

Global Call to Action From
“Uniting forces to make female genital mutilation/cutting a practice of the past:
A gathering for global civil society actors”

On June 2, 2019 in Vancouver, Canada, civil society organisations, champions, survivors and other grassroots representatives came together at Women Deliver 2019 to unite voices around a global Call to Action to end female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C).

The pre-conference was an unprecedented gathering as a sector working globally across the issue to discuss what is needed to accelerate ending FGM/C by 2030. The event put grassroots voices at the centre and worked to strengthen our unified community of practice to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5.3. (eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation).

“Uniting forces to make female genital mutilation/cutting a practice of the past: A gathering for global civil society actors” involved more than 100 participants in Vancouver. More than 270 additional participants shared their expertise and experience through an online survey. The event was co-ordinated through a core group of globally representative organisations that managed logistics: [Amref Health Africa](#), [Coalition on Violence Against Women](#), [End FGM Canada Network](#), [End FGM European Network](#), [Equality Now](#), [Orchid Project](#), [Sahiyo](#), [The Girl Generation](#), [The Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices](#), [The US End FGM/C Network](#), [There Is No Limit Foundation](#) and [Tostan](#).

Participants in Vancouver endorsed the following Call to Action:

PREAMBLE

- FGM/C is a violation of the human rights of women and girls and must be ended in all its forms
- We need to make FGM/C a global priority, in the same way the global community responded to other global epidemics, such as HIV/AIDS

SUPPORTING CHANGE FROM WITHIN - CHALLENGING SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS

- We share a vision of a world free from FGM/C and will work in partnership with each other, all communities, governments, donors, multilateral bodies and others to end the practice by 2030 in line with the SDGs
- Whole communities must be mobilised and empowered at the grassroots level if we are to end FGM/C – women and girls, men and boys, traditional and religious leaders, health workers
- Ending FGM/C requires addressing the root causes of gender inequality at the community level, including gender stereotypes, unequal power relations, and negative social norms



STRENGTHENING THE EVIDENCE BASE THROUGH CRITICAL RESEARCH

- Fill the knowledge gap on FGM/C survivors' specific needs, impact on economic empowerment, and behaviour change around emerging trends such as medicalisation and lower ages of cutting
- Use community-based participatory approaches within research efforts and ensure that research results and data are synthesised for communities to use
- Create, test, and implement standardised universal indicators that are informed by context specific measures and demand country-level reporting

IMPROVING WELLBEING VIA SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS

- More support is needed for survivors in various forms, including security and protection for survivors, targeted research and resources to enable health and emotional wellbeing
- Enable the transformative power of survivors and survivor-led networks through support to connect with each other, other gender-based violence movements and capacity build

ADDRESSING EMERGING TRENDS AROUND FGM/C

- We need an integrated, intersectional approach to ending FGM/C recognising the connections with other forms of gender-based violence and linking with existing movements
- We are committed to working with religious leaders, health workers and governments to respond to adaptations to the practice which continue to violate women's rights, such as medicalisation, cross-border practices, and lowering the age at which FGM/C is carried out

INCREASING RESOURCES TO ACHIEVE THE GLOBAL GOAL

- We call on all stakeholders to prioritise resources towards grassroots and community-led programmes. Funds should be more flexible, sustainable and accessible for communities and grassroots and capacity building should be provided as well as networks
- Investment is needed in better research into what is working and what is not to end FGM/C. This research needs to be participatory and involve multiple stakeholders and should be made available and accessible
- We are focused on coming together and working collaboratively to address what existing gaps there are, what are the costs of FGM/C, and what do we need to end this globally

