30%	10.80%	11.80%	34.90%	1.70%	24.10%	18.70%	22.10%
<i>Perspectives of Men and Boys in ending FGM and CM</i>	3.10%	16.70%	18.60%	8.10%	10.10%	31.80%	0.00%	19.50%	8.00%	17.80%
<i>Role of teachers in ending FGM and CM</i>	6.20%	4.20%	11.60%	5.40%	7.10%	20.80%	6.80%	17.20%	9.30%	14.90%

<i>The role of School clubs in ending FGM and CM</i>	1.50%	4.20%	2.30%	2.70%	2.40%	22.40%	5.10%	8.00%	9.30%	13.40%
<i>The role of clan leaders on fighting FGM and CM</i>	0.00%	4.20%	4.70%	5.40%	3.00%	22.40%	0.00%	8.00%	10.70%	12.30%
<i>Reporting FGM and CM cases</i>	1.50%	0.00%	0.00%	5.40%	1.80%	18.80%	2.60%	0.00%	8.00%	9.60%
<i>The role of community agents in fighting FGM and CM</i>	3.10%	4.20%	0.00%	8.10%	3.60%	14.60%	0.00%	2.30%	13.30%	8.50%
<i>Drivers of FGM and CM</i>	3.10%	25.00%	2.30%	2.70%	5.90%	9.90%	6.00%	4.60%	2.70%	6.80%
<i>Regional trends in the rate of FGM and CM</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	8.10%	1.80%	7.80%	0.00%	2.30%	9.30%	5.10%
<i>Empowering adolescent girls to prevent FGM/M and CM</i>	0.00%	4.20%	0.00%	2.70%	1.20%	9.40%	0.00%	4.60%	6.70%	5.70%
<i>Increasing the girl-friendliness and responsiveness of services</i>	0.00%	4.20%	0.00%	8.10%	2.40%	9.40%	0.00%	2.30%	5.30%	5.10%
<i>Supporting girls education</i>	0.00%	12.50%	0.00%	8.10%	3.60%	6.80%	12.00%	4.60%	16.00%	9.10%

The Extent to Which the Community Listen to the RTSs:



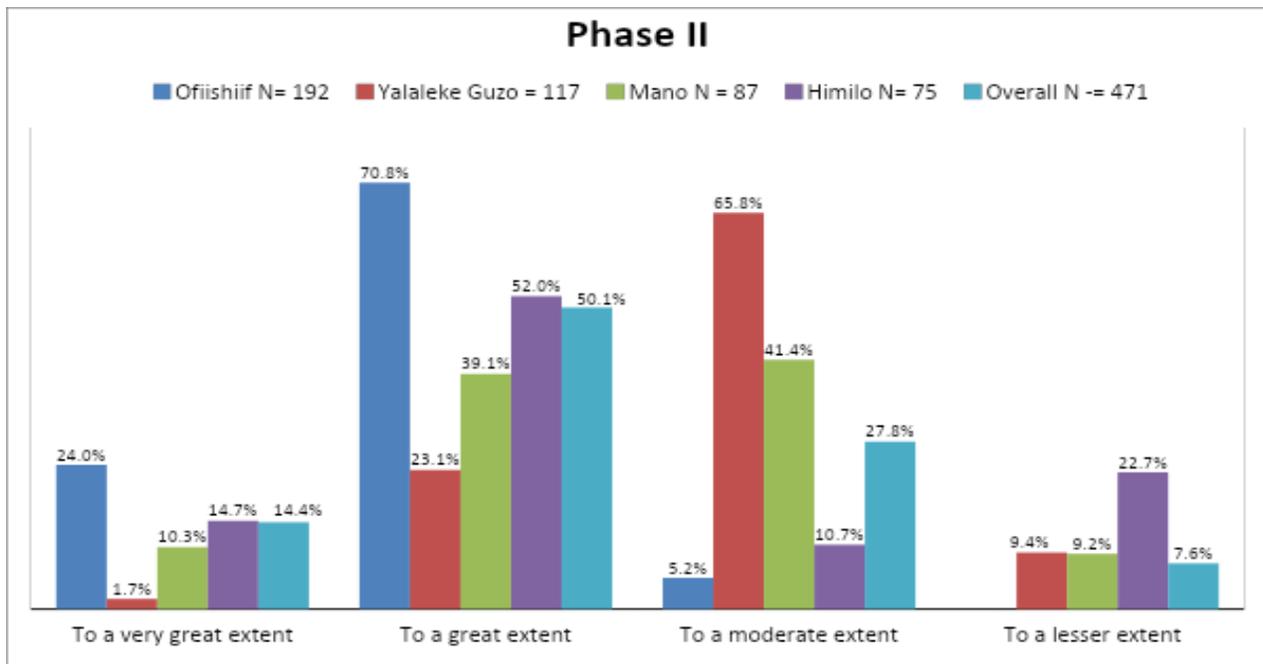


Figure 2: The Extent to Which the Community Listen to the RTSs

Respondents were asked to rate the degree of listenership of the RTSs within the community. As shown in the figure above, in Phase I, 36.9% of *Ofiishiif* listeners believed the community listens to the RTSs "to a moderate extent". Similarly, the majority of respondents who listen to *Yalaleke Guzo* think their community listens to the RTSs "to a moderate extent" (41.7%) and to a great extent (33.3%). Significant majority of listeners of *Mano* think their community listens to the RTSs "to a great extent" (74%). Likewise, majority of respondents who listen to *Himilo* believed that their community listens to the RTSs "to a great extent" (52%). Overall, a total of about 55.6% of the respondents believed that the RTSs are attended well among the community. Especially, *Mano* and *Himilo* were found to have better listenership status in their respective community. In Phase II, unlike Phase I, *Ofiishiif* RTS enjoyed the highest listenership status within the community, where 24% rated "to a very great extent" and 70.8% "to a great extent." The next highest listenership was observed among communities targeted by *Himilo*, as approved by an overall 66.7% of listeners. The least listenership has been witnessed among communities targeted by *Yalaleke Guzo*, where only 24.7% of listeners believed that the RTS is listened to by the community. Overall, about 64.4% of participants believed that RTSs are well listened to by their respective communities. Relatively speaking, better communities' listenership has been reported in Phase II than in Phase I (64.4% vs. 55.6%).

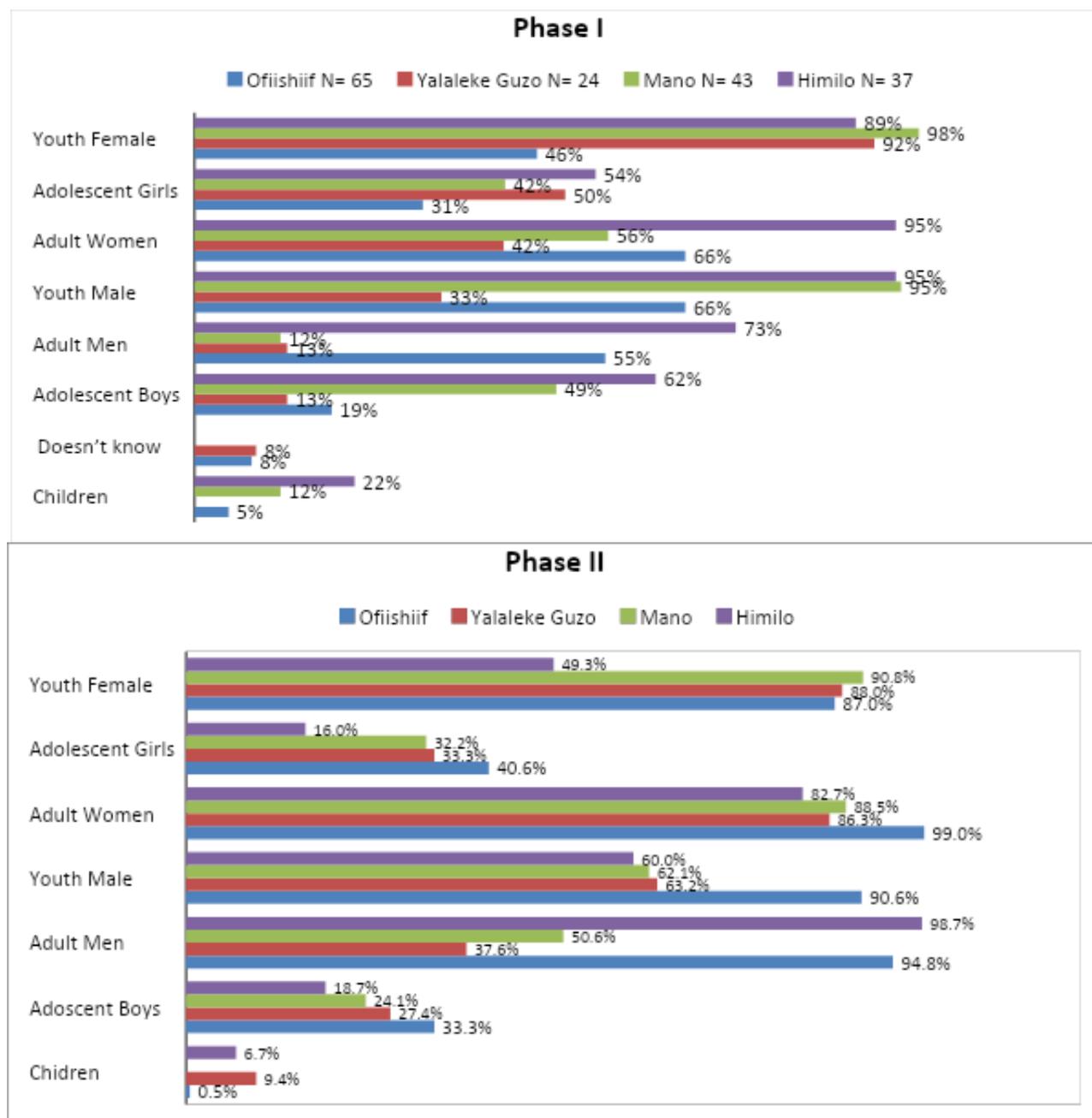


Figure 3: Age Groups of the Community who are more interested in the RTSs

Respondents were asked to point out age groups of the community that are more interested in the RTSs. As shown in the figure above, in Phase I, for *Himilo* 95% adult women, 95% youth male, and 89% youth female are the top three age groups of the community that listen to the show. For *Mano*, 98% youth female, 95% youth male, and 56% adult women are the top three age groups of the community that listen to the show. For *Yalaleke Guzo*, 92% of young females, 50% of adolescent girls, and 42% of adult women are the top three age groups of the community that listen to the show. For *Ofiishiif*, 66% youth male and adult women, 55% adult male, are the top three age groups of the community that listen to the show. Adolescent girls and boys targeted by *Ofiishiif* are reported to be listening to the show at a lower extent, as compared to other groups of listeners.

In Phase II, adult women, young females, and young males were the three top age groups identified as good listeners of the RTS. Adult women were claimed to be active listeners in all four locations, getting approval from more than 80% of the listening respondents and especially from *Ofiishiif* listeners (99%). Except in the Somali region, young females were the second-rated active listeners of the RTSs. However, in Oromia, the participation of adult men (94.8%) and young males (90.6%) has been worth noting. Moreover, in communities targeted by *Himilo*, the study explored adult men as active listeners, as confirmed by 98.7% of listeners.

Suggestions to Improve the RTSs

Respondents were asked to forward suggestions on how they would like the RTS to be designed and transmitted. Suggestions were provided in terms of content relevance and appropriateness, time of transmission, radio station and channel preference, skills, and cultural congruence of the language spoken by actors, and continuity and sustainability of the RTS. Findings in Phase I have been different from Phase II and hence coding is categorized in different ways.

Overall, listeners who participated in Phase I were in favor of the radio talk show broadcast. They liked the programs to stay as they claimed the contents were relevant, the programmes were attractive, the date of transmission was adequate, the time of transmission was appropriate, and the skills and languages spoken by RTS actors were suitable.

However, in terms of content relevance and appropriateness, an increment of coverage was recommended by *Mano* listeners, and the addition of rape-related issues and transmission by local languages by *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners. The need to have additional days of transmission was also suggested by participants targeted by *Yalaleke Guzo* and *Mano*. Participants from all sites suggested changing the transmission of RTSs to the night time thinking it is convenient to listen to the radio as it is claimed to be working off time. Extending the length of transmission was especially suggested by *Yalaleke Guzo* and *Mano* listeners. In terms of skills and cultural congruence of the language spoken by actors, more than half of the participants targeted by *Yalaleke Guzo* highlighted the importance of using local languages for transmitting RTS programs and recruiting actors with good acting skills.

Finally, in terms of continuity and sustainability of the RTSs, the majority of participants believe the RTSs are good and suitable and should continue as they are. Especially, the RTSs have been highly recommended to sustain by *Yalaleke Guzo* (95.8%) and *Mano* (90.7%) listeners. However, participants targeted by *Ofiishiif* highlighted the importance of having additional days of transmission while deciding to sustain the RTS programs.

In Phase II, similar questions were presented, and different responses have been established. As shown in Tables 15 and 16 below, ranges of suggestions have been secured, and most are very constructive and helpful to improve the RTSs. In terms of content relevance and appropriateness, a significant majority reported that programmes are exciting and attractive. This is especially reported by *Himilo* (100%), *Mano* (90.8%), and *Ofiishiif* (90.6%) listeners. However, slight reservation has been sought among listeners targeted by *Yalaleke Guzo*, with the approval of 73.6% of listeners. *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners need longer transmission time (11.1%). In Afar, around 6.9% of listeners suggest that the RTS shall resume as before, perhaps because there is an interruption in the transmission of the RTS in some areas.

In terms of date and time of transmission, mixed result has been found. With date, for instance, almost three-fourths of *Ofiishiif* (71.9%) and *Himilo* (77.3%) listeners are happy with the date of transmission while about half of *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners are reserved. *Ofiishiif* and *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners suggest the transmission date be on Saturday and Sunday. With the time of transmission, the majority of RTS listeners were happy with the time of transmission, believing it was appropriate and interesting. However, it has been suggested that transmission to be in the morning and evening. However, 25% of *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners need the time of transmission to be in the afternoon.

The fourth suggestion was gathered in terms of radio station and channel preference. Some listeners targeted by *Yalaleke Guzo* suggest the transmission be done on *Dehub* radio which is more common to them. Besides, *Ofiishiif* listeners suggest the need to have the show aired on more channels.

In terms of skills and cultural congruence of language spoken by actors, all except *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners are happy with the culture and language spoken by RTS actors. *Yalaleke Guzo* listeners believed that the RTS should be transmitted via the local language, i.e., *Hadiya* language. Finally, findings on suggestions in terms of continuity and sustainability of the RTSs fetch positive results. Listeners believed that the RTS programs should continue as they are, in spite of acknowledging broadcasting time is short and needs additional time.

DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Factors

The majority of the participants in both phases of the study were recruited from rural locations although there was an attempt to balance between rural and urban participants. Participants were predominantly female and had low education attainment. As already established in the literatures [8], being a rural dweller and having low education are drivers for the practice of FGM and CM hence the reason why prevalence was high among the targeted study areas.

Access and Awareness on RTS

Feature phones are the most accessed media infrastructure from which the RTS can be listened. There is lower access to other media infrastructure including working television, working radio, or a Smartphone. This positions the feature phones as the readily accessible media through which the shows are listened to compared to the other forms of media. The low education and rural dwellers could be the explanation for this variation in media access as people with these characteristics have a lower economic means or will to acquire the lowly accessed media infrastructure (working television, working radio, or a Smartphone) [10] compared to a feature phone which is considered cheaper to the former. However, as times go by and as people's awareness about the media grows and their economic status changes or the gadgets become cheaper, adoption of the lowly accessed media is expected to grow which is evidenced in the findings from Phase II.

Concerning the awareness of RTSs, only a third of the people in the selected regions were aware of RTS during the first phase of the study. This is a low number that requires that the barriers to access to RTS be overcome to enhance awareness and reach. However, during the second phase of the study, it was revealed that over 80% of the people in the selected regions were aware of the RTSs, an indication of growth. Perhaps during the second phase, the short-

term barriers had been dealt with paving the way for increased awareness. The common ones among participants in the selected regions are *Ofiishiif* for Oromia, *Yalaleke Guzo* for SNNP (Sidama), *Mano* for Afar, and *Himilo* for Somali. Program awareness is high for *Mano* compared to the rest of the programs.

Although lack of access to radio and phone were some of the deterrents to hearing RTSs (already explained in the previous paragraphs), lack of time to listen to the talk shows was the second main reason for not listening to the shows as well as lack of electricity which was the other factor that deters hearing RTS among the targeted people. Inadequate time to listen to the shows is indicated by the rural culture which is often labor-intensive denying subjects the time to go find a radio somewhere where they can listen to the shows. Lack of electricity constrains the powering of radios [11] and could be one of the reasons some people have not thought of accessing this medium of communication. These findings are in tandem with those submitted by Mtega [12].

Phase I findings revealed that the majority of those who had heard about RTS were listening to the programs. Thus, awareness was directly associated with interest or consumption [13]. This offers the encouragement that stakeholders must continue promoting the creation of awareness and eradication of barriers to awareness as one of the determinants of consumption (listening). *Ofiishiif* and *Mano* are popular shows listened to by people. *Yalaleke Guzo* and *Himilo*, which are the least listened-to shows, should be promoted to enhance their popularity.

Degree of Listenership

The majority of listeners listened to RTSs 'sometimes' indicating that people of the select region who could access the RTSs had not made it a priority to listen to the RTS broadcasted to them. Perhaps the listenership came about by chance. Specifically, *Mano* and *Hamilo* were the only shows listened to 'very often' while *Ofiishiif* and *Yalaleke Guzo* were listened to sometimes or rarely respectively. As such, the less often listened-to shows need to be enhanced to make them an always favorite to listeners. Often listening to content (repetition) enhances memory and shows the significance of the issues presented to the community [11] hence its effect is greater than when one listens to it rarely or according to chance.

Listeners of *Ofiishiif*, *Yalaleke Guzo*, and *Mano* listened to the shows with their family members while a significant number of *Himilo* listeners listened to the show with their listeners' group. As such, family members were an important accompaniment for the listeners either this occurred by coincidence (the show began when all family members had congregated at home from farm work or while basking or enjoying their favorite dishes like *Injera* or tea), or by design (where parents (who were the main participants in the study) determine that all their family members should congregate and listen to the shows due to its informative nature). Listening to the shows with family members is very instrumental in nurturing family culture towards the issues being spoken in the show and can generate a greater impact [13]. Listening in the company of family is also preferred than when one listens with friends or alone because it is easier to influence family members than people you are not related to [14].

Convenience of RTSs

The broadcasted RTS content is relevant and appropriate, is transmitted on a convenient date and time, and channels/stations, are convenient and suitable, the language used in conveying

the content is culturally congruent and understandable and the actors/ presenters have good artistic skills required of them. Generally, the content and the conduct of the content presenters were convenient to participants. This portrays a picture of well-researched and presented content that is appealing and relevant to the issues and needs of the audience. This finding agrees with Kalangi's [11] concerning the well-understood language of broadcast, and Mtega [12] who considers relevant content appealing and convenient to an audience. Additionally, RTS listeners were found to have a better understanding about the risks of FGM and CM as compared to their non-listener counterparts indicating the impact of the programs in changing society just as is submitted in the literature [10, 11, 13].

Awareness of the Contents of the RTSs

Respondents were aware that the content aired in the RTSs in the selected regions concerned ending FGM, ending child marriage, ending gender inequality, and promoting women's empowerment. Respondents were aware of and appreciated this content because it was relevant to the needs of society as established in the literature [12]. FGM, CM, and gender equality issues have become central to the discussions on-going in Ethiopia on protecting the rights of women and children hence the presentation of content focusing on these issues was of interest to the RTS and caught the attention of many. Additionally, the convenience RTSs offered to their audience enhanced the said awareness.

The top four issues respondents recalled being covered in the shows include Child marriage (CM) and its impacts, FGM and its impacts, Women's access to social services, Gender equality issues, and "Legal action on FGM and CM. Respondent awareness was high in these four issues which were also the most popular issues in the RTSs perhaps because the issues were central to national discussions taking place in Ethiopia today [8]. The finding implies that attending to the RTSs plays a role in enhancing their awareness of the issues discussed [10]. The listenership to RTS across the target regions is well done. This revelation is associated with the convenience of the content and presenters/actors, the relevance of the issues being discussed and the popularity of the issues among the communities involved which are determinants to listenership [15]. Among the active listeners are mature and young people of whom females dominate the males. This seems to be constructive and promising to achieve the major objective of the study – changing the knowledge, attitude and behavior of the community towards eradicating HPs. Women being central to the change aspired, getting their attention and changing their behavior is decisive [13]. Yet, active participation of adolescents and adult men is also required.

Suggestions to Improve the RTSs

Although there is convenience in the content relevance and appropriateness and time of broadcast of the RTS, the study found some recommendations that would make the experience better and enhance outcomes. The study realized that participants preferred an increment of coverage in terms of increasing the number of days and times the shows broadcast and rescheduling the RTS from daytime to night time to allow many people to listen in since at night many people are not distracted by the day's chores. In addition, there was a proposal for the inclusion of 'rape-related issues and enhanced use of local dialects (in SNNP) as opposed to national languages in the shows. Having creative and skilled actors/presenters was also an anticipated improvement. There should be no interruptions in the shows and consistency should be ensured, the broadcast should also be upgraded to TVs as well for those who can

appreciate viewership. Summarily these proposed improvements involve a change of timings to suitable ones, enhancing content to include other HP-affecting children, and enhancing presentation of the content i.e., by skilled actors and use of TVs. All these are in line with the factors the literatures mention as drivers of increased listenership or consumption of media [10, 11, 12, 15].

CONCLUSION

The AMS establishes that there is a low listenership of RTS in the targeted regions (Afar, Oromia, Somali, and SNNP) although the reception of the shows is good. Four major factors challenge the listenership/hearing about RTSs—lack of access to a radio, lack of time to listen to the shows, lack of access to a phone, and lack of access to electricity. Awareness of RTS is good among the targeted communities although not all people are reached. A significant number of people who have heard about the RTS were active listeners of the shows. The majority of people in the selected regions do not listen to RTS often indicating the potential for improvement. However, the majority of the listeners listen to RTS with their families, an opportunity for family members to influence each other to create a strong family culture.

Contents broadcast on RTS, time and day of broadcast as well as the presenter/actor and presentation skills are convenient and enhance the listenership to the shows even though some adjustments including change of broadcast time from day to night time, enhancing content to include rape issues, enhanced creativity among presenters and increased length of broadcast time can lead to greater listenership and impact. The majority of the people targeted are aware of the content broadcast and like it. The shows, therefore play a role in influencing a culture aimed to reduce FGM and CM issues among the select regions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need to form listenership groups through which many people can access RTS. The government of Ethiopia should seek and/or work with potential donors to subsidize the cost of radios purchased by residents in the surveyed communities. Other ways of distributing the content aired in RTS should be devised including the use of school mini media, social media, and distributing recorded shows through flash disks. In addition to these natural and traditional sources of information, it is important to enhance the culture of getting information through other mainstream and social media sources such as TV, Facebook, Telegram, etc. To this end, public promotion and awareness creation is basic. This will enhance the reach of RTS hence the impact bearing in mind the finding that RTS listeners were found to have a better understanding of the risks of FGM and CM compared to their non-listener counterparts.

There is a need to enlarge the scope of topics offered in the RTS to include rape-related issues as well as sensitize the community and emphasize on focus on other topics like legal action on FGM and CM, the role of religion on fighting FGM and CM, perspectives of men and boys in ending FGM and CM, the role of teachers in ending FGM and CM, the role of school clubs in ending FGM and CM, the role of clan leaders on fighting FGM and CM, reporting FGM and CM cases, the role of community agents in fighting FGM and CM, drivers of FGM and CM, regional trends in the rate of FGM and CM, empowering adolescent girls to prevent FGM and CM, increasing the girl-friendliness and responsiveness of services and supporting girls education which will contribute to building a greater culture against HP against women and children. The

designers of the RTS content should focus on these topics while the radio hosts/presenters should invest more time in publicizing the said topics.

The broadcast times for RTS should be adjusted to the convenience of listeners (night-time) and the length of the broadcast extended to cover more topics and content so as to enhance reach and impact. More males should be encouraged and advised to listen to RTS through sensitizations and community gatherings to ensure a large number of them are included and impacted by the shows. This will go a long way in speeding the attainment of an FGM-free and CM-free society. Listeners of RTSs confirmed that adolescent boys and girls from all locations are listening to the RTS to a lesser extent, as compared to other age groups. While the issue is entirely about them, it is discouraging to realize that adolescents are less engaged with the RTSs. Thus, it is critical to extend the breadth of listenership of RTSs from adults to adolescents by using schools, Kebeles and Youth Centers as major entry points for change.

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