



TOGETHER TO END FGM

How To...

use social
media to
communicate
about ending FGM



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thegirlgeneration.org



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About this Guide

This guide is a quick resource for activists and campaigners working to End FGM, on how to use social media to communicate about their work, and reach a broader audience.

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 use Social Media to communicate about ending FGM?

Social media connects the world, allowing us to communicate with a large number of people over a wide geographical area in real time.

Social media helps us to link end FGM campaigners working across continents to drive social change through the sharing of ideas, campaigns, photos, and stories.

The more people who post content on social media about ending FGM, the more the public will see that change is happening and that momentum is building across Africa and beyond.

Social Media helps us to...



Showcase positive stories of change from the movement to end FGM



Inspire other people to take action to end FGM



Make the case for more funding to end FGM



Reach a broader audience with awareness of what people and organisations are doing to end FGM in their contexts



Demonstrate the impact of The Girl Generation and its members

You can use social media to...



Publicise an event or activity



Tell a story of change from your work and community



Ask a question so you can understand more about something



Highlight an important issue or statistic

Social media tips

Use Images

Posts and tweets with images – photos or infographics – are far more likely to be noticed and shared. Tweets with images are twice as likely to be retweeted as ones without.

Be Imaginative Show Impact

Use photos, live tweeting, Instagram, Facebook Live, music, poetry, infographics, Instagram and Snapchat stories.

What have you achieved? Do you have a quote from someone who has changed their mind about FGM, new activists who have joined the movement, a statement from an influential person who is doing something to end FGM in your community? Is there a statistic which will get your audience's attention?

Tag, Tag, Tag

Let people know who is in your photos – they're much more likely to share your tweets and Facebook posts if they get notified when they are posted. At the same time, tag sparingly. Don't spam or annoy people!

Use Simple Language

Make it easy for all of your readers to understand – some people won't be fluent in English or French. Avoid jargon or acronyms as much as possible.

Be Correct

Make sure any evidence or data you quote is up-to-date and from a reliable source.

"One key lesson for me is to always double check your facts."
– Leyla Hussein

Balance

The number of characters or the size of the photo which will show up in social media feeds varies. Use the table below for more information. You can edit the size of photos using the Paint application on a PC or there are various apps on a smartphone.

Be Consistent

Test out different ways of posting the same content and increase the chances of your followers seeing your content by reposting multiple times.

Be Authentic

Speak from your heart and avoid overly formal language.

Proof Read

Take a few seconds to double check your grammar and spelling. Make sure people and place names are spelled correctly, and you are tagging the right Twitter handles.

Analytics





Look at the data to see what posts work well and replicate those. Simple, free software for managing and tracking your social media accounts are readily available online (e.g. Sprout, Hootsuite).

Timing

Use the table below to find the best time to reach your audience on the given social media platforms. Consider different time zones as well.



Platform Quick Guide

Social Media Format	Character length	Photo size (pixels)	Best time to post
 Facebook	<p>Maximum length of a status update: 63,206 characters</p> <p>Recommended length of a status update: less than 300 characters</p>	<p>Shared Image: 1200 x 630</p> <p>Highlighted Image: 1200 x 717</p> <p>Event Image: 1920 x 1080</p>	<p>6–8am</p> <p>2–5pm</p>
 Twitter	<p>Tweet: up to 140 characters</p> <p>Retweet with comment: up to 116 characters</p> <p>Link in a tweet uses 24 characters</p> <p>Image/GIF/video in a tweet uses 25 characters</p> <p>Use up to two hashtags per tweet</p>	<p>In-Stream Photo: minimum 440 x 220</p>	<p>1–3pm</p>
 Instagram	<p>Image caption: up to 2,200 characters, but it cuts off in users' feeds after three lines of text.</p>	<p>Photo thumbnails: 161 x 161</p> <p>Photo size: 1080 x 1080</p>	<p>8–9am</p>
 YouTube	<p>–</p>	<p>Video uploads: 1280 x 760 minimum HD</p>	

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.

Sample images



Sample posts





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