

# Egypt

87.2%<sup>1</sup>



## Key Findings

With an FGM prevalence of 87.2% among all women aged 15–49 in a population of nearly 95 million, Egypt has the greatest number of women and girls who have experienced FGM of any country in the world.<sup>2</sup>

### **Geography:**

There is a markedly higher prevalence among girls living in Upper Egypt than girls living in Lower Egypt and the Urban Governorates<sup>3</sup>

### **Age:**

Prevalence among young girls is low, but increases dramatically from age of nine; most girls undergo the practice at or before puberty<sup>4</sup>

### **Type:**

Type I and Type II are the most common types of FGM practised

### **Agent:**

Among girls aged 0–14, 78.4% of incidences of FGM are carried out by a health professional<sup>5</sup>

## Development Indicators

**HDI Rank:** 115 out of 189 countries (2018)<sup>6</sup>

**SDG Gender Index Rating:** 87 out of 129 countries (2019)<sup>7</sup>

**Population:** 95,316,705 (as at 24 May 2017), with a 2.51% growth rate (2016 est.)<sup>8</sup>

**Infant Mortality Rate:** 20 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)<sup>9</sup>

**Maternal Mortality Ratio:** 33 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)<sup>10</sup>

**Literacy:** 73.8% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write<sup>11</sup>

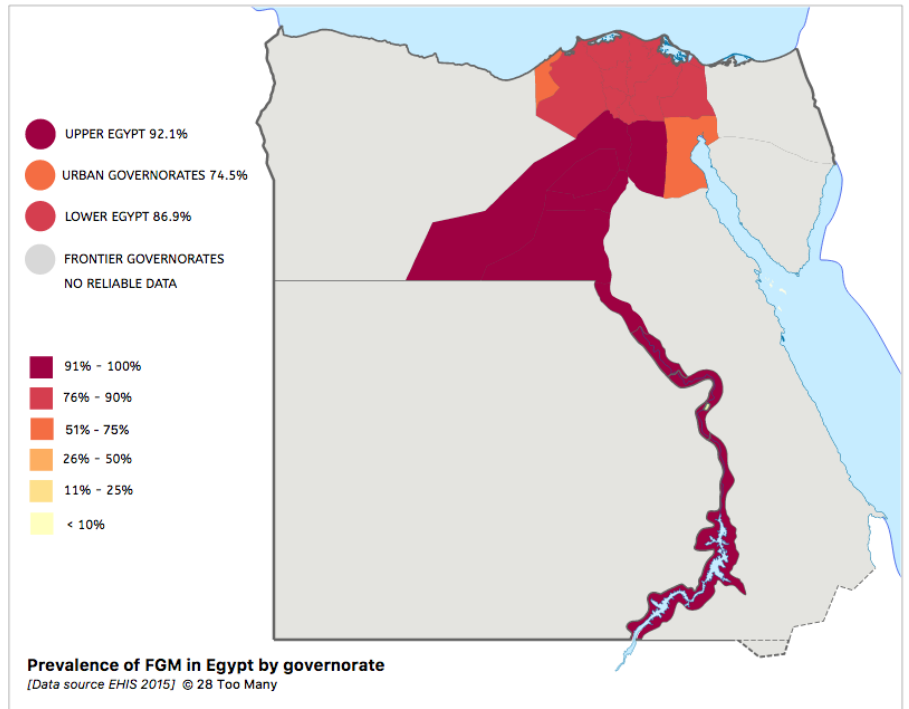
*‘We need nothing short of a recognition that ending [FGM] is part of the “social justice and human dignity” revolution that we began in Egypt in January 2011.’*

*~ Mona Eltahawy, Egyptian activist and author*

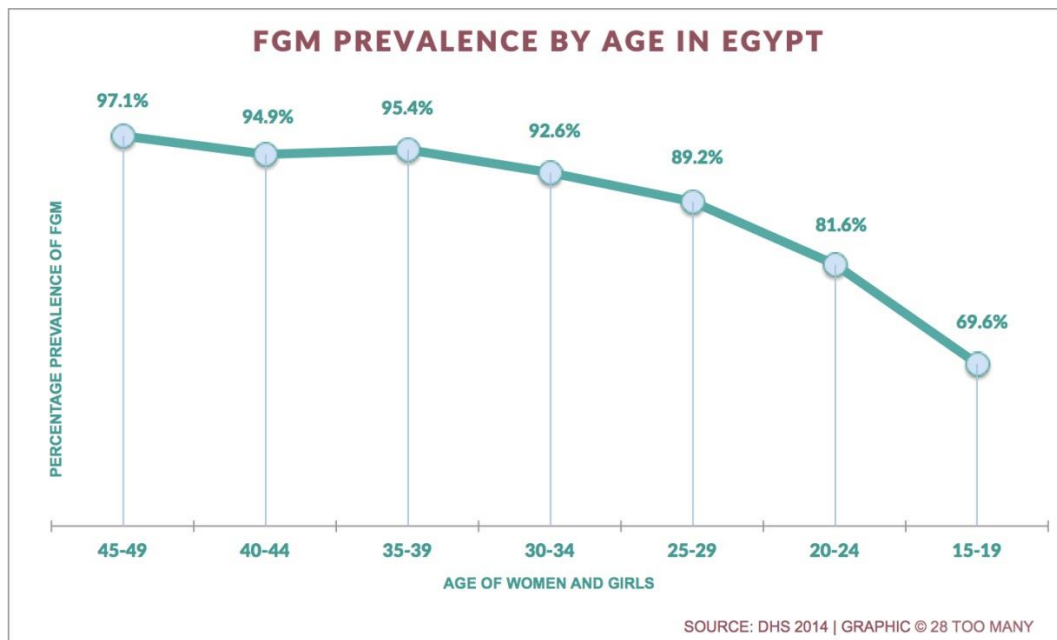
## Prevalence

Prevalence is lowest in the Urban Governorates and the urban areas of Lower Egypt. It also appears to be low in the Frontier Governorates, but the extremely small number of surveyed women in this area means that these results should be treated with caution. FGM in the urban areas of Lower Egypt is slightly less prevalent than in the urban areas of Upper Egypt. The majority of Egypt's population (57.2%) lives in rural areas.

Prevalence by current place of residence may not be a telling factor, however, as a woman may have moved since undergoing FGM, particularly if she was cut at a young age. For this reason, it is more helpful to look at prevalence among young girls according to their place of residence. In Egypt the prevalence of FGM among girls aged 1-14 is 10.4% in urban areas compared with 15.9% in rural areas. There is a markedly higher prevalence among girls living in Upper Egypt than among girls living in Lower Egypt and the Urban Governorates.



94.4% of women (aged 15–49) in the lowest wealth quintile have undergone FGM, compared to 69.8% of women in the highest wealth quintile.<sup>12</sup>



The DHS 2014 gives a prevalence of 92.3% among (ever married) women aged 15–49, and the EHIS 2015 gives a prevalence of 87.2% among all women aged 15–49. There has been little change between 2008 and 2015. A more encouraging picture is presented in a secondary analysis of the DHS data on Egyptian girls aged 0-17 between 2005 and 2014, which concludes that the total percentage of girls who had already undergone FGM and those who were likely to undergo FGM before they reached 18 years of age fell from 69% to 55% in that period. As girls are unlikely to experience FGM after the age of 17 in Egypt, this suggests that there will be a continued decline in the overall prevalence of FGM in the future.

Breaking down the most recent data by age group shows that the prevalence for women aged 45–49 is 97.1%, while for the youngest age group this has fallen to 69.6%. This further demonstrates a trend towards lower prevalences among younger women.<sup>13</sup>

## Egyptian Law

The Egyptian Government passed legislation in 2008 that specifically prohibits FGM. In September 2016, a further amendment was made (by Law No. 126 of 2016) to the Penal Code, replacing Article 242-bis and adding Article 242-bis (A), upgrading FGM from a misdemeanor to a felony.

- 
- 1 (**'EHIS'**): Ministry of Health and Population [Egypt], El-Zanaty and Associates [Egypt], and ICF International (2015) *Egypt Health Issues Survey 2015*, p.104. Cairo, Egypt and Rockville, Maryland, USA: Ministry of Health and Population and ICF International. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR313/FR313.pdf>.
  - 2 EHIS, p.104.
  - 3 EHIS, p.104.
  - 4 Dr Fatma El-Zanaty, UNICEF (2015) *Factors and determinants of FGM/C of girls aged 0-17 years: a secondary analysis of the Egypt Demographic and Health Surveys, 2005, 2008 and 2014*. Available at [https://www.unicef.org/egypt/FGM\\_Secondary\\_analysis\\_edited\\_5-08-2016\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/egypt/FGM_Secondary_analysis_edited_5-08-2016_FINAL.pdf).
  - 5 EHIS, pp.106-107.
  - 6 United Nations Development Programme (2018) *Human Development Reports*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update> (accessed 12 June 2019).
  - 7 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).
  - 8 - Country Meters (2017) *Egypt*, 24 May 2017. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Egypt> (accessed 24 May 2017).  
- Central Intelligence Agency (2016) *World Factbook: Egypt*, 11 May. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html> (accessed 24 May 2017).
  - 9 Countdown to 2030 (2015) *A Decade of Tracking Progress for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival The 2015 Report: Egypt*. Available at [http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Egypt\\_2015.pdf](http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Egypt_2015.pdf) (accessed 24 May 2017).
  - 10 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and United Nations Population Division Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (2015) *Maternal mortality in 1990-2015: Egypt*. Available at [http://www.who.int/gho/maternal\\_health/countries/egy.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/egy.pdf?ua=1) (accessed 24 May 2017).
  - 11 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
  - 12 EHIS, pp.104 & 106.
  - 13 - EHIS, p.104  
- Ministry of Health and Population [Egypt], El-Zanaty and Associates [Egypt], and ICF International (2015) *Egypt Demographic and Health Survey 2014*, p.186. Cairo, Egypt and Rockville, Maryland, USA: Ministry of Health and Population and ICF International. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-FR302-DHS-Final-Reports.cfm>.  
- Fatma El-Zanaty, UNICEF, *op. cit.*, pp.2-3 & 24.

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

UNICEF (2016) Egypt: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. Available at [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Egypt/FGMC\\_EGY.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Egypt/FGMC_EGY.pdf) (accessed 24 May 2017).

**Images on website:**

- 1 Egyptian Studio (2016) *Borg Al Burlos, Kafr El Sheikh, Egypt – October 16, 2016: Young Egyptian Girl Portrait*. Shutterstock ID 509707771.
- 2 paul prescott (2011) *DAHAB, EGYPT – JANUARY 30, 2011: Portrait of modern young Egyptian girls woman wearing hijab, traditional head cover or wrap worn by Muslim women*. Shutterstock ID 174799592.
- 3 Tribes of the World (2013) *Two Egyptian Women, Egypt*. Available at <https://flic.kr/p/f4MLQd>. CCL: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>.