

## **FGM Action Research workshop notes**

### **28 Too Many – Louise Robertson**

- FGM is a global issue
- Important to know your data and community in depth – need to know ethnicity
- FGM has a multitude of different issues and reasons for its practice so needs to be approached in different ways : e.g is perpetrated & justified by reasons of perceived beauty, health, to control women's sexuality, as a punishment. Therefor it needs to be tackled with reference to all those issues : health, human rights, gender equality, etc
- 28 Too Many have detailed country specific information to help build plans

### **Action Research – Ebony Riddell Bamber , Community Engagement**

- Has to be conducted by experienced people in the community
- Reason is to come up with concrete proposals
- It addressed two questions:  
What is happening out there?  
What can we do?

### **Discussion points**

Important to work with local organisations ( e.g. African Advocacy Foundation and World of Hope) to understand existing knowledge

Need to establish what , and if, we need to know more about our local community

The statutory agencies have lead responsibility, but what about dialogue with communities

What about leadership from existing communities . eg Somlia community, what are the barriers to this happening

What is going to bring about cultural and attitudinal change

Some practicing communities are emergent in this country

African Advocacy Foundation have community champions from Somali and Sierra Leona

Community groups have managed to engage successfully with the Muslim community, partly as they wanted to disassociate from the practice given high profile media association of FGM and Islamic faith – a statement was issued clarifying that FGM is not part of Muslim faith - however less successful engaging Christian community eg Nigerian Pentecostal churches

FGM is being driven by older aunties ( female elders) and faith leaders

Community change is more effective if there is a process of development that involves and empowers members of the community.

Discussion on building resilience with children in schools via PSHE curriculum & Pastor Power versus the responsibility for change lying with adults & wider community

Community action research could address some of these issues and questions.

A multifaceted approach is important eg law, persecution, child protection, information, with community & attitudinal change being one of the most important levers for change to end FGM.