

# Overall Strategy & Theory of Change Summary document

Submitted by Options on 18 December 2020



# Introduction to the Africa-led movement to end FGM/C

## Contributing to the SDGs

The UK Government (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office - FCDO) has a vision of a world free from the practice of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) by 2030, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It has established a programme to contribute to global efforts to achieve that vision: 'Support to the Africa-led movement (ALM) to end FGM/C'



## Accelerating the pace of change

This programme is building on the foundations of the first five-year investment: The Girl Generation and the Evidence to End FGM Research Programme (2013-2018). This 5-year programme will focus on **accelerating the pace of change** and achieving results to contribute to the vision in the SDGs.

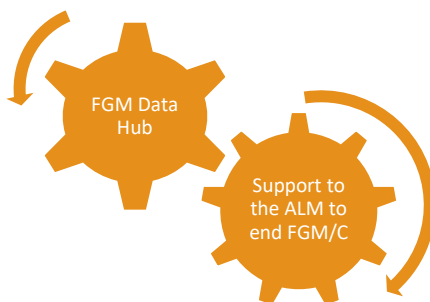


## Intended impact

The intended impact of this programme is an accelerated reduction in the practice of FGM/C in focus countries/regions by 2025. However, this programme is not only focused on reducing FGM/C. We envision a world where girls and women can exercise their power and rights, have expanded choice and agency, and be free from all forms of violence, including FGM/C.

## OUR VISION:

A world where girls and women can exercise their **power** and rights, have expanded **choice** and **agency**, and be free from violence including FGM/C



## Consortia

Phase II is composed of two consortia: 'Support to the ALM to End FGM/C' and 'The FGM Data Hub: Data and Measurement Support to the ALM to end FGM/C' working in close collaboration. This programme will support and build the capacity of the already existing Africa-led Movement to end FGM/C at **multiple levels and at scale**. The programme is not working in isolation, but works in partnership with the rest of the FGM/C community at all levels, including UN agencies.

## Adaptive programming & learning

An adaptive programming approach is taken at heart. The overall strategy and ToC is a living document that will be reviewed multiple times and updated based on evidence and learnings coming out of this programme.

# The building blocks of our Theory of Change

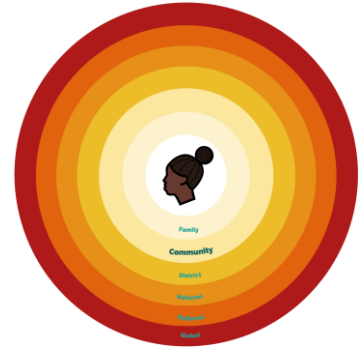


## 1. Girl-Centered Programming

Girls are placed at the heart of our programme design, implementation and evaluation. FGM/C is a practice that affects and impacts girls and therefore we aim to centralise their voices.

## 2. Socio-ecological model

A Political Economy Analysis (PEA) Ecology lens has been applied throughout the programme. This model begins with understanding the girls' experiences and vulnerabilities. These personal experiences and vulnerabilities are shaped by gendered dynamics existing at multiple levels, including: (extended) family, community, district, national, regional and global level. Change at one level is not sustainable if not replicated throughout.



## 3. Community-led

The ALM is underpinned by the evidence that social movements must be built from the ground up. Grassroots organisations are in the best position to understand the dynamics of change around FGM/C decision-making, identify key influencers and how best to mitigate against backlash to change. This program will therefore be led by their expertise in designing projects.








## 4. Changing gender norms

FGM/C is a manifestation of gender inequality and a human rights violation. The programme is underpinned by the idea of changing gender norms so that FGM/C is no longer considered necessary or desirable, and so is no longer carried out. Fundamental to this, therefore, is a shift in gender relations and how women and girls are valued in their communities and societies. Therefore, 'social attitudes' is defined as a shift towards gender equity which includes the abandonment of FGM/C. The evidence shows that a combination of approaches (a "multi-pronged" approach) is needed to bring about this change in gender norms and behaviour.

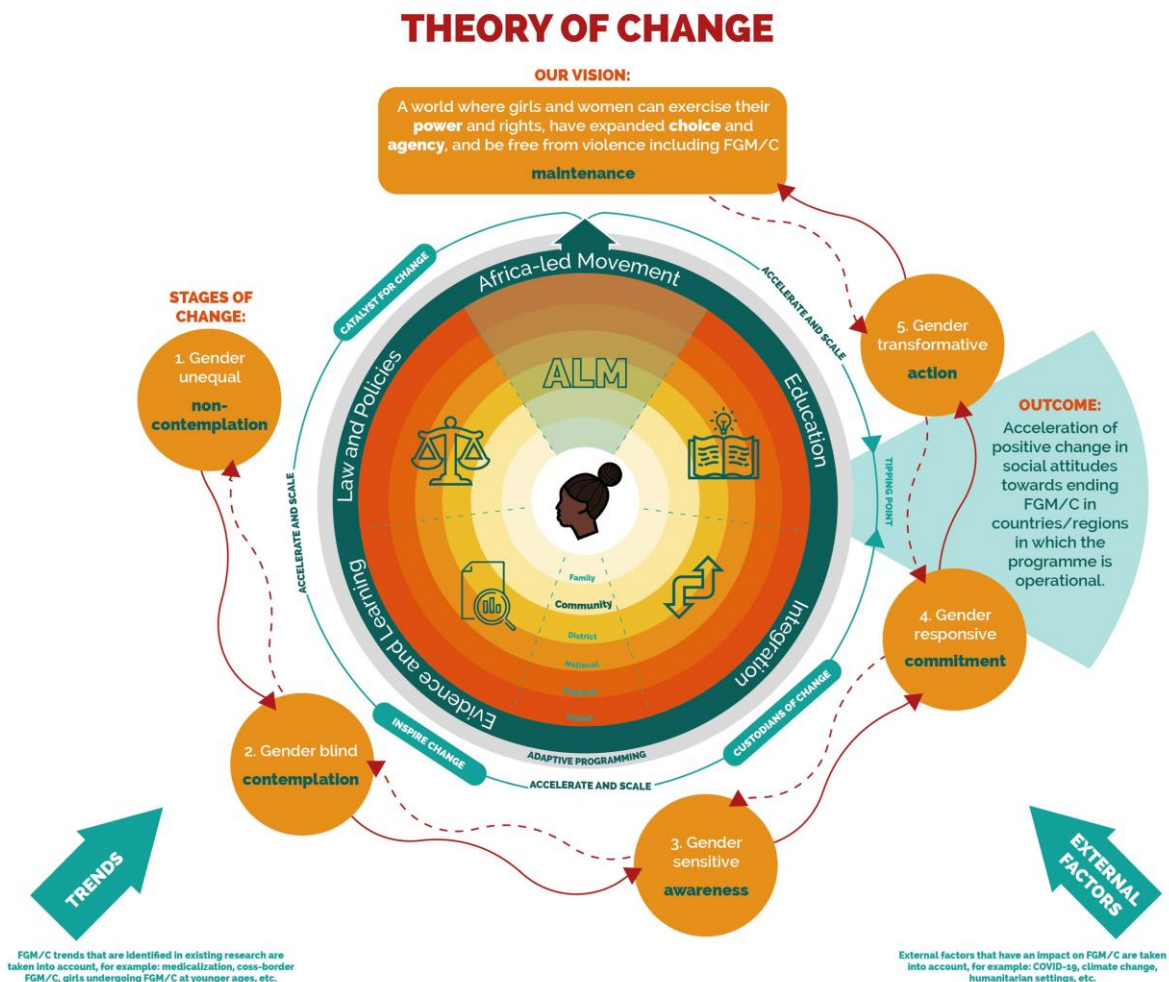
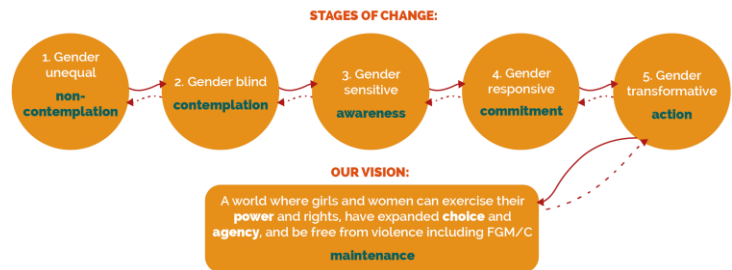
## 5. Pathways of Change

We have developed 5 causal pathways of change that indicate how we could accelerate positive change. These pathways are evidence-based and interconnected in many different ways.

-  1. This pathway centres on the role of the **ALM** that consists of a diverse network of 'change agents,' including activists and other stakeholders.
-  2. This pathway considers the role of both formal **education**, and educational programmes in the reduction of FGM/C.
-  3. This pathway focuses on **integration** of FGM/C interventions into existing development programs to promote gender equality.
-  4. This pathway on **evidence and learning** merges the FGM Data Hub into the overall ToC. Evidence-based programming is important for improving outcomes and informing efficient use of available resources to achieve those outcomes.
-  5. This pathway focuses on the **law and policies** and 'accountability' to address FGM/C. Besides serving as a deterrent, laws and policies provide enabling environments to safely implement other interventions to end the practice.

## 6. Stages of Change

A 'stages of change' approach is employed in acknowledgment of the reality that change in FGM/C practice is complex and is not instantaneous, but happens along a continuum gradually over time. People go through different stages before reaching sustainable new behaviour. In order to see a complete end to FGM/C, we need to see a critical mass and **tipping point** in attitudes towards wholesale rejection. Importantly, our model shows that change is not linear. Instead, change is gradual, continuous and dynamic. The progress will be different in different contexts and we may go forward then backward (the dotted line) depending on what is happening in the context (which can also be out of the ALM's control, e.g. COVID-19).



\* This overall programme strategy and ToC has been developed by Dr. Annemarie Middelburg, on behalf of Options, working collaboratively with all consortium partners of 'Support to the Africa-led Movement to end FGM/C', led by the Leadership Team in Nairobi, the FGM Data Hub and STAGE. A clear process was in place with a strong focus on consultation, short feedback loops and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.