

## INTACT Quarterly E-Newsletter April, May & June 2010

Dear INTACT Members,

In this issue of INTACT Quarterly E-Newsletter, we covered FGM information from the past 3 months to give you a glimpse of the most important happenings. The highlight of this quarter is the policy statement issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) on FGM and reactions to it from local and international NGOs and professional associations, which considered the statement as promoting FGM rather than limiting it. Enjoy reading!

*(This Issue of INTACT E-Newsletter is funded by Wallace Global Fund)*

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## Ritual Genital Cutting of female Minors (News Article)

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<<<<<The message below includes attached link>>>>>

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### **Africa/Regional: Dakar Inter-parliamentary Conference on FGM: "Towards the ban of the practice at the United Nations"**

3-4 May 2010

The Inter-parliamentary Conference "To Harmonize the Legal Instruments Prohibiting FGM: Consolidating the Achievements, Sharing the Successes, Pursuing the Advancements! Towards the Ban of the Practice at the United Nations", held on 3-4 May 2010 in the premises of the *Conseil Economique et Social*, in **Dakar**, was organized by the Ministry of Family Affairs of Senegal in partnership with the international NGO No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ) and the Senegalese Organization *La Palabre*, with the financial support of Italian Cooperation, UNOPS, UNFPA and the Municipality of Rome. The Conference, which saw among others the participation of *Emma Bonino*, Vice-President of the Italian Senate and founder of NPWJ, gathered parliamentarians, civil society activists and government representatives from Senegal and the other 27 African countries affected by the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), as well as representatives of the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, the ECOWAS Parliamentary Assembly, the East African Legislative Assembly, and the relevant United Nations specialized agencies.

The Dakar Inter-parliamentary Conference concluded with the adoption of a [Final Declaration](#) stressing the need to work for a universal ban on FGM. The Final Declaration calls for the adoption of a resolution explicitly banning FGM worldwide as a violation of human rights of women and girls during the 65th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

For more information:

[http://www.npwj.org/FGM/Dakar-Inter-parliamentary-Conference-FGM-  
\"Towards-ban-practice-United-Nations\".html](http://www.npwj.org/FGM/Dakar-Inter-parliamentary-Conference-FGM-\)

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### **Africa/Regional: Estimating the obstetric costs of female genital mutilation in six African countries**

January 2010

This is a study carried out by a number of researchers from six African countries to estimate the economic cost to the health system of obstetric complications due to female genital mutilation (FGM) in six African countries. The study, which was carried out in 2008, used the findings from the WHO study on the association between the different types of FGM and obstetric outcomes, where it estimated the medical costs associated with FGM. Findings from the study showed that the annual

costs of FGM-related obstetric complications in the six African countries studied amounted to \$3.4 million and ranged from 0.1 to 1% of government spending on health for women aged 15–45 years. In the current population of 2.8 million 15-year-old women in the six African countries, a loss of 130 000 life years is expected owing to FGM's association with obstetric haemorrhage. This is equivalent to losing half a month from each lifespan. It is concluded from the study that beyond the immense psychological trauma it entails, FGM imposes large financial costs and loss of life. The cost of government efforts to prevent FGM will be offset by savings from preventing obstetric complications.

*To read the Study:*

<http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/88/4/09-064808-ab/en/index.html>

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### **Australia: Criticism over Australian Doctors Support for Female Circumcision**

28 May 2010

**(Radio Australia News)** - Human rights groups have come out against a proposal by the Royal Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists to support a form of female circumcision. The college is considering supporting a less extreme version known as a 'ritual nick'. Female circumcision is illegal in Australia but the secretary of the Royal Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; Dr *Gino Pecoraro* says he's worried the practice is being done overseas with much worse consequences.

*For more information:*

<http://www.radioaustralianews.net.au/stories/201005/2912525.htm?desktop>

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### **Egypt: Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE)- Preliminary Report**

February 2010

The Population Council conducted a national Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE) in collaboration with the Egyptian Cabinet, Information and Decision Support Center. The survey included 15,029 young people (male and female) aged 10-29 years. Preliminary results showed that four in five girls aged 10-29 in Egypt have been exposed to female genital mutilation/cutting. FGM is more prevalent in the older cohorts, where it reaches 93% among females aged 22-29. However, among girls aged 10-14, the prevalence rate is 66%. Given the fact that FGM is generally practiced in Egypt around age 9, these figures suggest the positive impact of the recent government efforts to eliminate this practice.

*To read the full preliminary report:*

[http://www.unicef.org/egypt/SYPE\\_Preliminary\\_Report.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/egypt/SYPE_Preliminary_Report.pdf)

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### **Global: Global Strategy to Stop Health-Care Providers from Performing Female Genital Mutilation**

UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WHO, FIGO, ICN, IOM, MWIA, WCPT, WMA

28 May 2010

(WHO) - This global strategy against medicalization of FGM has been developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, including UN organizations and health-care professional bodies, national governments and NGOs. Basically, the strategy includes detailed information on the concept of FGM and medicalization, which is clearly set and explained; it also relates it to global issues. Moreover, it explains the reasons why medicalization happens, why it should not happen and challenges that need to be overcome. The last section of the publication is dedicated to spelling out the strategy, which is based on the principles governing international human rights. The adoption and implementation of this strategy is essential to secure the elimination of all forms of FGM. The strategy is intended for a broad audience of policy-makers in governments, parliamentarians, international agencies, professional associations, community leaders, religious leaders, NGOs and other institutions.

To download the publication:

[http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2010/WHO\\_RHR\\_10.9\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2010/WHO_RHR_10.9_eng.pdf)

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### **Iraqi Kurdistan: “They Took Me and Told Me Nothing”, Female Genital Mutilation in Iraqi Kurdistan- Human Rights Watch Report**

16 June 2010

Human Rights Watch traveled to the Kurdistan Autonomous Region in May 2009 to carry out the research for this report, meeting girls and women who had undergone the procedure as well as traditional midwives, healthcare workers, clerics, government officials, and nongovernmental organizations. HRW interviewed people about the impact of FGM on their lives, explored views and representations of reasons for the practice, and met activists and others committed to its eradication. The report was released in June 2010. The report discusses FGM as a harmful tradition practiced around the world with a special focus on Iraqi Kurdistan. Furthermore, it addresses FGM from a human rights perspective. It also provides a list of useful recommendations, in addition to calling for official action against the harmful tradition.

To download the full Report:

<http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2010/06/16/they-took-me-and-told-me-nothing-0>

For more information on FGM & Iraqi Kurdistan:

**HRW Urges Iraqi Kurds to Ban Female Circumcision**

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5g9se38lr1pzPUYTmSviqbx8BZF6QD9GCFJ701>

**Q&A on Female Genital Mutilation**

<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/06/10/qa-female-genital-mutilation>

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### **Ireland: Female Genital Mutilation Bill 2010**

15 April 2010

Irish Senator *Ivana Bacik* introduced a Bill to prohibit the act of Female Genital

Mutilation in the *Seanad* during a discussion held with members of the Labor Party. The Bill is entitled to be an Act to provide for the offence of Female Genital Mutilation and related matters. The Irish Minister for Health and Children has welcomed the Bill, indicating that it will be read a second time in a year or so. "We urgently need a law specifically criminalizing this barbaric practice, which has destroyed the lives of so many girls and women world-wide. I welcome the Minister's commitment to address this issue, but there has already been a great deal of work done on developing a legal framework, and delaying the introduction of this legislation by another year is unacceptable", commented *Bacik*.

*The Bill and its Explanatory Memorandum are available here:*

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=14752&&CatID=59>

*For more information:*

**AkiDwA Welcomes New Female Genital Mutilation Bill 2010**

<http://www.akidwa.ie/AkiDwA%20welcomes%20new%20Female%20Genital%20Mutilation%20Bill%202010.pdf>

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## **Kenya: Taking Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting out of the Cultural Mosaic of Kenya**

22 April 2010

(UNFPA News) - When *Lina Kilimo* ran for the Kenya Parliament in 2002 on a platform of peace, development and ending female genital mutilation/cutting, her opponents claimed that as an uncircumcised woman, she was unfit to hold office. She said they were amazed that she was bold enough to speak out frankly on such a sensitive issue. But she turned culture to her advantage, invoking a myth that if you want to end fighting between groups, you should send an uncircumcised girl to make peace. The fact that she won, and is now one of the sponsors of legislation to expand legal sanctions against FGM/C, which was once almost universally practiced in her *Marakwet* community, is one indication that attitudes toward the practice are shifting in Kenya. FGM/C was traditionally practiced in all but five of Kenya's 43 ethnic groups. Its prevalence is diminishing countrywide, especially among younger, more urban and more educated women. Latest data (preliminary reports of the 2008-2009 Demographic and Health Survey) show that FGM/C has declined from 38% in 1998 to 27.1%. The statistics for younger girls are more encouraging: Data show that nearly half of women ages 45-49 had been cut compared to only 15% of those age 15-19. But the practice, condemned by international organizations as well as the Kenya government, is still nearly universal in some communities, including among the *Kisii*, *Maasai*, *Somali*, *Samburu* and *Kuria* ethnic groups.

*For more information:*

<http://www.unfpa.org/public/news/pid/5409>

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## **Nigeria Experts Link High Maternal Mortality to Genital Mutilation**

28 May 2010

(**Business Day News**) - Experts have identified Female Genital Mutilation as one of the harmful health practices that cause complications for mothers during child delivery in developing countries. Rising from a three-day Training Information

Communication (TIC) workshop held in *Oye-Ekiti* in Nigeria, participants were unanimous that such complications often accounted for the high maternal mortality rate on the continent. In a communiqué issued at the end of the workshop, they urged health workers to abstain from female genital mutilation practices, while calling on governments at all levels to eradicate the habit through the media and establishment of Female Genital Mutilation Monitor Clubs in all secondary schools.

For more information:

[http://www.businessdayonline.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=11416:experts-link-high-maternal-mortality-to-genital-mutilation&catid=126:health](http://www.businessdayonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11416:experts-link-high-maternal-mortality-to-genital-mutilation&catid=126:health)

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### **Uganda: Uganda Police Arrests Two over Female Genital Mutilation**

10 June 2010

(The Female Genital Cutting Education & Networking Project) - Uganda Police in *Looro* Sub County, *Moroto* district have arrested two people over conducting banned female genital mutilation practice. Female genital mutilation is a common cultural practice among *Sebei*, *Pokot* and *Tepeth* ethnic groups. Female genital mutilation is outlawed in Uganda and any person that practices or promotes this practice commits an offence. The spokesperson of Police, *Judith Nabakooba* says the suspects arrested will be prosecuted in courts of law.

For more information:

[http://www.fgmnetwork.org/gonews.php?subaction=showfull&id=1276191793&archive=&start\\_from=&ucat=1&](http://www.fgmnetwork.org/gonews.php?subaction=showfull&id=1276191793&archive=&start_from=&ucat=1&)

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### **UK: Women Call for an End to Female Genital Mutilation to Mark the Day of the African Child**

16 June 2010

(FORWARD) - 16 June is International Day of the African Child. On this occasion, FORWARD called on UK leaders to address the rights of African girls as essential to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular tackling female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage which hamper girls' potential, health and development. The practice is illegal in the UK, yet in 2001 it was estimated that over 66,000 women and girls were affected by FGM in the UK and a 2005 study by FORWARD estimated around 32,000 girls were at high risk of FGM.

For more information:

<http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/news/news/575>

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### **USA: American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Policy Statement on Ritual Genital Cutting of female Minors**

5 May 2010

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has been under fire by the media and

activists worldwide for their statement on female genital mutilation published in the journal *Pediatrics* on April 26. The statement would allow American doctors to perform a ceremonial pinprick or "nick" on girls from those countries that practice FGM if this would keep their families from sending them overseas for the full circumcision. The above statement triggered strong criticism from local and international NGOs, professional associations as well as African women themselves. The policy statement was considered as promoting FGM rather than limiting it, since it allowed the performance of a 'mild' form of the practice under the notion of "Cultural Sensitivity". This resulted in retracting the statement and amending it into a more acceptable one. In the same day the AAP published its new recommendation, the Girls Protection Act, which would make it illegal to take a minor outside the U.S. to seek female circumcision, was introduced in Congress (article included at the end of the E-Newsletter). In a release issued on the new Policy Statement, the AAP stated that it has "retired" its 2010 revised statement on FGM, is opposed to "all forms of female genital cutting" and "does not endorse the practice of offering a 'clitoral nick.'" A link to the new Policy Statement is added below to give you full information from the complete and final document.

***AAP Policy Statement Ritual Genital Cutting of Female Minors***

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/peds.2010-0187v1>

*The following is a selection of reaction articles & Statements made in response to the AAP policy statements:*

**American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Is Advocating for U.S. Pediatricians to Perform Certain Types of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Says Equality Now**

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/american-academy-of-pediatrics-aap-is-advocating-for-us-pediatricians-to-perform-certain-types-of-female-genital-mutilation-fgm-92871624.html>

**EQUALITY NOW Welcomes the Decision by American Academy of Pediatrics to withdraw its 2010 Policy Statement**

[http://www.equalitynow.org/english/pressroom/press\\_releases/aapwithdrawal\\_20100527\\_en.html](http://www.equalitynow.org/english/pressroom/press_releases/aapwithdrawal_20100527_en.html)

**Regarding the "Policy Statement - Ritual Genital Cutting of Female Minors" from the American Academy of Pediatrics (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA & UNIFEM)**

[http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/fgm/fgm\\_app\\_statement.pdf](http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/fgm/fgm_app_statement.pdf)

**Statement By The FIGO President On Medicalization Of FGM**

<http://www.figo.org/news/statement-figo-president-medicalisation-fgm>

**Has a U.S. Pediatrics Group Condoned Genital Cutting?**

<http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1988434,00.html>

**Group Backs Ritual 'Nick' as Female Circumcision Option**

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/07/health/policy/07cuts.html>

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**USA: U.S. Bill Would Outlaw FGM "Holidays"**

12 June 2010

**(IPS)** - The U.S. currently lags behind several Western European countries in closing a legislative loophole banning the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) beyond its borders to protect U.S. citizens and residents; this may soon change.

The "Girls Protection Act" would make it illegal to transport a minor abroad for the purpose of FGM. Introduced by members of Congress *Joseph Crowley* and *Mary Bono Mack* as a bipartisan initiative, the bill is now awaiting review in a congressional committee. The bill will also be coupled with community outreach and educational programmes to shore up awareness on the link between FGM and many serious health complications.

For more information:

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51802>

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*\*\*\*Thank you for Reading\*\*\**

### INTACT Network

The International Network to Analyze, Communicate and Transform the Campaign against FGC/FGM/FC (INTACT), which is managed by the Population Council, is an international group of researchers, scholars and activists committed to bringing scientific evidence to contribute to the abandonment of FGM/C through:

- **A**dvancing social, behavioral and epidemiological research;
- **P**romoting research on the impact of interventions;
- **F**acilitating the utilization of findings to guide policies and programs.

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