

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF FEMALE
GENITAL MUTILATION/CUTTING
IN NIGERIA

IT ENDS WITH MY GENERATION



Background

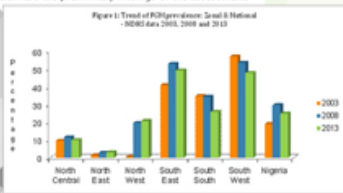
The origin of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting is largely unknown, but the practice predates contemporary world religions and is rooted in tradition. The practice is documented in 28 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Among these countries, the prevalence rate in Nigeria, according to the National Demographic Health Survey 2013, is 24.5%.

In 2008 a global UNFPA/UNICEF joint programme on the abandonment of FGM/C was launched. The programme is currently being implemented in 17 countries. Nigeria joined the global programme in December 2013, but the actual implementation commenced in 2014 in Imo, Ebonyi, Osun, Ekiti, Oyo and Lagos states with a joint Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Situation Assessment. These states were chosen on the basis of high prevalence for FGM/C based on the NDHS data 2003, 2008 and 2013 in Figure 1 below.



The Survey

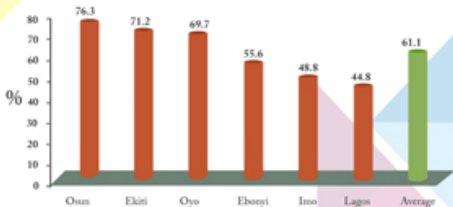
The situation assessment (baseline survey) was conducted to understand the nature and drivers of FGM in states and communities of programme focus. The data from the assessment will inform the design of effective strategies and interventions to accelerate the abandonment of FGM/C. Below are the preliminary findings of the assessment.



According to the NDHS, the FGM/C prevalence rate in the South West is the highest in the country. Although little progress has been made from a prevalence rate of about 57% in 2003 to 48% in 2013, a lot still needs to be done. The South East however, has seen a steady increase in the practice from 40% in 2003 to 48% in 2013. The practice of FGM/C is based on myths and religion passed down for many generations. Key among these myths is that some communities believe that the clitoris contains powers strong enough to cause harm to a man's reproductive organ or to damage/kill a baby during childbirth. The preliminary findings of the joint Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Situation Assessment in the six States in the following charts are consistent with the NDHS data. According to the data in Figure 2, Osun State reported the highest prevalence rate of 76.3 percent.



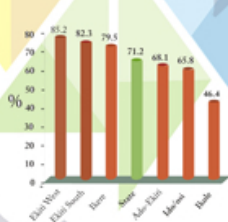
Figure 2: FGM/c Prevalence in the 6 States



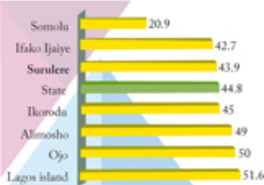
FGM Prevalence by LGAs in Ebonyi State



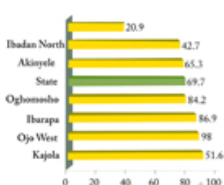
FGM Prevalence by LGAs in Ekiti State



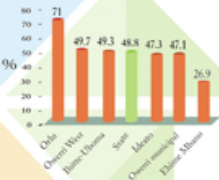
FGM Prevalence by LGAs in Lagos State



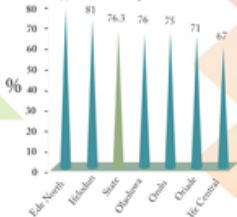
FGM Prevalence by LGAs in Oyo State



FGM Prevalence by LGAs in Lagos State



FGM Prevalence by LGAs in Oyo State



Reasons why FGM/C is practiced

- **Sexuality** FGM/C is used to preserve the virginity of a woman till she is married.

- **Marriageability** By preserving her virginity, it is assumed that her chances of being solicited for marriage increases by 100%.



- **Economic Empowerment** FGM is an income-generating activity, stopping the practice will put a significant number of people out of work. The practitioners are revered and their status invokes a level of power and authority in the community.



-Tradition FGM/c is seen as a way to preserve and continue a set of values and rituals passed on from one generation to the next.



- Religion FGM/c is seen as an instruction from God, one that must be followed. Cultural aesthetic reasons Female genitals are considered ugly, unclean and unattractive

- Rite of passage FGM/c is a symbol from girlhood into womanhood. Unless it is done, a woman is seen as incomplete.



FGM/C is a violation of a woman's reproductive rights. It puts her life at risk and is harmful not only to her but also to her unborn child.

Join the campaign to #ENDFGM in Nigeria.



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