

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 and in Sudan since 2020. 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.

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| Project title | Improving the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) |
| Commissioned by | Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) |
| Project regions in Africa | Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Afar and Somali Somalia: Mogadishu, Puntland and Somaliland Sudan: North Darfur and Khartoum Province Diaspora |
| Lead executing agency | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH |
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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.



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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 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. Trainings on social norm change, coordination and communication skills were conducted. The project will also carry out Generation Dialogues in local communities.

2. Exchange, coordination and cooperation

The project established new collaborations with relevant private sector actors, the diaspora and various media. In this way, the project enables actors from different countries to combine strengths and jointly develop strategies for sustainable change. Exchange formats like multinational conferences will support coordination efforts. A Virtual Community on FGM Prevention has been established, including stakeholders from the Horn of Africa region and the diaspora communities. A training series to engage the diaspora in awareness-raising activities was conducted. The first regional meeting of the Ethiopian, Somali and Sudanese Task Forces against FGM took place and the participants committed to further collaborate on a regional level.

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 level. Multimedia campaigns will be combined with local, community level awareness-raising activities for schools, health care workers, youth groups. A Community Initiative Fund (COIN-Fund). has been established which aims to support and incentivize efforts made on a local level by non-governmental as well as community-based organizations.



Implementation areas of the programme in Eastern Africa

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