



Annual Report 2014

Accelerating Social Change for
African Girls and Women

Contents

Reflections from the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director	1
Tribute to FORWARD Founder, Efua Dorkenoo	2
About FORWARD	4
Why We Work	5
How We Work	8
From the Grassroots Up: Our Work with Communities	10
Empowering for the Future: Services for Young People	18
Strength in Partnership: Our Work in Africa	24
Raising Voices: Our Advocacy Work	30
Ending FGM and Child Marriage in a Generation: The Girl Summit	32
Uniting for Change: Our Global Partnerships	34
Learning and Sharing: 2014 Publications	38
Going the Extra Mile: Our Fundraisers	40
Our Partners	41
Financial Statement 2013-14	42
FORWARD Team	43
Thank you!	45

© 2015 Foundation for Women's Health, Research and Development (FORWARD)

Registered charity no. 292403 Company no. 01921508

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the publisher or, in the case of reprographic reproduction, in accordance with the terms of licenses issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency in the UK (www.cla.co.uk).

Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the terms stated here should be sent to the publisher at the UK address printed on the back page of this report.

All photography copyright of FORWARD unless otherwise stated.

Designed by Emma Scott (esdesignmailing@gmail.com).

Reflections from the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director

2014 has been another hectic but productive year for FORWARD, strengthening our mission to safeguard the rights and dignity of African girls and women in the UK and beyond, and accelerating actions to promote social change as we approach our 30th anniversary.

This year we have continued our work to end child marriage, FGM and obstetric fistula through our support of girl and women - led organisations in Tanzania, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Kenya. 2014 saw the publication of three incisive research reports into obstetric fistula in Sierra Leone, child marriage in Ethiopia and obstetric fistula in Tanzania; amplifying the voices of girls and women affected.

Our work in the UK has continued to empower and support girls and women from FGM affected communities, raising awareness about FGM among 4,700 young people and advising the government and relevant bodies on how to engage communities to end FGM, support those affected and safeguard those at risk. We also took part in the high profile Prime Minister's Girls Summit and participated in the Summit's Youth for Change programme.

We have expanded our partnerships to end FGM in the UK and Europe through the DFID funded The Girl Generation to galvanise a global movement. Through the End FGM European Network we have helped shape the transition from a campaign to a network of 11 organisations from ten countries in Europe.

This year we lost our founder and leading anti-FGM campaigner, Efua Dorkenoo OBE. We are greatly saddened by her untimely death. Efua took on FGM at a time when no one dared speak about this taboo violation of rights. Her legacy will continue to shape and inform the work of FORWARD.

FORWARD wishes to thank everyone we have worked with, those who have donated towards our work, funded our projects, volunteered their time and who support our work to end FGM, child marriage and violations of the rights of African girls and women. Without your support, commitment and generous donations our work would not be possible. We hope that as you read through this report you will see how far the campaign has come and how we make huge steps every year towards a world free of these harmful practices. We have moved the agenda forward on African girls and women for 29 years and hope you will join us in 2015 to celebrate our 30th anniversary. Please continue to help us to reach the vision of dignity, health, choice and equal opportunities for all African girls and women.



Dr Sohier Elneil
Chair of the Board of Trustees



Naana Otoo-Oyortey MBE
Executive Director

Tribute to FORWARD Founder, Efua Dorkenoo

2015 will mark the 30th anniversary of FORWARD's registration as a charity. Efua Dorkenoo OBE, the founder of FORWARD, will unfortunately not be with us to celebrate her success story.

Sadly she passed away on the 18th October 2014. Efua, a biosocial scientist, researcher and trained nurse, affectionately referred to as the "Mother of the Campaign" came across FGM while doing a short course in midwifery in the early 1970s in Sheffield. Efua was part of a health team attending to a young mother giving birth who had undergone FGM and the birth resulted in a caesarean section. The health professionals there had never come across FGM and lacked the skills and training to respond to her needs. This was an experience which stayed with Efua for many years, leading her to research the practice and to start campaigning towards its elimination.

She went on to set up FORWARD with Jennifer Kenton. The aim was to demonstrate the need for special care for women who have undergone FGM.

FORWARD evolved from the Women's Action Group for Female Excision and Infibulation, a group of UK-based women concerned about FGM. Efua coordinated the group between 1981 and 1983 under the auspices of the London based Minority Rights Group. During this time she also travelled to several FGM affected countries in Africa, gathering data to serve as the basis of her campaign.

Efua was instrumental in facilitating the formation of the Inter African Committee (IAC) on Harmful Traditional Practices to address FGM in Africa. The IAC is an African Regional Body with national chapters in 28 African countries. She helped to conceptualise FGM as a human rights concern and placed this once taboo subject on the agenda of the United Nations Commission in Geneva. Efua took this campaign to the World Health Organisation to help shape its work on FGM. For her contribution to the pioneering work on FGM, Efua was awarded an OBE in 1994.

Efua continued to make great strides in the FGM campaign on her return to the UK in 2005, supporting FORWARD

in the landmark research on FGM prevalence which was released in 2007. She moved on to join Equality Now and followed her passion for informing and shaping the campaign on FGM in the UK and globally. As Director of the new DfID funded the Girl Generation, Efua once again took the campaign to a global level.

In the last few months of her life Efua had continued to travel to Africa to gather information and pave the way for The Girl Generation movement. This project has now been launched and another chapter has been opened in Efua's memory.

"It is with great sadness that FORWARD's Board, Staff and supporters shared the news about the passing of the wonder that was Efua Dorkenoo, our founder and friend. Her vision and her passion to see an end to the suffering of African girls and women worldwide, for an end to FGM, created a movement for change that has made great strides and will continue in her honour. We have lost a great woman and one of the end FGM movement's most prolific campaigners."

Dr Sohier Elneil
Chair of the Board of Trustees

FORWARD will forever remember Efua for her **vision, insights and commitment** to the campaign to end FGM and to make history this human rights violation. We will remember her with great respect. Our sister may have left us but she has left behind a lasting legacy and movement. We have an obligation to ensure an end to FGM globally.

Rest in peace Efua, 'Damirefa due'
(In Efua's first language Akan this means 'we acknowledge the deep pain within you and condole you.' This is said in Ghana among the Fanti people when someone passes).



About FORWARD

FORWARD (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development) is a leading UK-based African diaspora women's charity working to safeguard the rights and dignity of African girls and women.

FORWARD works in the UK, across Europe and in partnerships in Africa. We undertake campaigns and participatory research to inform policy and shape services.

We implement innovative and transformative community interventions to tackle female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage and obstetric fistula. We facilitate young women's leadership, mentorship and activism to ensure impactful and sustained change.

Our Vision:

A world where women and girls live in **dignity**, are **healthy**, have **choices** and **equal opportunities**.

Our Values:

FORWARD's work is centred on the following:

- Protection of the rights of African girls and women
- Prevention of harmful traditional practices and support for those affected
- Participation of those affected, by enabling them to engage effectively
- Collaborative partnerships at all levels with key stakeholders

Our Aims:

- Ending gender based violence (GBV), in particular FGM, child marriage and related health rights issues affecting African girls and women
- Increasing access to specialist support services, skills and livelihood opportunities for girls and women at risk of or affected by FGM
- Improving the capacity and sustainability of partner organisations
- Strengthening voices of African diaspora girls and women in policy processes and development

Why We Work

Female Genital Mutilation

FGM, also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting, is defined by the World Health Organisation as “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons”.

FORWARD works to inform and shape policies and services for girls and women affected by FGM, engaging affected communities to change their attitudes towards FGM and thus to end the practice.

“

FGM is driven by deep rooted beliefs...Those who are not [mutilated] are despised and insulted by relatives, parents, even their peers, and by doing so girls are willing and happy to go through FGM!”

- Child bride, Tanzania.

More than
130
million

girls and women worldwide have experienced some form of FGM

(UNICEF, 2014)

In **19** out of **29**
countries where FGM is predominantly practised most girls and women think it should end

(UNICEF, 2014)

In the UK it is estimated that over
100,000
women are living with the consequences of FGM and
60,000
girls are at risk

(City University London & Equality Now, 2014)



“Some say it is religion, culture, and some say that you bring shame if you do not get it done. They say that a man will not marry you but they don't tell you that it is difficult to give birth. Now it is not like before. In the big cities, they don't practise it much but in the village they still do it.

- Woman from FGM affected community, UK

”

Child marriage and Child motherhood

Child marriage refers to the formal and informal marriage of a child under the age of 18 years. While child marriage affects both sexes, girls are disproportionately affected. Their overall development is compromised, leaving them socially isolated with little education, skills or opportunities for employment and independence.

FORWARD is working to end child marriage and child motherhood in Africa through women-led projects with grassroots organisations and at an international level, through global partnerships.

“

“Marriage took me away from my parents’ love and childhood games.”

- Child mother at 14, Tanzania

“I was only seven years. My family thought I was young, but my in-laws said they will raise me and my husband will not sleep with me until I was ten years old.”

- Child mother, Ethiopia

“Child motherhood makes girls hate the fact they were born a woman.”

- Child mother at 16, Tanzania

”

Complications from
pregnancy
& childbirth
are the leading
causes of death
for girls aged
15 to 19
years in developing
countries

(UNFPA, 2013)

Globally
1 in 6 girls
aged 15 to 19
are already married
or in union

(UNICEF, 2014)

40%
of women aged
20 to 24
in West & Central Africa
were married when
they were children

(UNICEF, 2014)



Obstetric Fistula

Obstetric fistula is a devastating pregnancy-related disability which two million young women are estimated to be living with in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. (WHO, 2014)

Fistula happens during obstructed labour when the baby's head exerts prolonged pressure on the mother's pelvis. The blood supply to the tissue around her bladder, rectum and vagina is cut off, causing tissue damage and creating a hole between the vagina and bladder or rectum. This results in incontinence. In most cases, the baby does not survive.

FORWARD has been working to end obstetric fistula in Africa since 2002 through research, access to treatment, social re-integration and rehabilitation, and by raising awareness and increasing access to maternal health services to prevent future cases.

Approximately
80 to 95%
of vaginal fistula
can be closed with
simple surgery,
but it is often not
accessible to many
women and girls living
in rural areas, or
affordable as repairs cost

£250

(UNFPA, 2003; WHO, 2014)

49 in 50
women with
obstetric fistula
do not receive treatment

(Global fistula map, 2014)

75%
of women with
obstetric fistula
have endured
labour that lasted
3 days or more

(Fistula foundation, 2014)



“There are some community members who think fistula happens to women who are weak in childbirth, or to dirty women unable to take care of their bodies.”

-Young woman, FORWARD PEER research, Tanzania

“When she got fistula her husband abandoned her. He said he could not stay with a woman who made the bed wet.”

-Young woman, FORWARD PEER research, Tanzania

“I survived fistula and now I am happy and free. I can even dance and celebrate with my community.”

-Young woman, FORWARD PEER research, Tanzania

How We Work

FORWARD's work encompasses a number of issues which require a variety of approaches, but our mission is simple: to bring about positive social change for the benefit of African girls and women.

Our work is based on transforming attitudes and empowering community actors to lead change. Our approach is founded on four key pillars: skilling up key actors, facilitating collaborative partnerships, providing insight for developing initiatives, and creating platforms for amplifying voices and actions.

Working with communities in the UK

Our community team works with affected communities across areas of London, Bristol and Birmingham.

We seek to raise awareness and enable men and women to influence change through events, leadership training and community development approaches such as intergenerational dialogue and facilitating discussions with faith leaders, police and other professionals. The team also works to advise and influence local authorities about best practice in safeguarding and service provision.

It is the work we do with communities that informs our responses at the policy level, as we relay back to the Government the views and challenges straight from the communities that are affected by FGM.

Youth engagement

FORWARD's youth programme Young People Speak Out, builds on our community engagement by offering young people the chance to gain skills and help create change in their communities.

Through peer to peer and skills training, young people (16 to 25) act as youth advocates in their communities. We also provide a support service and work with youth advocates to create projects, events and workshops in their communities as a way of raising awareness about FGM.

One key area of our youth work is with schools (primary, secondary and universities) where we work with school staff, teachers, parents and students to raise awareness and empower young people.

Working through Africa based partnerships

FORWARD operates in five countries across Africa to respond to FGM, child marriage and obstetric fistula.

We provide a platform for the voices of girls and women affected by these issues to be heard. We ensure all girls and women's views and experiences in our projects are documented and shared to the relevant people (government and media for example). Also the girls and women directly help shape our responses and how we plan our programmes, where there is most need.

We work with local organisations, supporting the development of women-led organisations and building their capacity to support women and girls rights.

Informing and shaping policy and practice, at national and global levels

FORWARD's policy engagement and ongoing advocacy work underpins our core activities with communities in the UK, across Europe and in Africa.

We continue to offer policy guidance and recommendations in the UK, Europe, Africa and globally. Our policy work is based on evidence and research from our work with affected communities and it equips policy makers with the knowledge and information to respond effectively to girls and women at risk of, and affected by, FGM, child marriage and obstetric fistula.

We are key members of government advisory groups, wider development and gender organisational networks and we work in partnerships with many advocacy groups across the UK and in Europe.



From the Grassroots Up: Our Work with Communities

Spotlight on Community Health Advocates

As an African women led organisation, FORWARD knows that the most powerful tool to accelerate social change is to **connect with the communities** affected by harmful practices and provide them with knowledge and skills to create sustained social change.

Our Women's Health and Leadership Skills Training is one of the key ways we equip women with the skills, resources and confidence to reach out to people in their own social networks.

The training creates a positive, safe and collaborative environment for women from a range of affected communities and includes work on:

- **Teambuilding**, exploring **values, gender** and **rights**
- **Understanding FGM** and how it affects girls and women's **wellbeing, health, dignity** and **rights**
- **Laws relating to FGM** and **safeguarding children**, in the UK and Africa





In 2014 we carried out women's leadership training in Birmingham, Bristol and London with **60 women** from Sudanese, Somali, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Ugandan, Kenyan, Zimbabwean and Gambian communities.

On the following pages we share the story of community advocates from our early health and leadership training sessions in Bristol in 2010 who have gone on to do vital work in their community.





Lynne Featherstone, MP with
FORWARD women, London

Amina Jama

When I was first invited to train as a Community Health Advocate on FGM I wondered whether I was doing the right thing. I have to say I thought, “What the hell are we really going to talk about?”

However, the training was so well done. It gave me confidence to speak about FGM and to share with others what is wrong with FGM. We learnt a lot of new things and many things that we had misunderstood – like it was not part of our religion.

Within the first few weeks we were sharing very emotional and personal issues about our experience of FGM but it was helping us to understand each other better and build trust. Knowing that we could trust and keep confidence in the group was very important. Five years later we are still close.

After the training we were really motivated. We decided to organise a Stop FGM march and we went out on the streets one day. Everyone was looking at us. During the march I felt very happy and good. I didn’t care who was seeing us and felt good to be part of that. When I came home my four daughters celebrated with me saying, “You have done it mum, we are so proud of you”.

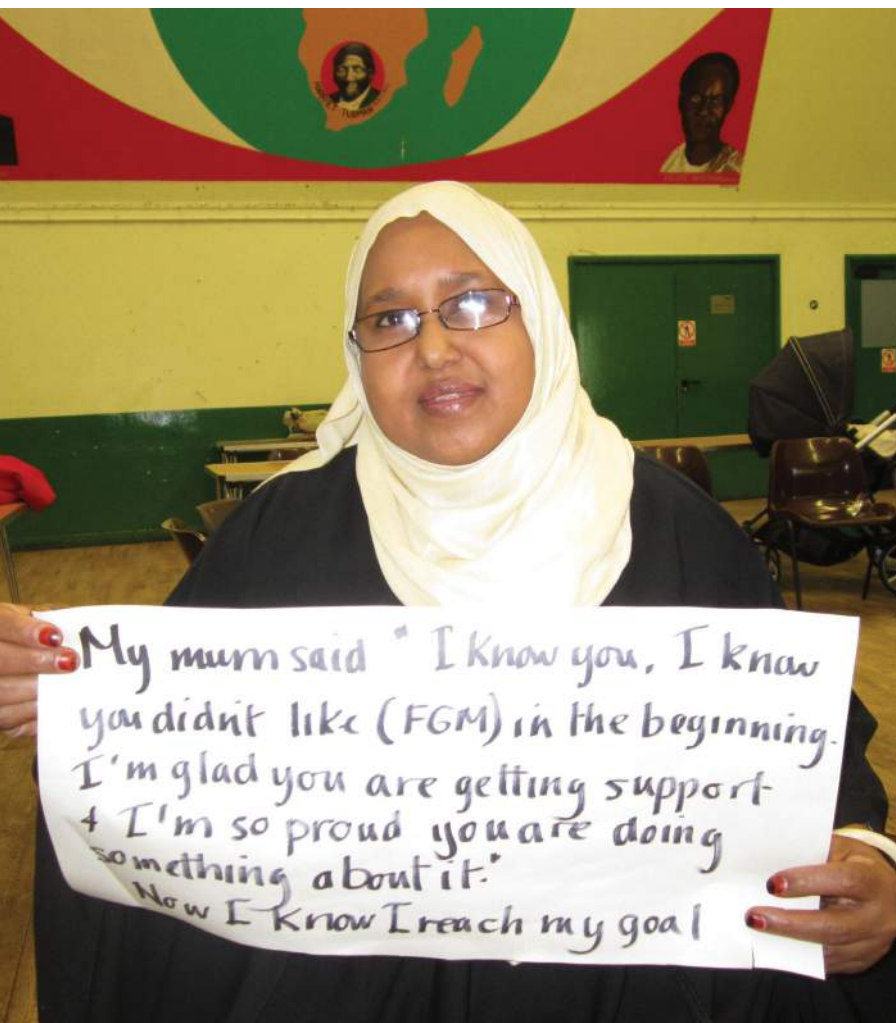
After the march things got better and better. I was giving talks and workshops to women in my community. At first many elders in our community were resistant to even talk about it but over the years I’ve seen that change. Elder women will talk about it now and many recognise that FGM is wrong, not part of the religion and harmful. I feel proud that we have changed their minds.”

Najet Hussein

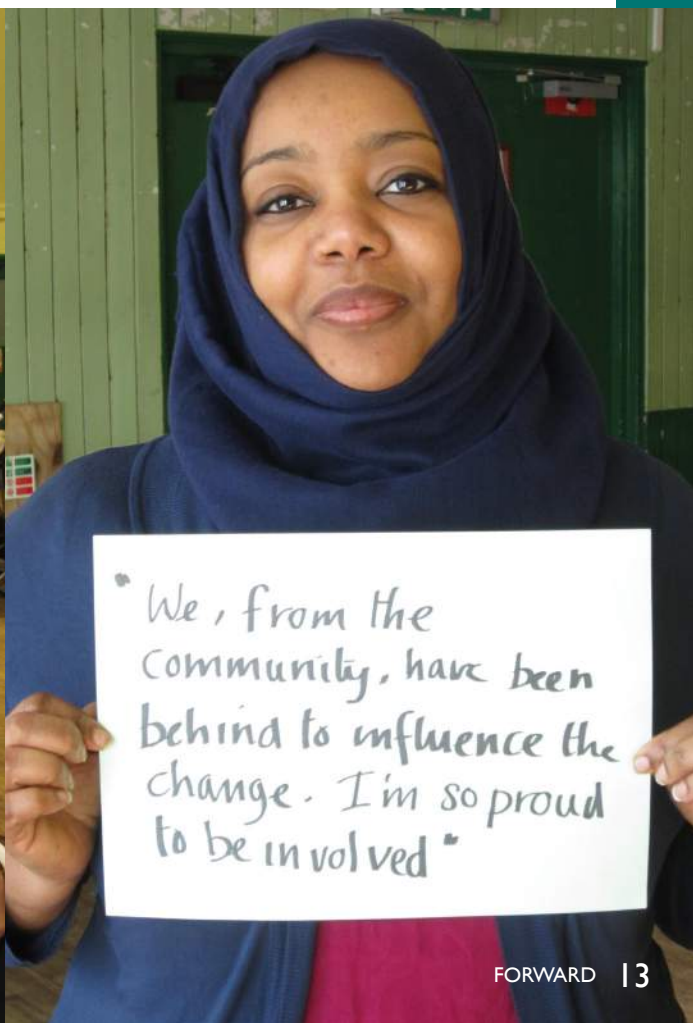
"To be honest, it was a bit up and down at first being a Community Health Advocate. There was quite a bit of resistance to talking about FGM in our communities. People felt really embarrassed to talk about it when we were first in the training. They also felt there were more important issues for our community, for example women and employment, childcare and being a parent when your child is growing up in the UK.

People sometimes felt we were giving out too much information and not respecting traditions. But little by little we learnt what worked, how to communicate best and after a while things got better.

People would talk and listen to us and ask us questions. Then they were telling us they didn't want FGM for their daughters. It was a real boost to the confidence to see that change and know we were part of that."



My mum said " I know you, I know you didn't like (FGM) in the beginning. I'm glad you are getting support + I'm so proud you are doing something about it."
Now I know I reach my goal



" We, from the community, have been behind to influence the change. I'm so proud to be involved "

Community programmes

EU level behaviour change interventions

In 2014 FORWARD entered our second year of partnership with organisations across Europe in European Commission co-funded projects: Replace II and CHANGE Project. Both projects nurture collaboration between European organisations to promote behaviour change among FGM practising communities in Europe.

Replace II, co-ordinated by Coventry University, saw community women who had received skills and leadership training speak to people from their communities to raise awareness about FGM. One major event Community Safeguarding Against FGM: Highlighting Community Champions was held to bring community members, leaders and professionals working with communities together. Replace II community

advocates spoke and a new video *Transforming Lives of Women Affected by FGM*, which explores the impact of FORWARD's Women's Health and Leadership Skills Training, was screened. As FGM is a cultural issue that is rarely spoken about publicly, this event provided a rare opportunity for people who were affected by it, directly or indirectly, to engage with others. They were able to discuss ways in which communities can lead on safeguarding at a local level. The event also attracted male elders of the Somali community who were there in support of FORWARD's work. The voluntary involvement of these elders was very exciting as they went on to pledge full support for the work and committed to engage more men on the issue.

The CHANGE Project last year provided training for men and women to engage with communities, professionals and organisations about dealing with FGM. There is now a strong network of independent CHANGE Agents who organise and host awareness raising activities of their own. They continue to meet proactively feeding back and learning from each other's experiences. Overall, the CHANGE

CHANGE Agents reached a further

455 people through their FGM awareness events

agents organised 30 tailored community events, including the establishment of a regular women's support group where issues including FGM are discussed, engagement with parents in schools and talks in community centres. They have further plans to set up an Arabic speaking group and to hold meetings to specifically engage men on the issue of FGM. FORWARD is proud to continue supporting the Agents by providing assistance with administration and the dissemination of marketing materials when required in their activities.

“

We gained so much knowledge, we will continue to stay in touch! We have to ensure that changes are made here in the UK and back home. The history of FGM was designed to punish and control women and is not a reward, so it must not be celebrated. We need to continue addressing FGM and women's issues”.

- Replace II training participant

“The fight to end FGM will never become successful unless men are involved. Historically FGM is practised for men; it's done on women for men to control their sexuality, to show off their masculinity. Men should be involved and show understanding and support in ending FGM.

- Solomon, male CHANGE Agent

”

Training for professionals and frontline staff

This year FORWARD carried out three training sessions on FGM for professionals and staff who are on the frontline, safeguarding girls against FGM or supporting women who have already been affected by it.

The one day course is Open College Network accredited and it is designed to increase knowledge, awareness and understanding for professionals about the practice. It serves to strengthen competency and skills and enable multiagency co-operation.

Specifically, the training provides knowledge on:

- The practice of FGM and its social and cultural context in UK
- The UK law, safeguarding policies and procedures
- The provision of appropriate care and support for women and girls affected by FGM
- The role of statutory agencies and key professionals in tackling FGM



FORWARD trained
41
members of staff
from the NSPCC for
the NSPCC FGM helpline

FORWARD reached
1,290
professionals
& frontline staff with
training on FGM in 2014

“

The smooth running of the session, the quality of the training and the content, [is] very precise, informative and constructive.”

– Professionals training attendee

“Delegates gained a great deal from this training. Subsequent to this training, and using the knowledge gained from the training, the East Sussex LSCB have started to deliver FGM half day workshop sessions to other professionals.

– East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board Manager

”



Bristol: Spearheading Change

Layla Ismail, the FORWARD Community Programme Coordinator based in Bristol, has been instrumental in shaping community and specialist health support services for women affected by FGM in the city.

This is part of an initiative funded by Bristol City Council, Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts and Lankelly Chase in partnership with Refugee Women of Bristol. The Bristol community programme is recognised as a model of good practice. It is integral to the Bristol FGM Delivery and Safeguarding

Partnership which is a group of statutory agencies, voluntary groups, charities and members of Bristol's local communities working together with the common goal of stopping FGM in the city. In 2013 the Bristol Community Rose Clinic was set up for women affected by FGM after years of lobbying from community women. We are delighted that the clinic won the 2014 award for Primary Care and Community Service Redesign from the Health Services Journal.

A key event of 2014 was the Zero Tolerance to FGM conference which shared best practice experience of the Bristol model.

The event was attended by **82 participants** including community members, statutory professionals, the police and local authority. It focused on how to engage and empower women, young people and affected communities for positive change, safeguarding and partnership working. It particularly focused on how to address FGM in health settings and the important role schools play in engaging with communities and providing support to girls affected by FGM or at risk of it. FORWARD's Community Health Advocates were involved in every aspect of the conference from planning through to delivery.

“The importance of networking and effective communication cannot be overstated. This is our journey we embark on together to advocate, support, champion and move others, change attitudes and minds to ensure effective safeguarding and a healthy future for women. Great job so far.”

- Attendee at community conference, Bristol

London Consortium on Ending Harmful Practices

As part of the London Violence Against Women and Girls Consortium, FORWARD works on the Ending Harmful Practices project where we provide support services for women and girls affected by FGM.

This support includes outreach work with affected communities, one to one support, help accessing health clinics or counselling for girls and women affected by the practice. We also provide group support in our monthly coffee mornings,

an informal meet-up where women can share information, talk about their experiences and support each other in a safe and positive space.

We are able to offer this support in a number of languages including Arabic, Somali, Amharic and French to make it as accessible as possible.

Guidance is also given to professionals regarding FGM cases and tailored sessions on FGM are delivered to schools, community groups, and other professional groups.

FORWARD
provided case
work support for
126
girls &
women
affected by
FGM in 2014



Empowering for the Future: Services for Young People

Spotlight on FORWARD Schools Programme



FORWARD believes that reaching young people, and those working with them, is fundamental to ending FGM. Our work with schools focuses not only on raising awareness but also on the role that everyone can play in supporting girls and ending the practice.

Empowered with knowledge and understanding, schools can make links outwards and act as catalysts in their wider community. School and youth involvement in the campaign to end FGM supports the belief that FGM is everybody's business. We must work together to collectively challenge stigma, shift norms, develop policies and pledge commitment and resourcing to end FGM.

We have worked with schools in various capacities since 2010 and this year we substantially expanded our work in this area to meet the demand from schools. Thanks to a grant from the Maria Marina Foundation, our Schools Programme grew from strength to strength, enabling us to develop a lesson plan and begin rolling out sessions for teachers, students and parents. Since launching our schools work we have reached 5,175 people, including students, school staff and parents.

The Schools Programme offers a comprehensive and wide range of services. All of the services are delivered in a sensitive and age-appropriate way by FORWARD facilitators and they are tailored to meet the needs of each school and target audience. The response from

schools was incredible. We recruited and trained 13 facilitators to help deliver our secondary school lesson plan in 2014 to meet demand. FORWARD strongly believes in supporting other organisations to develop their skills and knowledge in this area and hope our training contributes to high quality service provision across the sector, ensuring sustainability of the impact of our work.

Given the phenomenal success of our work with secondary school pupils, and in recognition of the fact that the age group most at risk of FGM are primary school girls, FORWARD also began working on FGM with primary school pupils in 2014. Following months of research, consultations and a focus group with teachers, PSHE



specialists and other professionals, we developed a lesson plan suitable for working with Year 5 Year 6 pupils (aged nine to eleven). These workshops provide children with an age-appropriate understanding of bodily integrity, safe boundaries and ownership of self. They encourage children to engage with adults if they have any concerns or fears.

“

I spoke yesterday with my class about the sessions – and the amount of information between them that they came up with is excellent – I was so proud and impressed with them and that is all down to what you taught them. They even taught me some things I wasn't aware of.”

- Teacher; present in student awareness session

FORWARD delivered
**158 FGM
sessions**
in schools, colleges
& universities across
23 London boroughs,
directly engaging
**5,175
people,**
including young people
& school staff

“[Staff] said that the content, whilst complex and sometimes shocking, was presented in a balanced, sensitive manner. They found the session relevant, topical and extremely informative. I know that the staff feel much better informed and am confident that this will serve us well in our everyday practice and the safeguarding of our students.

-Teacher and Staff Training Attendee

”

Youth programmes



—60—
young people
were involved in the
London flashmob
calling on people to
SEE. HEAR. SPEAK.
to end FGM
& child & forced marriage

CREATE Youth-Net

This year we expanded our youth networks across Europe, collaborating with youth advocates in the UK, Portugal and the Netherlands through the European Commission co-funded project CREATE Youth-Net.

FORWARD was the lead partner in this innovative two year project. It trained young people to become advocates, mapped services available to young people affected, co-ordinated flash mobs in three major cities (including our own in Covent Garden), spread awareness and encouraged

action to end FGM and forced marriage.

You can see a video of the flash mobs at www.createyouthnet.eu

PEER research (a participatory form of research where the young people were trained to become researchers and to interview their peers) was also carried out in each country to highlight the stories and youth perspectives on FGM and forced and child marriage as a basis to inform policy interventions. The final report *I Carry the Name of my Parents: Young People's Reflections on FGM and Forced Marriage* is available on our website.

CREATE Youth-Net
reached over
6,500
people
across Europe,
including young people,
school & college staff,
government staff & NGOs

“What I really like about CREATE Youth-Net and the PEER project – they don't just give you information. They tell you how to talk to people. And if there's something that you didn't expect, like how to react. For instance, I didn't know how to react if someone says “Yeah, I am circumcised.”

– CREATE Youth-Net participant

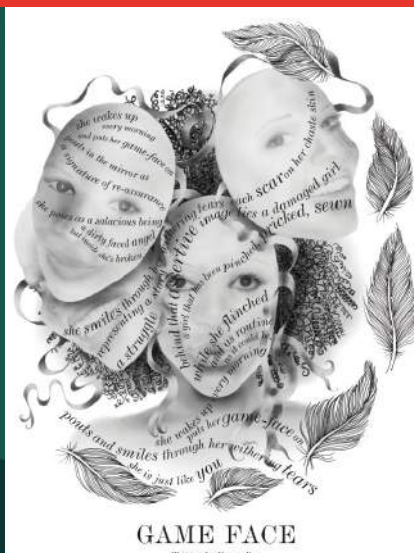
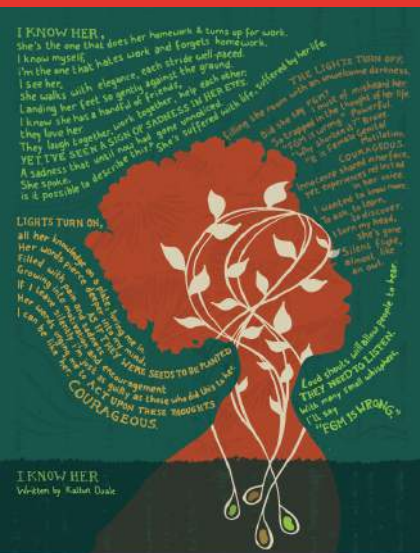
These Are Our Friends

Young People Speak Out - FORWARD's youth advocates, who now number over 60, continue to meet regularly in groups in London, Bristol, Manchester and Birmingham. The creative output of the youth advocates this year was impressive and a two day workshop on spoken word at the end of 2013 led to the creation of poems that highlight that FGM is an issue in the UK and not one that occurs in 'another faraway country'.

The poems were deemed too good to go unpublished so, with the support and creative input from Richard 'Rich Blk'

Mkoloma, a collection of the poetry was printed as a book entitled *These Are Our Friends* and distributed across the four cities. It proved so popular we had to do a second print run. A selection of the poems were also developed into striking poster art work by four artists from diverse sectors with important facts about FGM printed on the reverse. The books and the posters are available to buy from FORWARD, please contact us on our website for more details.

Thanks to Media Trust and City Bridge Trust we were able to further develop the poetry into a powerful short film. The film features narrative from the poems to depict the emotional impact of living with FGM. This was launched at the Barbican and shown on the Community Channel. The video is available to view on our website.



by Yasmin Moalin

X marks the spot.
The sensitive spot
The sensitive spot of a woman.

Why tamper with X ?

X is fragile and drowning in hope.
X is young.
X is learning about the new world.

X doesn't know any better.
X is being given a chance to live.

Allow X.

Teach X the ways of life.
Don't hurt X.
Don't expose X to violence.

Help X grow into an independent capital X .

Care for X.
Because one day X will be providing
for you
and will be there for you in difficult
times and struggles.



Youth events

X Takes the Stand & These Are Our Friends

Two events were held in celebration of the extraordinary talent demonstrated by our youth advocates in the production of the *These Are Our Friends* poetry book.

The first event, X Takes the Stand, held in February, provided a platform for the Youth Advocates to perform their spoken word alongside uplifting music sets from Mulele Matondo Afrika, Bumi Thomas, Mas Law, and Richard 'Rich Blk' Mkoloma.

The second event, named after the poetry book, took place in October and was its official launch with over **80** people in attendance. The artwork was displayed, youth advocates performed their poems and discussion panels were held with the youth advocates and artists to explore the artistic process and consider the impact of creative arts to accelerate social change.

“Fantastic event put on by FORWARD highlighting the impact of FGM in a wonderfully creative and heartfelt way.”

- Audience member at X Takes the Stand

“Powerful FGM poems from FORWARD *These Are Our Friends* book launch. Deep and painful - talented young people.”

- Audience member at *These Are Our Friends*

Schools conferences

Two schools conferences were held in 2014, *Strategies for Schools' Engagement on FGM in London* and *Tackling Female Genital Mutilation in Birmingham*, to explore strategies for engaging young people on FGM with a focus on the role of schools and safeguarding.

The London conference reached over **100** professionals, exploring best practice for schools to respond to FGM effectively, drawing on the skills and expertise of

FORWARD's staff, as well as frontline educational professionals who had practical experience. The Birmingham event also drew in over **50** professionals, from **32** schools, with presentations from a variety of professionals, exploring the medical, legal and community aspects of ending FGM and supporting girls and women affected by it. Delegates also benefited from an interactive workshop facilitated by the FORWARD youth team which enabled all delegates to discuss how this issue should be delivered within school settings.

“This was one of the best whole day training events I have attended in a long time. I usually think I have been to a good course if I learn one new thing. Today my head is full of new information. Thank you.”

- Tackling Female Genital Mutilation conference attendee

“Overall the day has been brilliant - I have learnt so much... I now feel much more confident about incorporating it into the curriculum.”

- Schools conference attendee



Bristol youth conference: FGM is Everybody's Business

Empowering, the Bristol based youth advocate group, hosted a conference to make the issue of FGM more accessible by creating dialogue between the community, professionals and young people and to present a teaching resource they developed for professionals.

The day began with a presentation and workshop about domestic violence which stimulated conversation and discussion of FGM as a form of gender based violence. Through these sessions, it was expressed



that FGM is not just an African or BME issue but an issue for all of humanity because it is an abuse of human rights.

The day also provided a space to break down the taboo which surrounds FGM in order to create a safe environment for survivors and campaigners to speak out. The event closed with a panel discussion with representatives from FORWARD, the police, education, the NHS and youth advocates themselves, on best practice for safeguarding and support services provision for girls and women.



“ A very useful day! It was professionally put together and the young people's voices in their own words was most powerful! ”
- Bristol youth conference attendee

Strength in Partnership: Our Work in Africa

Spotlight on empowerment and insights through research

FORWARD believes that investing in collecting evidence is fundamental to accelerating social change. This is because evidence from affected communities is vital for informing initiatives to end FGM, child marriage and obstetric fistula. The implementation, recording and dissemination of Participatory Ethnographic Evaluation and Research (PEER) is one of the key ways by which FORWARD gathers such evidence.

PEER research means that members of target communities are trained to carry out in-depth interviews with people they select from their own social networks. We use this approach because it provides a real insight into the lives of girls and young women affected by the issues FORWARD works on. PEER exposes the social context in which they occur; the consequences and the personal impact behind the statistics.

In addition to collecting rich, personal information, the PEER method also empowers the participants as they gain knowledge and develop support networks over the course of the research, ultimately building their skills and confidence. The final report provides a platform for the girls and women to make recommendations about further work needed to tackle the issues and they are further empowered to articulate their needs to key stakeholders including their families, community leaders, professionals and local leaders or government ministers throughout the process. This is extremely important, as girls and women affected by child marriage, child motherhood, FGM or obstetric fistula are commonly marginalised by their communities and unheard by local leaders.

In 2014 FORWARD produced three PEER reports following research in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Tanzania. On each occasion, the PEER led to new community advocates and the development of further interventions to support the girls and women affected.

**'I used to cry a lot every night'
- Voices of women with
obstetric fistula in Sierra Leone**

“ In the first place I was ashamed to explain my problem to others, I only ever thought I was the only one suffering from this sickness called fistula. I thought that when I explained my problem to anyone they will gossip or back bite me but this research and workshop has made me realise that I am not alone and that there are others like me.”
- PEER participant, Sierra Leone

This PEER was launched in Freetown, Sierra Leone on the International Day to end Obstetric Fistula in May when the researchers presented the findings to key government officials. This research exposed the need to improve the quality of, and access to, services to ensure obstetric fistula can be prevented or treated when it does arise.

Crucially, it also showed the need to build support networks for survivors to help them overcome the stigma they face, and to rehabilitate them into society. FORWARD will be taking on the recommendations and sourcing funding to further develop the network of fistula survivors and to strengthen social re-integration processes.

No Girl Should Be a Child Bride: Taking Action to End Child Marriage in Lay Armachiho District, Amhara Region, Ethiopia

“ I learned that other married girls are having children too young. I learned from them that I shouldn't have a baby until I am older – I learned the challenges through the other girls' stories. ”

- PEER participant, Ethiopia

Released in July in time for the UK Government's Girl Summit, this report exposed the struggles faced by girls married before the age of 18. Using the PEER methodology meant that the child brides were able to speak frankly about their experiences of sex and the pressures of marriage on their young bodies.

The recommendations from this report highlighted the need to work with girls who are already married, in tandem with efforts to prevent child marriage, emphasising the need for psychological support for these young women. FORWARD has been implementing programmes to work with child mothers following the PEER findings.

Do not hide yourselves, you are not cursed: A PEER Study on Obstetric Fistula, Mpwapwa, Dodoma, Tanzania

“ I had prolonged labour which took me almost two days as the child was wrong[ly] placed in my womb. The doctors decided to operate on me to save my life as the child was already dead. Due to that prolonged labour, I developed fistula. ”

- PEER participant, Tanzania

This research provides a platform for the voices of women affected by obstetric fistula in Tanzania to be heard and explores the relationship between obstetric fistula and FGM and child marriage in their community. This report has helped identify particular areas which must be addressed in order to prevent more women from developing obstetric fistula during child birth. This includes improving the quality of and access to maternal health services and family planning resources, as well as reducing the prevalence of child marriage.

This report also identified the all-important need to mitigate the impact of obstetric fistula among survivors, to

help them re-integrate into society and overcome the stigma and ignorance which surrounds this condition. This report is part of a three year project on maternal health with our partners in Tanzania that will influence policy and provision of services.

FORWARD launched the Tanzania PEER at a learning event Empowering Girls Left Behind: Comprehensive Approaches to Tackling Child Marriage and FGM in Tanzania in November at the Houses of Parliament. It was hosted by Baroness Tong and Pauline Latham MP. Those who attended included NGOs, representatives from four embassies from Africa and funders.



Africa Programmes

FORWARD continues to work in five countries in West and East Africa – Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Tanzania.

We worked with local partners on all our key issue areas of FGM, child marriage, child motherhood and obstetric fistula. All our programmes are tailored to the specific needs of each community so the issues that we prioritise vary according to the needs identified by the local community.



Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, FORWARD works with the Girl 2 Girl Empowerment Movement (G2G) based in the capital Freetown, empowering girls with knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The project had to be adapted due to the ebola outbreak in March and the subsequent restriction on movement imposed by the Government. The girls' networks remained connected but met less frequently and in smaller groups and training was re-directed to ebola prevention.

Leaders of girls' networks across Sierra Leone continued to meet and our partners taught them about ebola prevention strategies and provided sanitation resources so that the young women could return to their girls' groups and communities to train them in turn. Towards the end of 2014 the rate of ebola cases was decreasing but our partners will continue to provide training about ebola until incidences cease.

We were also pleased to begin a new project in November 2014; Developing Rights-based and Empowering Approaches to Mobilise Action to end FGM in Sierra Leone. The project will be run in

partnership with two local NGOs, G2G and Advocacy Movement Network and will employ a coordinated, rights based strategy to engage critical players at national and community levels to tackle FGM and child marriage. It will also support youth advocacy and engagement and will create an enabling environment for greater protection and support of the rights of women and girls.

In 2014 we
continued to support
4 girls clubs, with
—95—
members in
Sierra Leone, adapting
to the ebola crisis with
resource provision &
training on prevention strategies

Tanzania

In Tanzania FORWARD continued work with our longstanding partner of **9** years, Children's Dignity Forum (CDF), working to end FGM and child marriage in the Mara region.

We are also working with the Wadada Centre who provide counselling and support to women experiencing, and survivors of, gender based violence and sexual violence. FORWARD has helped the centre build their capacity to establish girls clubs and provide training and education to young people, both in and out of school, on their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

This year also saw the end of a three year project with local partners, CDF and Chama Cha Uzazi na Malezi Bora Tanzania (UMATI), Mobilising Action to Safeguard the Rights of Women in Tanzania. It increased knowledge about women and girls' rights specifically related to FGM, child marriage and sexual and reproductive health and services. As part of the project **33** girls clubs and networks were established, involving over **700** members, all of them young women.

Income generating activities were also successfully established and now **187** of the girls involved have established profitable small businesses.

We continued the project Promoting Maternal Health Equity and Accountability in Tanzania with Utu Mwanamke. This project aims to improve maternal health equity and services for women and girls in Singida and Dodoma regions. In its second year our partners established **9** more school and out of school girls' clubs, bringing the total to **13**. We trained over **327** girls on leadership and sexual and reproductive health rights.

Training village health workers on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and equipping them with bicycles and mobile phones, had a significant impact resulting in over **3,100** women accessing maternal and reproductive health services. In addition to this, the project provided support to women who have been affected by obstetric fistula.

107 women accessed fistula repair services, **45** of which received entrepreneurship training and **20** have already started their own income generating activities.

In 2014 over
18,000
community
members
were informed about
women rights,
Sexual & Reproductive
Health & Rights,
FGM, child marriage &
Gender Based Violence
in Tanzania

“With this business my life has totally changed, I can now dress well also I can assist my family by paying medical bills, (and) sending my sister to school.”

-Young woman from FORWARD/
Utu Mwanamke Project, Tanzania

“Joining this club was my first experience of meeting many people outside my village. Before joining the club I was someone who cries all the time because of life hardship and what I passed through in the past. Through my club I received different trainings on leadership, communication, sexual and reproductive rights, girls' rights, FGM and

child marriage. This has transformed my life completely, I am now confident. I can feel the difference within me, I am no longer shy or afraid of sharing my past for the other girls to learn, I have come to see myself as one whose life is just as important as [any] other person.

-Young woman survivor of GBV, Tanzania

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, our work with ProFutures Development Initiative continued to provide leadership training and income generating activities for child mothers in Northern Ethiopia.

We added a new strand to the project in 2014 and now also support girls living in slum areas in the capital city, Addis Ababa.

Interventions include the creations of girls' networks, provision of leadership training for girls and women, advocacy work with school teachers and the provision of basics such as sanitary towels, the lack of which sometimes mean girls are forced to stop attending school during their period.

100
school girls
received awareness
training about
girl's rights,
leadership &
skills training



Kenya

FORWARD's work on raising awareness of women's rights in Kenya was undertaken in partnership with Cinyati Women's Group in Marigat district.

We are working with girls, women and communities from the Maasai-speaking

Ilchamus community in the Rift Valley to raise awareness of harmful traditional practices such as FGM and of women's rights in general. The project provides leadership training for girls and women. It acts as a platform for women advocates in the community to act as role models and facilitate intergenerational discussions between community elders and young girls to challenge social norms and thus change behaviour on FGM and child marriage.

In 2014 the project reached

330

community members including community elders as well as

150 girls & women

Ghana

In Ghana we have expanded our project with Purim African Youth Development Platform and are now working in the capital Accra to safeguard 'kayayei'.

Kayayei work as porters carrying goods in the markets of the south of the country. Usually girls and young women, they have invariably migrated from the north in search of work. Away from home and in unfamiliar surroundings, these girls are at increased risk of gender based violence and child pregnancy.

This year we continued working with them through PEER, training girls to become researchers speaking to other kayayei. The research findings will inform the development of further projects to support and empower them. We also continued work in urban and rural areas through girls' clubs to support girls at risk of becoming kayayei, or of child marriage or child motherhood. The girls in these areas are empowered through leadership and entrepreneurship training, provision of business start-up loans and the establishment of girls' networks to support those already affected and to protect those at risk.

In 2014
850 girls
in Ghana were
reached through
10 clubs across
3 regions,
receiving vital information
on leadership & economic
empowerment

Raising Voices: Our Advocacy Work

FORWARD has been working on FGM in the UK since 1983, making us one of the most long-standing organisations to do so.

As such, we provide expert advice and guidance to government groups about how to safeguard against FGM and support women and girls affected by FGM in the UK.

Over 2014 we have contributed to numerous policy consultations and discussions with the aim of raising the voices of affected girls and women to inform and shape policies that will enable sustained change to happen.

Home Affairs Select Committee Inquiry into FGM

In 2014 the Home Affairs Committee began investigating the state of FGM in the UK in order to prepare a report on findings and recommendations to the Government. At the development stage of the report FORWARD submitted written evidence. Our main demand for the Government was to establish a robust national action plan to effectively tackle FGM in the UK. It is something for which FORWARD has been campaigning for, for many years. Subsequent to our

written submission, we were invited by the Committee to give oral evidence. We were very pleased that their final report adopted FORWARD's main recommendation as the report theme. The report was entitled *Female Genital Mutilation: The Case for a National Action Plan*. It is one of the first times that a cross party group has come together to make the unified call for developing a national action plan and we look forward to seeing whether the government take action accordingly.

“

In stating the case for a national action plan, the [Home Affairs] Committee in several significant respects adopted our critique and concerns about the phenomenon of FGM in the UK. It repeated our analysis that the UK's failure to protect has resulted in the preventable mutilation of thousands of girls to whom the state owes a duty of care. It concurred with our stance that current legal loopholes severely limiting the protection of children who are not UK nationals or permanently resident are morally indefensible. However, what is of paramount importance at this vital time is not praise but progress. Progress in the more effective protection of young women and girls from this physically and psychologically scarring crime.

- Dexter Dias QC and Charlotte Proudman, following the publication of *Female Genital Mutilation: The Case for a National Action Plan* by the Home Affairs Committee

”

FGM Law: The Extra-territoriality Clause

The first law against FGM was passed in 1985 following a long campaign from FORWARD during our founding years. The law was a strong first step to ending FGM in the UK and we have continued campaigning since that day to ensure the law is properly implemented. In 2003 an extra-territoriality clause was introduced to the legislation. We were able to celebrate a new success this year as the clause

was expanded making it illegal to perform, or assist in the arrangement of FGM on anyone habitually resident in the UK – not just British citizens or UK permanent residents. This amendment was the result of many years of campaigning, including the submission of evidence and lobbying members of parliament and FORWARD believes that it will serve to further safeguard more girls at risk.

FGM Protection Orders

2014 saw the Department of Justice carry out a consultation on bringing into law a Protection Order specific to FGM. FORWARD submitted a response to their consultation advising on how Protection Orders should be implemented if they came into practice. The Department of Justice included our notes in their final

Women's Health and Equalities Consortium

FORWARD continued its involvement with the Women's Health and Equalities Consortium, a strategic partner of the Department of Health led by Maternity Action. This year FORWARD collaborated with them, Imkaan and Positively UK to produce the resource: *Addressing Barriers to Accessing Primary Care*.

response and the FGM Protection Order was signed into law the 3rd of March as part of the Serious Crimes Act. This now enables relevant authorities' greater power to safeguard girls by calling for an injunction when a girl is deemed to be at risk of FGM.

FORWARD held focus group discussions with African women to discuss their access to, and experience of, primary care in London. Some women reported that doctors did not have a sufficient level of understanding on issues such as FGM. The full report can be found at www.maternityaction.org.uk

Local Government Association FGM Task and Finishing Group

FORWARD also teamed up with the NSPCC and British Arab Association to provide advice on tackling FGM as part of the Local Government Association (LGA) FGM Task and Finishing Group.

The group was set up to consider ways to promote best practice on FGM and to systematise the way that local authorities across the country respond. Working in partnership with Councillors from each of the three main political parties and policy advisors from the LGA, the group produced the LGA Councillors Guide on FGM. The guide is a useful tool for Councillors to consider their safeguarding procedures and services for girls and women affected by FGM and to build their confidence in developing strategies to improve them. The guide can be found at www.local.gov.uk



House of Commons
Home Affairs Committee

Female genital mutilation: the case for a national action plan

Second Report of Session 2014–15

Report, together with formal minutes relating to the report

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 25 June 2014



THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE SECOND REPORT FROM THE HOME AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE SESSION 2014-15 HC 201

Female genital mutilation: the case for a national action plan

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty

December 2014

Cm 8579

HC 201
[Incorporating HC 1091, 2013–14]
Published on 3 July
by authority of the House of Commons
London: The Stationery Office Limited

Informing and shaping UK policy discussions

FORWARD's Executive Director was invited to join Secretary Justine Greening's Expert Advisory Group on Girls. This provided FORWARD with the opportunity to highlight issues surrounding FGM and child marriage in Africa and to recommend what the most effective action to end the practices could be.

Ending FGM and Child Marriage in a Generation: The Girl Summit



In July the UK Government and UNICEF co-hosted the Girl Summit in London. It was an ambitious summit which set out to mobilise international efforts to end FGM, child, early and forced marriage within a generation.

The summit brought together officials, organisations and affected individuals across the globe to share stories and best practice and to make pledges. FORWARD played a major role in both the Girl Summit and the youth event, Youth for Change. We were represented by staff from several departments, our youth advocates and our project partners in Africa.

The Girl Summit was preceded by a youth specific summit: Youth for Change. Four of FORWARD's youth advocates were part of the panel of 22 young people from around the world who organised the event. As part of the panel they also conducted research with young people and used their findings to draft a statement with guidance on necessary steps to end FGM and child, early and forced marriage. FORWARD were invited to host a creative writing session based on the success of our *These Are Our Friends* poetry project. Our Executive Director also joined a panel discussion and also acted as a speed mentor providing advice to young people.

FORWARD attended the main event, the Girl Summit, with representatives from two of our partner organisations in Africa. ProFutures Development Initiative (PFDI), a small woman-led organisation in Ethiopia which FORWARD helped establish in 2013 following research on child marriage; and Children's Dignity Forum (CDF), a Tanzanian NGO which FORWARD has partnered with since 2006 when it was a small children's rights organisation and who we have worked closely with to advise on strategy and build capacity. They are now recognised as one of the foremost organisations working to protect children's rights in Tanzania.

The Executive Directors and two young campaigners, both 19 and both survivors of child marriage and FGM, from each of the organisations came to the Girl Summit. We were very pleased to have the opportunity to host them and show the young women around London. They had never been outside their countries before. Our Youth Team Lead was invited to share our experience of, and to advise on, best practice of working in schools at the Spotlight Session on The Role of Health, Education and Social Care Professionals in Creating Change.



FORWARD/PFDI youth advocate from Ethiopia

GIRL SUMMIT 2014

A FUTURE FREE FROM FGM AND
CHILD AND FORCED MARRIAGE



FORWARD youth advocates along
with other Youth For Change delegates
and Justine Greening MP

“

I learn something new every time I meet Naana.”

- DfID Minister Lynne Featherstone, during Question Time panel with FORWARD's Executive Director

“I'm very happy to be here and feel the experience, particularly seeing videos of girls around the world with similar problems to me, which made me sad as well.”

- ProFutures, project participant

“It is exciting to see the UK government recognise how destructive these practices are and pledge to tackle them globally. Yet, while there is a critical role for government intervention and support, change must come from within. If the Prime Minister, the Development Minister, DfID and the large NGOs want to see change in a generation, we urgently need a comprehensive UK national action plan on FGM, which acknowledges the key role of community or grassroots organisations and individuals and which invests in and supports marginal voices.”

- Naana Otoo-Oyortey, FORWARD Executive Director who also wrote an article for *The Guardian* about the summit entitled 'Where were the grassroots voices at the Girl Summit?' which can be found on www.theguardian.com

“The summit was very tokenistic because there was a number of government representatives talking about what they are doing in their countries which actually, when you look at most of the African governments, they have yet to take issues around child marriage and FGM into their national agenda. And we have seen also the development partners pledging that they're going to work with the UN and the UNFPA but it's something that is very difficult when they are working with the UN even for these resources to trickle down to the local organisations.” — Koshuma Mtengeti, Executive Director, CDF

“It was a good forum for us to get ideas on how we can work to end child marriage, teenage pregnancy and FGM in our country and we hope that, as we heard from different leaders around the world, that they can spearhead a movement to end child marriage and FGM.

- Cynthia Mushi, Programme Coordinator, CDF

”

Uniting for Change: Our Global Partnerships

New FGM Initiative: The Girl Generation

October saw the official launch of The Girl Generation, a global Africa-led movement which aims to end FGM within a generation.

The programme, funded by the Department for International Development in the UK, supports campaigns to break the cycle of FGM and end it globally. It aims to bring inspirational stories of change to a global audience, stimulate media campaigns, identify and support ambassadors of change, and mobilise further resources to help end

FGM in one generation. FORWARD is one of the implementing partners and we will be linking African diaspora organisations in the UK to support Africa-led initiatives to end FGM. In 2014 work for The Girl Generation started with a particular focus on some of the most affected countries in Africa: the Gambia, Senegal, Mali, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya.

Research and consultations began in February and saw FORWARD conduct scoping visits to Senegal and the Gambia to assess the country context of FGM, meet with key organisations and people working for girls and women's rights in the country and map existing services. We also held consultations with UK African diaspora organisations to inform the development of the diaspora component of The Girl Generation strategy.

“This communications programme exists to support the work of such tireless campaigners - to amplify their work, tell their stories, and attract additional resources so that work to end FGM can be scaled up. We felt strongly that their perspectives had to form the heart of the movement.”

- Efua Dorkenoo OBE, Programme Director, The Girl Generation

Formation of the End FGM European Network

FORWARD supported the end FGM European Campaign, led by Amnesty Ireland, to successfully transition into an independent network with a secretariat based in Brussels. The campaign provided a vital co-ordinated voice to shape and lobby for European

wide policies on FGM. In recognition of the importance of such a voice to maintain momentum for work on FGM across the EU, FORWARD has once again demonstrated the added value of partnerships in accelerating change. The European campaign now continues as the end FGM European Network, of which FORWARD's Executive Director is President, working with 11 member organisations across 10 countries. The Network is currently funded by the Human Dignity Foundation and Wallace Global.

FORWARD is implementing a two year project funded by EuropeAid, the project is led by AIDOS in Italy and collaborating with partners from Portugal and Cyprus. The aim of the project is to push for FGM to be a development priority within the Africa-EU partnership and European gender action plan. The EuropeAid project has been instrumental in supporting the transformation of the end FGM European campaign to a network.



Newsha Tavakolian for
TooYoungToWed/The Girl Generation

FORWARD raises awareness of illegal cutting season in Tanzania

At the close of 2014 FORWARD was alerted to the terrible news that hundreds of girls were being forced to undergo FGM in Tarime, Mara region, Tanzania. We were informed by our

partners, Children's Dignity Forum (CDF), who witnessed first-hand the public and celebratory FGM ceremonies taking place. Although FGM was declared illegal in Tanzania in 1998 and the government have been vocal about their opposition to the practice, our partners informed us that local authorities and police took no action to stop the FGM ceremonies.

The FGM cutting season also took place despite declarations from the Kurya* traditional leaders that there would be no FGM taking place that year.

*Kurya = ethnic group in Tanzania/Kenya

The FGM season started in secret in late October, with no repercussions from the police. The practice then took place publicly in December with the 'after cutting' ceremonies parading in the streets. After learning that over 1,000 girls had been forced to undergo FGM since the end of October and around 3,000 further girls would undergo FGM by the end of the cutting season (beginning of January), FORWARD and CDF called on the Tanzanian government to take immediate action in Tarime to prevent any further girls being subjected to this human rights abuse.



Girls in Tarime after the FGM ceremony

Over 600

girls ran away

from the FGM ceremonies
to a FORWARD & CDF
supported safe house,
the Masanga Centre

FORWARD contacted multiple news agencies in the UK at this time, hoping to capitalise on the current media attention about FGM, put global pressure on the Tanzanian government to take action.

We are sad to report that not a single news agency covered the story or encouraged action, despite the provision of photos of the ceremonies taking place and in-country witnesses. The response to this case of FGM shows that there is still a long way to go in the efforts to unite organisations and media across the globe to eradicate the practice and that further collaborative efforts are needed to create change. We were, however, happy to note that one tribe in the region, the Butimbaru clan, with whom our partners CDF had been working, and who had also agreed not to put their girls through FGM, engaged in alternate rites of passage which did not involve FGM during this cutting season.

UK premiere of *Honor Diaries*

To mark International Women's Day FORWARD and Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO) co-organised the UK premiere of the documentary *Honor Diaries* in which an international group of women's rights champions discuss the various forms of 'honor violence', including child and forced marriage and FGM. A panel discussion followed the screening and included Paula Kweskin, Producer of *Honor Diaries*, Naana Otoo-Oyortey MBE, FORWARD's Executive

Director, Jasvinder Sanghera CBE, CEO and Founder of Karma Nirvana, Diana Nammi, Executive Director of IKWRO and was moderated by Professor Fareda Banda from the School of Oriental & African Studies.

We are extremely thankful to the **150** people who showed up to support the film and are pleased that many people said they left inspired to do more to address 'honor' based crimes including FGM, child and forced marriages.

Women's Forum Global Meeting 2014

FORWARD's Executive Director was invited to participate in the 10th annual Women's Forum Global Meeting which took place in France this year. Hosted by the Women's Forum for Economy and Society, the global meeting is a leading platform to feature voices and views of women around the world on major social and economic issues. FORWARD contributed to the break

out session on A World Free From Female Genital Cutting alongside Julia Lalla-Maharajh, Founder and CEO of the Orchid Project and moderated by Nina Gardner, Founder and Director of Strategy International. The session involved discussion about awareness of FGM and how this is expanding and the importance of working across multiple sectors to bring an end to the practice.

“

It is important to link [FGM] to maternal health, but the problem is that it is different from one country to another. One size does not fit all.”

- FORWARD Executive Director, Naana Otoo-Oyortey at the Women's Forum Global Meeting

“Not every tradition is good, so we don't have to go back to our roots for a better society. I want to see leaves and flowers, not roots.”

- Emma Bonino, Minister of Foreign Affairs in Italy at the Women's Forum Global Meeting

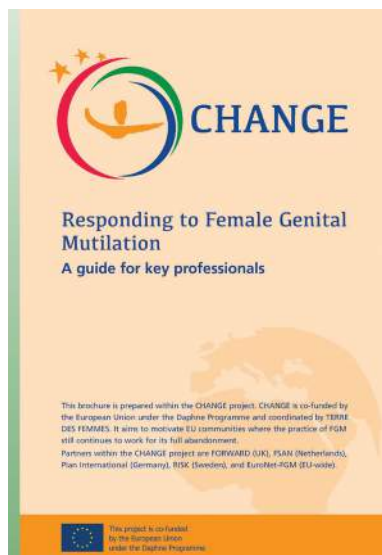
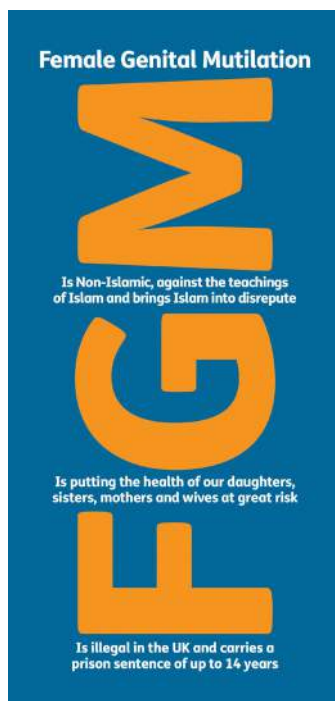


Learning and Sharing: 2014 Publications

All publications can be found on our website at www.forwarduk.org.uk/information-hub, unless otherwise stated.

FGM and Islam

FORWARD worked alongside The Muslim Council of Britain and the Muslim Spiritual Care Provision to advise on and develop the leaflet *FGM and Islam*. The flyer reiterates that FGM is non-Islamic, is against the teachings of Islam and puts the health of women and girls at risk. It also talks about the legal implications of carrying out FGM in the UK.



Responding to Female Genital Mutilation: A Guide for Key Professionals

As part of the European CHANGE project FORWARD collaborated with Terre Des Femmes, Plan Germany, FSAN, RISK and EuroNet-FGM to create a guide for frontline professionals who work with girls and women affected by FGM. The guide provides information on what FGM is, where it occurs and where services are available as well as guidance on how to deal with FGM cases in a culturally sensitive manner.

Schools Resource Pack

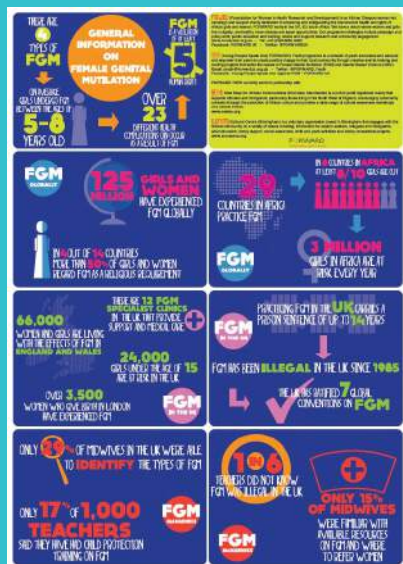
FORWARD developed this pilot resource for teachers, external facilitators and other professionals with an interest in education. FORWARD's Schools Pack is accessible, flexible and suitable for use with pupils aged 11 to 21. The pack is designed to support professionals with little-to-no experience of working on the issue with the means to engage in a safe, effective and culturally sensitive way. It includes everything necessary to deliver an interactive, multi-sensory session, including introductory and supplementary

information, a lesson plan, activities and youth-friendly resources. Please contact youth@forwarduk.org.uk if you would like a copy.



These Are Our Friends infographic and poster

There are four posters that accompany the *These Are Our Friends* poetry book. Each artwork represents one of the four themes of the poems: This Is - Our Inspiration, This Is - Our Community, This Is: FGM and This Is - Our Life. The themes have been beautifully illustrated by talented and creative professionals from the world of fashion, graphic and web design, social media and music. The reverse side of each artwork displays an infographic highlighting key statistics about FGM. The posters fold down into small and easy to carry pamphlets for people to enjoy and share. You can buy a copy for £1.99 by contacting forward@forwarduk.org.uk



These Are Our Friends poetry book

This poetry book is made up of poems written by our youth advocates from FGM affected communities across four UK cities. The poetry, written following creative writing workshops, capture the nuances and complexities of the practice of FGM and the varying emotions and feelings that it evokes. They invite the reader to engage in a wider discussion about the links, rationale and complications of a practice that can at times be oversimplified in wider public debate and commentary. You can buy a copy for £5.99 by contacting forward@forwarduk.org.uk



Video: Transforming Lives of Women Affected by FGM

This video documents and explores the impact of FORWARD's Women's Health and Leadership Skills Training which provides a safe space where women can reflect on and discuss their social, cultural and religious beliefs and values. The training enables women to speak out against FGM in their communities by improving their communication and leadership skills and developing self-esteem, confidence and resilience.



Video: A Change Has Begun

A Change Has Begun is a short and intimate survivor-led account of life with FGM which speaks of the positive shift in perspective within practicing communities in the UK. Released by The Girl Effect, it features insightful interviews with FORWARD's Executive Director and our CHANGE Agents.

Going the Extra Mile: Our Fundraisers

FORWARD would like to offer a sincere thanks to all the people who dedicated their time and effort to fundraise for FORWARD's work this year.

Thank you to everyone who took on runs, half marathons, marathons and triathlons! Well done to you all:

Aline Rogers - Reading Half Marathon
Jane Thomas - London Marathon
Kathrine Sheldon - Weston Colour Run
Georgia Seago - Heroes Run
Leanne Atkinson - Rock'n'Roll Liverpool Marathon
Rhona MacLean - Rock'n'Roll Liverpool Half Marathon
Shanice Swales & Sofia - Bath Half Marathon
Rebecca Essex-Crosby - Langport Triathlon

A big thank you also goes to:

Kelly Ross who had the original idea of abseiling down Guildford Cathedral to raise funds for FORWARD's work.

Huddersfield Midwifery Society who put great effort into an FGM conference at their university – the biggest event any student society has held at the university - followed by a raffle with final donations of £170 going to FORWARD.

Everyone on NCS Team Synergy, a group of 11 young people who put in incredible effort organising a range of events to raise funds for FORWARD. Their activities included bike rides, street fundraising and a community event – altogether raising over £800. The funds they raised were kindly matched by the Threadneedle Foundation.

Seble Alemu chose to combine the organisation of her school reunion with fundraising for FORWARD, raising £120 for our work.

Samantha Schofield & Natasha Richards - Richmond Running Festival half marathon (they also held a bake sale, overall raising over £700).

Paulina Sygulka who dedicated her 30th birthday celebrations to hosting the Unconventional Convention, donating all the proceeds to FORWARD. She presented a wonderful evening, including a silent auction and raised an amazing £2,500 for FORWARD.

Finally, thanks to Mariama Sherriff for holding a short story event and auction to raise £140 to support FORWARD.



Huddersfield Midwifery Society's FGM Conference

“We are absolutely delighted to be able to support FORWARD at this event. We know that FORWARD is at the forefront of leading worldwide campaigns into the eradication of FGM, amongst other issues, and the reason to support you was simple; we wanted to contribute in some small way to enable continuation of this work.”

- Huddersfield Midwifery Society

“Both of us were horrified to hear about the practice of FGM. We felt shocked and a little guilty that we had never heard of it before, which compelled us to do something... anything to raise awareness or stop it happening.”

- Samantha Schofield and Natasha Richards

“Well I did it! What a fantastic day, with the help and support from my family and friends (and the sunshine). Amazing feeling, can't believe I've done it and managed to raise a few bob for a very worthwhile charity too.”

- Rebecca Essex-Crosby

Our amazing
supporters
fundraised
£10,000
for FORWARD's work



Paulina Sygulska's
Unconventional Convention

Our Partners

- Acton FGM Specialist Clinic
- Advocacy Movement Network, Sierra Leone
- Association of Church Development Projects - www.acdep.org
- Associacao Para O Planeamento Da Familia, Portugal - www.apf.pt
- Bristol NHS - www.bristol.nhs.uk
- Bristol Public Health - www.bristol.gov.uk
- Care for Women and Girls, Birmingham
- Chama Cha Uzazi na Malezi Bora, Tanzania - www.umati.or.tz
- Children's Dignity Forum, Tanzania - www.cdftz.org
- Enabling Education Network - www.eenet.org.uk
- End FGM European Network - www.endfgm.eu
- End Violence Against Women - www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- Eurosoma, Birmingham - www.eurosoma.org
- Federation of Somali Associates in the Netherlands - www.fsan.nl
- FGM Special Initiative
- Gender and Development Network - www.gadnetwork.org
- Girl 2 Girl Empowerment Movement, Sierra Leone
- Girls Not Brides - www.girlsnotbrides.org
- Girls of Dignity World, Liberia
- Haikal Foundation, Sierra Leone - www.haikalfoundationssierraleone.org
- Her Centre Greenwich - www.hercentre.org
- International Planned Parenthood Federation - www.ippf.org
- Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation - www.ikwro.org.uk
- Katherine Low Settlement - www.klsettlement.org.uk
- London VAWG Consortium
- New Step for African Communities - www.nestac.org
- Ocean Somali Community Association - www.oceansomali.org.uk
- Purim African Youth Development Platform, Ghana - www.paydp.org
- Refugee Women of Bristol - www.refugeewomenofbristol.org.uk
- Sinyati Womens' Group, Kenya
- The Gaia Centre - www.refuge.org.uk/what-we-do/our-services/gaia-centre-lambeth
- The Girl Generation - www.thegirlgeneration.org
- UTU Mwanamke, Tanzania - www.womensdignity.org
- Women's Health and Equality Consortium - www.whec.org.uk
- Wadada Centre, Tanzania

Financial Statement 2013-14

Statement of Financial Activities for April 2013 – March 2014

Incoming Resources

Donations	48,393	●
Grants Receivable	1,265,475	○
Other Income	33,357	●
Total	1,347,225	

Expenditure

Fundraising	942	●
Charitable Expenses	1,175,105	●
Governance	11,202	○
Total	1,187,249	

Net Incoming Resources	159,976
Total Funds b/f	192,075
Total Funds c/f	352,051

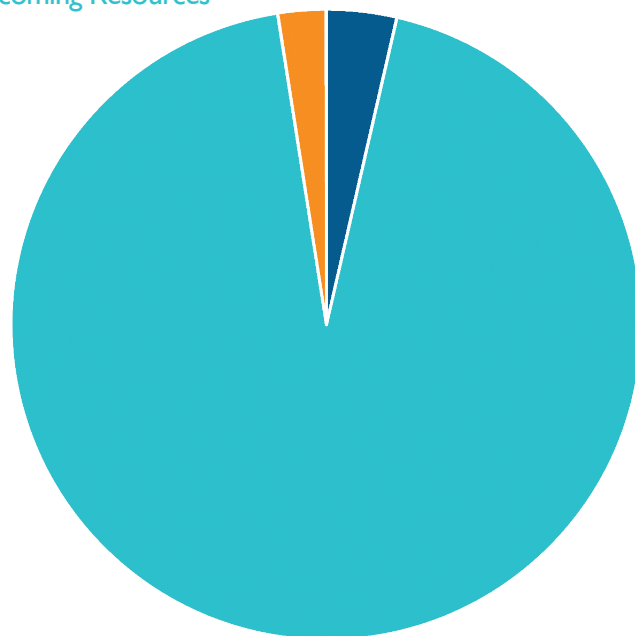
Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2014

Current Assets	267,292
Creditors	84,759
Net Assets	352,051

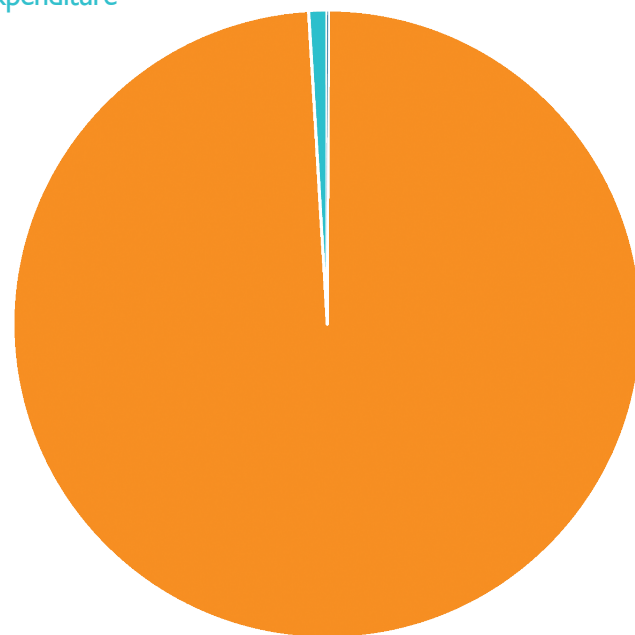
Represented by:

Restricted Funds	267,292
Unrestricted Funds	84,759
Total Funds	352,051

Incoming Resources



Expenditure



FORWARD Team

Staff

Naana Otoo-Oyortey MBE

Executive Director

Toks Okeniyi

Head of UK Programmes

Adwoa Kwateng-Kluyitse

Head of Global Advocacy & Partnerships

Rukayah Sarumi

Campaigns and Advocacy Manager

Kekeli Kpognon

Head of Diaspora Programmes

Elizabeth Gezahegn King

Africa Programme Manager

Wossenyelesh Kifle

Africa Programme Officer

Lottie Howard-Merrill

*Africa Programme Research &
Documentation Assistant*

Zara Mahdi

*Africa Programme Project Coordinator
(Sierra Leone, left in 2014)*

Hodon Abdi

Community Programme Manager (left in 2014)

Naima Ibrahim

Community Development Officer

Layla Ismael

Community Development Worker, Bristol

Yvette Robbin-Coker

Training and Development Co-ordinator

Maria Aden

Community Outreach Worker

Mahasin Abu

Sudanese Community Support Worker

Kabung Lomodong

Community Programme Assistant

Jane Murdoch

Training Support Assistant

Saria Khalifa

Youth Programme Lead

Dina Baky

Youth Programme Officer

Vanessa Diakides

Schools Programme Coordinator

Rasha Farah

Youth Programme Assistant

Nadia Gahakwa

Youth Programme Assistant (left in 2014)

Naomi Reid

Projects and Events Manager

Caroline Walker

Fundraising and Communications Officer

Fosdicka Crankson

Finance Manager

Rita Janani

Finance Assistant

Damaris Villanueva

Admin and HR Officer



Board of Trustees

Dr Sohier Elneil - Chair
Beatrice Mutali
Dr Deborah Hodes
Gibril Faal
Dr Lisa Smith
Muna Dol
Nisan Zerai Kesete
Sam Matthews
Dr Yunes Teinaz

Patrons & Matrons

Baroness Gould
Don Boyd
Karon Monaghan QC

Ambassadors

Ade Daramy
Bumi Thomas
Gavin Weston

Spotlight on Gavin Weston...

This year FORWARD Ambassador Gavin ran several Twitter competitions, the prizes being signed copies of his book about child marriage in Niger, entitled *Harmattan*. The main purpose being to disseminate information about child marriage, FGM and FORWARD's crucial work. He also did a series of prison tours, as a guest writer, during which he read from *Harmattan* and talked to the inmates about FORWARD's work and the scale of these problems.

Harmattan was the featured book for several local book clubs, and Gavin was able to discuss both the novel, his research for the novel and FORWARD's campaigns to end both child marriage and FGM with avid and concerned readers.

“ I never go anywhere without some FORWARD literature and it still amazes me when I meet someone who knows little or nothing about these issues. I wish that I could do more but am, nevertheless, proud to be able to do a little in terms of spreading the word. ”

- Gavin Weston

Interns & Volunteers

Alexandra Marie Agostino
Amy Facondini
Ayan Hassan

Elise van Zeeland
George Kingsley
Hannah Small
Irene Dzogum
Kabung Lomodong

Maryam Akram
Megan Geddes
Melissa Madchen
Navaisha Mwanji
Rebecca Keatinge

“ My experience at FORWARD was overwhelmingly positive. While it is an important issue around the world, FGM is not talked about in the US as much as it is in the UK so while I was not new to working on human rights, I was quite new to the issue. Only interning there for a few months, I only got to see a short snapshot of the work FORWARD does but I feel as though I was given a whole and complete experience. I'm so grateful that I was welcomed so easily and warmly and allowed to work closely with so many great activists working on interesting and important campaigns. Working at FORWARD was an invaluable experience and I want to thank everyone who works there for the work that they do every day and for allowing me to be part of that work.”

- Melissa Madchen

“ I am pleased and humbled to have had the opportunity for a while to volunteer in the HR department at FORWARD, such a worthy organisation. I learned so much about the struggle and suffering of women and children in some part of the world. I had a good manager who put my skills to good use to benefit the organisation. I received regular and sufficient feedback on my performance which help me improve my skills. I would recommend volunteering and donating with this organisation to my friends and family. Keep up the good work, we need you. ”

- Irene Dzogum

Thank you!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have donated, fundraised, volunteered, attended events and to acknowledge all the wonderful things amazing individuals do every day to contribute to FORWARD's mission.

From telling a friend about FORWARD to having an awareness of the issues, all contributions are valuable in the campaigns to end FGM, child marriage and their associated health risks. Together, we can continue the momentum to accelerate social change and safeguard the rights and dignity of African girls and women.

A special thank you goes to our funders, without whom our work would not be possible:

- Amnesty International Ireland
- BBC Children in Need
- Big Lottery Awards for All
- Body Shop Foundation
- Bristol City Council
- Catapult
- City Bridge Trust
- Common Ground Initiative
- Department for Communities and Local Government
- Department for International Development
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- European Commission Daphne III Funding Programme
- European Commission EuropeAid
- Home Office Crime Innovation Fund
- Human Dignity Foundation
- International Planned Parenthood Federation
- John Lyon's Charity
- Lankelly Chase Foundation
- London Borough of Hounslow
- London Councils
- Maria Marina Foundation
- Matrix Chambers
- Sigrid Rausing Trust
- The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund
- Trust for London
- Women's Resource Centre

What can you do to support FORWARD?

There are several ways in which you can help change lives and achieve a safer and healthier future for African girls and women. Here are just a few ways that you can get involved:

- Subscribe to our quarterly newsletter (through our website)
- Raise awareness in your local area and within your community
- Become a regular supporter with monthly donations
- Become a member of FORWARD and contribute to our AGM
- Do an activity or organise an event to fundraise for FORWARD
- Make a donation to our work
- Join our Young People Speak Out programme for training, to gain skills in mentoring, advocacy and more. Please contact our Youth Programme for more information: youth@forwarduk.org.uk



Your donations enable us to continue the type of vital work outlined in this Annual Report. To support the work we do you can:

1. Text FWRD30 £'your donation' to 70070 (e.g. FWRD30 £10)
2. Go to www.charitychoice.co.uk/forward and donate online
3. Send a cheque addressed to 'FORWARD' to the address on the back of this report

Please contact FORWARD for more information, materials or support: forward@forwarduk.org.uk

It's never been **easier** to **support FORWARD!**

Text **FWRD30 £5** to **70070**
to donate to our work



Contact

FORWARD, Suite 2.1, Chandelier Building, 8 Scrubs Lane, London NW10 6RB

T +44 (0)20 8960 4000

E forward@forwarduk.org.uk

W www.forwarduk.org.uk



@FORWARDUK & @FORWARD_Youth



FORWARDUK & Forward.YPSO

FORWARD is a UK registered charity. Charity registration number: 292403 Company number: 01921508