

# Somalia

97.9%<sup>1</sup>



## Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM in women aged 15-49 is 97.9%.  
64.5% of women aged 15-49 believe that FGM should continue.<sup>2</sup>

### **Geography:**

The zone with the highest prevalence is Central South, at 99.2%; however, the other two zones are also over 90%<sup>3</sup>

### **Age:**

Most girls are cut between the ages of 5 and 9<sup>4</sup>

### **Type:**

Nearly 80% of women undergo Type III (“sewn closed”)<sup>5</sup>

### **Agent:**

Unknown, but most likely predominantly traditional practitioners

## Development Indicators

**HDI Rank:** no reliable data; the UNDP estimated in 2010 a rank of 165 out of 170 countries<sup>6</sup>

**Population:** 11,284,253 (as at 26 June 2017), with a 1.92% growth rate (2016 est.)<sup>7</sup>

**Infant Mortality Rate:** 85 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)<sup>8</sup>

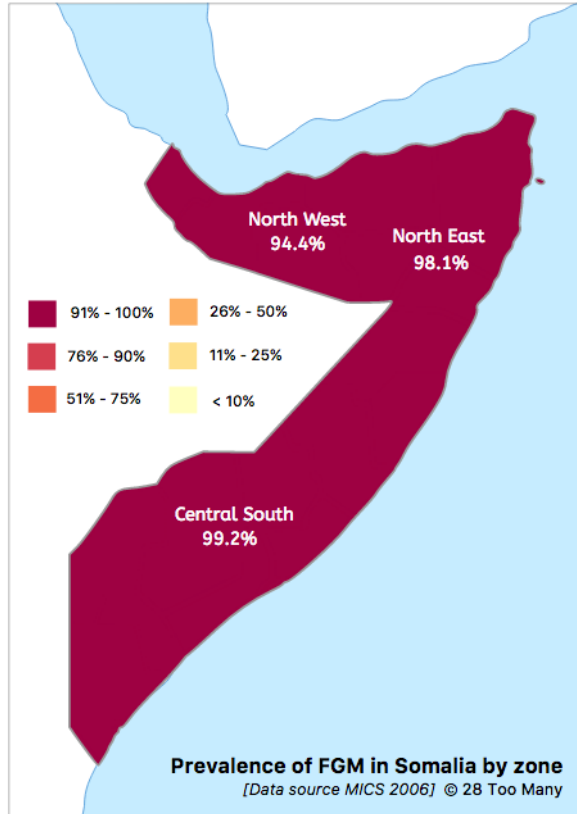
**Maternal Mortality Ratio:** 732 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)<sup>9</sup>

**Literacy:** unknown

*‘The youth are our future. If we teach young people to how to help,  
and give them the tools to help themselves,  
we can eradicate FGM for the generations to come.’  
~ Somali FGM survivor Hibo Wardere<sup>10</sup>*

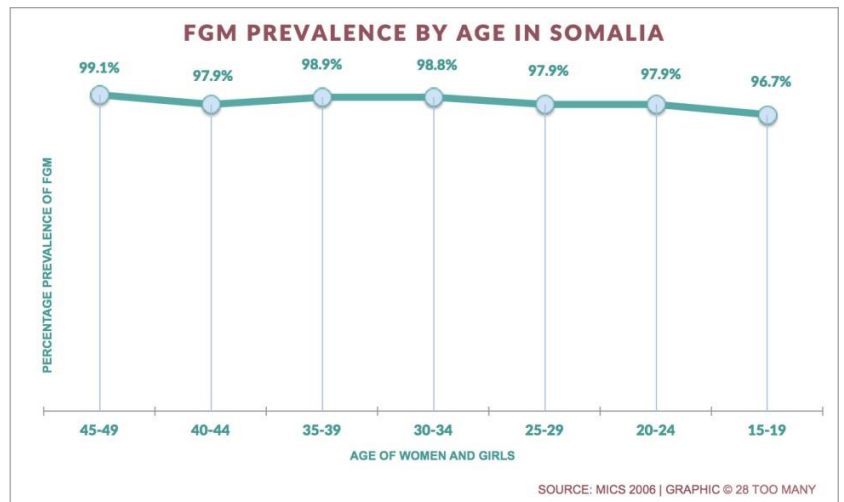
## Prevalence

The zone with the highest FGM prevalence among women aged 15-49 is Central South, at 99.2%. The other zones are North West (94.4%) and North East (98.1%). Women aged 15-49 who live in rural areas are only slightly more likely (98.4%) to undergo FGM than those who live in urban areas (97.1%), and the lowest prevalence of FGM is among women in the highest wealth quintile. Women aged 15-49 who live in rural areas are more likely to believe that the practice of FGM should continue (71.8%) than those who live in urban areas (53.8%). Overall, 64.5% of women aged 15-49 believe that FGM should continue.<sup>11</sup>



The MICS survey in 2011 only gathered data from the north-east (Somaliland). That survey showed that the prevalence of FGM in women aged 15-49 is 98%. A comparison with the 2006 figure for the North East region, which is 98.1%, suggests that there has been very little change in overall prevalence.

Breaking down the 2006 data by age group shows that the prevalence for women aged 45-49 is 99.1%, while for the youngest age group it is 96.7%. Despite the fact that a small proportion of women may be cut after the age of 15, the data suggests there may be a slight trend towards lower prevalences among younger women, although more data would be required to confirm.<sup>12</sup>



## Somali Law

To date no legislation has been passed in Somalia that prohibits the practice of FGM.

- 1 (**'MICS'**): UNICEF, MICS (2006) *Somalia: Multiple Indicator and Cluster Survey 2006*, p.138. Available at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/18T3Gr8YvcsO0vIc4TZuNaJ8P9cI5aH8E154TsJpL7Rk/edit> (accessed 26 June 2017).
- 2 MICS, p.138.
- 3 MICS, p.138.
- 4 MICS p.66.
- 5 MICS, p.138.
- 6 United Nations Development Programme (2015) *Human Development Index*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/137506> (accessed 16 May 2017).
- 7 - Country Meters (2017) *Somalia*, 1 May 2017. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Somalia> (accessed 26 June 2017).  
- Central Intelligence Agency (2016) *World Factbook: Somalia*, 15 June. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html> (accessed 26 June 2017).
- 8 Countdown to 2030 (2015) *A Decade of Tracking Progress for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival The 2015 Report: Somalia*. Available at [http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Somalia\\_2015.pdf](http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Somalia_2015.pdf) (accessed 26 June 2017).
- 9 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and United Nations Population Division Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (2015) *Maternal Mortality in 1990-2015: Somalia*. Available at [http://www.who.int/gho/maternal\\_health/countries/som.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/som.pdf?ua=1) (accessed 26 June 2017).
- 10 Charlotte Lytton (2015) 'FGM survivor: 'The pain was so bad, I prayed to God to take me then and there'', *The Telegraph*, 6 February. Available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/11390949/FGM-survivor-The-pain-was-so-bad-I-prayed-to-God-to-take-me-then-and-there.html> (accessed 27 June 2017).
- 11 MICS, p.138.
- 12 - MICS, p.138.  
- UNICEF Somalia and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (2014) *Northeast Zone Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011, Final Report*, p.103. Nairobi, Kenya: UNICEF, Somalia and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. Available at [https://www.unicef.org/somalia/SOM\\_resources\\_mics4finalreport\\_nezone.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/somalia/SOM_resources_mics4finalreport_nezone.pdf) (accessed 8 August 2017).

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

UNICEF (2013) *Somalia: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*. Available at [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Somalia/FGMC\\_SOM.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Somalia/FGMC_SOM.pdf) (accessed 1 May 2017).

**Images on website:**

- 1 Free Wind 2014 (2010) *HARGEISA, SOMALIA – JANUARY 11, 2010: African refugee camp on the outskirts of Hargeisa in Somaliland. With the support of UNICEF, an international organization it operates the school*. Shutterstock ID 173095733.
- 2 Sadik Gulec (2011) *DADAAB, SOMALIA – AUGUST 15: Unidentified woman & children live in the Dadaab refugee camp where thousands of Somalis wait for help because of hunger on August 15, 2011 in Dadaab, Somalia*. Shutterstock ID 83490673.
- 3 Free Wind 2014 (2010) *HARGEISA, SOMALIA – JANUARY 8, 2010: Unidentified Somalis in the streets of the city of Hargeysa. City in Somalia, capital of unrecognized state of Somaliland. Much of the population lives in poverty*. Shutterstock ID 187165037.