



FGM POLICY AND ADVOCACY BRIEF

**The Role of Parliamentarians
to accelerate the elimination
of FGM by 2030**

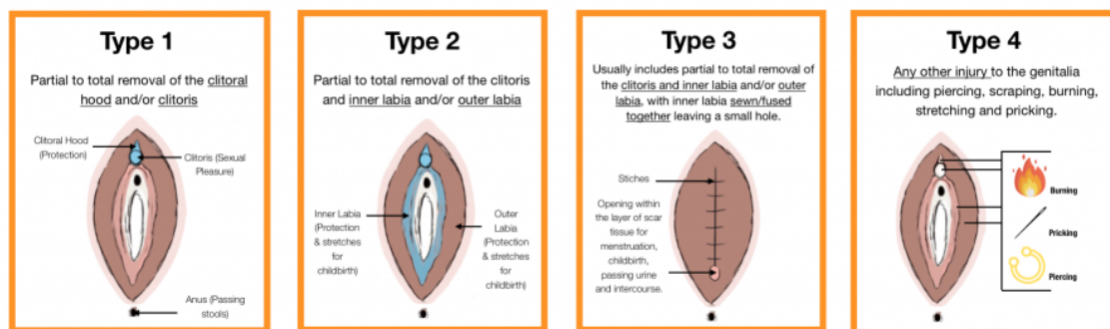


1. Introduction

What Is FGM?

Female genital mutilation (FGM) 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.

FGM 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. FGM is thus a harmful traditional practice perpetuated by gender-biased social norms to ensure that girls are socially accepted and marriageable and to uphold their status and honour and that of the entire family. Occurring at a very young age, FGM not only puts girls at risk of serious health complications but also violates their rights to bodily autonomy. It is important to raise awareness and work towards ending this harmful practice.



Source: WHO

Impact of FGM

FGM is a harmful practice that has no health benefits for girls and women; instead it is a violation of their human rights that causes short and long-term consequences, including:

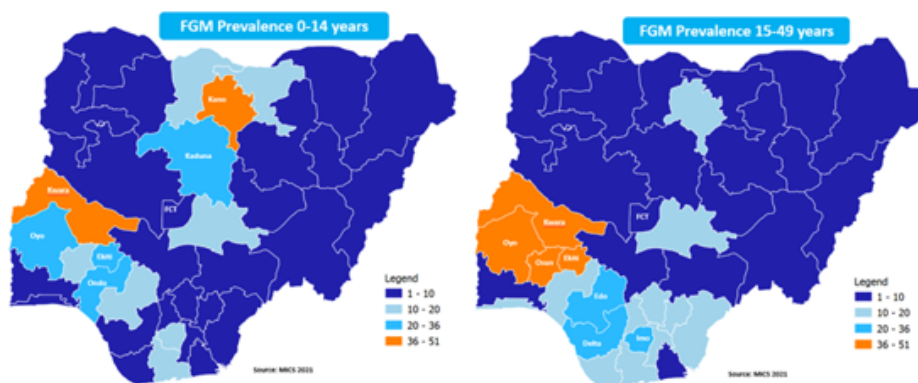
- Severe bleeding (which can result in death), cysts and problems passing urine and menstruation
- Death of the victim through bleeding, infection or complications of childbirth with increased risk of newborn death and fistula.
- Often affects the victim's mental health long into her adult life including signs of psychological trauma: anxiety, somatization, depression, post-traumatic stress and other mood disorders.
- Difficulties during intercourse and childbirth: delivery complications, fissures due to scars that reduce the elasticity of the skin, fistulas, keloids, and cysts
- Economic burden on the health and social welfare system.

2. Situation Analysis of FGM

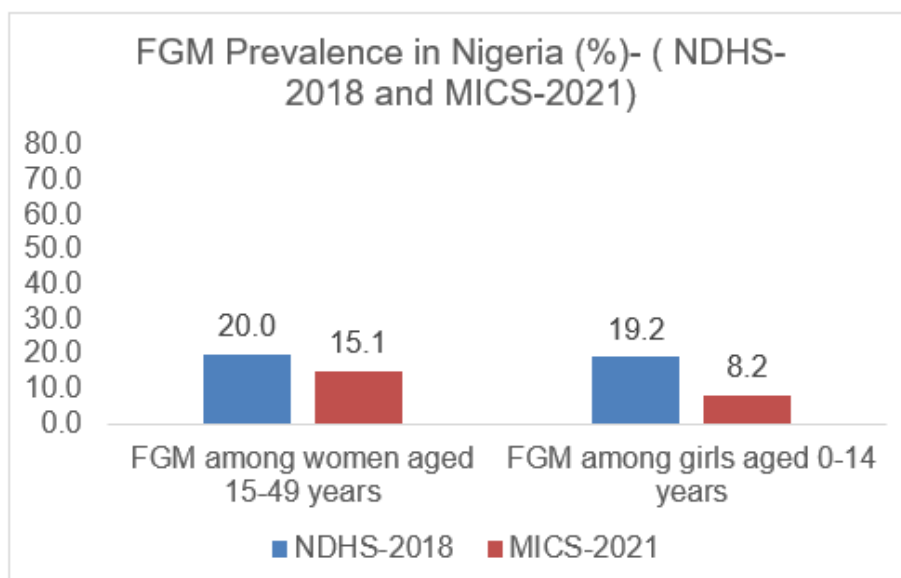
Nigeria carries the 3rd rank of worldwide burden of harmful practices against girls and women, with, approximately 19.9 million, who have undergone FGM, despite the fact that recent MICS 2021 findings have revealed a decrease in prevalence of FGM among women aged 15-49 years from 20% to 15% (NDHS 2018:20%) with huge inequalities between states.

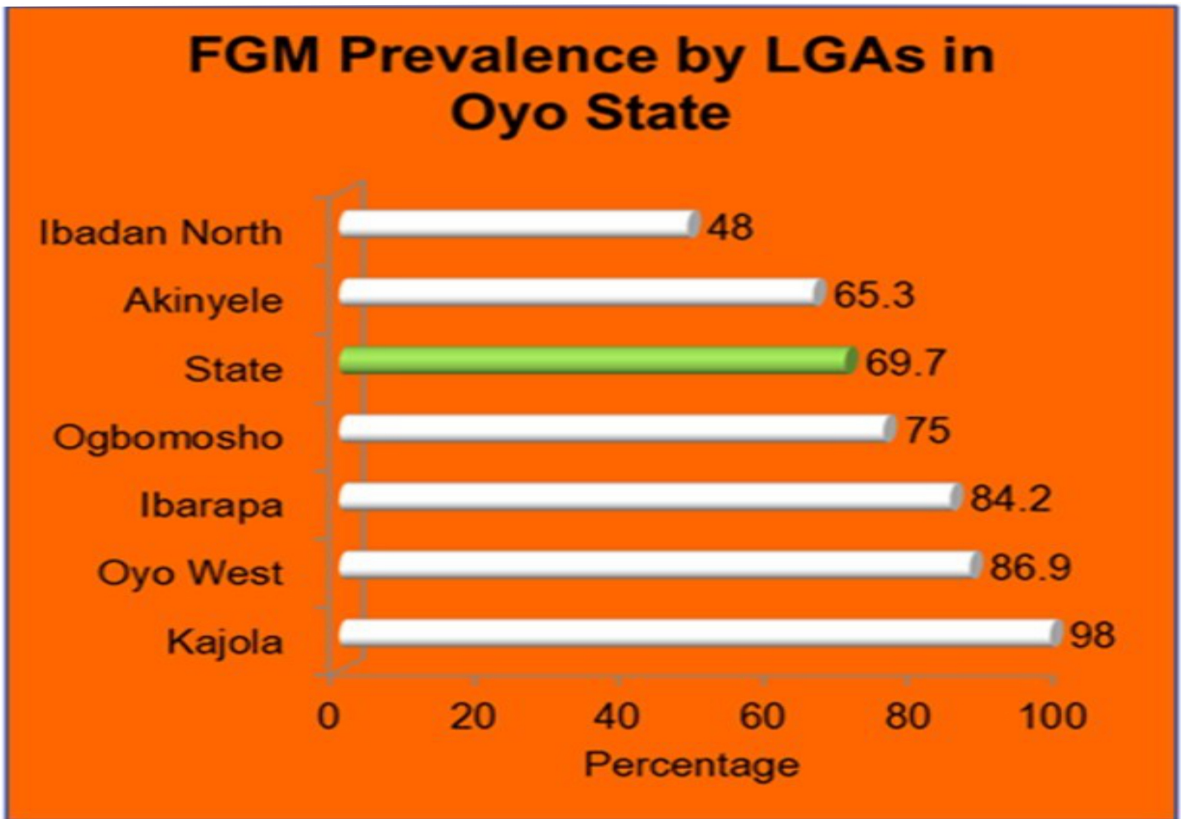
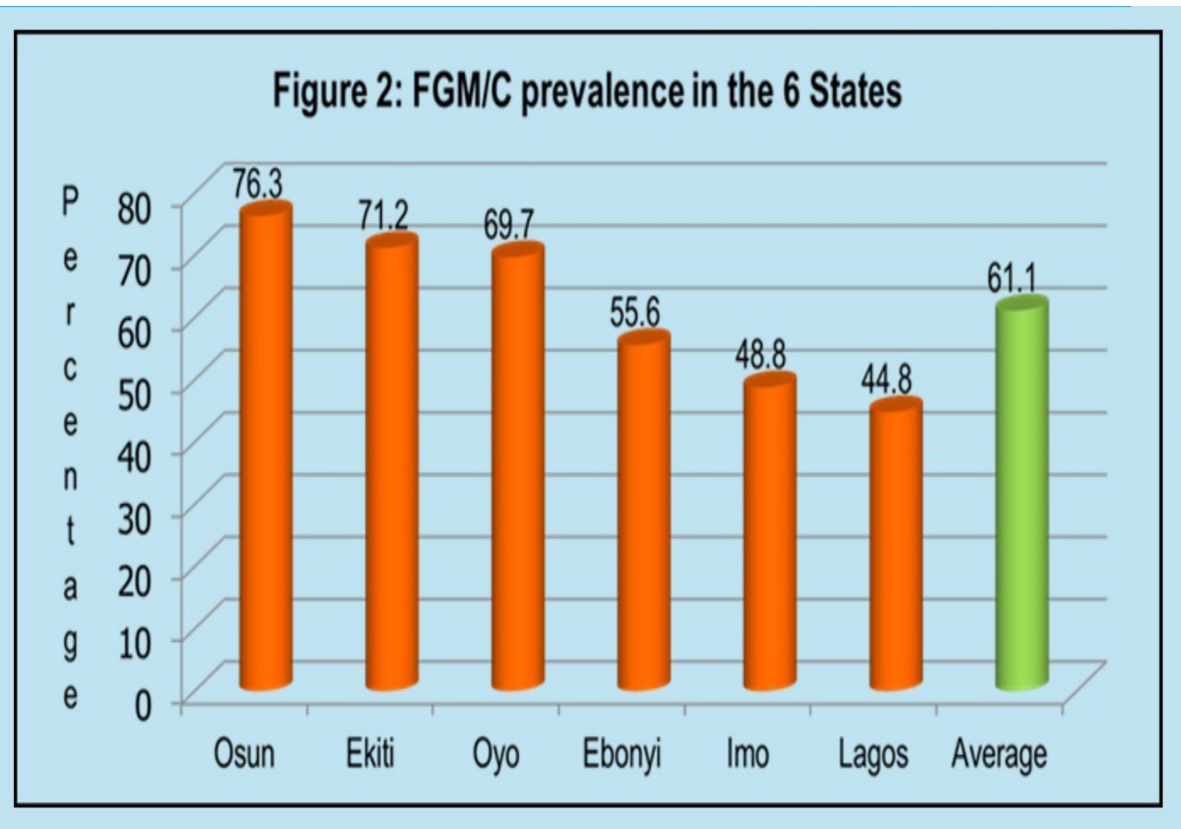
The Oyo state prevalence is 69.7% whilst Kajola LGA had a 98% prevalence of FGM (the highest in the Country), while Ibarapa North had an 89.3% prevalence among women aged 15-49 years. Over 50% of women of child-bearing age in Oyo state have been mutilated. More than a third of the women in Oyo State had a mutilated female child. This represents an increase of more than 10% in recent FGM practice when compared to the 2016-2017 MICS study.

Map of FGM prevalence among Girls (0-14years) and women (15-49 years) - (MICS 2021)

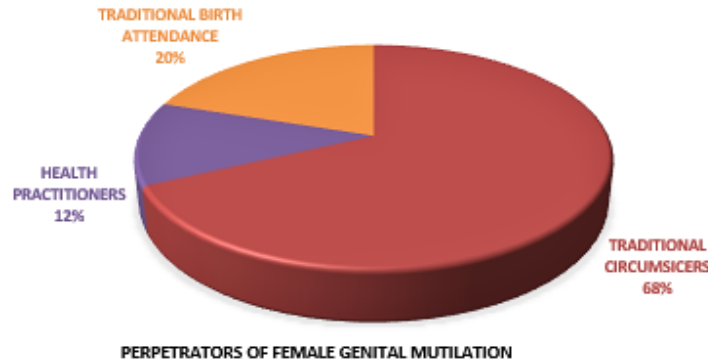


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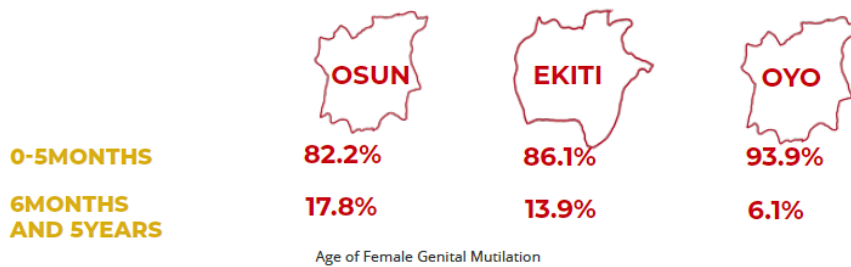


3. Knowledge, Attitude and Practice

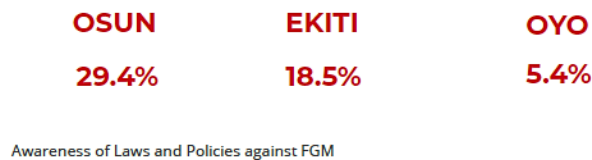


Oyo state showed that 67.0% was performed by traditional circumcisers and 11.9% by health care practitioners.

Traditional circumcisers are widely regarded as perpetrators of FGM. In Southwest Nigeria, traditional circumcisers referred to as “Oloolas” is a well-known profession that is primarily passed down from generation to generation, with circumcisers usually responsible for carrying out all circumcisions for their client-families.



Source: HACEY 2021



Source: HACEY 2021



Cultural belief

OYO 73.4%



Family Influence

33.4%



Fathers Influence

5.6% OYO



Poor Knowledge

60.5%



Knowledge about complications

33.1%

Source: HACEY 2021

4. Conclusion

The Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP) Law in Oyo State was passed on February 8th, 2020 and assented to on December 28, 2020 demonstrating the State's commitment to eliminating all forms of violence against persons including harmful practices such as FGM among women and girls.



Need for strengthened efforts to effectively implement the law as it is crucial towards accelerating efforts to eradicate FGM and ensure the well-being and rights of girls and women are safeguarded.



Need for a multi-sectoral approach to eliminating FGM in Oyo State including advocacy at community level, engagement of men, boys and religious leaders as well as empowering women and girls to become agents of change for ownership and sustainability.



FGM is highest in the first year of life at 79.2% (women) and 76.7% (girls), it is therefore, necessary to invest and scale up prevention-focused methods and actions that are directed at parents/caregivers and key household decision-makers.

5. Prayers And Recommendations

•Advocacy

- For the 10th National Assembly to include prevention and response to FGM as a key strategic agenda for addressing the plight of women and girls in the state
- Convene townhall meetings to advocate and secure buy-in of constituents, key influencers, traditional and religious leaders on the importance of FGM abandonment and enrolment of pledges to join the movement for good

Budgetary allocations:

- Ensure timely and effective allocation of budgets to relevant ministries including Women Affairs, Social Welfare, health, education, justice, social mobilisation agencies (National Orientation Agency and Ministry of Information) and Law Enforcement to embark on preventive and response programmes
- Operationalization of the Oyo State and Local Government Technical Committees on the Elimination of FGM for effective coordination of multi-sectoral efforts in line with the National Policy on the Elimination of FGM
- Implementation of the Oyo State Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP) Law (awareness creation on criminalization of FGM, empowerment of service providers and the SGBV Response Team)
- A robust database of perpetrators (FGM/Sexual offenders' Register) and incidence tracking to inform response.
- Strengthening of community-based surveillance structures and social service workforce for service provision

Accountability and oversight:

- Parliamentary oversight through relevant parliamentary committees (House Committee on Women Affairs and Health) for the judicious and effectively utilisation of funds

In 2020, Oyo State government domesticated the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law, in addition to two other laws that previously existed in the state, but unfortunately there has been low reportage of cases and zero prosecution. Despite concerted efforts to end FGM, the practice still persists and will need to be accelerated in order to meet the target of zero FGM cases by 2030

About UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of FGM

Since 2014, UNICEF and UNFPA, in partnership with government and other partners, implemented the Joint Programme on the elimination of FGM in five states namely, Osun State (45.9%), Ebonyi State (53.2%), Ekiti State (57.9%), Imo State (61.7%) and Oyo (31.1%) (NDHS 2018) through a set of coherent set of interrelated interventions to ensure timely abandonment of FGM with the aim to:

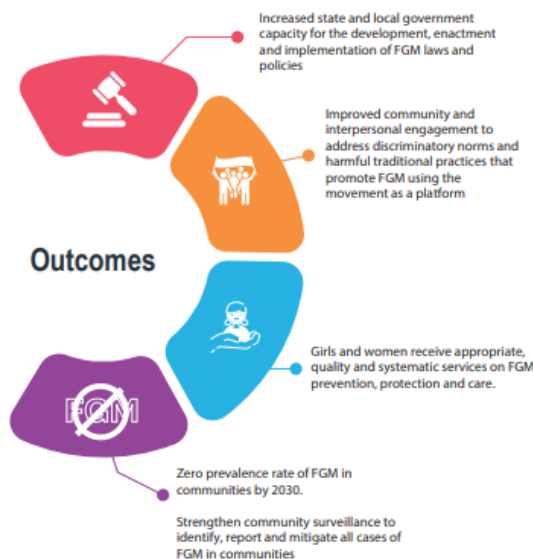
- strengthen legal and policy development and implementation,
- improve access to quality health care, protection, legal and social services,
- sensitization/educate communities on the need to eliminate FGM.
- Data: investing in evidence building and strengthening data systems, analysis and use to inform policy initiatives, programming and strategic advocacy.



Background and overview of the M4G project



In April 2022, the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the Ministries of Women Affairs and Health, led and officially launched, the **Movement for Good to end FGM** in Nigeria, within the context of the **UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme to eliminate FGM**. The Movement is a whole-of-society and community led undertaking, to drive, accelerate and scale up existing grassroots efforts and initiatives by women and youth-led groups, community stakeholders including traditional and religious leaders and CSOs, that have been helpful in the abandonment of the practice of FGM. The movement aims to reach an initial five million people, especially young people, adolescent girls, survivors, care givers, to drive collective and sustainable change by pledging to **#Act2EndFGM**.



Objectives

- 1 Build girls' and women's agency to support innovative and safe platforms and spaces, both offline and online, to lead, influence change and voice their opinions on issues related to FGM.
- 2 Scale up and sustain awareness within high prevalence communities on the risks and harmful consequences of FGM on girls and women's rights, its legal prohibition and the consequences of its violation.
- 3 Strengthen service provision to protect girls and women at risk of FGM including enhancing access to health, psycho-social support and justice services for survivors.
- 4 Develop, disseminate and track the utility of gender transformative social mobilisation content through social media platforms, house to house campaigns and other media channels.



ABOUT TBI

TRAILBLAZER INITIATIVE NIGERIA (for sustainable development, health and empowerment) is a youth-led, Youth and Women focused Non-Profit, Non-Governmental Organization that is committed to the betterment of generations and making Positive Change Inevitable in the Society through sustainable programmes that promote and facilitate Good Health and Well-being, Poverty Eradication, Good and Accessible Education, elimination of harmful traditional practices (e.g. Female genital mutilation), Gender-based Violence, Violence against women and children, Child's Right Advocacy and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children, and Democracy and Good Governance.

Founded in 2013, we are registered with corporate affairs commission (CAC) in May 2018 as well as Oyo State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Inclusion. We are one of the NGOs partnering with UNICEF Nigeria to work on elimination of Female Genital Mutilation, Gender-Based Violence, Child Marriage and Violence against Children and Women in Oyo State since 2018.

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to end Female Genital Mutilation

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