

Somaliland



99.1%¹

Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM in women aged 15–49 is 99.1%.
64.5% of women believe that FGM should continue.²

Geography:

Women aged 15–49 who live in rural areas are slightly more likely to undergo FGM than women in urban areas³

Age:

Most girls are cut between the ages of 10 and 14⁴

Type:

84.9% of women aged 15–49 have undergone Type III FGM (infibulation/'sewn closed'), which is also known as Pharaonic FGM⁵

Agent:

Predominantly traditional practitioners, but medicalised FGM is on the rise

Development Indicators

HDI Rank: no reliable data; the UNDP estimated in 2010 a rank of 165 out of 170 countries (for Somalia and Somaliland)⁶

Population: 4–5 million (2019), with a 2.08% growth rate (2018 est.)⁷

Infant Mortality Rate: 85 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)⁸

Maternal Mortality Ratio: 732 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)⁹

Literacy: 45.3%; literacy among women is less common, at 40.5%, than among men, at 50.2%¹⁰

We should stand against FGM; it has caused death to many and left others suffering throughout their lives. Let's help girls to enjoy their body intact and no longer be victims.
~Dr Mariam Dahir, Chair of the Youth Anti-FGM Network, Somaliland

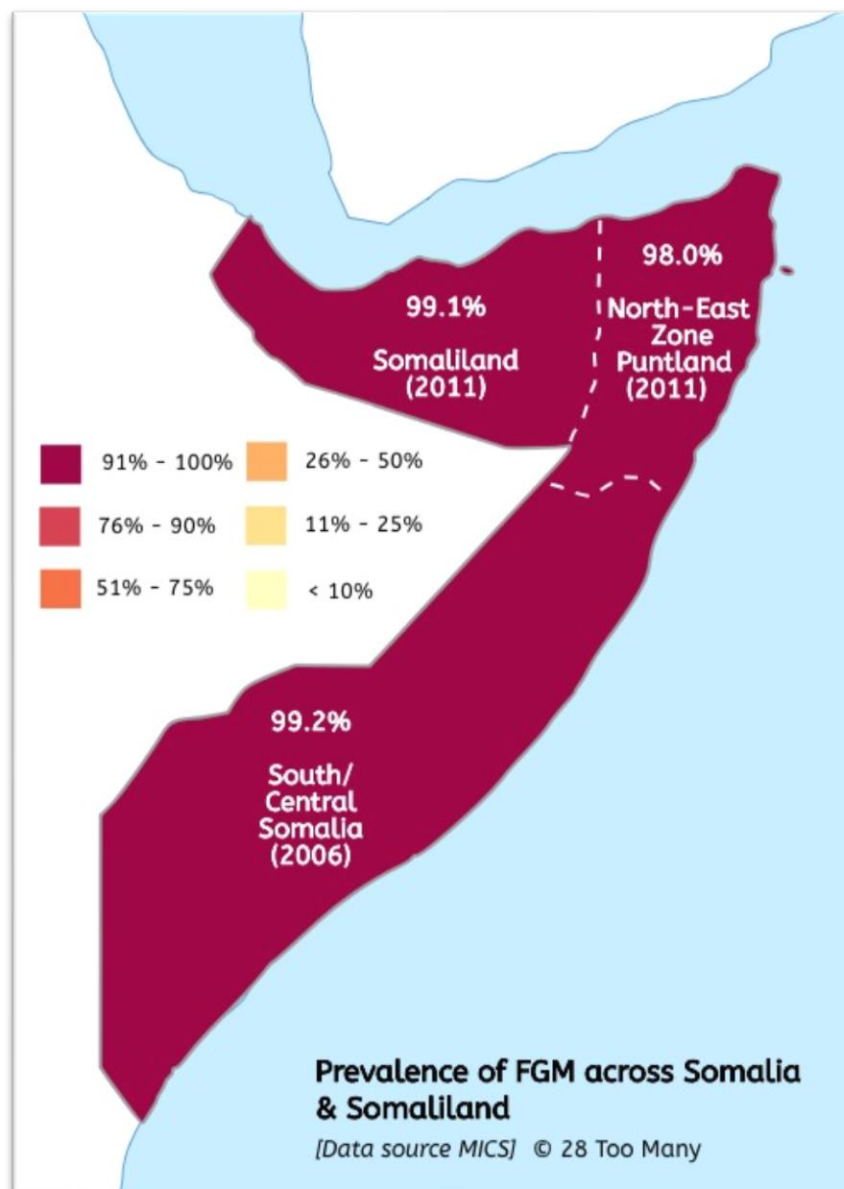
Prevalence

In 2011, prevalence in Somaliland was 99.1% (women aged 15–49). 2006 and 2011 figures indicate that the prevalence of FGM has increased from 94.4% to 99.1%; however, due to various challenges related to data collection, further data would be required to confirm that there has been a genuine upward trend in cutting.

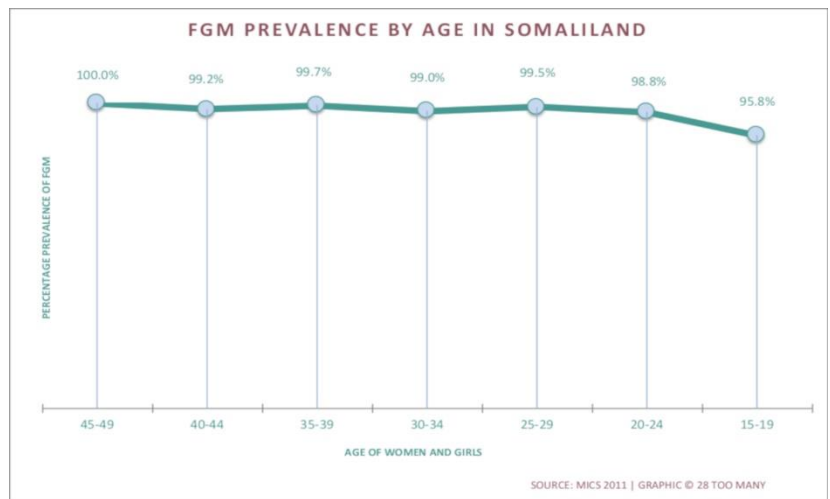
Women who live in rural areas are only slightly more likely (99.6%) to undergo FGM than those who live in urban areas (98.7%).

Across the entire region of Somalia and Somaliland, 64.5% of women believe that FGM should continue and 32.8% believe that it should not (2006).¹¹

While support for Type III (Pharaonic) FGM has declined in recent years, other types of FGM referred to as 'sunna' remain popular.



Breaking down the 2011 data by age group shows that the prevalence for women aged 45–49 is 100%, while for the youngest age group it is 98.5%, but some girls over the age of 15 may yet be cut, and ideally more data would be required to confirm this trend.¹²



Somali Law

There is currently no national law in place banning FGM in Somaliland. New national legislation has been drafted and will enter a consultation phase with stakeholders in 2019.

In the run-up to the November 2017 presidential elections, it was reported that all three candidates publicly pledged to outlaw FGM.

In February 2018 the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Somaliland issued a fatwa banning the most severe type of FGM, Type III (infibulation/'sewn closed').

- 1 (**'SL-MICS 2011'**): UNICEF Somalia and Somaliland Ministry of Planning and National Development (2014) *Somaliland Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011, Final Report*, p.100. Nairobi, Kenya: UNICEF, Somalia and Somaliland Ministry of Planning and National Development, Somaliland. Available at https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS4/Eastern%20and%20Southern%20Africa/Somalia%20%28Somaliland%29/2011/Final/Somalia%20%28Somaliland%29%202011%20MICS_English.pdf .
- 2 UNICEF Somalia (2006) *Somalia: Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006*, p.138. Available at https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS3/Eastern%20and%20Southern%20Africa/Somalia/2006/Final/Somalia%202006%20MICS_English.pdf.
- 3 SL-MICS 2011, p.100.
- 4 SL-MICS 2011, p.101.
- 5 SL-MICS 2011, p.100.
- 6 United Nations Development Programme (2015) *Human Development Index*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/137506> (accessed 16 May 2017).
- 7 Central Intelligence Agency (2019) *World Factbook: Somalia*, 29 February. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html> (accessed 7 March 2019).
- 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 (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 (accessed 26 June 2017).
- 10 Somalia Federal Republic Ministry of Human Development and Public Services (2014) *Programme Document 2014–2016: Programme Implementation Grant – Global Partnership for Education*, pp.29–30. Available at <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/program-document-gpe-grant-somalia-federal-government-2014-2016>.
- 11 - SL-MICS 2011, p.100.
- UNICEF Somalia, *op. cit.*, p.138.
- 12 SL-MICS 2011, p.100.

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 (accessed 1 May 2017).

Images on website:

- 1 Free Wind 2014 (2010) First school Sunshine of Hargeysa. In Somaliland, there are a number of primary and secondary schools, with the acute shortage of material resources and funds. Shutterstock ID 180618989.
- 2 Free Wind 2014 (2010) Somalis in the streets of the city of Hargeysa. Much of the population lives in poverty. Shutterstock ID 180309380.
- 3 Free Wind 2014 (2010) Unidentified children in an African refugee camp on the outskirts of Hargeisa. With the support of UNICEF, an international organization, it operates the school. Shutterstock ID 239706895.