



THE
GIRL
GENERATION

TOGETHER TO END FGM

STRATEGIC PLAN

2015-2020

www.thegirlgeneration.org

Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
(I)NGO	(International) Non-governmental Organisation
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SOAWR	Solidarity for African Women's Rights
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
WHO	World Health Organization

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TOGETHER TO END FGM

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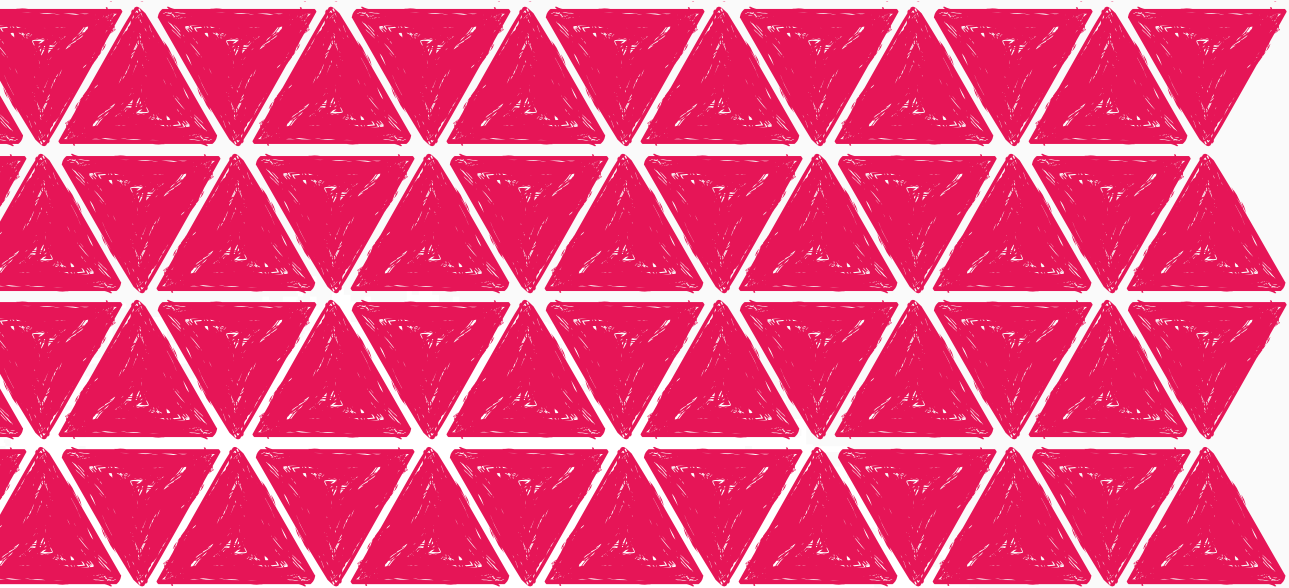
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WHAT IS FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION?

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a harmful practice.

It includes all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasonsⁱ. FGM can cause severe pain, bleeding, problems urinating, cysts, infections, infertility, complications in childbirth, and even death.

The psychological effects of FGM can include post-traumatic stress and depressionⁱⁱ. FGM is an expression of gender inequality and a form of gender-based violence, as the UN recognises in its 2012 resolution calling for the global elimination of FGMⁱⁱⁱ.



FGM IS A GLOBAL ISSUE

More than 125 million women and girls have undergone FGM globally,

and over three million more are at risk every year^{iv}. Across the African continent, where FGM is most prevalent, rates vary by country: Egypt has the world's highest total number with over 27.2 million women having undergone FGM (equivalent to 91% prevalence), whilst Somalia has the highest recorded prevalence rate at 98%.

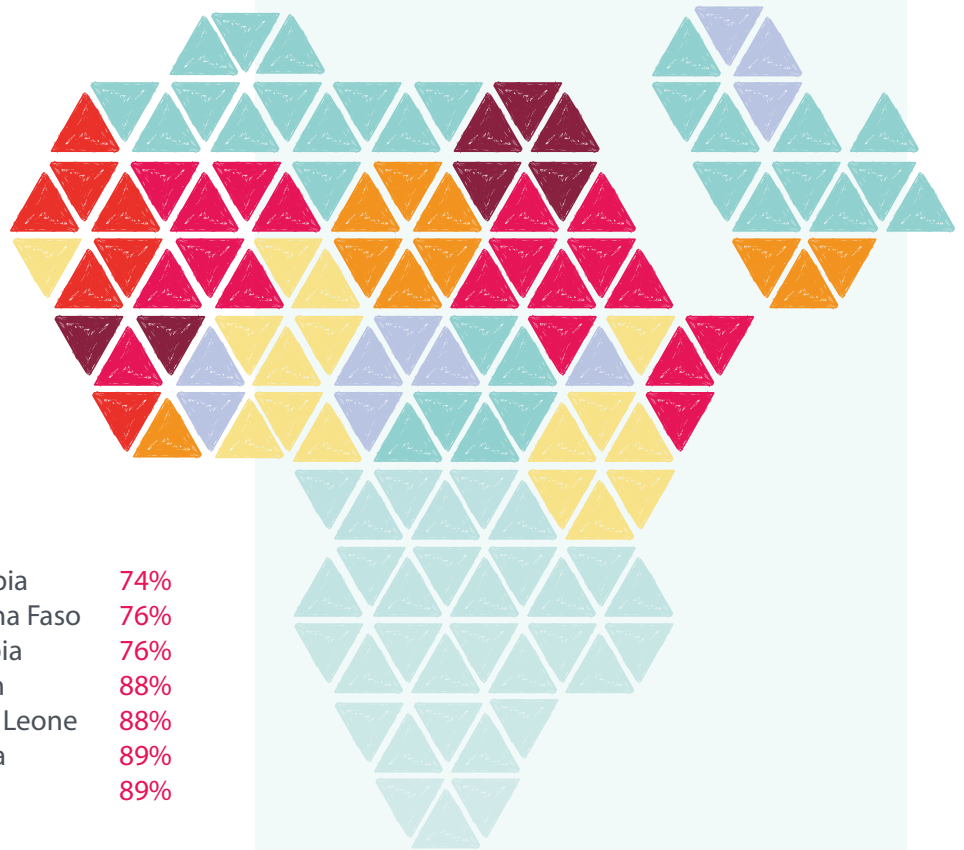
However, FGM is an issue in many other parts of the world: in the Middle East, FGM has been documented in nine countries, including Yemen, where 23% of women have undergone FGM^{iv}. In Asia, FGM is known to take place in at least nine countries, including Indonesia, where 51% of girls have undergone some form of the practice^v. It is estimated that up to half a million women and girls in the United States have undergone FGM or are at risk of the procedure^{vi}. In addition, in the European Union, it is estimated that half a million women have undergone FGM^{vi}. Women and girls in Australia and other countries with diaspora populations are also affected.

FGM is recognised internationally as a violation of the rights of women and girls.

Many national, regional and international actors have developed programmes to advocate for, and support, its abandonment. These efforts have been reinforced by international frameworks, research, work within communities, and changes in laws and policy. Laws against FGM have been enacted across in 24 of the 29 African countries where the practice is concentrated, and in 12 industrialised countries with migrant populations from FGM-practicing countriesⁱ. These efforts were reinforced by the passing of UN General Assembly Resolution 67/146 in December 2012, led by the Africa Group and with widespread international support, calling for a global ban on FGMⁱⁱⁱ. There have been rapid developments in recent years, and Nigeria is the latest country to enact a law against FGM^{viii}.

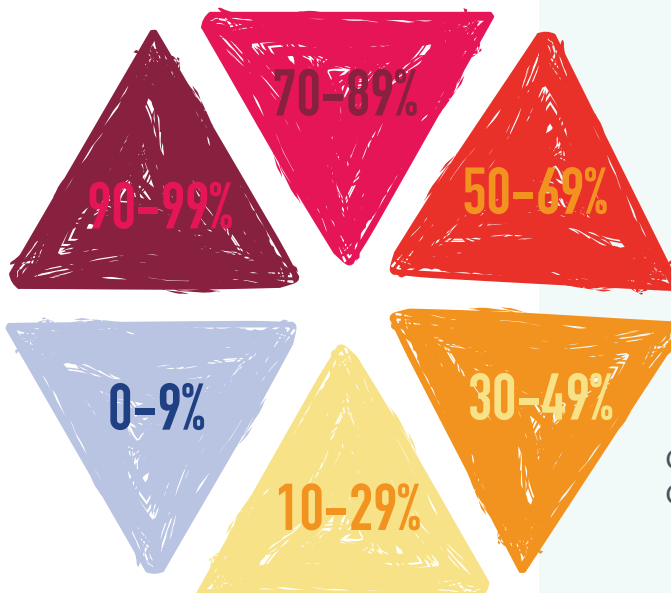


PREVALANCE OF FGM



Ethiopia	74%
Burkina Faso	76%
Gambia	76%
Sudan	88%
Sierra Leone	88%
Eritrea	89%
Mali	89%

Egypt	91%
Guinea	96%
Somalia	98%



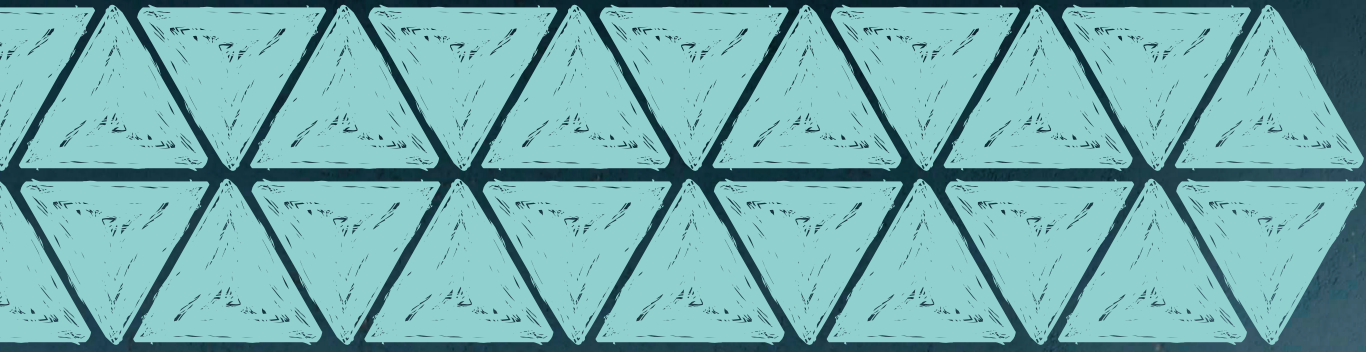
Guinea-Bissau	50%
Liberia	66%
Mauritania	69%

Cameroon	1%
Uganda	1%
Ghana	4%
Togo	4%
Iraq	8%

Côte d'Ivoire	38%
Chad	44%

Benin	13%
Tanzania	15%
Yemen	23%
CAR	24%
Senegal	26%
Kenya	27%
Nigeria	27%

Source:
UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on
Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting



WE ARE THE GIRL GENERATION



We are united by our vision that FGM can – and must – end in this generation.

FGM is one of the gravest human rights violations of our time. For too long, it has been neglected on the global agenda, and treated as a taboo subject. Ending FGM can be a catalyst for change, going hand-in-hand with other gender equality issues, including child marriage, girls' education, and 'honour'-based violence. No country can achieve its full potential, socially or economically, when half of its population is held back by extreme forms of discrimination. FGM is everyone's issue, and each of us can play a role in creating a world that is safe for girls.

We are driven by the conviction that for FGM to end, there needs to be a positive transformation in the way that girls are valued, and in the beliefs and social norms that underpin FGM. We are confident that communication – which has the power to positively influence the very fabric of society and communities – lies at the heart of this transformation. But this isn't about simplistic messages or lecturing people about what they should and shouldn't be doing – this is communication which speaks to the motivations behind the practice, and identifies the very real personal and social barriers that hinder abandonment of FGM. Communication which provides a positive alternative, opens up debate and discussion in the public sphere, prompts individuals to question their acceptance of the practice, and increasingly builds confidence to speak out against it. This is social change communication.

We are a social change communications initiative, providing a global platform for galvanising, catalysing and amplifying the Africa-led movement to end FGM,

building on what has already been achieved. We are also our members and partners: a global collective brought together by this shared vision. Supported by a small team, we seek to inspire organisations and individuals, including youth, across the most affected countries in Africa and beyond, to end FGM in one generation.

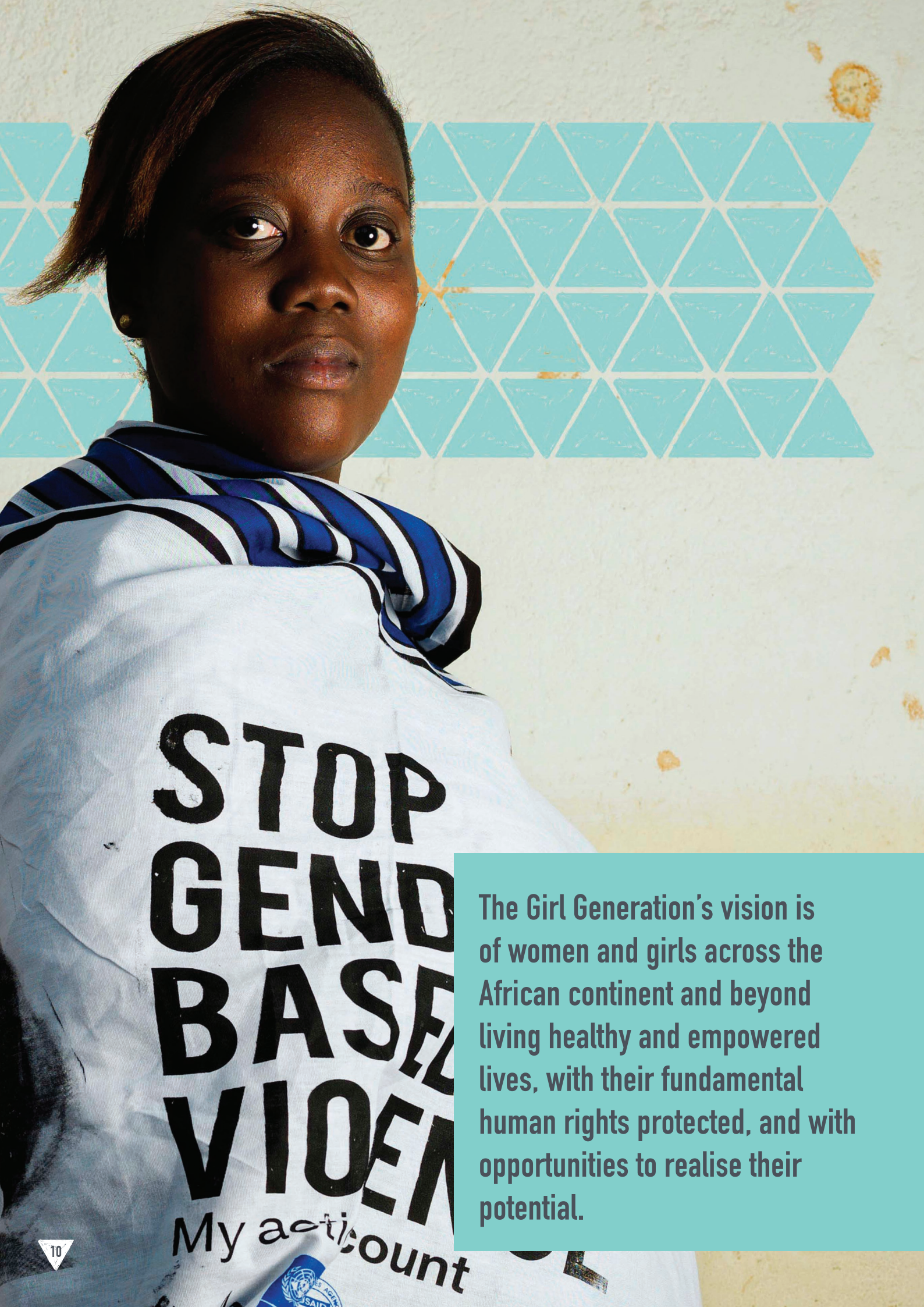
Young people provide the inspiration for The Girl Generation.

We recognise them as the future parents of the continent – and as critical actors in ending FGM in their generation. African youth are more connected and engaged than ever, with social media providing access to new information, new ways of communicating with one another, and providing a window on a world previously beyond their reach. They are open to new ideas, influenced by cultural figures from around the world, and ready to give their allegiance and passion to issues they see as important. This is an inquisitive, confident, vibrant generation; it is full of energy, potential and aspiration; and it leads the way in speaking out for change and opportunity.

Why Social Change Communications?

- Uses locally-led and culturally relevant communications methods to spark discussion and dialogue, inspiring individuals and communities to question their own beliefs
- Supports and accelerates wider behaviour-change efforts, creating an enabling environment for community-based interventions and broader policy and legal reforms, and amplifying change where it is happening
- Addresses the social and psychological drivers and motivations behind FGM
- Encourages positive alternatives rather than simply condemning the practice and those who support it
- Increases the public space for dialogue on the issue, raising its importance on the public agenda, giving confidence to those affected to speak out
- Accelerates change at a local level by increasing global, regional and national solidarity and momentum for change





**STOP
GEND
BASE
VIOEN**

My acti count

The Girl Generation's vision is of women and girls across the African continent and beyond living healthy and empowered lives, with their fundamental human rights protected, and with opportunities to realise their potential.

WHAT DO WE DO?

We support grassroots organisations to strengthen their social change communications to end FGM,

building on The Girl Generation vision and values, and multiplying the message of hope we promote.

We catalyse and amplify the voices of the African movement,
linking them together and to the wider global audience.

We are building a critical mass for change, which will help to unlock regional, national and international commitments,

to increase resources that can sustain and scale up these efforts, and end FGM in one generation.

**Everything we do is rooted in our brand –
The Girl Generation –**

envisioning the very change we want to see by depicting a generation of girls increasingly empowered and able to enjoy access to their fundamental human rights. A generation of young women who know the reality of the fear and consequences of FGM, but are empowered to speak up, inspire change in their families and communities, and able to realise their potential.

Our vision is underpinned by our strategic plan which we describe in the rest of this document.

Overview of The Girl Generation's Strategic Plan: Outputs, Outcomes and Goal

Goal

(the high level change that The Girl Generation is working towards):

- Transformation in the social norms underpinning FGM
- FGM ends in one generation

Outcome

(the change that The Girl Generation is aiming for):

- Accelerated and sustained social change in focal countries and beyond

Outputs

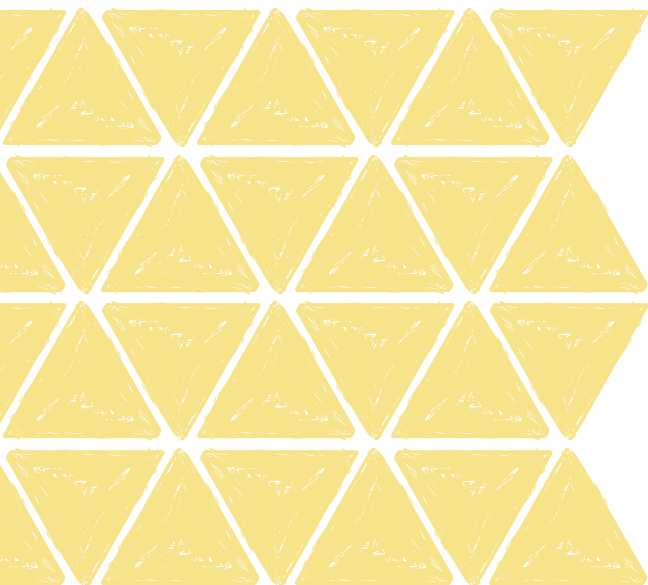
(The Girl Generation's direct deliverables):

- Output 1: An Africa-led, global collective of organisations working together to End FGM
- Output 2: Partners delivering effective social change communications to end FGM.
- Output 3: Amplified positive stories of change build the global movement to end FGM at all levels
- Output 4: FGM mainstreamed on the global development agenda

The Girl Generation brand

The Girl Generation brand provides a positive identity and common vision to unite the Africa-led, global movement to end FGM. Its personality is strong, friendly, inclusive, dynamic and authentic. It inspires passion, energy, confidence and courage.

The Girl Generation brand puts the focus clearly on the exceptional value of girls to their communities and countries. It invites many different people to be part of this generation where FGM ends.



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our approach, methodology and personality are all driven by our three guiding principles, which inspire and underpin all that we do. These principles are:

We are Africa-led

The Africa-led movement to end FGM is vibrant and active.

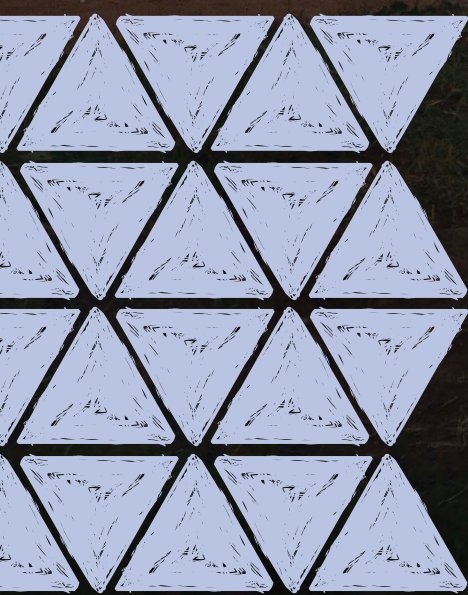
This movement is at different stages across the continent; in some countries there are high levels of political will to end FGM; leadership from enthusiastic and committed (if under-resourced) civil society actors; and policies and plans addressing FGM. In other countries, the movement still faces enormous challenges, including high levels of public support for FGM; extremely limited resources for action; and a fragmented civil society response. This is compounded by limited political freedoms and restricted press freedom. Beyond the African continent, there are highly motivated civil society organisations active on FGM (including in the USA, Australia, Europe, and Middle East), as well as international media outlets keen to cover the issue. Women affected by FGM are also speaking out and supporting each other, and there are a growing number of international initiatives and networks on FGM, as well as a growing girls' rights movement spearheaded by many actors across the globe.

Despite these opportunities, gaps remain. There is lack of coordination and a common identity for the movement at global level, as well as an absence of focused, coordinated messages or calls to action across the movement. There are also tensions arising as a result of different terminology and approaches used to end FGM. There are inadequate resources, and in many cases resources are not reaching grassroots organizations working at the heart of the issue. Moreover, there is a risk that US and UK civil society and media voices can dominate the FGM space, minimising African voices.

The Girl Generation will address these gaps in a truly Africa-led approach.

We will continually seek strategic leadership and guidance from African experts, including those who make up our Strategic Advisory Group (SAG). We will be led by the priorities and contexts of our focal countries, with flexibility and responsiveness to local issues. We will work with and through African institutions, partners and media to support, strengthen and grow the existing movement, building on what has already been achieved. We will raise the profile of African voices, and amplify positive social change from across the continent. All of our work is rooted in learning, participation and co-creation with those across the African continent, facilitating linkages and learning, and allowing the energy and action which already exists to take on its own momentum.





FGM is a harmful practice



FGM is a form of violence against women and girls, held in place by social norms

FGM is a harmful practice which is internationally recognised as a form of violence against women and girls. It is held in place by social norms – the invisible rules that govern the behaviour which is considered acceptable in a group or society. We believe social change communications will play a critical role in addressing these social norms as part of wider efforts to end FGM. Social change communications can support and accelerate behaviour change in multiple ways and at different levels. They can open up debate and discussion in the public sphere, exposing people to alternative perspectives, and encouraging them to reflect on their beliefs and norms; and amplify social change where it is happening, emboldening and facilitating connections between those committed to ending FGM.

Yet there is a gap within the current movement to end FGM in the development of locally-led, impactful, targeted communications, which seek to influence the social norms which hold FGM in place. This is our opportunity to act. We will take a nuanced and context-specific approach to social change communications, which builds on a strong understanding of the social motivations and barriers for change at grassroots level, recognising both the power of social influencing, and the fact that FGM is an expression of gendered power dynamics.

We are embracing the opportunity to catalyse the take-up of sophisticated and sensitive communications approaches which focus on inspiring a change in social norms, as well as in building awareness and momentum behind the movement as a whole. There is an opportunity both to harness the power of social media to get the message out and generate discussion, and use mainstream culture, including radio, print, music and other discussion forums to engage broader audiences in the debate.

Our Do No Harm principle

FGM is a sensitive and often taboo issue, enshrined within complex political, social, cultural and religious perceptions that go to the heart of gender identity and gender relations. Efforts to end FGM can result in damaging consequences - driving the practice underground, undermining existing efforts to end the practice, putting individuals at risk, stigmatising those that have undergone FGM, and adding to broader political or cultural tensions. Of course, the process of change is riddled with resistance and protest - and this is unavoidable when social change begins to take place, shifting power dynamics.

We are dedicated to changing the discourse which has surrounded FGM – moving from engagement based on fear, power and ignorance to one of hope, empowerment and knowledge. The Girl Generation brand celebrates positive change, it values and empowers women and girls, and focuses on solution-based and practical action where everyone can play their part. We believe that this will maximise the positive impact of the movement, and minimise opposition, by increasing the number of entry points for individuals to engage with the issue.

We are committed to the protection and empowerment of women and girls, activists and advocates across all of our work. Our Do No Harm principles help us do just that – raising awareness of the potential for backlash, both personal and cultural, and mitigating against these negative effects. Our Do No Harm framework helps us to systematically apply this principle – and support our partners and members to do the same.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2015–2020

How we've got here

Since our launch in October 2014, The Girl Generation has been gaining momentum as we build relationships, sign up members and begin to amplify the inspiring work that is happening at the grassroots. We're already working with a truly inspirational range of young women's rights and FGM activists across the most affected countries in Africa – and have engaged over 70 member organisations, ranging from grassroots organisations across the African continent to International Non-governmental Organisations (INGOs) and media partners. At a national level, we worked with passionate youth activists in The Gambia to support a 'booths' campaign, creating a safe space for dialogue and awareness raising about FGM communities, and gaining extensive profile across national media. In Kenya, we've conducted one of the first ever pieces of research on the attitudes of young men to FGM – an opportunity to understand what they think and why they think it – and will use these insights to influence the design of communications tools. At a global level, we led a digital communications drive on the Day of Zero Tolerance to End FGM, prompting a global conversation on the issue, communicating that Together We Can End FGM and getting The Girl Generation brand known amongst a global audience.

We've seen a hunger for opportunities to learn about what works, and a demand for bringing together the many different actors involved in the movement – raising the profile of their work, generating space for greater debate on FGM and giving them the credibility of being part of a larger movement. Our tagline – "Together to end FGM" – has been naturally adopted in existing national forums in Kenya, and we have been encouraged by the enthusiasm and energy behind the idea of a focused communications initiative on ending FGM, and the role that a unifying brand can play. We've consulted with our SAG, talked, listened, and worked hard to understand the priorities of grassroots activists, and what role we can play in supporting them. We've also understood further what we shouldn't try to do – a highly valuable learning in itself.

And this is only the beginning.

This strategy will guide what we do over the next five years. It has been directly informed by all our engagements and achievements since our launch, and we believe it reflects what the Africa-led movement to end FGM is looking for to strengthen its work, and where there are gaps in resources available. The role of social change communications in bringing about fundamental change in social norms is a relatively new field, with limited evidence to inform us at this stage. As such, this strategy is a live document, which will be adapted and refined as we learn from the results – including unintended consequences – of this work. We will review and refresh the strategy on an annual basis.

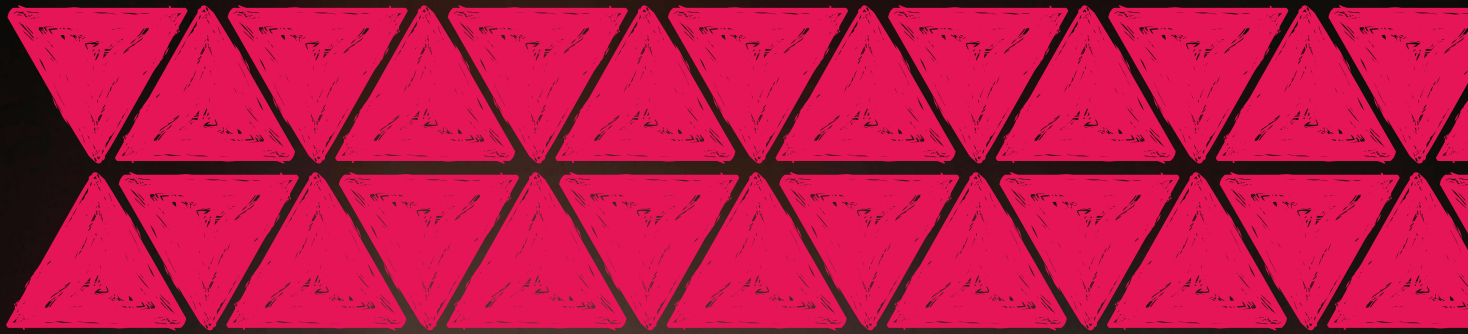
Where we work

As part of the broader UK Department for International Development (DFID) End FGM/C Programme, we work alongside three other programme components, including: direct work with practising communities, implemented by the UNICEF-UNFPA Joint Programme on FGM/C through partners in 17 African countries; efforts to strengthen legislation and policy (also implemented by the Joint Programme); and a research programme to produce a global evidence base on the most effective and cost-effective approaches to ending FGM in different contexts, to inform future policy and programming (led by the Population Council). Ours is the social change communications component, and we focus our work in 10 African countries (Kenya, The Gambia, Nigeria, Sudan, Somalia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Senegal and Burkina Faso) whilst also recognising our role in galvanising a broader Africa-led, global movement across the continent and beyond.

All of our focal countries are also part of the UNICEF-UNFPA Joint Programme on FGM/C, so that we can maximise synergies with their efforts.

The three countries where we will begin implementation are Nigeria, The Gambia, and Kenya.

These are countries where rapid implementation is possible, and where substantial potential exists for documenting innovative approaches and sharing learning. This is part of our strategy to learn from what works, build positive momentum, share expertise and communicate stories of positive change to other countries. These countries provide an opportunity to test our strategy, and generate learning and evidence to take into phase 2 countries, from the beginning of 2016.



How we work in focal countries

Our ambition is to develop a locally-owned social change communications strategy in each country, based on national priorities and responsive to current contexts and needs. Our approach will be facilitative, building capacity locally through country stakeholders, campaigners and existing national coordination mechanisms to enhance local efforts. We will work through existing networks and forums, such as end-FGM task forces, youth groups, others working towards elimination of harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage, and national and international NGOs. Our work at the national level will be anchored with the relevant Ministries so that we gain support from national leadership and contribute to the national agenda of ending gender based violence.

To do this, our work will start with bringing together national and grassroots organisations and activists to identify opportunities for The Girl Generation to engage and add value. These convenings will ensure that we are informed by an up-to-date understanding of the cultural and political tempo, and experience-led insights into the most effective entry points for social change. We envisage a period of intensive initial engagement, and then, as local ownership and capacity develops over time, we will adopt a less active, more supportive role. We will take the same fundamental approach in each country but the level and intensity of our engagement, and the relative level of effort under each of our outputs will differ according to the status of the existing national movement, and each country's unique social change communications needs and priorities.



WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE

Our vision

is of healthy and empowered girls and women, accessing their fundamental human rights, and with the opportunity to realise their full potential.

Within this, our specific goal is to contribute to the transformation in the social norms underpinning FGM, and an end to FGM in one generation.

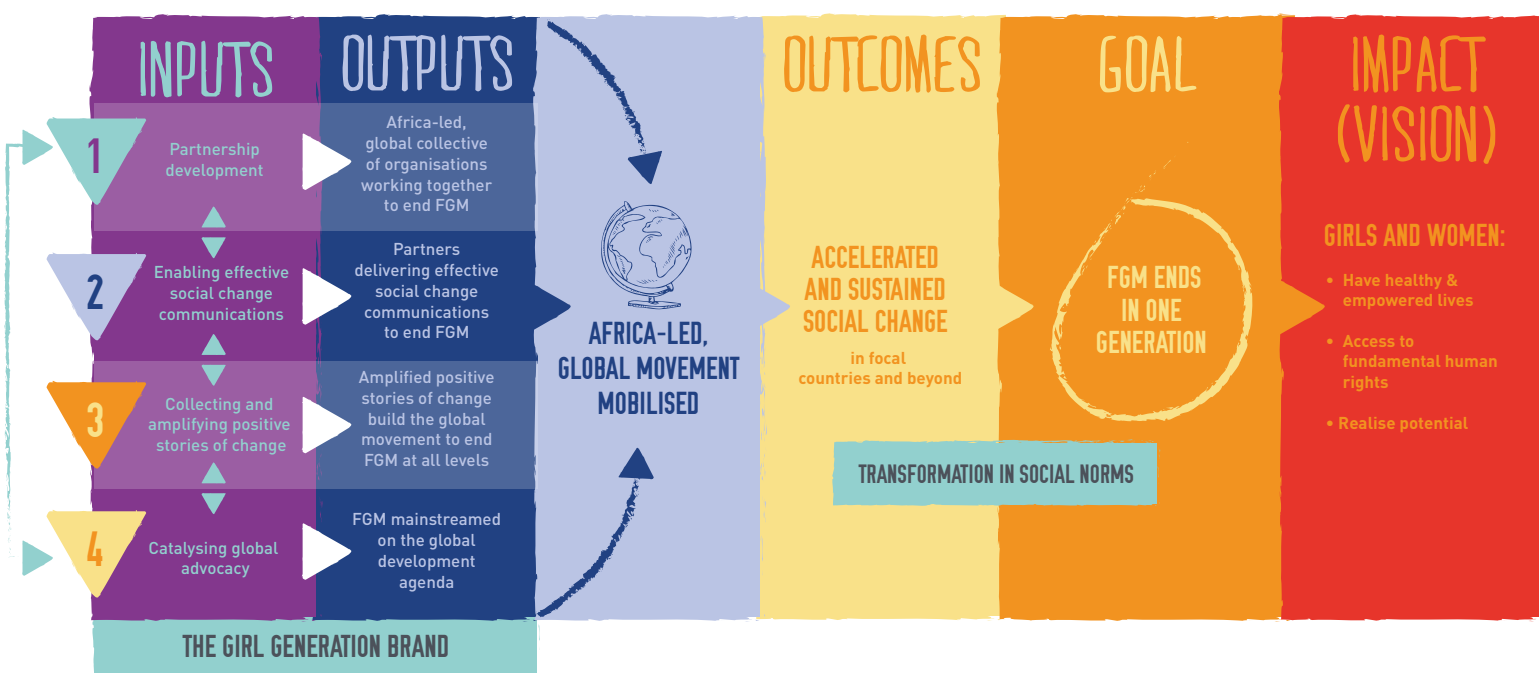
Between 2015 and 2020, we aim to achieve the outcome of accelerated and sustained social change in focal countries and beyond. We will measure social change across areas that we believe will support and promote social norms change, including enhanced political will, increased resources available to end FGM, and heightened public and media dialogue.

To achieve this, and held together by The Girl Generation brand and vision, our strategy will deliver four outputs, each contributing to strengthening the Africa-led, global movement to end FGM.

These are:

- Output 1: An Africa-led, global collective of organisations working together to end FGM.
- Output 2: Partners delivering effective social change communications to end FGM.
- Output 3: Amplified positive stories of change build the global movement to end FGM at all levels.
- Output 4: FGM mainstreamed on the global development agenda.

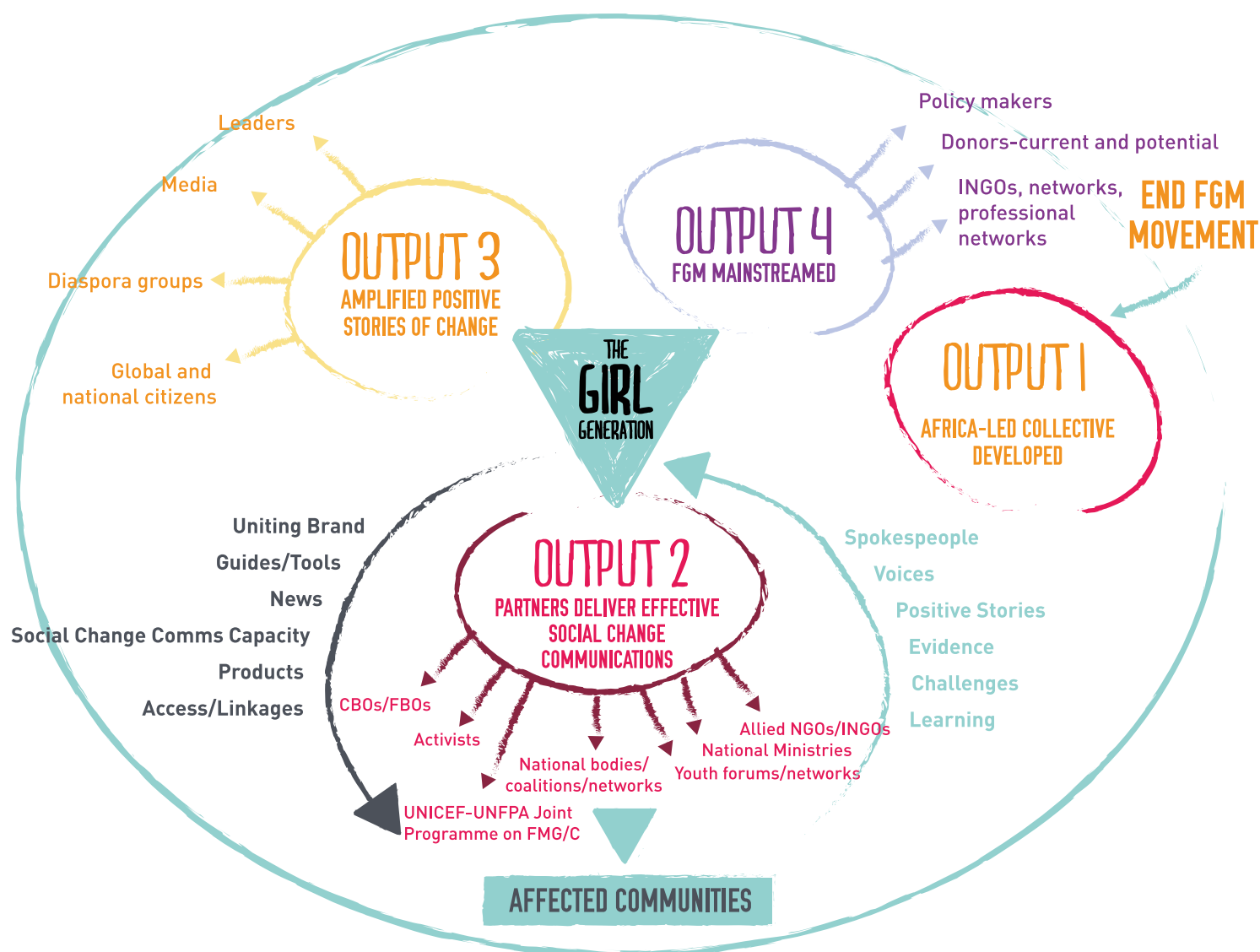
Figure 1:
The Girl Generation results chain



Together, these outputs emphasise the central role of The Girl Generation as a social change communications platform for the Africa-led, global movement to end FGM. Figure 2, below, shows the complementary focus of each output in providing this platform - building partnerships at a local, national and global level under the common identity of The Girl Generation brand (output 1); supporting organisations and activists in focal countries to develop more effective

social change communications, whilst working with them to gather learning, stories and evidence of change (output 2); amplifying these stories of change to broader audiences to engage new supporters, and promote an enabling environment and openness to dialogue on the issue (output 3); and targeted advocacy to secure greater policy support and resourcing for ending FGM globally (output 4).

Figure 2: The Girl Generation as a platform for social change communication



The remainder of this document expands on each of the outputs in detail. We provide the rationale for each output, and a breakdown of the areas of work involved in each one.

OUTPUT 1

An Africa-led, global collective of organisations, working together to end FGM in a generation

Strong partnerships are the foundation of the Africa-led, global movement to end FGM, and will provide the basis for all of The Girl Generation's outputs. We will rely on our partners to amplify The Girl Generation's vision, engage new members and supporters, and disseminate messages and stories of social change. Essentially – we cannot do it alone, but together, we can end FGM in a generation. Through the unifying power of The Girl Generation brand, we will mobilise partnerships, including new and influential actors such as the media, youth and corporate partners, to work together to end FGM in one generation. We will have a particular focus on engaging young people, grassroots organisations across focal countries, and the African diaspora. This output will be guided by a comprehensive Partnership Framework which will:

- Facilitate the prioritisation of potential partners, to enable decisions on where finite time and energy should be targeted;
- Provide greater consistency in how partners are supported and/or brought into The Girl Generation's work, and;
- Help provide the infrastructure necessary for ensuring that critical partnerships are consistently nurtured and strengthened.

Once engaged, we will encourage and support our members and partners to co-brand with The Girl Generation, and to take up and amplify The Girl Generation's vision alongside their own work. In doing so, as multipliers of a united message that this is the generation where FGM ends, we will collectively increase visibility of the global movement to end FGM, and promote a sense of unity and solidarity. We will learn continuously from our members and partners, gaining and sharing a greater understanding of the complexity of developing effective social change communications in each context, and how best we can support their work.

Key Areas of Work:

Membership development

We have an open invitation to organisations, individuals and networks who share our vision and guiding principles to sign up to join The Girl Generation. United through The Girl Generation brand, a broad, visible membership base provides a sense of identity, shared values, solidarity and a credible focal point for the movement, helping maximise the reach and impact of The Girl Generation's values, messages and vision. We will target grassroots organisations across the African continent for recruitment, prioritising our focal countries, as they are our key target audience for enabling and amplifying social change communications. We offer our members both tangible and intangible benefits, including:

- A clear, shared vision and identity
- Inspiring and hopeful messaging and communications products
- A greater understanding of, and ability to develop, social change communications, including tools and resources to support this
- Access to capacity-building opportunities and signposting to support their advocacy and fundraising efforts, as part of our resource-leveraging mandate
- Increased visibility and profile for their work and voices on a global platform, e.g. members benefit from opportunities to connect with the media, and from having their work profiled on The Girl Generation's communications platforms
- Enhanced access to networks, connections, and spaces for dialogue on ending FGM
- The knowledge that by working together, all of our voices are stronger both on the global stage, and in the communities where change must happen
- Increased legitimacy and credibility, and a sense of belonging and courage, as a result of being part of an Africa-led, global movement
- Opportunities for peer-to-peer support and learning with others in the movement

Individuals will also be able to engage with The Girl Generation through signing up to social media platforms and regular updates. We will identify and support ambassadors to amplify the momentum behind the Africa-led movement, and share stories of change (see Output 3).

Youth engagement

Young people are essential to the success of the movement to end FGM. With a stronger tendency to activism and easily influenced by their peers, young people are key drivers of social change, innovation and the adoption of new values and behaviours. Seventy per-cent of the African population is under 30 years old, and they are the future parents and opinion formers who can decide to abandon FGM within their communities and families. Many young Africans are highly networked into extensive, loose, informal networks online, particularly those in urban areas and with access to mobile devices. They are ready to give their loyalty to issues they are passionate about, and are able to contribute to and engage with multiple causes at once.

By supporting young people in our ten focal countries to engage in the movement to end FGM and to become agents of change, we will contribute to fostering youth ownership of the movement to end FGM, and trust that the energy and momentum they hold will take on a life of its own. We will need to think differently about how to achieve this, not being limited to formal groups, but working closely through relationships with inspiring youth activists, taking their lead on how to best reach their generation.

Diaspora engagement

Since the 1980s, diaspora actors have been key players in building the movement to end FGM, shifting the narrative from a position of cultural relativism to one where FGM is considered as a rights violation. Diaspora organisations often straddle between the African continent and their host countries, which gives them unique insights and enables them to act as a link between Africa and their host countries. Through transnational families and networks, and ever increasing communication and remittances flows between diaspora and home countries, some diaspora members have the power to promote social change to end FGM in their countries of origin as well as in their host countries, and some members of the diaspora are willing and able to channel their energies and commitment for ending FGM by contributing skills and expertise.

We will harness and support the influential role of the diaspora as agents of change. By developing relationships and partnerships with diaspora organisations we will recruit diaspora members, particularly diaspora networks, organisations working on reproductive health and rights, international development and youth groups. This is a two-directional partnership – north-south and south - north, with learning, support and collaboration working both ways.

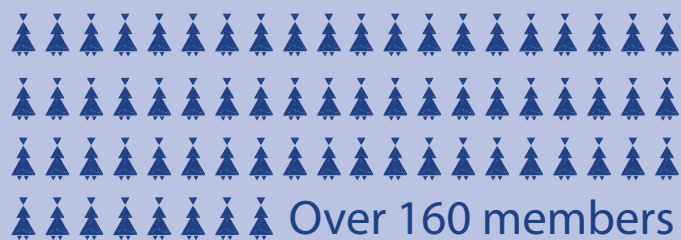


OUTPUT 2

Partners delivering effective social change communications to end FGM

To date, we have attracted over 160 members, the majority of whom are grassroots organisations based in our focal countries. Being part of a larger collective is a compelling reason in itself for grassroots and national organisations to join, but we also see our specific role in supporting these members to develop their own social change communications skills, in line with the positive message and vision of The Girl Generation brand.

We know that communication is only as good as the insights that drive it, and the relevance of the message to the target group. There are many different contexts in which FGM occurs, and as a result, one over-arching communications campaign will not be able to deliver real change at the local level. Instead, we believe that local actors are best placed to adapt and deliver communications approaches within their context. This will be the most effective route to impacting social norms, and to strengthening the Africa-led movement to deliver sustained change. But to do this, local actors require a renewed understanding of communications, the principles underlying social change, and foundation resources to structure their own communications work.



Over 160 members

Key areas of work:

Resource development

We will be led by the specific priorities articulated by our members and partners in each country to produce and disseminate a portfolio of branded guides, products and templates to support the use of more effective social change communications from the grassroots up. From our initial research and engagement with grassroots partners, we are already aware of some basic resources that many would find useful – including videos, infographics or brochures describing core facts and figures on FGM, and showcasing The Girl Generation's vision and passion to end FGM in a generation. Working together with our members, and learning from their huge experience and existing knowledge, we will develop "How to.." guides on the basics of developing targeted messages, or identifying opportunities for social change communications, as well as templates and tools for using images as discussion starters, getting stories in the media, or facilitating youth-led development of brochures and events.

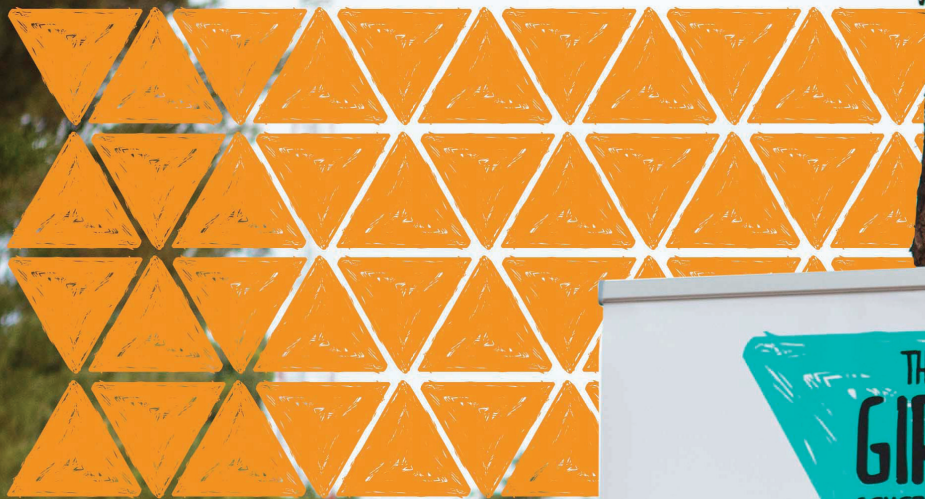
Rather than generating all materials ourselves, we will also look for best practice tools and communications from within our members, and re-purpose them for others to adapt. We will identify a broad range of approaches, providing a tool-box from which organisations can choose – from traditional media, to online campaigning, as well supporting groups to use creative, community-based approaches to open up debate on the issue of FGM. Ensuring broad access to materials will be important – resources need to be in easily downloadable and mobile-friendly formats to ensure that those in remote areas are able to access them.

Capacity building

Responding to the gaps and needs that members identify for themselves, we will provide tailored support mechanisms for our members and partners to use these products – such as introducing them at national gatherings or youth forums, holding online tutorials or providing simple guidance notes. We envisage hosting Social Change Communications workshops with a small group of partners in each country – to lead organisations through the process of developing their own communications and campaigns.

We also see an opportunity in bringing together organisations with complementary skills to encourage the development of targeted communications. For example, individual organisations may not be able to approach a community radio station on their own, but we can play a role in facilitating the relationship, and working with them to identify programme ideas, story-lines and roll-out strategies in line with The Girl Generation brand.

We will also support our members to engage more effectively with the media, and help to facilitate relationships between grassroots groups and the media. We will support them to understand both traditional and new media, and importantly, help them to learn how to develop stories for the media, and to identify opportunities to engage and "hook" different audiences.



TOGETHER TO END FGM



CARING FAMILIES BELIEVE
FGM IS HARMFUL



Ministry of Devolution & Planning



because everyone counts

OUTPUT 3

Amplified positive stories of change build the global movement to end FGM at all levels

We believe that amplification of social change – including how, where, and why FGM is ending – is critical in both mobilising a global movement to end FGM and bringing new actors and voices into it, and supporting social change at the national and local level. Under this output, we will collect, package and amplify positive stories of social change at multiple levels, giving a louder voice to African grassroots activists, and inspiring actors at all levels to learn about, discuss, and ultimately commit to ending FGM. The Girl Generation brand will connect diverse threads and stories together under a single identity and provide a platform from which to consistently communicate a positive vision of change.

In many countries where FGM is prevalent, it has typically been a taboo subject. As a result, it can be difficult for families, couples, and communities to initiate the conversations necessary to start questioning and challenging the practice. The media is a strategic multiplier for the movement to end FGM, but current coverage of the issue is inadequate, at best, and non-existent, at worst, in many of the most affected countries. Stories on FGM that do reach the press often depict a simplistic view of the issue, and pitch “sides”, showing modernity versus tradition in a binary manner.

There is growing evidence of communities choosing to end the practice. The UNICEF-UNFPA Joint Programme on FGM/C and other actors have documented thousands of public declarations against the practice, and across the African continent are numerous other examples of undocumented progress, whether these are stories of positive social change, examples of learning, or evidence for the abandonment of FGM.

Highlighting and sharing these positive stories of social change across national, regional and international platforms will increase coverage and awareness of the movement to end FGM, and inspire more people to be involved. This is the very essence of movement building, that human instinct leads people to do what others do, to want to be involved in what others are talking about. By increasing the coverage and reach of positive stories of change we will mobilise more people to get involved. At a national and local level, this will create an enabling environment for social change, kick-starting personal and community discussions on the issue, and bolstering individuals and organisations committed to ending FGM. Amplifying evidence of change gives strength to lone voices – the positive deviants and early adopters who drive behaviour change in its early stages - and will give credibility to those working at the grassroots in affected communities by opening up a conversation on abandonment.

We will mobilise our members and partners to share news, stories and information, providing essential content for The Girl Generation’s communications. Amplifying members’ voices and stories will keep them engaged and motivated, and will in turn motivate and inspire the wider movement at national and global level, as they learn about progress at the grassroots. This will accelerate the pace of engagement from decision-makers by increasing the profile of, and public support for, the issue. A priority will also be consolidating and expanding the number of opportunities for profiling stories of social change on FGM at a national, regional and global level, and increasing the space for dialogue on the issue.

Key areas of work:

Collecting stories of change

We will work with our members and partners to alert us to, and share with us, stories, news and evidence that demonstrate social change. We will develop simple story-gathering tools, and ensure that our members see the benefits of sharing information on their work. Key partners in this regard will be the UNICEF-UNFPA Joint Programme on FGM/C and its implementing partners, our members, the FGM/C Research Programme (which is generating evidence on what works to end FGM), and allied networks and campaigns.

Developing and disseminating positive stories of change

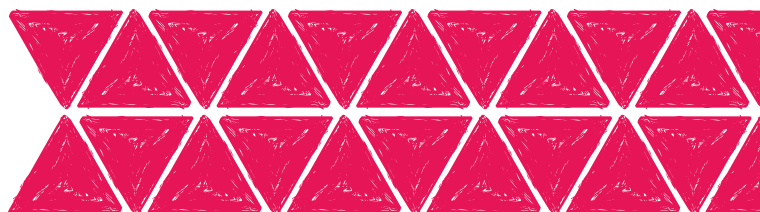
In a crowded campaign market-place where many different movements and issues are seeking policy influence and public engagement, the end FGM movement needs to carve out a place for itself from which to speak in a united voice. We will be proactive in identifying and creating more opportunities for dialogue and discussion on the issue, enabling those working to end FGM to speak out, and fostering greater attention and reach for the movement. As a platform for the movement, it is here that we can set the agenda for discussion and bring together new and existing actors, influencers and multipliers in the movement. This will take on a variety of forms, from identifying relevant events, conferences or activities at which to amplify stories of change, to creating or joining virtual, online opportunities in which to encourage dialogue on ending FGM. We will explore the benefits of bringing together the movement in regional or global events, and will also leverage existing moments (such as annual “awareness days” on relevant topics, and in particular, on the 6th February, International Day of Zero Tolerance to FGM) and events to maximise reach amongst new and influential audiences.

Using the content gathered from our members and partners across the movement, we will develop targeted communications products to disseminate stories of change across these different audiences. All products will be an opportunity to elevate The Girl Generation values and personality, and will be clearly branded to raise awareness of the movement, and build connections across our work. We will identify the key influencers and priority targets in each country and build a clear insight base of who they are, what they want to know and how best we can reach them. We will tailor each product for these strategic audiences— some will be for general dissemination through The Girl Generation platforms such as our website, blog and newsletters, others will be targeted for different audiences - such as global events, media viewers or listeners, online youth audiences, or specific allied sectors. Flexibility to the local context will be a priority – in order to develop communications most relevant to their audience.

Our ability to re-package information gathered from the field will be essential to develop thematic story-lines, bite-size information and compelling “asks” or “actions” that audiences can take forward. Where possible, we will work with dynamic content developers and agencies from our focal countries to access the most creative minds and latest approaches to communicating complex ideas and reaching our audiences. Co-creation will also be key, providing contexts in which young people can develop ideas and products of their own. Products might include videos, photo-stories, fact sheets, radio story-lines and programme ideas, articles, music and one-off events and talks.

We will develop priority media partnerships with agenda-setting media organisations and journalists in each focal country and at a regional and global level. The focus will be on identifying and engaging those that have significant coverage, as well as the potential to influence the political agenda, in order to commission and pitch stories on the issue. We will also develop partnerships with national and regional women’s media networks in focal countries/regions. We will rely on these partnerships to get our content into the public realm – via websites, newspapers, radio stations and social media, in order to showcase real stories of social change from the grassroots. But we will also work with them to extend their understanding of FGM and provide the positive message and values of The Girl Generation to shape the way they report on the issue, particularly our ‘Do No Harm’ principle. There is also an opportunity to engage with community radio stations across many of our focal countries, which are the primary media channel at the local level, but often lack quality content.

A final element of our dissemination strategy is to build our network of ambassadors. The Girl Generation ambassadors are those that already live out the values of The Girl Generation, and are eager to act as spokespeople for the movement. They champion and remodel social norms, engage and invite their peers to get involved in the issue, and positively influence those around them to shift their attitudes, beliefs, and ultimately, their behaviour. We will identify and engage a range of ambassadors who reflect the range of audiences we are hoping to reach – from youth and culture-makers, to national decision-makers and traditional leaders. A generation of girls who live healthy and empowered lives is the new social norm we want to present – girls and women must be active agents for change in this. Through identifying and supporting ambassadors we will be able to multiply the number of channels and platforms that we reach, and speak in the most relevant voice and tone for different targets. We will support our ambassadors to be a public face for the message and for communicating evidence of change, and support them to speak on diverse platforms, such as in the media, at conferences and through online channels.



OUTPUT 4

FGM mainstreamed on the global development agenda

We believe that global advocacy, including influencing policy and donors, is vital for mainstreaming FGM into development policies and programmes, so that additional resources are leveraged to support, strengthen and expand efforts, particularly at the grassroots.

Many grassroots organizations have limited access to resources, and yet they are the heart and soul of the African-led movement that we seek to galvanize. Although The Girl Generation is not a funding body, we have a responsibility to support the movement by creating opportunities for grassroots groups to access additional resources, as their sustainability is critical in realizing our goal of ending FGM in one generation.

We see three ways in which we will contribute towards mainstreaming FGM on the global development agenda: Firstly, through targeted global policy advocacy – including mobilising our members and partners behind coordinated and amplified calls to action. We will seek to secure inclusion of FGM in key global development policies and agendas, such as the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The aim is to ensure that FGM is mainstreamed in global, regional and national development policies and agendas, as this will unlock new resources for ending FGM. Secondly, we will target international NGOs working on wider health, rights and education for women and girls to include FGM as a vital component of their work. The intention here is to bring new actors to the global movement against FGM and to leverage on existing wider development resources. Thirdly, we will exploit current global momentum behind the issue of FGM to secure increased commitments to ending FGM from global multilateral, bilateral and private donors, in particular encouraging them to direct resources to grassroots organizations, as well as securing The Girl Generation's financial sustainability beyond its current funding support.

Key areas of work:

Mainstreaming FGM within wider global development policy

It is vital that FGM is mainstreamed within wider development policy for the issue to receive sustained attention, and to ensure that efforts to end FGM contribute to the wider vision of empowering women and girls. Through targeted advocacy, and in collaboration with our partners at various levels, we will work to identify where FGM should be positioned within global, regional and national development agendas.

At the global level, we will work with global players and support emerging policy frameworks, including the SDGs, to seek for inclusion of FGM as a global indicator, as this provides an accountability framework for governments and funders in their efforts towards ending FGM. Following the finalisation of indicators for the SDGs in March 2016, we will target new policy opportunities as they emerge. This is likely to include a focus on accountability mechanisms for the SDGs, in particular in terms of resourcing commitments made.

At regional and national level, our role will be to catalyse enhanced advocacy among our members and partners, by signposting them to advocacy opportunities and platforms, informing them of developments at global and regional level that have implications for their work, highlighting commitments made by international and regional actors for the purposes of accountability, and encouraging effective national advocacy through the capacity building and amplification work that we are delivering under our other outputs.

We will also identify opportunities at the regional level to enhance the position of FGM on the regional development agenda, e.g. targeting the African Union to raise the profile of FGM alongside other girls' rights issues including child marriage.



Mainstreaming FGM within wider global development programming

Beyond policy work, we will target INGOs, including those who currently work on FGM, and those that have not worked on FGM before but run campaigns and programmes on related issues (e.g. girls' rights or education, health, human rights, poverty reduction) and encourage them through sustained advocacy to mainstream FGM into their existing programmes. This will be done through national and international convenings, face to face meetings, use of ambassadors and champions, and disseminating targeted briefing papers linked to stories of positive change under output 3. The intention is to ensure that FGM is addressed within a comprehensive development agenda, thus leveraging existing resources and stakeholders.

Donor advocacy

To secure additional resources in order to significantly scale up all efforts to end FGM, in particular for grassroots organisations, we will identify and map potential donors including private trusts, foundations, and other bilateral and multilateral funders (e.g. Global Fund, European Union, USAID) who could be encouraged through advocacy to unlock new and additional resources for the issue. We are particularly keen to develop mechanisms through which funds can directly reach grassroots organisations. We will identify existing donors currently funding in particular for grassroots organisations and we will develop joint proposals to increase resources for such organisations to address FGM. Importantly, the Girl Summit in July 2014 generated significant commitments to ending FGM from the global community, and we can play a key role in holding them to account for these commitments, working with others who already have a global voice.

For sustainability of The Girl Generation beyond its current programme funding (which will be necessary in order to deliver the commitments outlined in this strategic plan), we will develop a resource leveraging plan that responds to grant opportunities. This will include engaging with existing traditional donors (such as DFID), and with new partners, including private trusts, foundations, corporations and other bilateral and multilateral funders.

A woman is walking away from the camera on a wide, reddish-brown dirt road that curves into the distance. She is carrying a yellow basket on her head, which contains some dark items and a small silver pot. She is wearing a blue sleeveless top and a colorful, patterned wrap around her waist. The road is flanked by dense, lush green vegetation and trees. In the top left corner, there is a light blue triangle containing the text 'THE GIRL GENERATION'.

THE GIRL GENERATION

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