



# Female Genital Mutilation

**For Prelims:** Female Genital Mutilation, International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, [United Nations Population Fund](#), [United Nations Children's Fund](#)

**For Mains:** Challenges Related to Women, Challenges in Eradicating FGM

[Source: TH](#)

## Why in News?

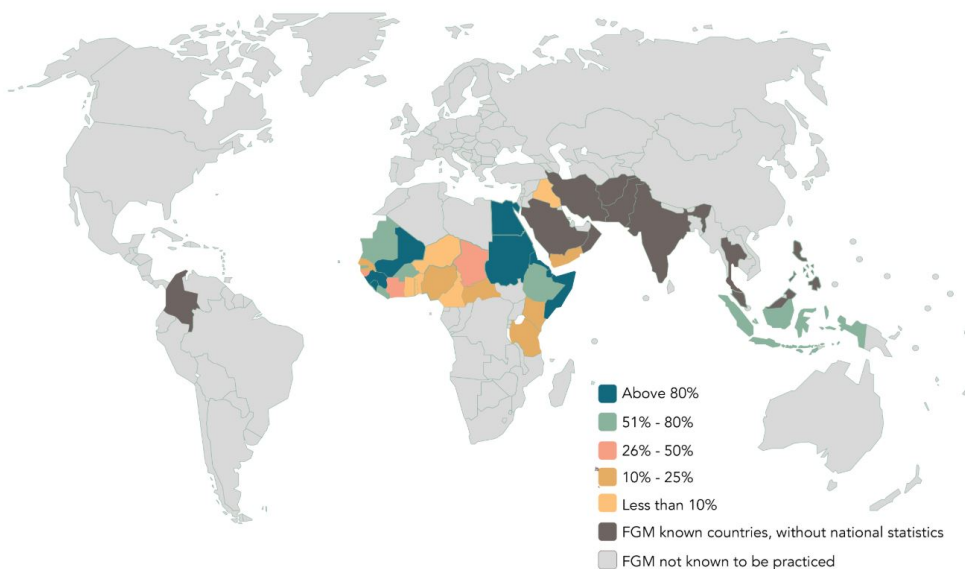
Recently, the UN agencies stated that in **2024**, nearly 4.4 million girls are at risk of **female genital mutilation** around the world.

## What is Female Genital Mutilation?

- **About:** Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve altering or **injuring the female genitalia for non-medical reasons** and is recognised internationally as a violation of the human rights, the health and the integrity of girls and women.
- **Prevalence:** It is concentrated primarily in **Western, Eastern, and North-Eastern Africa**, as well as select **Middle Eastern and Asian nations**.
  - However, with increased migration, FGM has become a global concern, affecting girls and women in **Europe, Australia, and North America** as well.

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GLOBAL PREVALENCE OF FGM



- **Impacts:** Girls who undergo female genital mutilation face short-term complications such as severe pain, shock, excessive bleeding, infections, and difficulty in passing urine, as well as long-term consequences for their sexual and reproductive health and [mental health](#).
- **Status in India:** Presently, there is no legislation that bans the FGM practice in the country.
  - In 2017, in response to a petition in the Supreme court, the Ministry of Women and Child Development had said that **“at present there is no official data or study which supports the existence of FGM in India.”**
  - However, according to some other unofficial reports, procedures of FGM are prevalent amongst the **Bohra community**, primarily in the states of Maharashtra, Kerala, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh.
- **Challenges in Eradicating FGM:**
  - **Cultural and Social Norms:** FGM is often deeply rooted in cultural and social norms, with communities practicing it as a tradition passed down through generations.
    - Changing these deeply ingrained beliefs and practices can be challenging.
  - **Lack of Awareness and Education:** Many individuals within communities where FGM is practiced may not fully understand the harmful consequences of the practice.
    - Lack of awareness and education about the physical and psychological health risks associated with FGM can perpetuate its continuation.
  - **Lack of Adequate Data Collection and Reporting:** Limited data collection and reporting on FGM prevalence hinder efforts to understand the scope of the issue and target interventions effectively.
- **Global Initiatives Towards Eradication:**
  - [United Nations Population Fund](#) and [United Nations Children's Fund \(UNICEF\)](#), have co-led the largest global programme on the elimination of female genital mutilation (FGM) since **2008**.
  - In 2012, the UN General Assembly designated **6<sup>th</sup> February** as the **International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation**, with the aim to amplify and direct the efforts on the elimination of this practice.
    - **2024 Theme:** Her Voice. Her Future
  - The United Nations strives for its full elimination by **2030**, following the spirit of [Sustainable Development Goal 5](#).
    - **SDG 5.3 aims to eliminate all harmful practices**, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations.

## Way Forward

- **Legislation and Policy Enforcement:** Strengthening existing laws to **explicitly bans FGM and imposes penalties** for those who perform or facilitate it.
  - Governments should ensure effective enforcement of these laws through law enforcement agencies.
- **Awareness and Education:** Launching a comprehensive awareness campaigns to educate communities about the harmful effects of FGM on physical, psychological, and sexual health.
  - These campaigns should target not only individuals within practicing communities but others as well.
- **Inclusion in Human Rights Framework:** There is a need to ensure that efforts to combat FGM are **grounded in [human rights](#) principles** and respect the rights of women and girls.
  - Advocating for the inclusion of FGM prevention and response measures in **international [human rights](#) framework** is the need of the hour.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### Mains

**Q.** Discuss the positive and negative effects of globalisation on women in India? **(2015)**

