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For immediate release:

**Amidst the pandemic, Sahiyo releases 11 more Voices To End FGM/C stories
Press Release:**

"The opportunity to participate in this webinar created a space for me to be vulnerable and feel supported while sharing the space with people who are doing just the same. Together, we learned, shared, supported and healed."

-Absa, Voices Storyteller

Absa is one of 200 million women affected by female genital mutilation/cutting worldwide. She is also one of the 11 storytellers in a new cohort of Sahiyo and StoryCenter's Voices to End FGM/C project, choosing to share her personal story in the hope that no more girls will be subjected to FGM/C.

On July 5th, Sahiyo will begin releasing 11 videos produced as part of the [Voices to End FGM/C project](#). A collaboration between [Sahiyo](#) and [StoryCenter](#), this project is mobilizing a critical mass of storytellers and activists from across the globe by bringing people together to share and heal from their experiences of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), connect and grow as leaders in their own communities, and create [short videos](#) calling for an end to this harmful practice.

"The most important thing was that we were all united by a common goal: to raise awareness about FGC and hopefully end the practice. Through this shared desire, we built a supportive network, and I soon felt less like a participant in a workshop and more like a member of a community." ~ Hunter Kessous, Voices storyteller

Since 2018, the two organizations have held a total of five workshops, supporting 49 storytellers from 16+ countries in sharing personal stories of courage and transformation. With the onset of the global pandemic, a shadow pandemic of increased gender-based violence has emerged. As lockdowns have interrupted efforts to reduce and prevent gender-based violence, the UN has reported that 2 million additional women and girls are at risk of FGM/C.

The most recent Voices workshop, held virtually in January and February of 2021, offered participating storytellers a community amidst the pandemic .

"As a survivor, I know now more than ever before, women's voices need to be heard. This is not the time to stay silent when the world is enduring a pandemic, and on top



Voices to End FGM/C

of that women and girls are being disproportionately impacted by gender-based violence. I'm so thankful we have been able to continue the Voices project and give women a platform to share their stories." ~ Mariya Taher, Sahiyo U.S. Cofounder & U.S. Executive Director

"We feel blessed that global access to the necessary online tools enabled us to engage storytellers who would not have been able to travel to an in-person digital storytelling workshop. The relationships built, and the intimacy cultivated in the virtual session, while different from what would have occurred in a real-world gathering, were nonetheless powerful and nourishing for the storytellers and advocates who came together to share stories about FGM/C." ~ Amy Hill, Silence Speaks Director, StoryCenter

The videos are being utilized globally to advocate for the abandonment of FGM/C within communities, train healthcare and other service providers on the impact of FGM/C, and educate legislators on the need for policies that protect future generations of girls from FGM/C. To view the new videos, check out this [playlist](#). Previously published videos can be found on [this playlist](#))

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