

The Gambia

2024 SNAPSHOT

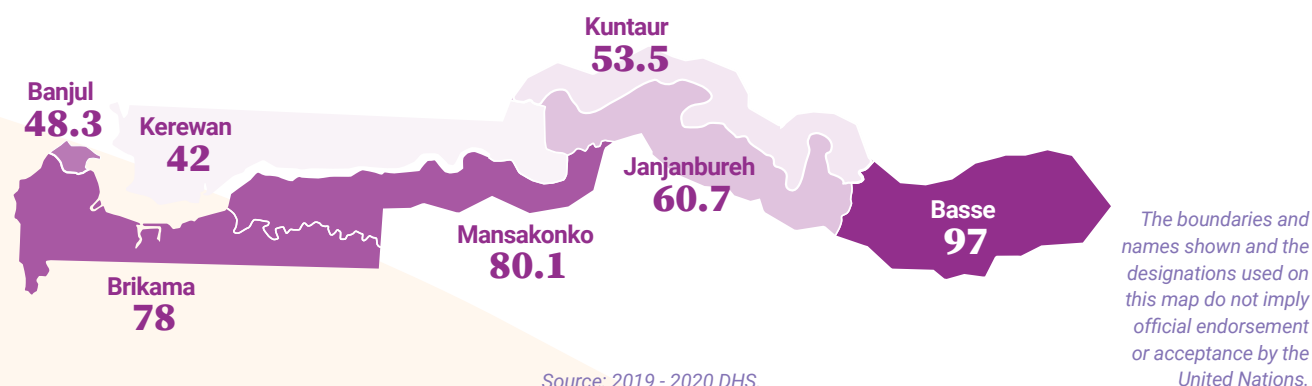
Sociopolitical context

In 2024, The Gambia continued its democratic transition, marked by constitutional reforms. While economic growth is accelerating and extreme poverty is declining, significant socioeconomic challenges persist.

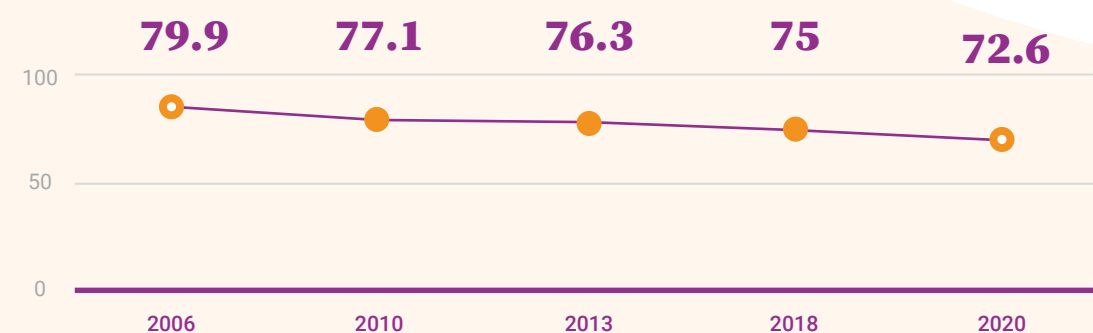
FGM context

Female genital mutilation prevalence decline among girls aged 15–19 has stalled for the last 30 years, necessitating intensified interventions. In addition, there is increasing pushback against FGM elimination efforts. In February 2024, a private bill sought to repeal the 2015 law criminalizing FGM, which sparked a national debate. In July 2024, 35 National Assembly members voted to maintain the ban, while 17 voted to repeal it; six were absent. This outcome resulted from a CSO coalition's multilayered advocacy strategy targeting policymakers, communities, health workers, the media, men and boys, and religious leaders. On 24 July 2024, however, a National Assembly member, four CSOs and three women challenged the constitutionality of the anti-FGM law in the Supreme Court, citing violations of cultural and religious rights. The Joint Programme is assisting the defence by supporting CSO meetings and providing technical aid to the Female Lawyers Association Gambia as an interested party or amicus curiae. The Joint Programme global team also coordinates a multi-level United Nations technical working group on The Gambia that reports to the Deputy Secretary-General-led taskforce on The Gambia.

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



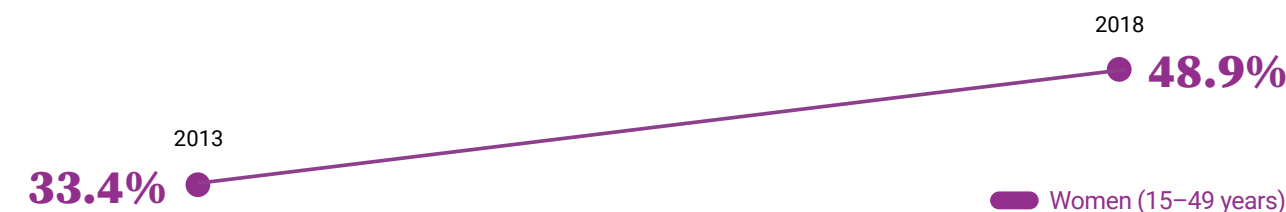
FGM prevalence (percentage) among females aged 15–19 years from 2006 to 2020



Social norms

No data available for descriptive and injunctive norms or for outcome expectancies.

Proportion of individuals who believe FGM should be stopped



Source: DHS and MICS from 2013 - 2018.

Highlights of 2024 programme results



Spotlighted interventions

Promoting girls' agency

→ The Joint Programme partnered with CSOs to conduct workshops in nine schools and sponsor the Fajara Disruptive Lab to empower adolescent girls. Reaching 626 in-school girls, the workshops provided education, awareness, advocacy and skills training focused on leadership, bodily autonomy and the harmful effects of FGM. The programme equipped girls with the knowledge and confidence to discuss and advocate for FGM elimination.

Movement-building

→ The Joint Programme supported a CSO coalition, led by the Network Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Association of Non-Governmental Organizations, that spearheaded efforts to stop the repeal of the FGM law in the lead-up to the July 2024 parliamentary vote. Significant community outreach, awareness campaigns and advocacy with National Assembly members took place. The programme also backed youth initiatives, such as the Youth Parliament, Children's National Assembly and community football matches, reaching over 1,000 adolescents. With Joint Programme support, the LAHIDO (Promise) Project in the Upper River Region raised FGM and child marriage awareness in 20 communities, reaching over 800 people. It empowered 15 youth through theatre training, secured commitments from 60 parents and reached over 1,000 listeners via radio.



IN-COUNTRY PARTNERS

Number	List of partners*
24	Beakang Organization, Catch Them Young, Child Protection Alliance, Child Fund The Gambia, Children's National Assembly, Forum for African Women Educationalists Gambia (FAWEGAM), Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (GAMCOTRAP), Girls Pride, Girls Talk, Men for Equality, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, Network Against Gender based Violence (NGBV), Nova Scotia Gambia Association, Paradise Foundation, Peace Ambassadors, Safe Hands for Girls, The Association of Non-Governmental Organization (TANGO), The Girls Agenda, The Woman Boss, Think Young Women, Tostan, Wassu Kafo, Women in Leadership and liberation (WILL), Youth Parliament

* List is a mix of implementing and strategic partners