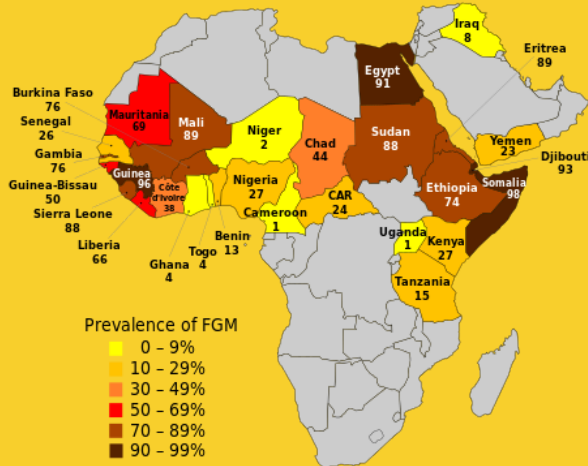


Priority populations

FGM/C is practiced in some Middle Eastern, African and South Asian communities.



FGM/C is classified into 4 types:

Type 1: Often referred to as clitoridectomy, this is the partial or total removal of the clitoris (a small, sensitive and erectile part of the female genitals), and in very rare cases, only the prepuce (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoris).

Type 2: Often referred to as excision, this is the partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora (the inner folds of the vulva), with or without excision of the labia majora (the outer folds of skin of the vulva).

Type 3: Often referred to as infibulation, this is the narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the labia minora, or labia majora, sometimes through stitching, with or without removal of the clitoris (clitoridectomy).

Type 4: This includes all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g. pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterizing the genital area.

Deinfibulation refers to the practice of cutting the sealed vaginal opening in a woman who has been infibulated, which is often for intercourse, childbirth, and access to the vaginal canal.

Key facts about FGM/C:

- Worldwide, more than 200 million girls and women alive today have undergone the practice
- Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) includes procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
- The procedure has no health benefits for girls and women.
- Procedures can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating
- Long-term health impacts include cysts, infections, complications in childbirth and increased risk of newborn deaths.
- FGM/C is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15.
- WHIWH considers FGM/C violence against women and a human rights issue

Are you interested in learning more about the program and getting involved?

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flourish
Communities Collaborating to Address FGM/C

A Program for Women Affected by Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting



WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN WOMEN'S HANDS
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

INCREASE • INNOVATE • IGNITE

WHO ARE WE?

Women's Health in Women's Hands is a community health center that provides primary health care to Black Women and Women of Colour from the Caribbean, African, Latin American and South Asian communities in metropolitan Toronto and surrounding municipalities. We are committed to working from an inclusive feminist, pro-choice, anti-racist, anti-oppression and multilingual participatory framework in addressing the issue of access to healthcare for WHIWH's mandated priority populations encompassing all the determinants of health caused by gender, gender identity, race, class, violence, sexual orientation, religion, culture, language, disability, immigration status and socio-economic circumstances.

WHIWH's approach to addressing FGM/C centres on respect, sensitivity, knowledge of cultural context and community-collaboration.

FLOURISH: Communities Collaborating to Address Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

is a collaborative community-based project that aims to engage, empower and support peoples affected by FGM/C through arts-based workshops and advocacy initiatives. The project aims to improve access to dignified and appropriate health care by providing training and tools for health care and media professionals on FGM/C.

What we hope to do in this project:

- Engage with peoples affected by the practice through arts-based workshops, gatherings and advocacy initiatives
- Conduct community consultations and focus group discussions to understand the scope and impact of FGM/C in Toronto
- Create a network and resources for peoples affected by the practice
- Provide training and resources for health care providers and media professionals on FGM/C and how to approach care using an anti-oppressive framework

Why is this project needed in Canada?

- Although the practice is illegal in Canada, many women who had undergone the practice are Canadian citizens, live here and access health care services here
- FGM/C has lifelong impacts and women deserve to receive dignified and appropriate health care for their specific needs
- FGM/C is a human rights issue that affects girls and women; knowledge and resources support prevention work
- FGM/C may result in negative physical health, reproductive health and mental health impacts
- Health workers, such as doctors, nurses and social workers, are often unaware of the many negative health consequences of FGM/C and many remain inadequately trained to recognize and treat them properly
- Health care providers and media professionals often perpetuate racist and dehumanizing narratives about communities where the practice of FGM/C is common; this creates a barrier to access to dignified health care

ZERO HEALTH BENEFITS

FGM/C has no medical health benefits. It involves removing and/or cutting female genital tissue; a process that is often leaves permanent loss of sensation and scarring of genitals. Risks increase depending on the severity.