

## **Response to Womankind Worldwide's campaign to end violence against Women and Girls**

Thank you for getting in touch regarding the UK's work to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG) overseas. As you may know, this issue is a top priority for me personally and for my Department. I am proud to be leading my Department's work on girls' and women's rights and, working with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Lynne Featherstone, on tackling violence against women and girls in particular.

The Department for International Development (DFID) has developed a strong vision for women and girls, a central pillar of which focuses on tackling violence. I am proud of the leadership role the UK has played on this issue, including the *Call to Action* event last November on protecting women and girls in emergencies, the *Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict* in June this year, and the *Girl Summit* to end female genital mutilation (FGM) and child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) - which was held in July. Each of these international events sought to mobilise global leaders and the wider public in order to end these horrific abuses of women and girls' rights.

With regard to ensuring VAWG is included as a strategic priority in DFID's Operational Plans, each country office will do its own contextual analysis and base its next Operational Plan on this work. We recently commissioned a piece of work, from an external body, to map and analyse all of our programmes that tackle violence against women and girls. The report shows that DFID currently funds 103 programmes that address VAWG in 29 countries around the world: a significant increase (63%) from the number of DFID programmes that tackled VAWG in 2012. Furthermore, the report found that the overall funding to programmes solely tackling VAWG has increased by 563% - from approximately £20m in 2012 to over £131m now. The VAWG team will continue to support country offices to scale up programming.

The mapping report also found that DFID is increasingly taking a holistic approach to tackle violence against women and girls with a sizeable increase in programmes to prevent VAWG alongside those that respond to and support survivors. DFID country offices work directly with a number of women's rights organisations. We also fund such organisations centrally through a range of mechanisms including DFID's Programme Partnership Agreements, the Civil Society Challenge Fund, the Human Rights and Democracy Fund and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. Furthermore, through expanded work on CEFM, we are exploring options to support civil society organisations, including women and youth activists, to promote work on CEFM, but also FGM and VAWG.

We welcome Womankind's work in this area and look forward to continued collaboration on tackling violence against women and girls in the future.

JUSTINE GREENING