

The Gambia

Due to geophysical conditions, accelerating climate change and high degrees of vulnerability, The Gambia faces acute risks of disasters that impact lives and livelihoods across the country.⁴⁶ It is highly prone to floods, while desertification and drought are driving displacement towards low-lying urban areas of Banjul, the capital. Unregulated settlement is taking place in flood-prone areas and encroaching on canals and drainage systems.⁴⁷ Insufficient infrastructure and drainage render both urban and rural populations vulnerable.⁴⁸ In terms of poverty, 41.7 per cent of the population is multidimensionally poor.⁴⁹

FGM PROFILE

75% of girls aged 15 to 19 have experienced FGM.⁵⁰

While 75.7 per cent of girls and women between the ages of 15 and 49 have undergone FGM, the prevalence rate is lower among younger cohorts, at 51 per cent among girls aged 0 to 14.⁵¹

FGM is performed by traditional practitioners.⁵²

There is **cross-border FGM** between The Gambia and Senegal.

49% of girls and boys aged 15 to 19 think FGM should stop.⁵³

The percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 who know about FGM and think it should continue **declines** from 50 per cent with a primary education to 39 per cent with a secondary education, and from 52 per cent in the middle wealth quintile to 36 per cent in the richest wealth quintile.⁵⁵

70% of adolescent girls reported undergoing FGM before age 5.⁵⁴

JOINT PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTIONS TO FGM ELIMINATION

Mothers' clubs: 209 community-based mothers' clubs with 3,135 members champion FGM elimination and have facilitated education sessions reaching approximately 3,000 students and 205 teachers on the consequences of FGM.

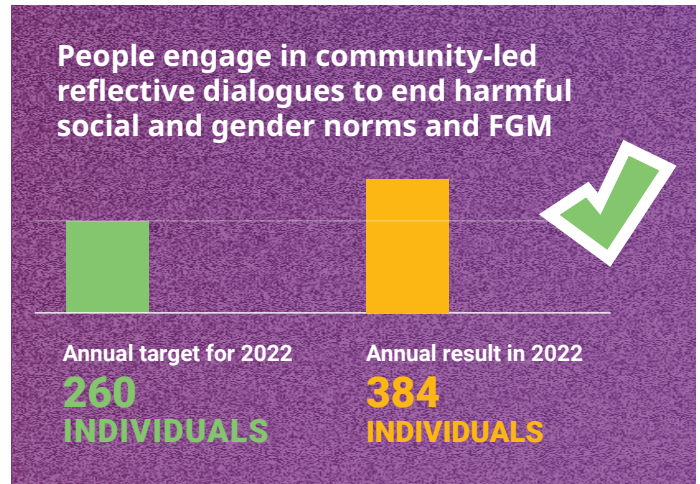
Social protection for FGM prevention: The Gambia is establishing a Social Registry to provide robust data on key household characteristics, which will facilitate common assessment and eligibility determination for social protection programmes. The Joint Programme intends to piggyback on an existing social protection programme, called "Nafa," by including vulnerable families where girls are most at risk of undergoing FGM.

Stopping cross-border FGM: The governments of The Gambia and Senegal signed an agreement to coordinate efforts to stop cross-border FGM.

Assessment on the effectiveness of social and behaviour change interventions to stop FGM: An assessment explored the effectiveness of social and behaviour change interventions, using a participatory methodology to solicit feedback from The Gambia's Children's Parliament, religious leaders, teachers, peer health educators and mothers' club members, among others.

Data on FGM: In 2021, the Joint Programme worked with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare to establish a gender management information system that will collect data on FGM. Data collected through one-stop centres, GBV shelters and helplines will be used to generate a monthly report to increase accountability and support for ending FGM.

KEY PROGRAMME RESULTS



BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Multi-pronged community-led interventions: Girls and women received support in facilitating education sessions and community dialogues on FGM, reaching 24,627 people. In addition to providing information about FGM, community-led activities included intergenerational dialogues, intended to develop consensus and build social support for collective action to stop the practice. Magnet theater encouraged audience members to actively participate in performances and critically reflect on FGM as a harmful practice and the benefits of eliminating it. Other interventions included applying the positive deviance approach, which involves people deviating from community expectations to sustain FGM and demonstrating positive health practices instead. This is part of community-led strategies that are culturally acceptable and feasible, and therefore sustainable. As a further measure, adolescent peer health clubs in schools provided information about FGM and promoted its elimination.



46 Ibid.
 47 OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), 2022. The Gambia Floods: Rapid Needs Assessment Report and Response Recommendations 2022. Website: https://reliefweb.int/report/gambia/gambia-floods-rapid-needs-assessment-report-and-response-recommendations-2022?_gl=1*shdnde*_ga*MzM0MzQzMzM4LjE2ODk3NzkzMDQ.*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*MTY4OTc3OTMwNC4xLjEuMTY4OTc4MDE0MS42MC4wLjA.
 48 Ibid.
 49 UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 2023. "Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023: Gambia." Website: <https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI/GMB.pdf>.

50 MICS 2018.
 51 UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), 2020. "Female Genital Mutilation Country Profiles." Website: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/fgm-country-profiles/>.
 52 Ibid.
 53 MICS 2018.
 54 UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), 2020. "Female Genital Mutilation Country Profiles." Website: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/fgm-country-profiles/>.
 55 MICS 2018.