



TEACHER'S GUIDE

FGM Training Pack for African Diaspora Communities

*Produced by Gill & Chris Mullen
and 28 Too Many*

Introduction to the *FGM Training Pack for Diaspora Communities*

Length and resources

This pack contains two lesson plans, of approximately 50 minutes each. It could also be used in smaller, bite-sized sessions, as each lesson is clearly divided into a few sections.

For these lessons you will need

- The accompanying PowerPoint slides
- The linked video

Target audience

This resource is designed for use in secondary schools, but could also be used in youth and community groups. The material is aimed at students, specifically those between the ages of 12 and 14. The primary aim of this resource is to educate girls on FGM and its risks. A number of African communities cut girls around the age of 15, as part of a coming-of-age ceremony. Other African communities perform FGM at a much younger age (0-5 years). Of course, many more don't perform FGM at all.

This pack is primarily aimed at at-risk girls from the African diaspora. Please assess your class before using this resource. See <https://www.28toomany.org/research-resources/> for country-specific information that can help you determine how appropriate this resource would be for your school.

FGM is a difficult topic

The resource is designed to require minimal lesson planning, but the teacher still needs to be familiar with the materials, so they can decide if there are sections they should omit. We have not suggested an appropriate age group beyond secondary school – each teacher will know what is appropriate for their students. We would recommend generally to teach mixed-sex groups, but in some schools this may not be appropriate. What is important is that the boys learn about FGM as well.

We have tried to approach FGM in a positive way

There are opportunities to link in with topics such as peer pressure and the power of culture in a more general way. There are also links to subjects such as fundraising and political activism. There is time to revise basic female anatomy – a subject that can always benefit from revision.

The resource uses different ways of teaching and learning

There are lots of opportunities for discussion and feedback. We suggest you vary these slots from discussion in pairs with feedback to whole class discussion. There are some work sheets to do in small groups. There is also a link to a short video clip.

Please feel free to share this resource with other groups who would like to use it.

Contact details: admin@28toomany.org

Lesson 1

Total 50 min

Slide 01: Title Page

Slide 02: Opening Exercise – 5 mins

This is a simple short ice breaker. There will be big differences in knowledge about FGM in the class and vast differences in response to the topic.

- Ask the class for **one-word answers or short phrases**. When they hear the term FGM, what do they think? What do they feel?

Slide 03: Definition – 1 min

The slide gives a simple, brief definition of FGM.

Read out the definition:

'Female genital mutilation comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways.'

~ Statement from the World Health Organization, 2011

- Explain that you will look at what actually happens in more detail later in the session.
- FGM may also be known as cutting or circumcision. Each ethnic group has its own name for FGM in their own language.

Slide 04: Where?

The next few slides will look at where FGM occurs.

Slide 05-06: Map of Africa – 3 min

The slide shows the countries in Africa where FGM occurs.

Be careful to not refer to the individual ethnic origin of pupils in your class.

- Explain that FGM happens in these 28 African countries.
- FGM is also part of the culture of some Asian countries, but the highest prevalence is in Africa.
- In some countries, such as Egypt, FGM happens to nearly every girl.
- It is estimated that there are 200 million girls and women alive today who have been cut.
- Talk briefly about which countries have a high incidence of FGM and which have a lower incidence. This is indicated by the colouring.
- In most of these countries, FGM is illegal!

Slide 07: World Map – 2 min

This slide shows some immigration patterns from Africa.

- Explain that people leave Africa to live in other countries, including the UK, and bring their own culture and practices with them.
- This means FGM is now happening in the UK among these ethnic groups.
- FGM may happen here in the UK.
- Or a girl may be taken back to her country of origin for a holiday and the purpose of the holiday will be so that she can be cut.
- It is impossible to know exactly how many girls may be at risk of FGM in the UK, but it is estimated that over 20,000 girls may be at risk in the UK alone.

Slide 08: Why?

This next section looks at why FGM happens.

Slide 09: Origins of FGM – 2 min

The origins of FGM are lost in the mists of time . . .

- FGM is really old, over 2,000 years old!
- The origins of FGM are not clear.
- One British museum mummy shows evidence of FGM in the 5th century BC. This was maybe to keep slaves 'pure' – stop them getting pregnant.
- It has no religious basis. It happens today among Muslims and Christians, but FGM predates these religions.

Slide 10: Today's Reasons – 2 min

Here are some of the reasons given today for the practice of FGM – ask the group if they know why.

- Giving a girl status and respect
- Part of becoming a woman
- It keeps girls pure
- It makes them clean
- It restricts their sexual desires and limits promiscuity
- It makes them suitable for marriage
- It means they will get a good dowry
- It's what has always been done
- To maintain family honour
- It's what a good parent does

Total 15 min

Slide 11: What is FGM?

The next few slides go briefly through the exact nature of FGM and the consequences of FGM.

This is obviously not an easy section and needs to be handled carefully.

It is also an opportunity to revise normal female anatomy.

Slide 12: Normal Female Anatomy – 2 min

Talk through normal female anatomy and its functions – ask the class the names and functions.

- Three holes:
 - urethra – for urine
 - vagina – for periods, babies, love-making
 - anus – for stools
 - Labia around urethra and vagina – protective
 - Clitoris – for sexual pleasure
-

Slide 13-15: FGM – 5 min

Shows types of FGM.

The details on this and the next slide will be quite shocking for the group. Allow them time to respond.

It's important to acknowledge that the information is upsetting.

- **Type 1** – part or all of the clitoris is removed
 - **Type 2** – part or all of the clitoris and labia are removed
 - **Type 3** – part or all of the clitoris and labia are removed and the edges of the labia are then sewn together, leaving one small hole for urine and periods to escape from
 - **Type 4** has no diagram – it covers any other form of damage to the vaginal area
-

Slide 16: The Cutting – 10 min

This slide talks briefly about how FGM is done.

If the group are not talking much, ask them what they are thinking and feeling, encourage them to talk in pairs or small groups and then to feed back to the whole group.

- Each community usually has its own traditional cutter, usually a woman. She may also be the midwife.
- The cutter will be paid for her services.
- Cutting is often done with razor blades or similar basic tools.
- The tools used for FGM are often not sterilised.
- There is usually no pain relief.
- Nearly all girls will have been cut by the age of 14; half of girls are cut by the age of five.

Slide 17: The Consequences – 7 min

Ask the group what they think will be the consequences of being cut in this way; then look at the slide.

Again, encourage discussion in pairs or small groups with feedback.

The consequences of FGM may be both physical and psychological, immediate and long term.

- Pain, shock, bleeding, death
- Infection, including HIV and Hepatitis B & C
- Difficulty passing urine, kidney damage
- Problems with periods, infertility
- Painful sex, lack of pleasure in sex
- Difficulties in childbirth
- Mental trauma, anger and sense of loss

Total 39 min

Slide 18: The Power of Culture!

The next section allows you to explore with the class issues around why we behave as we do, how we are influenced by others around us and the power of our culture.

This can be a really useful time for young people to reflect on why they behave as they do and, thus, this section will link in to other PSHE topics.

The section starts with a short video that helps to round off today's lesson, while introducing the topic of the conflicting influences around us.

The second lesson will then start with a focus on the power of culture.

Slide 19: Video – Think Again – 11 min

A seven-minute video acted by young people to introduce the topic:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzBNTtR7toE>

Follow the video with discussion about the issues raised:

- What is the girl's mother planning?
- What do the girl's friends say?
- What does the mother say?

Total 50 min

Lesson 2

Total 50 min

Introduction – 3 min

Take a few minutes at the beginning of the lesson to reflect back on last lesson and learning about FGM.

Does anyone have any thoughts or questions?

Remind the group that we're now going to spend some time thinking about the power of our culture.

Slide 20-21: Influences on a young person – 8 min

The slide shows a spider graph with a young person at the centre.

Print off enough copies for each group of 4-6 to have a sheet.

Ask them to think about the influences on them. What makes them behave as they do?

Get the groups to feed back.

Then look at the suggestion on the slide. These include peer pressure, social media, advertising, parents, teachers, the desire to conform, greed, compassion, etc.

Slide 22-23: Influences on an adult – 4 min

Repeat the exercise with an adult at the centre.

Notice how similar are the answers!

Slide 24: Good & bad? – 5 min

Explain: historically in our own culture in the UK, women and other groups have been treated in very bad ways. At the time, this was seen as quite acceptable or even good for the women!

Ask the group to think about things that have happened in our society that we now think were bad, but at the time were accepted or even thought of as good.

The class can discuss first in pairs or small groups.

Get the group to feed back ideas.

Slide 25: Our Culture – 2 min

This slide suggests some possible answers:

- Married women had to stay at home
- Women were paid less
- Married women were not allowed to own property
- Only wealthy men could vote
- Homophobia
- Slavery
- Child labour

Talk about how long it took and how difficult it was to change our culture – and some of these things still exist in our culture.

Total 22 min

Slide 26: Waris Dirie – 2 min

The session now moves back to the topic of FGM, and looks at some survivors of FGM who now campaign against it.

They still struggle to show their own families the truth about FGM.

It is very difficult to change such a longstanding part of a society's culture.

Look at the photo and explain to the group: Moving back more specifically to the topic of FGM, we're going to look at some powerful and influential African women and see how difficult it is for them to bring change to their own culture.

- The first lady is Waris Dirie.
 - She grew up in a nomadic family in Africa and was a victim of FGM.
 - She ran away from home and became a supermodel.
 - She became a UN ambassador for FGM and now runs a campaign called the Desert Flower Foundation, to rescue girls from FGM.
-

Slide 27: Quote from Waris – 2 min

Waris has written some books about her life and FGM. Read out the following quote from one of her books:

'In spite of my anger over what has been done to me, I don't blame my parents. I love my mother and father. My mother had no say-so in my circumcision, because as a woman she is powerless to make decisions. She was simply doing to me what had been done to her, and what had been done to her mother and her mother's mother. And my father was completely ignorant of the suffering he was inflicting on me. He knew that in our society, if he wanted his daughter to marry, she must be circumcised or no man would have her. My parents were both victims of their upbringing and cultural practices that have continued unchanged for thousands of years. The time has come to leave the old ways and suffering behind.'

I feel that God made my body perfect the way I was born. Then man robbed me, took away my power and left me a cripple. My womanhood was stolen. If God had wanted those body parts missing, why did he create them? I just pray that one day no woman will have to experience this pain. It will become a thing of the past and the world will be safe for all women. What a happy day that will be, and that's what I'm working towards.'

~ From Desert Flower: The Extraordinary Life of a Desert Nomad by Waris Dirie

Slide 28: Jaha Dukureh – 1 min

Explain to the group:

- Jaha lives in the USA and campaigns against FGM.
 - Jaha grew up in Africa and is a victim of FGM.
 - She has advised Barak Obama about FGM!
-

Slide 29: Quote From Jaha – 2 min

There have been various newspaper articles about Jaha.

Read out the following quotes from an article: Jaha has gone back to visit Africa and tries to talk to her father about FGM.

'Her father does not condemn her work; he barely comments on her headline-grabbing conference, due to start in two days. But he reminds her, sternly and repeatedly, that she must be respectful of her culture and guided by her religion. "Do not force anti-FGM on people," he warns. "Remember this is what your grandparents, parents and yourself went through. If you use force, people will not listen to you." Gambian culture insists on deference to one's elders, so Dukureh keeps her eyes lowered and says: "I will not do that. OK, Father."

Slide 30: Quote From Jaha – 2 min

She also tries to talk to the family friend who was her mother's midwife and also cut Jaha when she was five days old:

'Sarjo, 63, lives in a simple, one-storey building on the outskirts of town. She was a trusted friend of Dukureh's mother, and remains close to her family. When Dukureh is ushered into her room, the old woman, regal in an ochre wrapper, a matching scarf in her hair, bursts into tears of joy. "My daughter is here, oh God here you are," she says, pulling Dukureh towards her.

'FGM is often described as child abuse. But in this room, the love displayed by the woman who carries it out is disorienting. Dukureh attempts to wade against the tide of affection, explaining that FGM is harmful. She asks why her old guardian still performs the ritual. Slightly confused, Sarjo answers: "It is our job and we get paid for doing it. Our parents did it before us, now we are doing it and then we pass it on to our children."

Total 31 min

Slide 31: What Can We Do?

This last section helps the group to start thinking about positive action to bring an end to FGM, and also how to help those who have already suffered FGM.

Slide 32: As A Country – The Law – 2 min

- FGM has been illegal in the UK since 1985.
- It carries a maximum prison sentence of 14 years.
- There have to date been no successful prosecutions.
- Since 2003 it has also been illegal to take a girl abroad from the UK to have FGM in another country.
- Professionals in health, education and social care have a duty to report on FGM.

Note on Mandatory Reporting

This applies to healthcare, social work and education professionals. If they observe signs that a girl may have been subjected to female genital mutilation (or receive a disclosure regarding this), a report must be made to police within one month of the initial disclosure or observation. If it is found a professional has not reported information to the police, they will be reported to their professional regulator and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service (previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau, CRB).

Slide 33: As Individuals – 5 min

What signs can we look out for that may suggest a girl needs help?

Ask the group to make suggestion before looking at the answers below. This is not an exclusive list.

- A girl may talk about going out of the country for a special holiday.
 - She may talk about a special ceremony to become a woman.
 - A girl may appear to be uncomfortable moving around or sitting.
 - She may spend a long time passing urine.
 - She may have difficulties with her periods.
 - Her behaviour may change after an absence from school.
-

Slide 34: Helping an Individual – 4 min

How could you help this girl?

Again, ask the group for suggestions before looking at the answers.

- Be very sensitive in talking to the girl.
- Talk to a trusted adult, a teacher, school nurse, or doctor.
- Ring a support agency, including the NSPCC or ChildLine.
- Ring social care.
- If it's urgent, ring the police.

Slide 35: Campaigning & Fundraising – 2 min

This slide highlights the inspirational work of a 17-year-old schoolgirl.

'BRISTOL schoolgirl Fahma Mohamed has won her campaign which called on the Education Secretary Michael Gove to write to every school in England to ask them to help protect girls from female genital mutilation (FGM).' (Feb 2014)

Fahma's campaign was carried out mainly on the internet.

Slide 36: Groups – 2 min

This slide highlights the work of YPSO – Young People Speak Out – the young people's branch of the UK action group FORWARD, which is based in London and Bristol.

FORWARD is committed to gender equality and safeguarding the rights of African girls and women.

They have a young people's group called YPSO – Young People Speak Out!

Slide 37-38: 28 Too Many – X min

The next two slides highlight the work of 28 Too Many. This is the charity responsible for producing this resource.

Slide 39: Action – 3 min

How could you help the anti-FGM campaign?

Ask the group for ideas

- Do a presentation
 - Post stuff about FGM on social media
 - Join groups like YPSO and like their page on Facebook
 - Put up a poster
 - Fundraise for an anti-FGM charity
 - Make a film and post it
-

Slide 40: The Girl Generation – 1 min

The Girl Generation is a global campaign that supports the Africa-led movement to end FGM.

Slide 41: End FGM!

The vision of The Girl Generation: **A WORLD WHERE FGM ENDS IN ONE GENERATION**

Let's be a part of it!

Total 50 min

References & Useful Links

16 ways to help end FGM – a booklet to inspire young people: <http://forwarduk.org.uk/what-we-do/resources/>

28 Too Many (<http://28toomany.org/>) – useful web site includes links to leaflets such as:

- *FGM – let's end it*, a basic leaflet summarising facts about FGM
 - *Make a difference*, which has ideas for campaigning, fundraising, etc.
 - *Ending Female Genital Mutilation resource pack* has all the basic facts
-

What the Government says: <https://www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation>

Government leaflet: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/.../FGM_leaflet_v4.pdf

Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation – an interagency statement, published by the World Health Organization, is a call to all to uphold the rights of girls and women:

www.un.org/.../statements.../Interagency_Statement_on_Eliminating_FG...

Forward FGM Information, Services & Support Guide, produced by the charity FORWARD, is another basic information leaflet which includes diagrams, maps and details of lots of support services:

https://www.gov.uk/.../system/.../FGM_info_guide_by_FORWARD.pdf

Advice on addressing FGM from PSHE association:

<https://pshe-association.org.uk/content.aspx?CategoryID=1193>

Link to another lesson plan which includes sample letters to send home: https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/resources_search_details.aspx?ResourceId=494&Keyword=&SubjectID=0&LevelID=0&ResourceTypeID=4&SuggestedUseID=0&campaignkw=SREcoveredlisting

'Female genital mutilation comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways.'

~ Statement from the World Health Organization, 2011

London Safeguarding Children Board has a resource that gives far more of the safeguarding approach to FGM: www.londonscb.gov.uk/fgm/

A recent study on the prevalence of FGM in England and Wales:

www.trustforlondon.org.uk/.../prevalence-of-female-genital-mutilation-i...

www.equalitynow.org/sites/.../FGM%20EN%20City%20Estimates.pdf

Excellent new and comprehensive report on FGM worldwide with good, brief video:

www.unicef.org/protection/57929_69881.html

Direct link to the report: www.unicef.org/media/files/UNICEF_FGM_report_July_2013_Hi_res.pdf

FORWARD are a leading anti FGM charity: <http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/>

The Girl Generation is the Africa-led movement to end FGM: <http://www.thegirlgeneration.org/>

Short drama showing a young girl's emotional struggle: www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzBNTtR7toE

Waris Dirie

In spite of my anger over what has been done to me, I don't blame my parents. I love my mother and father. My mother had no say-so in my circumcision, because as a woman she is powerless to make decisions. She was simply doing to me what had been done to her, and what had been done to her mother and her mother's mother. And my father was completely ignorant of the suffering he was inflicting on me. He knew that in our society, if he wanted his daughter to marry, she must be circumcised or no man would have her. My parents were both victims of their upbringing and cultural practices that have continued unchanged for thousands of years. But just as we know today that we can avoid disease and death by vaccinations, we know that women are not animals in heat, and their loyalty has to be earned with trust and affection rather than barbaric rituals. The time has come to leave the old ways and suffering behind.

I feel that God made my body perfect the way I was born. Then man robbed me, took away my power and left me a cripple. My womanhood was stolen. If God had wanted those body parts missing, why did he create them?

I just pray that one day no woman will have to experience this pain. It will become a thing of the past and the world will be safe for all women. What a happy day that will be, and that's what I'm working towards. In'shallah, if God is willing, it will happen.

~ From *Desert Flower: The Extraordinary Life of a Desert Nomad* by Waris Dirie 1998

Jaha Dukureh

<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/dec/13/fgm-my-daughter-will-never-be-cut-it-stops>

'Her father does not condemn her work; he barely comments on her headline-grabbing conference, due to start in two days. But he reminds her, sternly and repeatedly, that she must be respectful of her culture and guided by her religion. "Do not force anti-FGM on people," he warns. "Remember this is what your grandparents, parents and yourself went through. If you use force, people will not listen to you." Gambian culture insists on deference to one's elders, so Dukureh keeps her eyes lowered and says: "I will not do that. OK, Father."

'It is to challenge this kind of ignorance that Dukureh finds herself, several days after the conference, jolting along a potholed road to meet the woman who brought her into the world, and who cut her just days later.

'Sarjo, 63, lives in a simple, one-storey building on the outskirts of town. She was a trusted friend of Dukureh's mother, and remains close to her family. When Dukureh is ushered into her room, the old woman, regal in an ochre wrapper, a matching scarf in her hair, bursts into tears of joy. "My daughter is here, oh God here you are," she says, pulling Dukureh towards her.

'FGM is often described as child abuse. But in this room, the love displayed by the woman who carries it out is disorienting. Dukureh attempts to wade against the tide of affection, explaining that FGM is harmful. She asks why her old guardian still performs the ritual. Slightly confused, Sarjo answers: "It is our job and we get paid for doing it. Our parents did it before us, now we are doing it and then we pass it on to our children."

Fahma Mohamed

www.bristolpost.co.uk/Bristol-schoolgirl-Fahma-Mohamed.../story.html

'BRISTOL schoolgirl Fahma Mohamed has won her campaign which called on the Education Secretary Michael Gove to write to every school in England to ask them to help protect girls from female genital mutilation (FGM).

'Earlier this month, Fahma launched a petition calling on Mr Gove to write to every teacher in the country before the summer holidays, asking them to train teachers and parents about the horrors of FGM in a bid to help bring an end to the practice.

'Earlier this week Mr Gove met with Fahma, 17, from Barton Hill, and agreed to her demand.

'Now Schools will receive guidance before Easter, aimed at stopping "this very serious form of child abuse".'
