



FORWARD

**INSPIRING A
GENERATION OF
AFRICAN WOMEN
LEADERS**

2018-2019

ANNUAL REPORT

CONTENTS

Reflection	4
About Forward	6
Why Forward Exists.....	8
Why we believe in leadership.....	14
Our Young Women's Feminist Leadership Programme	15
Community Advocates: Leading Change in Communities	32
My Voice Matters	36
European Development Days	38
2019 in Numbers	40
Annual Finances.....	41
Thank You	42
Our Team	44
Forward's Partners	46
Supporting Forward	47

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REFLECTIONS

FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We are very excited to share our reflections on this past year. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement have transformed all of our lives in a major way, inspiring us to reflect on how best to respond to vulnerability and address fundamental rights and justice in our work. At FORWARD, young women's rights have continued to shape our work. We take this opportunity to highlight one of FORWARD's key focus areas: nurturing young women's leadership in the UK and in Africa to drive change.

We strongly believe that in attaining gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls - a key global priority enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals - we need to strengthen the leadership capacity of young women, supporting them to transform their lives, their peers and their communities. We believe that for young women to achieve their full leadership potential, we must nurture and enable them by building up their capacity, providing mentoring support, building a movement and strengthening their resilience.

This past year, FORWARD adopted a special focus on fostering young women's leadership in local, national and international efforts to end female genital mutilation and all forms of violence against women and girls.

As our pilot Young Women's Feminist Leadership Programme, TuWezeshe Akina Dada, comes to a close, this report celebrates our achievements in inspiring a generation of young women leaders who are driving lasting social change across the UK and Africa.

In 2019, we helped to amplify girls' and young women's voices to claim their rights and demand freedom from violence. Our on-the-ground support, in cooperation with our partners, combined capacity-building workshops, mentoring on the delivery of local social action projects, and opportunities for learning and networking. We have supported local advocates to build movements while developing mutual solidarity and networking with other

"We see our role as developing their capacity, providing mentoring support and building their resilience to achieve their leadership potential."

groups and individuals. To this end, throughout the year, we co-hosted several transnational gatherings, including the International Conference on Violence Against Women and Children with our partner in Tanzania, Children's Dignity Forum (CDF), and the Pan-European Knowledge Exchange Conference #MyVoiceMatters, together with the End FGM European Network. We were also delighted to see our young women leaders (TuWezeshe Fellows) showcase their social action projects at the 2019 European Development Days in Brussels.

In our continuing push to work closely with like-minded organisations, we established strong new partnerships with social and academic institutions, from Huddersfield University to Dar Es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE), as well as new European partners. We continue to build on our transformational work, strengthening the technical expertise and cultural competency of frontline professionals, community advocates, educators and policymakers across borders. Central to this ongoing innovation is our community research: listening to and promoting migrant women's insights, documenting lived experiences of the different forms of violence against women and girls and assessing their related traumas and service needs.

We will not relent in our goal to create sustainable change: nurturing and building the capacity of the next generation of African women leaders. Throughout this report, we share insights and stories of change with you, illustrating the range of interventions and specialist support needed to provide the enabling environments for young women and women to thrive and transform their lives.

Our work has always been made possible by the support of our many funders, donors and individual supporters and we thank you for being here for us. To the Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers whom we work with at FORWARD, we truly value your continued commitment and dedication, which make all our actions possible.



Dr Titilola Banjoko
Chair, Board of Trustees



Naana Otoo-Oyortey MBE
Executive Director

ABOUT FORWARD

Our Vision

We are working for the day when African girls and women will live in dignity, be healthy, and enjoy equal rights, free from fear of violence.



Our Mission

The Foundation for Women's Health, Research and Development (FORWARD) is an African women-led organisation working to end violence against women and girls. From female genital mutilation and child marriage to domestic and sexual violence, we tackle abuse and discrimination – enabling African women and girls to achieve the dignity, health and equality that they deserve.

At FORWARD, we focus on both personal stories and the bigger picture. That's why we support affected women and girls on the ground – bringing communities together, fostering skills and knowledge, and nurturing young women leaders of tomorrow. And it's why we work strategically to challenge and support decision-makers and practitioners – conducting community research, building long-term partnerships and creating opportunities to transform lives.

Together, we're working to create a world free from violence for all African women and girls – and we won't stop until we get there.

Our Values

Grounded

We are led by African women for African women. This means that our roots and our hearts are in the communities we work with. They set our agenda, guide our decisions and sustain the change we create - together.

Bold

We will always speak out about the issues that face African women and girls, no matter how uncomfortable some may find them. We've been doing it for over 30 years and we're not about to stop now.

Nurturing

We help African women and girls gain vital skills and inner strength. Together, we empower them to find the courage to lead and create the change they deserve.

Trusted

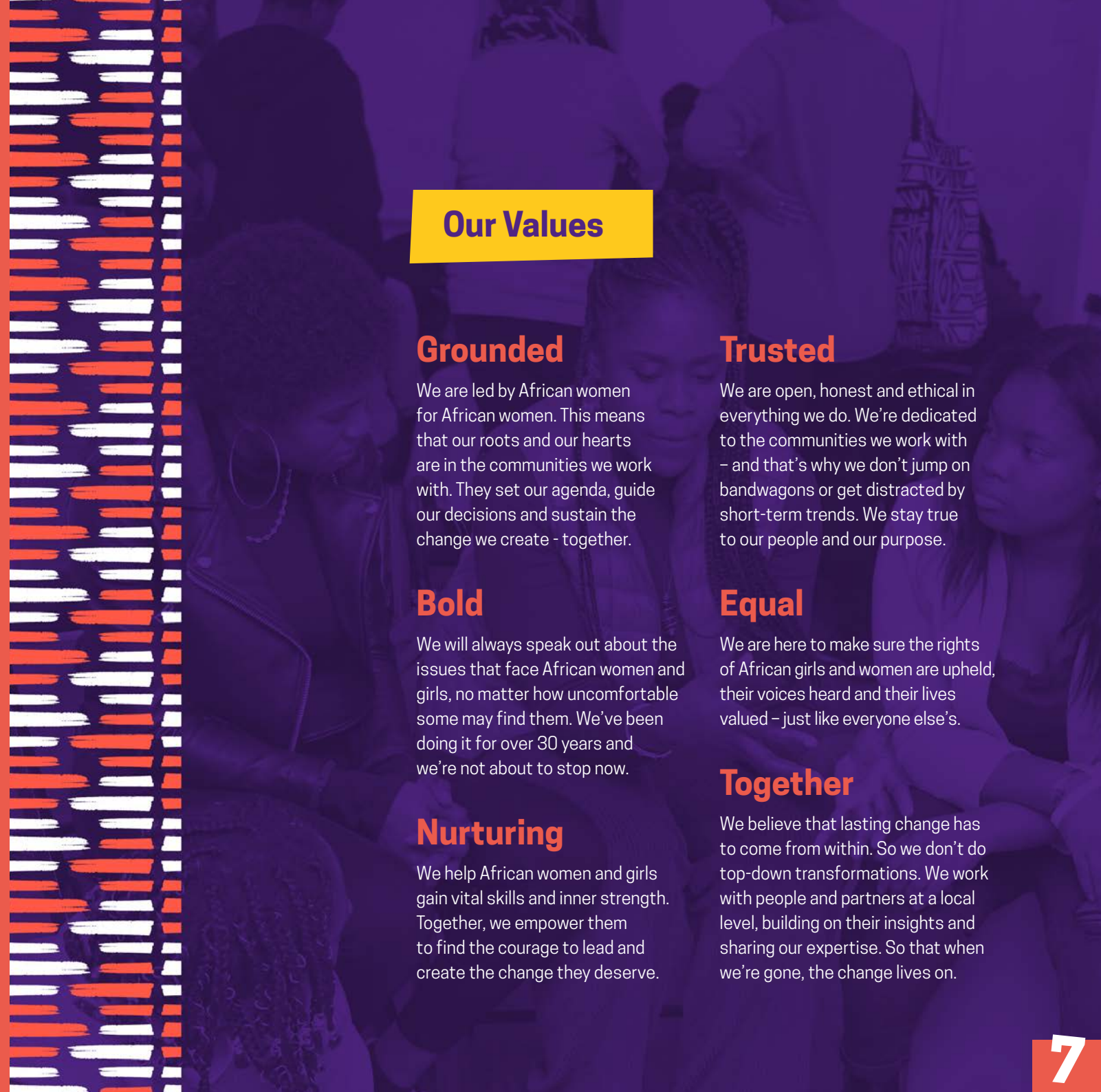
We are open, honest and ethical in everything we do. We're dedicated to the communities we work with – and that's why we don't jump on bandwagons or get distracted by short-term trends. We stay true to our people and our purpose.

Equal

We are here to make sure the rights of African girls and women are upheld, their voices heard and their lives valued – just like everyone else's.

Together

We believe that lasting change has to come from within. So we don't do top-down transformations. We work with people and partners at a local level, building on their insights and sharing our expertise. So that when we're gone, the change lives on.



WHY FORWARD EXISTS

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread forms of human rights violations across the globe. An estimated one in three women are affected by sexual or physical violence in their lifetime, causing damaging, long-term, social, political and economic consequences for all women and girls as well as for their communities at large.

The causes of continuing violence against women and girls are rooted in a long history of inequalities between men and women as a means of control and power. Despite the recent efforts made by some governments and non-governmental organisations to promote an agenda of gender equality, a staggering number of African women and girls continue to experience multiple forms of violence - including female genital mutilation, child marriage, sexual violence, trafficking, and domestic abuse, amongst others.

Female Genital Mutilation

According to the World Health Organisation, female genital mutilation (FGM), comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs, for non-medical reasons." A harmful practice with no health benefits, FGM can cause long-lasting physical, emotional and psychological trauma, and, in some cases, death.

60,000

girls under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM in England and Wales
(Macfarlane, A. & Dorkenoo, E., 2015)

137,000

women and girls are living with the consequences of FGM in England and Wales
(Macfarlane, A. & Dorkenoo, E., 2015)

200 MILLION
GIRLS & WOMEN
alive today have undergone
FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

(UNICEF, 2016)

Child Marriage

Child marriage refers to any formal or informal marriage of a child, female or male, under 18 years of age. Child marriage disproportionately affects girls and young women.

Child marriage has long-term consequences for girls and women, including social isolation, domestic violence, disruption of education and complications in childbirth. In low-income countries, pregnancy- or childbirth-related complications are the leading causes of death amongst girls aged 15 to 19 years (Girls Not Brides, 2017).

700 million
women alive today worldwide were
child brides (Girls Not Brides, 2016)

125 million
African women and girls alive
today were married before
their 18th birthday (UNICEF, 2015)

**150
MILLION
MORE
GIRLS**

will become child brides by

2030

if more is not done to prevent it!



Our Approach

For over 35 years, FORWARD has been championing African women's and girls' rights and safeguarding their dignity wherever they live, in Africa and across the diaspora. We work by listening to community insights and voices, and then developing strategic, evidence-based programmes, partnerships and campaigns.

How FORWARD works for women and girls...



Support Services (UK)

We provide advice, one-to-one support and culturally appropriate counselling for women and girls affected by any form of violence in the UK.



Partnerships

We build strategic partnerships with women-focused organisations operating at the local level, both in the UK and in Africa. We offer our partners capacity-building services in many areas, from advocacy, campaigning and research to financial support and technical advice.



Policy and Advocacy

We actively engage with policy advisors, local governments and EU and international governing bodies to strengthen their actions in favour of women and girls.



Participatory Research

We conduct participatory research in order to contribute to the growing evidence base on how to combat VAWG effectively.



Young Women's Advisory Council

Our council consists of 11 young women who are passionate about advancing women's rights. They help to shape FORWARD's youth programmes, bringing their perspectives into our work and developing creative ways to engage young women in VAWG advocacy.



Schools and Professionals Training

Our school workshops support students and educators to help them to understand how to protect girls at risk of FGM. We also offer training for professionals, such as teachers, healthcare and frontline staff, to improve their capacity to respond to the unique needs of African women and girls.



Young Women's Leadership

We provide feminist leadership training to young women in the UK and in Africa. Our programmes foster their confidence, leadership skills and knowledge of VAWG, enabling them to fully harness their potential power and agency to claim their rights and freedoms.



Community Engagement

We engage with local communities, providing safe spaces for them to come together to discuss issues related to VAWG. We train community champions and advocates, enabling them to become agents of change within their communities.

WHY WE BELIEVE IN LEADERSHIP

Women's active participation in policy development, social political processes and economic structures at all levels is critical to achieving gender equality and building a more just and equitable society.

At FORWARD, we believe that uplifting and empowering young African women to become confident, resilient and effective leaders is key in helping us to reach our goal of ending all forms of violence against women and girls and attaining gender equality and empowerment.

OUR YOUNG WOMEN'S FEMINIST LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Our young women's leadership programme, 'TuWezeshe Akina Dada' - Swahili for 'empowering our sisters' - is a feminist leadership programme that seeks to inspire a generation of young African women to engage in both civil and political spaces and to take collective action against VAWG.

TuWezeshe Akina Dada is a one-year fellowship programme, during which the young women Fellows build up core leadership skills, are mentored by established female leaders and ultimately receive funding to initiate their own Social Action Projects.

TuWezeshe Fellows learn how to shape the policy agenda on VAWG, to build solidarity with other young women activists and to voice their concerns and demands through a range of national and international platforms. The programme is also designed to build bridges between East Africa and the UK African Diaspora.

Since 2015, the TuWezeshe programme, funded by Comic Relief, has been successfully implemented in Uganda, Tanzania, Somaliland, England, Scotland and Wales, working with our partners Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMWA) in Uganda, the Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel (SSAP) in Wales, Scotland and Somaliland, the Children's Dignity Forum (CDF) in Tanzania, and the Somaliland Nursing and Midwifery Association (SNMA), also in Somaliland.

How TuWezeshe Works

The programme consists of the following five components:

#1

Leadership training

Young women first take part in residential feminist leadership training. The training teaches Fellows practical feminist leadership skills, improves their knowledge of their fundamental rights, and equips them with confidence and resilience to become effective leaders.

#2

TuWezeshe sisterhood

Fellows become members of country-specific fellowship networks. The networks provide them with opportunities to develop their ideas, to receive encouragement and inspiration from one another, and to work collaboratively to combat the challenges that they face.

#3

Social media activism

By building TuWezeshe-specific social media pages and followings, Fellows can exchange information and make links across countries, confronting issues of women's and girls' rights on a global level.

#4

Social action projects

Once Fellows complete the feminist leadership training, they are provided with a sub-grant, tasking them to initiate their own Social Action Project and apply the skills and new knowledge that they have acquired.

#5

Mentorship

Each Fellow is paired with a mentor to guide her through her fellowship journey. Supported by experienced and established female leaders, Fellows thus receive role models who provide them with coaching, advice and networking opportunities that shape their personal development.

The TuWezeshe Impact

Since the launch of the programme, TuWezeshe has so far trained 126 young women leaders. Through their activism and their individual social action projects, the young women have since reached more than 3,000 people in England, Wales, Somaliland, Tanzania and Uganda.



As a result of taking part in TuWezeshe...

90%

of young women say they 'value themselves more highly'

88%

of young women agree that they have become more resilient in the face of challenges and setbacks

95%

of young women say that they are more confident in their abilities to create change as a result of TuWezeshe.

Stories of Change:

England and Wales

England

“The most significant impact of TuWezeshe on me has been my confidence. Walking with my head held high, talking to anyone and looking at them in the eye, volunteering first for leadership roles, being confident in myself as a black woman - unique in her own right, and still standing in constant solidarity with my black sisters.”

England Fellow

Wales

“My experience of the TuWezeshe training could very easily be described as transformative. I learned so much about myself and how I relate to the world that I was previously blind to. I feel so much better equipped to be a change maker within myself, my communities, and society at large.”

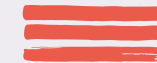
Wales Fellow



‘Bodily Integrity: Safe from Destruction’, England

Hadeel Elshak created Bodily Integrity, a photography exhibition at the University of Sussex, to spark conversations on VAWG. Her exhibition featured photographs of young women from the African and Caribbean Diaspora, displaying what womanhood means to them. Since TuWezeshe, Ms. Elshak has become an Ambassador of the End FGM European Network. She has also won the 2018 ITV ‘Breaking into News’ competition for her report on the impact that the Grenfell disaster has had on young people’s engagement in politics.

“TuWezeshe has developed my skills in public speaking so much so that I won a nationwide journalism competition. I believe this demonstrates the long-lasting impact TuWezeshe has had on creating advocates for causes that we care about”.



‘G.I.R.L Xhibition’, Wales

Aisha Kigwalil hosted a collaborative art exhibition, ‘G.I.R.L Xhibition’, exploring identity, culture and the misrepresentation of black women in society, showcasing the work of nine young, up-and-coming artists from across the UK. “I aimed to portray the individuality of the average black women, the stories and narratives that do not live up to the expectations of society.”

Ms. Kigwalil’s exhibition was hosted by the Temple of Peace in Cardiff, the National Museum of Wales Youth Conference and the Women of the World festival. It has also featured in a number of local art platforms, such as Get the Chance, and in the leading black newspaper ‘The Voice’.



Stories of Change:

Tanzania & Uganda

Tanzania

“The TuWezeshe sisterhood has been a life changing experience! Through the other Fellows I have learnt a lot, such as focussing and moving with great passion in whatever plan of life, as well as avoiding all setbacks that life throws at me to obstruct my plans.”

Tanzania Fellow

“Before joining TuWezeshe, I was passionate about making a change but I didn’t know how to. TuWezeshe has enabled me to believe in my abilities and improve my capacity to lead and influence change in the community.”

Tanzania Fellow

Uganda

“Being a TuWezeshe Fellow has helped me to have a great sense of identification. Especially being identified as a member of a strong women-led organization. I have now been identified as one who will always fight for women and actually challenge my family to fight the patriarchy system that might be visible in our daily lives.”

Uganda Fellow

“I got to know about transformational and feminist leadership, critical thinking, self-care and the power we hold as human beings, standing for my rights, [and] self-assessment as a leader.”

Uganda Fellow



Hands for Children, Tanzania

Khadija Khalid Ismail’s outreach project engaged teenage students to empower them to become confident advocates for change. Her project aimed to encourage young people to share their knowledge of VAWG, report any violence that they saw and help survivors by directing them to available support.

Ms. Ismail engaged 70 students, and invited the Deputy Minister for State in the Prime Minister’s Office, Antony Peter Mavunde, to speak with her students. Khadija says: “My project is already having an impact. One of my students reported that her neighbour was being severely beaten by her husband. She raised the issue with an elder neighbour who could take the case to the police. The incident was reported and the man was eventually convicted.”



Eliminating violence against women and girls with Disabilities, Uganda

Susan Aciro implemented her project in Buyende District, Kidera Sub-County in Uganda. As a deaf woman, her project focussed on deepening the knowledge of girls and women with disabilities on the subjects of human rights, feminism and leadership. She trained more than 20 differently-abled women and girls on VAWG and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights. Ms. Aciro’s project has encouraged women to come forward and officially report their experiences of sexual harassment, leading to a number of successful prosecutions.

“Tuwezeshe changed my perception about sexual violence. Through the training and the interactions with other Fellows, I came to realise that survivors of sexual violence require a lot of support to heal their wounds.”



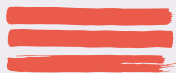


‘Overcoming pain’: Stories of LBQ women who suffered IPV, Uganda

Gloria Mutyaba created a network for 25 Lesbian-Bisexual-Queer (LBQ) women who have suffered Intimate Partner Violence. Creating a safe space to share stories and mutual support, Gloria used poetry and art therapy to help them to overcome their traumatic experiences and to embolden them to stand up to sexual and physical violence.

Following TuWezeshe, Ms. Mutyaba delivered a presentation at the International AIDS Conference in Ivory Coast to discuss ‘The Implications of Excluding LBQ women in the HIV debate’ and secured a Mandela Washington fellowship for Young African Leaders.

‘My experience of TuWezeshe led me to grow as a better leader for myself and for the younger upcoming LBQ leaders that look up to me for inspiration’.

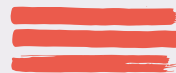


Increasing the capacity of communities to mitigate Gender Based Violence, Uganda

Tendo Namata’s project sought to create structures that would empower communities to fight VAWG. She delivered sexual health rights training to over 100 pupils and teachers, and sensitisation training to community members. She further helped to establish a Village Gender Team, who now act as the first point of referral on cases of VAWG and draft by-laws for the community.

Ms Namata won the 2018 World Bank award for her blog on her community-led approach and she has since founded her own organisation, the Embimbo Gender-Based Initiative.

‘Finding yourself as a feminist and what you want to do cannot be done alone, you need people to show you, mentor you and provide a sisterhood. That is what TuWezeshe is to me’



Stories of Change:

Somaliland

Toghdeer: Zero tolerance of FGM and VAWG Advocacy, Somaliland

Nura Salaad Ali, Nusayaba Abdirahman Jama and Asma Omar Ahmed collaborated on their project ‘Toghdeer’, which aimed to provide women and girls within their community with a safe space to discuss the practice of FGM and broader issues of VAWG. They carried out a range of VAWG awareness campaigns to reach out to the community’s women. They extended the scope of these campaigns by working through the area’s Mother & Child Health Centres and educational medical institutions, thus also challenging the medical students’ perceptions of FGM. Their outreach successfully engaged 78 women, 107 girls and 7 men. They said of their experience as Fellows: “being members of TuWezeshe, we now have a sense of power within us, which we want to shine on to others.”



TuWezeshe Journeys

A portrait of Saviour Nakakembo, a woman with a headwrap, resting her chin on her hand.

Saviour Nakakembo

When I applied for the TuWezeshe fellowship, I was broken. All I needed was a safe space to heal from the trauma of a broken marriage. Everyone around me judged me and often told me that I should have stayed back, because so many women are violated, yet stay put in their marriages. I wanted to meet people that would listen to my story without judgement. My hope was also to learn skills in advocacy and leadership, to fight for the rights of other women who were going through the same issues, and to build my career in life skills coaching.

In the 5-day training programme, I learned how to build an everlasting sisterhood. It has touched my heart that women celebrate and support one another regardless of their background, and work to achieve a common goal.

My proudest achievements throughout my TuWezeshe journey have been starting my feminism journey and practicing it.

Delivering my 'Boys4Boys' project has been the most amazing journey of my life. It was a dream come true – the dream of engaging men in the fight to end VAWG. Now, I have successfully reached more than 100 boys in secondary schools and out of school boys who are mentoring fellow boys to live in equality with women. This experience has greatly expanded my skills in advocacy, resource mobilisation and financial accountability, and has sparked further ideas on how to deliver male engagement on VAWG.

Two years down the road, I have learnt how to influence national policy, and I'm part of a network of many influential people in the Uganda Women's Movement. I successfully set up my own organisation, the Legacy

“It has touched my heart that women celebrate and support one another regardless of their background, and work to achieve a common goal.”

World Initiative, which focusses on human capital development, human rights advocacy, and women economic empowerment. As an advocate for gender equality, I've been invited to different platforms, including the Private Sector Foundation and UNDP, to promote and advocate for gender equality as a new model of business growth.

Going forward, I intend to expand the Boys4Boys project to include young men at institutions of higher learning. I intend to pursue further studies in human rights, advocacy and policy, and to launch my own coaching institute in Uganda.

My advice to young women out there who wish to be a part of TuWezeshe is firstly for them to build a lot of networks, because that is where growth starts, and secondly to break the silence around sexual and gender-based violence by recognising and speaking out about the injustices around them.

I am forever glad that I was selected to be part of this journey. This has been the greatest encounter in my life, ever!



**Lillian
Kimath**

The first time I saw the TuWezeshe advert was in a WhatsApp group, and I decided to apply. After I was selected, I was happy but somehow, I was terrified too. I said to myself that 'I can do this!'

In the beginning, I thought it was just going to be a normal training programme, like the ones I usually attend, but TuWezeshe was different: the training was so powerful!

In particular, the self-worth section of the training was inspiring. It's the section that made me reflect deeply on myself, especially on my weaknesses. I explored every part of my body and asked myself questions like 'why am I feeling weak?' and 'why am I feeling strong?'. These brought a sense of power within me. But that's not all. The leadership skills and self-awareness skills made me consider my role in bringing about the change that I wanted to see in my community.

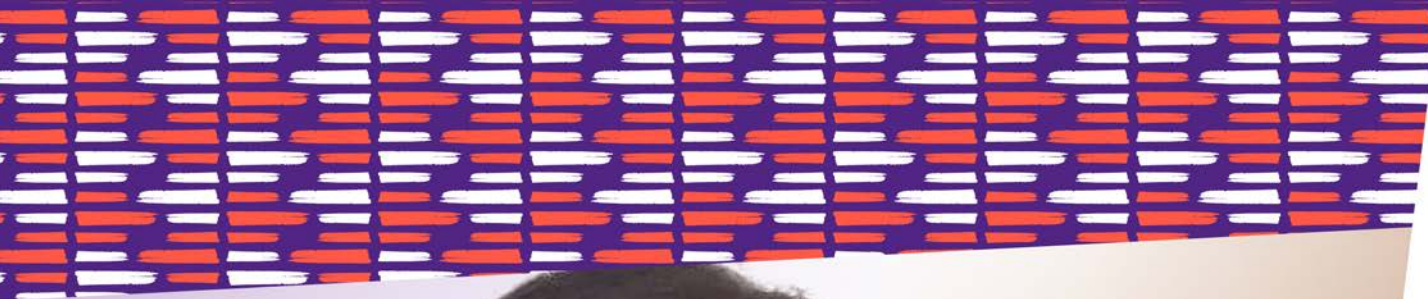
"In the beginning, I thought it was just going to be a normal training, like the ones I usually attend, but TuWezeshe was different: the training was so powerful!"

I named my project 'Kengele ya Binti', meaning 'a wake-up call for girls'. I wanted to empower girls aged 13-18 to gain self-awareness, to understand their rights and to know how to take action on gender-based violence. At first, I planned to train only young girls, but I realised boys also needed that space.

I carried out 'Kengele ya Binti' in four secondary schools, where I trained 218 boys and girls. They had a lot of questions and were very curious to learn. This gave me strength to train them. What makes me so proud when I think of 'Kengele ya Binti' is training boys, reviving gender clubs in schools that were no longer functioning, and most importantly, becoming a leader and taking leadership roles in different places.

TuWezeshe has opened so many doors for me, especially career-wise. Right after the training, I got an opportunity to work with VSO as a volunteer and I got nominated in the yearly VSO Volunteer awards. I also had an opportunity to work with the Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT) as a trainer on entrepreneurship, where I trained more than 190 women and men on entrepreneurship and ICT. And finally, I received the opportunity to join Children's Dignity Forum's work in Tarime as Programme Assistant.

My advice to other young women who would like to join TuWezeshe is: 'Don't hesitate! Follow your dreams! Don't miss out on this opportunity, there is a lot to learn and TuWezeshe can change your life in so many ways.'



**Rochelle
Ampomah**

Before I applied for TuWezeshe, I really wanted to go into international development and women's rights. So, I will never forget when I came across TuWezeshe. I was drawn to it because I wanted to get leadership skills – being a leader is something I always shied away from; I never had the confidence! I remember thinking: "Wow, we also get funding to do our own social action project." Literally, for me, it looked too good to be true!

The name of my TuWezeshe project is 'I Have a Voice' and I think it is hands down one of the best things that I have ever done.

My project was about empowering young girls of African heritage aged 14-15 to use their voices to create change. I ran weekly sessions with 10 school students over two months to talk about topics like FGM, race, identity, sexual health, mental health, career options and politics. I made the decision to run my sessions at my old school, because, growing up, I had felt like an outcast. I was one of only a few black girls there and I was made fun of for all the features that made me black.

When I first started my sessions, I was nervous that the girls wouldn't really know me and that they wouldn't be comfortable talking to me. But they were so open, they loved the sessions – they didn't even want to leave. We talked about racism, micro-aggressions, and they told me about their experiences in school. One girl disclosed that she gets made fun of for being dark, and when she tells the teachers, they brush it off. I spoke to the head teacher who agreed to join one of the sessions and to look into ways to address issues raised.

I also arranged for the girls to go to the House of Commons to meet with the Shadow Home Secretary, Diane Abbott, and the then MP for Peterborough, Fiona Onasanya. It was so inspiring for the girls! They

"The name of my TuWezeshe project is 'I Have a Voice' and I think it is hands down one of the best things that I have ever done."

were able to ask them loads of questions about their paths into politics. They got to see where decisions are made and witnessed black women like themselves in positions of responsibility.

The girls and the teacher whom I was liaising with want me to do the sessions again next year, which is amazing! I think that from this whole experience, I learned just how powerful I can be. These girls really look up to me and are excited about our sessions. I am influencing them and it's just like: "Whoa, it's just little me, I am making a difference!" I'm encouraging them to also make a difference and to tell their friends about what they are learning. The experience has given me more confidence and has encouraged me to take a stand for the things that I believe in.

Now, I'm working on my social enterprise organisation - it's called 'The 3 E's' - which I started a few months ago. I've been recruiting for roles and I've literally got emails from women in Botswana, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, and in the UK who are interested to join. Just knowing that people see my vision is amazing!

I wouldn't have been able to achieve this if it wasn't for TuWezeshe. It's just reinforced my passion for women's rights. And the leadership skills I gained have helped me to become decisive in my decisions and more confident in them.

COMMUNITY ADVOCATES: LEADING CHANGE IN COMMUNITIES

FORWARD continues to work with community health advocates in supporting migrant women and girls affected by VAWG and in bringing about change within the community.





The ACCESS project - the acronym stands for Appropriate Community-Based Care and Empowering Support Services - is a project that supports migrant women in the UK, Belgium and Spain who are affected by or at risk of VAWG. The project is led by our partner, GAMS Belgium, and is co-funded by the European Commission. FORWARD is responsible for carrying out the international project's actions in the UK. In our ACCESS role, we train and support Community Health Advocates in the migrant communities identified by the programme, equipping them with core skills, knowledge and confidence that will empower them to drive change within their communities. At the same time, we train statutory professionals in order to extend their cultural awareness, helping them to better respond to the particular needs of migrant women.

Migrant women who are affected by any form of VAWG, including FGM, sexual violence, forced marriage or human trafficking, are often unable to report incidents or seek support. This can be due to a fear that they will not be believed, in light of their immigration status. It can also be due to language and cultural obstacles, or simply to a lack of knowledge on the services that are available in their area.

Since the launch of ACCESS, some of the advocates trained under the project have carried out research exploring community views on access to VAWG-related services, reaching over 300 community women. Upon completion of the training, the advocates also provide online support for migrant women across the UK, Belgium and Spain through a confidential chat service, which is available in 10 languages. Crucially, this platform



In 2019, we:

Trained 20 community health advocates from migrant communities in London and Bristol.



Trained 60 key professionals in London, Bristol and Birmingham

“I would like to express how thankful I am for the trust vested in me and for the endless possibilities and opportunities that you have been providing for us – for myself and my entire community. I would like to express my excitement about being your ambassador at the End FGM EU Network, and I am already thrilled by the programme and the work we are doing.”

Aminata Bah, Community Health advocate



MY VOICE MATTERS



In November 2019, we launched the **#MyVoiceMatters** campaign in partnership with the End FGM European Network. This campaign centred around a two-day conference that provided a platform to more than 80 professionals, young people and activists to come together and exchange promising practices to tackle FGM and VAWG across Europe.

The first day brought together statutory professionals, frontline workers and a range of organisations working on FGM in the UK and Europe for a **'Pan-European Knowledge Exchange'**. The conference built bridges between policymakers and communities and enhanced key professionals' understanding of the critical role that community engagement and representation must play in shifting attitudes on FGM.

The second day focused on **'Strengthening Young Women's Leadership to End FGM and VAWG'** and brought together young women activists and professionals working to protect the health and rights of women and girls. This day also provided an opportunity for the attending young Black, Asian and minority ethnic young women to network with professionals and with other activists from the UK and around Europe. The young activists took part in inter-generational panel discussions and in workshops on leadership skills, feminist awareness, understanding of power structures, and campaigning strategies for effectively tackling FGM and VAWG.

The impact of **#MyVoiceMatters** was emphasised by the attendees, who stated that both events had increased their "chances of collaboration" and described them as a "way of giving more power to the new generation". Feedback from both conferences praised the diversity and mix of different cultures, among both the hosts and the guests, as well as the strong and engaging atmosphere of "togetherness", solidarity and sisterhood.



#MyVoiceMatters

EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT DAYS

Every year, FORWARD participates in the European Development Days (EDD) annual conference. Organised by the European Commission, EDD brings together over 8000 members of the global development community to share their ideas and experiences, and to inspire new innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges.

The 2019 event's theme focussed on **'Addressing Inequalities: Building a world which leaves no one behind'**; it was one of the most exciting EDD conferences to date. It notably featured high-level panels in which a member of FORWARD's team and a TuWezeshe Fellow spoke alongside Heads of State, Commissioners and other leading grass-roots activists.



“Being at the European Development Days 2019 has been the highlight of my year so far. So much so that the entire time I was in Brussels, it felt like I was living someone else's life! It would have been great enough if all I had to do was attend, but to be able to participate and speak is one of my proudest moments.”

Fionah Komusana, TuWezeshe Fellow.



2019 IN NUMBERS

As well as inspiring a generation of young women leaders, in 2019, FORWARD continued to deliver our multi-award-winning UK Schools Programme, to engage with communities across borders, and to provide accredited and tailored training services to a wide range of statutory professionals.



In 2019:



1,420

young people attended our FGM sessions in schools across the UK

546

staff members in schools were trained on FGM and other forms of VAWG

500

professionals received training on how to safeguard women and girls affected by or at risk of FGM in the UK

1,358

girls and boys were mobilised against VAWG in Africa

ANNUAL FINANCES

Financial Statement 2018-19



Incoming Resources

	2018 -19	2017 -18
Donations	84,141	54,500
Grants Receivable	755,972	1,461,632
Other Income	31,193	18,010
Total	871,306	1,534,142

Expenditure

Fundraising	7,849	13,503
Charitable Expenses	1,179,124	1,374,445
Governance	9,820	6,371
Total	1,196,793	1,394,319

Net Incoming Resources

	2018 -19	2017 -18
Net Incoming Resources	(325,487)	139,823
Reconciliation of Funds		
Total Funds brought forward 01.04.18	801,989	662,166
Total Funds carried forward 31.03.19	476,502	801,989

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2019

Total Assets	594,155	930,603
Less: Liabilities	(117,653)	(128,614)
Total Net Assets	476,502	801,989

Represented By:

Restricted Funds	188,434	417,835
Unrestricted Funds:		
Designated Funds	120,000	140,000
General funds	168,068	244,154
Total Charity Funds	476,502	801,989



THANK YOU

We wholeheartedly thank all those who volunteered with, donated funding to, and otherwise supported FORWARD. You are an invaluable part of our family of committed supporters, who enable us to transform lives and end VAWG.



Claudia Monteith -The Kind Project

Claudia is an artist who crafted and sold 50 unique dolls as part of her fundraising initiative for FORWARD. Claudia states that her initiative, entitled The Kind Project, "is a celebration of the female form and that it is something to respect. I chose to raise money for a charity that is dedicated to supporting women having to face the harshest challenges, and to ending the greatest crime committed against the female form - Female Genital Mutilation."



Sophie Dibben

Sophie ran the 2019 Tollymore Trail marathon to raise more than £1000 for FORWARD. "I wanted to raise money to tackle FGM and I felt that FORWARD is a charity that has made a significant impact since 1985. After learning about their projects with the Bristol community and in Tanzania, it was further reinforced how progressive, supportive and accessible FORWARD is for all women. The collaborative effort from FORWARD, which has made such significant strides in giving support to so many vulnerable women and girls, is something I really wanted to support."



Westcliff High School for Girls

For their 2019 Charity Week, Westcliff High School for Girls (WHSG) raised an incredible £13,000 for three organisations including FORWARD. Their Head Girl, Mayowa Osadiya, shared with us that FORWARD's work "matches the ethos of our school. As our diverse student body encompasses a wide range of cultures, we are able to empathise with the struggles faced by females around the world. WHSG hopes that our contribution will not only help FORWARD to continue to reach women and girls across the world facing injustices, but will give them the opportunity to realise their right to self-determination."

Finally, we want to say a special thank you to all our funders, without whom our work would not be possible.

Act for Change Fund

Baillie Gifford

Comic Relief - Maanda Programme (co-funded by DFID)

Comic Relief

Common Ground Initiative - Comic Relief

DFID - Department for International Development - Options Consultancy

European Commission - C Daphne - CUT

European Commission - C Daphne - GAMS

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

February Foundation

London Councils - HTP

London Councils - Prevention

MOPAC - London Mayor's Office

Maria Marina Foundation

The National Lottery Community Fund

Harry Gaskell & Kate Wilkinson

Jane Telling Fund

OUR TEAM

Ambassadors

Ade Daramy
Gavin Weston

Trustees

Dr Titilola Banjoko – Chair
Dr Lisa Smith – Treasurer
Joy Fraser-Amosun
Julia Klein
Priti Dave
Sakaria Ali
Sarah McDonald
Aneisha Obuobie

Patrons and Matrons

Baroness Gould
Don Boyd
Karon Monaghan QC

Young Women's Council

Aneisha Obuobie
Anjeli Shah
Bimpe Lawal
Enna Uwaifo
Faith Israel
Grace Labeodan
Lynette Owusu
Mems Ayinla
Paige Nakiwu
Qadija Elmi
Vanessa Nakitende



Naana Otoo-Oyortey MBE
Executive Director



Toks Okeniyi
Head of UK Programmes
and Operations



Mary Otuko
UK Programme Manager



Kabung Lomodong
Programme Support Officer



Naima Ibrahim
Community Development
Officer



Mahasin El-Hasan
Outreach and Community
Support Worker



Yvette Robbin-Coker
Training and Development
Coordinator



Eiman Hussein
Psychotherapist



Adwoa Kwateng-Klavitse
Head of Global Advocacy
and Partnerships



Wossenyelesh Kifle
Programme Development
and Partnerships Manager



Seble Belay*
Africa Programmes Officer



Angela Muruli*
Programmes Officer



Nafisa Jones*
Africa Diaspora Advocacy
and Policy Intern



Fosdicka Crankson
Finance Manager



Rita Janani
Finance Assistant



Damaris Villanueva*
HR Manager



Amy Abdelshahid
Head of Evidence and
Knowledge Management



Naomi Reid*
Communications and
Events Manager



Yasmeen Omran
Communications and
Digital Fundraising Officer



Khadra Habane
Research and Evaluation
Assistant



Vanessa Okiki
Office Assistant



Paige Nakiwu
Schools and Youth
Programmes Assistant



Dolly Ogundinre
UK Programmes Assistant



Alya Harding
Schools and Youth Volunteer

* No longer working at FORWARD

FORWARD'S PARTNERS

UK & Europe

End FGM European Network
www.endfgm.eu

The Girl Generation
www.thegirlgeneration.org

Girls Not Brides
www.girlsnotbrides.org

Angelou Centre
www.angelou-centre.org.uk

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

New Step for African Communities
www.nestac.org.uk

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

Refugee Women of Bristol
www.refugeewomenofbristol.org.uk

Africa

AMNet
www.amnet-online.org

Chama cha Uzazi na Malezi Bora
Tanzania (UMATI)
www.umati.or.tz

Akina Mama Wa Afrika (AMwA)
www.akinamamawaafrika.org

Wadada Centre for Solution
Focused Approach
www.envaya.org/wadada_centre2014

Girl2Girl Empowerment Movement
www.girl2girlngo.org

Children's Dignity Forum (CDF)
www.cdf.or.tz

SUPPORTING FORWARD

Our amazing supporters allow us to continue to campaign for African women's and girls' rights and to inspire young African women to become change-makers in their communities.

With your donation, we will be able to run more learning sessions for students and teachers at schools, provide training sessions for healthcare professionals, and increase community awareness and response services for women and girls at risk of FGM and other forms of violence.

Please email us at forward@forwarduk.org.uk for any further information.

**Thank you for
your support.**



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Registered Charity No: 292403 Company Number: 01921508

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