

# Uganda

0.3%<sup>1</sup>



## Key Findings

The estimated prevalence of FGM in women 15–49 is 0.3%.<sup>2</sup> It is mostly practised by the Sabinu and the Pokot. More than 80% of Ugandan women think the practice should be stopped.

*Please note that, due to the low prevalence of FGM in Uganda, very few surveyed women have been cut. For this reason, detailed breakdowns by age, education, etc. should be treated with caution.<sup>3</sup>*

### **Geography:**

The highest prevalence (6.4%) is in the Karamoja region in the north-east<sup>4</sup>

### **Age:**

Girls are typically cut at age 10 and older<sup>5</sup>

### **Type:**

The Sabinu primarily practice Type II; the Pokot Type III<sup>6</sup>

### **Agent:**

FGM is performed by older women called 'surgeons', but they have no medical training

## Development Indicators

**HDI Rank:** 162 out of 189 countries (2018)<sup>7</sup>

**SDG Gender Index Rating:** 107 out of 129 countries (2019)<sup>8</sup>

**Population:** 41,401,798 (as at 11 May 2017), with a 3.22% growth rate (2016 est.)<sup>9</sup>

**Infant Mortality Rate:** 38 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)<sup>10</sup>

**Maternal Mortality Ratio:** 343 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)<sup>11</sup>

**Literacy:** 78.4% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write<sup>12</sup>

*'It is essential we modernise and that our culture is not left behind. Education is the answer.*

*The less ignorant we are, the more this practice will die out.'*

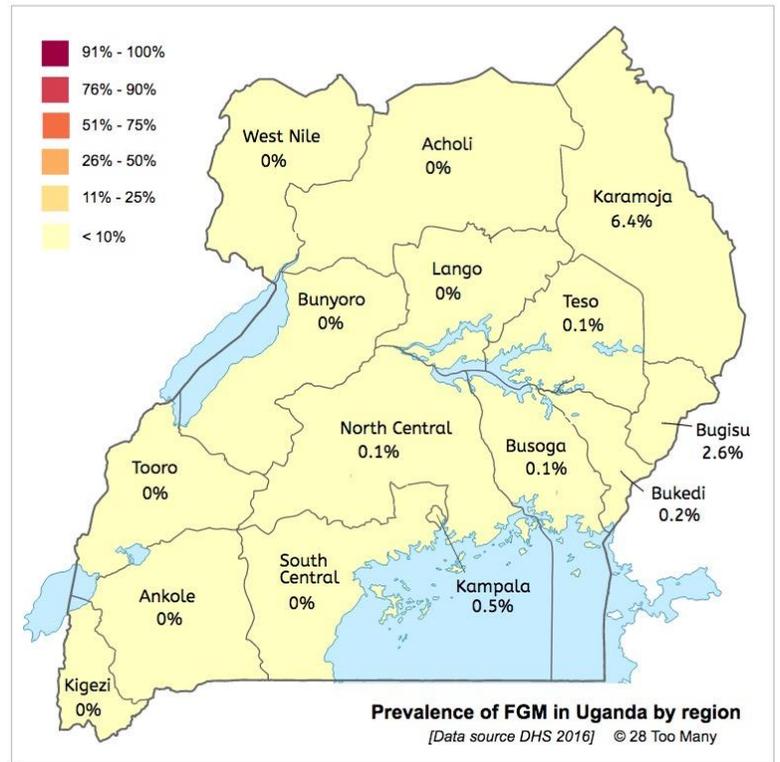
*~ Mr Cheborion, Chairman of the Sabinu Elders Association*

## Prevalence

FGM in Uganda is mainly practised by the Pokot, the majority of whom live in the Karamoja region in the north-east (which has the highest FGM prevalence by region), and the Sabiny, who live in the Eastern region. FGM is near-universal (95%) among the Pokot, and is estimated at 50% among the Sabiny, but the prevalence of FGM across the entire country is less than 1%. 'Genital elongation' (categorised as FGM Type IV) is also practised in Uganda (for example, among the Baganda).

Survey data suggests no difference in FGM prevalence between women aged 15–49 who live in urban areas and those who live in rural areas. However, support for discontinuation of the practice is higher among women who live in urban areas (90%) than those who live in rural areas (80.3%).

Better-educated women are less likely to support the continuation of FGM (6%) than those with little education (11.1%), and women in the highest wealth quintile are less likely to support its continuation (5.4%) than those in the lowest wealth quintile (13.1%).<sup>13</sup>



Between 2006 and 2011, the prevalence of FGM appeared to increase from 0.6% to 1.4%. However, this increase is not statistically significant and may simply reflect the limitations of the survey data, which comprised only small numbers of women who had experienced FGM. The data suggests that the prevalence remained fairly constant at around 1%, and the latest DHS data, from 2016, reports it as 0.3%. In contrast to many other countries, younger women are more supportive of the continuation of FGM (12.8% of young women aged 15–19 support its continuation compared to 4.3% of women aged 45–49).<sup>14</sup>

## Ugandan Law

In December 2010, the Ugandan Government passed legislation that specifically prohibits the practice of FGM (The Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act 2010). Implementation of the law and its enforcement remain a challenge, however. The practice continues in very remote rural areas, often in secret, and reports suggest that, although there have been arrests, few actual prosecutions take place in Uganda.

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- 1 ('DHS'): Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and ICF International Inc. (2018) *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2016*, p.162. Kampala, Uganda: UBOS and Rockville, Maryland: ICF International Inc. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-FR333-DHS-Final-Reports.cfm>.
  - 2 *Ibid.*, p.162.
  - 3 ('DHS 2011'): Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and ICF International Inc. (2012) *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2011*, p.119-120. Kampala, Uganda: UBOS and Calverton, Maryland: ICF International Inc. Available at <http://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR264/FR264.pdf> (accessed 11 May 2017).
  - 4 DHS, p.162.
  - 5 DHS 2011, p.119.
  - 6 UNFPA (2011) *Request for Proposals for Grant to strengthen capacity of Organisations to Enhance Community Action for abandonment of Female genital mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) in Uganda*.
  - 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](http://www.data.em2030.org/2019-global-report) (accessed 12 June 2019).
  - 9 - Country Meters (2017) *Uganda*, 11 May 2017. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Uganda> (accessed 11 May 2017).
  - Central Intelligence Agency (2017) *World Factbook: Uganda*, 12 January. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ug.html> (accessed 11 May 2017).
  - 10 Countdown to 2030 (2015) *A Decade of Tracking Progress for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival The 2015 Report: Uganda*. Available at [http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Uganda\\_2015.pdf](http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Uganda_2015.pdf) (accessed 11 May 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: Burkina Faso*. Available at [http://www.who.int/gho/maternal\\_health/countries/uga.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/uga.pdf?ua=1) (accessed 11 May 2017).
  - 12 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
  - 13 - DHS 2011, pp.119-120.
  - UNFPA, *op. cit.*
  - 14 - DHS, p.162.
  - DHS 2011, p.120.
  - Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and Macro International Inc. (2007) *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2006*, p.135. Calverton, Maryland, USA: UBOS and Macro International Inc. Available at <http://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR194/FR194.pdf> (accessed 11 May 2017).

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

UNICEF (2014) *Uganda: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*. Available at [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Uganda/FGMC\\_UGA.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Uganda/FGMC_UGA.pdf).

#### **Images on website:**

- 1 U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Roger S. Duncan (2010) *Pokot girl poses for a photograph during the Veterinary Civil Assistance Project (VETCAP) operated by U.S., Kenyan, Tanzanian and Ugandan veterinarians and doctors...* Available at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AUS\\_Navy\\_060815-N-0411D-045\\_A\\_Pokot\\_girl\\_poses\\_for\\_a\\_photograph\\_during\\_the\\_Veterinary\\_Civil\\_Assistance\\_Project\\_\(VETCAP\)\\_operated\\_by\\_U.S.%2C\\_Kenyan%2C\\_Tanzanian\\_and\\_Ugandan\\_veterinarians\\_and\\_doctors.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AUS_Navy_060815-N-0411D-045_A_Pokot_girl_poses_for_a_photograph_during_the_Veterinary_Civil_Assistance_Project_(VETCAP)_operated_by_U.S.%2C_Kenyan%2C_Tanzanian_and_Ugandan_veterinarians_and_doctors.jpg).
- 2 Papa Bravo (2016) *RUHIJA,UGANDA/UGANDA – JUNE 5: portrait of unidentified children belonging to the Ruhija tribe of Uganda on June 5 2016 in Ruhija, S Uganda. Ruhija is close to last living mountain gorillas habitat*. Shutterstock ID 569468893.
- 3 Hector Conesa (2010) *UGANDA – AUGUST 12: Karamojong ethnic woman poses with her baby, lives in northeastern Uganda, is currently in the process of disarmament, August 12, 2010 in Karamoja, Uganda*. Shutterstock ID 66309124.