

PRESS RELEASE:

Spoken word and experimental music album on the issue of female genital mutilation to be released

Wednesday 6th February 2019

Immediate Release

Leading UK-based African diaspora women's campaign and support organisation FORWARD is set to release a unique album to highlight the work it does to eradicate FGM (female genital mutilation). The album is the brainchild of FORWARD's Naomi Reid and founder of Tse Tse Fly Middle East Simon Coates and continues FORWARD's *These Are Our Friends* project, a collection of poetry from young people from London, Bristol, Manchester and Birmingham that responds to the themes of FGM and its attendant consequences. The first stage of the project resulted in a [book](#) of the same name that features more than thirty pieces of work, a [short film](#) made with Media Trust, and the new collaboration will see twenty of the poems re-imagined.

Known for their live experimental music events that are used to draw attention to human rights issues, Tse Tse Fly Middle East have recruited twenty female artists and musicians, and each one will be given a spoken word recording of one of the poems. They will then compose and record a sonic background for their designated piece, with the resulting spoken word and experimental music compositions making up the new, twenty-track set. As Tse Tse Fly Middle East champions the work of artists in the Middle East, Africa and the Indian subcontinent the album will feature contributions from some of the foremost female proponents of noise from those regions, as well as drawing from more locally-based collaborators. Entitled *These Are Our Friends Too* the album will be released as a digital download in June 2019. Everyone involved has given their time for free, with all proceeds from sales of the album going directly to FORWARD.

About FORWARD

FORWARD (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development) is the leading African women-led organisation working on female genital mutilation, child marriage and other forms of violence against women and girls in the UK and Africa. For 33 years they have been committed to safeguarding the rights and dignity of African girls and women. They do this through community engagement, women's empowerment, training of professionals, research, and international advocacy.

www.forwarduk.org.uk

About Tse Tse Fly Middle East

Formed in the UAE in 2015 and now based in London, Tse Tse Fly Middle East is a non-profit organisation that uses live events, artwork and interventions to draw attention to human rights and freedom of speech issues.

www.tsetseflymiddleeast.org

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (WHO). It is also sometimes referred to as female genital cutting or female circumcision. There are no health benefits to FGM and it is recognised internationally as a human rights violation.

More information here: www.forwarduk.org.uk/key-issues/fgm

High res / low res photos and logos available on request

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Notes to Editors:

- FORWARD has been campaigning against FGM and other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) affecting African women and girls for 27 years.
- FORWARD's key areas of work are: [female genital mutilation \(FGM\)](#), [child marriage](#) and related rights abuses of girls and women.
- FORWARD works in the UK, Europe and Africa to help change practices and policies that affect access, dignity and wellbeing. www.forwarduk.org.uk Twitter: @FORWARDUK
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