

# The Gambia

## CONTEXT

In The Gambia, the 2015 amendment of the Women's Act 2010 criminalized the practice of FGM and stipulated several punishments. FGM remains widely practised across the country, however.



3 out of 4 girls experience FGM before age 6

## Enabling environment for the elimination of FGM

- Legislation criminalizing FGM
- Costed national action plan
- National budget line for FGM
- National coordination mechanism

## Since 2018, law enforcement has resulted in:



**2** arrests



**1** cases brought to court



**0** convictions and sanctions

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Overall performance on outcome indicators in Phase III

- Below 70%
- 70%–100%
- Above 100%

### OUTCOME 1



Have an enabling environment for the elimination of FGM practices at all levels and in line with human rights standards

### OUTCOME 2



Girls and women are empowered to exercise and express their rights by transforming social and gender norms in communities to eliminate FGM

### OUTCOME 3



Girls and women receive appropriate, quality and systemic services for FGM prevention, protection and care

### OUTCOME 4



Have better capacity to generate and use evidence and data for policymaking and improving programming and care

Sources: The Gambia MICS 2018, UNFPA's estimates 2018 based on The Gambia DHS 2013, Data-for-All, UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation: Accelerating Change

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### Fostering an enabling environment for FGM elimination

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare through its New Gender Directorate on GBV and FGM developed its Institutional Strategic Plan and created a Technical Committee on GBV Issues. It also drafted a National FGM Strategy and Action Plan for 2021-2025. The latest strategy addresses gaps

in the implementation of legislation that bans FGM, insufficient capacity to integrate FGM interventions in existing gender and social development programmes, women's low awareness of their legal rights and shortfalls in information-gathering and analysis of FGM.

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### Community outreach

In Phase III, the Joint Programme employed strategies to reach out to more communities on ending FGM, including activities such as community dialogues, advocacy through art competitions, intergenerational dialogues and theater drama.

A total of 64,782 people actively participated in education, sensitization and social mobilization sessions promoting the elimination of FGM. Also, 163,140 people engaged in public declarations in 1,570 communities that agreed to abandon FGM.

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### Women's and girls' empowerment

In 2021, 209 mother clubs with 3,135 women members developed 209 workplans and expected to reach 10,450 students and 50 teachers through step-down sensitization activities in their communities. Magnet Theater reached 600 community members in 19 communities across four targeted regions.

The Joint Programme collaborated with Think Young Women to provide mentorship for

adolescent girls on topics such as personal hygiene during menstruation and to equip them with interpersonal, life and advocacy skills, particularly on human rights. Other training and sexuality education sessions allowed young girls and boys to discuss issues often not talked about at home due to cultural beliefs and social norms. In Phase III, 1,614 girls became change agents after completing capacity development packages.

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### MOST SIGNIFICANT STORY

"What I have learned today is immeasurable. Firstly, this sensitization has helped me to know how I can go about my religion. At times, one engages in a practice thinking it's part of religion, but it's indirectly mixing traditions with religion. It's time for people to be aware of FGM and its effect on women and children.

"Being here today makes me very happy and gives me hope. My work is preaching and that's what I'm known for everywhere in the country as I engage in a one-hour radio programme every Thursday. I am a

religious scholar, I teach students and I have more than a hundred followers.

Now that I have this knowledge, I will include talks about FGM and its harmful effects in my radio programme and sermons. I will endeavour to raise the attention of the public opinion and of the elders in my community. It's my duty to talk to them about what is beneficial for our generation. I will not hesitate to talk about FGM."

– Oustas Lamin Jagne