

Ethiopia

65.2%¹



Key Findings

With an FGM prevalence of 65.2% among women aged 15–49 in a population of nearly 104.5 million, Ethiopia is second to Egypt in the total number of women and girls who have experienced FGM.²

Geography:

The regions with the highest prevalence are in the east³

Age:

Approximately 64% of daughters of women aged 15–49 who have undergone FGM were cut before the age of 4⁴

Type:

'Cut, flesh removed' is the most common type of FGM practised⁵

Agent:

Almost all FGM is carried out by 'traditional practitioners'⁶

Development Indicators

HDI Rank: 173 out of 189 countries (2018)⁷

SDG Gender Index Rating: 117 out of 129 countries (2019)⁸

Population: 104,278,136 (as at 7 June 2017), with a 2.88% growth rate (Nov. 2016 est.)⁹

Infant Mortality Rate: 41 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)¹⁰

Maternal Mortality Ratio: 353 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)¹¹

Literacy: 49.1% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write¹²

*'In our community, girls and women are discriminated against.
I learned that I have to show that I am equal to boys and I can do whatever boys do.'*

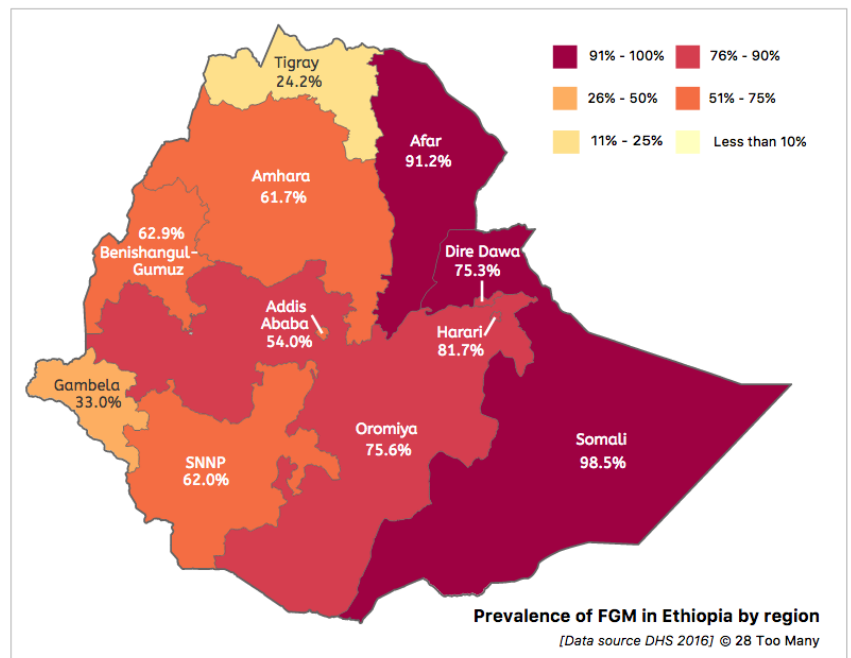
~ Tezerash Tesfa, whose mother refused to have her undergo FGM¹³

Prevalence

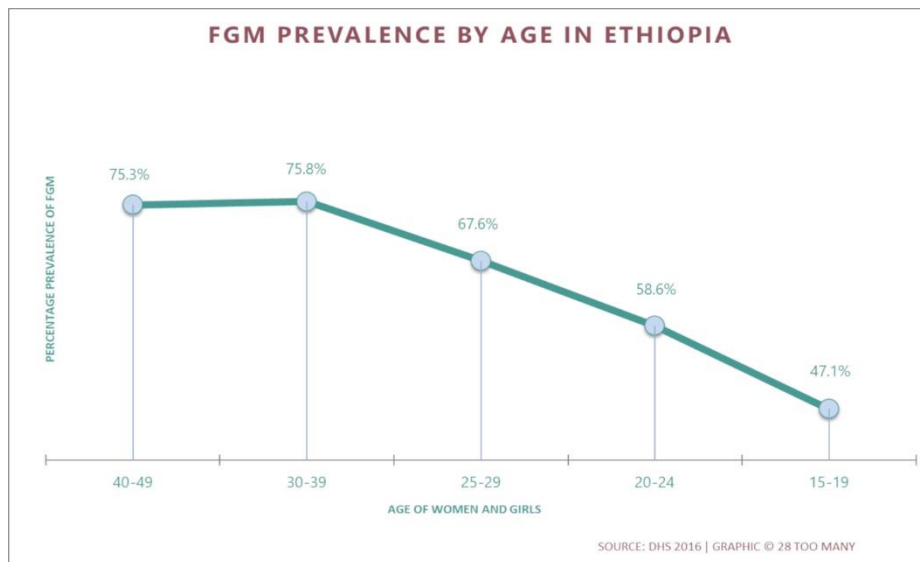
FGM is practised across all regions, religions and ethnic groups in Ethiopia. FGM among women aged 15–49 is more prevalent in the east of the country, and the region with the highest prevalence is Somali, at 98.5%. The lowest prevalence is in Tigray, at 24.2%. It should be noted that small sample sizes were used in many of the regions and figures therefore may not be accurate. Women who live in rural areas are more likely to be cut (68.4% of women aged 15–49) than women who live in urban areas (53.9%).

The Somali are the ethnic group with the highest prevalence of FGM among women aged 15–49, at 98.5%, followed by the Afar, at 98.4% (however, once again, the small sample size makes this figure potentially unreliable). The ethnic group with the lowest prevalence is the Tigray, at 23%.

82.2% of Muslim women aged 15-49 have undergone FGM, compared to 54.2% of Orthodox women and 65.8% of Protestant women.¹⁴



Between 2005 and 2016, the overall prevalence for women aged 15–49 fell from 74.3% to 65.2%. Due to the large age-range of women included, however, the overall prevalence alone may not fully reflect the progress that has been made in recent years. Breaking down the most recent data by age group shows that the prevalence for women aged 45–49 is 75.3%, while for the youngest age group this has fallen to 47.1%. Despite the fact that a small proportion of women may be cut after the age of 15, the lower prevalences among younger women suggest that the practice is declining.¹⁵



Ethiopian Law

The main law governing FGM in Ethiopia is Proclamation No. 414/2004, the Criminal Code of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2004. Articles 561–570 are relevant to FGM, but law enforcement is weak and few cases reach court.

- 1 (**'DHS'**): Central Statistical Agency (CSA) [Ethiopia] and ICF (2016) *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey 2016: Key Indicators Report*, p.321. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Rockville, Maryland, USA. CSA and ICF. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf> (accessed 7 June 2017).
- 2 - DHS, p.45.
- UNICEF (2013a) *Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A statistical overview and exploration of the dynamics of change*, p.2. Available at http://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/FGMC_Lo_res_Final_26.pdf.
- 3 DHS, p.45.
- 4 UNICEF (2013b) *Ethiopia: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*, p.2. Available at https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Ethiopia/FGMC_ETH.pdf (accessed 5 June 2017).
- 5 DHS, p.45.
- 6 UNICEF 2013b, *op. cit.*, p.2.
- 7 United Nations Development Programme (2018) *Human Development Reports*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update> (accessed 12 June 2019).
- 8 Equal Measures 2030 (2019) *Harnessing the Power of Data for Gender Equality: Introducing the 2019 EM2030 SDG Gender Index*, pp.12–13. Available at www.data.em2030.org/2019-global-report (accessed 12 June 2019).
- 9 - Country Meters (2017) Ethiopia, 7 June 2017. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Ethiopia> (accessed 5 June 2017).
- Central Intelligence Agency (2016) *World Factbook: Ethiopia*, 30 May. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/et.html> (accessed 5 June 2017).
- 10 Countdown to 2030 (2015) *A Decade of Tracking Progress for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival The 2015 Report: Ethiopia*. Available at http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Ethiopia_2015.pdf (accessed 5 June 2017).
- 11 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and United Nations Population Division Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (2015) *Maternal mortality in 1990-2015: Ethiopia*. Available at http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/eth.pdf?ua=1 (accessed 5 June 2017).
- 12 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
- 13 Amy Yee (2017) 'Talking it Out: The Effort to End Female Genital Mutilation in Ethiopia', *UNDark*, 4 June. Available at <https://undark.org/article/ending-female-genital-mutilation-ethiopia-fgm/> (accessed 9 June 2017).
- 14 DHS, p.45.
- 15 DHS, p.45.

UNICEF Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting:

UNICEF (2013) *Ethiopia: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*. Available at https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Ethiopia/FGMC_ETH.pdf (accessed 5 June 2017).

Images on website:

- 1 Jazzmany (2012) *HARAR, ETHIOPIA – DECEMBER 25, 2012 Unidentified young Muslim girl standing portrait in the streets of old city*. Shutterstock ID 195541997.
- 2 Martchan (2012) *GAYO VILLAGE, ETHIOPIA – JUNE 19: Women and young village girls collect water from a rain water pool which is purified before use with tablets on June 19, 2012 in Gayo village, Ethiopia*. Shutterstock ID 49746061.
- 3 John Wollwerth (2015) *ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA – APRIL 22, 2015: A young woman and her sister sell spices in a market in Ethiopia*. Shutterstock ID 298532906.