



AT A GLANCE

The Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation

UNFPA, in partnership with UNICEF, leads the largest global programme to accelerate the elimination of female genital mutilation in 18 countries in Africa and Asia.

The Joint Programme's interventions are evidence-based, context-specific, and implemented in close collaboration with governments, national and grassroots community organizations, and key stakeholders. Launched in 2008 and now in its fourth phase, the programme focuses on coordinated action from grassroots to global levels, involving public and private sectors in health, education, region and policy. This multi-sectoral approach aims to shift social norms through advocacy, community-led movements, and by strengthening surveillance, protection, prevention and care services.

A group of girls in Oyo State, Nigeria, take part in a UNFPA-supported community dialogue on ending female genital mutilation, led by survivor and advocate Comrade Hajia Aisha Ismail. © UNFPA



The challenge

Female genital mutilation is a global issue. In 2025, UNFPA estimates that more than 4.4 million girls are at risk, up from 4.1 million girls in 2021. The deadline for achieving Sustainable Development Goal to end FGM by 2030 is just five years away. To meet it, urgent, strategic acceleration is required. But meeting this goal is possible through scaling effective interventions and mobilizing broad partnerships.

Female genital mutilation violates multiple human rights, including the rights to health, physical and mental integrity, life, freedom from torture and inhumane treatment, and from discrimination. It is never safe and has no health benefit. It causes lifelong harm, including chronic pain, infections, childbirth complications for mother and child, and lasting sexual and psychological trauma.

Key issues

- An estimated **27 million additional girls are at risk** of undergoing female genital mutilation by 2030 unless action is accelerated.
- Over **230 million girls and women** alive today have undergone female genital mutilation and need access to care.
- Every year, more than **2 million girls** – many under age five – undergo female genital mutilation.
- The financial cost of health care for survivors is **\$1.4 billion annually**.

The solution

We have learned through programming and evidence that community dialogue with parents, religious leaders and health workers, along with education, media and culturally sensitive messaging, can shift attitudes towards abandoning female genital mutilation. These interventions are most effective when led by trusted local champions and sustained over time.

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Results

To date, the Joint Programme has, with its partners, achieved the following:



Close to 1.2 million girls were protected from female genital mutilation



7.2 million girls and women received prevention and protection services



2.6 million women and girls initiated conversations on female genital mutilation



51 million people made public declarations to abandon the practice



300 million individuals reached by media messaging



WHY INVEST?

Ending female genital mutilation by 2030 is within reach, but only with urgent and sustained investment. Achieving this goal requires an estimated \$2.1 billion, yet the cost of protecting one girl is just \$95 – a small investment with a lifelong impact. This support can help scale up proven interventions, strengthen community-led movements, and drive policy change that protects millions of girls.



www.unfpa.org/unfpa-unicef-joint-programme-elimination-female-genital-mutilation