



**END FGM**  
EUROPEAN NETWORK



**End Female Genital Mutilation**  
European Network

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STRATEGIC PLAN  
2018 - 2022

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End FGM EU creates an enabling environment where activists and FGM survivors are empowered to engage directly with EU representatives to discuss change, address the challenges they face and build bridges across sectors to increase the understanding of FGM in the EU

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## INTRODUCTION FROM THE END FGM EU PRESIDENT

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a global human rights violation which exists also in Europe. Even though it affects over 200 million women and girls worldwide, until recently it was not adequately recognised as a European policy concern.

The voices of those affected by the practice were rarely heard. Many European countries were blind to the issue of FGM, and were failing to provide the necessary measures to effectively address this problem, which continues to affect the daily lives of so many women and girls.

End FGM EU was founded in 2014 after the END FGM European Campaign and has since become an established network driving the united vision to create a strong and sustainable European movement to end FGM. End FGM EU works at joining the forces of FGM-affected communities and civil society organisations, and building synergies and cooperation with all relevant actors in Europe and globally.

One of our many key areas of success has been the advancing of policy and legislation in Europe where FGM was once not well known nor considered an issue. In a relatively short period, Europe has developed a strong policy and legislative framework which puts us in the position to hold the European Union and Member States accountable for the provision of proper and effective protection and prevention measures.



**NAANA OTOO-OYORTEY**

President of the End FGM EU Board

Furthermore, we have been successful in proposing alternative representations of communities through positive and empowering visuals, narratives and language that emphasizes the benefits of community-based and led programmes as well as through the further amplifying of voices of our End FGM EU Ambassadors who provide a critical link with diaspora communities from across Europe.

From the original 11 founding organisations from across Europe, the network has continued to grow, with 19 members as of the end of 2017, serving as a critical force driving effective change at local, national and regional level for a world free from all forms of female genital mutilation.

It goes without saying that FGM is now a recognized item on the European agenda. However, with varying shifts occurring in the current political climates that challenge human rights agendas everywhere, End FGM EU continues to work at ensuring commitments are turned into actions and further developments are made to transform attitudes and receive support and engagement from European decision makers, stakeholders and FGM-affected communities.

This document is the second strategic plan of End FGM EU and outlines our priorities and approach for the next five years where we will continue to act as the platform that galvanizes European Institutions, policy makers, professionals dealing with FGM, NGOs, affected communities, FGM survivors and funding partners to join our efforts for lasting and sustained change in Europe and beyond.



# 200 million

women and girls worldwide are  
affected by female genital mutilation

## WHO WE ARE?

**End FGM EU is a European umbrella organisation set up to ensure sustainable European action to end female genital mutilation. Our members are non-profit organisations expert in FGM and other forms of violence against women and girls.**

Acknowledged as the key interlocutor on FGM in Europe, End FGM EU is in an ideal position to actively promote and support an effective European response to end FGM and to hold EU and national institutions accountable for their commitments. Thanks to the long-standing expertise of our member organisations, which define and guide our work, End FGM EU represents a crucial interface for national organisations working with girls, women and communities affected by FGM; EU and national policy and decision-makers; academia and research institutes; organisations representing professional groups; and other relevant actors working to end FGM in Europe and beyond.

We believe that cooperation at various levels is crucial to effectively tackle this cross-border transnational practice and thus, we provide the ideal platform at European level for sharing learning and knowledge, building skills and engaging in fruitful partnerships. We have well-established cooperation with the EU institutions, other European networks

and civil society organisations sharing common objectives, European and international associations representing professionals and we strongly promote the direct involvement in our activities of FGM survivors and diaspora communities living in Europe through our Ambassadors Programme and our newly created Youth Programme.

By facilitating the synergy of diverse organisations and the active participation of rights holders and affected communities, End FGM EU creates an enabling environment where activists and FGM survivors are empowered to engage directly with EU representatives to discuss change, address the challenges they face and build bridges across sectors to increase the understanding of FGM in the EU, debunk misconceptions and do better prevention and awareness-raising work.

While being dedicated to continue strengthening the European movement to end FGM, we are equally committed to actively promote and foster cooperation between such European movement and movements in other regions, within a global coordinated effort to end FGM. End FGM EU is in the unique position of serving as European focal point in this global movement to end FGM.

“  
**End FGM EU represents a crucial interface for national organisations working with girls, women and communities affected by FGM.**  
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## VISION

A world free of all forms of female genital mutilation (FGM) where women and girls are empowered and can fully enjoy their human rights.



## MISSION

To be the driving force of the European movement to end all forms of female genital mutilation (FGM), joining the forces of communities and civil society organisations, and building synergies and cooperation with all relevant actors in Europe and globally.





## VALUES

**END FGM places the following principles  
at the core of its work:**

- ▶▶ Respect and promotion of human rights, with a focus on women's and children's human rights
- ▶▶ Active participation of rights holders in decision-making and activities
- ▶▶ Use of and promotion of empowering and non-stigmatising language and visuals
- ▶▶ Ownership by member organisations
- ▶▶ Accountability, integrity, transparency and professionalism
- ▶▶ Solidarity between organisations and respect for staff, members, individuals and allies

## FGM IN EUROPE

**Europe is home to an estimated 500,000 women and girls living with the lifelong detrimental consequences of FGM and, each year a further 180,000 girls and women are estimated to be at risk of FGM.**

However, there is clearly the need for more recent and reliable data that can be comparable among different Member States, especially due to the recent increase of the migration influx which had a significant impact on such numbers.

Over the past few years, End FGM EU played an important role in the regional and national mobilisation that put FGM on the EU agenda, as reflected in several EU policy and legislative commitments now in place. Not all commitments, however, have resulted into action, and there is an important gap between those and their actual implementation, which seriously affects the availability of proper preventive and protective policies and services to support women and girls throughout Europe. Moreover, there is no uniform approach within and across countries, which reinforces inequality and fails to effectively address the cross-border dimension of FGM.

Another major emerging issue is the lack of mainstreaming of those commitments towards ending FGM into all relevant policy areas. Whereas currently FGM is well addressed in certain policy areas and fields such as justice, violence against women and girls (VAWG), gender equality and human rights, there are others where FGM needs to be more strongly and consistently addressed: for instance, migration, health, research and data collection. In particular, with regards to the asylum

and migration sector, with the recent migration influx and the shift towards a security approach of the EU and national borders, it has been increasingly challenging to ensure homogeneous approaches in all Member States to better protect those seeking asylum on the grounds of FGM.

At the level of service provision for FGM survivors and girls and women at risk, there is a need to progress towards a systematic holistic multi-disciplinary and multi-sectorial approach that is also gender-, child- and culturally-sensitive. Furthermore, most professionals likely to be in contact with women and girls living with or at risk of FGM (in the health, social, education, child protection, law enforcement, asylum, justice and media sectors) are still not properly trained on FGM, which undermines the quality and appropriateness of the services provided.

FGM-affected communities should also be more systematically involved in the decision-making, policy-making and service provision, which could be supported by sustained funding schemes for community-oriented and community-driven programmes. Overall there is a need for more long-term sustainable, accessible and flexible funding dedicated to FGM in Europe. Furthermore, there is a clear strategic need for strengthening the cooperation between diaspora communities residing in the EU and their communities in the countries of origin. The difficulty in building bridges between regions and the existence of few concrete examples of such an approach is linked to the geographical limitations of current available funding schemes.



The issue of interconnection between FGM and other forms of gender-related operations on genitalia for non-medical reasons, which are also performed in Europe is becoming more and more relevant and it is necessary to deepen such reflection.

Finally, in recent years the EU and its Member States have taken important steps towards the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence<sup>1</sup>, which is the first legally binding treaty recognising that FGM is a European issue. It remains essential to monitor that those national and EU commitments are implemented in practice.



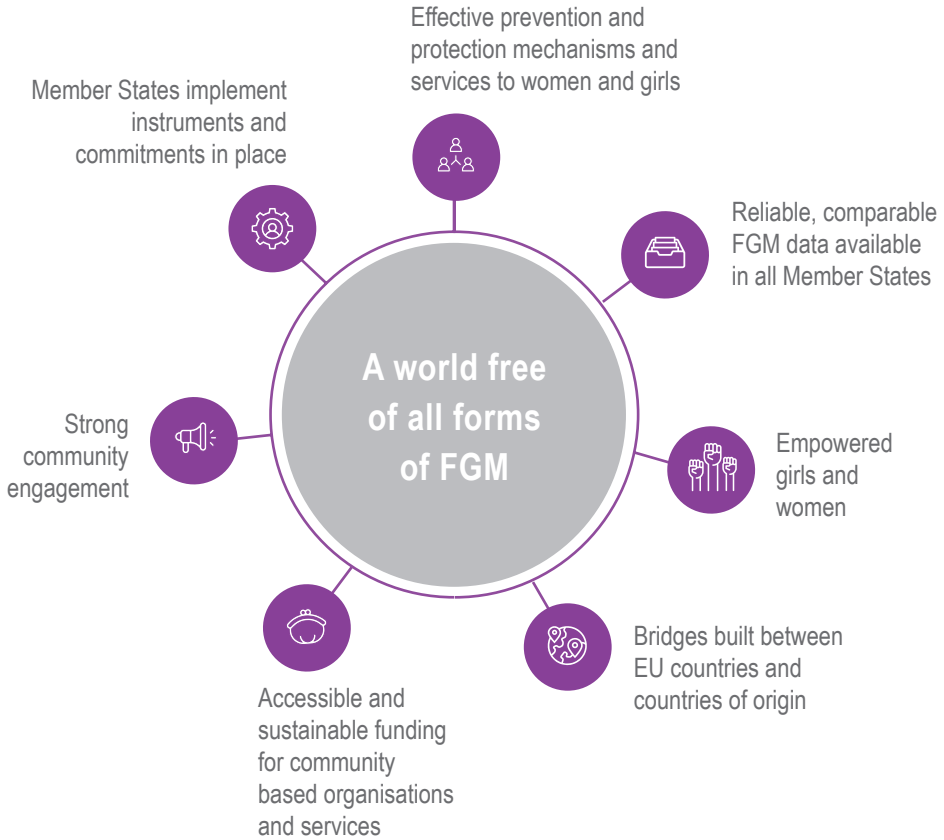
**500.000**

**women and girls estimated to live in Europe with the lifelong detrimental consequences of FGM**

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<sup>1</sup>Istanbul Convention, 2014

## THE CHANGES WE WANT TO SEE



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

To achieve these changes, End FGM EU has identified the strategic priorities and objectives it will focus its work on in the years 2018-2022.

These will be pursued using a range of approaches to influence change and to further develop and expand the organisation. These include: facilitating community participation, capacity building of members and stakeholders, building bridges between regions of the world, monitoring and advocating for proper implementation of legal

and policy commitments, developing and sharing knowledge and resources, providing technical expertise, coordinating actions throughout Europe and raising awareness using empowering, gender-child- and culturally-sensitive language.

Finally, End FGM EU is committed to strengthening the organisation's governance and management structures and systems to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of its work.

### PRIORITY 1

**Ensure a European, coordinated and human rights based and child focused approach to end FGM**

#### Strategic Objectives

- ▶ Increase the engagement and capacity of policy and decision makers, professionals and other relevant stakeholders to tackle FGM
- ▶ Enable communities and community based NGOs/ CSOs to be key actors in tackling FGM
- ▶ Increase understanding of FGM among the general public to foster citizens' involvement in the European movement against FGM based on an empowering, non-stigmatising communication approach
- ▶ Monitor and support the implementation of existing national, EU, European and international commitments and instruments on FGM towards the provision of prevention and protection measures and services





“ FGM-affected communities should also be more systematically involved in the decision-making, policy-making and service provision ”



## PRIORITY 2

**Build bridges between relevant actors and countries to end FGM**

### Strategic Objectives

- ▶ Foster and facilitate synergies and cooperation between actors in the EU and in countries of origin in order to better tackle the cross-border nature of FGM
- ▶ Sustain End FGM EU's role as European focal point in the global movement to end FGM in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the European consensus on Development

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## PRIORITY 3

**Strengthen the European movement to end FGM**

### Strategic Objectives

- ▶ Strengthen the capacity, outreach, visibility and sustainability of End FGM EU and of its members
- ▶ Expand the membership to include members throughout Europe





## 2017 MEMBERS









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