

UK





UBELE **YVONNE FIELD**

yvonne.field@ubele.org

Twitter @ubeleinitiative

Instagram: Ubeleinitiative

Facebook: Ubeleinitiative

Short Description of the Partner

The Ubele Initiative is an African Diaspora led intergenerational social enterprise founded in 2014. Our primary mission is to help build more sustainable communities across the UK. Ubele in Swahili means 'The Future'.

Ubele has been developed through bottom up, community-based approach. Although African Diaspora led, we have a culturally diverse team and support a wide range of communities, community-based organisations and groups.

The situation in the UK

Sex Trafficking or Sexual Exploitation is a human rights violation and it can happen to anyone, adult women, young girls, men and boys are all at risk. The victims are hidden from view, and the impact is huge, both on human lives and the economy, with estimates putting its cost to the UK at as much as £4.3 billion in 2016/17. Hundreds of vulnerable women, predominantly from Eastern Europe, are being supplied by trafficking gangs into residential properties to be sexually exploited by British men. Source: Annual UK Government Report on Modern Slavery 2018. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/>

government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/749346/2018_UK_Annual_Report_on_Modern_Slavery.pdf

The UK has some of the toughest Modern Slavery laws in the world and the Modern Slavery Act, introduced by Theresa May in 2015, has given law enforcement agencies the tools to they need to tackle modern slavery and identify victims online, including maximum life sentences for perpetrators and enhanced protection for victims. Although the Modern Slavery Act was a step in the right direction, it is too heavily focused on policing, and doesn't provide protection for the victims. As a result, many are not recognised as victims and not supported properly. Many are treated as immigration offenders rather than victims of a serious crime. They are also less likely to act as witnesses in court and help prosecute the traffickers. Source: Slavery Today: Anti-Slavery. <https://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/slavery-uk/>

The largest-ever modern slavery ring uncovered in the UK has been broken up after a three-year investigation into its activities. Some of its 400 victims worked for as little as 50p a day. Their labour earned millions for members of a criminal gang led by a Polish criminal family, which preyed on the homeless, ex-prisoners and alcoholics from Poland. The gang tricked and then trafficked vulnerable men and women – ranging in age from 17 to over 60 – to Britain with the promise of gainful employment but instead housed them in squalor and used them as what a judge described as “commodities”. The gang were jailed on Friday 5th July 2019. Ben Quinn Guardian Newspaper 5th July <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jul/05/charity-and-police-break-up-uks-largest-modern-slavery-ring>

FORWARD

SARAH'S STORY

Naana Otoo-Oyortey MBE
Toks Okeniyi (Head of UK Programmes
and Operations)
Suite 4.7 Chandelier Building
8 Scrubs Lane, London, NW10 6RB
020 89504000
forward@forwarduk.org.uk

Introduction: background situation on the topic

Sara (25 years old) a newly married bride came to the UK, for her very first time, to join her husband. Her marriage was a traditional arranged marriage. She had not met her husband in person but was excited at the prospect of coming to the UK and having the opportunity of pursuing her career. Sara was referred to our services from the organization Refuge which supported victims of domestic abuse. Throughout the 8 months of her short marriage, Sara had suffered from severe emotional and physical abuse by her husband. The shock that she endured from her husband, left her dumbfounded. When she came to FORWARD, she was constantly crying, suffering from nightmares, panic attacks and loss of appetite. The longest time she slept was for 2 hours, she would then awake, frightened, as if someone was strangling her. The fear of her ex-husband was extreme. She was confident that if he found her, he would kill her.

The abuse began from the second day of their marriage. Unable to consummate the marriage due to Sara having

had FGM Type III, left Sara's husband feeling frustrated and angry. He began hurling abuse at her, shaming her, treating her as if she was his servant, to cook and clean for him. He forced her to do acts of sex on him that left Sara feeling mortified. He made her feel that something was detrimentally wrong with her.

Sara suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). She had poor self-esteem and poor confidence in herself. She would say "I feel so broken and damaged". Sara had no way to return back to her country. Her ex-husband had spread rumors about how she was not a 'virgin' when he had married her. Her older brother vowed to kill her if he ever saw her again. She had brought shame and dishonor to their family.

Sara felt she had lost everything in this marriage. Her family had turned against her, she was also tied to her ex-husband by the spousal visa. Through her solicitor and FORWARD's support we provided a letter to the Home Office to support her application. She was granted a visa to remain on compassionate grounds. She commented how FORWARD staff made her feel like she was part of the family. Everyone would greet her with warmth and kindness.

Services offered by the organization or the project (700 min - 1000 max)

- Training and leadership development- accredited & tailored training to professionals; leadership training to young women & community champions; capacity development & mentoring
- Policy advocacy & public awareness: conducting participatory research, developing education materials,

delivering school awareness sessions, supporting youth advocacy & annual youth forum, engaging policy makers & organising public events

- Outreach & community support: peer to peer group support, coffee mornings; mobilising, supporting community educators & community champions including supervision support
- Specialist services & provision of information & advice through sign posting & referrals, provision of specialist advice through telephones & face to face, counselling & family education sessions;
- Partnership development & collaboration through developing long-term partnerships
- Developing evidence to inform & shape policies and practice that meet the needs of BME VAWG survivors, particularly African women and girls.
- A short film about FORWARDS work https://youtu.be/cZ_9bybCQWM

Advice for other organization working in the same field

Tackling FGM within Communities requires:

- Partnerships
- Providing safe spaces
- Supporting affected women
- Effective and sensitive Media engagement
- Engaging Religious leaders
- Building bridges with frontline health workers
- Engaging Community champions in the design and delivery of services
- Community outreach events and working with men

LEAVING IT INTACT WOMEN IN SAFE HANDS (WISH)

Mrs Dorcas Olayemi Amusan-Fagborun. MBE
CEO

info@peacemaker-international.org
West Bowling Centre, Clipstone street, Bradford,
West Yorkshire BD58EA
www.peacemaker-international.org
Email: info@peacemaker-international.org
Tel: +44 1274-736859
Mobile: +44 7401-222-557

FACE BOOK: pem peace
INSTAGRAM: internationalpeacemaker
TWITTER: peacemaker_intl
CHARITY REG NO. 1147995

Short Description of the Partner

Our main focus at present is working towards eradicating FGM which promotes sexual and women exploitation. Our FGM project - 'Leaving It Intact' - raises awareness of consequences of harmful practices against women/girls.

With the project, we:

- reach out to schools and faith leaders/communities
- train families and professionals to become champions
- provide weekly drop-in sessions, guidance, one-to-one and group support
- work with families whose children are at risk of FGM

Our project is survivor-led and our senior advocacy worker has over 20 years' experience supporting women/girls. The statutory bodies [government agencies] have recognised our project as a specialist on the issue of FGM.

Working at the grass-root, women from our community come to us first when they need support on gender-based violence, as we understand their cultural needs. We work in partnership with the police, social services, solicitors, schools, Victim Support and various community organisations.

We are a specialist service provider and well known as a campaigner against FGM, support and training. Our organisation has featured in the newspapers, television and radio programmes. We started the only community-led multi-agency group on FGM, involving Voluntary and Community Sector, schools, solicitors, police, Council, Bradford University and College.

Early 2017, Bradford was declared 'Zero Tolerance for FGM' through our initiative and the pledge was signed on 6th February as part of International Day for Zero Tolerance for FGM in 2017, making Bradford the 2nd city to do so in the UK. We are working in the Southwest of Nigeria to see that FGM/circumcisers stop their operations. In 2015 we published our research finding on FGM, featuring current and ex-circumcisers and survivors

Services offered by the organization or the project

- Mediation and Conflict Resolution
- Home-School mediation
- Children & Youth Engagement
- Care of African Elders & Friends

- Internship for Job Seekers
- Leadership Training
- Support for Women from Violent Relationships & their Children
- Women Empowerment
- Gender- Activism
- Campaign Against FGM
- Support for People with Learning Disabilities

Advice for other organization working in the same field

My advice for other people working in the area of gender abuse and exploitation is to be strong about what they believe in. They must be ready to uphold gender activism which compels us to defend women and girls, not to doubt them, not to blame them for whatever happens. Activists always believe that they are fighting a just course. For instance, there is no reason why a woman should be stripped naked in the public by mobs whatever she must have done. She can be arrested and charged to court but not to be beating or stripped naked which is a common thing nowadays in many African countries.

Opening hours

10 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday

WILDE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK (WIN)

Photo Supplied

Rasheda Malcolm CEO

www.wildeinternationalnetwork.org.uk

Email: wilde2000@btopenworld.com Tel: 07904444569/

FB: [https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/Wilde-International-Network-WIN-409557612450082)

Wilde-International-Network-

WIN-409557612450082 Twitter:

[https://twitter.com/WildeWIN /](https://twitter.com/WildeWIN/)

Insta: [wildeint](#)

Presentation of the organization / project / success story

WILDE International Network (WIN) is a specialist women-only service that supports women and girls affected by all forms of gender-based violence, and provide training for professionals and communities. WIN's services provide a holistic domestic abuse training that supports women and girls' transformation from survivor to ambassadors, influencers and encouragers.

A description of the success story (personal journey of the person what happened? How? (600 min - 800 max)

My working life began as a journalist, writing features about women and women's empowerment, then as a magazine editor, writing empowering features. After writing a feature on women's refuges, I began working as a support worker in a women's refuge and stayed for 18-years. The broken lives I encountered working in a refuge can

be avoided and be prepared for. Using creative tools in bringing awareness to domestic abuse. I partnered with two organizations, Maendeleo Services & CAM Women & Girls Org to write and deliver our Continuing Professional Development Accredited Domestic Abuse Ambassador Training – FREE ME to be ME.

Services offered by the organization or the project

Our services include:

- CPD Accredited Domestic Abuse Training
- Sourcing safe spaces for women fleeing domestic abuse
- One to One Coaching
- Independent Advocacy
- Community Outreach
- Culturally Specific Services
- Advice and Support Monthly Forum
- Events and Conferences
- Creative Writing Workshops

Advice for other organization working in the same field

WIN & our working partners believe in the economic empowerment of women and girls. We have seen that women who are empowered and financially independent are less likely to stay in toxic relationships. WIN has made it its mission to provide training and create opportunities for women and girls and for people in the creative, empowerment and health and well-being industries.

WIN strives to broaden its scope and spread our wings further by creating on-line training opportunities for women to enhance economic independence and well-being and for professionals who work with the public to be aware of early warning signs of abuse.

We welcome collaborations and affiliates and encourage members who are interested in setting up branches in their part of the world to get in touch.

NOT JUST A REFUGEE PHOTO EXHIBITION THE UBELE INITIATIVE

The Ubele Initiative / Conway Hall

Presentation of the organization /
project / success story

In celebration of Refugee Week 2019, Conway Halls in Central London was the host for a Ubele photography exhibition which featured the lives of refugees. Focus groups with the subjects of photographs offered harrowing and inspiring stories of newcomers who entered the UK claiming asylum or as refugees. The exhibition celebrated the lives of people who had worked hard to fulfil their potential and despite, in many cases experiencing overwhelming odds, succeeded.

The realities of life in their destination countries more often than not belied expectations. Sometimes this meant working three times harder than someone who has had the privilege of being born in the UK and understanding the culture, customs, geography and language. Many sacrificing their identity to fit in with the welcoming UK society, that was not always hospitable or accepting of other migrant cultures.

This exhibition shares the stories of people, who after ten years or more of arriving in the UK are making positive contributions to communities across London and in wider society as social activists, change agents and community leaders. They are role models to all who encounter them and their work. [Insert video of the exhibition]

A description of the success story (personal journey of the person what happened? How?)

Adiam Yemane is now a published photographer based in East London. She was born in Ethiopia and raised in Eritrea before coming to the UK as a teenager in 2005 as a refugee. In 2014 she studied photography and has been working as a freelance portrait photographer since 2015. She has been working with young people in communities for some years and met the Ubele Initiative through a Tottenham based youth project called Kori. Over the past two years, she has been involved in Ubele's Emerging Leadership Programs and has participated in several of Ubele's pan European projects. Currently, Adiam is working as an in-house photographer for Verizon Media, capturing photos during live shows and taking celebrity press shots in a studio setting.

Services offered by the organization or the project

The exhibition, in addition created opportunities to meet with the subjects within the photographs and hear their stories of overcoming great hardships. It was inspirational and informative to those in attendance and particularly relevant to those people who can relate to the experience of refugees or those who support, engage with and work within refugee communities.

Advice for other organization working in the same field

The Ubele Initiative creates opportunities via its programs for many young people to branch out into substantive careers. They learn new skills such as leadership and targeted communications, develop confidence, and from networking occasions, build new contacts and find new opportunities.

Opening hours

9:00am -4pm

Sitography

Sex Trafficking vs Sex Work: Understanding The Difference
www.stophetraffik.org

Sex trafficking taking place on an 'industrial scale' as government strategy 'failing', MPs warn | The Independent
www.independent.co.uk

women trafficked into sex work UK - Google Search

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/749346/2018_UK_Annual_Report_on_Modern_Slavery.pdf
assets.publishing.service.gov.uk

Modern slavery in the UK - Anti-Slavery International
www.antislavery.org

current state of human trafficking UK - Google Search
www.google.com



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empowering women

