

# Sudan

86.6%<sup>1</sup>



## Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM in women aged 15–49 is 86.6%.

52.8% of women aged 15–49 who have heard of FGM believe it should be discontinued.<sup>2</sup>

### **Geography:**

The states with the highest prevalence are in the north-west; North Kordofan is the highest at 97.7%<sup>3</sup>

### **Age:**

The majority of women were cut between the ages of 5 and 9<sup>4</sup>

### **Type:**

Type III (sewn closed) is the most common type of FGM practised<sup>5</sup>

### **Agent:**

More than ¾ of FGM cases are carried out by nurses, midwives or other medical personnel<sup>6</sup>

## Development Indicators

**HDI Rank:** 167 out of 189 countries (2018)<sup>7</sup>

**Population:** 41,945,377 (as at 26 June 2017), with a 1.69% growth rate (2016 est.)<sup>8</sup>

**Infant Mortality Rate:** 48 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)<sup>9</sup>

**Maternal Mortality Ratio:** 311 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)<sup>10</sup>

**Literacy:** 75.9% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write<sup>11</sup>

*'I am also against FGM and I ensure that no midwife performs this barbaric custom. I went through it, so I am familiar with the physical and mental pain it inflicts on the little girls that endure it.*

*I know too well the harm this cultural practice does to girls.'*

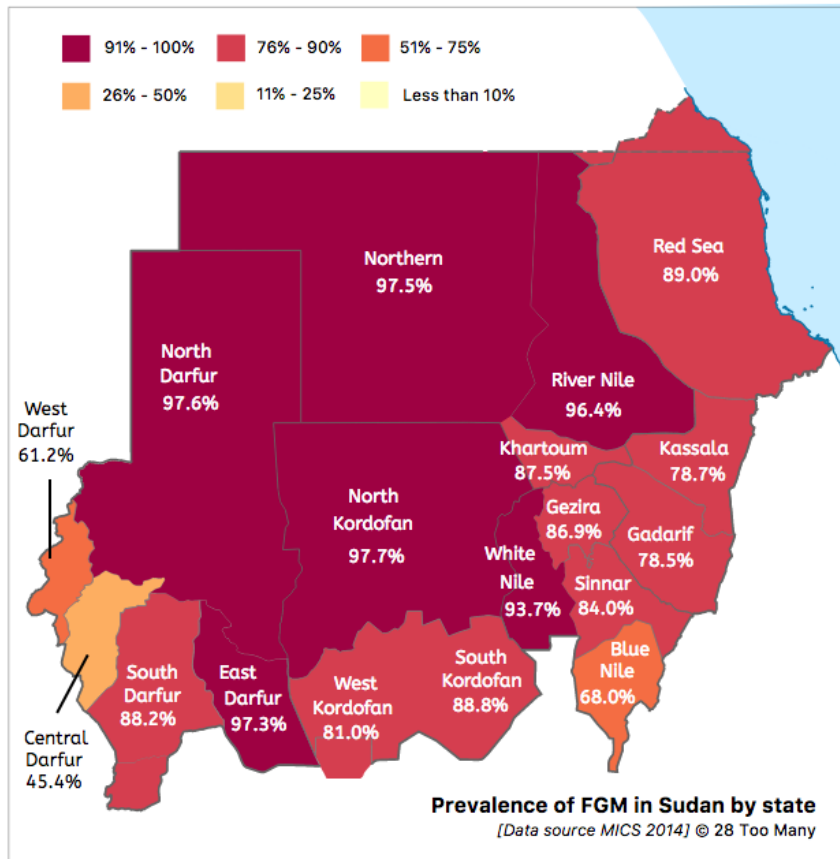
*~ Midwife and FGM survivor Madina Nasser Hroon Zakaria<sup>12</sup>*

## Prevalence

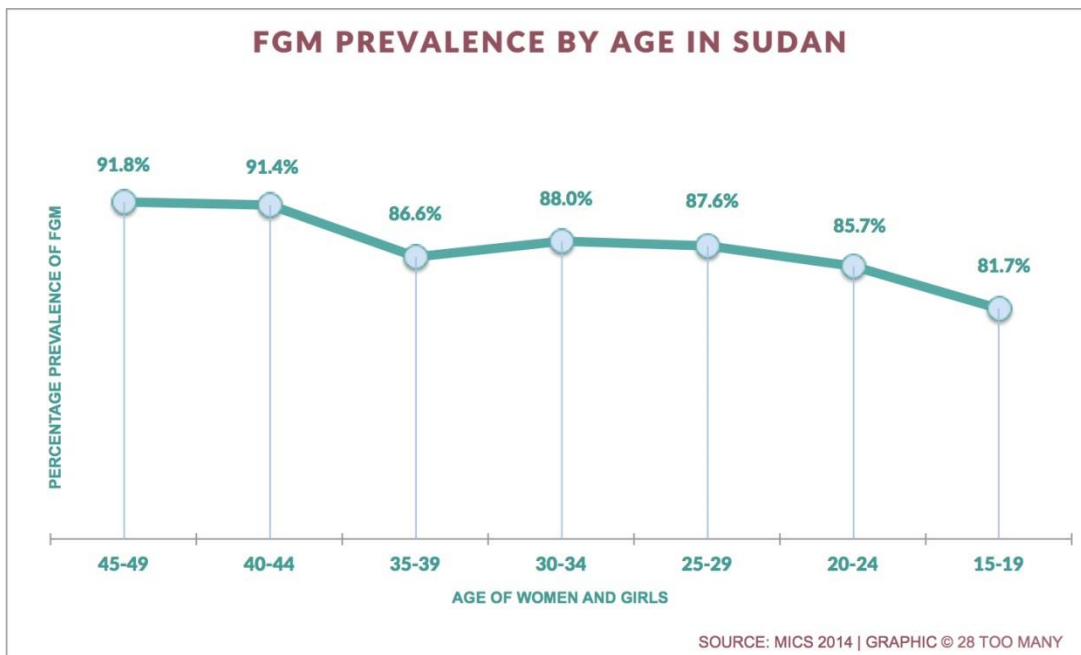
The states in Sudan with the highest FGM prevalence are in the north-west: North Kordofan (97.7% of women aged 15-49), North Darfur (97.6%) and Northern (97.5%). The state with the lowest prevalence is Central Darfur, in the south-west, at 45.4%. Women aged 15–49 who live in rural areas are slightly more likely to undergo FGM (87.2%) than those who live in urban areas (85.5%).

FGM is least prevalent among women aged 14–59 with 'no education', at 76.8%.

52.8% of women aged 15–49 who have heard of FGM believe it should be discontinued.<sup>13</sup>



Breaking down the most recent data by age group shows that the prevalence for women aged 45–49 is 91.8%, while for the youngest age group this has fallen to 81.7%. Despite the fact that a small proportion of women may be cut after the age of 15, the data suggests a trend towards lower prevalences among younger women.<sup>14</sup>



## Sudanese Law

In Sudan, only the most severe form of FGM is prohibited by law. Four states have specifically addressed FGM:

- South Kordofan: FGM Prohibition Act 2008, enforced
- South Darfur: Child Law 2013 – Article 11 prohibits all forms of FGM
- Gadaref: Child Law 2009 – Article 13 prohibits all traditional harmful practices, including FGM
- Red Sea: Child Law 2011 – Article 10 endorses a decree made by the State Minister of Health prohibiting FGM

However, the enforcement of these laws has been questioned, and it has been reported that an agreement exists with religious and traditional leaders in each of these states to allow Sunna cuts (Type I FGM), but not Type III.

Additionally, Article 2 of The Child Act 2010 states that children should be protected ‘from any kind of violence or harm or physical/sociological abuse’.<sup>15</sup>

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- 1 **(‘MICS’)**: Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), UNICEF Sudan (2016) *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 of Sudan, Final Report. Khartoum, Sudan: UNICEF and Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), February 2016*, p.214. Available at [https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/Middle%20East%20and%20North%20Africa/Sudan/2014/Final/Sudan%202014%20MICS\\_English.pdf](https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/Middle%20East%20and%20North%20Africa/Sudan/2014/Final/Sudan%202014%20MICS_English.pdf) (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 2 MICS, pp.214 & 218.
  - 3 MICS, pp.214-215.
  - 4 UNICEF (2016) *Sudan: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*, p.2. Available at [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Sudan/FGMC\\_SDN.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Sudan/FGMC_SDN.pdf) (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 5 MICS, p.214.
  - 6 UNICEF, *op. cit.*
  - 7 United Nations Development Programme (2018) *Human Development Reports*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update> (accessed 12 June 2019).
  - 8 - Country Meters (2017) *Sudan*, 26 June 2017. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Sudan> (accessed 26 June 2017).  
- Central Intelligence Agency (2017) *World Factbook: Sudan*, 21 June. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html> (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 9 Countdown to 2030 (2015) *A Decade of Tracking Progress for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival The 2015 Report: Sudan*. Available at [http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Sudan\\_2015.pdf](http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Sudan_2015.pdf) (accessed 26 June 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: Sudan*. Available at [http://www.who.int/gho/maternal\\_health/countries/sdn.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/sdn.pdf?ua=1) (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 11 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
  - 12 Madina Nasser Hroon Zakaria cited in Fatma Naib (undated) ‘Sudan's midwives take on Female Genital Mutilation, *Aljazeera*. Available at <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2015/sudan-midwives-female-genital-mutilation/index.html> (accessed 27 June 2017).
  - 13 MICS, pp.214-215 & 218.
  - 14 MICS, pp.214-215.
  - 15 Liv Tønnessen, Samia El-Nagar and Sharifa Gafar Bamkar (2017) ‘Paper tiger law forbidding FGM in Sudan’, *Open Democracy*, March. Available at <https://www.opendemocracy.net/liv-t-nnessen-samia-el-nagar-sharifa-gafar-bamkar/paper-tiger-law-forbidding-fgm-in-sudan> (accessed 6 July 2017).

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

UNICEF (2016) *Sudan: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*. Available at [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Sudan/FGMC\\_SDN.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Sudan/FGMC_SDN.pdf) (accessed 22 August 2017).

### **Images on website:**

- 1 Nonlani (2015) *Group of unidentified Sudanese girls from the Khartoum, Sudan on January 10, 2015*. Shutterstock ID 311022512.
- 2 Galyna Andrushko (2010) *SUDAN – JANUARY 09: Sudanese people walking from a bazaar in rural area near Khartoum on January 9, 2010 in Sudan*. Shutterstock ID 52363738.
- 3 Arsenie Coseac (2009) *\_MG\_6552*. Available at <https://flic.kr/p/6XaCea>. CCL: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/>.