



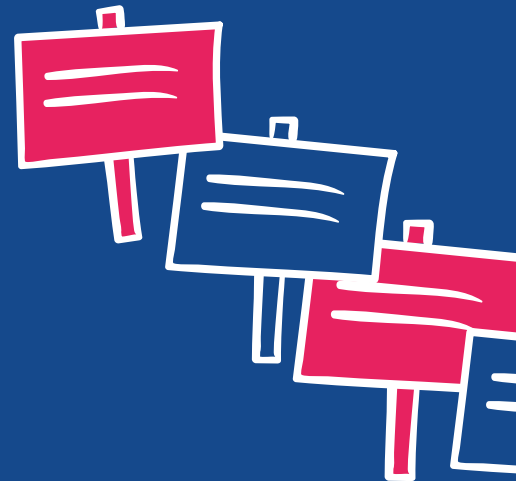
TOGETHER TO END FGM

How To...

DEVELOP KEY

MESSAGES ON

ENDING FGM



IN THIS GUIDE

- ▶ Overview
- ▶ Step-by-step
- ▶ 7C's of communication
- ▶ 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.

WHAT IS A KEY MESSAGE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A key message is the **ONE** thing you want your audience to take away from everything you tell, show or share with them.

They are the guiding language, leading idea or ask that will direct all of your materials and conversations and should be used to form the basis of all your communications work.

They are not only an opportunity to communicate your message, but also to influence change to end FGM. They are also an opportunity to gather key insight from the community on FGM and provide your audience with the information they need to know on ending FGM.

MESSAGES CAN BE WORDS, IMAGES, SIGNS OR SYMBOLS AND CONVENED IN VARIOUS WAYS:



ORAL

**Personal, repetitive
(emphasis purposes)**



WRITTEN

**Less personal, more
formal, less repetitive**



VISUAL

**An image speaks a
thousand words**

STEP-BY-STEP

1. Team

Identify a team to support and develop your key messages. It should include people from the community themselves to answer: How would **THEY** say it? How would **THEY** convey the key issue/ message you want to share?

2. Needs

Identify what your messaging needs are for, and key data points or background information on FGM in your community. Here you can define what you want to say, and then work through the next steps to make sure the message is effective for your audience and what you want them to do, say or think as a result of your message.

3. Who?

Identify your key stakeholders, audience and targets –WHO will hear your message - analyse what they know currently which will impact HOW they hear this message.

4. Content

Identify what content your key messages should include – i.e . what do you want to say/ vs. what will they hear?

5. Actions

Identify what action you want the stakeholders and audience to take, and why they should undertake that action ending FGM, etc.

6. Draft

Draft your message – thinking carefully about what your target audience will hear rather than what you are saying. There are three main categories of messages to choose from:

a. Calling Card: this type of message provides information like factsheets, infographics. They seek to aim awareness, build relations with existing allies/ audiences and attract new allies/audiences.

b. Conscious Building: this type of message seeks to build agency against a recurring problem in the target audience. It seeks to convert awareness into critical awareness that will lead to a judgement change in key stakeholders.

c. Action request: this type of message seeks audience buy-in and a decision to act on something e.g. fundraising, reporting cases of FGM, declaring a commitment.

7. Test

Pre-test your messages with a group that represents your key audience to make sure they are effective.

8. Adjust

Adjust your messages based on the feedback of your target group.

9. Tailor

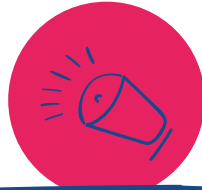
Identify where and how you should share your key messages. While your core message will always remain the same, you will need to adjust its packaging based on where it will be shared. Examples of where it will be shared include TV, radio, email, face-to-face, poster or social media.

a. For TV and radio – it depends on the length of time you will have to discuss your story or issue. Make sure that you have short and concise take away points to end your interview, including actions that listeners can take.

b. For email – you will want to have short and clear messages- utilising bullet points or other distinguishers to highlight your key message.

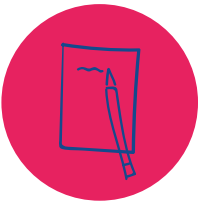
c. For social media – on twitter you are limited by character count, it is also important to make sure you save space to include hashtags or to tag key influencers to make sure your message spreads far and wide.

10. Disseminate!



COMMAND ATTENTION

Effective messages should stand out and get noticed above anything else.



CLARIFY THE MESSAGE

Most messages will lack impact if the message is not clear.



COMMUNICATE A BENEFIT

Messages that communicate a benefit to the target audience are more likely to appeal to the audience.



CREATE TRUST

People trust what makes sense to them. A message must be believable and consistent with reality.

THE 7C'S OF COMMUNICATION



CALL TO ACTION

The purpose of any message is to change people's behavior – that is, to enable people to change from behaviour A to behaviour B. A message without a call to action is incomplete and its impact is usually not measurable.



CATER TO THE HEART AND HEAD

The most inspiring messages are those that appeal to the emotion, thereby making us think more about the problem.



CONSISTENCY COUNTS

A message repeated consistently over time builds credibility.

SAMPLE KEY MESSAGES ON ENDING FGM



KEY MESSAGES CHECKLIST

- ✓ Promote ONE clear and specific behavior – this is to prevent oversaturation or confusion of your message
- ✓ Positive and benefits based
- ✓ Easy to understand
- ✓ Accessible to the target audience using the same language that your target audience uses. In particular, it uses the same word your community uses to describe FGM
- ✓ Convincing to the target audience and focuses on what they care about

TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Keep your messages concise and simple, and avoid jargon.
- Make sure your messages are culturally sensitive and relatable.
- Be strategic about your messaging and utilize them to expand your impact and reach.
- The most impactful messages include a clear call to action and a benefit for performing that action.
- Think beyond words when coming up with your messaging – use images, infographics, videos or even more expressive language

HOW TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT FGM

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

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.

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.

GLOSSARY

→ AUDIENCE -

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

→ FGM -

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→ STAKEHOLDER -

A person with an interest or a concern in something, in this case ending FGM. They can include faith leaders, politicians, health care providers, etc.

→ TARGET -

Decision makers and influencers who you want to influence.



TOGETHER TO END FGM



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