



TOGETHER TO END FGM

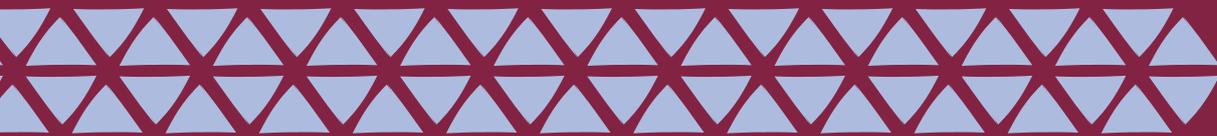
How To...

USE
POSITIVE
STORIES TO
END FGM



IN THIS GUIDE

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- ▶ Quick Tips
- ▶ Glossary



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About this Guide

This guide is a quick resource for activists and campaigners working to End FGM, on how to use positive stories to end FGM.

About The Girl Generation

The Girl Generation is a communications initiative, providing a global platform for galvanising, catalysing and amplifying the Africa-led movement to end FGM. We seek to inspire organisations and individuals, especially youth, across the most affected countries in Africa and beyond, to end FGM in one generation.

What is FGM?

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

FGM is a form of violence against women and girls. In 2012, the UN passed a resolution calling for a global ban on FGM.

1.1A: Classification of types of female genital cutting

Sunna (no stitches) WHO type I	Partial or complete removal of the clitoris (clitoridectomy), requiring no stitching.
Intermediate cut WHO type II	Partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora (excision), requiring 2 or 3 stitches to partially close the vaginal orifice.
Pharaonic cut WHO type III	Narrowing of the vaginal orifice with creation of a covering seal by cutting and re-stitching the labia minora and/or the labia majora, with or without excision of the clitoris (infibulation), requiring 4-7 stitches and resulting in only a very small vaginal orifice.

WHY ARE POSITIVE STORIES OF CHANGE IMPORTANT?

Sharing your story is important, it gives you an opportunity to have your voice and experiences heard, and as a personal way to get your story out there.

Research shows that stories are more effective than facts, explanations, or arguments to influence thinking and behavior. Positive stories on ending FGM are particularly important. They can change the narrative moving it from one of focusing on FGM as a problem or an issue, and framing people as victims, to focusing on the positive of ending FGM, on where change is taking place, and on solutions and inspiring ideas through empowerment, dignity and purpose.

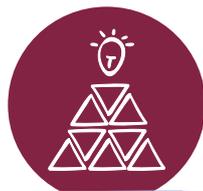


SHARING POSITIVE STORIES OF CHANGE WILL...



AMPLIFY

Give a louder voice to African grassroots activists, and inspire actors at all levels to learn about, discuss, and ultimately, commit to ending FGM.



CELEBRATE

Celebrate examples of solutions to ending FGM, and prompt individuals to question their own views on the practice.



MOBILISE

Mobilise a global movement to end FGM by bringing new actors to the movement – creating greater awareness of what is happening on the ground.



SUPPORT

Support social change at the national and local level – by showing the strength of activism against the practice, illuminating how change is being influenced and sparking personal engagement on the issue.

The Girl Generation believes in the power of positive stories of change to unite the Africa-led, global movement to end FGM – to do so, sharing what is happening is essential to building awareness, momentum and a sense of united purpose. Amplifying and sharing 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. By increasing the coverage and reach of positive stories of change we will mobilise more people to get involved.



STEP-BY-STEP

1. Assess

What is happening in your community that you could shout about? What change are you seeing that would inspire and motivate others?

2. Audience

Identify your audience – who do you want to hear your story, and how would they like to hear it?

3. Platform

Identify the best platform to share your story for your audience to hear or see it – these can include blog/vlog/video/podcast or media?

4. Outline

Start to develop the outline for your story – develop a quick summary of what the positive change story is, identify the problem and the context before the change, identify the solution or action that taken place and resulted in change and what will be done differently in the future.

5. Write

Write your story - make sure you are showing your story and not just telling it – try to inspire, create a sense of place, provide with an action.

6. Edit

Make sure to proofread and edit your story. Check back through and make sure your story remained positive, and focused on solutions and outcomes.

7. Check

If possible, ask those involved in the story to read it to check they are comfortable with what you are sharing.

HOW TO TELL GOOD STORIES

- T** Transportation, take your reader to the world of the story
- E** Empathy, understand and feeling
- A** Attention, build tension, and engagement
- S** Segments, makes it more memorable
- H** Humanise, makes real those we don't relate with
- O** One person, 'one death is a tragedy, a million is a statistic'
- P** Prime for action, what do you say before you make your ask

POSITIVE STORIES OF CHANGE

POKOT COMMUNITY CELEBRATES ALTERNATIVE RITES OF PASSAGE CEREMONY IN KENYA

Kepsteono Rotwo Tipin (KRT), a community based organisation has been working with the Pokot community in Kenya to end FGM by introducing an alternative rites of passage for girls. Since 2016, over 300 girls have escaped the cut through the alternative rite of passage. KRT worked together with the girls, their parents and the community, to increase understanding about FGM and to provide an alternative. The positive experience in the Pokot community will be used as a model in the neighboring Maasai community to undertake a similar process.

YOUNG MEN ENDING FGM IN KAJIADO, KENYA

In Kenya, Children in Freedom, have supported local End FGM Ambassadors (EFAs) to educate and change the mindset of their community members on FGM. The EFAs have brought together 60 fathers and sons to discuss the dangers of FGM, and used the village baraza, a community meeting organised by the village chief, to discuss FGM. The EFA's work has led to a decrease in FGM in some villages, for example in the village of Indupa no known FGM cases were reported during the long school holiday.

EMPOWERING YOUNG GIRLS TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST FGM IN GAMBIA

Yeswecan for Children Foundation (YCF) has been holding campaigns and training sessions in rural communities allowing girls and women to speak freely and learn about the negative impacts of FGM. In 2017, YCF organised an FGM awareness workshop at Faraba Bantag Upper Basic School where girls were taught about the negative effects of FGM and the laws against the practice. Many of the girls and women who attended were willing to speak out against the practice and to share the information that they had learnt with other community members.

CHECKLIST

- ✓ **Celebrate solutions to ending FGM – i.e. it shows that change is happening and possible**
- ✓ **Promotes an evaluation of one's own personal beliefs**
- ✓ **Changes the narrative – move away from the negative to stories about the positive impacts of ending FGM**
- ✓ **Supports others to speak out and engage – the personal story is the most effective**

HOW TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT FGM

Show **positive images** of strong women and girls - being active, in school, smiling, taking action. No graphic images or images that show girls in a negative way.

Celebrate positive change, to convey that change is happening, across Africa and beyond. Celebrate practical action to show that anyone can make a difference.

Think carefully to make sure that your communications **do not appear to criticise** a particular religion, ethnic group or culture, rather than the practice of FGM itself.

Get consent from anyone who may appear in blog posts or photos or whose name you might use. Ensure that they are aware that you are communicating about FGM and that they may be identifiable. Use the consent form available on our website here.

Follow The Girl Generation's **Do No Harm guidelines** to protect women and girls from unintended harm from your communications work.

TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Speak to your audience (not only to people like yourself) – people are moved by values, explanations and solutions that they can see themselves taking part in.**
- **Facts do matter – but don't forget about the personal and emotional.**
- **Use explanation, not logic – rhetoric does not work – you need to explain how and why things work for people to reassess their own beliefs.**
- **Avoid crisis messaging – any message that is written in an urgent manner, but without any change causes fatalism and fatigue, reducing engagement.**
- **Share quotes from the people involved in the change.**

GLOSSARY

- **BLOG** - Regularly updated website or web page, typically one run by an individual or small group, that is written in an informal or conversational style
- **PODCAST** - Program (as of music or talk) made available in digital format for automatic download over the Internet
- **VLOG** - A blog in which postings are mostly in video format



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