



INTACT Quarterly E-Newsletter April, May & June 2011

Dear INTACT Members,

Welcome to the June issue of INTACT newsletter!

In this issue of INTACT Quarterly E-Newsletter, we have covered FGM information from the past 3 months to give you a glimpse of the most important happenings. We gathered a selection of news from ten different countries and three different continents. It is clear that much has been going on in Kenya this quarter in the area of FGM, since Kenya has the lion's share in this e-newsletter. Enjoy reading!

We would also like to use this opportunity to make two announcements.

- The French Interface of INTACT website (www.intact-network.net/intactfr/) has been officially launched today! The website contains many resources on FGM (reports, journal articles, videos, books, IEC materials, factsheets..etc). At this stage the website includes recent resources on FGM, while we continue to upload older material. You are more than welcome to contribute material to enrich the website. The INTACT website has been funded by the UNICEF-UNFPA Joint Program on FGM, the Wallace Global Fund, and Population Council).
- INTACT is now officially tweeting. Follow us on twitter @INTACTnetwork .

(This Issue of INTACT E-Newsletter is funded by UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM)

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Burkina Faso: Factors associated with female genital mutilation in Burkina Faso and its policy implications

May 2011

This study investigated social, demographic and economic factors associated with FGM in Burkina Faso using the 2003 Demographic Health Survey (DHS). The DHS is a nationally representative cross-sectional survey (multistage stratified random sampling of households) of women of reproductive age (15-49 years). Associations between potential risk factors and the prevalence of FGM were explored using χ^2 and t-tests and Mann Whitney U-test as appropriate. Logistic regression modelling was used to investigate social, demographic and economic risk factors associated with FGM.

The study concluded that factors associated with FGM are varied and complex. Younger women and those from specific groups and religions are less likely to have had FGM. A higher level of education may be protective for women from certain religions. Policies should capitalize on these findings and religious leaders should be involved in continuing programmes of action.

<http://www.equityhealthj.com/content/pdf/1475-9276-10-20.pdf>

Ethiopia: Rural village in Ethiopia vows to stop female genital mutilation

April 2011

(FIGO) - A rural village in southern Ethiopia, Africa, has vowed to end the practice of female genital mutilation.

While it is a tradition in the village of Senbata Lencho, people are beginning to realise the long-term impact female genital mutilation can have, reports Radio Netherlands Worldwide in Africa.

<http://www.figo.org/news/rural-village-ethiopia-vows-stop-female-genital-mutilation-003557>

Gambia: 117 URR communities abandon FGM, other practices

June 2011

(The Observer) - A total of 117 Fula and Mandinka communities in the Upper River Region (URR) Sunday openly declared they have abandoned Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); and early and forced marriage; among other harmful traditional practices. The declaration ceremony was held at the Basse mini-stadium.

<http://observer.gm/africa/gambia/article/117-urr-communities-abandon-fgm-other-practices>

Global: An update on WHO's work on female genital mutilation (FGM)

This progress report reviews current information on FGM based on recent studies in the field supported by WHO. The first section includes information about the prevalence, the human rights implications and the health risks associated with the practice. It also explores some of the factors that account for its persistence despite growing awareness of its dangers to health and its infringement of human rights. The second section focuses on the efforts to abandon the practice, as well as the challenge of its "medicalization".

The final section of this progress report summarizes the results of some of the most recent WHO-supported studies that have been initiated by HRP in Burkina Faso, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Sudan.

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2011/WHO_RHR_11.18_eng.pdf

Global: World Health Assembly - female genital mutilation WHA61.16

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, 1997). Despite previous efforts approximately 3 million girls per year are at risk of this harmful practice.

Of concern is the medicalization of this practice (where it is undertaken by registered practitioners in licensed facilities).

There has been inadequate attention to changing the social representation of FGM; changes in the way the society perceives FGM particularly in areas with a high prevalence rate.

There is also a need for psychosocial rehabilitation for girls/ women that have gone through his act.

<http://www.ghwatch.org/node/243>

Indonesia: Female Circumcision Decree Must Be Revoked: NGOs

June 2011

(The Jakarta Globe) - Hundreds of activists demanded on Thursday that Indonesia's Health Ministry revoke a 2010 ministerial decree regulating the proper procedure for female circumcision.

"The decree is extremely discriminatory, we want it to be revoked immediately," Ratna Batara Munti from the Federation of the Women's Legal Aid Foundation (LBH Apik) said.

More than 170 NGOs, including Amnesty International, and activists signed a joint statement asking the ministry to revoke the decree, which they said contradicted a 2006 circular from the director general of community health prohibiting health workers from performing female circumcisions.

<http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/female-circumcision-decree-must-be-revoked-ngos/448791>

Ireland: Ireland calls for female genital mutilation to be halted

May 2011

(FIGO) - Ireland is calling for the reintroduction of legislation to outlaw female genital mutilation (FGM).

Even though FGM is mainly carried out on young girls in regions around Africa, some females from migrant communities living in Ireland have also been subjected to the act.

The new law, which was drafted by the former Irish government, would make it illegal for the practice to be carried out in the European nation, as well as prohibiting parents from taking their children back to their own country for it to take place.

<http://www.igo.org/news/ireland-calls-female-genital-mutilation-be-halted-003691>

Kenya: Female Genital Mutilation in Kenya: Local Girls Fight Back Against the Controversial Rite (VIDEO)

April 2011

(The Guardian) - According to the Huffington Post this new *Guardian*-produced documentary sheds light on the huge emotional conflict the two Kenyan women experience after challenging their families' authority by refusing to undergo the risky procedure. With the girls not considered eligible by prospective husbands until they have been "cut," the risk of family breakdown over the issue is clear.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/video/2011/apr/18/female-genital-mutilation-video>

Kenya: MPs Back Bill to Prohibit Female Genital Mutilation

April 2011

(All Africa) - MPs yesterday commended debate on a Bill that seeks to punish those found practicing Female Genital Mutilation. The motion which was moved by Mt Elgon MP Fred Kapondi received the backing of all legislators who stood to contribute saying it was time the country effected laws to curb FGM.

Kapondi told the House that FGM was interfering with women sexuality. He said the act has been a major factor undermining development noting that it had inhibited the education of the girl child in many parts of the country.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201104140205.html>

Kenya: Female Genital Mutilation practices in Kenya: The role of Alternative Rites of Passage

This research was undertaken to better understand FGM as currently practised by the Kuria and Kisii communities. The study used a qualitative approach, involving focus group discussions and individual interviews to investigate current attitudes and practices in relation to FGM among men and women; awareness and attitudes towards the Alternative Rite of Passage (ARP); factors which encourage individuals to take decisions to abandon FGM.

<http://www.feedtheminds.org/downloads/FGM%20July%20Report.pdf>

Kenya: FGM Clubs in Schools to Fight the Cut

April 2011

(All Africa) - The government has been urged to establish anti-Female Genital Mutilation clubs in schools to combat the outdated cultural practices in pastoral communities in Northern Kenya.

Merti Intergrated Development (MID) coordinator Abdulah Shande said the clubs will help reduce cases of discrimination against those non-practising in primary and secondary schools in the region.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201104120250.html>

Kenya: "International Conference on research, healthcare and preventive measures for female genital cutting (FGC) and support for capacity strengthening of leadership and research in Africa"

A symposium entitled "International Conference on research, healthcare and preventive measures for female genital cutting (FGC) and support for capacity strengthening of leadership and research in Africa", is scheduled to take place on the 17th - 19th October, 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya. The symposium will be sponsored by University of Sydney, World Health Organization, UNFPA and International Centre for Reproductive Health - Ghent University.

The primary purpose of this conference is to review existing knowledge and identify knowledge gaps with regards to the health consequences of FGC and their treatment, as well as review of community based interventions against FGC and their efficacy.

Senegal: Two Recent Declarations of FGC Abandonment in Senegal
June 2011

Within the past two weeks, 159 communities throughout the Fouta and Kolda regions of Senegal declared their collective decision to abandon the harmful traditional practices of female genital cutting (FGC) and child/forced marriage. By publicly declaring their abandonment of these practices as a group, these communities established a mass of people that can encourage a movement for positive social change in the area.

<http://www.tostan.org/web/module/events/pressID/196/interior.asp>

Somalia: Somali religious leaders and high-level officials join hands to put an end to all forms of FGM/C
June 2011

Seventy religious leaders and some of Somaliland's highest officials participated in a public gathering in Hargeisa to declare their support and commitment to the abandonment of all forms of the practice of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C).

While presiding over the occasion, Somaliland's First Lady Amina Waris mentioned that men are the key perpetrators of FGM/C while women are the ones who have to suffer the consequences including complications during child birth. "Men are the ones who insist on marrying circumcised girls, so if men don't change their attitude towards FGM/C, the practice will never die out" she said. "I am pleased to see that respected religious leaders have decided to publicly declare the abandonment of all types of FGM/C in Somaliland because people listen to them. Let us put the interest of our daughters first and ensure that they remain intact as they were created by Allah".

http://www.unicef.org/somalia/reallives_8552.html

United Arab Emirates: Female genital cutting in the UAE

April 2011

(Orchid Project) - As in many other nations, female genital cutting is a contentious and sensitive topic in UAE. With around 96% of the population of UAE Muslim, many see FGC as a religious tradition. Others argue that FGC is not supported by Islam and is a tribal practice passed through the generations. The data on FGC in UAE is scarce and despite much searching, we were only able to find numerous references to a 'mid 1990's study' which found FGC prevalence (in girls 1-5 years old) was 30.8%. While this percentage is far from reliable, FGC is clearly an issue which warrants further attention and research in the UAE.

<http://www.orchidproject.org/female-genital-cutting-in-the-uae/>

UK: Sign-up to FGM e-petition

June 2011

"Half of the membership of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists are based outside of the UK, some of whom work in countries where FGM is practised. There is universal acceptance amongst us that this brutal, appalling practise MUST be stopped or women will continue to suffer needlessly. Aside from the usual arguments about entrenched cultural mores, this barbarism has no place in our modern society. The RCOG has produced clinical guidelines and statements on the subject voicing strong concerns about FGM. We will continue to support the call to eradicate this harmful practise."

<http://www.rcog.org.uk/what-we-do/campaigning-and-opinions/statement/rcog-statement-%E2%80%9Cyes-we-ban%E2%80%9D-e-petition>

****Thank you for Reading***

INTACT Network

The International Network to Analyze, Communicate and Transform the Campaign against FGM/C (INTACT), is an international group of researchers, scholars, and activists committed to bringing scientific evidence to bear on the campaign to end FGM/C. INTACT serves as a forum for FGM/C debate and helps bridge gaps in knowledge and information relevant to FGM/C on the local and the international levels. INTACT helps communicate lessons learned, disseminate research, and promotes the utilization of research findings to assist in the campaign against FGM/C.

INTACT is managed by the Population Council.

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