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STATISTICAL PROFILE ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/CUTTING

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) refers to “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.”¹ More than 125 million girls and women alive today have been cut in the 29 countries in Africa and the Middle East where FGM/C is concentrated. As many as 30 million girls are at risk of being cut before their 15th birthday if current trends continue. FGM/C is a violation of girls’ and women’s human rights and is condemned by many international treaties and conventions, as well as by national legislation in many countries. Yet, where it is practised FGM/C is performed in line with tradition and social norms to ensure that girls are socially accepted and marriageable, and to uphold their status and honour and that of the entire family. UNICEF works with government and civil society partners towards the elimination of FGM/C in countries where it is still practised.

1. World Health Organization, *Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation: An interagency statement*, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNECA, UNESCO, UNDP, UNAIDS, WHO, Geneva, 2008, p. 4.

No national decree/legislation banning FGM/C

SELECTED STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S STATUS

15% of women 20-24 years were married or in union before age 15

55% of women 20-24 years were married or in union before age 18

46% of women 20-24 years have given birth by age 18

87% of women 15-49 years think that a husband/partner is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances

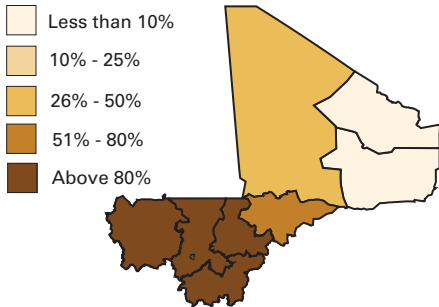
75% of women 15-49 years make use of at least one type of information media at least once a week (newspaper, magazine, television or radio)

Source: DHS 2006 and MICS 2010

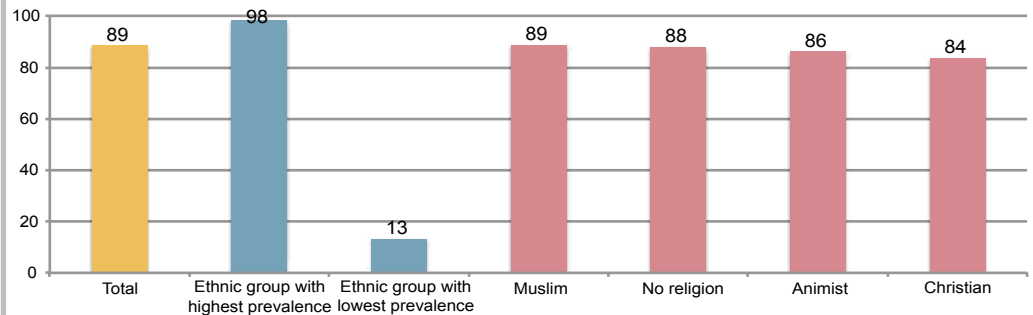
HOW WIDESPREAD IS THE PRACTICE?

Around 9 out of 10 girls and women in Mali have undergone FGM/C

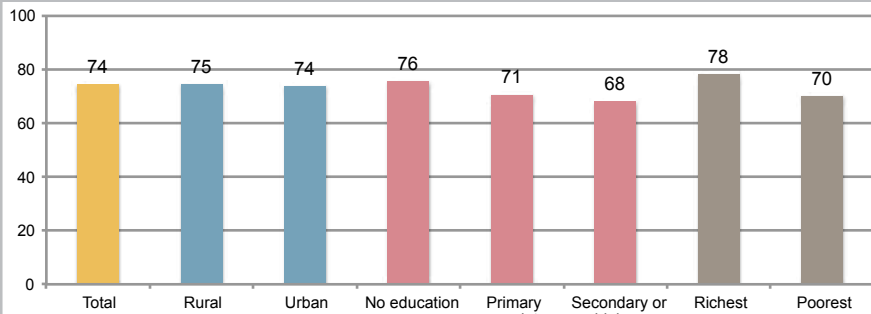
Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, by region



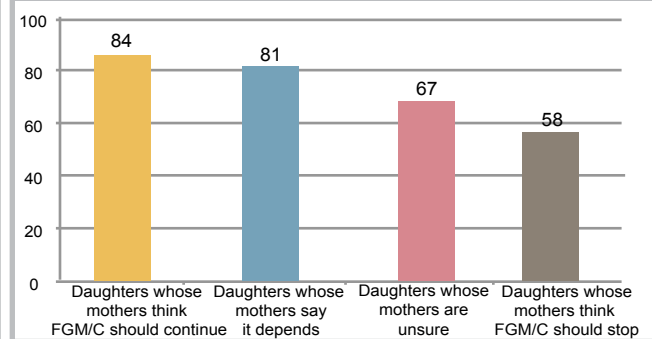
Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, by ethnicity and religion



Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years with at least one living daughter who has undergone FGM/C, by residence, mother's education and household wealth quintile



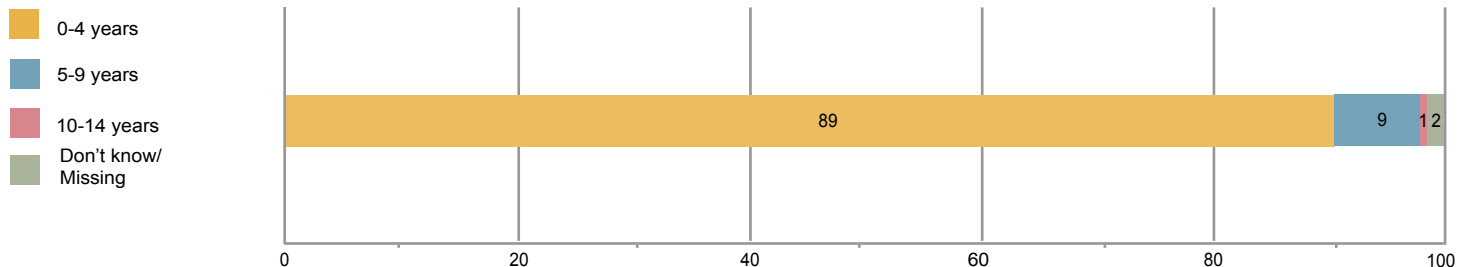
Among daughters of cut girls and women, the percentage of those who have undergone FGM/C, by mothers' attitudes about whether the practice should continue



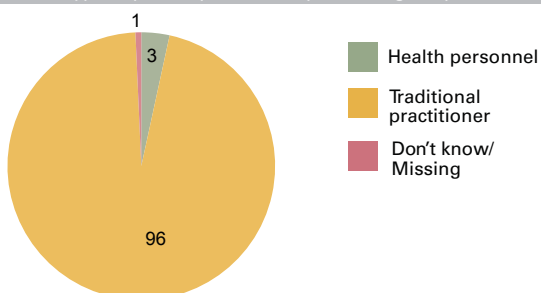
WHEN AND HOW IS FGM/C PERFORMED?

Almost all girls experienced the practice before age 5

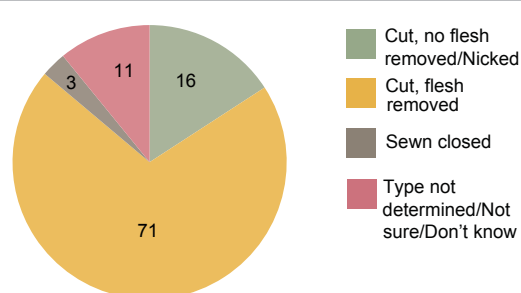
Percentage distribution of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years with at least one living daughter who has undergone FGM/C, by age at which cutting occurred



Percentage distribution of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years with at least one living daughter who has undergone FGM/C, according to the type of person/practitioner performing the procedure



Percentage distribution of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years with at least one living daughter who has undergone FGM/C, by type of FGM/C performed

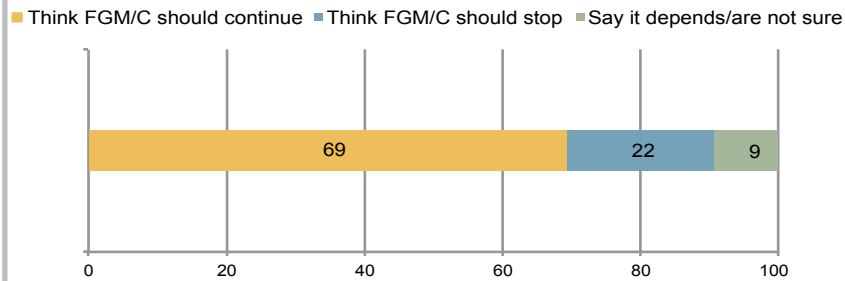


Notes: The boundaries and the names shown on the map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Only categories with 25 or more unweighted cases are presented. Due to rounding, some of the data presented may not add up to 100 per cent. 'Health personnel' includes doctors, nurses, midwives and other health workers; 'Traditional practitioner' includes traditional circumcisers, traditional birth attendants, traditional midwives and other types of traditional practitioners.

WHAT ARE THE PREVAILING ATTITUDES TOWARDS FGM/C?

One in three girls and women think FGM/C is necessary for social acceptance, while one in four think it is a religious requirement

Percentage of boys and men aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C, by their attitudes about whether the practice should continue

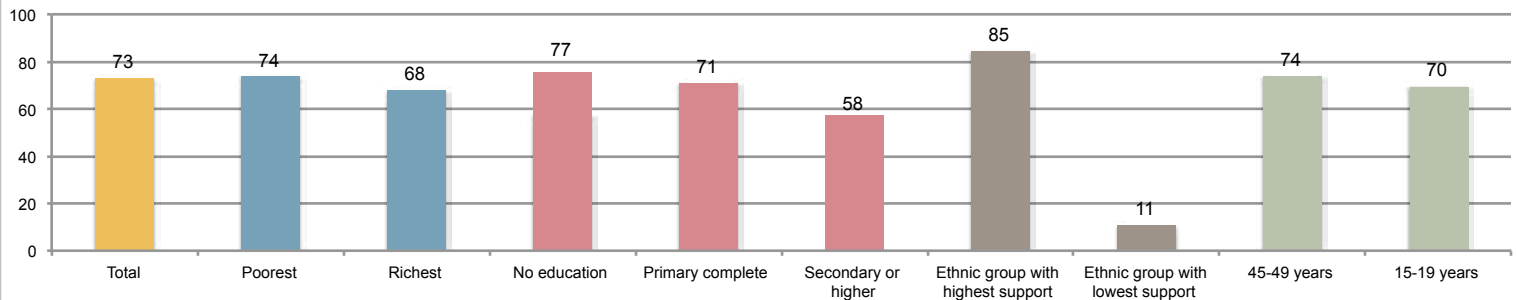


Source: DHS 2006

Among girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C, the percentage who cite specific benefits or advantages for a girl to undergo the procedure

No benefits	17
Cleanliness/Hygiene	22
Social acceptance	37
Better marriage prospects	10
Preservation of virginity	12
More sexual pleasure for the man	7
Required by religion	24
Other	16
Don't know	N/A

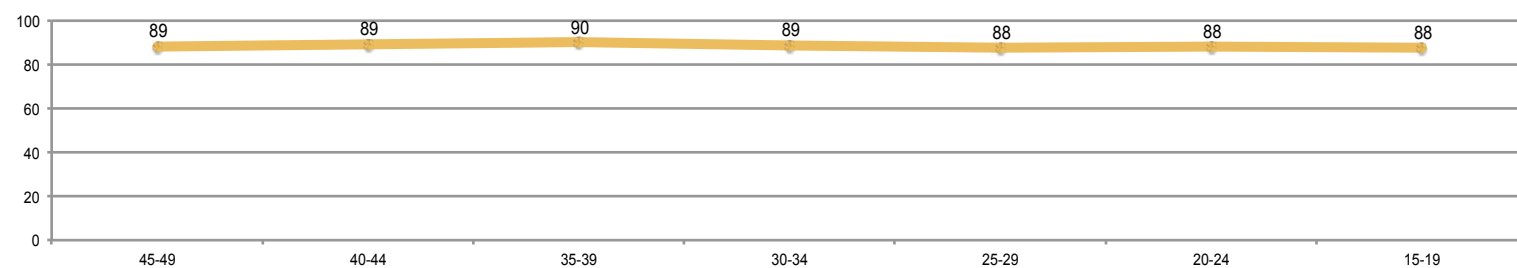
Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C and think the practice should continue, by household wealth quintile, education, ethnicity and age



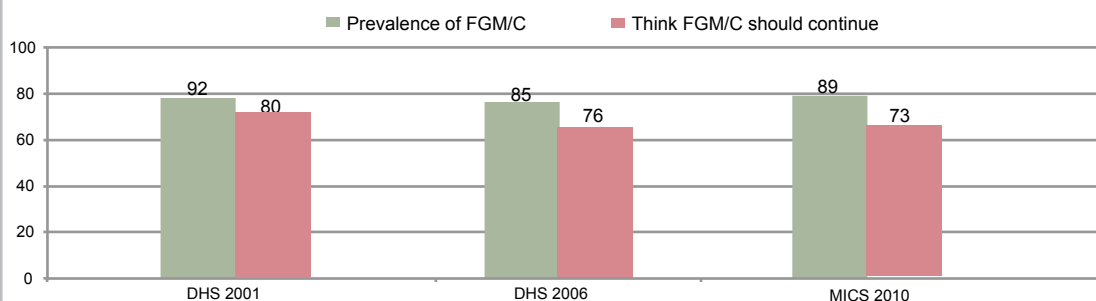
IS THE PRACTICE OF FGM/C CHANGING?

There is no evidence of decline in the prevalence of FGM/C among girls and women in Mali but attitudes towards the practice have slightly changed over time

Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, by current age



Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, and percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C and think the practice should continue, by survey year



Source for all of the above charts: MICS 2010, unless otherwise noted

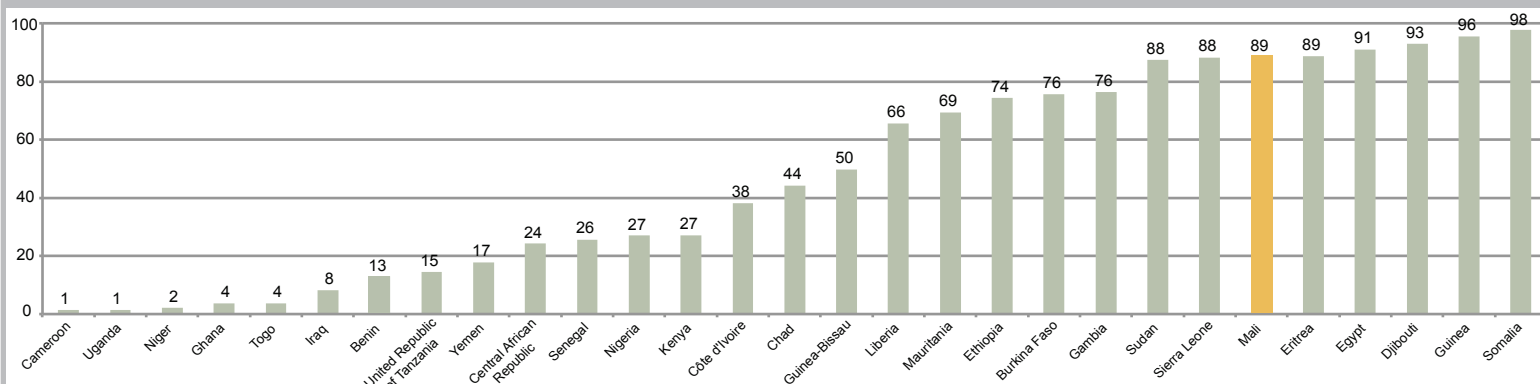
Notes: N/A = not available. Data on women's attitudes cannot be directly compared with men's attitudes since the data source for girls and women is more recent than that for boys and men. Data on FGM/C were also collected in the 1995-1996 DHS but did not cover the district of Kidal (an area of very low prevalence) and underrepresented the districts of Tombouctou (an area of higher prevalence) and Gao (an area of very low prevalence). Therefore, the prevalence and levels of support for the practice were likely to be slightly higher in 1995-1996 than recorded by the survey. However, the size of that increase cannot be calculated with precision so the 1995-1996 survey is not included in the trend analysis since it cannot be directly compared with later surveys.

MALI

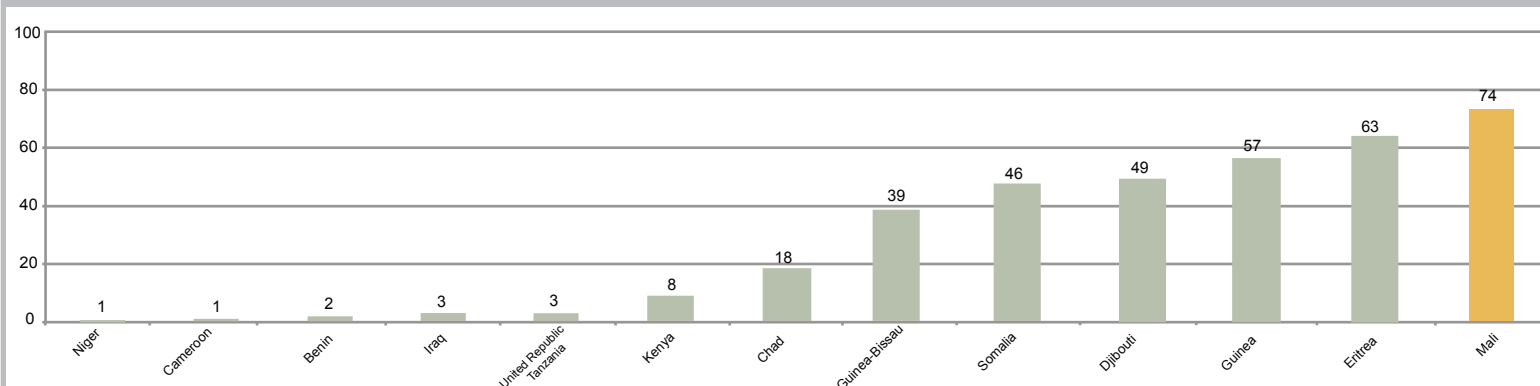


INTER-COUNTRY STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

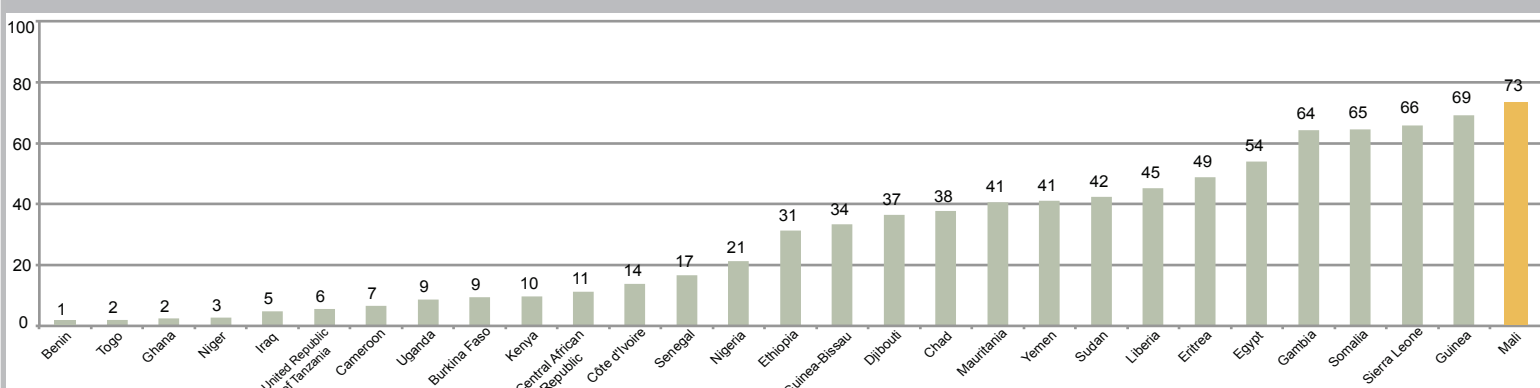
Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C



Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years with at least one living daughter who has undergone FGM/C



Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C and think the practice should continue



Notes: Data on attitudes for Yemen refer to ever-married girls and women. In Liberia, girls and women who have heard of the Sande society were asked whether they were members; this provides indirect information on FGM/C since it is performed during initiation into the society. Data on daughters for Iraq refer to ever-married girls and women with at least one daughter who has undergone FGM/C. Data on attitudes for Ghana are from MICS 2006, for Nigeria from DHS 2008, and for Sierra Leone from DHS 2008 as data from the most recently available MICS surveys are not comparable. In Liberia, only cut girls and women were asked about their attitudes towards FGM/C; since girls and women from practising communities are more likely to support the practice, the level of support in this country as captured by the DHS 2007 is higher than would be anticipated had all girls and women been asked their opinion.

Sources: DHS, MICS, National Social Protection Monitoring Survey and SHHS, 1997-2012

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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