

ANNUAL REPORT 2015



30 YEARS CHAMPIONING RIGHTS OF AFRICAN WOMEN & GIRLS



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Throughout this Annual Report you will see this symbol where we remember some of FORWARD's milestones over the past 30 years. Reflecting on how far FORWARD has come in the campaign and how important it is to remain committed to positive, permanent social change!



From left: FORWARD's UK Programme Manager, Mary Otuko, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Sohier Elneil, Head of Global Advocacy, Adwoa Kwateng-Klavitse, and Trustee, Zainab Nur

REFLECTIONS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

From one woman's vision in 1983, FORWARD has grown to become a leader in the promotion of the neglected issues affecting the reproductive and sexual health rights of African girls and women.

2015 was our 30th anniversary and FORWARD is still trailblazing. We're keeping female genital mutilation (FGM) firmly on international and government agendas as a violation of human rights, a form of child abuse and an issue of gender based violence. We envisage a world in which African women and girls live in dignity, are healthy and enjoy equal rights.

Over the years FORWARD's work and staff have expanded, nurturing campaigners and partners young and old, reaching grassroots communities, the media and decision makers, and shaping policy and practice at local, national and international levels.

As an African diaspora women-led organisation FORWARD is uniquely positioned. Over the last 30 years, we have punched above our weight, not only working directly with women but initiating projects with young people, men and schools, training professionals and building the capacity of local partners. The result has been transformative and catalytic.

In many of the communities that we work in FGM is a precursor to child marriage. That in turn leads to early pregnancy and increased risk of debilitating maternal health complications, including obstetric fistula (injuries resulting from prolonged labour).

Our holistic approach has resulted in recognising and promoting the links between these issues. They have informed the development of how we work from the very earliest days. Today, we are proud to be members of key global movements and partnerships working to unite action on these issues. They include The Girl Generation, Girls Not Brides and the End FGM European Network.

FORWARD is grateful to the numerous friends, partners and funders who have supported our work and to the many amazing women and men who have joined FORWARD's campaign and shaped our knowledge, experience and work.

We are entering a new era of uncertainty with new international development goals, funding cuts and new actors. But we are equipped to continue reaching out to affected communities, to amplify grassroots voices and to strengthen dialogue and actions to end these harmful practices.

We see safeguarding the rights and dignity of African girls and women as critical to the overall development and wellbeing of communities. Our future strategic direction seeks to consolidate and expand these gains.

Together, we are hopeful we will celebrate the end of FGM and child marriage globally, within our generation. Do join us as we strive towards this goal.

A luta continual

Dr Sohier Elneil, Chair, Board of Trustees
Naana Otoo-Oyortey MBE, Executive Director

ABOUT FORWARD

FORWARD is the leading African women-led organisation working on female genital mutilation, child marriage and maternal health in the UK and Africa. For over 30 years we have been committed to safeguarding the rights and dignity of African girls and women. We do this through community engagement, grassroots partnerships, international advocacy, training and research.

OUR VISION IS A WORLD WHERE AFRICAN GIRLS AND WOMEN LIVE IN DIGNITY, ARE HEALTHY, HAVE CHOICES AND ENJOY EQUAL RIGHTS.



FORWARD WAS FOUNDED IN 1983 BY EFUA DORKENOO OBE, A BIO-SOCIAL SCIENTIST AND NURSE. IT WAS RUN OUT OF HER SITTING ROOM FOR THE FIRST FEW YEARS WHILE RESEARCH ON FGM WAS DONE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MIGRANTS RIGHTS GROUP. IT WAS REGISTERED AS AN INDEPENDENT CHARITY IN 1985, ESTABLISHED AS THE FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (FORWARD).

OUR KEY ISSUES

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female genital mutilation (FGM), also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting, is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) 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 believes that FGM can only be effectively eliminated if affected communities themselves are supported to stop it, and also supported to address the social norms that perpetuate it. That's why we seek to engage members of the community, share knowledge, skills and create opportunities to prompt discussions in a culturally sensitive manner.

We also target policy makers to create the frameworks needed to protect the rights of girls and women and to provide necessary services for those affected. We have programmes in the UK and Africa providing support for women affected, and girls at risk of FGM.



MORE THAN 200 MILLION GIRLS AND WOMEN WORLDWIDE HAVE UNDERGONE FGM

(UNICEF, 2016)

CHILD MARRIAGE AND CHILD MOTHERHOOD

Child marriage refers to both formal and informal marriage of any child under the age of 18 years. While child marriage affects both sexes, girls are disproportionately affected by child marriage and child motherhood. Girls living in poverty are less likely to be aware of their rights and have less access to opportunities and education, making them more vulnerable to early pregnancy.

Child marriage and motherhood compromises the overall development of young women, leaving them socially isolated with little education, skills or opportunities for employment and achievement of their own goals.

FORWARD is working to end child marriage and child motherhood in Africa through community projects with grassroots organisations and at an international level, through global partnerships. FORWARD is co-chair of the Girls Not Brides network in the UK.



**THERE ARE CURRENTLY 700 MILLION
WOMEN WORLDWIDE WHO WERE MARRIED
AS CHILDREN**

(GIRLS NOT BRIDES, 2016)

MATERNAL HEALTH

While motherhood is often a positive and fulfilling experience, for too many women and girls in many countries in Africa it is associated with suffering, ill-health and even death. Those in rural areas and from poor communities are most affected.

The major direct causes of serious maternal injury and death include haemorrhage, infection, high blood pressure, unsafe abortions, and obstructed labour. (WHO, 2016) These risk factors are increased in child pregnancies, when certain types of FGM have taken place, and in environments where women do not have access to health clinics and give birth at home or without trained professionals.

FORWARD's work focuses primarily on obstetric fistula, a debilitating consequence of prolonged labour with no access to emergency obstetric care.

FORWARD focuses on promoting access for treatment for obstetric fistula, prevention of maternal health problems and advocating for an end to practices that fuel these problems including child marriage and FGM.



OVER ONE MILLION WOMEN ARE ESTIMATED TO BE SUFFERING WITH OBSTETRIC FISTULA. YET ONLY 1 FISTULA SURGERY FOR EVERY 50 WOMEN AFFECTED TAKES PLACE EACH YEAR

(LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND TROPICAL MEDICINE, 2013) (GLOBAL FISTULA MAP)

FORWARD MARKS OUR

2015 was an historic year for FORWARD, marking 30 years since we were first registered, in 1985. We have since established ourselves as a pioneering example of how to engage with affected communities; amplifying the voices of girls and women affected by FGM and supporting them to advocate against these harmful practices themselves.

Naana Otoo-Oyortey, our Executive Director, who was a Trustee since 1989, and has headed the organisation since 2007 has been a witness to FORWARD's progress since our early days:

"FORWARD has consistently campaigned over the past 30 years on female genital mutilation. As a pioneer organisation we are happy to have witnessed an increase in national and global attention to this neglected human rights violation. More importantly we are seeing a shift in the prevention action by communities, we have nurtured a number of campaigners and activists and enabled community voices to be more visible where previously this would have been unthinkable. A change has begun and we are proud to have facilitated this process. However, much still remains to be done and FORWARD will continue working as hard as ever to ensure that FGM does not become a forgotten issue and the rights of African girls and women are safeguarded - before the next 30 years is up!"



30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY



To mark our 30th anniversary we hosted a celebratory event on 15th December in London, showcasing our history, and progress made since we began. The inspiring evening included conversations with FORWARD staff past and present, trustees and community advocates. The occasion was a tribute to the founders, supporters, funders, volunteers, trustees and staff who have been part of the journey of FORWARD. We were pleased to see so many old and new faces join us for the celebration – thank you to everyone who has supported us!

We also launched a booklet to mark our anniversary; *Sharing Actions, Achievements and Aspirations*. The booklet documents 30 years of FORWARD's milestones in the campaigns to end FGM, child marriage and improve maternal health.



Women who have access to the Village Health Centre set up in Tanzania

HOW WE WORK

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FORWARD believes that transforming attitudes, social norms and behaviours of communities affected by FGM and child marriage is the most effective way of creating permanent social change.

Our community engagement work includes training male and female champions against these issues and providing support for women affected. We work with young people to amplify their voices and support them to become advocates, engaging with pupils and parents through schools in the UK and the formation of girls' clubs and networks in Africa.

It is the work we do with communities that informs our national advocacy, as we relay back to governments the views and challenges of the communities that are affected by FGM.

GRASSROOTS PARTNERSHIPS

We believe that partnerships are essential to reaching community members and shaping policy change.

Since FORWARD was founded, our grassroots partnerships have included working with diaspora organisations outside of Africa, with UK partners in schools, and with grassroots organisations in African countries.

In Africa, forming partnerships with grassroots organisations gives us the knowledge and insights needed to facilitate change within communities. We help to provide funding for, and work practically with, partners to develop their organisational capacity. We help them to find their voices, and to be heard locally, regionally and even internationally.

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY

As well as creating social change at local and national level, we recognise the importance of underpinning this change through policy and law.

We lobby the UK government for policy change and we participate in European projects and networks, sharing our insights and lobbying for change.

We also advocate within Africa through initiatives in-country and participate in regional level advocacy.

TRAINING

Training and public education is about providing the information, knowledge and skills needed to increase awareness on our issues and provide confidence to respond effectively.

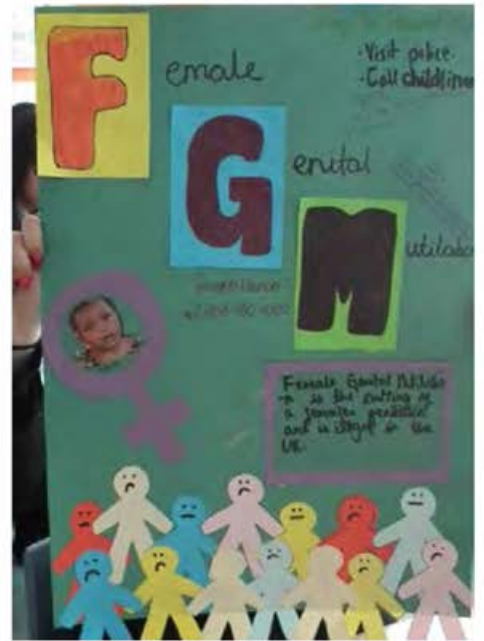
In the absence of mandatory training for key professionals to understand new policies and sensitivity to community perspectives, FORWARD provides tailored and accredited training to professionals that enable them to respond in an informed and culturally sensitive way to cases of FGM, and to help them understand the regulations that affect their role.

We also provide training to women from FGM affected communities on health and leadership, and to young people on FGM and advocacy.

RESEARCH

FORWARD believes in building an evidence base to inform our work. Research underpins our engagement with communities and our grassroots partnerships.

This research is designed to hear from affected communities directly about their issues and challenges. We provide a medium for their voices to inform and shape policy and practice.





**“WE HAVE BEEN HERE FOR
30 YEARS AND THIS IS
RECOGNITION OF OUR TIRELESS
EFFORTS TO PUT FGM ON THE
NATIONAL AGENDA.”**

FORWARD's Executive Director and Schools Programme Coordinator (centre) with our award presenters

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

SCHOOLS

SCHOOLS PROGRAMME GOES NATIONAL

FORWARD received funding from the UK Department for Education to expand our schools programme in 2015 which was supported by Maria Marina Foundation and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

The programme provides culturally sensitive, interactive workshops on FGM for teachers, pupils and parents. We have been working in secondary schools and colleges for five years. In 2015 we have been able to upscale our work, including delivery to primary schools, and **increased our reach to staff and students by 149%**. This is a significant milestone in our work as Primary School age is when girls are most at risk of FGM. We also took the programme national, delivering school sessions and holding conferences across England in collaboration with our local partners New Step for African Community in Manchester, and Muslim Women's Network UK in Birmingham.

AWARD FOR OUR WORK IN SCHOOLS

FORWARD's valuable work with schools was recognised this year when we were awarded the Healthcare and Medical Research award in the national Charity Awards 2015. It recognised our work in secondary and primary schools on FGM awareness and safeguarding children from harm.



COMMUNITY

COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL COUNCILS TO REACH COMMUNITIES

FORWARD worked with Hounslow council in 2015 on a two year programme to deliver community engagement and FGM support. We have trained women from affected communities, and hosted awareness raising events, trained local health, police, social service and education professionals. We have also engaged with schools through parent sessions, holding stalls and hosting special events.

In Bristol our partnership with Public Health, the city council and Refugee Women of Bristol has strengthened over the last eight years.

The Community Health Advocates have hosted parent sessions in schools, and worked within the community. FORWARD's youth campaign group Empowering has started to attract more young people, as well as media and community attention with captivating awareness raising strategies.



FORWARD'S COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS CELEBRATED!

As part of our 30th Anniversary celebrations FORWARD hosted an event this June to celebrate our most valuable colleagues: FORWARD's Community Champions. Community Champions are people from FGM affected communities who receive training on FGM, services available, leadership and campaigning skills, as well as counselling skills, so that they can work within their communities to support women affected and girls at risk.

The event, hosted by Wandsworth Council, was held to celebrate the Champions' incredible achievements in breaking the silence on FGM. The event highlighted the value of working with women and men from affected communities to abandon the practice of FGM and reaffirmed the importance of empowering Community Champions.



**“I REALISE WE MUST TALK WITH OUR CHILDREN, LISTEN TO THEM.
I REALISE I TALK AT THEM SOMETIMES. NOW IT'S DIFFERENT.”**

FORWARD Community Health Advocate

“THE EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT ADVOCATES MOVE ALONG A CONTINUUM FROM BECOMING HEALTH MESSENGERS AT ONE END, TO BECOMING CHANGE AGENTS AT THE OTHER. SOME COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATES MOVED ALONG THE CONTINUUM TO BECOMING CHANGE AGENTS AND ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF EMPOWERING [FORWARD’S BRISTOL YOUTH GROUP] HAD BECOME ACTIVE AGENTS OF CHANGE. THE WORK OF EMPOWERING IS ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE OUTCOMES OF THE WORK IN BRISTOL.”

External evaluation of our Bristol community programme

IN 2008, FORWARD BEGAN A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE, WORKING TO EMPOWER WOMEN FROM FGM AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN BRISTOL. WITH REFUGEE WOMEN OF BRISTOL, THE PROJECT FORMED PART OF THE WIDER BRISTOL CITY DELIVERY GROUP ON FGM BRINGING TOGETHER A RANGE OF ORGANISATIONS.



TRAINING WOMEN FROM FGM AFFECTED COMMUNITIES TO BECOME COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATES WAS A CORE PART OF THE PROGRAMME. THESE WOMEN GO ON TO DO OUTREACH AMONG THEIR PEERS, RUN PARENTS' SESSIONS AND GIVE ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES. THE PROJECT ALSO INCLUDES A YOUTH PROGRAMME, SUPPORTS TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS, ENGAGES MEN AND EVEN RESULTED IN THE FIRST COMMUNITY MARCH AGAINST FGM IN THE UK.

THIS MULTI-AGENCY, COORDINATED COMMUNITY APPROACH TO ENDING FGM IS NOW RECOGNISED AS A MODEL OF BEST PRACTICE FOR ENDING FGM. THE PROGRAMME IS STILL BUILDING ON POSITIVE PROGRESS AND WILL CONTINUE UNTIL MARCH 2017.

HER STORY

BRISTOL COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATE HANNA AHMED, BRISTOL



"I trained as a Community Health Advocate and Community Evaluator and loved the training. Together the trainings have given me the feeling that I can do something, that I can take a lead. Why not me?"

"I'm a busy mother of four young children but my youngest has now started pre-school. The teachers at the school often ask me to help with parents who need translation. I had an idea. Why not set up a parenting group at my children's school? I

arranged a meeting with the head of the school, and they offered the hall, tea and coffee, one morning per week.

"Everything I learnt from the training I want to bring to the group. I'm not going to keep my knowledge in the bottom of a cupboard. I need to share it.

"The group met this May for the first time. 24 parents came to the group. Together we decided that the aims and objectives of the group are to provide support to parents covering a wide range of issues affecting themselves and their families; to help parents who do not speak English and do not feel confident about how the school system works; to help the school communicate with parents.

"The aim is that parents would support each other, with parents who have older children or who have more experience helping other parents and helping them communicate with the school or outside agencies.

"I'm also aware that FGM will come up as an issue. I know that some people are still doing type 1, as they think it is not really FGM. There needs to be more awareness for parents. Many people are not even sure it's illegal, particularly when they first arrive in the UK. If they are coming to the school with their children and they join our group we will have opportunities to discuss FGM, child protection and other things.

"I'm a young mother. I got married and have been bringing up children since leaving school. Now is my time to do something important in my community. FORWARD has truly motivated me."

YOUTH

YOUTH ADVOCACY PROJECT UNDERWAY

This year FORWARD refreshed our Young People Speak Out! Programme. We trained 12 young men and women to be part of our new Youth Advocacy Groups in Manchester, Birmingham and London.

They attended a three day residential training which focused on FGM awareness, project management, peer support, and advocacy and leadership skills. For the first time, the advocates received £250 each to support their project ideas for awareness raising and advocacy campaigns of their own.

Responses so far have been both fun and inspiring and included outcomes such as new plays and spoken word performances written and staged, and some of the young people have even been interviewed on national radio!



EUROPEAN YOUTH MOVEMENT CONCLUDES

This year saw the final stage of the Europe-wide Create Youth-Net programme. It united young people from the UK, Portugal and the Netherlands to campaign against FGM and child and forced marriage.

The project generated research on young people's views, and mapped services available in each country. Campaigns such as flash mobs and petitions were held in key cities. The project concluded with a final conference Strengthening Youth Engagement in Ending Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage, co-hosted by FORWARD in January 2015.

A number of resources were developed to capture learning from this youth programme, to educate young people and teachers, and to empower young people as advocates. (See Publications section on page 50).

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL ESTABLISHED

To build on our work with young people, we established a Youth Advisory Council in November 2015.

The council is made up of 13 young women from diverse backgrounds and occupations. They provide insight, recommendations and ideas on all our youth programme activities, ensuring that our work is being constantly influenced and shaped by the voices of young people.





FORWARD'S WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE BEGAN IN 2006 WHEN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SPEAK OUT! PROGRAMME WAS LAUNCHED. IT BUILDS ON THE ENERGY AND POWER OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM FGM AFFECTED COMMUNITIES AND PROVIDES A SPACE FOR THEM, AS THE SLOGAN STATES, TO GET SKILLS, GET KNOWLEDGE, GET CREATIVE – GET HEARD!

YOUTH PEER MENTORS

A new initiative has been added to our Young People Speak Out! Programme, with six young women trained to become peer mentors on FGM.

The mentor project began in November and saw the young women trained on FGM and the reasons the practice continues. They also learned counselling skills from a professional psychotherapist.

We hope that this new approach will mean young women who may be in need of help will be properly supported by their peers and directed towards services that can help them.



LAUNCH OF NEW SHORT FILMS

In October 2015, FORWARD launched three new short animated films about FGM. The films which were launched at the House of Commons, hosted by Pauline Latham OBE MP, offer a new way for FORWARD to invoke passion, action and fundraise to end FGM.

Needlecraft portrays the severity and complexity of FGM. The film was developed by FORWARD and Animage Films to raise awareness of FGM among a wider UK audience, galvanising support for the campaign and raising funds for our work.

My Body My Rules is a version of *Needlecraft* developed to facilitate sessions on FGM in primary schools in the UK, as well as for use by professionals and NGOs working with younger children at risk of FGM.

A third film, *The True Story of Chati and Rhobi*, made for distribution in Tanzania and other African countries, was also launched at this event (read more about it on page 30). The film was launched to over 250 people, including cutters, traditional and religious leaders, and government officials in Tanzania in November.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS

114 WOMEN RECEIVED DIRECT CASE WORK OUTREACH AND SUPPORT ACROSS LONDON DURING 2015. OUR SUPPORT TEAM ACCOMPANY WOMEN TO ACCESS HEALTH SERVICES, MEETING WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS AND PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH WOMEN, AND PROVIDE ADVICE TO WOMEN AFFECTED BY FGM. WE ALSO PROVIDED TRANSLATION SUPPORT TO 41 CASES OF WOMEN AFFECTED BY FGM.

130 PEOPLE ATTENDED THE SUMMIT ON FGM YOUTH CONFERENCE IN BIRMINGHAM, ORGANISED WITH OUR PARTNER, MUSLIM WOMEN'S NETWORK. SPEAKERS INCLUDED SHABANA MAHMOUD MP AND LYNNE FEATHERSTONE MP, AND FEATURED WORKSHOPS EXPLORING THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS, HEALTHCARE AND FAITH IN RESPONDING TO FGM. THE EVENT GALVANISED SUPPORT AND INSPIRED LOCAL AND NATIONAL EFFORTS TO END FGM, AND ESTABLISH BIRMINGHAM AS A REGIONAL HUB FOR BEST PRACTICE.

414 PEOPLE IN HOUNSLOW HAVE BEEN REACHED DIRECTLY WITH TRAINING, INFORMATION AND SUPPORT ABOUT FGM.

50 PEOPLE CAME TOGETHER TO TAKE PART IN FORWARD'S COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ON FGM IN LONDON. THE CONVERSATIONS WERE AN INFORMAL WAY TO MEET WITH NGOS, COMMUNITY LEADERS, PROFESSIONALS AND THE POLICE TO SHED LIGHT ON NEW MANDATORY REPORTING ON FGM.

2,250 YOUNG GIRLS AND BOYS IN TANZANIA SAW OUR FGM CAMPAIGN FILM AND RECEIVED AWARENESS TRAINING. A FURTHER 273 PROFESSIONALS AND POLICY AND DECISION MAKERS WERE REACHED THROUGH THE FILM PROJECT, AS WELL AS 1,837 KEY COMMUNITY ACTORS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

11 WOMEN IN HOUNSLOW WERE TRAINED AS COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS TO UNDERSTAND THE EFFECTS OF FGM AND HOW TO ENGAGE WITH THEIR PEERS ON THE ISSUE.

135 PEOPLE IN BRISTOL AND HOUNSLOW ATTENDED FORWARD'S SUMMER CAMPAIGN TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE RISK OF GIRLS BEING TAKEN ABROAD TO UNDERGO FGM DURING THE SUMMER SEASON.

9 WOMEN ATTENDED OUR BASIC COUNSELLING AND PEER SUPPORT TRAINING. THE PARTICIPANTS REPORTED THEY HAD GAINED MORE KNOWLEDGE ON HOW TO CONTROL PERSONAL EMOTIONS WHEN DEALING WITH CLIENTS, MORE UNDERSTANDING ABOUT RESPECTIVE CLIENTS' NEEDS AND HAD A BROADER KNOWLEDGE OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF FGM.

40 YOUNG PEOPLE WERE TRAINED AS ADVOCATES ACROSS ENGLAND.

10,600 SCHOOL STAFF, PUPILS AND PARENTS WERE ENGAGED BY OUR SCHOOLS PROGRAMME, WITH OVER 384 SESSIONS CARRIED OUT IN SCHOOLS. 9,570 YOUNG PEOPLE WERE TAUGHT ABOUT FGM, INCLUDING 680 PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS.



Massai women leading local initiatives in Kenya

GRASSROOTS PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICES PROJECT UNDERWAY, SIERRA LEONE

After a delay in this new project due to the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, programme activities began in earnest in May 2015. Since then we have reached 1,310 girls and young women at risk of or affected by harmful traditional practices.

The four year *Developing Rights-based and Empowering Approaches to Mobilise Action to End FGM* (DREAM) project is being implemented in partnership with Advocacy Movement Network and Girl to Girl (G2G) Empowerment Movement, based in Freetown. G2G is a young woman-led organisation which emerged following FORWARD's research *In Their Own Words: Girls from Sierra Leone on Sexuality, Pregnancy and Services*.

The DREAM project targets girls and young women at risk of teenage pregnancy, child marriage and FGM. It provides a safe space for accessing information, support, and economic and leadership skills.

Over 100 girls attended the project launch event, chanting the slogan "I am a leader," reinforcing the empowerment message of the project. The girls used theatre skits to share stories of child fostering and teenage pregnancy.

Pregnant girls are banned from attending school in Sierra Leone as part of government policy to prevent 'immorality' so the project is a timely initiative that brings hope for girls left behind.



NEW VIDEO ENCOURAGES END TO FGM, TANZANIA

This year FORWARD launched a new approach to reach communities in areas of Tanzania where FGM continues. A short animated film, *The True Story of Chati and Rhobi*, was designed and scripted to reach rural Tanzanian audiences. It is an inspirational story about two girls resisting their community's pressure to go through FGM.

They show courage by running away to seek protection and, with the help of community elders, their actions change the way their community treats a girl's transition into womanhood.

The film is available in English and Swahili versions, alongside a facilitators' guide to help activists use the resource to engage with community members on FGM.



COMPLETION OF MATERNAL HEALTH EQUITY PROJECT, TANZANIA

This was the concluding year of our project Promoting Maternal Health Equity and Accountability in Tanzania, with our local partner UTU Mwanamke in Singida and Dodoma Regions.

The project collaborated with the local government, including regional and district health management teams, education officers and community leaders as well as development partners to mobilise village health workers, district health officials, schools and communities to take action on maternal health and obstetric fistula support.

The project raised awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and provided referrals to services for pregnant women. It also empowered survivors of obstetric fistula, providing skills training, psychosocial support and small business start-up funds.

OVER THE COURSE OF THE PROJECT:

11,775 WOMEN AND GIRLS WERE REACHED THROUGH THE WORK OF THE HEALTH WORKERS, GIRLS CLUBS AND NETWORKS.

327 SURVIVORS OF OBSTETRIC FISTULA RECEIVED INCOME GENERATING SKILLS TRAINING, PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND REFERRAL TO SERVICES.

44 FISTULA SURVIVORS RECEIVED START UP FUNDS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES.

500 POLICY MAKERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS WERE LOBBIED ON RESPECTING GIRLS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND ACKNOWLEDGING THE NEED FOR GOOD MATERNAL HEALTH SERVICES.

92% OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER FIVE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PROJECT ATTENDED AT LEAST 4 ANTENATAL CLINICS AND 96% GAVE BIRTH AT HEALTH FACILITIES.

58% OF WOMEN SERVICE USERS WERE AWARE OF FAMILY PLANNING METHODS AND 22% MORE WOMEN WERE USING MODERN FAMILY PLANNING METHODS BY THE END OF THE PROJECT.

RAISING OUR VOICES: AFRICAN DIASPORA WOMEN'S FORUM

In July, FORWARD organised Raising Our Voices: African Diaspora Women's Forum to bring together activists and individuals from across the African diaspora.

The event, jointly organised with The Girl Generation, addressed the contribution of African women in the diaspora to development, and gender equality and human rights both in the diaspora and on the African continent. It provided a platform and opportunity for more than 80 participants, including many diaspora women, to reflect on key challenges and progress on human rights and development for African women and girls.

The keynote speaker was the Senior Gender Advisor for the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Ngoné Diop. The forum involved a range of speakers with a wealth of experience working on development issues within Africa and the diaspora.

Presentations touched on a range of topics, including building links between the diaspora and African communities, supporting local development, social change and communications, and how diaspora organisations add value to development in Africa.

It was a great opportunity to hear about the work of others, to network and to build a unified approach to African diaspora work in the UK. A report on the forum's discussions and insights will be published in 2016.

**“MAKE THE MOST OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO QUESTION,
CHALLENGE AND LEARN. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU
SHARE THE LEARNING WITH PEOPLE WHO WEREN'T ABLE
TO ATTEND, TO SPREAD THE IDEAS FURTHER, AND RAISE
OUR VOICES HIGHER”**

Sohier Elneil, Chair of the Board, FORWARD

**“YOU'VE INSPIRED ME BEYOND MY IMAGINATION! I'M
READY TO CHANGE THE NARRATIVE OF AFRICA.”**

Forum attendee



FORWARD HAS A HISTORY OF BRINGING ORGANISATIONS TOGETHER TO TACKLE FGM IN A COLLABORATIVE WAY. IN 1989, WE HOSTED THE UK'S FIRST EVER CONFERENCE ON FGM, DILEMMAS FOR PROFESSIONALS IN HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK. IT LED TO THE RECOGNITION OF FGM AS CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE.



IN 1992, WE ORGANISED THE FIRST EUROPEAN STUDY CONFERENCE ON GENITAL MUTILATION OF GIRLS TO UNITE CAMPAIGNERS AND NGOS WORKING TO END FGM ACROSS EUROPE. THIS CONFERENCE LED TO RECOGNISING FGM AS A FORM OF TORTURE AND TO THE EVENTUAL CLASSIFICATION OF FGM AS A HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION.

IN 2002, WE COLLABORATED WITH THE FORUM ON MARRIAGE AND THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS TO ORGANISE THE FIRST CONFERENCE ON CHILD MARRIAGE IN AFRICA. IT CULMINATED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OUGADDOUGOU DECLARATION ON CHILD MARRIAGE, WHICH SETS OUT A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE END OF THE PRACTICE.



FORWARD'S FIRST PROGRAMME IN AFRICA STARTED IN 1996 IN THE GAMBIA WHERE WE WORKED WITH OUR FIRST AFRICAN PARTNERS, A LOCAL WOMEN'S ORGANISATION, FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON WOMEN'S HEALTH, PRODUCTIVITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT (BAFROW). THE PROJECT INITIATED THE FIRST ALTERNATIVE RITES OF PASSAGE, WITHOUT CUTTING, WHICH LATER BECAME A CRITICAL APPROACH TO TACKLING FGM. IT IS USED BY MANY COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS TODAY.

GRASSROOTS PARTNERSHIPS IN NUMBERS

28,000

PEOPLE WERE REACHED THROUGH OUR PARTNERSHIPS IN AFRICA IN 2015 ALONE. THIS INCLUDES GIRLS AT RISK OF HARMFUL PRACTICES, INFLUENTIAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS.

16,380

PEOPLE HAVE SEEN *THE TRUE STORY OF GHATI AND RHOBI* IN ENGLISH OR SWAHILI.

100

GIRLS IN ETHIOPIA SET UP GIRLS' CLUBS AT THEIR SCHOOLS, RECEIVING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING, AS WELL AS BEING GIVEN SANITARY PADS TO DISTRIBUTE TO THEIR PEERS.

1,837

COMMUNITY MEMBERS WERE REACHED IN THE LEAD UP TO THE FGM 'CUTTING SEASON' IN TANZANIA, INCLUDING TRADITIONAL AND FAITH LEADERS.

170

GIRLS IN TANZANIA SOUGHT REFUGE AT THE SERENGETI SAFE HOUSE DURING CUTTING SEASON, AVOIDING FGM THIS DECEMBER.

HER STORY

FISTULA CHAMPION ADIMU'S STORY, TANZANIA



Adimu went into labour with her second child when she was 22 years old. After waiting over night at her local health dispensary to be seen by a nurse, it became clear a natural delivery would not be possible. After an hour, a car came to take her to Mpwapwa Hospital where better health care was available.

On the way to the hospital the car broke down, leaving her stranded with no transport, water or health care. After seven hours she reached the hospital and had a vacuum assisted vaginal delivery. The baby died shortly after being delivered. The body was disposed of without Adimu ever being able to hold her baby.

While she was recovering, a nurse removed Adimu's catheter and the bed became wet. This made Adimu worried as she hadn't actively relieved herself. During her prolonged labour she had developed obstetric fistula, a hole between her vagina, and her bladder. The nurse was unable to identify the condition. Adimu could not afford to pay for further health care and so was forced to return home leaking urine.

Adimu lived at home with obstetric fistula for over a year. Even when a family member suggested it was likely she had obstetric fistula, and explained that the condition could be treated, her husband refused to pay for her transport and eventually left her.

Her neighbours 'denied' her, not wanting to associate with someone constantly leaking urine. When a specialist team drove through her village offering women affected by obstetric fistula free transport to treatment centres, Adimu was out working in the fields.

Eventually Adimu saved up enough money to take public transport to a treatment centre in Dar es Salaam. They provided her with clothes, bedding, soap and food for three weeks while she waited to be treated. Following a successful operation, Adimu was discharged and returned home.

In 2013 Adimu was invited to be a community researcher in Participatory Ethnographic Evaluation Research (PEER) being carried out by FORWARD. Adimu explained how she had grown in confidence after learning research skills and hearing about experiences of women similar to her own. More recently she has taken part in entrepreneurship training with UTU Mwanamke and received a small accompanying loan.

Adimu has used her loan to start a business making local beer. She has also used the money to strengthen her family's agricultural work, raising pigs and growing sunflowers to make cooking oil. She is now able to cover the cost of basic healthcare for her family and special medication for her father who has mental health problems.

Adimu developed an obstetric fistula because she experienced multiple delays in accessing good quality maternal health care. The nurses she dealt with were unable to recognise the warning signs or identify the problem. Neither did they sensitively deal with the loss of her child. Once she had developed obstetric fistula, lack of understanding from health professionals as well as her family and community meant she lived with the condition for much too long.

Obstetric fistula is both preventable and treatable. Cases like Adimu's are unacceptable and unnecessary.

**HER NEIGHBOURS 'DENIED'
HER, NOT WANTING TO
ASSOCIATE WITH SOMEONE
CONSTANTLY LEAKING URINE**

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

DEVELOPING THE 2015 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

2015 saw the introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals, a set of intergovernmental targets for taking action on global development. The specific focus on harmful practices and gender based violence in Goal 5 is indeed real progress from the Millennium Development Goals, which were launched at the turn of the century.

We collaborated with The Girl Generation and End FGM European Network to join voices to highlight the need to retain FGM as a measurable target within the goals. Goal 5 of the final document, under gender equality, establishes the target to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation”. It provides a solid framework for holding governments accountable for working towards ending these human rights violations in one generation.

“FOR MANY YEARS I HAVE BEEN TALKING TO MEN IN MY COMMUNITY ABOUT THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF FGM ON GIRLS AND WOMEN. I NOTED THAT MANY MEN DID NOT WANT TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT, OR KEPT SILENT – DECIDING TO ONLY MARRY WOMEN WHO HAVE UNDERGONE FGM. WOMEN HAVE BEEN CHAMPIONING THIS CAUSE FOR DECADES WITH LITTLE OR NO SUPPORT FROM MEN IN THE COMMUNITY, I AM HONOURED TO JOIN FORWARD AND THIS PROJECT TO SAY THAT ‘IT’S MY ISSUE TOO’ AND SHOULD BE THAT OF ALL FATHERS, HUSBANDS, BROTHERS, AND UNCLES IN COMMUNITIES WHERE FGM CONTINUES.”

Solomon Zewolde, researcher for Men Speak Out

MEN SPEAK OUT CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED



FORWARD began a new project this year as part of our work to end FGM across Europe. Men Speak Out, funded by the European Commission Daphne Project, recognises that FGM affects all members of society and should not just been seen as a woman's issue.

FGM is carried out to increase men's sexual pleasure, control women's sexuality, maintain their virginity and ensure their marriageability. The Men Speak Out project encapsulates FORWARD's view that all men can, should and must, play a key role in ending the practice.

The project is led by GAMS Belgium and also includes HIMILO Foundation in the Netherlands and the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. It focuses on research, resource development and community outreach.

Nine men who are actively involved in their communities were recruited in the UK and trained on FGM, focusing on men's perceptions, human rights and leadership. The trained male peer educators will now reach out to other men in their communities through events and one-to-one sessions.

KENYAN FGM DOCUMENTARY SCREENED

FORWARD and SOAS University teamed up in January to host the film screening of documentary *The Cut* by Kenyan director Beryl Magoko. The documentary explores the practice of FGM among the Kuria community and provided a captivating insight into the culture around the practice.

The screening was followed by a panel discussion hosted by Professor Fareda Banda with the film's director, FORWARD's Executive Director, and Executive Director of Children's Dignity Forum, FORWARD's Tanzanian partner, considering what actions needed to be taken by governments and funding bodies to enable the abandonment of the practice in Africa.

FORWARD ESTABLISHES ARTISTS AGAINST FGM NETWORK



Performance Artist Christina Oshunniyi moves the crowd at the closing of the exhibition.

In March FORWARD hosted a week long art exhibition *Something About Bodies* to celebrate the strength of African women and explore the complexities of harmful practices.

The exhibition displayed unique work from over 40 artists who have joined FORWARD's new Artists Against FGM initiative (along with Berlin based artist Aga Tamiola), as well as poetry and photography projects from FORWARD's Youth Advocates.



Our Youth Advocates celebrate at the Something About Bodies art exhibition featuring their poetry and photography projects

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY IN NUMBERS

2

RESEARCH PAPERS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED ON FGM AND LAW IN TANZANIA AND THE UK, IN A COLLABORATION BETWEEN FORWARD AND LISA AVALOS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SCHOOL OF LAW (READ MORE ON PAGE 51).

50

PEOPLE ATTENDED AN EVENT IN TANZANIA IN MAY TO SHARE INSIGHTS FROM FORWARD'S PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES ON GIRLS' RIGHTS IN THE MARA REGION AND MATERNAL HEALTH EQUITY IN THE DODOMA AND SINGIDA REGIONS.

300

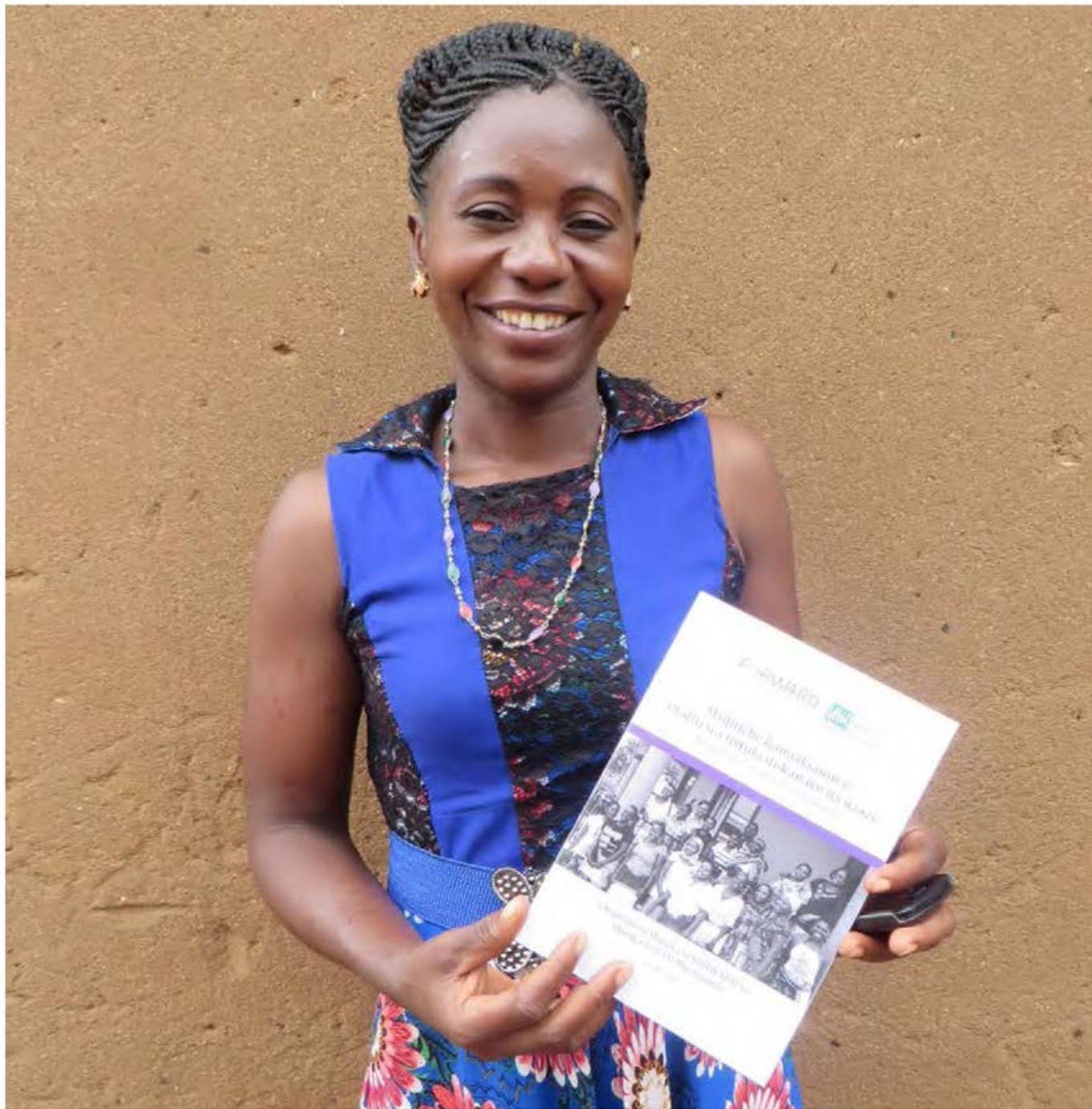
PEOPLE VISITED A LONDON GALLERY THIS YEAR TO SEE A WEEK LONG ART EXHIBITION ABOUT HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICES HOSTED BY FORWARD, *SOMETHING ABOUT BODIES*.



FORWARD'S ADVOCACY BEGAN IN **1983** WHEN OUR FOUNDER, EFUA DORKENOO, WAS STILL WORKING OUT OF HER SITTING ROOM, SUCCESSFULLY LOBBYING TO MAKE FGM ILLEGAL IN THE UK. THE LAW CAME INTO BEING IN 1985, THE SAME YEAR THAT FORWARD WAS OFFICIALLY REGISTERED.



THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN **2009** SAW THE LAUNCH OF THE EUROPEAN END FGM CAMPAIGN, A CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY AMNESTY IRELAND AND COORDINATED ACROSS 14 COUNTRIES. FORWARD REPRESENTS THE UK IN THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN. FORWARD'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IS NOW PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN END FGM NETWORK.



A PEER Researcher holds the Swahili research report on obstetric fistula in Tanzania

TRAINING

FORWARD TRAINING GOES ON TOUR

FORWARD was commissioned by the Home Office to provide FGM awareness training for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland to improve national responses to FGM.

We worked with 25 boroughs, delivering tailored sessions incorporating aspects of the Home Office e-learning tool, which FORWARD helped to produce. The sessions were interactive and addressed FGM context, existing policies and safeguarding procedures. A key element of the training sought to encourage multi-agency approaches to tackling FGM.

The trainings revealed the challenges professionals face in reporting cases of girls at risk of FGM and enabled us to identify where improvements can be made in the current system. We were then able to make further recommendations to the Home Office.

SCHOOLS TRAINING RECEIVES QUALITY MARK

As part of our work reaching out to girls at risk in primary and secondary schools, FORWARD provides a *Train the Trainers* course and a resource pack. It trains teachers and safeguarding leads about FGM, risk factors and their duties in responding to girls at risk and girls who disclose FGM.

The course equips them to pass on what they have learned to other staff in the school. It provides information about FGM and the law, safeguarding duties and Ofsted responsibilities. After providing such training for three years, our resource pack has been awarded the PSHE Association's Quality Mark.



TRAINING IN NUMBERS

100 SCHOOLS FROM 7 NATIONAL REGIONS SENT DELEGATES TO OUR TRAIN THE TRAINERS SCHOOL, WHERE THEY LEARNT TO RESPOND TO CASES OF FGM AND GIRLS AT RISK OF FGM, AND TO PASS ON THEIR LEARNING TO OTHER STAFF.

18 PROFESSIONALS ATTENDED OUR ACCREDITED TRAINING COURSE; *RESPONDING TO FGM: TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS AND FRONTLINE STAFF.*

1,070 PROFESSIONALS FROM VARIOUS SECTORS INCLUDING LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARDS, HEALTH AUTHORITIES, AND THE POLICE RECEIVED TRAINING ON SAFEGUARDING AND FGM ACROSS ENGLAND.

9 MEN RECEIVED TRAINING ON FGM AND LEADERSHIP AS PART OF OUR MEN SPEAK OUT PROJECT.

HER STORY

FRONTLINE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKER ON FGM, HAMPSHIRE



A Community Development Worker on FGM working within a Domestic Abuse Service came to FORWARD's accredited training on FGM for frontline professionals in summer 2015.

"I had been in post for 10 months when I came into contact with FORWARD. I had delivered training to smaller community groups and professionals working with older children, but my confidence was really low. I had not yet developed the skills and knowledge to execute my work competently. Although I did a lot of research before delivering any training, I was nowhere as confident as I got after I received

FORWARD's FGM accredited training for professionals.

"The FORWARD trainers' knowledge, expertise and passion could not be matched and their professionalism surpassed any expectations I had. This inspired me in my work to be just as passionate. I was also privileged enough to observe FORWARD staff delivering training to specialist midwives and nurses and the experience I gained from this initiative has built and developed my capacity as an FGM trainer.

"I have the confidence to address any FGM queries and I have since delivered training to specialist midwives, specialist urogynaecology nurses and paediatric nurse specialists. I would not have achieved this without the input from FORWARD. Your involvement has helped to establish SDAS' FGM work in Hampshire."

**THE FORWARD TRAINERS' KNOWLEDGE,
EXPERTISE AND PASSION COULD NOT BE
MATCHED AND THEIR PROFESSIONALISM
SURPASSED ANY EXPECTATIONS I HAD.
THIS INSPIRED ME IN MY WORK TO BE
JUST AS PASSIONATE**

RESEARCH

RESEARCH ON OBSTETRIC FISTULA IN TANZANIA

FORWARD released our latest PEER Research, *Do not hide yourselves, you are not cursed: A PEER Study on Obstetric Fistula, Mpwapwa, Dodoma, Tanzania* in January 2015. The research provides a platform for the voices of women affected by obstetric fistula. It explores the social context of poverty, FGM, child marriage, women's experiences and the stigma related to fistula in their community. It was also printed in Swahili which is widely spoken in Tanzania.

In the UK, the research was launched at Empowering Girls Left Behind: Comprehensive Approaches to Tackling Child Marriage and FGM in Tanzania, a learning event presented by Baroness Tong, Pauline Latham MP and FORWARD. We were honoured to have in attendance representatives from four embassies of countries in which FORWARD has projects to share what we had learned.

FORWARD
Safeguarding rights & dignity



**'Do not hide yourselves,
you are not cursed'**

A PEER Study on
Obstetric Fistula

-Mpwapwa, Dodoma, Tanzania-



FORWARD and UfU Mwanamke Publication
December 2014

"I HAD A PROLONGED LABOUR WHICH TOOK ME ALMOST TWO DAYS AS THE CHILD WAS WRONGLY PLACED IN MY WOMB. THE DOCTORS DECIDE TO OPERATE ON ME TO SAVE MY LIFE, AS THE CHILD WAS ALREADY DEAD. DUE TO THAT PROLONGED LABOUR, I DEVELOPED A FISTULA."

PEER participant

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF THE BONDO SOCIETY ON FGM PRACTICE, SIERRA LEONE

This year we carried out further PEER research in Freetown, Sierra Leone, to uncover the process and influence of the Bondo Society. The Bondo Society is a women's secret society that holds significant influence over communities and organises an initiation ceremony during which FGM takes place.

The research was carried out among young women from the communities to provide insight into their living situation, the Bondo society, how FGM takes place, and girls' recommendations for tackling the practice. The research was launched in March 2016 in Sierra Leone.

“THEY WILL NEVER TELL YOU THAT IF YOU DO NOT RESPECT THE ELDERLY THEY WILL BEAT YOU IN THE BUSH OR THEY WILL REMOVE THAT PART (CLITORIS) FROM YOU. SO THESE GIRLS WILL WANT TO JOIN THE BONDO BECAUSE OF THE STORIES ABOUT GOOD FOOD, NEW CLOTHES, DANCING AND SO ON.”

Peer research, Sierra Leone

INSIGHTS INTO THE WELLBEING OF KAYAYEI, GHANA

PEER research *We are Treated as if We are not Human Beings* was carried out in Ghana to provide insight into the social context and challenges of Kayayei. Kayayei are girls and women who migrate from northern regions of Ghana to work as porters to carry heavy goods in the cities of Ghana.

Usually the girls have moved from rural areas to try to make a living to support themselves and their families. Many girls aim to acquire items to prepare for their marriages. The main aim of the research was to understand the situation of Kayayeis in Accra, including the driving factors that see young girls seeking to become kayayei.

The research has been conducted in partnership with Purim African Youth Development Platform (PAYDP) and The Association of Church Development Projects (ACDEP) and will be published in the coming year.



FORWARD'S FIRST REPORT WAS RESEARCHED OVER TWO YEARS AND PUBLISHED IN 1999. OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND? ASSESSED HOW LOCAL AUTHORITIES RESPONDED TO THE PRACTICE OF FGM IN THEIR AREAS AND WHAT PROGRAMMES WERE IN PLACE TO REACH COMMUNITIES. THE RESEARCH FOUND THAT A QUARTER OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES DID NOT KNOW IF THERE WERE AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN THEIR AREA AND TWO THIRDS HAD NO SPECIFIC POLICY OR PROCEDURE RELATING TO FGM.

FOLLOWING THE RESEARCH, FORWARD MADE RECOMMENDATIONS TO SOCIAL SERVICES ABOUT HOW TO IMPROVE THEIR SYSTEMS AND TRAINING TO PROTECT GIRLS AT RISK OF, AND WOMEN AFFECTED BY, FGM.

2015 PUBLICATIONS

All publications can be found on our website under Information Hub.

FILMS

FORWARD worked with Animage Films to develop three animated films on FGM, a project funded by Comic Relief and The Sigrid Rausing Trust:

Needlecraft

A four minute animated film on FGM to raise awareness of the practice among a wider public audience in the UK, to galvanise public support, and to help raise funds for FORWARD's work.

The True Story of Ghati and Rhobi

A six minute animated film aimed at raising awareness of FGM among communities in Tanzania. A Swahili version, Simulizi ya kweli ya Ghati na Rhobi, is also available. *The True Story of Ghati and Rhobi* is an inspirational story about two girls resisting their community's practice of FGM.

My Body, My Rules

A three minute animated film aimed at raising awareness of FGM among primary school aged children in the UK. It is designed to be used by teachers, professionals and NGOs working with young children who could be at risk of FGM.



PUBLICATIONS

Sharing Actions, Achievements and Aspirations: 30 Years Safeguarding Rights and Dignity of African Women and Girls

A history of the work of FORWARD over 30 years. Our contributors, achievements and milestones are summarised in this succinct timeline of some of our key activities.

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

The research provides a platform for the voices of women affected by obstetric fistula in Tanzania and explores the culture around FGM and child marriage in their community. The report is also available in Swahili.

Youth Campaign for Rights, Education, Access, Transformation and Engagement on Harmful Practices in Europe: Youth Advocacy in Practice Pilot Toolkit for Practitioners

A practical guide on how to deliver advocacy training for young people on the issues of FGM and forced marriage, including examples and interviews drawn from our European work on these issues.

Working on Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage with Young People Engaging Schools on Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage: A Guide for Education Professionals

A practical guide on how to deliver advocacy training for young people on the issues of FGM and forced marriage tailored for educational professionals. The guide includes examples and interviews drawn from our European work on these issues.

Ending Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage in Tanzania, Fordham International Law Journal Vol. 38 No.3.

A research paper on FGM and law in Tanzania and the UK, in collaboration with Lisa Avalos, Assistant Professor of Law at the University Of Arkansas School Of Law.

Female Genital Mutilation and Designer Vaginas in Britain: Crafting an Effective Legal and Policy Framework, Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law Vol. 48 No. 3.

Another research collaboration between FORWARD and Lisa Avalos, this time analysing Britain's legal and policy approach to FGM. It addresses gaps in the law, in particular the double standard between FGM and so-called 'designer vagina' surgeries and concludes with a model FGM law for the UK.

POSTERS

STOP FGM Poster (kindly designed by Midwifery student Jessica Laidlaw)

OUR FUNDRAISERS

FORWARD would like to offer our sincere thanks to all the people who dedicated their time and effort to fundraise for FORWARD's work this year. A big thank you goes to:

- *Attwood Academy who raised £67*
- *Camilla Duggan completed the Vitality 10k London Run and raised £43*
- *Charlene James who has championed the anti-FGM cause in so many ways managed to fit in the Hackney Half Marathon and raise £723 for our work*
- *Claire Stirling took to cold waters in July for the Henley Classic 2.1km swim and raised £510*
- *Eleanor and Matt Ridley who took part in the Birmingham 10k run, raising £415*
- *Ella McGovern did a zip wire trip to raise £140 for FORWARD's work*
- *Holly Jacques, Jack Johnson, Matthew Jones, Tarryn Auld and Ruth Jones got really ambitious and climbed Mount Kilimanjaro and raised £990*
- *Jessica Bayly impressed us all by running the Virgin London Marathon and raised £787*
- *Kate Williams held a 'not-so-silent auction' and raised £200*
- *Kirat Kaur Kalyan who braved it out with a tandem skydive to raise £225*
- *LSE Rugby Team for sacrificing their hair and shaving their heads to raise £140*
- *Margaret Burgess managed to raise an impressive £1,600 at the London Night Rider*
- *Michael Coulston dedicated his birthday to FORWARD and raised £300*
- *Orla Handley completed the Cheltenham Triathlon to raise £245*
- *Reading University Feminist Society donated £71*
- *Ruth Wright ran the Leeds Half Marathon and raised £190*
- *Susannah Chandler ran the Hackney Half Marathon where she raised £400*
- *Trish Hardy took on a cycling event and raised £415*
- *YogaWest raised £320 with a special yoga class and cake sale morning*
- *Zaynab Barok, our youth advocate, who wrote and staged a play on FGM and held a cake sale at her college raised £200 for FORWARD*

“WE CYCLED PAST MANY OF THE FAMOUS LANDMARKS. THE HARDEST THING WAS THE SLEEP DEPRIVATION BUT IT IS AMAZING HOW THAT DISAPPEARS WHEN THE SUN COMES UP! I AM ABSOLUTELY DELIGHTED TO SAY THAT WE ARE ABLE TO DONATE £1,600 TO THE CHARITY FORWARD. I FELT THAT MY SPONSORS WERE ESPECIALLY GENEROUS BECAUSE THIS IS SUCH A WORTHWHILE CAUSE.”

Margaret Burgess, who took part in the London Night Ride



OUR PARTNERS

UK & EUROPE

- *Acton FGM Specialist Clinic*
- *Associacao Para O Planeamento Da Familia (APF) - www.apf.pt*
- *Associazione Italiana Donner per lo Sviluppo (AIDOS) - www.aidos.it*
- *Bristol NHS - www.bristol.nhs.uk*
- *Cyprus University of Technology - www.cut.ac.cy*
- *END FGM European Network - www.endfgm.eu (FORWARD's Executive Director is President of the Network)*
- *End Violence Against Women (EVAW) - www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk*
- *Eurosoma, Birmingham*
- *Federation of Somali Associates in the Netherlands (FSAN) - www.fsan.nl*
- *GAMS Belgium - www.gams.be*
- *Gender and Development Network - www.gadnetwork.org*
- *Girls Not Brides - www.girlsnotbrides.org (FORWARD co-chairs the UK network)*
- *HIMILO - www.himilo.org*
- *Her Centre Greenwich - www.hercentre.org*
- *IC Change - www.icchange.co.uk*
- *Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp - www.itg.be*
- *International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) - www.ippf.org*
- *Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO) - www.ikwro.org.uk*
- *Muslim Women's Network UK - www.mwnuk.co.uk*
- *New Step for African Communities (NESTAC) - www.nestac.org*
- *Ocean Somali Community Association (OCSA) - www.oceansomali.org.uk*
- *Refugee Women of Bristol - www.refugeewomenofbristol.org.uk*
- *Terre des Femmes, Germany*
- *Women's Health and Equality Consortium (WHEC) - www.whec.org.uk*

AFRICA

- *Association of Church Development Projects (ACDEP), Ghana - www.acdep.org*
- *Advocacy Movement Network (AMnet), Sierra Leone*
- *Chama Cha Uzazi na Malezi Bora (UMATI), Tanzania - www.umati.or.tz*
- *Children's Dignity Forum (CDF), Tanzania - www.cdftz.org*
- *Girl 2 Girl Empowerment Movement (G2G), Sierra Leone*
- *ProFutures Development Initiative, Ethiopia*
- *Purim African Youth Development Platform (PAYDP), Ghana - www.paydp.org*
- *UTU Mwanamke, Tanzania*
- *Wadada Centre for Solution Focused Approach - www.wadadacentretz.blogspot.co.uk*



FINANCES 2014 - 2015

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR APRIL 2014 – MARCH 2015

INCOMING RESOURCES

DONATIONS	63,022
GRANTS RECEIVABLE	916,462
OTHER INCOME	35,716
TOTAL	1,015,200

EXPENDITURE

FUNDRAISING	7,802
CHARITABLE EXPENSES	1,013,846
GOVERNANCE	7,768
TOTAL	1,029,416
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	-14,216

RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS

TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD 01.04.14	352,051
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD 31.03.15	337,835

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH

CURRENT ASSETS	524,754
CREDITORS	-186,919
NET ASSETS	337,835

REPRESENTED BY:

RESTRICTED FUNDS	167,671
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	170,164

TOTAL FUNDS	337,835
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FORWARD TEAM

PATRONS AND MATRONS

- *Baroness Gould*
- *Don Boyd*
- *Karon Monaghan QC*

AMBASSADORS

- *Adé Daramy*
- *Bumi Thomas*
- *Gavin Weston*

INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS

- *Amera Abdhi*
- *Amy Facondini*
- *Ashlee Cook*
- *Ayan Hassan*
- *Bhakti Parmar*
- *Binta Bajana*
- *Carola Addington*
- *Elisa Krauce*
- *George Kingsley*
- *Irene Dzungoum*

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- *Dr Sohier Elneil, Chair*
- *Beatrice Mutali*
- *Dr Deborah Hodes*
- *Gibril Faal*
- *Dr Lisa Smith*
- *Muna Dol*
- *Nisan Zera Kesete (until April 2015)*
- *Sam Matthews*
- *Dr Yunes Teinaz*

- *Julia Harris*
- *Kathlyn Gainer*
- *Liliana Timoniere*
- *Linda Obinchi Bonareri*
- *Maria Dentaa Osei Bonsu*
- *Marion Berthault*
- *Maryam Akram*
- *Mulkaht Ibrahim*
- *Shadrack Mutali*

STAFF

- *Adwoa Kwateng-Kluyitse - Head of Global Advocacy and Partnerships*
- *Amal Mohamed - Youth Programme Assistant*
- *Elizabeth Gezahegn King - Africa Programme Manager (until September 2015)*
- *Caroline Walker- Fundraising and Communications Officer*
- *Damaris Villanueva - Admin and HR Officer*
- *Dina Baky - Youth Programme Officer (until September 2015)*
- *Fatuma Farah - DfE Project Officer*
- *Fosdicka Crankson - Finance Manager*
- *Helen Beecher Bryant - Senior Research and Policy Officer (until December 2015)*
- *Jane Murdoch - Training Support Assistant (until March 2015)*
- *Kabung Lomodong - Programme Assistant*
- *Kekeli Kpognon - Head of Diaspora Programmes*
- *Layla Ismail - Community Development Worker, Bristol*
- *Lottie Howard-Merrill - Africa Programme Research and Documentation Assistant (until September 2015)*
- *Mahasin Abu - Sudanese Community Support Worker*
- *Maria Aden - Community Session Worker*
- *Mary Otuko - UK Programme Manager (maternity cover)*
- *Mulkaht Ibrahim - Community Programme Coordinator*
- *Naana Otoo-Oyortey, MBE - Executive Director*
- *Naima Ibrahim - Community Development Officer*
- *Naomi Reid - Projects and Events Manager*
- *Nisan Zerai-Kesete - UK Programme Manager*
- *Rasha Farah - Youth Programme Assistant*
- *Rita Janani - Finance Assistant*
- *Rukayah Sarumi - Campaigns and Advocacy Manager (until June 2015)*
- *Saadye Ali - Bristol FGM Community Project Assistant*
- *Saria Khalifa - Youth Programme Lead (until April 2015)*
- *Seyi Afolabi - Youth Programme Officer*
- *Toks Okeniyi - Head of UK Programmes and Operations*
- *Vanessa Diakides - Schools Programme Coordinator*
- *Yvette Robbin-Coker - Training and Development Coordinator*
- *Wossenyelesh Kifle - Africa Programme Officer*



“VOLUNTEERING WITH FORWARD HAS BEEN AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES I HAVE HAD TO SUPPORT ITS TRAINING PROGRAMME, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THE INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN I HAVE MET ALONG THE WAY. DESPITE THE CHALLENGING WORK THAT FORWARD UNDERTAKES, I HAVE NEVER WORKED IN SUCH A FRIENDLY AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT, WITH STAFF SO CLEARLY COMMITTED TO TACKLING DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES THAT AFFECT THE DIGNITY AND WELLBEING OF GIRLS AND WOMEN.”

Carola, FORWARD training team volunteer

THANK YOU

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have donated, fundraised, volunteered, attended events and more to contribute to FORWARD's mission.

From telling a friend about FORWARD to having an awareness of the issues, all contributions are valuable. Together, we can continue the momentum to move positive social change forward 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:

- *Ashla Charitable Trust*
- *Barrow Cadbury Trust*
- *Bristol City Council*
- *Comic Relief*
- *Department for Education*
- *Esmée Fairbairn Foundation*
- *European Commission Daphne III Funding Programme*
- *European Commission Europe Aid*
- *February Foundation*
- *Gaskell and Wilkinson*
- *Home Office - Crime Innovation Fund*
- *Human Dignity Foundation*
- *London Borough of Hounslow*
- *London Borough of Waltham Forest*
- *London Borough of Tower Hamlets*
- *London Councils*
- *MariaMarina Foundation*
- *People's Postcode Lottery*
- *Persula Foundation*
- *The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund*
- *The Body Shop Foundation*
- *The City Bridge Trust*
- *The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation*
- *The Sigrid Rausing Trust*
- *The Women's Resource Centre*
- *Trust for London*

WE ARE EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR THE LONG TERM SUPPORT THAT SO MANY OF OUR FUNDERS GIVE TO ENABLE US TO DEVELOP OUR PROGRAMMES. IT HAS TAKEN US A LONG TIME TO GET HERE, BUILDING UP OUR REPUTATION AND THE POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE IMPACT WE'VE HAD SINCE WE STARTED IN 1985.



"MY FONDEST MEMORIES WORKING WITH FORWARD GO BACK TO THE TINY, INSIGNIFICANT, UNATTRACTIVE OFFICE AT 38 KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON. SOME MONTHS THE OFFICE RENT COULD NOT BE PAID (THERE NEVER WERE ENOUGH FUNDS). EFUA'S (FORWARD FOUNDER) SALARY WAS NOT PAID FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. REASON: A LACK OF FUNDS. SHE PLACED FORWARD'S NEEDS BEFORE HERS' AND HER FAMILY, WORKING ALL HOURS WITHOUT COMPLAINING. FROM TIME TO TIME SHE WOULD TURN AROUND WITH A SMILE AND SAY 'COMFORT, IT IS A GOOD CAUSE, WE HAVE A GREAT JOB TO DO, NO MATTER THE OBSTACLES. WE SHALL KEEP FIGHTING AND WE SHALL WIN BECAUSE IT IS A GOOD CAUSE.'"

COMFORT OTTAH, SUPPORTER, VOLUNTEER AND FORMER TRUSTEE



SUPPORTING FORWARD

TEXT **FWRD30** £5 TO **70070** TO DONATE TO FORWARD NOW

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

- **SUBSCRIBE TO OUR QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ONLINE**
- **RAISE AWARENESS IN YOUR LOCAL AREA AND WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY**
- **BECOME A REGULAR SUPPORTER WITH MONTHLY DONATIONS**
- **DO AN ACTIVITY OR ORGANISE AN EVENT TO FUNDRAISE FOR FORWARD**
- **JOIN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SPEAK OUT! PROGRAMME**

For more information go to our website and see our [Get Involved page](#)

To support the work we do you can:
Text **FWRD30** £'your donation' to **70070**
Go to our website and click the Donate button
Send a cheque addressed to 'FORWARD' to the address on the back of this report

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



Women in Tanzania receive copies of Swahili research they carried out on obstetric fistula

**IT'S NEVER BEEN EASIER TO SUPPORT
FORWARD TEXT FWRD30 £5 TO 70070 TO
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