



Terms of Reference

Consultancy to support the development of a position paper on Female Genital Mutilation and Religious Discrimination

1. End FGM European Network

The End FGM European Network (End FGM EU) is an umbrella network of 35 national organisations working in 16 European countries and who are expert on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). End FGM EU operates as a meeting ground for communities, civil society organisations, decision-makers and other relevant actors at European level to interact, cooperate and join forces to end all forms of FGM in Europe and beyond. We put at the heart of our work grassroots voices to influence European governments and policy-makers to work towards the elimination of FGM. We build our members' capacity, offer spaces to share expertise and develop partnerships.

While being dedicated to being the driving force of the European movement to end FGM, we are equally committed to build bridges and cooperation with all relevant actors in the field of FGM both in Europe and globally. In this sense, we actively promote and foster cooperation between the European movement and movements in other regions of the world.

2. End FGM EU Position Paper on FGM and Religious Discrimination

End FGM EU is looking for a consultant to support the development of a position paper on Female Genital Mutilation and Religious Discrimination.

Since 2021, End FGM EU has a working group on FGM and intersectionality, exploring the links between the practice and other forms of discrimination and/or social issues. In 2022, the Network published a paper on FGM, Antiracism and Intersectionality as the first product of this working group. As a follow-up to this reflection on FGM and Antiracism, the working group members have decided to explore religious discrimination. Indeed, FGM can be linked to various sets of belief, some of them rooted in religious dogma. This means that in the general public's perception, FGM can be seen as a religious practice and this perceived link between religion and FGM can create a stigma and feed hate speech and discrimination

towards certain religious communities. In particular, Islam seems to be singled out as the main cause for FGM, but other religions are also employed to justify this practice, including Christianity and Hinduism . In order to make sure these harmful narratives are not reproduced and to actively uproot religious discrimination from the anti-FGM movement, the working group has decided to reflect on these common myths and their effect. As an outcome of this reflection, End FGM EU will produce a short paper on the intersectionality of Female Genital Mutilation and religious discrimination. This paper will explore, through the lens of intersectionality, the impact of religious discrimination on the work to end FGM and support affected communities and Survivors. From such analysis, this paper will pull out concrete recommendations to ensure that religious discrimination is properly addressed both when advocating against the practice and when preventing and responding to it.

More concretely, the objectives of this short paper are to:

- Initiate an understanding of the issue through the intersectionality lens, presenting the diversity of beliefs used to justify FGM and the diversity of people affected, identifying the added challenges created by religious discrimination for activists, affected communities and Survivors of FGM.
- Identify the specific needs created by these challenges in particular regarding access to information and resources.
- Develop an End FGM EU position statement on FGM and Religious Discrimination.
- Put forward concrete recommendations to EU institutions and other stakeholders within the movements against FGM to account for these discriminations in their work.

Expected Deliverables

The aim of this consultancy is to carry out the research with the support of End FGM EU and the dedicated new Working Group as well as support the production of a final paper on the topic.

It is expected that the consultant will undertake the following tasks:

1. Refine the definitions of concepts such as intersectionality, religious discrimination, islamophobia, freedom of belief...etc. as they relate to FGM and agree upon them with members of the WG.
2. Conduct research, including interviews with End FGM EU members, other actors of the anti-FGM movement and community members (such as our Ambassadors).
3. Attend regular ad-hoc meetings with End FGM EU staff to coordinate the creation of the paper
4. Attend relevant WG meetings (around 3) to report to the members around the work conducted.
5. Support the drafting and review of a position paper on FGM and Religious Discrimination (the final paper will be around 10 pages)
6. **Material available**

Some relevant existing materials will be available for the Consultant:

- Toolkit and brochure of the #EndFGM4All campaign
- Concept Note for the position paper
- Position Paper on Community Engagement (including some reflections on discriminations)

- State of World Population report 2020: "Against My Will" (including insight on the diversity of FGM affected-communities)
- Guide on Addressing common myths and misconceptions on FGM
- Position Paper on FGM, Antiracism and Intersectionality

And any other resources collected by the working group on the topic in our shared folder.

3. Expected timeframe

- **By mid-June:** plan the research, finalise introduction and definitions and agree on next steps.
- **By beginning of September:** finalise the desk-research/literature review in preparation for the paper.
- **By mid-October:** finalise the full research including interviews/focus groups, with the support of End FGM EU and WG members.
- **By end-October:** submit a full report of their research including
 - Definitions
 - Problematization of the topic
 - Literature review
 - Evidence (conclusions based on interviews and/or focus group discussion)
 - Suggestion of position statement
 - Suggestions of recommendations
 - Bibliography
 - Anonymised transcript of interviews

The consultancy should start as soon as possible. The estimated number of days for this consultancy is 22 days. Payments will be made in two instalments, one within the first month of the consultancy and within a month after the final delivery.

4. Proposal submission

To be considered for this service, the applicant must:

- Send an email with an expression of interest to Xheni Dani, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator (see email below).
- Send their CV highlighting relevant advocacy experience (national, and/or toward intergovernmental institutions) and expertise in researching issues of religious discrimination, GBV and intersectionality – knowledge of FGM specifically would be an asset.
- Indicate their rate/payment expectation for this consultancy.
- (Optional) Provide any evidence of previous relevant research they have carried out (in English) around GBV, religious discrimination and/or FGM.

The proposal must be submitted electronically in English to xdani@endfgm.eu by 26th April 2023

