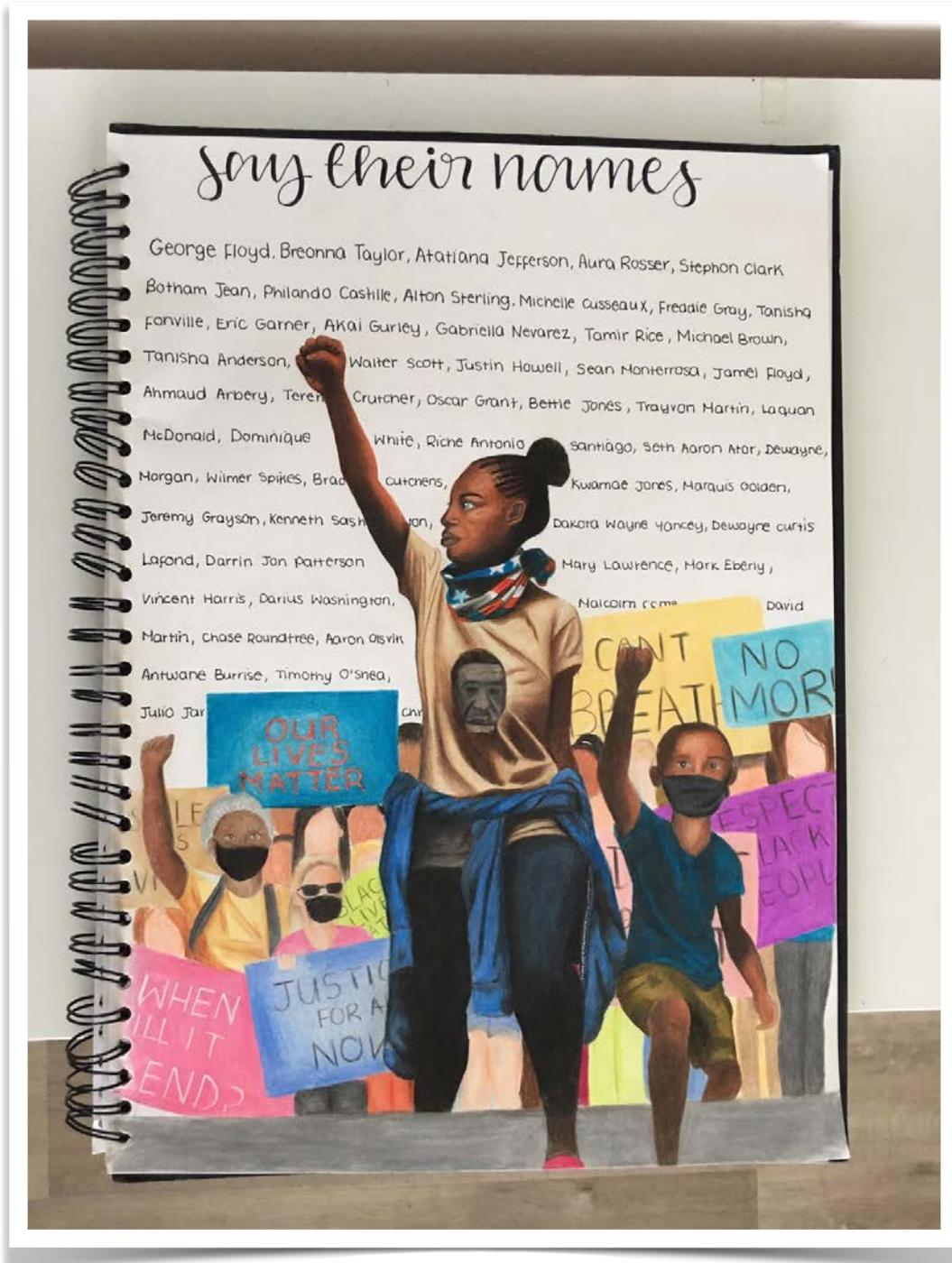


## Director's Annual Report April 2020 - March 2021

*Our vision: Gender and Racial Equality and Cross Cultural Cohesion*



Artwork by Mariam, aged 16

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## Overview

The importance of Integrate UK's vision and purpose have never been more salient than in the past year. As well as being up to three times more likely to contract Covid -19 (Public Health England) and five times more likely to become seriously ill (The Runnymede Trust), people from racialised communities are more likely to lose income, to struggle with the impact of home schooling and to suffer in terms of mental health. The cost to women and girls has also been considerable with widespread reports of the increase in violence and abuse against women and girls. Young people have seen an 18% rise in unemployment to 13.6%, with an even greater rise amongst black graduates, amongst whom unemployment stand at 34% (Resolution Foundation). The list of inequalities is evident and the publication of the Sewell Report in March this year report cannot erase this.

In spite of outperforming boys in education, the gender pay gap persists and more young women end up in low paid jobs than their male peers. Childcare challenges during lockdown had a greater impact on women and many of our girls reported having less time for their studies because they had to take on childcare and household chores. According to research by the Fawcett Society and Queen Mary University of London, all these inequalities affected women from racialised communities more acutely.

The findings of the many research pieces correspond to our own experience with our service users. The pandemic and the various lockdowns highlighted and exacerbated the pre-existing economic, social and educational inequalities in terms of gender and race.

It has also been a year in which so many people have taken to the streets - the BLM movement, the toppling of the Colston statue in Bristol, the protests around the assault and murder of Sarah Everard. The #MeToo movement has also been strong and many young women have disclosed their experiences of harassment and sexual abuse in schools on the *Everyone's Invited* website. Our young women have told us of their own experiences and of how dismissive some teachers are when they report this. Through their voices, the schools we work with are listening and have invited our young activists to speak to teachers and to the whole school in assemblies.

The pandemic impacted our organisation in many ways, and although like most organisations we had to adapt and change our methodology very quickly, we felt there were some positive outcomes. We have learned a lot - not least that our staff and young people are resilient, adaptable and resourceful. We are extremely proud of the service our young staff and older service users delivered during the lockdowns and of the achievements of our young people throughout this challenging time.

## Lockdown and moving projects online

In response to the Covid19 pandemic, the decision was taken in March to cancel both remaining film shoots and the summer conference. We also cancelled existing bookings for peer education workshops. Prior to the lockdown, preparations had already been made in the office to reduce the risk of infection and to ensure not more than three were working at the same time. The UK lockdown was announced on the 23rd March and we had to rethink our approach to working with young people.

The impact of the lockdowns was not felt equally. Many of our young people live in crowded, high rise accommodation, do not have a dedicated space to study, have little access to safe, outdoor spaces and they face a range of socio-economic challenges. When school lessons were first moved online, we found a considerable number of our service users did not have a laptop or printer and their families had lost most or all of their income. We also learned that while some schools were providing worksheets or resources on their websites, others took much longer to set up this service. This was a source of considerable stress for our young people and many reported that they were struggling with their mental health. Our service users in higher education were also impacted in terms of mental health and financial struggles. It was painfully clear that a very holistic approach was needed to try and address these issues and to develop a comprehensive support network as quickly as possible.

Prior to the pandemic, we aimed to work with approximately 100 young people each year, engaging them in projects, investing in their skills and talents, providing real leadership opportunities and ensuring their experiences and views informed our approach. Older service users train as Outreach Workers and deliver peer education in schools while supporting and mentoring younger members. Since the pandemic, demand for our services has dramatically increased; over the past 12 months we have been working with 340 young people (of which 227 are from racialised communities and 237 are female) on a range of creative and educational activities, providing pastoral support and responding to their immediate and long term needs resulting from the pandemic.

It has been a year of learning and adapting. We discovered early on that large groups on Zoom don't work very well as many were too shy to contribute. Facilitating more and smaller workshops allowed all to engage actively but resulted in increased hours for staff. During the first lockdown, we moved two staff members whose roles were no longer possible into the Project team. We also recruited two additional temporary Project Workers from our pool of Outreach workers to ensure we were able to deliver to all service users without putting too much pressure on staff.

Pre-Covid, we would bring young people from very different religious and cultural backgrounds together, foster positive relationships, identify commonalities and facilitate their collaboration on a media production and a youth conference. Considerable adjustments had to be made due to the pandemic and remote working. The smaller groups were very successful – as an example, all the young people involved in the animation project were very excited to finally meet in person for the live action shoot and although most hadn't met before, they greeted each other as if they were old friends. Some parents joined too, either dropping their children off or watching from a distance.

Our project work is usually planned – however, over the past year, we needed to be 'reactive' and respond to immediate need while still delivering our usual activities. As an example, many young people were worried about their education and their future so we secured funding for the tutoring project and ran remote careers sessions.

Thanks to Emergency Covid funds, we were able to purchase 17 laptops for young people and provide support with rent, utilities or household essentials for those facing extreme hardship. We set up new projects, delivering 17 creative workshops and 60 remote tutoring sessions each week in core subjects. We also provided weekly one to one mentoring sessions for all our young people. Our younger service users had positive activities on a daily basis and continued to

benefit from aspirational opportunities including public (remote) speaking, providing consultation, access to professional mentors, learning, leadership and recognition.

# VIRTUAL PROJECTS

**WORKSHOPS AND ACTIVITIES BY INTEGRATE UK**





During lockdown, we have adapted our creative and educational projects so they can be delivered remotely. Through workshops, challenges and activities, we will keep young people engaged, entertained and positive while supporting their learning and attainment.

### PROJECT WORKERS

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1

VISION

Integrate UK works with you people to promote gender and racial equality.

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2

SKILLS

Young people will be able to create new skills, collaborate and share their learning.

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3

PASTORAL SUPPORT

Each young person is offered a mentor for support and wellbeing.

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PROJECT INFO

All of Integrate's remote projects are free.

Workshops will be held on Zoom. Compute access is needed and all workshop materials will be provided.

Media consent forms will need to be signed and sent back via email.

**Remote projects delivered during the first lockdown:**

**Story and script development, coercive control:**

Having started this project in September, project participants wanted to complete their script development. Workshops ran weekly, allowing the young people to explore toxic relationships and coercive control and consider how to help peers recognise the signs. Unfortunately, due to the lockdown, the film shoot could not go ahead.

## **Story and script development, FGM activism**

Following our collaborative work with young activists in Sweden, this project focused on developing a resource that could be used internationally to open discussions on FGM. The resource aims to de-racialise the practice and to look at the wider issues around the pressure on women and girls to modify their bodies. During the workshops, participants read and acted, discussed aims and objectives and offered suggestions to ensure the resource is intersectional, up to date and inclusive.



*Integrate young activists speaking at the Swedish Equality Agency's conference in February 2020*

We were fortunate to work with the poet and activist Shagufta Iqbal for script development. Unfortunately due to the rate of infection in Sweden and the requirement for all visitors to quarantine for 10 days on arrival, the Swedish activists will not be able to join us for the production which is planned for late Spring or Summer this year.

## **Hijabs and Miniskirts**

Since live action could not go ahead, we decided to run an animation project. This was a particularly popular project as the young people loved the idea of seeing themselves animated and of having something concrete to 'show' in spite of the restrictions of lockdown. They chose to focus on the judgements and assumptions people make about girls based on the clothes they

wear - they also wanted to encourage young women to stand together against all forms of sexual harassment and judgement.

Twelve young people between the ages of 11 and 15 met weekly to develop the story and script for this animation between April and July. Following training in Covid secure film shoots, we organised the sound recording and film shoot for the introductory live action clips over two days at the end of August. Fortunately, it was a warm, sunny day so social distancing was easy and we spent lot of time outdoors.



The idea of the live action shoots was to 'introduce' the actors as real people before they turn into animated versions of themselves. The animation was launched in February and following a social media campaign, has had over 400,000 views across all platforms.

We are all very proud of this project - our usual media activities had to be put on hold due to the pandemic, so being

able to organise an ambitious, exciting and safe alternative made such a difference to our service users during this difficult time. All the young people involved really enjoyed the experience and loved being able to see each other in 'real life', after so many weeks on Zoom!



A few examples of feedback from young people on the animation project:

Saffiya, 13: "I enjoyed creating awareness for issues that a lot of people face. And I liked how we did it in a fun and entertaining way. The animation was really fun! Everyone's ideas were included and I really liked the storyline we came up with. Integrate helped me with bonding with other people easier and Integrate is really good at steering a safe place for everyone. Integrate supported me really well!"

"Filming was fun, I'm always learning and loved being on set. It was really nice to see people I've been in projects with online, but in reality. I enjoyed hearing others' experiences and seeing how that shaped the animation. Planning the animation was fun. It was nice a project that we could work on and invest our time in, especially since not a lot of things were happening because of the pandemic. I struggled with characterisation. The atmosphere feels supportive and encouraging. There wasn't any pressure, the project workers and everyone involved knew the best way to get us at our best was to be calm and let us come into character in our own time."

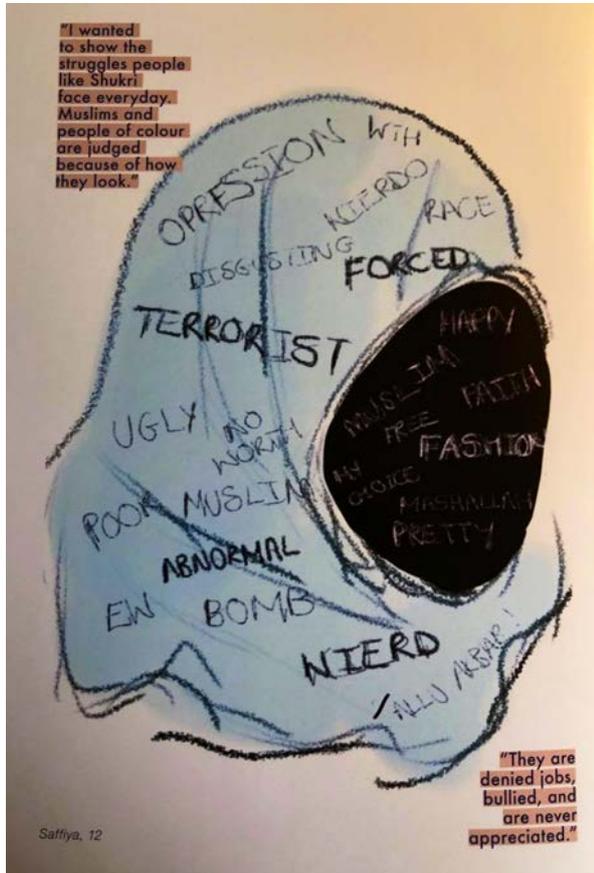
Shaheim, 16

Raekwon, 12: "The actual filming of the scenes was fun, the football scene in particular. We learnt how to act, to put drama and emotion into it, how I'm properly supposed to say my lines. I feel like I learnt a lot."....."

"I think integrate has really helped me to become confident in speaking in front of a lot of people and also just confident in myself and also helped me to become the person I am and figure myself out."

## Wellbeing and activism through Art:

Each week a different theme was chosen for these workshops, focusing on our mission statement, on the BLM movement and on life in lockdown. Art materials were sent to all project participants who then sent us photographs of their work.



## Book Club

At the request of some of our service users and in response to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, we introduced this weekly workshop to look at works by writers of colour. Participants received their copy in the post then held weekly discussions on a set piece of reading. The book chosen was Parable of the Sower by Octavia Butler.

## Black Lives Matter

These workshops looked at the history behind and the current relevance of the BLM movement. Discussions also focused on how we can support the movement safely, address racism without confrontation and educate others.

## Photography

Photography workshops started before the lockdown but were adapted for remote delivery. Each week young people worked on a different aspect of creative imagery and looked at themes relating to gender and racial inequalities and the experience of being in lockdown. Examples of

the young people's work can be seen in our *Unlocked* publication.



## Music and Songwriting

These workshops ran once or twice weekly over the lockdown period and included song development, lyric writing and singing rehearsals. In October, each of the singers came in turn to the Integrate offices for the voice recording. The song is in response to the BLM movement and looks at displacement, reflecting how people feel when they are 'othered' and made to feel they don't belong.



*Song recording at Integrate premises*

This is Integrate's first jazz song and the workshops were led by Cynthia, our former service user who is currently studying music and performance in London. We are all looking forward to the music video shoot later this year.

Examples of feedback from young people about the songwriting project:

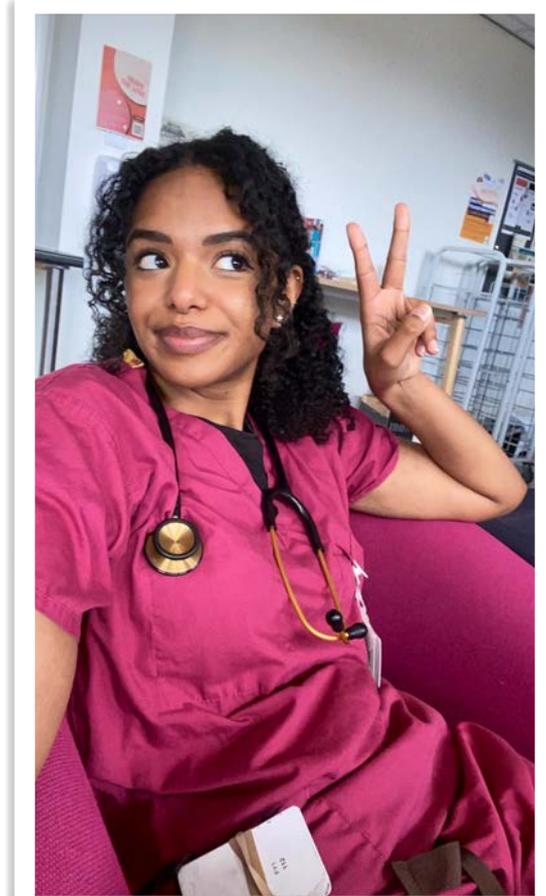
*I loved the recording day on Saturday. I loved how professional it felt. Everyone was hugely supportive and Cindy and Jim delivered constructive feedback in a way that was very supportive.*

*The conversations we had about our individual experiences and watching that translate into lyrics. It was a safe and open space, something needed for Black people during the BLM movement.*

*The part I enjoyed the most about creating the song was the first couple zoom calls where we were all pitching in our ideas and listening to all different types of music to choose the style we wanted our song to be. That was a very precious moment because we all got along so well and just vibed together. To be honest, there is nothing to improve. In my opinion everything went so smoothly, everyone knew what they were doing and I think we all just want this pandemic to end so we can go back to hugging our friends from Integrate that we've missed!*

### Podcast - racism in healthcare

With the aim of better defining the way racism manifests in healthcare, 9 young people who are either studying for a career in healthcare, have a part time job in the sector or who are already employed in health and or social care met weekly to share their experiences of discrimination and open racism. The project allowed them to communicate these experiences to the wider public through a podcast.



### Remote tutoring in core subjects

Our tutoring project has been extremely successful and is very popular with tutors and tutees. Our young people were very concerned about the education they have missed and the impact this will have on their future. They worried about being 'left behind' and unable to compete with peers who have access to support at home, to a dedicated space to study and to additional resources. Using Emergency Covid funding, we set up a remote tutoring project in English, Maths and Sciences. Our older service users in higher education delivered one to one sessions for students between the ages of 11 to 17, ensuring our young people were able to keep up with the curriculum and supporting them with topics they found challenging.

For the tutors, being able to support young members gave them structure, purpose and a positive activity at a time when they felt lost and isolated. It also supported them financially and ensured they had a support group to turn to when needed.

## Careers workshops

These weekly workshops were tailored to the young people's interests, providing them with information about different career paths and improving organisation and focus. As well as building confidence and aspirations, facilitators supported them through the experience of home learning.

In addition to all the projects and activities, our project workers offered weekly mentoring calls to all our young service users, providing support and listening to their concerns and fears.

## Unlocked publication

Since our very popular youth conference had to be cancelled, we decided to celebrate the work of our young people in a publication.



We were very excited when *Unlocked* arrived at the office! *Unlocked* is a collation of the art, photography, poetry and clay modelling our service users produced through remote workshops over lockdown. The sense of excitement and achievement the contributors had when they received their copy was wonderful and showed how important maintaining a supported creative outlet was, especially during a pandemic, was. The standard of work produced is exceptional and is a testament to the dedication our project workers have for our service users' wellbeing.

## Moving out of lockdown

### Project Fearless, year 3

Due to the increase in demand, we are working with four schools rather than two this year. The pandemic and the lockdown have had a considerable impact on all our young people and we feel it is important that we work more closely with them and offer more support. Our Covid-19 policy ensures our Project workers use PPE until they are in the project room and that social distancing is maintained at all times.

We are currently working in four schools delivering Project Fearless: Cotham, John Cabot Academy (JCA), Winterbourne Academy and Bristol Brunel Academy (BBA).

Due to the pandemic, the cohorts this year are in the same year group according to their bubbles, with the exception of BBA where there are two (socially distanced) year groups. In BBA we are working with years 9 and 10, and in all other schools with year 9. In previous years, we found mixed year groups very beneficial in terms of the positive relationships that developed between older and younger students; this also helped embed peer mentoring. Nevertheless, we are confident all our young people will benefit from the intervention and very much look forward to seeing their development.

**a) Equality Councils:** Although Cotham, Winterbourne and BBA are new to Fearless, we worked with JCA last year but the project was interrupted due to the lockdown in March. However, as the young people were familiar with our work and aims, the Equalities Council had already started as had the additional Ambassador training. The Equalities Council meetings run weekly throughout the year.

In JCA, there are ten young people - two representatives from each year group in the Equality Council. They have achieved the following changes to policy and practice through their activism:

**b) Cultural awareness** - The school has a very diverse student body with young people from all over the world, however, council members reported that this was not reflected or celebrated in the school. The students asked the school to host a cultural day, where people can bring food and clothes from all over their own cultures. This event has had to be postponed due to Covid-19 but senior leaders have agreed this will become an annual event at the school and a large scale celebration is currently planned for July 8th. As well as food and clothing, there will be performances by the young people. To replace the cultural awareness day, the school will hang flags of the countries of origin of all their students around the school to reflect and celebrate the diversity of their community.

**c) Curriculum:** The Equality Council members discussed the lack of diversity and representation in the school curriculum and have arranged a meeting with the head of history to discuss how they can address this across all curricular subjects. They also want to introduce one off sessions discussing concepts such as the history of racial slurs. One of our young women was given her English literature reading list when she started her A level course. She remarked at the absence of writers of colour. The head of English acknowledged this and added two books by writers of colour to the list.

**d) Training for teachers** - Council members felt that there were many problems with biases and internalised racism amongst the teacher body. Firstly, the teacher body is completely white and students do not feel represented at all. They argued that if there was a more representative teacher body, issues like these could be talked about more openly and perhaps resolved.

Unfortunately, this problem is institutional and the young people were informed about the external and institutional barriers that can be reasons as to why there are not enough teachers of colour in schools.

To tackle these problems of biases, the Integrate young Ambassadors will be training teachers on other Integrate UK resources challenging racial and gender inequalities. This will create an open forum for teachers to learn and listen to their students, whilst also giving Ambassadors the opportunity to freely express their concerns and offer solutions. The school is also looking for external experts to run training sessions and have sent out questionnaires to teachers asking about how well informed and / or comfortable they are dealing with racial incidents. This will be anonymous so the school and head can see how staff feel.

**Integrate UK display board:** To inspire their peers and motivate them to take an active role in challenging inequalities, some of the members of the group will be creating an IUK board outside of the main hall with pictures, events and other pieces of work from Project Fearless, EmpowHER and other Integrate projects at JCA.

**e) Ambassador Programme:** The Ambassador programme is an additional leadership opportunity running at JCA. Eleven young activists in years 8, 9 and 10 from the previous (2019 - 2020) Project Fearless cohort, were trained to deliver Integrate UK resources and lesson plans. They delivered 8 workshops to years 9 and 10 reaching 200 of their peers and gaining experience in public speaking and leadership. We hope to provide this service to all partner schools.

**f) PF Girls group:** The Project Fearless group at JCA has a considerably higher number of boys to girls. The girls felt they couldn't speak as openly as they'd like to and expressed their discomfort at being so heavily outnumbered. To counter this, the project session with the whole group is now followed by a girls only group.

#### Findings:

We are seeing real changes in the schools where our project is embedded. Through the work of our young activists, the project activities, the recognition they receive for their work and the establishment of Youth Led Equalities Councils, schools are responding promptly to the need for change. In one of these schools, at the request of the Equality Council Ambassadors, they have introduced an annual cultural day to celebrate the diversity in the school and a regular Youth Led training session for teachers on gender and racial equality during inset days.

### Collaboration with UK Youth:

UK Youth commissioned Integrate to deliver their EmpowHER programme to girls between the ages of 12 and 15 girls who would benefit from developing their emotional and social capabilities through the framework of learning about empowerment, resilience and individual rights. We recruited 86 girls into this new project. Each of our project workers paired with an outreach worker to deliver weekly workshops for each of the 8 groups. Project participants choose which topics they wished to cover including inspirational women, body image, sexual health etc. The programme will run over three months and ends with a social action project of their choice. Each of the groups pitched successfully for money towards their social project costs, all of which will be celebrated at a special event later this year when awards will be given out.



The EmpowHER programme started with in person delivery, then moved to remote during the third lockdown. Since March, when schools opened, all project sessions have returned to in person delivery with the exception of Montpelier High (formerly Colston Girls' School).

### Peer education, outreach and training

Although we have considerably exceeded our target in terms of the number of young people we engage long term in projects, we have not been able to achieve our target in terms of peer education reach due to the pandemic. Several bookings for March and April were cancelled, and although we quickly adapted our resources for remote delivery, many schools weren't equipped for online delivery. We were also very aware of potential risks and safeguarding concerns around having open conversations with young people while they were at home.

Training new Outreach Workers remotely is more time consuming but has continued successfully, and although we were unable to reach our target in terms of peer education workshops in schools, we successfully delivered remote, peer to peer workshops during the first and second lockdowns and all disclosures were reported and followed up on.

Students reach through workshops: 1,517

Potential reach through workshops cancelled in March and April 2020: 2,048

Total (known) professionals reached through workshops and presentations: 176

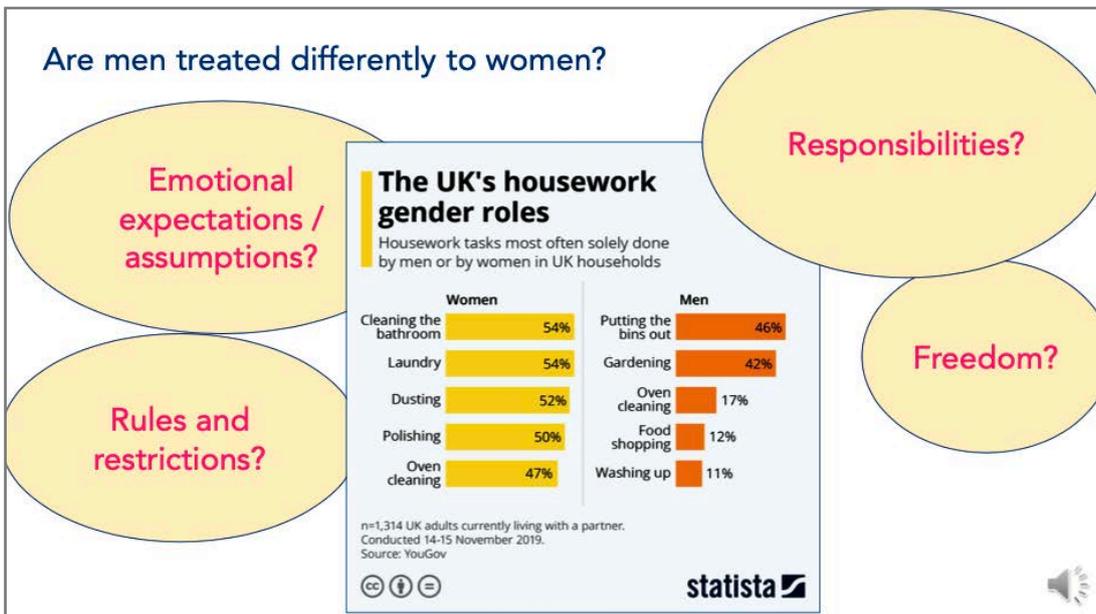
Webinars for front line professionals:

In addition to the reach mentioned above, we were commissioned by NHS England to develop a webinar for training NHS professionals on honour based abuse (HBA), and 5 webinars for training teachers during an inset day across two learning federations with a total of 15 schools. Although the overall reach would have been considerable, we weren't give this information and the schools were unable to process our feedback forms.



The topics were HBA safeguarding, FGM safeguarding, gender equality education, far right extremism and addressing racism in the classroom.

112 remote **training sessions** for new Outreach Workers were delivered - in face to face training sessions we would have between 3 and 5 people in each session, but when training on Zoom, we found this much more challenging. Now that restrictions are lifting, we can invite small groups into the office for training if required.



Rules and restrictions?

Challenges of remote workshop delivery:

While we have adapted our resources and approach for delivering remote workshops, we were aware of potential safeguarding challenges when the young people were logging in from home. As an example, we needed to be acutely aware that during lockdown, any difficult conversations or disclosures might be overheard and potentially put the child at increased risk.

For remote workshops with students in classrooms, we planned delivery with staff beforehand and although the workshops weren't as satisfactory as delivering face to face, all students engaged. Difficult questions or conversations were held in break out rooms and in spite of the restrictions, we received some disclosures, all of which were followed up appropriately by the school safeguarding team. As we gained confidence in remote delivery, we accepted larger bookings. In December 2020, our Outreach Workers successfully delivered a total of 32 workshops remotely at a school in Birmingham, with a total reach of nearly 800.

Another challenge presented itself in terms of feedback from the workshops. In face to face delivery, all students complete a feedback form before and after the intervention so we can evidence impact. To address this, we asked schools to print out the forms, ensure they were completed and post them back to us.

### Other news, events, press and recognition

Throughout the pandemic, we have continued to engage in public speaking, consultations and round table meetings on remote platforms, including:

- FGM Stakeholder meeting at the Home Office
- VAAWG round table meeting the Home Office
- Three FGM Safeguarding meetings in Bristol
- We worked on a collaborative project with two GPs from NHS North to make a resource for GPs focusing on the most appropriate and comfortable way to speak to survivors
- Hillingdon Women's Centre - two young women delivered a talk on HBA
- Giving keynote speech for Bristol Women's Voice on International Women's Day: *'How can we recover from Covid-19 in a way that meaningfully supports greater equality, community and inclusion for all women and girls in Bristol?'*

Two of our young activists were recognised for their work and activism and received the Diana Award in a remote ceremony in July. One of the young women also had a special mention from Prince Harry and her award was retweeted by Emma Watson!

Although disappointed not to win, we were nevertheless proud to hear that IUK reached the final 50 out of 360 applications for the King's Fund & GSK Impact award.

In spite of the restrictions of lockdown, our young activists and staff achieved impressive press coverage. A few examples:

*BBC Points West - three young activists interviewed about the lack of diversity in education*

*Shropshire News - July 1*

Bristol 24/7, July 2 2020, Anti FGM Campaigner recognised with National Award

The Bristol Cable, 11 September 2020, Barriers in Education, Bridging the digital divide more pressing now than ever'

The Bristol Cable, 29 October 2020, video and article about Shaheim, our Junior Trustee, Vulnerability, Escapism and Creativity, my experiences of lockdown as a young Bristolian.

Iran International TV - an interview about ending the practice of FGM

Open Democracy - our work on countering extremism and empowering young people

The Guardian, January 29 2021, The reckoning: the toppling of monuments to slavery in the UK

The Mirror, 19th March 2021, Student with no laptop forced to handwrite her GCSEs gets surprise lifeline

The Irish News, 19th April 2020, Harry takes a stand against institutional racism in surprise message

Rife Magazine, 11 January 2021, Meet our incredible 30 under 30

Home Office FGM Resource Pack, 11 February (Useful documents for teachers and Videos for Schools)

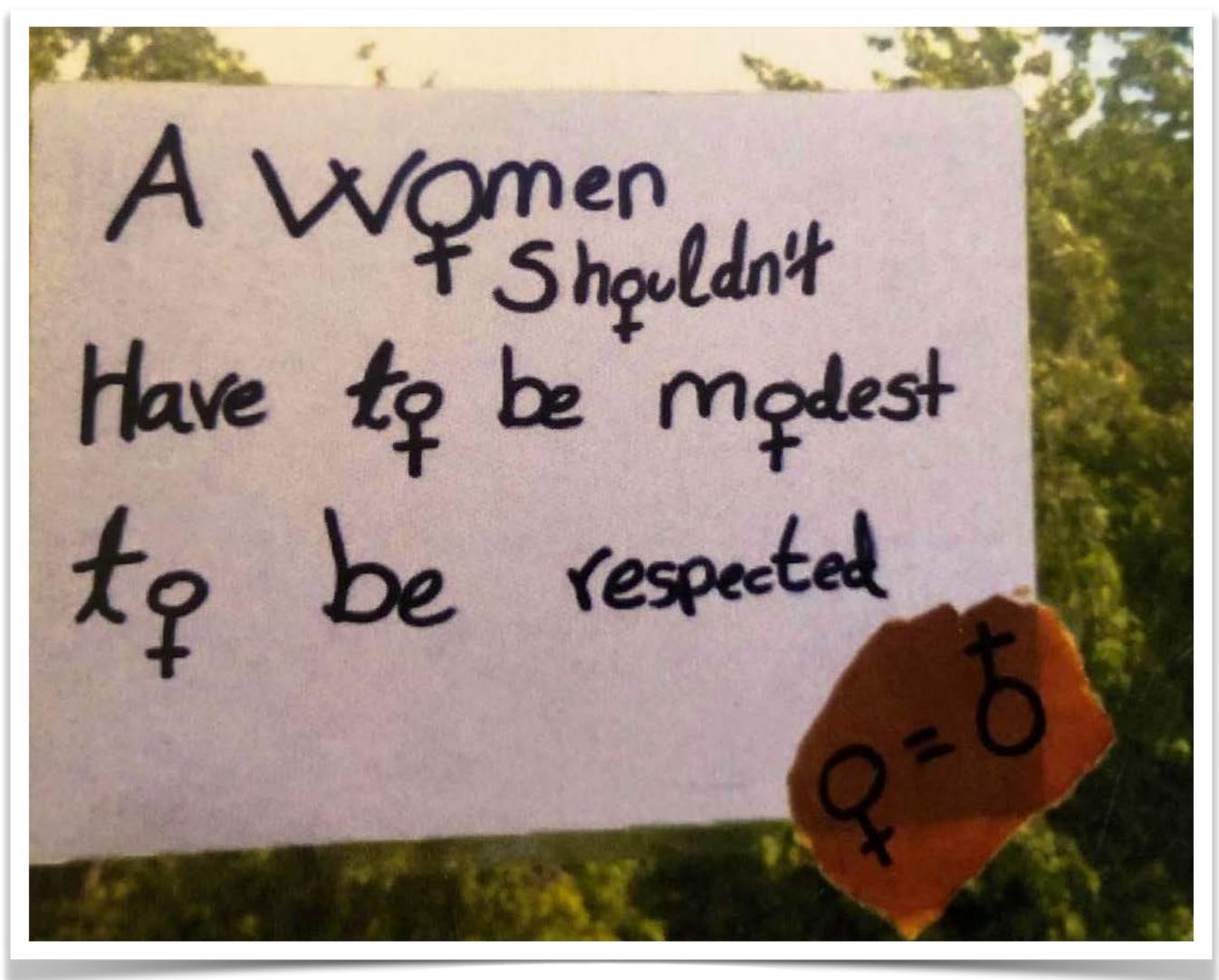
In July, Bristol Cable, a local paper contacted Integrate in the hope of collaborating with young people in Bristol. The opportunity was open to all and could be on any issue the young person chose. Our junior trustee and brilliant young activist Shaheim, who is also an aspiring writer, wrote a piece on his vulnerabilities, escapism and the realities of lockdown. Shortly after this was published, Shaheim had the opportunity to document this into a spoken piece for Black History Month. Shaheim is continuing his writing and is currently developing a short story.



To support Shaheim's writing development, we organised individual workshops with a professional writer (TV and radio drama) and with a young journalist.

### Something to celebrate!

In addition to the five Integrate service users who graduated as medical doctors earlier this year, we are delighted to announce that Ifrah (Law), Sami (Journalism and PR), Sahib (Law), Aroosa (Photography) have successfully completed their degrees. Congratulations to all!



Fatou, 13