



# HM Government

6 February 2014 - International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation

**There is no justification for FGM - it is child abuse and it is illegal.**

This government is absolutely committed to preventing and ending this extremely harmful form of violence.

The government is clear that political or cultural sensitivities must not get in the way of uncovering and stopping this terrible form of abuse. The law in this country applies to absolutely everyone.

We want to empower girls and our vision is to see an end to FGM. At the same time we will work to ensure that those girls and women living with the consequences of FGM are given the specialised care and support they need.

FGM is not a problem that can be solved by government alone. Indeed, the progress that we have made so far would not have been possible without the commitment of the voluntary sector partners and frontline professionals who work on and campaign tirelessly on this issue.

Women and girls are increasingly speaking out, and diaspora leadership has played a critical role in getting this on the national agenda. The government is committed to supporting and enhancing these on-going efforts.

We undertake to build on this momentum and do all we can to protect girls and women from this abuse and end FGM.

We recognise that a joined-up approach across government and front-line agencies is needed, and tackling FGM forms a key commitment in the government's 'The Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls: Action Plan'.

Key achievements to date include:

- The **Home Office** has been awarded £250,000 funding from the European Commission to promote the national NSPCC FGM helpline, provide training for frontline professionals and support community engagement activity. It is also part-funding a study into the prevalence of FGM in the UK.
- The **Department of Health** has a programme of work to routinely record information relating to FGM, and then to collect, share and use this information to provide appropriate healthcare for girls and women, and support social services and the police in their work.
- **The Department for International Development** is leading a £35million flagship programme to support the Africa-led movement to end FGM, supporting work in 17 countries.
- The **Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)** is putting in place a robust framework to support the prosecution of FGM including prosecution leads in every CPS Area.
- The **Department for Education** is investing over £700,000 over 2 years in programmes of work led by the Victoria Climbié Foundation and AFRUCA to address safeguarding issues, including FGM, in BME communities.

Key future initiatives include:

- The **Ministry of Justice** will consider any recommendations arising from the CPS action plan on strengthening the criminal law on FGM and will also be seeking views on how a civil prevention order might work alongside the criminal legislation to protect potential victims of FGM.
- The **Home Office** is launching a new £100,000 FGM Community Engagement Initiative today. Voluntary sector organisations can bid for up to £10,000 to carry out community engagement work aimed at raising awareness of FGM.
- The **Department of Health** has announced that all acute hospitals will report information about the prevalence of FGM within their patient population each month, with the full report from this data return being available in the autumn.
- The **Department for Education** is taking forward major reforms of child protection processes and social work education in order to protect children from all forms of abuse, including FGM.
- **The Department for International Development**, as part of their broader programme, is funding a global social change campaign (which includes up to £1m to support UK based diaspora groups for efforts to end the practice in their countries of origin), and in 2014 will be launching a research programme to improve understanding of what works to end FGM.
- The **CPS** is working very closely with the police to identify girls and women at risk, or subject to, FGM and has agreed local protocols with every police force in the country to support a pro-active approach.



Norman Baker - Minister for Crime Prevention



Jane Ellison – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health




Oliver Heald - Solicitor General



Lynne Featherstone - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for International Development



Edward Timpson - Minister for Children and Families, Department for Education



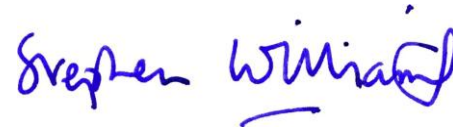
Alison Saunders – Director of Public Prosecutions, Crown Prosecution Service



Damian Green - Minister for Policing, Criminal Justice, and Victims



Rt. Hon Baroness Warsi - Senior Minister of State at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Minister for Faith and Communities, Department for Communities and Local Government



Stephen Williams - Minister for Communities, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government