

Country: Guinea-Bissau

Population: 1.6 million

Estimated prevalence among women aged 15-49: 50%

Data Source	15 – 49 (%)	15 - 19	35 - 39	Urban	Rural	Lowest Region	Highest Region	Nicked, no flesh removed	Flesh removed	Sewn closed	Medically performed	National law
MICS 2006	44.5	43.5	48.6	39	48.2	28.7	92.7	0.8	91.7	3.2	--	Illegal

PRB 2010

Type practised:

The most widely practiced forms are **Type I** and **Type II**.

Legal status:

Until quite recently, no law prohibited the practice of FGC in Guinea-Bissau. However, in June 2011 the National Popular Assembly (ANP) approved a law prohibiting FGC. The controversial law had been on the table for discussion for 16 years, before it was ultimately approved by 64 votes in favour to 1 against.

History of FGC in Guinea-Bissau:

Before the country's civil war in the late 1990s, a National Committee against Harmful Practices (supported by UNICEF and others) conducted FGC awareness campaigns in partnership with local NGOs. These activities were not sustained due to political instability and a lack of funding, but the government intended to address the problem – starting with a national consultation on FGC.

In 1995, a government proposal to outlaw FGC was defeated in parliament, but practitioners were to be held criminally responsible if a woman died as a result of FGC. Since this time, it has been suggested that the government has failed to adequately assist the movement against FGC.

Current efforts to abandon FGC:

UNICEF is implementing a joint programme with UNFPA and the NGO Tostan in Guinea-Bissau to promote the end of FGC. This programme has achieved public declarations of the abandonment of FGC in a number of communities in the Gabu and Bafata regions where the practice is most prevalent.

Sinim Mira Nassiquê (meaning: 'We are thinking of the future' in Mandinka), a non-governmental organisation, brought cutters and activists together to discuss the health hazards of genital cutting. It presents alternative rites of passage to rural societies. They include the cutters in the process, for economic and social reasons.

Ongoing challenges:

33% of women approve of the continuation of FGC across the country.

In some local traditions, uncut women are not considered clean enough to prepare food.

Additional information:

FGC is normally carried out on children and adolescents between 6 and 14 years of age – though it has also reportedly been performed on infants in recent years.

It is easier to campaign against FGC in urban areas, as the issue is well known there and a majority rejects the practice. Most urban men and women see the practice as outdated.

Practising Ethnic groups:

Fula/Peul
Mandinka

Languages:

Portuguese (official)

Crioulo

Mandinka
Pulaar

Major religions:

Islam 50%

Indigenous beliefs 40%

Christianity 10%

Resources:

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guineabissau_statistics.html

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pu.html>

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guineabissau_59787.html

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guineabissau_41785.html

http://www.afrol.com/News2002/gub001_fgm_rites.html

<http://www.prb.org/pdf10/fgm-wallchart2010.pdf>

<http://2001-2009.state.gov/g/wi/rls/rep/9305.htm>