



End FGM
EUROPEAN NETWORK



EUROPEAN FORUM TO BUILD BRIDGES ON FGM

Square Brussels Meeting Centre, Rue Ravenstein 2, Brussels 1000, Belgium

REGIONS

BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN SECTORS

FORMS OF VAWG

***Organised by the End FGM EU in cooperation with DG JUST and DG DEVCO
and with support from the Human Dignity Foundation and the Wallace Global Fund.***

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Directorate-General for International
Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO)



**HUMAN
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Background

FGM is a human rights violation that has existed over centuries and is strongly linked to social norms shaped by tradition, culture and religion.

According to the latest UNICEF statistical report, while the exact number of girls and women worldwide who have undergone FGM remains unknown, at least 200 million girls and women in 30 countries, mostly but not solely in Africa, have been subjected to the practice.

FGM is now recognised as a global issue, which affects all continents, including Europe. FGM has emerged as an issue in the European Union (EU) due to migration from countries affected by the practice – migrants' countries of origin – and it is now practiced by several communities residing in the EU, which have strong transnational linkages both within the EU and beyond. Research by the European Parliament indicates that an estimated 500,000 women and girls in the European Union (EU) have been subjected to FGM (EU, 2016) and, each year, 180,000 girls and women are estimated to be at risk. According to [UNHCR](#), around 20,000 women and girls from FGM-risk countries of origin seek asylum in the EU each year—20% of all female applicants in 2011. Around 8,800 of these—mostly from Somalia, Eritrea or Guinea—are affected by FGM.

Since its foundation, the End FGM European Network (End FGM EU) has had the mission of creating an enabling environment for coordinated and comprehensive action to end FGM in Europe and to facilitate transnational, cross-border cooperation at global level. As defined in their strategic plan, the End FGM EU has as one of its main strategic priorities to facilitate exchanges and cooperation between actors engaged in ending the practice of FGM to address the cross-border transcontinental nature of FGM.

The End FGM European Network is dedicating its 2017 annual campaign to the theme of Building Bridges in order to fine tune its building bridges approach and pursue it with concrete actions and initiatives.

The End FGM's definition of Building Bridges in tackling FGM is:

“Synergies and cooperation between actors from different sectors in EU countries of residence and in countries of origin to implement actions, policies and legal frameworks to end FGM tackling the transnational nature of this practice”.

The European Forum to Build Bridges on FGM intends to be an opportunity for all actors working to end the practice of female genital mutilation to share experiences, exchange good practice and discuss future trends.

The Forum aims to gather NGOs, CSOs, service providers and practitioners, donors, researchers, experts, lawyers, academics, civil servants and activists from worldwide. The programme will be shaped around the 4 Ps approach of the Istanbul Convention – Prevention Protection Prosecution Integrated Policies – and, at the same time be structured to explore how to strengthen cooperation between different regions of the world, particularly with regard to cooperation with countries of origin in Africa and Asia; between different sectors and how to foster actions that address various forms of VAWG through a holistic approach.

The outcome of the Forum will be a set of conclusions and recommendations targeted to the various audiences, that have a role to play in cross-border, multi-sectoral, holistic actions to tackle FGM, having the added value of being formulated by a multi-stakeholder audience coming from different parts of the world.

Objectives of the Forum

- To share knowledge on existing building bridges approaches and best practices for the three topics
- To exchange information on new and existing opportunities for building bridges to end FGM
- To brainstorm on how to address current challenges to building bridges approaches to end FGM.



8.00-9.00

Registration

9.00-9.30

Opening remarks

End FGM EU (**Naana Otoo-Oyortey**)

Director of Unit for Equality and Union citizenship at DG JUST (**Irena Moozova**)
(TBC), Deputy Head of Unit for Gender Equality, Human Rights and Democratic Governance at DG DEVCO (**Fabienne Van Den Eede**)

9.30-11.15

Building Bridges between Regions

The decision to cut or not to cut a girl is often not an individual one: families and communities both in the country of origin and in countries of residence have a large influence on it. At the same time, migrants returning to their country of origin can represent a challenge for FGM abandonment programmes both in a positive and negative way. Sometimes members of affected migrant communities may encourage communities to perpetuate or maintain traditional practices like FGM, in some cases due to the lack of awareness of the social change that might have occurred in the country of origin since they left. In other cases, migrant organisations, as well as migrants who return to their countries of origin can play an important role in showing how communities can shift from FGM practices without losing their sense of belonging and cultural identity.

Therefore, the practice must be addressed in bi- and multilateral discussions among countries and stakeholders and requires the development of measures with a cross-border dimension and collaboration among EU stakeholders and with partners in countries of origin.



Intro with Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices (**Morissanda Kouyaté**), UNFPA Arab States Regional Office (**Menna El Shiaty**), IPPF ESEAOR (**Nora Murat**), Equality Now (**Shelby Quast**) & Safe Hands for Girls (**Jaha Dukureh**)
Moderator: End FGM EU (**Liuska Sanna**)

The parallel workshops will explore how intra and extra continental cross-border cooperation can effectively strengthen prevention, protection and prosecution to tackle FGM, as well as measures and integrated policies between regions of the world.

Some key questions that will be addressed include: What can different regions learn from each other? How can actors working in the same sector but in different cultural & socio-economic contexts work together in a cross-border manner (e.g. communities, NGOs, health professionals)? What type of legal and policy frameworks do we need to have in place? How can institutions and donors facilitate such forms of building bridges?



Group work on **Prevention** – Moderator: **Fatma Naib**, Al Jazeera free-lance journalist

Group work on **Protection** – Moderator: **Hannah Wettig**, WADI

Group work on **Prosecution** – Moderator: **Jennifer Obaseki**, UK solicitor, VAW and FGM advocate

Coffee break



11.15-11.45

11.45-13.30

Building Bridges between Sectors

In order to end FGM it is necessary to promote interaction and collaboration among stakeholders in different fields of action, which can all contribute to enhancing prevention, protection, prosecution and can effectively shape integrated policies towards the abandonment of the practice. These include national and regional institutions, governmental and public officials, civil society organisations (including women's rights and youth movements), professionals in several sectors (health, asylum, social work, child protection, VAWG, law, law enforcement, education, journalism and media), FGM survivors, communities, as well as traditional and religious leaders. Building bridges among these multiple stakeholders, promoting cooperation and exchanges among them, is key to strengthen integrated and holistic approaches to end FGM.



Intro with WHO (Cristina Pallitto or Lale Say), Global Media Campaign (**Maggie O'Kane**), UNHCR (TBC), ICRH (**Els Leye**)

Moderator: The Girl Generation (**Faith Powell**)

The parallel workshops will explore challenges and benefits of multi-sectoral approaches when dealing with prevention, protection and prosecution, with concrete examples of initiatives implementing this type of approach in different parts of the world.

Some key questions that will be addressed include: What is needed to mainstream FGM into all relevant policy and legislative frameworks (education, health, justice, research, asylum, etc.)? And how to bring these together into integrated policies? How can we equip professionals with the knowledge and skills they need to protect and support girls and women? What type of cooperation mechanisms across sectors could be established? What type of resources need to be made available to achieve such cross-sectorial cooperation?



Group work on **Prevention** – Moderator: **Masooma Ranalvi**, WeSpeakOut

Group work on **Protection** – Moderator: **Fabienne Richard**, GAMS Belgique

Group work on **Prosecution** – Moderator: **Christine Nanjala**, Anti-FGM Prosecution Unit, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

13.30-14.30

Lunch



14.30-16.15

Building Bridges between Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls

It is important not to consider FGM as an isolated practice, but to see it within a continuum of violence which is deeply rooted in gender inequality and gender-based discrimination against women and girls. For instance, girls and women who are survivors of FGM could be at risks of or subjected to other forms of gender-based violence, such as child marriage, intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence. To ensure a strategic and comprehensive approach to end FGM it is key to adopt a holistic approach to address the continuum of gender-based violence against women and girls. This can be done by developing partnerships with actors working towards the elimination of other forms of VAWG, including the abandonment of other harmful practices, as well as by implementing policies and providing services informed by this type of approach. Although such holistic approach is already well known, unfortunately it is not systematically and widely implemented. There is therefore a need to strengthen the sharing of expertise and promising practices, inter alia by involving all critical stakeholders into the process of change.



Intro with UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme (**Nafissatou J. Diop**), EWL (**Edith Schratzberger-Vecsi**), Plan International (**TBC**), ILGA Europe (**TBC**)
Moderator: UN Women (**TBC**)

The parallel workshops will look into gaps of current policy frameworks and service provision in responding to the multiple needs of girls and women affected by FGM as well as by other forms of harmful practices and gender-based violence.

Some key questions that will be addressed include: What are the unmet needs and gaps in policy and practices? What are the good and promising practices available and the opportunities for strategic cooperation? How can we hold responsible entities accountable for delivering a comprehensive response? How can all concerned actors work better together? Which kind of resources are needed to achieve a more comprehensive approach to ending FGM as a form of VAWG?



Group work on **Prevention** – Moderator: **Anna Zobnina**, European Migrant Women Network

Group work on **Protection** – Moderator: **Sophia Temba**, Children's Dignity Forum (**TBC**)

Group work on **Prosecution** – Moderator: **Lorraine Koonce-Farahmand Esq.**, Solicitor (UK), Lawyer (US), Gender & Human Rights Advocate

16.15-17.00

The way forward

End FGM EU, the Girl generation, UN Women, representative from FGM/C Donor Working Group,

Chair: Estonian Presidency of the Council of the EU **(TBC)**

Concluding remarks

End FGM EU, CoE (TBC), MEP (TBC)

