

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions**Africa Advocacy Foundation (AAF)****Adv: Geraldine Page****Base: Lewisham****Amount requested: £74,273****Benefit: Lewisham, Lambeth, Southwark, Greenwich and Croydon****Amount recommended: £74,280****The Applicant**

Africa Advocacy Foundation (AAF) is a charity established in 1996. Until March 2016 it was registered as both an unincorporated charity and as a company limited by guarantee. In December 2015, in order to simplify the structure of the organisation, the trustees decided to cease its previous registrations and incorporate AAF with the Charity Commission as a CIO. AAF runs several projects focused on HIV prevention and support; training for employment; mental health wellbeing; and educating communities on the harmful impacts of female genital mutilation (FGM). The charity also runs targeted work with senior citizens and young people, and annually reaches over 7,000 people originating from African countries

The Application

The application seeks two years continuation funding to support young women aged 16 to 24 whose mental health has been adversely affected from having undergone FGM, initially funded by you in March 2016. The project offers one-to-one support, specialist counselling, and facilitated group work, including provision of arts-based therapeutic activities.

The Recommendation

AAF is a well-established charity with a good track record in working to prevent the practice of FGM within South London's African communities. This project addresses a gap in provision to support survivors over the mental health impacts of FGM. The project fits well with your Positive Transitions programme and funding is recommended:

£74,280 over two years (£36,920, £37,360) towards a part-time salary (21hrs d/p/w), project costs and overheads of a project to support young women in addressing the psychological impact of female genital mutilation.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
18/03/2016	£106,500 over three years (£35,700; £35,500; £35,300) towards a part-time salary (3.5 d/p/w), project costs and overheads of a project to support young women in addressing the psychological impact of female genital mutilation.

Background and detail of proposal

FGM is a harmful practice that involves partial or total removal of the female external genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM has been illegal in the United Kingdom (UK) since 1985, with the law being strengthened in 2003 to prevent girls travelling from the UK and undergoing FGM abroad. The estimated prevalence of FGM in south London is highest nationwide i.e. Southwark 4.7%; Lambeth 3.2%, Lewisham 2.5%, Greenwich 3.0%, Wandsworth 1.6%, Croydon 1.4, Bexley 1.2% compared to

2.1% in London and 0.5% in England and Wales. These boroughs also have the highest population of African migrants including unaccompanied minors. The health impacts of FGM can be lifelong and severe. These include urinary and kidney problems, infertility, pain during sex, and serious complications at birth. Less attention has been given to the psychological impact. Research on FGM-practising African communities indicates similar levels of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as in adult survivors of early childhood abuse. Depression, anxiety, flashbacks, and issues stemming from difficulty with sexual relationships are reported to be common.

AAF has successfully engaged and supported 300 young FGM survivors over the past 3 years and trained over 120 advocates who continue to facilitate FGM conversations within families and community social networks. (Funding from City Bridge Trust 2016-2019 and MOPAC Victims Fund 2016-2018). Some FGM survivors supported have confided that they are also victims of sexual abuse and exploitation, intimidation and forced marriage. The project will work collaboratively with other agencies to put in place supportive structures to address their complex needs including language, discrimination and social exclusion to reduce the risk of further abuse.

Financial Information

The accounts show a stable level of income increasing moderately year on year. AAF holds just below its reserves policy of three months of its expenditure. The trustees are aware and acknowledge that the operations and expenditure of the organisation are increasing, thus affecting its target to maintain sufficient levels of free reserves in line with the policy. To mitigate this risk the organisation has put in place a strategy which includes: renting out part of its office space, providing accredited FGM training for frontline professionals and partnership bidding for local authority contracts.

Year end as at 31st March	2018 Examined Accounts £	2019 Draft Accounts £	2020 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	358,063	454,269	555,176
- % of Income confirmed as at 17/6/19	N/A	100%	70%
Expenditure	(335,945)	(434,159)	(518,559)
Total surplus/(deficit)	22,118	20,110	36,617
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	11,291	16,313	30,151
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	10,827	3,797	6,466
	22,118	20,110	36,617
Cost of Raising Funds	0	4,650	6,500
- % of income	0.0%	1.0%	1.2%
Total expenditure	335,945	434,159	518,559
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	85,723	89,520	95,986
No of months of total expenditure	3.1	2.5	2.2
Reserves policy target	83,986	108,540	129,640
No of months of total expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	1,737	(19,020)	(33,654)