

Ethiopia

2024 SNAPSHOT

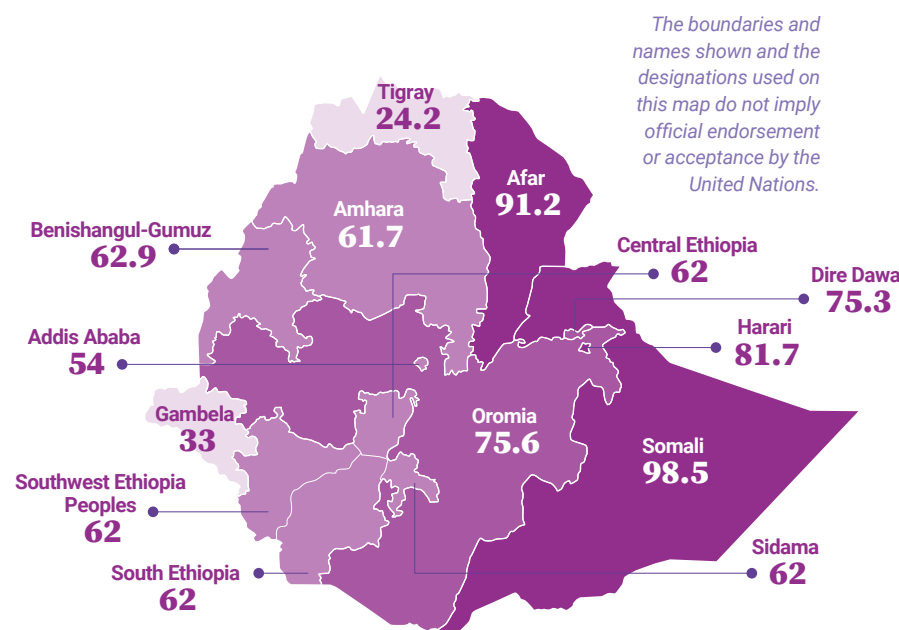
Sociopolitical context

Ethiopia faces a complex sociopolitical situation marked by ethnic federalism, internal conflicts and challenging political reforms. Ongoing conflicts, especially in Amhara and Oromia after the Tigray peace agreement, cause significant displacement and hinder aid delivery. In 2024, 21.4 million people needed humanitarian assistance, including over 3.3 million internally displaced persons as of May, with conflict and drought accounting for 69 per cent and 17 per cent of displacement, respectively.

FGM context

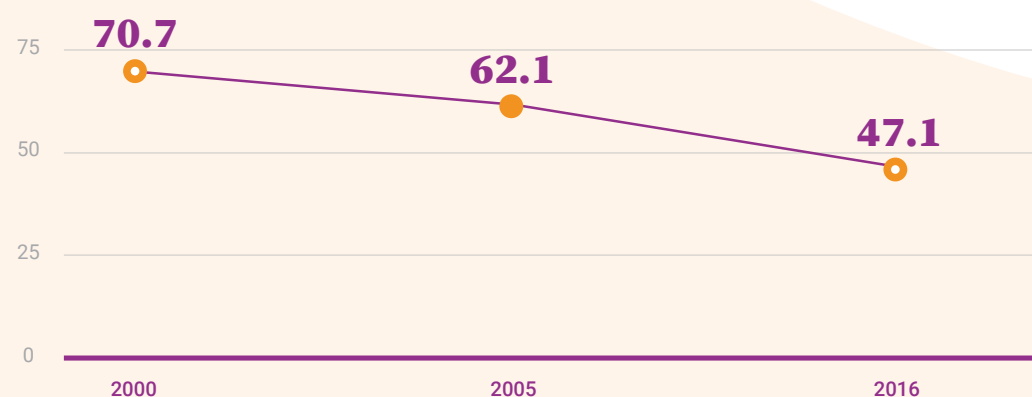
Ethiopia has a multisectoral strategy guided by the 2020–2024 National Costed Roadmap. The country has seen a relatively fast decline in female genital mutilation prevalence among girls aged 15–19. However, a concerning 2024 fatwa from the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council reportedly elevated FGM from a recommended (*sunnah*) to an obligatory (*wajib*) practice, sparking widespread condemnation. Human rights and women's organizations, including the African Women of Faith Network, argued that this decision contradicts national and international laws, violates human dignity and misinterprets Islamic principles. They urged the council to reconsider, asserting that FGM is a harmful cultural practice without a basis in the Quran or hadiths, and should not be medicalized or endorsed by health practitioners.

Latest subnational FGM prevalence (percentage) among females aged 15–49 years



Source: 2016 DHS.

FGM prevalence (percentage) among females aged 15–19 years from 2000 to 2016



Source: DHS from 2000 - 2016.

Social norms (2023 data)¹

Descriptive norm:

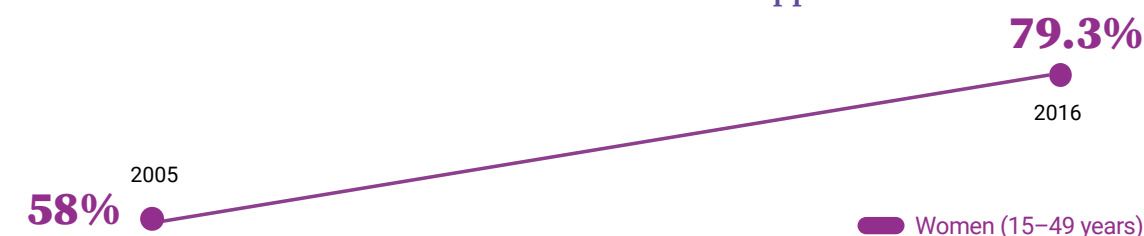
Community social norms endorse FGM (3.24–3.36).²

Injunctive norm:

Social norms in communities endorse FGM (2.06–2.25).³

Outcome expectancies: No data available.

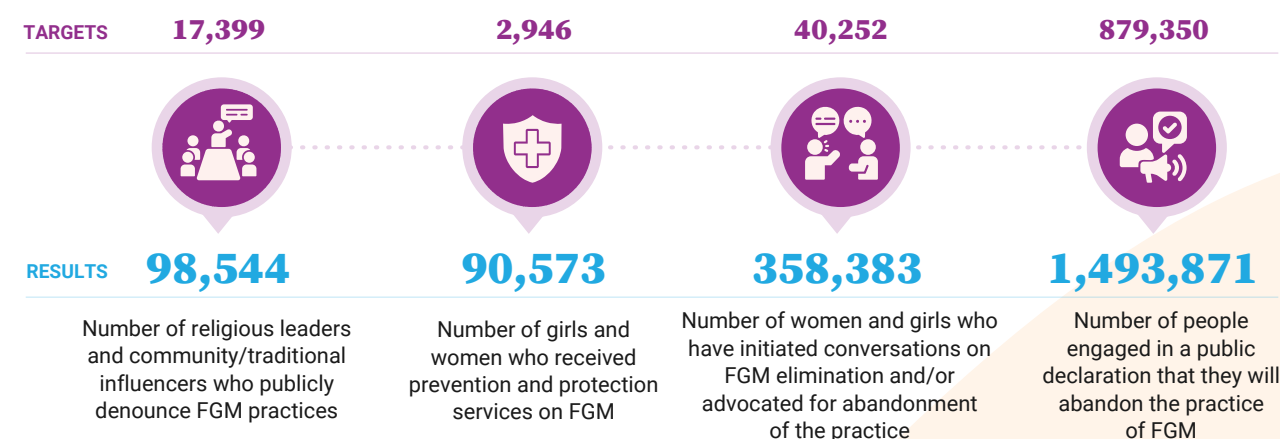
Proportion of individuals who believe FGM should be stopped



Women (15–49 years)

Source: DHS from 2005 - 2016.

Highlights of 2024 programme results



Spotlighted interventions

Promoting girls' agency

→ Emphasis on life skills education and out-of-school empowerment continued for adolescent girls. These initiatives, along with vocational training and leadership development, aimed to build girls' resilience to social pressures and empower them as agents of change. The Joint Programme evaluated these interventions in Afar, Amhara, Gambella, Oromia, Sidama and Somali, surveying 501 respondents, including adolescent girls and boys, parents, programme staff and community leaders. The evaluation revealed positive shifts in attitudes: Approximately half of out-of-school adolescent girls (47.9 per cent) now believe they have the right to refuse FGM, an increase from 41 per cent at the 2024 baseline.

Movement-building

→ Efforts against FGM intensified, focusing on engaging religious and community leaders, youth and women's groups. Men's engagement in the Afar and Somali regions included active advocacy on girls' rights and FGM elimination. Religious leaders were key in dispelling FGM-related religious misconceptions. To counter cross-border FGM, community protection committees and local authorities along the Djibouti and Somalia borders cooperated to prevent girls from being trafficked for the procedure. Community surveillance and anti-FGM committees collaborated to identify at-risk girls for timely intervention. Research results from Samara and Hawassa universities on FGM knowledge, attitudes, practices and community readiness is anticipated in 2025.

¹ UNICEF (2023). Social behavioral change Ethiopia – adult (15+) community survey on attitudes, behaviors, norms, and practice of female genital mutilation and child marriage. Baseline data report. Unpublished manuscript.

^{2,3} Scores range from 1–5, where 5 is the highest score.



IN-COUNTRY PARTNERS

Number	List of partners*
25	Afar NRS Bureau of Women and Social Affairs and Woreda Offices, Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA), Afar Regional State Bureau, CER Bureau of Justice, CER Bureau of Women and Children Affairs, Central Ethiopia Regional State Bureau, Inter religious counsel of Ethiopia, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Organization for Welfare and Development in Action (OWDA), Oromia NRS Bureau of Justice and Woreda Offices, Oromia NRS Bureau of Women and Social Affairs and Woreda Offices, Oromia Regional State Bureau, Population Media Center Ethiopia (PMC-E), SER Bureau of Justice, SER Bureau of Women and Children Affairs, SNRS Bureau of Women - Youth and Social Affairs, SNRS Regional Attorney General, SWEPR Bureau of Justice, SWEPR Bureau of Women - Children and Youth Affairs, Sidama Regional State Bureau, Somali NRS Bureau of Justice and Woreda Offices, Somali NRS Bureau of Women and Children Affairs and Woreda Offices, Somali Regional State Bureau, South Ethiopia Regional State Bureau

* List is a mix of implementing and strategic partners