

# FGC

## IN ASIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Female genital cutting (FGC) affects over 200 million women and girls worldwide. National prevalence data on FGC exists for 30 countries, 27 in Africa and only 3 in the Middle East and Asia - Iraq, Yemen and Indonesia. FGC happens elsewhere in the Middle East and Asia, see map below.

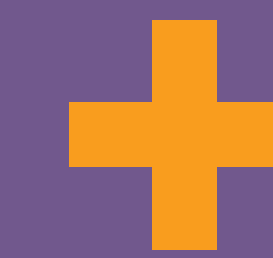
Reasons for the continuation of FGC are varied; drivers include tradition, culture and social pressure. In some places FGC is believed to be an Islamic imperative although the practice is not endorsed by any religion. FGC is not mentioned in the Koran and is not practised by the majority of Muslims worldwide.



Medicalisation is on the rise; in Indonesia over 50% of girls aged 0-11 years old were cut by a trained medical professional



85% of girls in Yemen are cut within their first week of life



FGC is sometimes offered as part of a birth package in Indonesian hospitals, alongside vaccinations and ear piercing

### RUSSIA

A 2016 study reports that FGC happens in remote mountainous regions of the Republic of Dagestan. Reportedly, tens of thousands of women and girls under the age of three have been cut. A national bill was drafted to criminalise FGC but has not yet been passed.

### IRAN

FGC is legal in Iran where small studies in regions bordering Iraq and in the south found that 40-85% of women have been cut. In 2009, high ranking clerics issued fatwas banning FGC.

### INDIA AND PAKISTAN

FGC is legal in both countries and happens amongst the Dawoodi Bohra. Sahiyo, an organisation empowering Dawoodi Bohra to end *khatna* or FGC, conducted an online survey amongst the community globally. Preliminary results indicate that 80% of the women who took the survey had undergone FGC.

● Indicates a place where FGC has been shown to occur

### IRAQ

8% of women have undergone FGC in Iraq. FGC is concentrated in Iraqi Kurdistan, in some regions over 55% of women have been cut. Overall, 88% of women think that FGC should end. Whilst a law has taken effect banning FGC in Kurdish Regions, the the Federal Government of Iraq is yet to impose a similar law.

### MALAYSIA

One small study of Malay Muslims in five rural villages in North Malaysia found that 93.5% of women had undergone FGC, with 80% stating religious obligation as the reason for this. In 2009, a Fatwa ruled that FGC was 'obligatory for all Muslim women, unless it was harmful'. In 2012, the Ministry of Health called for a need to standardise the procedure, contradicting its own 1996 circular banning doctors from performing FGC.

### JORDAN

### KUWAIT

### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

### SAUDI ARABIA

### THAILAND

### THE PHILIPPINES

### YEMEN

19% of women have been cut. There has been a drop in prevalence rates and 75% of girls and women think FGC should end. FGC is legal, but a 2001 Ministerial Decree prohibits the practice in government and private health facilities.

### INDONESIA

49% of girls aged 0 to 11 years have undergone FGC and 77% of girls were cut at less than 6 months old. In 2006 the Ministry of Health (MoH) banned doctors from performing FGC. In contradiction to this, after the country's top Islamic clerical body issued a fatwa in 2008 ruling that FGC was 'morally recommended', the MoH released a regulation providing guidelines for health professionals to perform FGC. There was an international outcry, as these guidelines legitimise FGC. In 2014 the guidelines were revoked but the situation is now unclear.

### OMAN

A small study found that 78% of women were cut and that there was a high rate of approval of FGC from both sexes. Anecdotally, FGC appears to be common in the north and south.

### MALDIVES

### SRI LANKA

### BRUNEI

### SINGAPORE