

Africa Department
Regional Division Sahel and West Africa 1



Supraregional project

Ending Female Genital Mutilation

gtz



On behalf of

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

THE SITUATION

According to estimates by the World Health Organization, 140 million women and girls worldwide are victims of female genital mutilation (FGM). Every year another three million babies, girls and women join them. This serious violation of human rights is practised above all in 28 African and a smaller number of Asian countries, as well as by immigrants in other countries.

Female genital mutilation is a collective term for various forms of operative procedures performed on the external female genitalia. Although the extent, scope and socio-cultural significance of the practice vary significantly, all forms are irreversible and connected both directly and in the long term with physical and psychological harm. Besides severe complications, in the long term women can suffer severe damage to their reproductive and sexual health, run a higher risk of HIV infection, experience less sexual pleasure and can be left with psychological disorders. In extreme cases the procedure can lead to the death of those affected.



Genital mutilation is often considered and defended as part of the local tradition. Social and cultural acceptances as well as religious interpretations of the practice often fly in the face of its official rejection. That is why legal bans, which already exist in many countries, are only enforced sporadically, if at all.

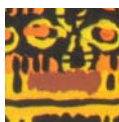
A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

Both at international level and in many countries where FGM is practised, governments, local organisations and networks have been working actively to put an end to FGM since the 1970s. They welcome and call for broad international support.

A series of international conventions and plans of action denounce FGM as an infringement of human rights, as a contravention of the rights of children, and as a violation of the right to health and physical integrity. The programmes of action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) urge governments concerned to take action against the mutilation of female genitalia and give their every support to civil society organisations in their efforts to overcome FGM.

Furthermore, the African Union's Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo, 2005) is an important regional instrument for protecting the human rights of women. It calls for a ban on harmful traditional practices, including FGM, and formulates measures to overcome these.

Ending female genital mutilation will impact positively on the development opportunities of women and girls and is associated with virtually all the concerns expressed in the Millennium Development Goals for sustainable development. Termination of the practice would also lead to strengthening the rights of women and girls (empowerment).



PROJECT PROFILE

Who are we?

GTZ has been implementing the supraregional project "Ending Female Genital Mutilation" based in Eschborn on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) since 1999.

How do we work?

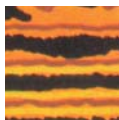
Ending the practice calls for long-term strategies targeting social change and overcoming deep-rooted role assignments. We adopt a comprehensive, multiple-level approach aiming at education and sensitising of target groups, capacity development for institutions and organisations, as well as policy consultancy in the national and international context.

What do we want to achieve?

We are committed to mainstreaming measures to end FGM systematically and sustainably in German development cooperation and thus helping to realise the human rights of women and girls.

Whom do we want to reach?

Our target group are women and girls who are (or might become) victims of female genital mutilation. We also address groups of persons who can influence decisions for or against FGM, such as parents, husbands and young men, traditional and religious leaders, teachers, or persons of authority in the community.



OUR SERVICES AND PARTNERS

- We advise the BMZ on integrating FGM into development policy steering instruments and into the policy dialogue with our partner countries. We also advise national, regional and international organisations on developing methods and programmes for combating FGM.
- We support partner governments in creating frameworks that promote the ending of FGM, for instance by helping to draft the necessary legislation.
- In country-specific work, we advise the implementing organisations of German development cooperation on how to incorporate measures to end FGM systematically in projects and programmes, primarily in the areas of good governance, health or education. In this context we help development cooperation projects to enhance the capacities of local partner organisations.
- We gather information and experience, identify successful approaches and make them available to our partners and the community of experts. As well as driving further methodological development, we promote innovative and culturally adapted strategies, such as the inter-generational dialogue, with the aim of changing attitudes and behaviour.
- We network with bilateral, multilateral and private organisations. GTZ plays an active role in the German network against female genital mutilation (INTEGRA). Through our collaboration in the Donors Working Group on FGM/C we support the harmonising of donor activities to end FGM at an international level.



For information and advice please contact:

Supraregional project

Ending Female Genital Mutilation

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH
Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
65726 Eschborn
Germany

Tel.: +49 6196 79-6399, -1579, -1553
Fax: +49 6196 79-7177
Web: www.gtz.de/fgm

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
65726 Eschborn
Germany

Tel. +49 6196 79-0
Fax +49 6196 79-1115
Email info@gtz.de
Web www.gtz.de

