



ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

HER STORY: EMPOWERING GIRLS AND WOMEN TO LEAD CHANGE



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Left: A woman speaks at a community event
in Sierra Leone

REFLECTIONS

My Photo of the Year, Naana Otoo-Oyortey, Executive Director

For me, this photo encapsulates so much about how FORWARD works and the change we are trying to create. Captured at our annual Youth Conference to mark International Women's Day in March, these young advocates gave a presentation about their work raising awareness about female genital mutilation (FGM) in schools in Manchester.

Throughout this report you will find Her Story. These are a collection of stories that showcase the remarkable people we work with, and the actions they are taking in their own lives to lead change, end FGM, child marriage and other forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG). The enthusiasm, determination and skills of young people are vital to the success of our campaign and the conference gave young people from across England the chance to tell others about what they are doing locally. From compiling poetry books; to creating roleplays for training teachers about sensitively responding to girls at risk; to interviews on national radio stations, their efforts have been remarkable.

We are really excited this year to be expanding our work with young people in one of our biggest projects; Tuwezeshe Akina Dada. The project joins young people from across seven countries in Africa and the UK to raise a new generation of young women leaders who are capable activists claiming their rights and freedoms. You can read more about the project and our other youth work from page 26.

The young person on the right in this photo is actually the daughter of the head of NESTAC, our partner in Manchester. We are seeing a lot of inter-generational activity on projects this year, with young women spurred on by the activism of their mothers to continue to amplify calls for change, taking on the campaigns of previous generations and transferring the activism to respond to current contexts, issues and platforms. Check out our story about the Bristol FGM March, 10 years on, on page 28 for more on this. **These young women are the product of campaigning for women's rights; they stand on the shoulders of their mothers' advocacy; articulate, proud, and empowered, calling for continued progress on the future that their mothers fought to make possible.**

Finally, we partnered with The Girl Generation, whose banner can be seen in this photo. Partnerships are vital to strengthening our voices in the campaign against VAWG, and transforming lives of women and girls. **Through our partnership work over 10 years in the Mara region of Tanzania, there has been an 8% decrease in the number of women and girls affected by FGM – that's roughly 70,000 girls spared from this human rights abuse.** Read about our grassroots partnerships on page 13.

We hope you will enjoy reading this report on our activities over 2016-17. We are grateful to our funders, staff and volunteers for their support and remain dedicated to continuing our work with partners, young people and activists to share stories and empower women and girls to lead change.





Our Vision

A day when African girls and women will live in dignity, are healthy, have choices and enjoy equal rights, free from fear of violence.



ABOUT F⇒RWARD

FORWARD is an African women-led rights organisation. Our work encompasses female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, physical and sexual violence and related maternal health issues, collectively known as violence against women and girls (VAWG). VAWG is not only an attack on the rights of African women and girls, it is an assault on their potential and their futures.

FORWARD is uniquely placed to lead change in this area. For over 30 years, we have been working to put these issues on the national and international agenda, speaking out and campaigning for change. We remain unafraid to tackle the issues head on, safeguarding the rights and dignity of women and girls in Africa and across the diaspora. We will continue to amplify their voices until all African women enjoy equal rights and opportunities, have control over their own bodies, and are free from fear of violence.

A young girl participates in our
march against FGM in Bristol



Our Values

Grounded: We are proud to be an African women-led organisation, with our roots and our hearts in the community. We have three decades of experience setting the agenda on our issues and bringing about change. We are known and respected as the go-to organisation for African women's health and reproductive rights issues.

Forthright: We are unashamed in our determination to bring the issues facing African women to attention and to take a lead in tackling them. We are not afraid to speak out about subjects that might be seen as taboo, knowing that silence is the enemy of change.

Equal: We seek to promote equity and inclusiveness, prioritising the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised to ensure their needs, issues and voices are amplified and addressed.

Collaborative: We may be the experts in our field, but we do not believe in operating from the top down. We listen and learn, then share our knowledge and experience as widely as possible, nurturing and training our stakeholders and bringing people and networks together. Our goal is for individuals and communities to bring about their own change – and pass on what they have learned.



Our Approach

Our work champions women's rights on many fronts: from working with communities to bring about change, to equipping health, education and social care professionals to respond appropriately; from providing evidence for policymakers, to holding politicians to account.

This Annual Report will present some of our achievements over 2016 and early 2017 through grassroots partnerships, community engagement, international advocacy, training and research.

Accountable: We hold the highest standards of ethical and trustworthy behaviour, and will not allow ourselves to be compromised in pursuit of short term gains. We base our decisions and actions on community-led insights and research, and embed dignity and respect into every part of our work.

Partnership working: We believe in enabling and facilitating grassroots organisations to work better locally. We focus our efforts on enabling partners to build their organisational capacity. We encourage collaborative working among the partners we work with.

OUR YEAR IN PICTURES

Clockwise from top left

- Engaging with communities through local events
- Working with partners to share learning and amplify voices across the globe
- Reuniting with our trained Community Champions to catch up on progress and challenges
- Using new approaches to discuss difficult issues with communities in our Uncomfortable Conversations project
- Young people speaking out and raising support for our work
- Providing platforms for young people to make their voices heard
- Advocating for change in policy and drawing attention to new perspectives through research





"In our family, we were not allowed to correct our father, and whatever he said, we had to obey him. After the education provided from the project, I can now correct my father when what he says is wrong, and convince him to change his ideas." Peer Interview, Musoma, Tanzania





GRASSROOTS PARTNERSHIPS➡

Tanzania

In 2015 FORWARD concluded a three year project Mobilising Action to Safeguard Rights of Girls in Tanzania. It aimed to tackle multiple forms of violence that girls and young women face in rural communities. It was a direct response to a study led by child brides which revealed high levels of FGM, child marriage, domestic violence, early pregnancy and motherhood and lack of economic opportunities for women. We were very pleased to continue this work supported by Comic Relief and The Sigrid Rausing Trust. Phase 2 of the project began in 2016. You can read about the first three years of the project in our report, found in the Publications section.


In 2010, around
15% of all women
in Tanzania
had undergone
some form of **FGM**



Five years later, in 2015,
that figure had fallen to **10%**

FORWARD has
actively involved in work to
end FGM in Tanzania for **10**
YEARS

All statistics from Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey, 2010 and Tanzania
Demographic and Health Survey and Malaria Indicator Survey, 2015-16



In Mara region, where we have engaged with the community through workshops, research and long term projects on FGM, the prevalence of the practice has reduced from 40% of women affected to 32%. That's a reduction of 8% - nearly 70,000 girls - who have been saved from undergoing this human rights abuse.

"Girls now consider FGM as abuse due to the associated effects, for example failure to get sexual desire, and pain and bleeding when delivering. Reproductive and gender education has helped girls to know their basic rights, like to be listened to and respected, to live and be free." Tanzania Project Beneficiary

We are proud of what our work with our partners and the communities of Mara region have achieved and we will continue our efforts to safeguard girls, working towards our goal of a world free from FGM.



One project member has trained as a tailor, she earns an income making dresses, like the one she is wearing, from beautiful fabrics.'

Cooperative Business Types



Tanzania in 2016-17



3 partners; Children's Dignity Foundation; UMATI; Wadada Centre for Solution Focused Approach; 1 project; Phase 2: Mobilising Action to Safeguard the Rights of Girls in Tanzania (Haki Ya Binti); 3 year project; 1st year.

113 young women have received startup funding to set up a cooperative business. Groups are guided by 25 trained mentors from their own communities

760 young women and men have received training through school and youth clubs learning about gender based violence, girl's rights, as well as gaining confidence and leadership skills. These young people have since reached out to a further 625 girls

241 girls who had run away from home during cutting season were provided with shoes and clothes at the Julian and Ann Marcus Safe house in Tanzania

1,752 community members have attended mobilisation events on gender based violence and discriminatory practices, raising awareness. They've been trained to demand better services from their local authorities

119 professionals came to a forum to discuss their responses to gender based violence and how they could be strengthened



"Previously, I was not even able to stand in front of my class to answer questions, but now I am able to stand in the village and start educating people in the community. After the education I got within the club I became confident, I respect myself and make my own decisions without dependence on men."

Sister to Sister Network Member, Tanzania



STOP THINKING
ABOUT MARRIAGE

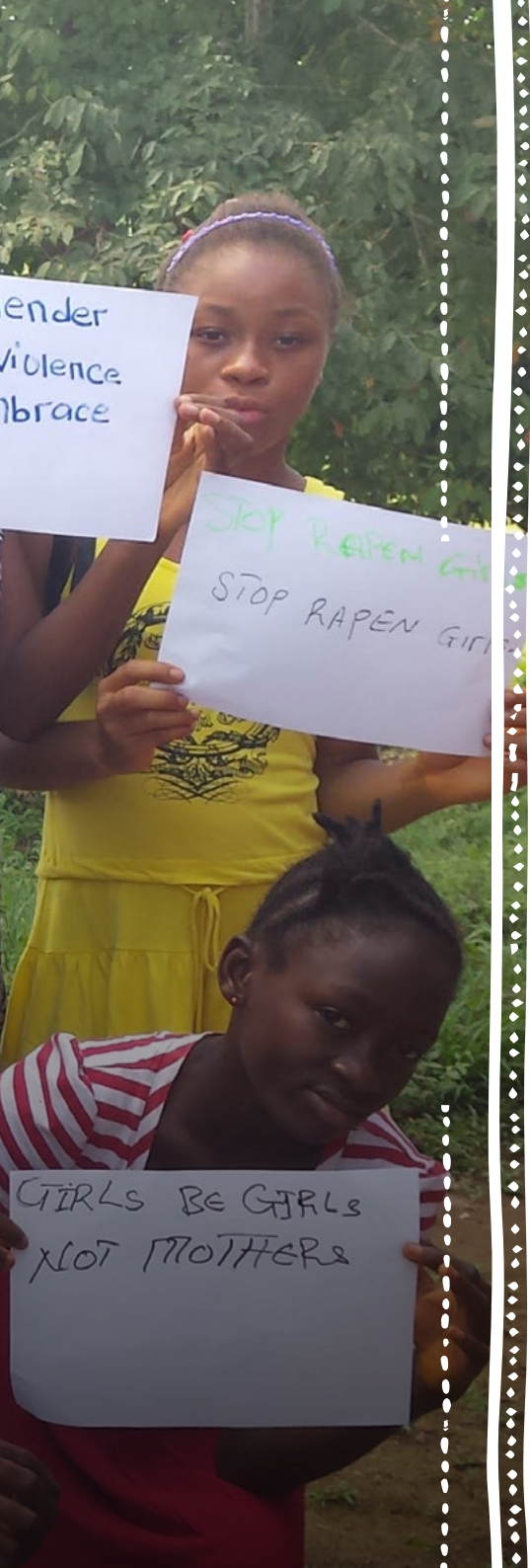
AVOID BAD
PEER GROUP

LET GIRLS BE
GIRLS NOT
MOTHER

STOP G
Based v
and Em
Peace

"The Girl 2 Girl Network came into existence through the support of FORWARD who provided the first funds for an office and registration of the organisation. We went from a research group to a girls rights programme within two years. G2G had grown from networks in two communities with 50 members, to networks in seven communities with a total of 175 members. If today we can boast of being recognised as an organization, it has been because of the tireless effort of FORWARD." Aminata Koroma, Head of G2G

PROTECT YOUR SELF
FROM (HIV)



Sierra Leone in 2016-17

2 partners; Girl 2 Girl Empowerment Movement; Advocacy Movement Network; 1 project; Developing Rights-based and Empowering Approaches to Mobilise (DREAM) ACTION TO END FGM; 4 year project; 2nd year.

1,252 girls and young women at risk of and affected by harmful traditional practices directly benefitted from the project

676 boys and young men were mobilised to take action to end FGM, child marriage and VAWG

1,900 young people became members of 59 clubs and networks established to tackle VAWG

54 local chiefs signed Memorandums of Understanding outlawing FGM and child marriage in their districts

93 community volunteers were trained to monitor the reporting of, and effective responses to, VAWG in their communities

2 awards have been won. Our partner AMNet won a national award for Best NGO Working on FGM and Child Marriage. Our G2G's Programme Coordinator won Best Advocate for Women's Rights 2016 at the National Women's Achievement Awards



Left: Young women in Sierra Leone declare what they want following training sessions.

HER STORY:

Preventing child marriage

Amara Jebba Amhara is 13 years old, she's in Grade 5 and would like to be a nurse when she's older. She is one of the seven girls who was rescued from child marriage by our partners AMNet in 2016.

"I always wanted to study and become a nurse. But my mother discourages my education. She says what will I do with education? After all, what I will have to do is take care of home, family and work on the farm. I tried to convince my mother that I would study hard and have a career but she never listens. Instead she would ask me to take care of my sisters."

Amara lives with her mother and four younger sisters. Her father passed away when she was three years old. Farming is the only source of income for the family. Amara's mother sought help from a man, offering Amara as a wife for him when she reached maturity, if he would help them on the farm.

"There was this man who helps out my family in the farm. I thought that he was just doing us a favour by being so good to me and my family. I always talked about his generosity to my friends. My mother was always saying that uncle is my 'husband'. I initially enjoyed it and just laughed, but as time went by I no longer see it as a fun. I started crying. My husband observed the changes in my reaction when they told me he was my husband and thought I had matured enough to marry him."

"He said (because I was crying) that I know now what sex means and he will not allow those village boys to sleep with his wife, ruin her, and give him the left overs. He requested my hand for marriage. When I refused he demanded to be paid for all the work he had done. My mother could not afford to pay and the pressure from the village was too much on my mother because they all knew the arrangement."

Amara's situation highlights the challenges that thousands of girls face day to day in Sierra Leone where 39% of girls are married before they are 18.

"One day my friend Gina told me about Auntie Saffie, AMNet's focal person in my community, and we went and explained everything to her. AMNet's team went to my village, spoke to the chief and the chief called a community meeting. Community dialogue was conducted on the issues of child marriage, the consequences and the laws protecting children like the Child Rights Act. The community came to an agreement to tackle child marriage. Finally, the chief pledged to give the man whatever little he has to compensate him for all the work he had been doing for my family. The chief also admonished him, saying that he could face prosecution if he insisted on marrying me and that he should stop harassing me and my family.

I am so grateful to AMNet and FORWARD for not letting me be married against my will. My future is secured - now I go to school in my village every day. Currently I am a child advocate and the president for the Children's Forum Network in my community."



"My wish is that all parents should give a proper education to their daughters and never marry them off at a young age."



Girls in Sierra Leone receive training about their rights



"The content was very complex and difficult and you were extremely skilful with your presentation. Really it was excellent. You have created a very helpful context for us as we consider how to manage this within our setting."

Assistant Head Teacher



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Schools

Impact of School Work Recognised

This year FORWARD's schools work won the Community Health Development Award from the Royal Society of Public Health. Our Schools Programme has been running for six years, and was dramatically scaled up in 2014 to meet the demand for support for pupils and teachers, in the face of new reporting duties. The programme provides tailored sessions on FGM for staff, pupils and parents at primary and secondary schools.

"I never told anyone about being cut before, and I never wanted my daughter to be Here in the UK we don't talk about it enough. I want my daughter and her friends to be taught about it in schools too."

Nigerian mother of four children who attended a parent's session

- ➔ **1,981** school staff in the UK were trained
- ➔ **9,279** UK school pupils learnt about FGM and how to get help or support their friends

Left: The evening's presenters, including Angela Rippon, with FORWARD Schools Programme Lead and Executive Director (centre)

Pan-European Schools Conference

FORWARD hosted the pan-European conference Tackling FGM in Schools: Adopting a Holistic and Proactive Approach, in partnership with the End FGM European Network. The Right Honorable Justine Greening MP was keynote speaker at the conference in February. The day involved a series of panels with speakers from youth organisations, school staff, the Home Office, and local authorities covering a number of issues related to approaches to dealing with FGM in education settings. These included family law; policy and legislation; sharing learning; and disclosures, support and emergency engagement.

"We've changed the law to introduce a new offence of failing to protect a girl from FGM with a maximum seven years in prison. We've also introduced FGM protection orders to help keep girls safe. 79 orders have been issued, that's 79 girls protected." Rt Honourable Justine Greening MP

➔ **74** people came to the conference to learn about tackling FGM in schools

Right: FORWARD's Executive Director meets with the Rt Honourable Justine Greening MP, Keynote Speaker at our Tackling FGM in Schools Conference





New Project Builds Bridges Between Young Women Leaders in Africa and UK

FORWARD is the UK partner and lead of the project which will create a network of young women in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Somaliland, Wales and England. It will develop the leadership capacity of 1,500 young women to influence and shape decisions about their rights, amplify their voices and strengthen their collective action to be free from gender based violence.

➤ **345** people have already been reached by the initiative, of which 65% are young people

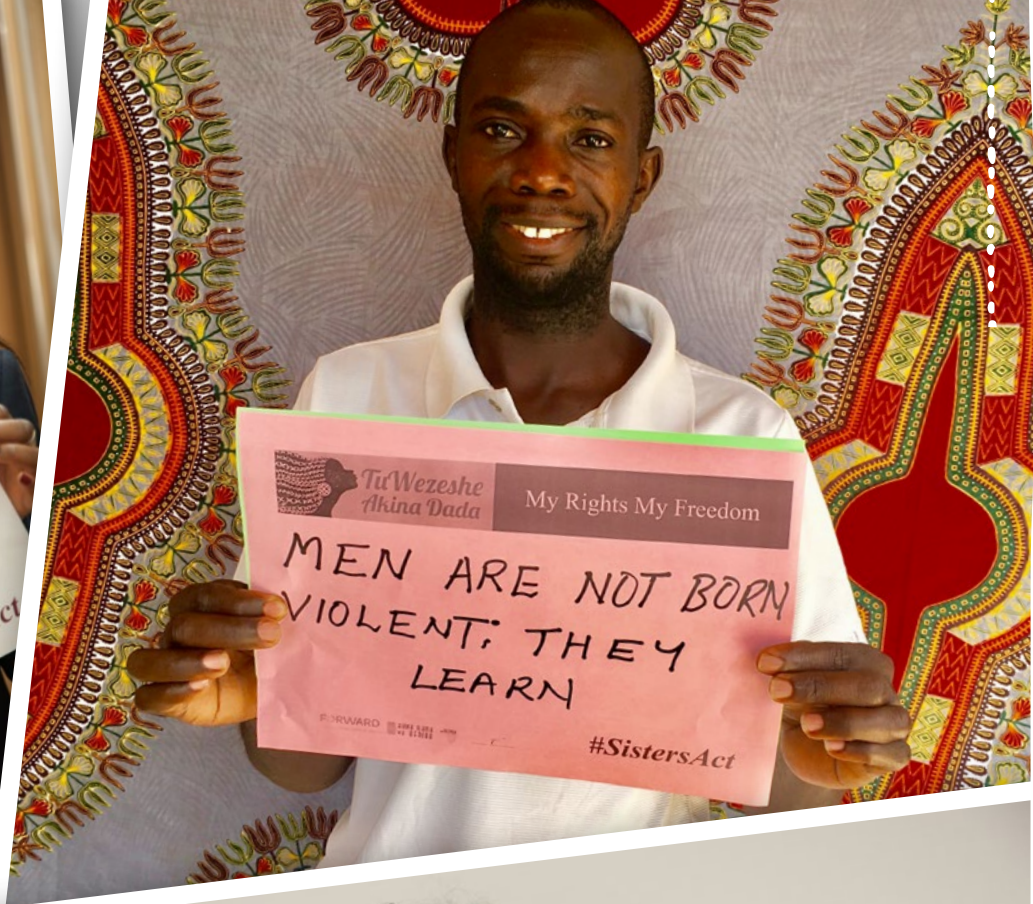
2 community forums were held and advocacy to raise the minimum age of consent took place in Kenya

 A safe space for young women was established, and a workshop on engaging young people from the African diaspora was held, at the Welsh International Development Summit

Dialogues on violence against women and girls were held at universities, and training modules were developed in Uganda

➤ An international social media campaign calling on #SistersAct to lead change was held over 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence

Right: Young people stand against VAWG for the #SistersAct campaign



Youth March in the Footsteps of their Mothers

This July, FORWARD's Youth Advocate group in Bristol, Empowering FORWARD, held a march against FGM through the town centre. The event mirrored the march made by FORWARD's Bristol community partners six years earlier, when work to encourage communities to speak out about FGM was just beginning. The event marked 10 years of the Bristol Model – a cohesive approach to unifying community members, organisations and leaders to effectively support women affected by and to help girls at risk of FGM. A report has been produced exploring FORWARD's work as part of the Bristol Model, and can be found in the Publications section.

- **70** women and girls marched through Bristol to amplify the call to end FGM
- **120** people attended our Summer Safeguarding event in Bristol led by a fresh generation of young women taking a stand against FGM. The event kicked off a series of activities taking place before the summer holidays, when girls are thought to be most at risk





Young people and experienced activists unite in the Bristol march to celebrate work done and continued efforts to end FGM

"My mum walked in the original march and she completely inspired me. It was a really proud moment to walk in her footsteps. We wanted to show that they made an impact but also that FGM is still happening and we're still fighting it."

Empowering FORWARD member

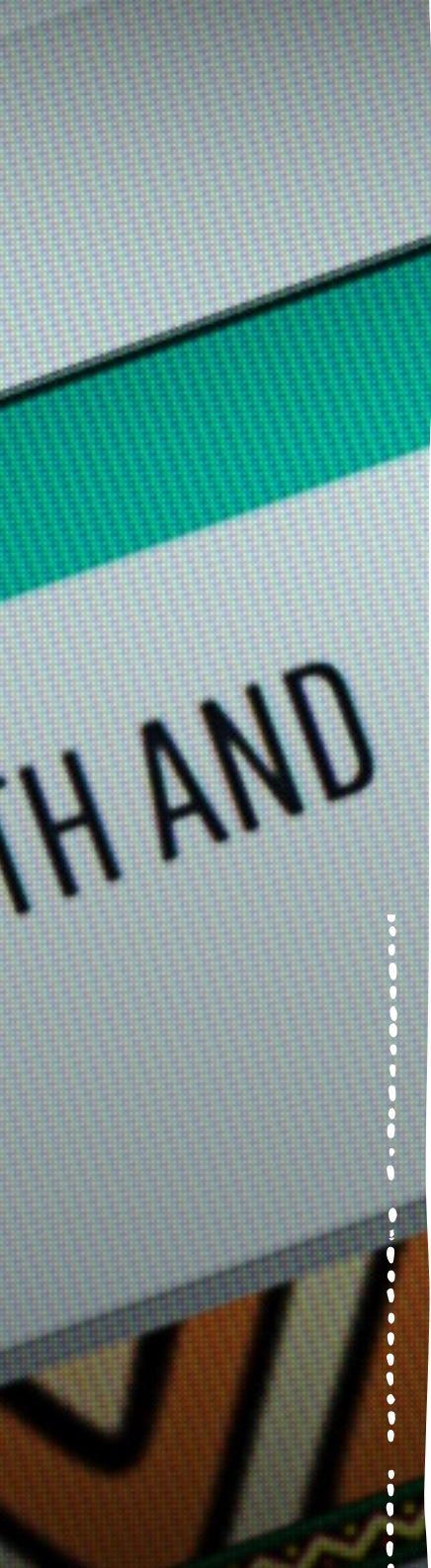
Empowering FORWARD member



www.forwardyouth.org

Google YouTube ▼

FORWARD'S YOUTH
SCHOOLS



Website Launched for Young People

In February, FORWARD launched a new website designed for young people in the UK. The new website, forwardyouth.org.uk is based on our experience of over 10 years' award winning work on FGM with young people, and in primary and secondary schools.

It is aimed at 11-25 year olds and offers a safe, age-appropriate environment to learn more about FGM within the context of bodily integrity, safety, human rights, violence against women and girls and health. It gives guidance for young people affected by FGM, as well as celebrating national youth campaigns and offering a gateway for young people to get involved in the campaign to end FGM.

HER STORY:

Finding a voice to advocate against FGM

"Three years ago, my mother told me about female genital mutilation. I don't remember what I said but I remember, quite vividly, how I felt. When you know that there are girls as young as five being subjected to this practice it is incredibly difficult to ignore. I remember in the weeks following that it was constantly on my mind. How? Why? These were just a few of the many questions that I had. But primarily there was outrage. I remember feeling horrified that I hadn't heard about the practice sooner and at that time it felt like the rest of the world either didn't know or didn't care.

I was fourteen when I first began campaigning against FGM. At that age it is extremely difficult to speak up about anything, especially something so taboo. This took an enormous amount of courage, which to be honest, I didn't know I had. Making the decision to speak out about FGM boiled down to two things: I did not agree with this practice and I wanted it to come to an end. Being surrounded by people who were still ignorant of it gave me the perfect opportunity to begin discussing it with other people and really pushing myself out of my comfort zone. This, for me, was an incredibly important decision, it took a while but by the end of that year I could talk to perfect strangers about the female genitalia and my hands didn't sweat quite so much!

Our youth group, Empowering FORWARD, was and still is, for me a safe place where I can discuss and learn more about this practice. Empowering is a youth-led group of young women and girls from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities living in Bristol who have embarked on this journey of youth advocacy together and have subsequently become very close.

The most amazing discovery I have made on my journey as a youth advocate is the power of young people as advocates for change. **We are the future leaders, doctors, midwives, social workers and teachers which is why it is imperative that we learn NOW why FGM and child, early and forced marriage are wrong – so that we grow up in a society that condemns these practices.** This is why Empowering FORWARD aims to empower other young people to speak out about these practices."

Bristol Youth Advocate, 17

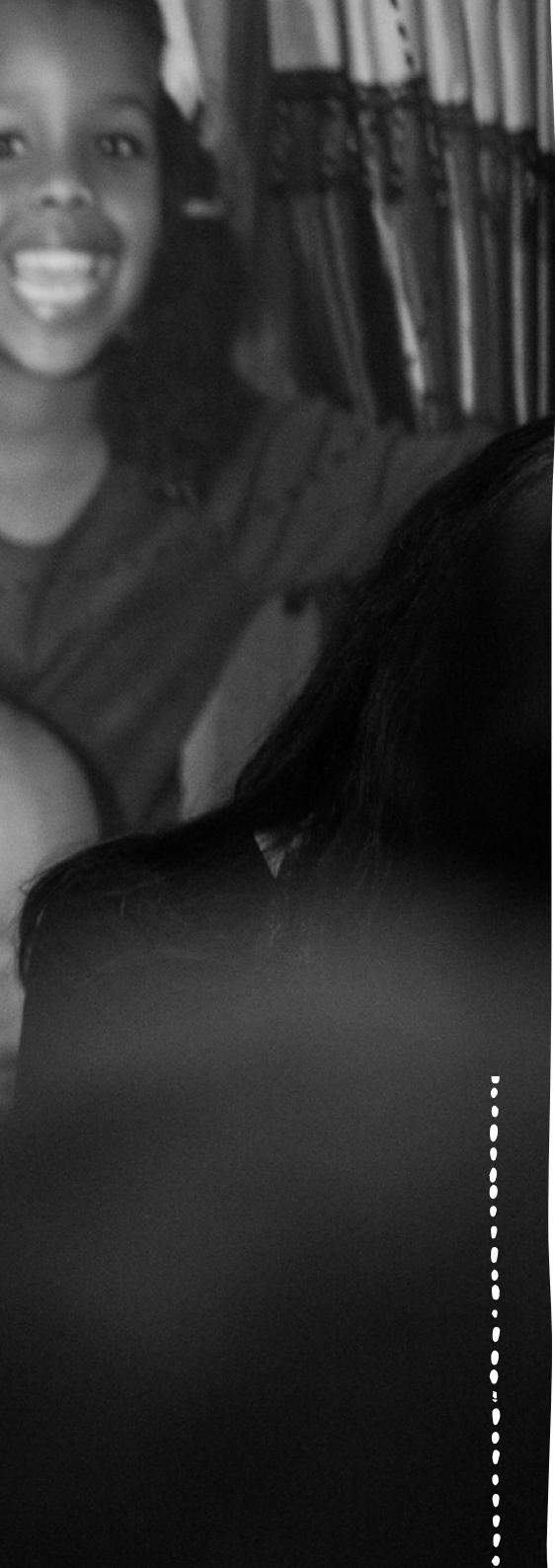


Rules
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Members of Empowering FORWARD speak at one of the first conferences they organised to raise awareness of FGM



**FORWARD Ambassador Ade Daramy hears testimonies
at the launch of the Men Speak Out research'**



Community

Men Learn to Speak to Men about FGM

Men Speak Out is a European programme to get men taking an active role in ending FGM. In 2016, activities included an awareness campaign launched in February in Brussels; research to gauge the knowledge and attitudes around FGM; and training for male advocates to reach out to other men. The research was published in a report "Men have a role to play, but they don't play it". (See the Publications section). The research was launched in December at the UK House of Commons hosted by Baroness Tonge.

FORWARD is the UK partner in this European campaign which includes HIMILO from The Netherlands, the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Belgium, with GAMS Belgium as the lead partner.

- ⇒ **33** men are actively creating conversations with other men about how to end FGM across Europe. **7** men are involved in the UK
- ⇒ These **7** men have gone on to engage **1,392** other boys and young men by hosting discussions and workshops in their communities and nationally to discuss their role in ending FGM

Uncomfortable Conversations: Using Theatre to Explore Diaspora Experiences



This March, FORWARD took a new approach to engaging with communities on a range of issues which affect the African diaspora. In partnership with Grinnell College, Iowa, a play was developed and acted by the community. The production featured a collection of stories that look at the difficulties of integration, identity and abandoning harmful traditions. It was developed over two months, based on real stories from focus group work with men, women and young people from various African diaspora communities in London and performed to a packed venue on two consecutive nights.

"Brilliant and courageous testimonies by survivors who allow us to learn and open our minds. Really powerful." Audience member

Right: Actors in our community play celebrate the final performance of Uncomfortable Conversations







**Dobet Gnahoré performs as part
of Musicians Unite to End FGM'**

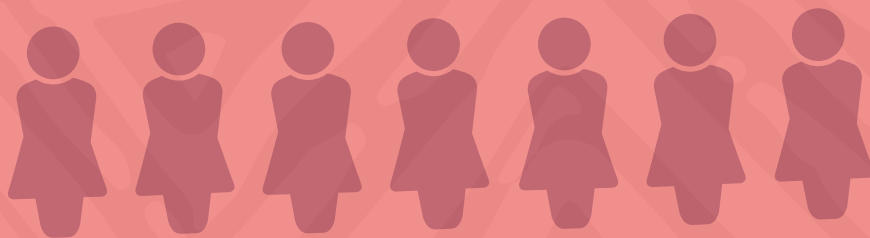
Poetic Pilgrimage at Musicians Unite to End FGM.

of community advocates

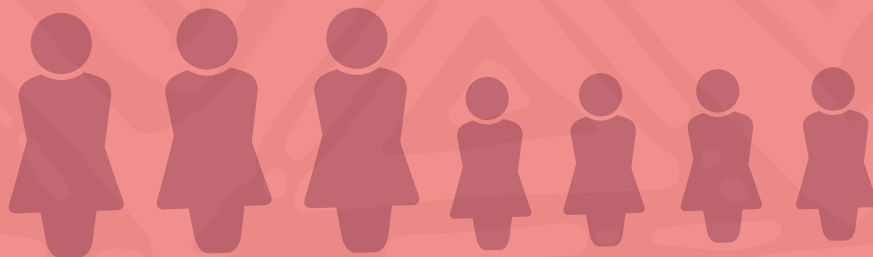
SUPPORTING AFFECTED

FAMILIES

THIS YEAR
WE SUPPORTED:



114



women and girls who have been affected
by FGM with one-to-one support

8



families who were involved in court
cases where FGM protection orders were
considered, providing psycho-social support.



HER STORY:

Supporting Women Affected by FGM



"I went for a smear test and I found out that I had FGM. Back at home I spent six hours Googling it, I watched so many videos and read so many articles and I came across a few organisations that I called up, FORWARD was one of them. They gave me an appointment the following week and I met with two FORWARD staff.

I was very nervous when I first came to the office, we were there for two hours. I'm a very private person so it was really hard to speak about something that intimate and I didn't know what to say. I felt like a fraud because I hadn't known about it. We went through the different FGM types and booked an appointment at Acton Well Women Clinic so that a doctor could find out what type of FGM I had. I had some form of type three and opted for deinfibulation under general anaesthetic. We went to University College Hospital for this, had my operation and found out that once opened up everything else was 90% normal which I was happy about.

The FORWARD staff member went with me to every single appointment, all the professionals corresponded through her, and she did all the running around. As soon as I was not with her, I was able to put it to the back of my mind until she next contacted me. I would have driven myself crazy overthinking things if I was doing it myself. She has been really helpful in everything, even in just talking about normal stuff, so it wasn't just about FGM.

I feel like it was more holistic and she cared about me, about what I wanted to do and just every other thing that she could help me with; it wasn't a matter of 'you've got FGM, okay this is the hospital that you need to go to'. FORWARD staff came with me for the operation. My friends didn't know about the process I was going through so it was really nice that as soon as I came out of the operation someone was there for me, even though she had to wait ages. **It felt like it made the experience a lot easier because she filled in the place of a friend when I wasn't comfortable enough telling my own friends."**

22 year old woman, London

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY

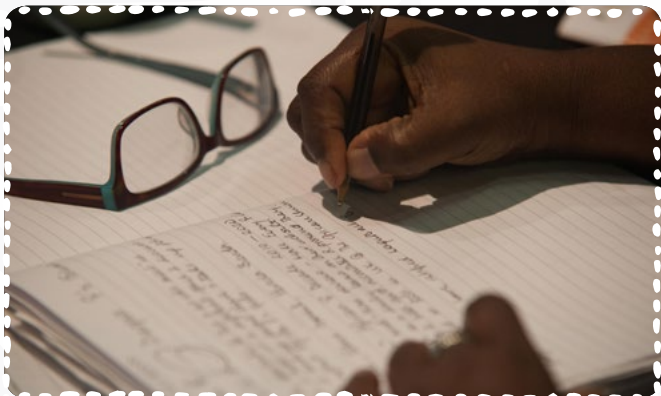
African Diaspora Women's Forum 2016



"The African Diaspora Women's Forum is about creating the opportunity to meet in order to link up, partner, share and take up policy issues which affect African women and girls."
[Eliza Anyangwe](#), Founder of the Nzinga Effect



"Don't wait for international organisations to solve the problems for us. We need to do it ourselves. It is us, women on the ground, who are trusted." [Edna Adan Ismail](#), [Edna Adan Hospital](#)



"We need to back up our advocacy work with data and make the data accessible to women on the ground otherwise it's useless." [Rainatou Sow](#), Founder of [Make Every Woman Count](#)



"The diaspora must enter with humility, acknowledging our privilege." [Fatou Wurie](#), [The Survivor Dream Project](#)

In December, FORWARD hosted the second African Diaspora Women's Forum in partnership with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and The Girl Generation.

The forum focused on how activism can be used to further the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 5, achieving gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls. We were delighted to be joined by two key note speakers: Edna Adan Ismail of the Edna Adan Hospital who shared Lessons from a Lifetime of Activism; and Theo Sowa, the Executive Director of the African Women's Development Fund.



"Women face multiple forms of violence throughout their lives so we must ensure we have an intersectional approach to VAWG." [Naana Otoo-Oyortey, Executive Director of FORWARD](#)



"Ending FGM isn't about telling people what to do but having a conversation, listening and creating situations for change together." [Faith Mwangi-Powell, Global Director of The Girl Generation](#)



"In building bridges within Africa, the messenger is just as important as the message – women must have a central voice. Men must support, but not lead." [Workshop discussion](#)



"Why do stories matter? The world need to know we saved ourselves over and over again." [Fatou Wurie, The Survivor Dream Project](#)

TRAINING

Training at FORWARD takes place in some form in most of our programme areas to raise awareness and improve responses to the issues.

We provide capacity training to support our grassroots partnerships in Africa. We provide women's leadership training in the UK and Africa, including mentorship. We train school staff to know what FGM is and how to respond to it. We train pupils to know that FGM is a violation of their rights and how they can seek support for themselves or friends. We train other professionals to know what their duties are, how to carry them out sensitively and how to work together effectively. We train men so they know they have a role to play in ending violence against women and we train them on how to approach it.

One of the core ways we delivered training to professionals and community group this year was through the Partnership for Ending Harmful Practices. This was a partnership of seven specialist women-led organisations that have extensive expertise in the area of violence against women and girls, offering services in 15 languages.

As well as one-to-one casework with women who have experienced and are at risk of harmful traditional practices, this year the partnership has provided a number of multiagency and specialist training workshops with the aim to raise awareness and improve responses to these practices.

- **5,284** professionals have been trained on FGM
- **28** women from FGM affected communities took part in our Women's Leadership Training to empower them to stop FGM in their communities, to help other survivors of FGM, raise their awareness of the harmfulness of this practice and enable them to help themselves and share their experiences

Professionals that
commissioned training
from FORWARD:



ST.MARY'S
UNIVERSITY

NHS
England


Lambeth

WOMEN & GIRLS

NETWORK

**CROYDON
COUNCIL**

5
SAH



London Borough
of Hounslow


Waltham Forest


TOWER HAMLETS


Department
for Education



SOAS
University of London


UNISON

MAYOR OF LONDON
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

RESEARCH➡

FORWARD continues to carry out research, providing an evidence base to share learning with others and inform programmes.

“Men have a role to play, but they don’t play it”: A mixed methods study exploring men’s involvement in Female Genital Mutilation in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.”

This research was carried out as part of the Men Speak Out project, a European programme led by GAMS Belgium, and including HIMILO in the Netherlands, the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, and FORWARD in the UK. The research provides insight into the perspectives of men on FGM, including their role in it, the taboo of men talking about it and the absence of communication on the subject among families. It was launched in December at the Houses of Parliament hosted by Baroness Tonge.



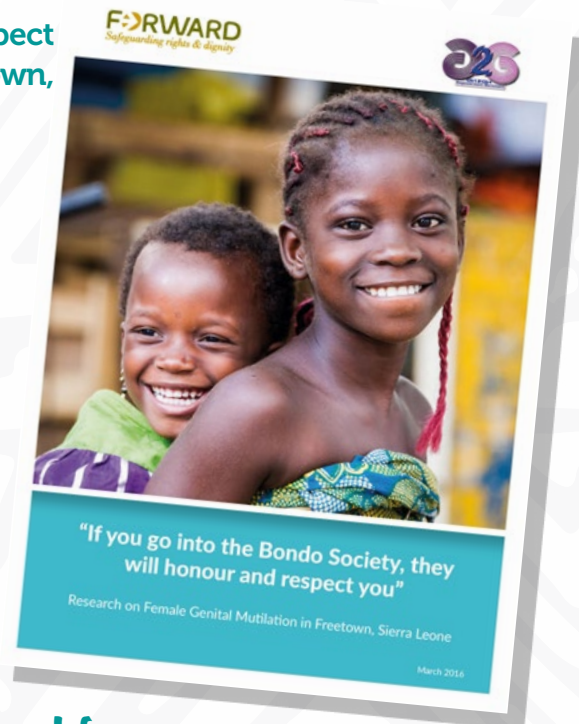
“I was looking for a woman who was not circumcised to have sex with. We all do. Everyone wants to have sex with a woman who is not cut but everyone wants to marry a woman who is circumcised.”

“I had a girlfriend who was circumcised, she lived with me in the Netherlands. I asked her if she had an orgasm she told me she does not feel much... it made me sad and then she became sad as well.”

PEER stands for participatory, ethnographic, evaluation and research. It is a research method that empowers the group being researched to become the researchers. We train young women and men to reach out to their peers to discover the issues that affect their lives.

"If you go into the Bondo Society, they will honour and respect you" Research on Female Genital Mutilation in Freetown, Sierra Leone

This 'PEER' (see below) research trained young women in Sierra Leone to become researchers themselves, interviewing girls from their community. The research asked girls about their daily lives, and the lived experience of young girls in Sierra Leone more generally. Extreme poverty was a recurring theme and rigid gender norms meant women are viewed with low regard. Women shoulder a disproportionate amount of domestic responsibilities causing them to feel held back and deeply frustrated. Likewise, girls' education is undervalued, and many parents prevent their daughters from attending school in the fear that it will increase the likelihood of their daughters 'going wayward'.



"People in her community say that Bondo is good for any girl child because in that period they will learn so many things about how to take care of their home and children."

"They said that the most important thing about Bondo is that when you are initiated you will not be involved in sexual intercourse with different men, because your clitoris has been circumcised. People say Bondo is a must because many families need to get money from the bride price."

"Girls and young women want to go through Bondo Society because they want to be associated with others who are part of it, they don't want to be discriminated against by others."

This process empowers those involved with new skills and knowledge and provides rich, personal research to inform approaches to helping solve those issues.

2016

PUBLICATIONS

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

Films

Raising our Voices on FGM

This film showcases how we work in the UK with women from FGM affected communities, schools, and young people of the African diaspora to reach out to people and make a difference among communities.



A still from FORWARD video Raising Our Voices on FGM showing how minds can be opened, and traditions transformed

Publications

Raising Our Voices, The African Diaspora Women's Forum: Showcasing Diaspora Engagement in Development in Africa and the UK

A report on the African Diaspora Women's Forum hosted by FORWARD in July 2015.



Now Girls Know Their Rights: Lessons from an Intervention on child marriage and FGM in Mara region, Tanzania

A report on lessons learnt from our work with our partners Children's Dignity Forum and UMATI from 2012-2015.



Keeping your girls safe from FGM: Summer Holidays, the law and YOU

Booklet providing information about the UK law on FGM for communities, services available and about the high risk of FGM over summer holidays.



"Men have a role to play, but they don't play it"

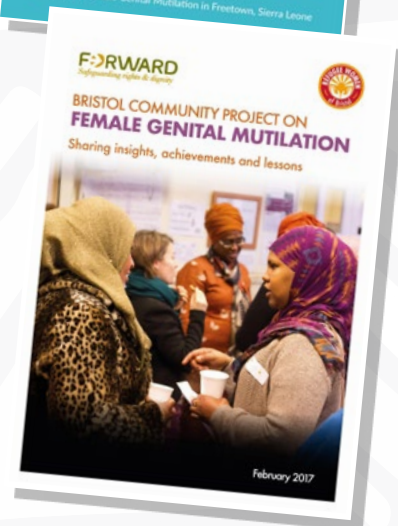
A mixed methods study exploring men's involvement in Female Genital Mutilation in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. [Full details on page 48-49.](#)

"If you go into the Bondo Society, they will honour and respect you"

Research on Female Genital Mutilation in Freetown, Sierra Leone. [Full details on page 48-49.](#)

Bristol Community Project on Female Genital Mutilation: Sharing Insights Achievements and Lessons

A reflective report on FORWARD's work with communities over eight years of work as part of the Bristol Model to end FGM.



Female Genital Mutilation: Frequently Asked Questions A Campaigner's Guide for Young People

A guide for young people which answers some of the common questions and explores issues that arise when campaigning on FGM.

FORWARD's UK Community Support Programme Addressing Female Genital Mutilation in the UK: What We Offer

An information booklet on the services that FORWARD provides for communities. This booklet provides information for professionals where the support poster is displayed so that they can identify which services may be relevant to their context.

Posters

FGM Advice and Support

A poster to signpost anyone who has been affected by, or is at risk of, FGM to our support services.



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.

- Alix Guerber ran the Vitality Oxford Half Marathon
- Emma Downey completed the Three Peaks Challenge
- Helena Wells ran the Windsor Half Marathon
- Jac Norris ran the Kingston Half Marathon
- Jacci Bulman hosted a poetry festival in Cumbria
- Cat Verge climbed Mount Kilimanjaro
- Kevin and Tracie dedicated their wedding gifts to FORWARD
- Kirsty and Ruth ran the Spartan Sprint
- Newham 6th Form College hosted a campaign day against FGM with FORWARD stalls to inform people about the practice
- Paige Smith shaved her head
- Sarah Petch completed the Mooloolaba Triathlon
- Tech City College held a mufti-day
- Wayne Southcombe completed the Great South Run
- Wimbledon High School dedicated their Battle of the Bands event to FORWARD

Kirsty and Ruth do the bucket challenge at the Spartan Sprint event





MOUNT KILIMANJARO

CONGRATULATIONS
— YOU ARE NOW AT —

UHURU PEAK - TANZANIA 5895M/19341FT AMSL

AFRICA'S HIGHEST POINT
— WORLD'S HIGHEST FREE-STANDING MOUNTAIN —

— ONE OF WORLD'S LARGEST VOLCANOES —
— WORLD HERITAGE AND WONDER OF AFRICA —

"I chose FORWARD because I believe it is an absolute priority to help young women worldwide to gain hope in the fact they should have the right to make decisions over their own bodies and this is something I am shocked has not yet been resolved. I hope doing this alone as a 21 year old woman, that others can be inspired to believe it is definitely something that can be achieved if you believe and have confidence in yourself."

Catherine Verge, climbed Mount Kilimanjaro



"I now understand that not a lot of people are aware of how many women and girls have been affected by FGM. I feel confident to talk to others about FGM. The protest and stalls were very enjoyable and informative. I liked having a wristband and each day it reminds me about how many women and girls can struggle from FGM. The event made me realise how much I want to support others. Overall, this campaign was a huge success and I want to do it all again."

Salma Begum, student at Newham 6th form college who held a campaign day against FGM

Financial Statement 2016-17

Incoming Resources

Donations

£ 45,559

Grants Receivable

£ 1,452,088

Other Income

£ 71,734

Total

£ 1,569,381

Expenditure

Fundraising

£ 10,072

Charitable Expenses

£ 1,217,098

Governance

£ 12,499

Total

£ 1,239,669

Net Incoming Resources

£ 329,712

Reconciliation of Funds

Total Funds brought forward 01.04.16

£ 332,454

Total Funds carried forward 31.03.17

£ 662,166

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2017

Current Assets

£ 1,208,394

Creditors

-£546,228

Net Assets

£662,166

Represented by:

Restricted Funds

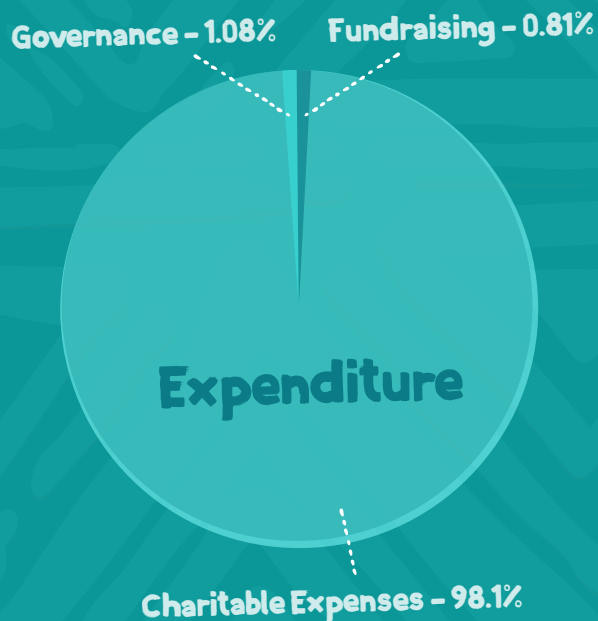
£292,013

Unrestricted Funds

£370,153

Total Funds

£662,166





FORWARD and our partners at the Tuwezeshe Akina Dada project launch in Uganda

OUR PARTNERS

UK & Europe

END FGM European Network – www.endfgm.eu
(FORWARD's Executive Director is President of the Network)

Acton FGM Specialist Clinic

Angelou Centre – www.angelou-centre.org.uk

Care for Women and Girls (CAWAG) –
www.careforwomenandgirls.org

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 is a co-chair of the UK Network)

HIMILO – www.himilo.org

Her Centre Greenwich – www.hercentre.org

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust –
www.imperial.nhs.uk

Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp –
www.itg.be

London Councils – www.londoncouncils.gov.uk

Mayor of London Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)

Muslim Women's Network UK – www.mwnuk.co.uk

New Step for African Communities (NESTAC) –
www.nestac.org

Refugee Women of Bristol –
www.refugeewomenofbristol.org.uk

Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel (SSAP) – www.ssap.org.uk

Women's Health and Equality Consortium (WHEC) –
www.whec.org.uk

Africa

Advocacy Movement Network (AMnet), Sierra Leone

Akina Mama wa Afrika, Uganda –
www.akinamamawaafrika.org

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

Julian and Ann Marcus Safehouse, Tanzania

ProFutures Development Initiative, Ethiopia

**Purin African Youth Development Platform (PAYDP),
Ghana** – www.paydp.org

Wadada Centre for Solution Focused Approach, Tanzania

Young Women's Leadership Institute (YWLI), Kenya

OUR TEAM

Patrons and Matrons

Baroness Gould

Don Boyd

Karon Monaghan QC

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Dr Deborah Hodes

Dr Lisa Smith

Muna Dol

Joy Fraser-Amosu

Sam Matthews

Priti Dave Sen

Dr Yunes Teinaz

Zainab Nur

Ambassadors

Ade Daramy

Gavin Weston



Some members of FORWARD staff with singer Dobet Gnahoré (right of centre) at the Musicians Unite to End FGM event



Staff

Adwoa Kwateng-Kluyitse – Head of Global Advocacy and Partnerships
Amal Mohamed – Youth Programme Assistant (until March 2016)
Angela Muruli – Africa Programmes Intern
Caroline Walker – Fundraising and Communications Officer
Christina Fonthes – Youth Programme Officer
Damaris Villanueva – Senior Admin and HR Officer
Fatuma Farah – DfE Project Officer (until March 2017)
Fosdicka Crankson – Finance Manager
Jennifer Vaughan – Senior Campaigns and Advocacy Officer
Justina Ogunseitun – Africa Programme Assistant
Kabung Lomodong – Community Programme Officer
Kekeli Kpognon – Head of Diaspora Programmes
Layla Ismael – Community Development Worker, Bristol
Mahasin Abu – Sudanese Community Support Worker
Maria Aden – Community Session Worker (until May 2016)
Mary Otuko – UK Programme Manager
Mulkaht Ibrahim – Community Programme Coordinator (until March 2016)
Naana Otoo-Oyortey, MBE – Executive Director
Naima Ibrahim – Community Development Officer
Naomi Reid – Projects and Events Manager
Nisan Zerai-Kesete – UK Programme Manager (until October 2016)
Rasha Farah – Youth Programme Officer
Rita Janani – Finance Assistant
Saadye Ali – Bristol FGM Community Project Assistant
Seyi Afolabi – Youth Programme Officer (until July 2016)
Toks Okeniyi – Head of UK Programmes and Operations
Vanessa Diakides – Schools Programme Coordinator (until March 2017)
Wangu Mureithi – Schools Programme Assistant
Wossenyelesh Kifle – Africa Programme Manager
Yvette Robbin-Coker – Training and Development Coordinator

Interns and volunteers

Amal Ibrahim Sabie

April Nwajiobi

Carola Addington

Eleanor Sian Dumper

Emily Haynes

Hannah Modupeore Aina

Jane Woodall

Lottie Howard-Merrill

Maisie Sloos

Michelle Gyandoh

Mona Mohamed

Noon Mirgani

Nuala Mendham

Pat Adjoa Amoah

Tien Nguyen

Yoursalem Semere

Zainab Mohamed ElSawi

"I have really learnt so much and I definitely feel inspired to do something similar in the future once I have finished university. Thank you for looking after me, for always being friendly, and for keeping my work interesting."

Eleanor, Africa Programme Volunteer

THANK YOU

Thank you to all those who have donated, fundraised, volunteered, attended events and more to support and 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.

Amnesty International

Arts Council England

Baillie Gifford

Barrow Cadbury Trust

Bristol City Council

City Bridge Trust

Comic Relief

Comic Relief - Common Ground Initiative

Department for Education

Department for International Development,
The Girl Generation

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

European Commission Daphne III
Funding Programme

European Commission Europe Aid

The February Foundation

Friends of FORWARD USA

Garfield Weston Foundation

Gunter Charitable Trust

Home Office – Department for
Communities and Local Government

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

Kate Wilkinson and Harry Gaskill

London Borough of Hounslow

London Borough of Waltham Forest

London Councils

MariaMarina Foundation

People's Postcode Lottery

Rosa

The Sigrid Rausing Trust

The Alan and Babette Sainsbury
Charitable Fund

Trust for London

Westfield Community Fund



Young women gather around FORWARD's Africa Programme Manager after training on VAWG to become Change Makers in Sierra Leone'

Right: Women from FGM affected communities complete training that will enable them to support others in their communities







Young boy and girls make their voices heard after training on children's rights and VAWG in Sierra Leone

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Website: www.forwarduk.org.uk

Twitter: @FORWARDUK and @FORWARD_Youth

Facebook: FORWARDUK and FORWARD.Ypso

FORWARD
Safeguarding rights & dignity

FORWARD is a UK registered charity

Charity Registration number: 292403

Company Number: 01921508