

# CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



## STATISTICAL PROFILE ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/CUTTING

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) refers to “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.”<sup>1</sup> More than 125 million girls and women alive today have been cut in the 29 countries in Africa and the Middle East where FGM/C is concentrated. As many as 30 million girls are at risk of being cut before their 15th birthday if current trends continue. FGM/C is a violation of girls’ and women’s human rights and is condemned by many international treaties and conventions, as well as by national legislation in many countries. Yet, where it is practised FGM/C is performed in line with tradition and social norms to ensure that girls are socially accepted and marriageable, and to uphold their status and honour and that of the entire family. UNICEF works with government and civil society partners towards the elimination of FGM/C in countries where it is still practised.

1. World Health Organization, *Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation: An interagency statement*, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNECA, UNESCO, UNDP, UNAIDS, WHO, Geneva, 2008, p. 4.

**1966** National decree/legislation banning FGM/C passed (amended in 1996)

### SELECTED STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S STATUS

**29%** of women 20-24 years were married or in union before age 15

**68%** of women 20-24 years were married or in union before age 18

**45%** of women 20-24 years have given birth by age 18

**80%** of women 15-49 years think that a husband/partner is justified in hitting/ beating his wife under certain circumstances

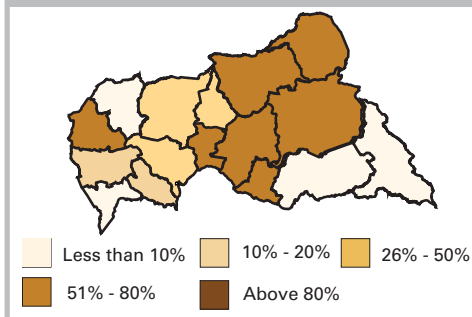
**67%** of women 15-49 years make use of at least one type of information media at least once a week (newspaper, magazine, television or radio)

Source: DHS 1994-1995 and MICS 2010

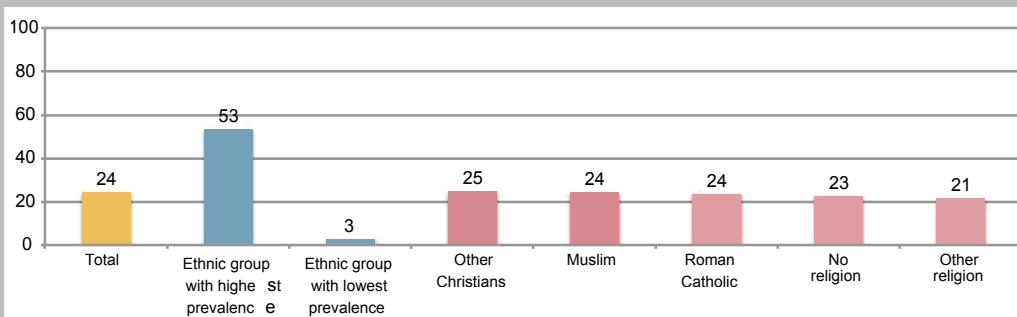
## HOW WIDESPREAD IS THE PRACTICE?

Nearly one quarter of girls and women have experienced FGM/C in Central African Republic, with variations by ethnicity and region

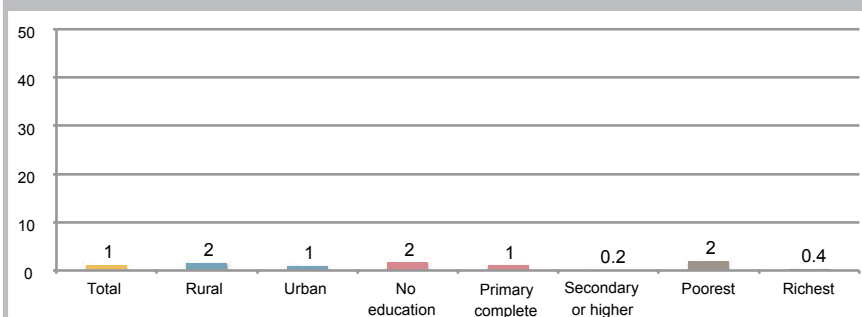
Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, by *préfecture*



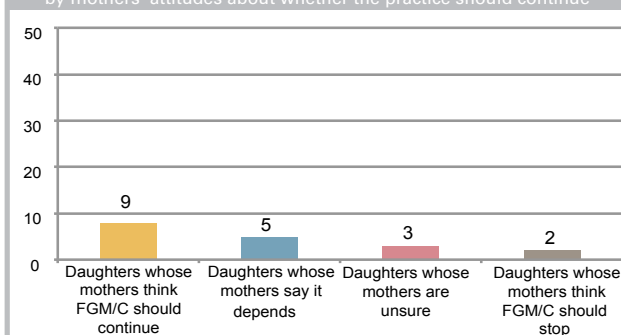
Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, by ethnicity and religion



Percentage of girls aged 0 to 14 years who have undergone FGM/C (as reported by their mothers), by residence, mother's education and household wealth quintile



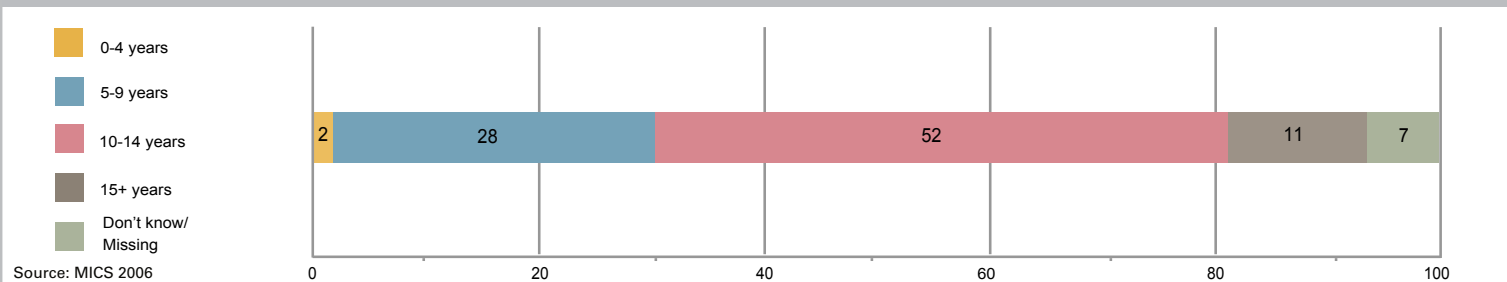
Among daughters of cut girls and women, the percentage of girls aged 0 to 14 years who have undergone FGM/C (as reported by their mothers), by mothers' attitudes about whether the practice should continue



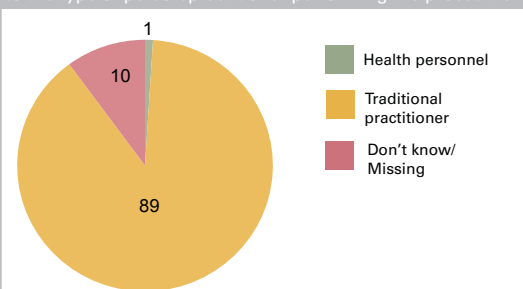
## WHEN AND HOW IS FGM/C PERFORMED?

Approximately half of girls were cut between the ages of ten and fourteen

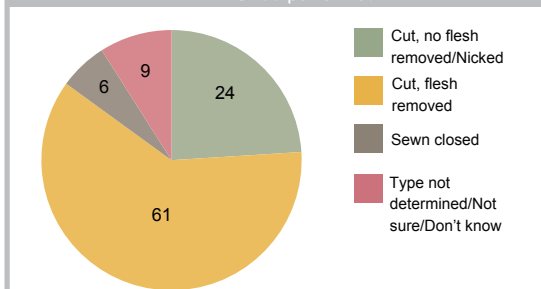
Percentage distribution of girls aged 0 to 14 years who have undergone FGM/C (as reported by their mothers), by age at which cutting occurred



Percentage distribution of girls aged 0 to 14 years who have undergone FGM/C (as reported by their mothers), according to the type of person/practitioner performing the procedure



Percentage distribution of girls 0 to 14 years who have undergone FGM/C (as reported by their mothers), by type of FGM/C performed



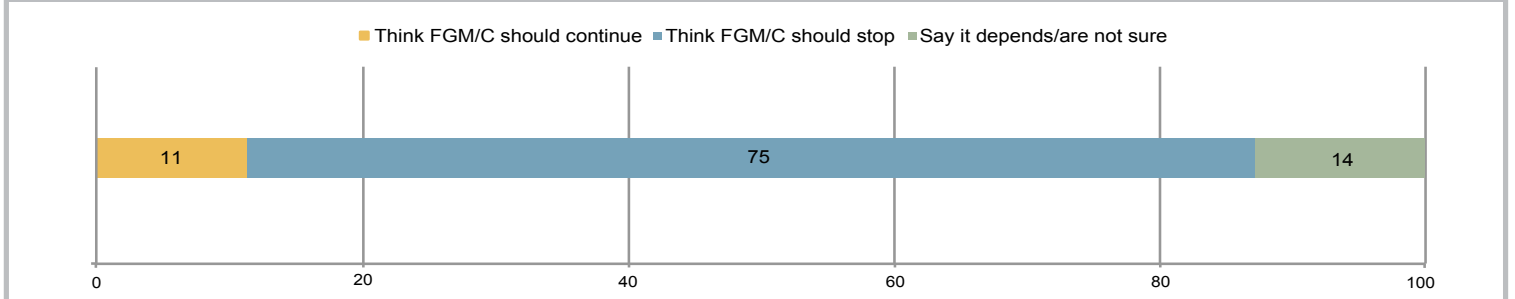
Notes: The boundaries and the names shown and the designations used on the map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Only categories with 25 or more unweighted cases are presented. Due to rounding, some of the data presented may not add up to 100 per cent. Prevalence data for girls aged 0 to 14 reflect their current, but not final, FGM/C status since some girls who have not been cut may still be at risk of experiencing the practice once they reach the customary age for cutting. Therefore, the data on prevalence for girls under age 15 is actually an underestimation of the true extent of the practice. Since age at cutting varies among settings, the amount of underestimation also varies and this should be kept in mind when interpreting all FGM/C prevalence data for this age group. Older data are used to report on age at cutting since data from the most recent survey includes some girls aged 0 to 14 years who have not undergone FGM/C but are still at risk of experiencing the practice once they have reached the customary age for cutting. 'Health personnel' includes doctors, nurses, midwives and other health workers; 'Traditional practitioner' includes traditional circumcisers, traditional birth attendants, traditional midwives and other types of traditional practitioners.

Source for all charts on this page: MICS 2010, unless otherwise noted

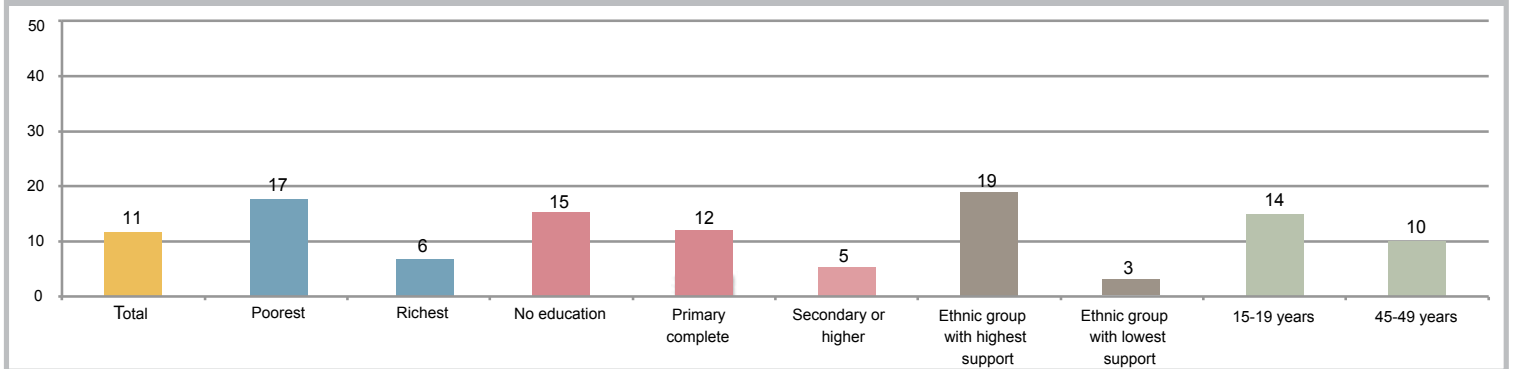
## WHAT ARE THE PREVAILING ATTITUDES TOWARDS FGM/C?

Three out of four women in Central African Republic think the practice of FGM/C should stop

Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C, by their attitudes about whether the practice should continue



Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C and think the practice should continue, by household wealth quintile, education, ethnicity and age

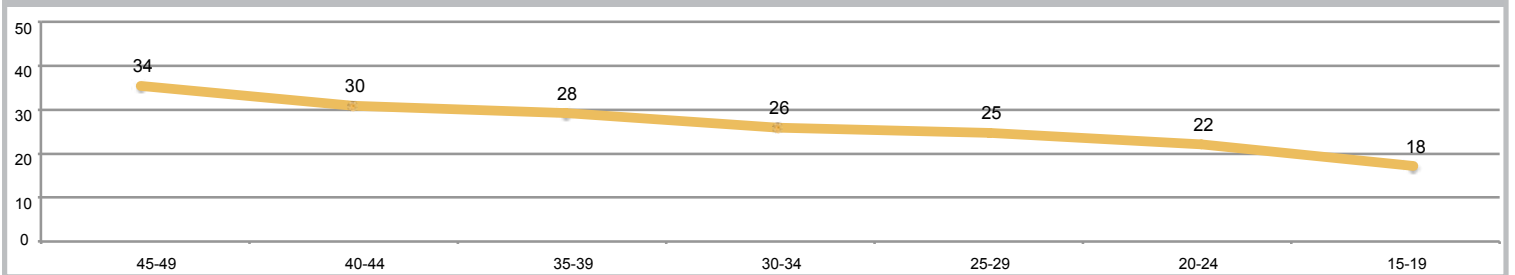


Source for all above charts: MICS 2010

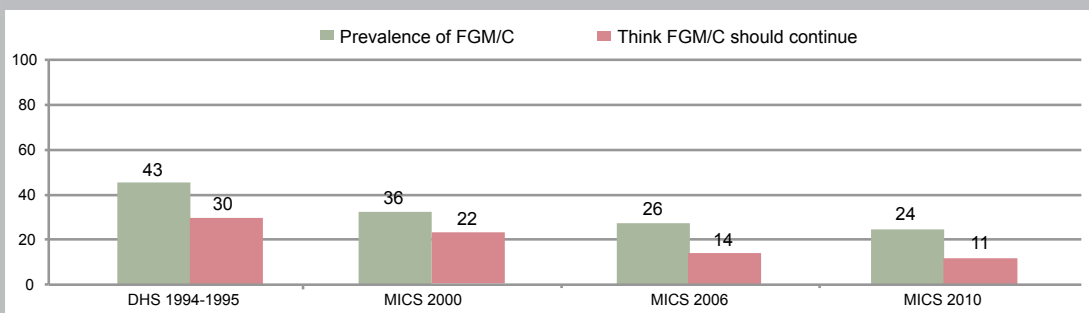
## IS THE PRACTICE OF FGM/C CHANGING?

Both the prevalence of FGM/C and support for the practice have declined sharply over time

Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, by current age



Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, and percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C and think the practice should continue



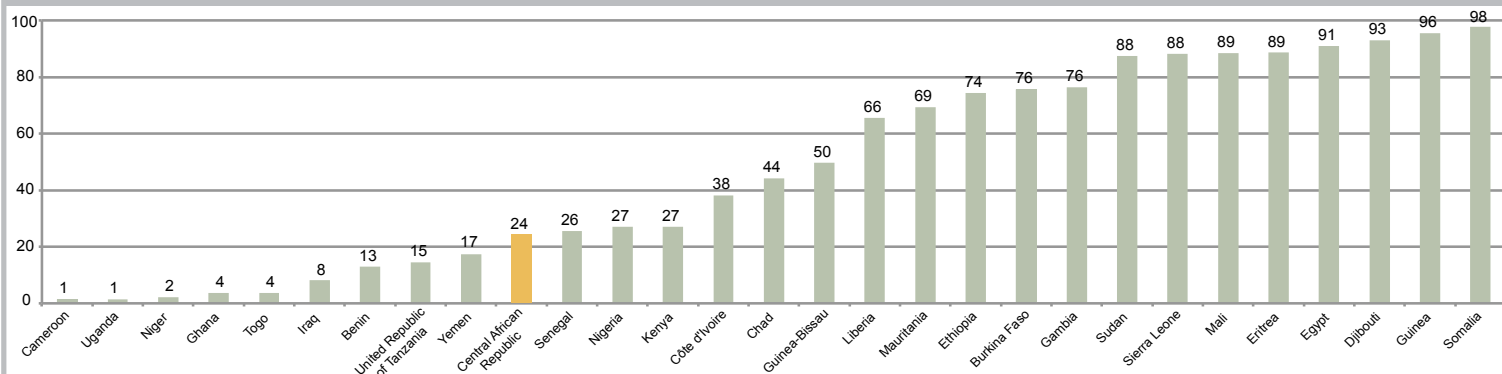
Source: MICS 2010

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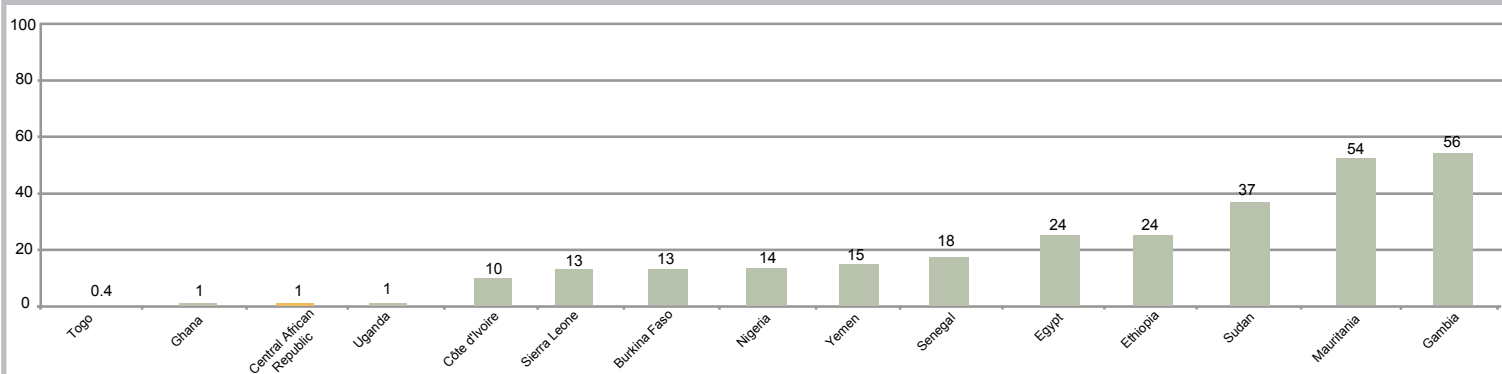


## INTER-COUNTRY STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

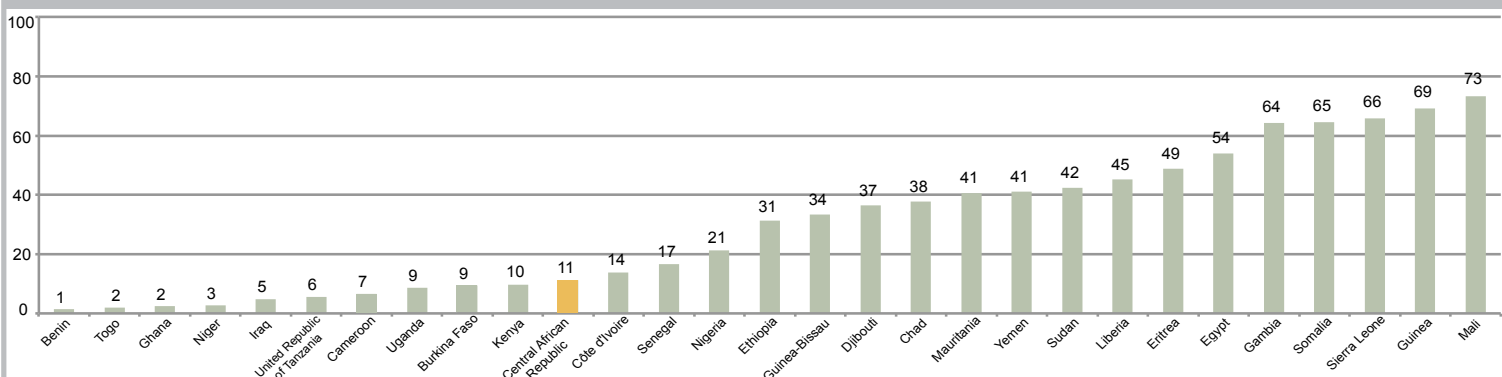
Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C



Percentage of girls aged 0 to 14 years who have undergone FGM/C (as reported by their mothers)



Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C and think the practice should continue



Notes: Data on attitudes for Yemen refer to ever-married girls and women. In Liberia, girls and women who have heard of the Sande society were asked whether they were members; this provides indirect information on FGM/C since it is performed during initiation into the society. Egypt data refer to girls aged 0-17 years who have undergone FGM/C. Data on attitudes for Ghana are from MICS 2006, for Nigeria from DHS 2008, and for Sierra Leone from DHS 2008 as data from the most recently available MICS surveys are not comparable. In Liberia, only cut girls and women were asked about their attitudes towards FGM/C; since girls and women from practising communities are more likely to support the practice, the level of support in this country as captured by the DHS 2007 is higher than would be anticipated had all girls and women been asked their opinion.

Sources: DHS, MICS, National Social Protection Monitoring Survey, SHHS and Welfare Monitoring Survey, 1997-2012

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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