

Kenya

21.0%¹



Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM in women aged 15–49 is 21%.
92.5% of women and 88.8% of men aged 15–49 believe that FGM should be stopped.²

Geography:

The region with the highest prevalence is in the north-east³

Age:

42.6% of women aged 15–49 who have undergone FGM were cut between the ages of 10 and 14⁴

Type:

'Cut, flesh removed' is the most common type of FGM practised⁵

Agent:

80.5% of FGM on women aged 15–49 was carried out by 'traditional circumcisers'⁶

Development Indicators

HDI Rank: 142 out of 189 countries (2018)⁷

SDG Gender Index Rating: 87 out of 129 countries (2019)⁸

Population: 48,391,266 (as at 30 May 2017), with a 1.81% growth rate (2016 est.)⁹

Infant Mortality Rate: 36 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)¹⁰

Maternal Mortality Ratio: 510 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)¹¹

Literacy: 78% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write¹²

'It's critical men are involved. Not only in changing cultural practices generally, but with their own daughters.'

~ Dr Kakenya Ntaiya, founder of the Kakenya Centre for Excellence¹³

Prevalence

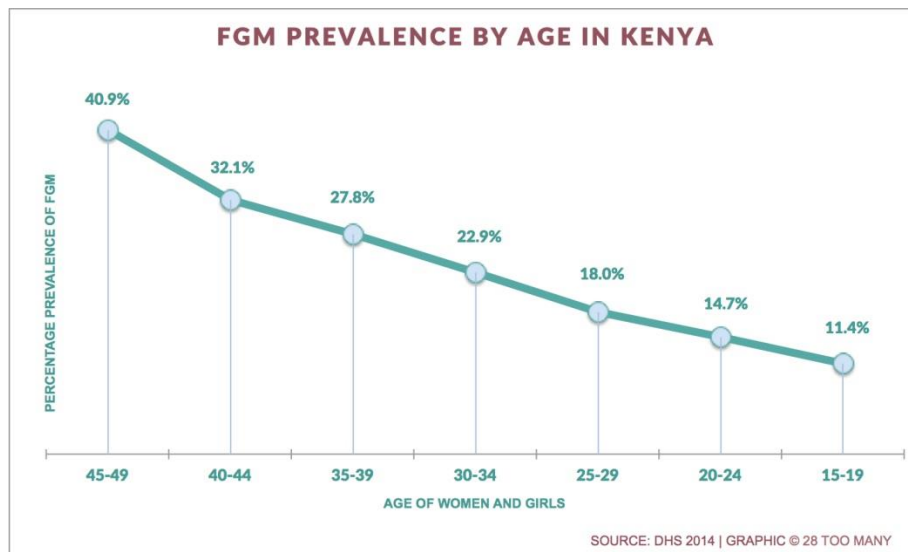
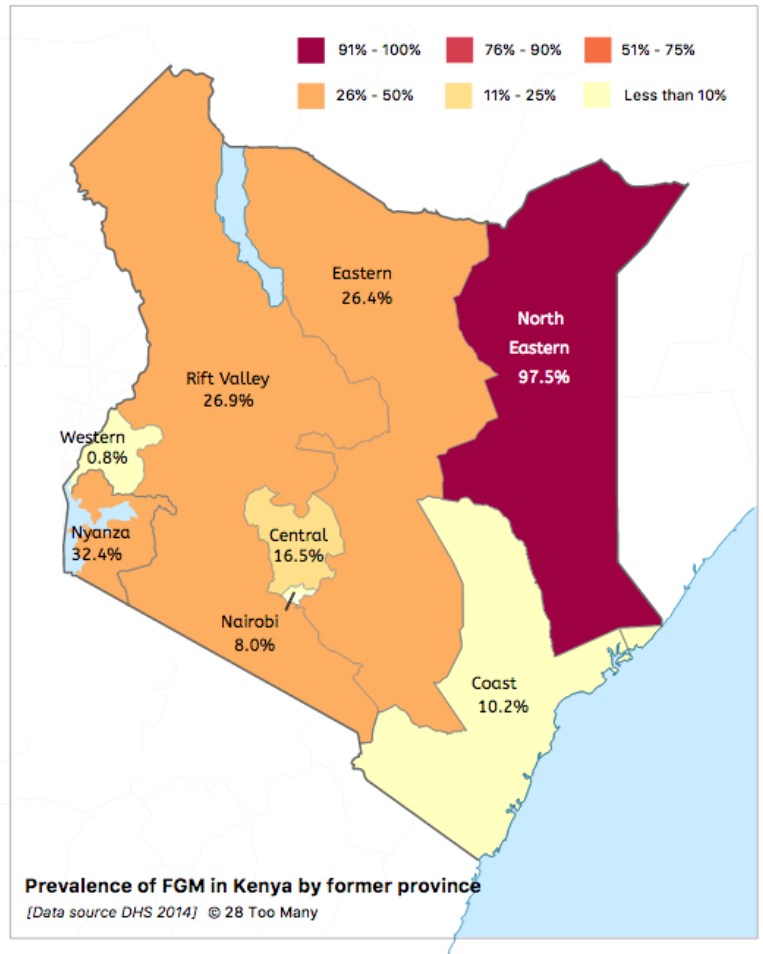
Prevalence varies greatly depending on the region – the (former) province with the highest prevalence is North Eastern (97.5% of women aged 15–49), and the province with the lowest is Western (0.8%). Prevalence is more common among women who live in rural areas, at 25.9%, than among women who live in urban areas, at 13.8%.

FGM is practised across all ethnic groups and religions, although to varying degrees. The highest prevalences are among Muslim women (51.1% of women aged 15–49) and the Somali (93.6%); the lowest prevalence according to

religion is among Protestant/other Christians (17.9%), and the lowest according to ethnic group appears to be among the Luhya (0.4%) and Luo (0.2%), although the small numbers of women who had been cut in each of these sample groups may make the statistics unreliable. According to a 2014 documentary, *The Elite Also Cut* (Kenya CitizenTV), there is a lack of comprehensive data on FGM among the Kuria, but prevalence is thought to be very high.

92.5% of women aged 15–49 and 88.8% of men in the same age-range believe that FGM should not be continued.¹⁴

The prevalence of FGM in Kenya has dropped from 37.6% of women aged 15–49 in 1998 to 21% in 2014. 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 40.9%, while for the youngest age group this has fallen to 11.4%. Despite the fact that a small proportion of women may be cut after the age of 15, the data demonstrates a clear trend towards lower prevalences among younger women.¹⁵



Kenyan Law

The Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act, which came into effect on 4 October 2011, is the principal legislation governing FGM in Kenya. It is a federal act criminalising all forms of FGM and is one of the most comprehensive in Africa. Implementation and enforcement of the law remain a challenge, however.

- 1 (**'DHS'**): Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Health, Kenya National AIDS Control Council, Kenya Kenya Medical Research Institute, Kenya National Council for Population and Development and The DHS Program, ICF International (2015) *Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2014*, p.333. Rockville, MD: ICF International. Available at <http://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR308/FR308.pdf> (accessed 29 May 2017).
- 2 DHS, pp.333 & 343.
- 3 DHS, p.333.
- 4 DHS, p.335.
- 5 DHS, p.333.
- 6 DHS, p.339.
- 7 United Nations Development Programme (2018) *Human Development Reports*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update> (accessed 12 June 2019).
- 8 Equal Measures 2030 (2019) *Harnessing the Power of Data for Gender Equality: Introducing the 2019 EM2030 SDG Gender Index*, pp.12–13. Available at www.data.em2030.org/2019-global-report (accessed 12 June 2019).
- 9 - Country Meters (2017) Kenya, 30 May 2017. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Kenya> (accessed 30 May 2017).
- Central Intelligence Agency (2016) *World Factbook: Kenya*, 8 May. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ke.html> (accessed 30 May 2017).
- 10 Countdown to 2030 (2015) *A Decade of Tracking Progress for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival The 2015 Report: Kenya*. Available at http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Kenya_2015.pdf (accessed 30 May 2017).
- 11 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and United Nations Population Division Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (2015) *Maternal mortality in 1990-2015: Kenya*. Available at http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/ken.pdf?ua=1 (accessed 30 May 2017).
- 12 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
- 13 Amanda Hooton (2017) 'Meet the Maasai woman who opened a school and sparked a revolution', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 March. Available at <http://www.smh.com.au/good-weekend/meet-the-masai-woman-who-opened-a-school-and-sparked-a-revolution-20170301-guopcq.html>.
- 14 - DHS, pp.333 & 343.
- (**'DHS 1998'**): National Council for Population and Development (NCPD), Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) (Office of the Vice President and Ministry of Planning and National Development) [Kenya], and Macro International Inc. (MI) (1999) *Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 1998*, p.168. Calverton, Maryland: NDPD, CBS, and MI. Available at <http://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR102/FR102.pdf> (accessed 30 May 2017).
- 15 - DHS, pp.333 & 343.
- DHS 1998, p.168.

UNICEF Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting:

UNICEF (2016) *Kenya: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*. Available at https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Kenya/FGMC_KEN.pdf (accessed 30 May 2017).

Images on website:

- 1 Marty Cohen Photography (undated) *Images of Women in Kenya and Tanzania, Image 2838*. Available at <http://www.martycohenphotography.com/images-of-women-in-kenya-and-tanzania/>.
- 2 EcoPrint (2017) *AMBOSELI, KENYA – AUGUST 31, 2013: Unidentified Masai woman and her children with traditional decorations and colorful red garments in a rural village*. Shutterstock ID 330578696.
- 3 africa924 (2009) *MASAI MARA, KENYA – JULY 13: Masai mother with her child on circa July 13, 2009 in Masai, Kenya. The woman wears traditional jewelry forgings of small colored beads*. Shutterstock ID 72189754.