



TOGETHER TO END FGM

# How To...

WRITE

A BLOG

POST ON

ENDING FGM



IN

THIS

GUIDE

- ▶ Overview
- ▶ Step-by-step
- ▶ 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 writing a blog 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 .

### 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 IS A BLOG IMPORTANT IN COMMUNICATING ABOUT FGM?

Blogs have greatly increased in popularity as a way to tell your story, or to get your message out to the world.

Blogs themselves are webpages that are discussion-based or informational. They usually have a series of blog posts. You can see each blog post as diary or journal entries. They are usually informal, and written from a personal perspective.

Unlike articles, or other more formal methods, blogs are written in the first person, and are a great opportunity to share your story or personal experiences. If you are looking for a more formal way of sharing a story, or if what you need to share is on the longer side, then a blog post may not be the right format for you.



# WHO WRITES BLOGS?

INDIVIDUALS

ORGANISATIONS

NEWS SITES

## WHY IS A BLOG A GOOD WAY TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT FGM

- Share background research, data and evidence to create a really strong story or message
- Update your audience on events and activities
- Enable you to express yourself
- Increase your impact
- Share positive stories of change
- Share your message to a broader audience
- Share your personal knowledge or experiences

## WHEN TO BLOG

- ✓ When your audience is easily reached via social media
- ✓ When you have something short and conversational to say
- ✓ If you are looking for high visibility and easily searched keywords

## WHEN NOT TO BLOG

- ✗ When traditional print media, i.e. newspapers, are more accessible to your audience
- ✗ When you have a longer, more fact-filled and objective piece to share
- ✗ If you are seeking to influence policy or to share the latest research

# STEP-BY-STEP

## 1. Message

Decide what you want to say, and if a blog is the best way to get your message across or to tell your story (see the checklist above)

## 2. Where to publish

Which blog to use? Do you have your own blogsite, or do you need to approach a relevant organisation/individual to ask them to post your blog for you? Think about who that blog belongs too, and what the overall values, message and audience of the blog is so that they are in line with who you want to reach.

## 3. Audience

Understand your audience – do some research on the audience of the blog you are writing for, and how your blog can target them. Picture the person you want to tell your story to and think about why you want to tell them this story, and how this will impact them.

## 4. Organise

Organise your content – gather any key statistics, messages or stories that you would like to include in your blog. Think about how to best weave these topics throughout the blog. It can help to include personal stories, either of your own experiences, or those of other activists – potential guiding questions include:

- What positive story do you want to tell about ending FGM? What was the situation at the beginning, what happened and what was the result? You can also include what happens next.
- What gets you out of bed every morning to end FGM?
- What is your story for why you are part of the movement to end FGM?
- Why do you believe that FGM must end in this generation?

## 5. The hook

Write a captivating intro – this is also known as a “hook” – if you don’t capture your reader immediately they will stop reading. This should be a short summary of the most important point in the blog to capture their attention.

## 6. Write

Now it’s time to write! Be sure to tell a story, as well as show it – include key information about FGM such as how common it is in the area where your blog is taking place, and make sure to include positive examples and solutions to FGM that are happening in the community. You can be honest too, about the challenges, the setbacks and what you have learnt.

## 7. Imagery

Remember a blog is more than words – be sure to include relevant pics and other images to really bring your story to life. (Be sure to have approval from those in the images to use them on the blog).

## 8. C.T.A

Finalise your post with a call to action so that readers can do something with the inspiration they’ve received from your blog. You might also want to link to other sites where they can find out more or connect with others to get involved.

## 9. Edit

Once you’ve finished writing take some time to edit and proofread your blog before you post. Make sure your blog meets the initial goals you set for it, and is consistent with your messaging.

## 10. Post

Post it and share far and wide!

# QUICK TIPS

## WHAT MAKES A GREAT BLOG?



### Authenticity

Be yourself and be relatable



### Photography

Let images show your story



### Story-led

Capture the emotions of the reader with stories



### Focus

Keep it snappy and focused



### Shareable

Share it broadly across multiple platforms - Twitter, Facebook, etc.

## WHAT MAKES A BLOG FAIL?



### Too long

Don't waffle or include long paragraphs



### Negativity

Don't be negative – keeping your story focused on the positive will keep the reader engaged, and will motivate them to act



### Mistakes

Don't forget to spellcheck – grammar mistakes and spelling errors can detract from your message

# HOW TO SHARE YOUR BLOG

## Share it on your social media...

including Facebook and Twitter. Use images when you share – it will increase your engagement.

## Encourage others to share...

ask those who are included in your blog to share the post, reach out to others working on FGM to share or key influencers in your community or the global community

## If you have a newsletter or email community...

share the blog out to your readers – or share your blog with listservs you are a part of (make sure the blog is relevant to the listserv so that you avoid spamming people)

# END FGM BLOG CHECKLIST



**Positive focus**



**Catchy introduction – be imaginative**



**Shows impact using quotes and stats**



**Uses images**



**Easy to understand**



**Tells a story -including personal stories and key facts where needed**



**Includes a takeaway action for the reader**

# HOW TO DO NO HARM WHEN WRITING YOUR BLOG

- **LANGUAGE**

The language we use when talking about FGM matters. We must be careful not to victimise or stigmatise FGM survivors or people from practicing communities, instead empowering them and emboldening them to end the practice.

- **EMPOWER**

Do No Harm is critical for empowering and protecting women and activists working to end FGM.

- **PLAN**

Do no harm is extremely important given the complexity and sensitivity of the issue. Unless we plan carefully and consider the risks and harm that we might inadvertently or unintentionally cause, we can do more harm than good. It protects vulnerable groups from harm and resistance and provides a shared vision and set of principles to help unify and grow the movement.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DO NO HARM, GO TO  
[WWW.THEGIRLGENERATION.ORG/RESOURCES](http://WWW.THEGIRLGENERATION.ORG/RESOURCES)

## GLOSSARY

→ **ARTICLE**

a piece of writing included with others in a newspaper, magazine or other publication.

→ **AUDIENCE**

your listeners or viewers, who will be seeing and hearing your messages.

→ **BLOG**

a regularly updated website, typically run by an individual, small group, large organisations or news sites, that is written in an informal or conversational style.

→ **BLOG POST**

a piece of writing or other item of content posted on a blog.





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