

ACCELERATING CHANGE

by the numbers



2016

Annual Report of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint
Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: Accelerating Change





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

UNFPA and UNICEF, on behalf of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, wish to thank the people and governments that have contributed to this work.

Specifically, we thank the governments of Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom for their generous financial contributions. We also express our deep appreciation to the European Union, which joined the group of donors in 2016. And we acknowledge, with gratitude, the members of the Joint Programme's Steering Committee for their support and technical guidance throughout 2016.

Our appreciation is extended as well to each national and local government and to civil society organizations for their collaboration in accelerating the abandonment of FGM/C through their in-depth local perspectives and for their political support, without which the achievements in this report would not have been possible.

This report was produced by the Joint Programme Global Coordination Team: Nafissatou J. Diop, Mar Jubero, Berhanu Legesse and Stephanie Baric. We give sincere thanks for the support of Janet Jensen, consultant.

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Publication Date: July 2017

Design and layout by Phoenix Design Aid.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASRO	Arab States Regional Office
AU	African Union
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ESARO	East and Southern Africa Regional Office
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HQ	Head Quarters
MICS	Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WCARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office
WHO	World Health Organization



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the largest global programme addressing FGM/C, the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: Accelerating Change plays a critical role in achieving Target 5.3 which calls for the elimination of all harmful practices by 2030, under the Sustainable Development Goal 5.

In 2016, the Joint Programme completed the third year of Phase II. Substantial progress was made across the three focus areas of intervention. All the countries supported by the Joint Programme have put in place a functional national coordination mechanism, and have continued to implement an integrated and comprehensive approach towards galvanizing the new social norm of keeping girls intact. Implementation in Yemen, however, was limited as a result of the dire political and humanitarian situations faced by the country.

Three important targets for Phase II have already been accomplished, along with other significant achievements, as outlined below.

Policy and legal environment

Although no additional countries supported by the Joint Programme adopted legislation criminalizing female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) in 2016, important progress has been made. This includes amendment of law to tighten the penalty on perpetrators (Egypt), endorsement of an amendment to the Criminal Act by introducing a new article criminalizing FGM/C by the Council of Ministers (Sudan), passage of the Children Act Amendment into law and a National Policy on Elimination of Gender Based Violence (GBV) that recognizes FGM/C as a form of GBV (Uganda), and adoption of bills that ban FGM/C and impose legal sanctions for perpetrators by the Council of Ministers on GBV and Reproductive Health (Mauritania). All these achievements resulted from many years of advocacy by national stakeholders, in collaboration with multiple actors and activists.

With action by Mauritania and Uganda, the number of countries establishing national budget lines to specifically address FGM/C increased from 10 in 2015 to 12 in 2016. As a result, this year, the Joint Programme has met and surpassed the overall target for this indicator.

During the year, 90 individuals were arrested, 253 cases of FGM/C were brought to court and 77 individuals were convicted. Countries are incrementally strengthening and improving the implementation of legislation on FGM/C – important steps towards ending impunity for perpetrators. The effort made in the Gambia to prosecute a case just two months after the introduction of legislation banning FGM/C is an encouraging step forward.

Provision of quality services for protection and care

In 2016, more than 1.5 million (1,547,378) girls and women received services for protection and care related to FGM/C, bringing the total number of girls and women who have received services since 2014 to nearly 2.4 million. Thus, the target for Phase II has already been achieved.

Galvanizing community movements towards social change

In 2016, more than 3,000 communities, involving nearly 8.5 million individuals, made public declarations of abandonment of FGM/C. This brings the total number of public declarations to more than 6,000, and the number of individuals reached to more than 18 million since the start of Phase II in 2014. In addition, more than 1,000 Egyptian families have declared abandonment of FGM.

Regional dynamics to support countries efforts

In addition to providing technical support and facilitating programme implementation at the country level, UNFPA and UNICEF Regional Offices have continued activities at the regional level. Some of their initiatives include the following.

Regional and national networks of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in the Arab States

A regional FBO network was operationalized during a regional meeting organized in Khartoum, Sudan. Four national FBO networks were also established – in Djibouti, Egypt, Somalia and Sudan. The networks help ensure solidarity among members, and align and reinforce efforts and ideas in support of the abandonment of FGM/C in the region.

Partnership with the Pan African Parliament in ending FGM/C

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