According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), female genital mutilation (FGM) refers to any procedure involving total or partial removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genitals for non-therapeutic reasons such as custom and cultural, religious, social or other beliefs. By causing ‘an irreversible reduction of human capacity’, FGM constitutes an extreme form of gender-based violence.

It is estimated that at least 200 million women and girls currently live with the consequences of this practice. Carried out on women and girls of various ages from new-borns to women about to be married, FGM is prevalent in at least 28 countries in Africa, some communities in the Middle East and Asia, and certain ethnic groups in Central and South America. Increasingly, almost all countries are facing the challenge of FGM within diasporas.
About
28 Too Many

28 Too Many is a research organisation created to end FGM in the 28 African countries where it is practised and in other countries across the world where there are diasporas of practising communities.

Founded in 2010 and registered as a charity in 2012, 28 Too Many provides a strategic framework where knowledge and tools enable in-country anti-FGM campaigners and organisations to be successful in making sustainable changes to end FGM.

We are building an information base that includes detailed country profiles for each country in Africa (and its diasporas) that practises FGM. We campaign and advocate locally and internationally to bring change and support community programmes to end FGM.
28 Too Many has firmly established its reputation with both influencers and grassroots advocates as a leading anti-FGM voice for Africa. 28 Too Many research is used by United Nations agencies, governments, law enforcement, international donors, global non-profit organisations and local activists to help shape their ongoing work to end FGM in Africa and the diasporas.

**Effecting Change By:**

1. **Collating and interpreting data (research)**
   We present data in a number of ways, primarily in country profiles and thematic papers, in addition to research products such as factsheets, as required. To support our aims, we make all research freely available globally.

2. **Influencing influencers (top-down approach)**
   Using the data we have collated, we engage influencers, encouraging them to advocate for change (of policy, legislation, etc.) within their spheres of influence.

3. **Supporting community change (bottom-up approach)**
   Based on our research, we develop and distribute advocacy materials, training tools and curricula that local organisations can use to bring effective change at a community level.

We believe that, as part of a bigger movement, change happens when policy and legislation (top down) align with community action and education (bottom up). Our approach is to play a catalytic role in both and to base our interventions on solid ethical research.
Too Many were also a support network – this was one of the most useful things about them... they share information with other campaigners – it is remarkable that they are open to share their data and their work.

Alimatu Dimonekene – Anti FGM Campaigner
As I write this reflection at the end of the UK Summer and as every country is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, I feel this year’s theme is about enduring change – despite.

It has been a challenging time for all in different ways, and my heart goes out to all our team and global partners affected by the virus in so varied ways. I was diagnosed with COVID-19 before the UK locked down, after our trip to UN Commission on the status of Women (UNCSW) was cancelled at a day’s notice by the US Government, backed by UK ministers. I have shielded for the entire year, on health grounds.

Our charity, as many, was affected by a significant reductions in donations. Meanwhile our work continued apace as the protection of vulnerable women and girls came even more into focus, as they were not able to benefit from the protection of schools and support systems. Reports of abuse including FGM have alarmingly increased by over 50%. In Kenya we know girls were cut at home in order to save the costs of feeding a girl.

We celebrated International Women’s Day by launching our Model Law Report, and within the year, saw it used by stakeholders, NGO’s and activists particularly in Sudan where we rejoiced at FGM being criminalised in Sudan in April 2020. Later Somalia’s Puntland also criminalised FGM using our Model Law.
In the spring, Mama Sylla, an FGM survivor and Board member, and I produced a short film on FGM for Press Red, entitled “Turn the silence off”, featuring author Elaine Storkey.

In the early part of lockdown, we switched the focus of our work to delivering and participating more online. As a remotely based team with three members overseas, we were well positioned for this. We worked closely with the Metropolitan Police, UN and government bodies to assess the risk to girls in lockdown away from the protection of schools and support systems.

Our partners in Africa told us of girls being subjected to FGM pre child marriage at times of financial hardship for families, having already been forced to abruptly end their education due to lockdown. All abuse, including FGM, has soared behind closed doors as a direct result of lockdowns. Funding has been redirected, and these financial cuts will be felt for generations, long after the virus settles.

I committed to help drive a fundraiser for our charity #Challenge 28 – by cycling on my static bike around the edge of Africa, for 28 minutes daily for 243 days! Many people joined the challenge, and we raised over £14k, matched to £28k – which kept us going as a charity.
I was pleased to speak virtually at CMS’s conference in Wales where I shared about how the law change in Sudan was influenced by our Model Law Report. It means Fatima, who I met in Darfur in 2005 aged 10 and now aged 25 years, with a daughter aged 15, can protect her granddaughter with an anti FGM law.

In the autumn, we were pleased to be commissioned by Plan International to undertake a design and review of their FGM programmes. We then delivered spring workshops and a report in the English and French languages on 'What works well'.

As winter approached we were busy as ever with the advocacy and communications of the 16 days of Activism, collaborating with Kajiado County, Kenya.

Spring heralded a CMS Southern Conference, and an array of FGM events for Zero Tolerance Day in February and International Women’s Day in March. I attended the launch of some FGM animations hosted by the Royal College of Midwives, and was interviewed by Restored, as they celebrated their 10th Anniversary and featured me as an inspiring woman. CMS did the same covering: 'Inspiring Women choosing to challenge: challenging social norms'.
UNCSW session 65 was held online based in New York. Myself and the team attended many events.

Our financial year ended with an online UNCSW – as again no one could attend in person in New York. My team and I attended many events, and I spoke at a key event on research and statistics in Africa and the diasporas.

Looking ahead to 2021/2, I spent all of 2019 writing a legacy book 'Overcoming – My fight against FGM'. This covers the twenty year journey from working in aid work to meeting FGM and changing my life’s direction to set up 28 Too Many. After editing in winter and spring this year, it will be published in June, on the Day of the Girl Child, supporting the theme of “My Voice, our Equal Future”.

As I finish, 28 Too Many and all our team, partners and collaborators have endured change – despite. I am proud of how we raised funds to survive.

Their contributions and voices are not forgotten, as those leaving passed on the baton to their successors, as we all will do one day. Only through the hard work of all have we achieved as much as we have, funded by loyal and very generous donors, to help make sustainable change – despite.

It leaves me to thank David, who stepped up to be Treasurer then Chair. We welcomed new and said goodbye to other colleagues, board members, volunteers and interns moving on.

Dr Ann-Marie Wilson
Sharing about the book 'Overcoming - my fight against FGM' on multiple radio stations including UCB, BBC London and Premier.
The Board's Thoughts

It remains a real privilege for each of us on the Board of 28 Too Many to be involved with the ongoing task of ending FGM.

Through the endeavours of our excellent team, and our connections with other partners and organisations, 28 Too Many has continued to make a significant contribution to this ongoing work.

We’re not a large charity, and we don’t have the biggest budget, yet with our exceptional team and our loyal donors and ambassadors, 28 Too Many has continued to make a substantive and significant difference.

Our plans for the year were, of course, disrupted and altered by the Covid-19 pandemic. The focus of our work changed as more of our advocacy, training, and campaigning moved online.

Despite the challenges this posed, the team adapted well and we have continued to engage with a good array of stakeholders.

I continue to be consistently encouraged by the way in which organisations as diverse as the Home Office, the police, Plan International, and local churches have sought out our research and expertise.

The knowledge and understanding that 28 Too Many brings is clearly valued, and most importantly used, which is exactly what we want. Whether it is through our updated country reports, short reports, mobile app, or another means, we remain determined to see this research available for anyone and everyone who in turn can use it to play their part in ending FGM.
The year ends with us being in better heart than I might have anticipated. Our donors and supporters have enabled us to continue our work and we are in a good financial position as we move into the forthcoming year. Ann-Marie’s own contribution to fundraising and encouraging donations is not to be underestimated, and this is just one of the ways in which Ann-Marie makes such a difference to all we do. I’m glad that Ann-Marie has been able to give time to writing ‘Overcoming’, and I believe that the 28 Too Many story told within its pages will inspire many.

Around the Board table, during 2020 we bid farewell to Yemi Garuba and Sharmista Michaels. We’re grateful to them both for all of the input and insight that they brought to our work, especially Yemi, who had served the Board for some years, most recently as Vice Chair.

At the same time, we were delighted during the year to welcome Dominique Carrie, Dimiana Farag, and Joanna Dunbar-Webb as new Trustees. They each bring skills and experiences that have added to the depth and strength of the Board and we look forward to working with them into the future.
On behalf of the Board, I express our sincerest thanks to all our fantastic donors, volunteers, and supporters for all they've done and continue to do. We also continue to count our blessings in respect of our wonderful team who remain a joy to work with and who produce such excellent work.

Finally, my thanks go to Ann-Marie for the way in which she resolutely continues to motivate and galvanise us all to keep going and keep pushing to end FGM. The 28 Too Many community is quite exceptional, and I remain confident that together we will continue to make a real difference into the future.

D. Mayne
Rev. David Mayne (Board Chair)
The COVID-19 global pandemic had huge impact on 28 Too Many and it’s research projects, yet, we continued to produce quality research this year:

**Country Profile Update: FGM in Somalia and Somaliland**

According to new data released in 2020 analysed by 28 Too Many for our *Country Profile Update: FGM in Somalia and Somaliland*, the prevalence of FGM among women aged 15–49 in Somalia and Somaliland is 99.2%. This new data suggests a slight increase in prevalence since our previous report based on 2006 and 2011 data.

At over 99%, FGM prevalence in Somalia remains the highest in the world, with available statistics suggesting there has been very little change over time.

Pharaonic cutting (Type III in the WHO definitions) continues to be the most common type of FGM self-reported by women in Somalia. The data suggests that there might be some evidence of a small shift towards Sunni (Type II) in younger generations.
The report finds that support for the continuation of FGM is strong among women aged 15–49 in Somalia and Somaliland (76.4%). While almost three-quarters (72%) of women aged 15–49 believe that FGM is a requirement of their religion.

The trends in belief surrounding FGM and religion strongly mimic the trends in support for the continuation of FGM, suggesting that religion is one of the primary reasons the practice continues in Somalia and Somaliland. Altering this perception by gaining the support of religious leaders may be a route to reducing FGM prevalence.

The Covid-19 pandemic also appears to have increased the urgency of the practice of FGM in the country and perhaps caused women to fall back on the comfort of tradition and religious beliefs.

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**Country Profile Update: FGM in Tanzania**

We also published an update to our *Country Profile: FGM in Tanzania* in 2020/21. Our analysis of the latest available data shows that there is a downward trend in the prevalence of FGM in Tanzania among women aged 15–49.

The prevalence is 10%, whereas it was 17.9% in 1996, suggesting an over 40% drop in that period.
Although it is likely that, in part, this reflects a true decrease in the practice, in part it may also be due to under-reporting of FGM by the women surveyed, especially since the practice became illegal in 1998. In the Tanzanian context most girls are cut either in their first year of life or around/after puberty at age 13 or above. Most of these girls’ experience Type II FGM.
Plan International commissioned 28 Too Many to write a report regarding what works well.

A Guide for Designing FGM-Specific Social Norms Change Programming

Bringing together our expert knowledge from our previous report, Social Norms and FGM, 28 Too Many worked with Plan International to develop *A Guide for Designing FGM-Specific Social Norms Change Programming*. The guide was workshopped with Plan International staff from across Africa and will guide their organisational response to FGM in the continent.

Key lessons from the report included the following:

- Importance of data and research
- Detailed stakeholder mapping
- Localised tailored responses
- Community dialogues that enable effective program design.

The report will be released by Plan International in English and French later in 2021. Once launched, the guide will be made available to other FGM campaigners and organisations through the 28 Too Many website.
Short Report Series
In 2019/20 we published two more Short Reports for Yemen and Iraqi Kurdistan expanding our research beyond the African context and together with our previously published Short Reports and Country Profiles making reliable data accessible for 31 countries.

Making our Reports Accessible
In addition to new and updated research reports, we completed over 20 new translations this year. Significantly, we expanded our translation beyond French and Arabic this year to include reports in Amharic (Ethiopia) Portuguese (Guinea-Bissau), Sorani (Iraq), Somali (Somalia) and Swahili (Tanzania).
Research Impact

Last year we commissioned an independent impact assessment of our work. The assessment included workshops with our team, desktop reviews of our impact and in-depth interviews with 12 stakeholders including local FGM activists and community organisations.

Key findings from the assessment included:

In particular, the activists and local organisations interviewed highlighted the value of 28 Too Many’s partner-centric approach. They consistently noted that it encourages them as individual activists and facilitates their work. The interviewees felt that our focus on sharing knowledge and resources is an important part of that, but that its personalised support (such as helping them organise logistics for an awareness raising activity or providing mentoring for a project) also helps sustain their partnerships.

Interviewees were very positive about their engagement with 28 Too Many, highlighting the valuable role we play in collating information, making it accessible to a broad audience, and supporting in the individual priorities of local activist and FGM organisations.
Four local organisations reported that the FGM ribbon had been one of the most useful things shared by 28 Too Many. They explained that this is a unifying symbol that transcends language and is an easy, visual way to express a position on FGM and belonging to the movement.

One of the primary ways that we track the impact of our research around the world is where it is utilised and referenced. Our research continues to be quoted in the media, including Reuters and The New York Times, as well as in academic papers and key reports from organisations such as the World Bank and UNFPA.
When you talk about FGM and issues around it, most will mention 28 Too Many as their first reply. Dr Chris Ugwu, Campaigner
This year our social media branding has been refreshed in line with our website and we have developed stronger engagement on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and launched a new LinkedIn profile.

Our social media continues to support activists and organisations by highlighting what is happening at local, regional and national levels, along with promoting the work they are doing. We have been busy promoting our work too and making it available to influencers and activists.

**Amazon Kindle**

All of our reports are now available on Amazon Kindle. As new translations are completed these will also be uploaded to Kindle later in the year.
Android app
In 2020/21 we developed and launched an Android app that makes our valuable research available to campaigners even when they are offline in the field. The application is available on Android since that is the most common platform used in Africa. It allows users to view all of our summary research content in English, French and Arabic and even download full reports to their mobile device. The app is being used regularly by activists in the field.

Any time I need research and data about FGM, my first point of call is 28 Too Many.
Anti FGM Campaigner
UN Commission on the Status of Women
Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the UN Commission on the Status of Women, Session 65 took place online this year.

Dr. Ann-Marie Wilson, 28 Too Many Founder and Executive Director, attended 2 weeks of sessions including one where activists, organisations and survivors came together to pledge their commitment to help #endfgm by working together.

Ann-Marie presented 28 Too Many’s research on FGM in Africa and FGM in Europe.

The Agreed Conclusions of the 65th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women acknowledges that the COVID-19 pandemic is deepening pre-existing inequalities that perpetuate multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, as well as racism, stigmatisation and xenophobia.

Yet, recent data show that women have been mostly absent from COVID-19 government task forces around the world – women make up only 24 percent of the 225 task force members examined across 137 countries.
The Agreed Conclusions make strong recommendations for concrete measures, which can enable women's role in decision-making, for instance:

- Changing laws and policies that discriminate against women and hinder their equal participation in public life;
- Innovative measures to promote women as leaders, executives and managers, in all areas;
- Setting targets and timelines to achieve gender balance in all government branches through relevant measures such as quotas, appointments, or training programmes;
- Encouraging political parties to nominate as many women as men candidates and promote equal leadership in their structures.
COVID-19
28 Too Many provided two to four weekly up-to-date briefings on the effects of COVID-19 on GBV including FGM in Africa to the Harmful Practices Working Group (HPWG) of the UK Police and the Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief (CALFB) committee throughout the pandemic. The impact of COVID-19 has been felt most acutely by women and girls who were at risk of FGM and where the pandemic has exacerbated this risk due to economic factors.
Despite Covid-19, due to two key generous donors and the #Challenge 28 fundraiser, our income increased this year, increasing our cash reserves which remain above our planned operating budget. The majority of our income comes from individual, voluntary donors rather than specifically solicited grants. We were commissioned as consultants for the work we undertook for Plan International.

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<th>Incoming Resources</th>
<th>Apr 19-Mar 20</th>
<th>Apr 20-Mar 21</th>
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<td>Voluntary Donations</td>
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<td>Restricted Funds</td>
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<td>Consultancy Income</td>
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<td>Total Income</td>
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<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Apr 19-Mar 20</th>
<th>Apr 20-Mar 21</th>
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<tr>
<td>Charitable Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governance Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Operating Expenses</td>
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<td>£93,752</td>
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28 Too Many gratefully acknowledges the many individual donors who share our vision and give generous donations to fund our work. We also thank the charitable trusts and organisations that have contributed to our work, including Church Mission Society (CMS), the Women’s World Day of Prayer and the many other donors and philanthropists who wish to remain anonymous, yet made our work possible.

28 Too Many wishes to thank Plan International for their partnership with us on the 'A Guide for Designing FGM - Specific Social Norms Change Programming research.'

We also wish to extend our thanks to the many other individuals and organisations who offer support, expert advice and pro bono services. Your help greatly encourages us, and we are grateful to everyone who assists our work, especially CARE, CMS, Grant Thornton UK LLP, LandMark Chartered Accountants, Helena Sharpstone and Lawrence Ding.

Finally, we want to thank all the 28 Too Many volunteers who contribute in so many ways.