

Give Girls Choices for their Bodies and their Futures

In March, UN Women NC UK hosted an event looking at developments in the campaign across the world to end FGM. Comfort Momoh MBE – FGM Consultant and Public Health Specialist and Joy Clarke FGM Specialist Midwife shared with us the stories of women they had met and helped. Comfort and Joy who work tirelessly in the UK and abroad, believe the prevalence of FGM is marginally decreasing in most countries, but there is still a long way to go before zero tolerance can be celebrated. One of the takeaways from this motivating event was the need for constant vigilance.

For many young girls, it is a way of life, something they expect to happen to them and is very much part of the culture in which they live. Changing people's perceptions and attitudes about FGM is perhaps the biggest challenge. Comfort and many other specialists tell us that much more must be done to address the deeply held myths and beliefs in communities. They fuel this abhorrent practice that causes severe health issues and is a violation of human rights. Joy spoke about the young girls from babies to age 15 who are circumcised. Raising awareness and education are crucial she said if we are to safeguard young girls worldwide.

Lindsey Ahmet, a Senior Lecturer Midwifery, shared with us the mandatory reporting procedure, which comes with its own challenges, but will provide the data needed to track changes and developments.

The session provoked a very thoughtful and insightful debate including an account of FGM being practiced in India.

Worldwide, 70 million girls were born in 2015 alone. It is up to us to fulfil the promise of Planet 50-50 by 2030 so that these girls come of age with informed choices for their future, in a gender equal world.

Let's End FGM!

