

Burkina Faso

56.1%¹

Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM/C in women aged 15–49 is 56.1%.
More than 85% of Burkinabé women are against its continuation.²

Geography:

The regions with the highest prevalence lie in the south-west and in a band across the country from the centre-east toward the north³

Age:

87.5% of women aged 15–19 who have undergone FGM/C were cut before the age of ten⁴

Type:

‘Cut, flesh removed’ is the most common type of FGM/C practised⁵

Agent:

Almost all FGM/C is carried out by ‘traditional agents’ (including traditional cutters and birth attendants)⁶

Development Indicators

SDG Gender Index Rating: 129 out of 139 countries (2024)⁷

Population: 23,042,199 (as at 15 December 2025), with a 2.4% growth rate (2024 est.)⁸

Infant Mortality Rate: 47 deaths per 1,000 live births (2024 est.)⁹

Maternal Mortality Ratio: 242 deaths per 100,000 live births (2023 est.)¹⁰

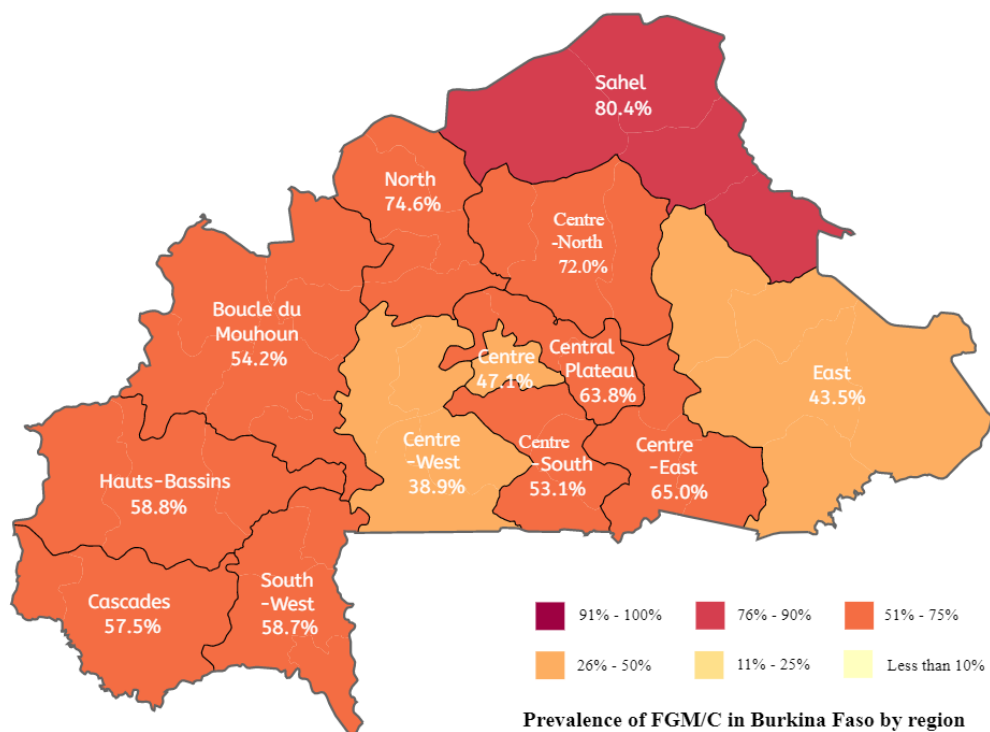
I was heartened during my time in Burkina Faso to see the level of youth involvement and enthusiasm for using songs and music to get anti-FGM messages across to the community.

~ Dr Ann-Marie Wilson,
founder and former executive director
of 28 Too Many, now a part of Orchid Project

Prevalence

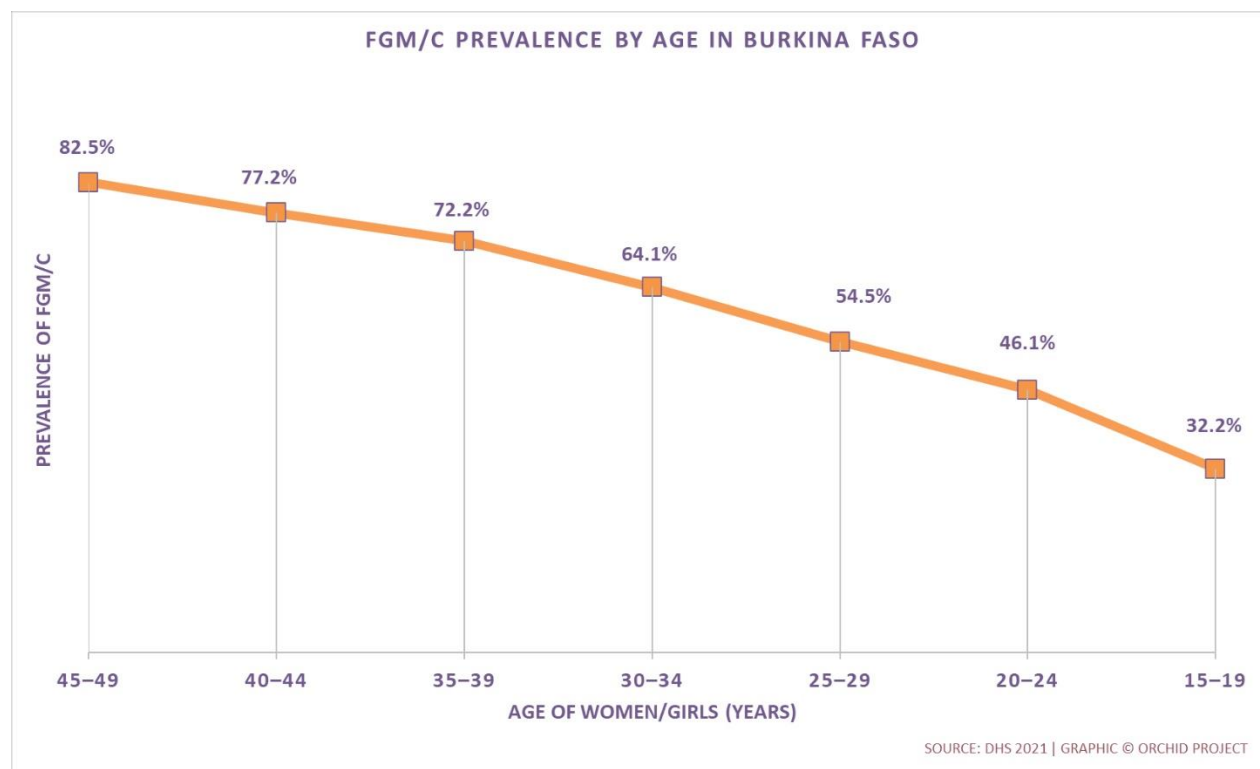
FGM/C is practised across all regions, ethnic groups and religions in Burkina Faso. There are distinct regional variations; FGM/C prevalence ranges from 38.9% in the Centre-West to 80.4% in Sahel. Two-thirds of the population of Burkina Faso live in rural areas, and over 15% more women (aged 15–49) who live in rural areas (58.9%) have had FGM/C than those who live in urban areas (50.2%). Prevalence in the capital, Ouagadougou, is 45.8%.¹¹

The regional pattern of FGM/C prevalence broadly corresponds with the distribution of ethnic groups: in 2010, the highest-practising groups included the Séonufu (87.2%) and Lobi (83.2%) in the south-west, the Fulani (83.9%) towards the north-east, the Mossi (78.4%) across the central band and the Bissa (83.1%) mainly in Centre-East. The lowest prevalence was recorded among the Gourounsi, who live largely in Centre-West (60.3%) and the Touareg/Bella in the far north-east (22.2%).¹²



FGM/C is practised by all religions: among Burkinabé women aged 15–49, 81.4% of Muslims, 75.5% of traditionalists/animists, 66.1% of Catholics and 60% of Protestants had been cut as of 2010.¹³

The prevalence of FGM/C in women (aged 15–49) is 56.1%. This is a decrease from 76.6% in 2003. Due to the large age-range of women included, however, the overall prevalence alone may not fully reflect the progress that has been made in recent years. Breaking down the most recent data by age group shows that the prevalence for women aged 45–49 is 82.5%, while for the youngest age group this has fallen to 32.2%. Despite the fact that a small proportion of women may be cut after the age of 15, the data demonstrate a clear trend towards a lower prevalence among younger women.¹⁴



Worryingly, the latest DHS data point to a large increase in Type 3 cutting ('sewn closed'/infibulation) between 2010 and 2021. More data is required to say definitively whether these figures are anomalies or indicate a shift that needs to be addressed by anti-FGM/C campaigns.¹⁵

Burkinabé Law

In 1996 Burkina Faso became one of the first African countries to introduce a national law against FGM/C (Article 380 of the Penal Code). A number of cases have been brought through the community-based mobile court system.

References

- 1 **(‘DHS’)**: INSD and ICF (2023) *Enquête Démographique et de Santé du Burkina Faso 2021*, p.469. Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and Rockville, Maryland, USA: INSD and ICF. Available at https://dhsprogram.com/Countries/Country-Main.cfm?ctry_id=50&c=Burkina%20Faso (accessed 24 August 2024).
- 2 DHS, pp.469 & 475.
- 3 DHS, p.469.
- 4 DHS, p.470.
- 5 DHS, p.469.
- 6 DHS, p.473.
- 7 Equal Measures 2030 (2024) *Findings from the 2024 SDG Gender Index: A gender equal future in crisis?*, p.13 (accessed 23 December 2025).
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- 9 Central Intelligence Agency (2025), *op. cit.*
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 DHS, p.469.
- 12 **(‘DHS 2010’)**: Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie (INSD) et ICF International (2012) *Enquête Démographique et de Santé et à Indicateurs Multiples du Burkina Faso 2010*, p.291. Calverton, Maryland, USA: INSD et ICF International. Available at <http://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR256/FR256.pdf> (accessed 1 May 2017).
- 13 *Ibid.*
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 - DHS, p.469.
 - Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie (INSD) et ORC Macro (2004) *Enquête Démographique et de Santé du Burkina Faso 2003*, p.205. Calverton, Maryland, USA: INSD et ORC Macro. Available at <http://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR154/FR154.pdf> (accessed 1 May 2017).
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 - DHS, p.469.
 - DHS 2010, p.291.