

South Sudan



1%¹

Key Findings

UNICEF has previously reported prevalence at 1% among women aged 15–49 years, but there are no recent surveys to confirm this figure.²

Almost 32,000 women were affected by gender-based violence in the two years after conflict broke out.³

Geography:

FGM has been reported in the northern regions of the country, including in Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile

Age:

Unknown

Type:

Unknown; however, a survey in IDP camps reported that, while Type 3 was previously more common, it is now practised less and 'sunna' is becoming more common⁴

Agent:

Unknown

Development Indicators

HDI Rank: 186 out of 189 countries (2018)⁵

SDG Gender Index Rating: 187 out of 189 countries (2017)⁶

Population: 15,054,653 (as at 28 May 2020), with a 2.7% growth rate (17 June 2020 est.)⁷

Infant Mortality Rate: 63.7 deaths per 1,000 live births (2017)⁸

Maternal Mortality Ratio: 1,150 deaths per 100,000 live births (2017)⁹

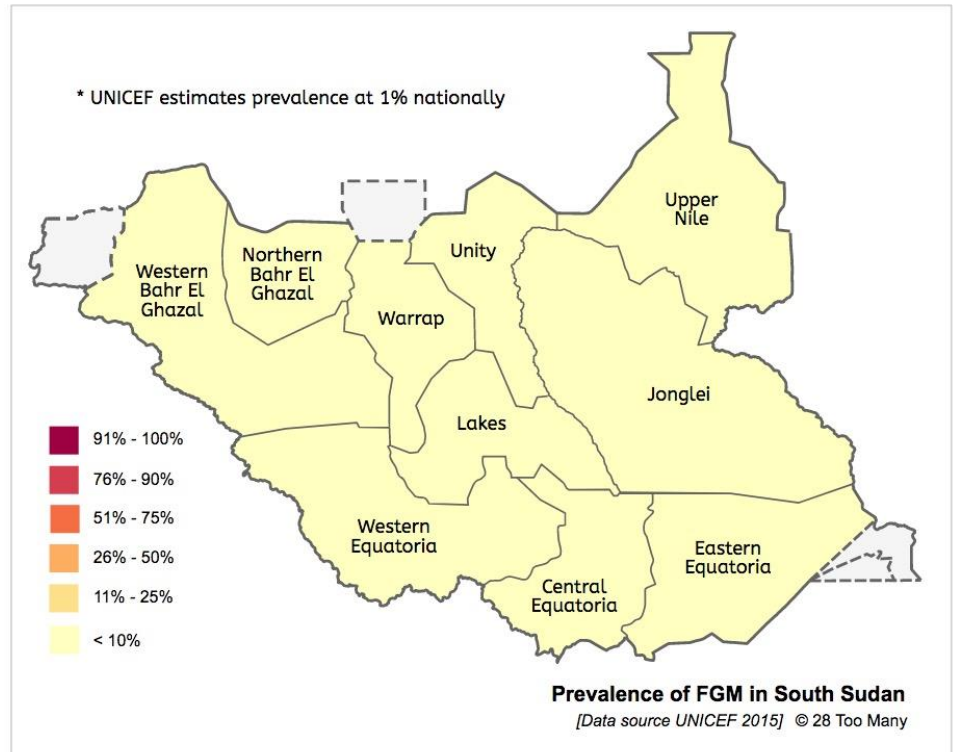
Literacy: 34.5% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write¹⁰

Prevalence

In 2015 the United Nations Population Fund estimated that almost 32,000 women in South Sudan had been affected by gender-based violence in the two years since conflict broke out.¹¹ As well as victims of sexual and physical violence, victims of FGM and child marriage were included in this estimate.

UNICEF previously reported the prevalence of FGM in South Sudan to be 1% among women aged 15–49, but there are no recent surveys to confirm this figure.¹²

FGM has been reported in both Christian and Muslim communities, particularly in the northern regions of the country, including Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile, both of which border Sudan, where the prevalence of FGM is 86.6%. These are also the regions where camps for displaced Sudanese are located, and it is therefore likely that this accounts for the higher prevalence in these regions.



South Sudanese Law

Under the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (2011), laws that applied in the ten states of Southern Sudan before it separated from Sudan are still in force. In South Sudan, both the Penal Code Act 2008 and the Child Act 2008 criminalise FGM and, therefore, remain in force as per the Transitional Constitution.

The Child Act gives a comprehensive definition of FGM and criminalises all forms of FGM performed on children under the age of 18. The Penal Code does not specifically define FGM, but under Section 259 criminalises the practice and punishes anyone who 'makes or causes a Female Genital Mutilation to be performed' (at any age).

It is not known to what extent the laws against FGM under the Child Act or Penal Code have been used in South Sudan. There is an absence of information on any cases brought to court and their outcomes.

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- 1 UNICEF (2015) *Situation Assessment of Children and Women in South Sudan*, p.129. Available at https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_South_Sudan_Situation_Assessment_of_Children_and_Women_2015.pdf.
 - 2 *Ibid.*
 - 3 United Nations Mission in South Sudan (2015) *South Sudan Observes Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women*, 25 November. Available at <https://unmiss.unmissions.org/south-sudan-observes-day-elimination-violence-against-women>.
 - 4 Maria Vargas Simojoki (2014) *Female Genital Mutilation – Practices Amongst the Refugee Population in Upper Nile State, South Sudan*, pp.17 & 21. Danish Refugee Council.
 - 5 United Nations Development Programme (2019) *Human Development Index*, p.303. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf> (accessed 30 June 2020).
 - 6 United Nations Development Reports (2017) *Table 4: Gender Development Index*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GDI>.
 - 7 - Country Meters (2020) South Sudan, 28 May 2020. Available at http://countrymeters.info/en/South_Sudan (accessed 28 May 2020).
- Central Intelligence Agency (2020) *World Factbook: South Sudan*, 28 May. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/od.html> (accessed 28 May 2020).
 - 8 UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (2019) *South Sudan*. Available at <https://childmortality.org/data/South%20Sudan>.
 - 9 World Health Organization (2017) *Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births)*. Available at [https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/maternal-mortality-ratio-\(per-100-000-live-births\)](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/maternal-mortality-ratio-(per-100-000-live-births)).
 - 10 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
 - 11 United Nations Mission in South Sudan (2015) *South Sudan Observes Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women*, 25 November. Available at <https://unmiss.unmissions.org/south-sudan-observes-day-elimination-violence-against-women>.
 - 12 UNICEF, *op. cit.*

Images on website:

1. John Wollwerth (2013) *An unidentified little girl responsible for carrying her baby sister in Torit, South Sudan*. Shutterstock ID 214560649.
2. John Wollwerth (2013) *Unidentified women carry heavy load on their heads in Torit, South Sudan*. Shutterstock ID 214826419.
3. John Wollwerth (2013) *Unidentified worshippers sing and clap at an outdoor worship service in South Sudan*. Shutterstock ID 297369074.