

Background Information

Female genital mutilation has existed since the very beginning of the fifth-century BC. Female genital mutilation involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or another injury to the female genital organs, for non-medical reasons. Being a social convention, female genital mutilation is deeply entrenched in the country's social norms in which violence against girls and women is acceptable.

Being often considered a necessary part of raising a girl, and a way to prepare her for adulthood and marriage, this mutilation is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15. This practice has in fact no health benefits for girls and women and, in addition, automatically causes severe complications such as cysts, infections, as well as complications in childbirth and an increased risk of newborn deaths. This procedure is a clear violation of women's and girls' human rights.

Nowadays, more than 200 million girls and women alive today, have undergone female genital mutilation in more than 30 countries in the Middle East, Africa as well as Asia. Treatment of the health complications of this mutilation in 27 high-occurrence countries is estimated to cost 1.4 billion USD per year and is projected to rise to 2.3 billion USD by 2047 if no action is taken.

UN Involvement

The United Nations strives for the full eradication of female genital mutilation by 2030.

The United Nations Populated Fund known as UNFPA, along with the help of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, UNICEF, leads the largest global program to accelerate the elimination of female genital mutilation.

Since 2008, more than 5.5 million girls and women have received prevention, protection and care services related to female genital mutilation. Around 42.5 million people made public declarations to abandon female genital mutilation and over 361,808 girls were prevented from undergoing this procedure.

Questions to Consider

What is your country's position on female genital mutilation?

Does your country have clear opinions on this procedure?

How does your country justify the authorization and the permit for female genital mutilation?

What are your country's statistics on girls and women who have undergone some form of genital mutilation?

How does your country put up with female genital mutilation?

Has your country taken any precautions or measures regarding this issue?

Does your country have any regional or even international instruments to help eradicate this forced operation?

How can your country raise awareness about this topic?

Would the strengthening of the health sector be an adequate measure to diminish female genital mutilation?

If your country is a member of the European Union, what actions does the EU take regarding this issue?

Helpful Resources and Links

<https://www.unfpa.org/resources/female-genital-mutilation-fgm-frequently-asked-questions>

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/02/1111242>

<https://www.unfpa.org/female-genital-mutilation>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

<https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/female-genital-mutilation>

<https://www.endfgm.eu/female-genital-mutilation/fgm-in-europe/>

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/female-genital-mutilation-day>

<https://www.equalitynow.org/female-genital-mutilation/>

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/female-genital-cutting>