



Urgent Call for Inclusion of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting as a Global Indicator in the Sustainable Development Goals

Statement from The Girl Generation: Together to End FGM

CORE MESSAGE: The Girl Generation's members and partners are calling for the indicator, 'Percentage of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)' to be included as a global indicator under Target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (*"Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations"*).

Provision of this global indicator creates an opportunity and a tool for governments, international agencies, global actors, and regional and national stakeholders to accelerate efforts to end all forms of harmful traditional practices, including child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) and female genital mutilations/ cutting.

ADDITIONAL MESSAGES:

ADDRESSING HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICES, including FGM/C and CEFM, is an agreed target for the SDGs, under Goal 5, *"Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"*. Under Goal 5, Target 5.3 is to *"Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations"*.

WE APPLAUD the proposed inclusion of 'Percentage of women aged 20-24 who were married or in a union before age 18' as a global indicator for monitoring Target 5.3. CEFM and FGM/C share many of the same social drivers. In many communities, FGM/C is the precursor to child marriage, and as such needs to be equally targeted for sustained reduction of CEFM.

A GLOBAL INDICATOR ON FGM/C is a vital component of measuring change in terms of gender equality, as outlined in Goal 5. We call for the indicator: "Percentage of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone FGM/C" to be included as a global indicator under Target 5.3, alongside the CEFM indicator, to provide a comprehensive framework for addressing both issues.

FGM/C IS A GLOBAL ISSUE WHICH REQUIRES A GLOBAL INDICATOR.

A GLOBAL INDICATOR FOR FGM/C will:

- Ensure sustained and increased political will and momentum for change; rates of FGM/ C are falling in many countries, and important programmatic and legal developments are apparent in many more;
- Ensure sustained and increased investment – which is required to end the practice by accelerating and scaling up existing efforts;
- Ensure that governments put in place and implement strategies to end the practice, requiring governments to report against them, generating critical worldwide data, and
- Ensure improved accountability, providing the growing global movement to end FGM with a credible tool to hold donors, policy makers and government to account for ending FGM.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

FGM/C IS A HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICE that involves altering or injuring the female genitalia for non-medical reasons. FGM/C harms women and girls in many ways. FGM/C is recognized internationally as a violation of the rights of women and girls. For over 30 years, governments have invested in legal and policy frameworks to address the practice, while many national, regional and international agencies have developed programmes to advocate for, and support, its abandonment. These efforts were reinforced by the passing of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 67/146 in December 2012, sponsored by two thirds of UN Member States, including the Group of African States, calling for a global ban on FGM/C. Despite this ban, globally more than 125 million women and girls have been subjected to FGM, and a further 3 million are at risk every year.

FGM/C IS A GLOBAL ISSUE: across Africa, FGM/C is practiced in at least 27 countries, with prevalence rates at 98% in Somalia and 91% in Egypt. In the Middle East, it has been documented in nine countries, including Yemen, where 23% of women have undergone FGM/C. In Asia, FGM/C is known to take place in at least nine countries, including Indonesia, where 51% of girls have undergone some form of the practice.

FGM is no longer restricted to these geographical areas. It is estimated that up to half a million women and girls in the United States have undergone FGM/C or are at risk of the procedure. In addition, in the European Union, it is estimated that half a million women have undergone FGM/C. Women and girls in Australia and other countries with diaspora populations are also affected.

- Ends –

THE GIRL GENERATION

We encourage your organisation to endorse this statement to ensure that your voice is included in this global call to action. Please email your endorsement to info@thegirlgeneration.org with your name, position, and organisation's name. We also encourage you to share this statement widely with your network. Thank you.

ABOUT THE GIRL GENERATION www.thegirlgeneration.org

The Girl Generation is social change communications initiative, providing a global platform for galvanizing, catalysing and amplifying the Africa-led movement to end FGM, building on what has already been achieved. We seek to inspire a collective of organisations and individuals across the most affected countries in Africa, and beyond, to end FGM in one generation. The Girl Generation is supported by a consortium of the following partners - Equality Now, FORWARD and Options.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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Indonesia: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. (February 2015) UNICEF.

Exploring the links: Female genital mutilation/cutting and early marriage. (May 2014) World Vision UK.

This statement is endorsed by the following organisations:



Comité Inter-Africain (CI-AF)
Inter-African Committee (IAC)

