



**End FGM**  
EUROPEAN NETWORK



Co-funded by  
the European Union

# TOGETHER TO SHAPE A FUTURE **FREE** FROM FGM

EMPOWER, ENGAGE, EDUCATE.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A **STRONG NETWORK** HAS  
MUCH MORE TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT THE  
STRONGER WE ARE, THE MORE WE ARE HEARD, THE MORE  
WE GET TO PLACES AND RAISE **AWARENESS** ABOUT FGM  
AND MAKE **CHANGES**.

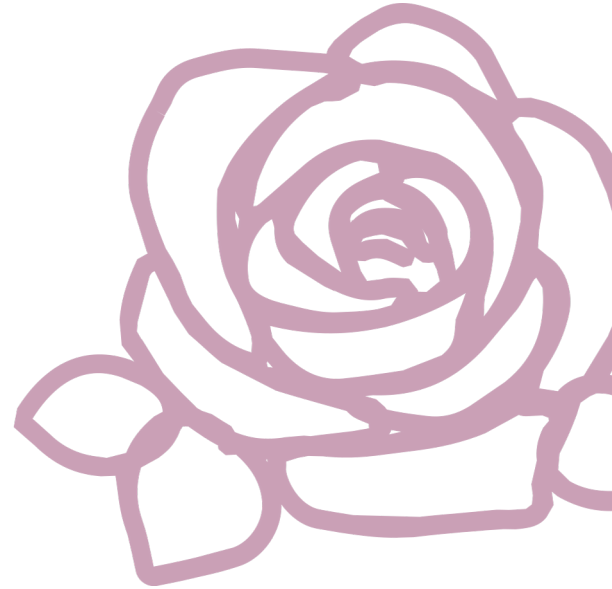


*Sonia Duarte - APF Portugal*

# ABOUT US



The End FGM European Network is an umbrella network of 39 organisations in 16 countries working to ensure sustainable European action to end Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). We are the central platform connecting grassroots communities and European decision-makers. The Network facilitates cooperation between all relevant actors in the field of FGM both in Europe and globally. Our mission is to be the driving force of the European movement to end all forms of FGM



## THE BOARD



**Marianne Nguena Kana**  
Interim Director of the Network

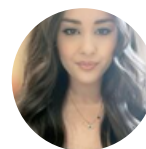
“As we embark on this new parliamentary mandate, I invite you, esteemed decision-makers, to stand with us to end female genital mutilation (FGM). It is crucial that we intensify our efforts, push for more ambitious policies, and ensure that the EU takes the lead in safeguarding every woman and girl from this harmful practice. Your voice, your guidance, and your action are essential in creating a future where every girl and woman can live without the fear of female genital mutilation. Together, we can turn this into a reality.”



**Aminata Sidibé**  
Co-president



**Rukio Omer**  
Co-president



**Rohma Ullah**  
Treasurer



**Sona Fati**  
Secretary



**Etenesh Hadis**  
Board member

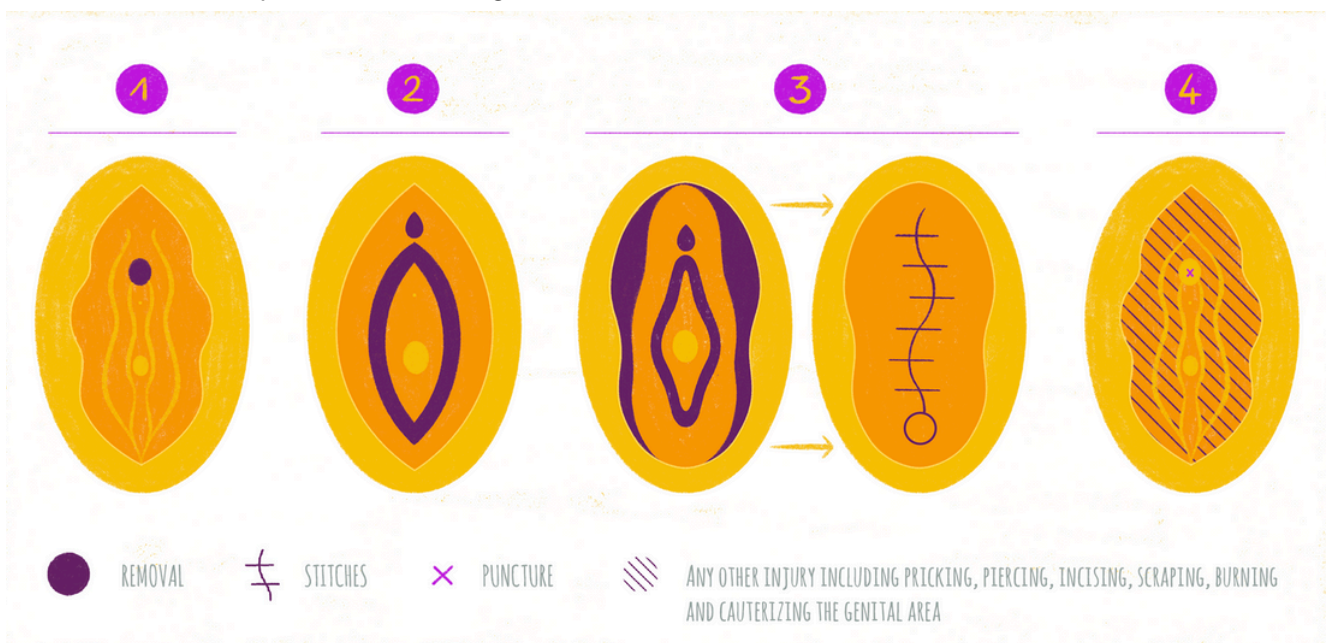


**Marly Bah**  
Board member



# WHAT IS FGM

According to the World Health Organisation, 'FGM comprises all procedures involving the removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons'. **At least 230 million girls and women have undergone FGM globally, and 3 millions are still at risk annually.** FGM is a form of gender-based violence deeply ingrained in harmful norms that control and restrict women's freedom. It denies full enjoyment of human rights, including bodily integrity, freedom from torture, mental health, sexual health, and reproductive rights.



The 4 different types of FGM

## WHO IS AFFECTED BY FGM?

FGM is a global issue, there are FGM survivors and girls at risk on every continent but Antarctica.

FGM-affected communities and FGM Survivors are **diverse**, coming from different ethnicities, nationalities, religions, socio-economic background and so on. This diversity **must be accounted for**.

The procedure is carried out at a variety of ages, ranging from shortly after birth to sometime during the first pregnancy. Although it **most commonly occurs between the ages of 0 to 15 years**.

# WHAT WE DO



## 01 **POLICY ADVOCACY**

We advocate for clear and comprehensive European policy to end FGM which is child-centric, community-focused and human rights-based. Our focus is to ensure that this policy promotes women and girls' safety within the EU and beyond.

## 02 **BUILDING BRIDGES**

We connect actors from all regions of the world to share expertise and skills, to tackle the cross-border nature of FGM.

## 03 **CHANGING THE NARRATIVE**

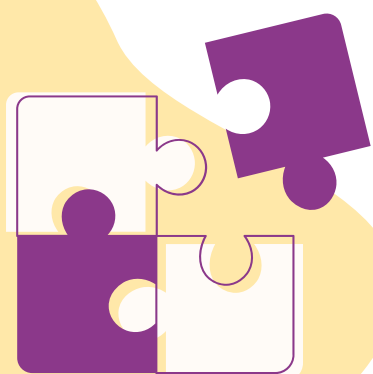
We empower, raise and promote the voices of FGM-affected communities to drive systemic change through an inclusive and non-stigmatising narrative.

## 04 **CAMPAIGNS**

We raise awareness about FGM among policy and decision-makers, professionals and other relevant stakeholders to increase their engagement with the movement.

## 05 **STRENGTHENING THE MOVEMENT**

We strengthen the European movement to end FGM through building the capacity, visibility and sustainability of our members.



# OUR PROGRAMME

## AMBASSADORS

Survivors and members of FGM-affected communities must play a central role in all actions and decisions taken to end FGM and gender-based violence! Our ambassadors programme involves activists committed to ending FGM who are already prominent at the national level and want to contribute at the European level. The programme provides the ambassadors with further training and allows them to raise their voices against FGM and gender-based violence and to share their experiences at European and international levels. The ambassadors regularly meet with European politicians, stakeholders and civil society organisations to create movement of actors committed to defending women's rights.



**Rafiu Olayinka Awolola**  
Senior Ambassador  
Terre de Femmes - Germany



**Bassmala Elbushary**  
Youth Ambassador  
FORWARD - UK



**Nabila Salih**  
Youth Ambassador  
FSAN - The Netherlands



*Intergenerational  
Ambassadors Meeting 2022*

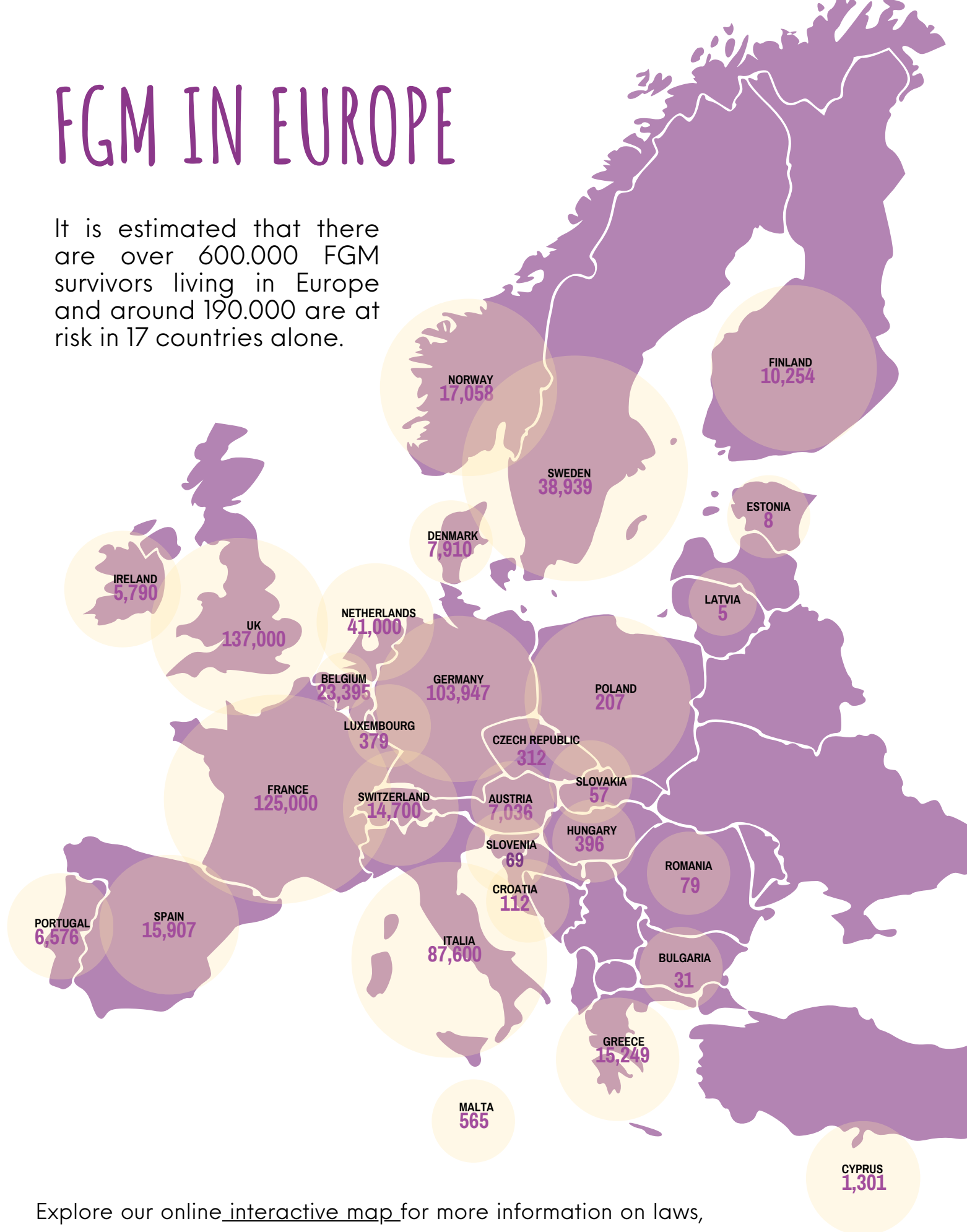
## EMPOWERING FUTURE GENERATIONS

The young generations play a key role in ending FGM and we want to ensure that their voices are at the heart of the European movement. We bring together young anti-FGM activists who are engaged with our members. We create a space for these inspirational young people to share their experiences and connect with each other, provide training and develop joint actions.



# FGM IN EUROPE

It is estimated that there are over 600.000 FGM survivors living in Europe and around 190.000 are at risk in 17 countries alone.



Explore our online [interactive map](#) for more information on laws, policies, services and data collection on FGM in the 16 European countries where End FGM EU has members.



## End FGM E-Campus

An online, free, knowledge platform offering professionals practical skills in supporting survivors of FGM.

[Learn more here.](#)



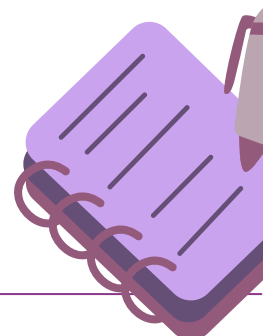
## Join Our Chain

This project is dedicated to the prevention and elimination of female genital mutilation (FGM) and early and forced marriage (EFM) among affected communities in Germany, Italy, and Ireland.

[More info here.](#)

# PROJ

The End FGM European Network related to raising awareness on

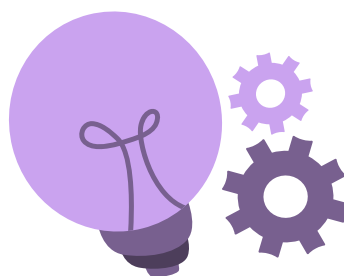






## Purple Chair Podcast

This project aims to facilitate the creation of a podcast series by youth for youth on FGM and Gender-Based Violence. Launching in October 2024. [Learn more here.](#)



# ECTS

## Mind the Gap

The project address gender stereotypes in education in Italy, Spain, and Portugal by raising awareness among educators, students, and parents. [Learn more here.](#)



leads and actively participates in projects FGM and on all forms of gender-based violence.

## Change Plus

CHANGE Plus focused on raising awareness and changing attitudes about FGM in five EU countries. It engaged community members, including survivors, in capacity-building and best practice exchanges. [Learn more here](#)



Support the full implementation of the directive on violence against women and domestic violence by all member states.



## Our Call for EU decision-makers

- **Address the shortcomings contained in the directive.** Work towards the revision of the directive and focus on enhancing the scope of its provisions and go beyond the current text to adopt a more robust and inclusive framework that leaves no form of SGBV unaddressed.
- Encourage and **advocate for member states to go beyond the minimal provisions** of the text setting stronger national standards for protecting victims.



Each person affected with FGM faces different challenges.



- **Increase funding for EIGE, EUAA or FRA** to allow them to pursue their vital activities and ensure the sufficient funding of data and research.
- **Increase the amount allocated to the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme** in particular its Daphne strand to address the cost needed to end violence against women in the mid-term review of the current MFF.
- **Adopt gender budgeting** and use a gender lens to ensure gender is mainstreamed in all budget lines.
- **Prioritise human rights, gender-equality and ending all forms of GBV when drafting the Union's budget** emphasising FGM prevention and survivor support aligned with the EU's priorities in both internal and external actions.

Better funding to end FGM

## Prioritise gender-equality non-discrimination to strengthen the gender-equality framework of the Union.

- **Prioritise equality and strengthening the content of the Union of Equality.**
- **Mainstream comprehensive gender and intersectional approach** when drafting new legislations, action plans and strategies.
- **Advocate for more inclusive policies and use a gender lens in all policy sectors at both internal and external levels** including but not limited to human rights, humanitarian, environmental, health, trade and employment.
- Accelerate and advocate for the Commission to **urgently finalise the long-awaited recommendation on harmful practices**, and further strengthen its content to make sure that all forms of genital mutilation including Intersex Genital Mutilations are addressed.



### [Read the full recommendations](#)

- **Encourage meaningful and co-operative civil dialogue** and value their key role across Europe.
- Ensure **CSOs are heard at all stages of the policy-making process**.
- **Create a safe and enabling space for civil society**, where smaller, grassroots and community-based organisations, can thrive.
- Making **funding opportunities accessible, sustainable available** and designed to support the long-term impact of CSO initiatives.

**Recognise and support civil society and grassroots organisations**



- Advocate for the needs and demands of FGM-affected asylum seekers to be accounted for at every stage of the asylum process. In particular, for **culturally and gender-sensitive reception services ensuring holistic support for FGM survivors**.
- Advocate for Member States and European Agencies to **put in place effective and accurate disaggregated data collection systems** in all Member States at all stages of the asylum procedure.
- Work closely with Member States, to re-affirm their commitment to the Charter of Fundamental rights and **ensure the New Pact on migration and asylum is implemented in a human-right centric and gender-sensitive way**.

**Protect and support FGM-affected asylum seekers**



# EU ELECTIONS 2024

2024 marked an important time for the European Union. With a new cohort of MEPs and College of Commissioners, End FGM EU looks forward to closely working with new and old allies to advance the elimination of FGM throughout this next mandate. In the run up to the European Elections we worked closely with our members to prepare and to disseminate for signatures, the End FGM Manifesto. With the help of our Ambassadors, the Manifesto was first launched during the International Day of 0 Tolerance for FGM on 6th of February 2024 at the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Gathering such allyship is essential to ensure that our goals are made into a reality.



Youth Ambassador, Imtinan Munir Senior Ambassador Sona with Former MEP Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana

## OUR MANIFESTO

1. Work towards EU **gender equality** goals, including ending gender-based violence and FGM.
2. Ensure FGM-affected community voices **shape policies** that concern them.
3. Promote accurate narratives about FGM to counter stigmatization.
4. Advocate for additional funding to civil society, prioritizing grassroots efforts.
5. Prioritize **training for professionals** in relevant policies and EU-funded programs.
6. Promote an intersectional and feminist approach to **eliminate gender-based violence** in EU policies.



Youth Ambassador, Imtinan Munir Abdulkarim & MEP Alice Bah Kuhnke at International Day of 0 Tolerance Event.

“

*“As we work toward our 2030 commitment to end Female Genital Mutilation, we urgently need your support with strong policies and dedicated funding to ensure that Europe leads in safeguarding the rights and future of girls and women. Every girl deserves a future free from violence and harm”*

Rukio Omer -End FGM EU Co-President

”

**Have a look at our full Manifesto.**



Youth Ambassador, Imtinan Munir; Senior Ambassador Sona Fati with MEPs Marc Angel and Tilly Metz

“

THIS IS OUR 10TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY AND I THINK  
WE DID A LOT. IT'S A PROCESS AND IS GOING WELL  
AND I WISH THAT IN THE COMING YEARS WE WILL  
ERADICATE ALL FORMS OF FGM.  
THAT'S OUR DREAM.

”

*Zahra Naleie  
FSAN- The Netherlands*



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# HOW TO TALK ABOUT FGM

DO'S

DON'TS

✓ Use the term Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), as it is the internationally agreed upon term

✗ Don't use misleading terms, such as "circumcision".  
Don't use specific terms, such as "infibulation", to refer to all forms of FGM

✓ Use positive images

✗ Don't use shocking images that risk causing re-traumatisation of FGM survivors and of affected communities. Don't use graphic images or details such as blades or blood

✓ Use the term "affected communities" as opposed to "practising communities" because it encompasses those who wish to leave the practice behind

✗ Don't assume that everyone in an affected community feels the same way about FGM

✓ Use comprehensive, respectful and non-stigmatising language

✗ Don't fuel hate speech using words such as "barbaric", "disgusting", "savage" that are offensive and judgmental for affected communities. Do not use sensationalising headlines or terms

✓ Use the same words survivors choose to use when speaking, without re-phrasing what they say. Use factually-based arguments

✗ Don't romanticise or re-write a survivor's story



## DO'S



FGM is a violation of human rights and a specific form of gender-based violence. FGM is only one of the many practices performed to control women's bodies and roles in society



Don't portray FGM with a sense of cultural otherness, that reinforces stereotypes and misunderstandings



Recognise all types of FGM are as harmful physically and/or psychologically. No hierarchy can be made in the pain and the trauma caused by FGM



Don't focus only on the physical procedure itself



Recognise FGM abandonment as a feminist issue. FGM aims at controlling women's bodies and sexualities. Both women and men play a role in the continuation or abandonment of the practice



Don't label FGM as a "women's issue"



Tell positive stories as a way of promoting FGM abandonment. Show that change is possible and can be inspiring to others



Don't forget many people and communities have abandoned FGM and cultural norms change over time. Change is possible and is happening



Women and girls who have undergone FGM are survivors, not victims. Acknowledge survivors' resilience and strength



Don't portray survivors as victims

## DON'TS

# WHEN TALKING WITH A WOMAN AFFECTED BY FGM OR WITH MEMBERS OF AN AFFECTED COMMUNITY

✓ Let people own their narrative and understand that every survivor has a different experience

✗ Don't assume you already know their story, don't assume all stories are the same

✓ Use the terms the person you are talking to prefers to use, as many terms are used worldwide to refer to FGM

✗ Don't use judging language and avoid alienation

✓ Believe survivors when they tell their stories and treat affected communities with respect: they are the experts of their own experience

✗ Don't minimise survivors experiences when they tell their stories

✓ Respect boundaries

✗ Don't be intrusive and don't ask questions that might re-traumatise the survivor. Do not ask personal questions or intimacy-based questions

✓ Let survivors tell you who they are and what they do today. Listen and respect them

✗ Don't reduce survivors to their traumas and their pasts

✓ Create a positive and safe environment when talking with a member of an affected communities

✗ Don't play a survivor in opposition to her community. Don't judge a survivor's family for practising FGM







# MYTHS - VS - FACTS

**✗** People who practise FGM are “barbaric” and “irrational”

**✓** When a family accepts to carry out FGM on its daughter, they wish to protect her against being stigmatised and socially excluded. A woman who has undergone FGM is socially accepted within her community and the society, and is ready to marry

**✗** Some forms of FGM are minor

**✓** All forms of FGM are harmful. Any form is a violation of human rights and a form of gender-based violence

**✗** FGM is a Muslim practice or a religious practice

**✓** FGM is not prescribed by Islam or by any other religion. FGM existed prior to the existence of monotheistic religions and is to this day also practised in some Christian communities for example

**✗** FGM is an African issue

**h ✓** More than 200 million women worldwide have undergone FGM. FGM happens on every continent in the world except Antarctica, it is a global issue. Also, in several African countries FGM is not practised

**✗** FGM is only practised by undereducated, socially disadvantaged people or in rural contexts

**✓** FGM occurs across all cultural and socio-economic groups

**✗** Practising FGM in a hospital reduces risk

**✓** Medicalised FGM (when practised in a healthcare facility) can be as harmful as when done traditionally and does not necessarily lead to a ‘safer’ practice. The psychological and physical effects of FGM remain serious and concerning

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



## **FGM AND MEDICALISATION**

This position statement outlines the importance of reflecting on medicalised female genital mutilation (FGM) and other related medical practices carried out within Europe.



## **FGM AND RACISM**

This paper explores, through the lens of intersectionality, the impact of racism with a focus on how it impacts the work of the anti-FGM sector.



## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Our report focuses on the provision of support services aiming to provide health care, including counselling or access to health care, for Survivors of FGM in Belgium, France, Germany, Portugal and Spain.



## **GOOD PRACTICE POSTER**

10 promising examples that different countries in Europe have introduced to advance the movement to stop FGM across the continent, available in 10 different languages.



## **FGM AND DISABILITY**

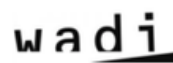
In collaboration with the European Disability Forum explains how we can provide for people at the intersection of FGM & Disability.



# FULL MEMBERS



# ASSOCIATE MEMBERS





“FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION AFFECTS OVER 600,000 WOMEN IN THE EU, WITH 190,000 MORE GIRLS AT RISK. WHILE AFFECTED COMMUNITIES AND THEIR ALLIES IN CIVIL SOCIETY WORK TIRELESSLY ON THE GROUND, LASTING CHANGE REQUIRES THE COMMITTED SUPPORT OF EU REPRESENTATIVES. TOGETHER, WE CAN PROTECT THESE WOMEN AND GIRLS AND ENSURE A FUTURE FREE FROM THIS HARMFUL PRACTICE.”

*Aminata Sidibé - End FGM EU Co-President*

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING  
OUR WORK TO END FGM  
IN EUROPE AND BEYOND!

# CONTACT US



## SOCIAL MEDIA



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