

# Mali

88.6%<sup>1</sup>



## Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM in women aged 15–49 is 88.6% (excluding the rural regions of Kidal)  
75.8% of women and 74.4% of men aged 15–49 believe that FGM should continue<sup>2</sup>

### Geography:

The regions with the highest prevalence are in the south and south-west of the country<sup>3</sup>

### Age:

FGM is most likely to take place before the age of 5<sup>4</sup>

### Type:

'Cut, flesh removed' is the most common type of FGM practised<sup>5</sup>

### Agent:

91.5% of women aged 15–49 were cut by traditional cutters<sup>6</sup>

## Development Indicators

**HDI Rank:** 184 out of 189 countries (2020)<sup>7</sup>

**SDG Gender Index Rating:** 123 out of 129 countries (2019)<sup>8</sup>

**Population:** 21,190,811 (as at 19 January 2022), with a 2.97% growth rate (2021 est.)<sup>9</sup>

**Infant Mortality Rate:** 62 deaths per 1,000 live births (2019)<sup>10</sup>

**Maternal Mortality Ratio:** 562 deaths per 100,000 live births (2017)<sup>11</sup>

**Literacy:** 35.5% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write<sup>12</sup>

*'As an African woman I went through Female Genital Mutilation. I know what it is and I know how harmful it is. And I want to protect those younger girls and those generations coming, because FGM has to end.'*

*~ Malian singer and activist Inna Modja<sup>13</sup>*

## Prevalence

The regions with the highest prevalence of FGM are in the south and south-west of the country: Sikasso (96.0%), Koulikoro (95.9%) and Kayes (94.7%).<sup>14</sup>

It should be noted that the figure of 88.6% for the overall prevalence of FGM in Mali does not include the rural regions of Kidal, which could not be surveyed. Although the effect of this on the overall prevalence is likely to be small, the results should be interpreted with caution.

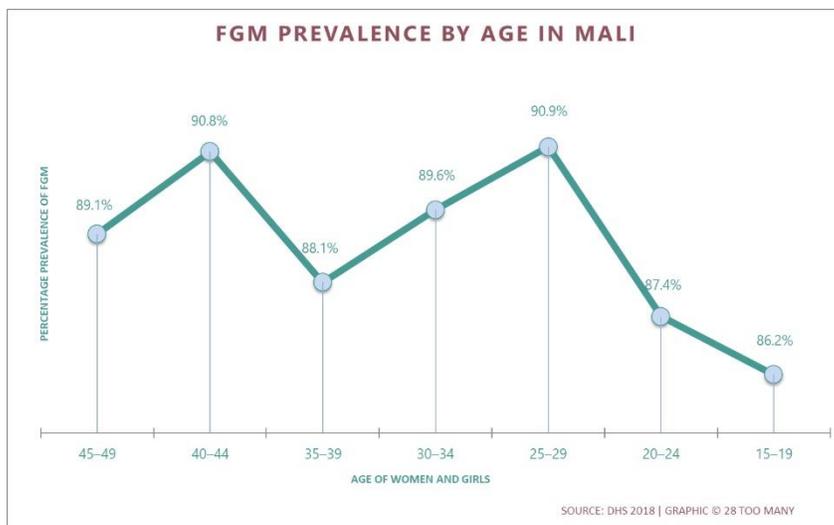
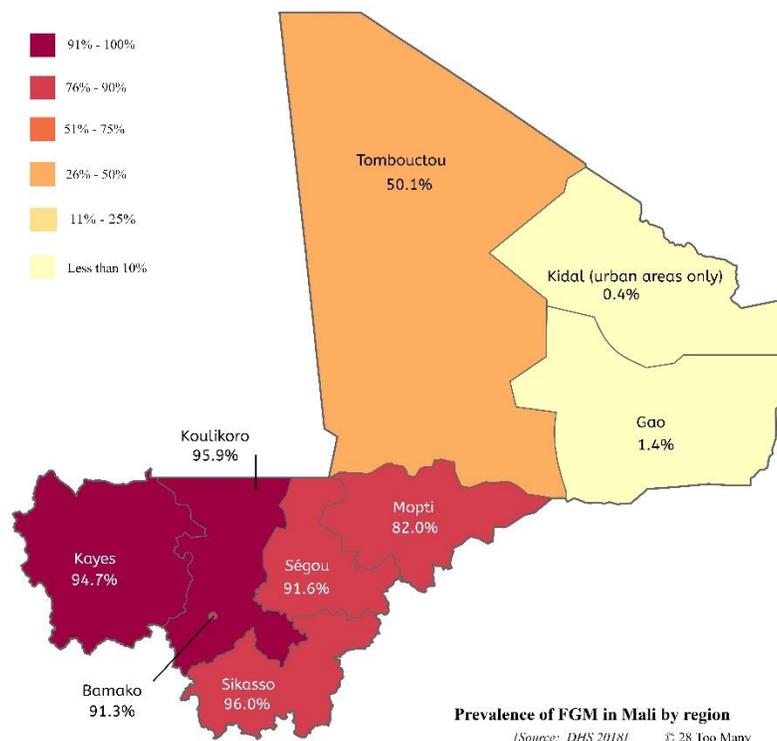
70% of women and 68% of men aged 15–49 believe that FGM is a requirement of their religion, while 75.8% of women and 74.4% of men aged 15–49 believe that the practice should continue.<sup>15</sup>

The DHS 2018 does not provide data on FGM prevalence according to people’s ethnic or religious groups. In the DHS 2012–2013, the ethnic group with highest prevalence of FGM was the Sarakolé/Soninké/Marka, at 96% of women aged 15–49, and the ethnic group with the lowest prevalence was the Tamachek/Bélla, at 62.7%.<sup>16</sup> Although only a small number of women from the Tamachek/Bélla were surveyed, it is worth noting that in countries such as Burkina Faso there is also a low prevalence of FGM among the Bélla.

FGM in Mali is practised by people of all the major religions: in 2012–2013, 92.8% of Muslim women aged 15–49 had been cut, as had 77.2% of Animiste women and 65.2% of Christian women. Of women who did not adhere to any major faith, 91.4% had undergone FGM.<sup>17</sup>

The results of the DHS 2018 cannot be compared directly with those of the DHS 2012–2013, since in the latter it was not possible to survey the three northern-most regions (Tombouctou, Kidal and Gao) due to armed conflict there. It is possible, however, to make cautious comparisons with the DHS 2006, which covered the entire country. In 2006, the overall prevalence of FGM was found to be 85.2%, suggesting that the prevalence of the practice has remained broadly constant in recent years.<sup>18</sup>

In some situations, seemingly small shifts in the overall prevalence can mask more striking changes in prevalence that can be seen when the data is broken down by age group. In the case of Mali, however, the prevalence is broadly the same across all age groups, with no distinct trend towards a lower prevalence in younger women.



# Malian Law

There is currently no national legislation in Mali that specifically criminalises and punishes the practice of FGM. There have been many attempts over the years to introduce a ban on FGM; most recently, in July 2017, a draft law to address gender-based violence (including FGM) was put forward, although it faces objections and has yet to be passed.

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- 1 **(‘DHS’)**: Institut National de la Statistique (INSTAT), Cellule de Planification et de Statistique Secteur Santé-Développement Social et Promotion de la Famille (CPS/SS-DS-PF) and ICF. (2019) *Enquête Démographique et de Santé au Mali 2018*. Bamako, Mali and Rockville, Maryland, USA: INSTAT, CPS/SS-DS-PF and ICF. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-FR358-DHS-Final-Reports.cfm>.
  - 2 DHS, p.356.
  - 3 DHS, p.352.
  - 4 DHS, p.352.
  - 5 DHS, p.352.
  - 6 DHS, p.354.
  7. UNDP (2020a) *Human Development Reports (HDR 2020)*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/latest-human-development-index-ranking>.
  - 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](http://www.data.em2030.org/2019-global-report) (accessed 12 June 2019).
  9. Country Meters (2022) *Mali*. Available at <https://countrymeters.info/en/Mali> (accessed 19 January 2022).
  - 10 UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (2019) *Mali*. Available at <https://childmortality.org/data/Mali>.
  11. *Ibid.*
  - 12 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
  - 13 Africa News (2016) *Mali: Inna Modja using music to stop Female Genital Mutilation*, 10 February. Available at <http://www.africanews.com/2016/02/10/mali-inna-modja-using-music-to-stop-female-genital-mutilation/> (accessed 21 August 2017).
  - 14 DHS, p.352.
  - 15 DHS, pp.355–356.
  - 16 Cellule de Planification et de Statistique (CPS/SSDSPF), Institut National de la Statistique (INSTAT/MPATP), INFO-STAT et ICF International (2014) *Enquête Démographique et de Santé au Mali 2012–2013*, p.296. Rockville, Maryland, USA : CPS, INSTAT, INFO-STAT et ICF International. Available at <http://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR286/FR286.pdf>.
  - 17 *Ibid.*, p.303–304.
  - 18 Cellule de Planification et de Statistique du Ministère de la Santé (CPS/MS), Direction Nationale de la Statistique et de l’Informatique du Ministère de l’Économie, de l’Industrie et du Commerce (DNSI/MEIC) et Macro International Inc. (2007) *Enquête Démographique et de Santé du Mali 2006*, p.287. Calverton, Maryland, USA: CPS/DNSI et Macro International Inc.

## **UNICEF Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting:**

UNICEF (2013) *Mali: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*. Available at [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Mali/FGMC\\_MLI.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Mali/FGMC_MLI.pdf) (accessed 31 May 2017).

## **Images on website:**

- 1 Marianoblanco (2011) *Mopti, Mali – Aug.27,2011: Girl in a village, Mali*. Shutterstock ID 348332174.
- 2 Quick Shot (2011) *MOPTI, MALI, AFRICA – AUGUST, 26, 2011 Women Mopti will wash their clothes in the river Niger*. Shutterstock ID 226221160.
- 3 Marianoblanco (2011) *Djene, Mali – Aug.29,2011: Children, Mali*. Shutterstock ID 375128974.