

# Sudan

86.6%<sup>1</sup>



## Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM in women aged 15–49 is 86.6%.  
52.8% of women aged 15–49 who have heard of FGM believe it should be discontinued.<sup>2</sup>

### **Geography:**

The states with the highest prevalence are in the north-west; North Kordofan is the highest at 97.7%<sup>3</sup>

### **Age:**

The majority of women were cut between the ages of 5 and 9<sup>4</sup>

### **Type:**

Type III (sewn closed) is the most common type of FGM practised<sup>5</sup>

### **Agent:**

More than ¾ of FGM cases are carried out by nurses, midwives or other medical personnel<sup>6</sup>

## Development Indicators

**HDI Rank:** 167 out of 189 countries (2018)<sup>7</sup>

**Population:** 41,945,377 (as at 26 June 2017), with a 1.69% growth rate (2016 est.)<sup>8</sup>

**Infant Mortality Rate:** 48 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)<sup>9</sup>

**Maternal Mortality Ratio:** 311 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)<sup>10</sup>

**Literacy:** 75.9% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write<sup>11</sup>

*'I am also against FGM and I ensure that no midwife performs this barbaric custom. I went through it, so I am familiar with the physical and mental pain it inflicts on the little girls that endure it.*

*I know too well the harm this cultural practice does to girls.'*

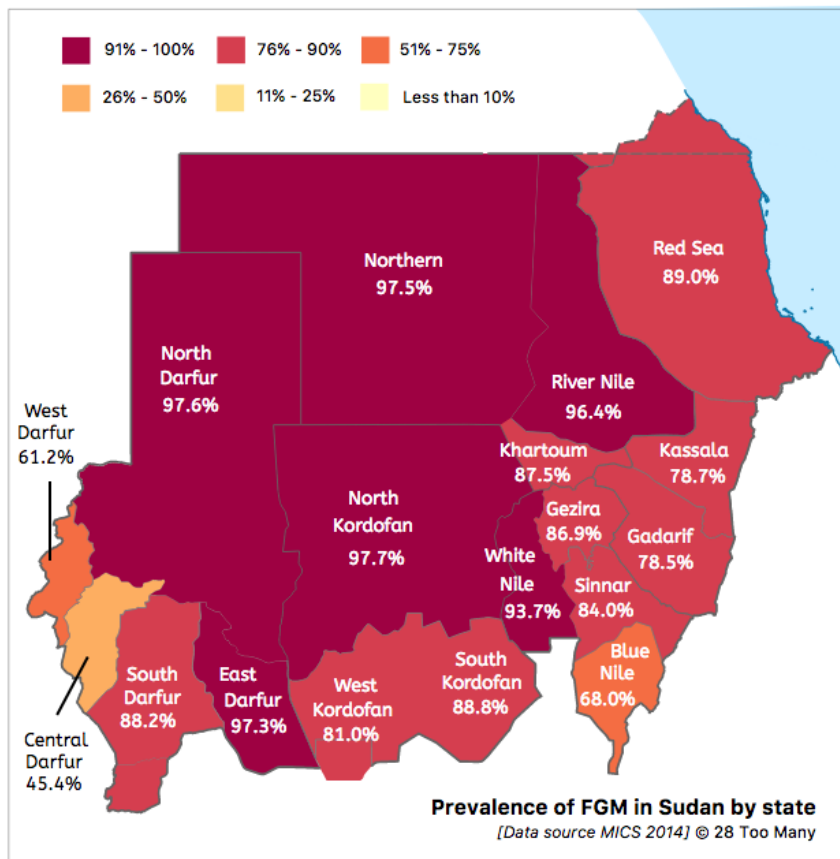
*~ Midwife and FGM survivor Madina Nasser Hroon Zakaria<sup>12</sup>*

## Prevalence

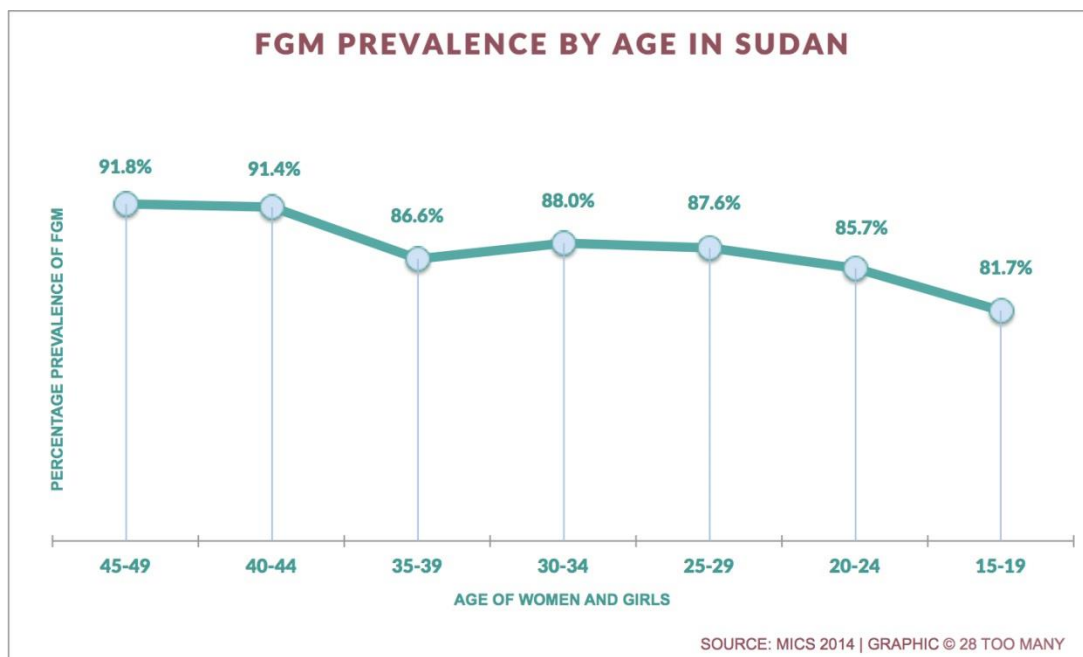
The states in Sudan with the highest FGM prevalence are in the north-west: North Kordofan (97.7% of women aged 15–49), North Darfur (97.6%) and Northern (97.5%). The state with the lowest prevalence is Central Darfur, in the south-west, at 45.4%. Women aged 15–49 who live in rural areas are slightly more likely to undergo FGM (87.2%) than those who live in urban areas (85.5%).

FGM is least prevalent among women aged 14–59 with 'no education', at 76.8%.

52.8% of women aged 15–49 who have heard of FGM believe it should be discontinued.<sup>13</sup>



Breaking down the most recent data by age group shows that the prevalence for women aged 45–49 is 91.8%, while for the youngest age group this has fallen to 81.7%. Despite the fact that a small proportion of women may be cut after the age of 15, the data suggests a trend towards lower prevalences among younger women.<sup>14</sup>



## Sudanese Law

There is currently no national law against FGM covering the whole of Sudan. Four states have attempted to address FGM:

- South Kordofan: The Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation Act (2008) protects girls up to 18 years of age;
- South Darfur: Article 11 of the Child Law 2013 prohibits all forms of FGM;
- Gadaref: Article 13 of the Child Law 2009 prohibits all harmful traditional practices, including FGM;
- Red Sea: Article 10 of the Child Law 2011, prohibiting Type III FGM, is yet to be fully enacted by the State Minister of Health.

Implementation and enforcement of these state laws is weak, and there is no protection from the increasing medicalisation of FGM in Sudan. It is also reported that an agreement exists with religious and traditional leaders in each of these states to allow sunna cuts, which are usually Type I FGM, but not Type II.

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- 1 (**'MICS'**): Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), UNICEF Sudan (2016) *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 of Sudan, Final Report. Khartoum, Sudan: UNICEF and Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), February 2016*, p.214. Available at [https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/Middle%20East%20and%20North%20Africa/Sudan/2014/Final/Sudan%202014%20MICS\\_English.pdf](https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/Middle%20East%20and%20North%20Africa/Sudan/2014/Final/Sudan%202014%20MICS_English.pdf) (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 2 MICS, pp.214 & 218.
  - 3 MICS, pp.214-215.
  - 4 UNICEF (2016) *Sudan: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*, p.2. Available at [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Sudan/FGMC\\_SDN.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Sudan/FGMC_SDN.pdf) (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 5 MICS, p.214.
  - 6 UNICEF, *op. cit.*
  - 7 United Nations Development Programme (2018) *Human Development Reports*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update> (accessed 12 June 2019).
  - 8 - Country Meters (2017) *Sudan*, 26 June 2017. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Sudan> (accessed 26 June 2017).  
- Central Intelligence Agency (2017) *World Factbook: Sudan*, 21 June. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html> (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 9 Countdown to 2030 (2015) *A Decade of Tracking Progress for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival The 2015 Report: Sudan*. Available at [http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Sudan\\_2015.pdf](http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Sudan_2015.pdf) (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 10 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and United Nations Population Division Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (2015) *Maternal Mortality in 1990-2015: Sudan*. Available at [http://www.who.int/gho/maternal\\_health/countries/sdn.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/sdn.pdf?ua=1) (accessed 26 June 2017).
  - 11 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
  - 12 Madina Nasser Hroon Zakaria cited in Fatma Naib (undated) 'Sudan's midwives take on Female Genital Mutilation, *Aljazeera*. Available at <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2015/sudan-midwives-female-genital-mutilation/index.html> (accessed 27 June 2017).
  - 13 MICS, pp.214-215 & 218.
  - 14 MICS, pp.214-215.