

Improving the prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Empowering regional, national and local stakeholders and strengthen awareness-raising

The challenge

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a serious violation of human rights. It also violates women’s rights, the right of every person to health, security and physical integrity, and children’s rights, as girls often suffer from FGM at a very young age. The lifelong health consequences of FGM include birth complications, chronic pain and menstrual cramps. The practice also leads to an increased risk of infection, including HIV, as well as to traumatization and severe psychological stress. Moreover, FGM makes a significant contribution to maternal mortality. FGM is both an expression and a cause of gender inequality.

A slow social change is emerging in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. However, in the selected regions of Ethiopia, Afar and Somali, as well as in Somalia, including Somaliland and Puntland, over 90 % of women and girls over 15 years of age are affected. In Sudan it is almost 87 %.

In all three countries there are political efforts to overcome female genital mutilation and strategies to strengthen the rights of women and children. FGM has been banned in Ethiopia since 2005. In April 2020, a paragraph that penalizes female genital mutilation was incorporated into the criminal code in Sudan. Similar legislation is currently going through the consultation phase in Somalia, the federal state of Puntland, quasi-independent Somaliland. However, there is a lack of regional coordination: key actors are unable to adequately implement preventive measures.

Project name	Improving the prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
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Project region	Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Afar and Somali Somalia: Mogadischu, Puntland and Somaliland Sudan: tbc
Lead executing agency	GIZ
Duration	02/2020 – 08/2022

The Objective

Relevant actors have better skills to perform regional, local and national awareness-raising work on the prevention of female genital mutilation. The framework conditions for prevention and regional coordination of the actors have improved.

Our Approach

Improved prevention work, increased local and regional networking plus the empowerment of role models and change agents, help to break up patriarchal structures in which FGM is rooted.

The project thus contributes to strengthening the human rights of girls and women to life, equality, non-discrimination, education and welfare. Moreover, the project promotes social, societal, political and economic participation of women and girls.



**Ethiopia:**

Jana Wegmann

Head of Project
jana.wegmann@giz.de

The prevention of FGM also improves the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls. In the longer term, the project contributes to placing the fight against FGM on the local, regional and global political agenda.

The FGM-Prev project works in three major action areas while applying a multi stakeholder and multi-level approach.

1. Capacity Development

The project supports broad political and social changes to prevent FGM in the partner countries. To this end, employees of governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations are supported in their skills development, through joint learning and in networking with other relevant actors. The project also promotes and establishes FGM prevention structures in the responsible ministries.

2. Exchange, Coordination and Cooperation

The project will establish new collaborations with relevant private sector actors, the diaspora and various media. In this way, the project enables actors from different countries and regions to **combine strengths and jointly develop strategies and approaches for sustainable change**. Exchange and dialogue formats to engage during multinational conferences will support coordination efforts.

3. Awareness-raising

The ongoing process of social change towards abandoning FGM will be reinforced by supporting information and awareness-raising measures implemented by state and non-state stakeholders at the local, national and multinational levels. A multimedia cross-country campaign will be combined with a number of local, community level awareness-raising activities for schools, health care workers, youth groups, etc.



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Registered offices

Regional Office of the Programme
„Improving the Prevention of FGM“
GIZ Ethiopia
Hisham Complex, Kazanchis Area
P.O. Box 34
Addis Ababa

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Gleichberechtigung und Inklusion

Postal address
of the two seats
of the Ministry

BMZ Bonn
Dahlmannstraße 4
53113 Bonn
T +49 (0)228 99 535-0
F +49 (0)228 99 535-3500

BMZ Berlin
Stresemannstraße 94
10963 Berlin
T +49 (0)30 18 535-0
F +49 (0)30 18 535-2501

poststelle@bmz.bund.de
www.bmz.de