

# LIBERIA



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## STATISTICAL PROFILE ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/CUTTING

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) refers to “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.”<sup>1</sup> FGM/C is a violation of girls’ and women’s human rights and is condemned by many international treaties and conventions, as well as by national legislation in many countries. Yet, where it is practised FGM/C is performed in line with tradition and social norms to ensure that girls are socially accepted and marriageable, and to uphold their status and honour and that of the entire family. UNICEF works with government and civil society partners towards the elimination of FGM/C in countries where it is still practised.

1 World Health Organization, *Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation: An interagency statement*, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNECA, UNESCO, UNDP, UNAIDS, WHO, Geneva, 2008, p. 4.

No national decree/legislation banning FGM/C

### SELECTED STATISTICS ON WOMEN’S STATUS

**9%** of women 20-24 years old were married or in union before age 15

**36%** of women 20-24 years old were married or in union before age 18

**37%** of women 20-24 years old have given birth by age 18

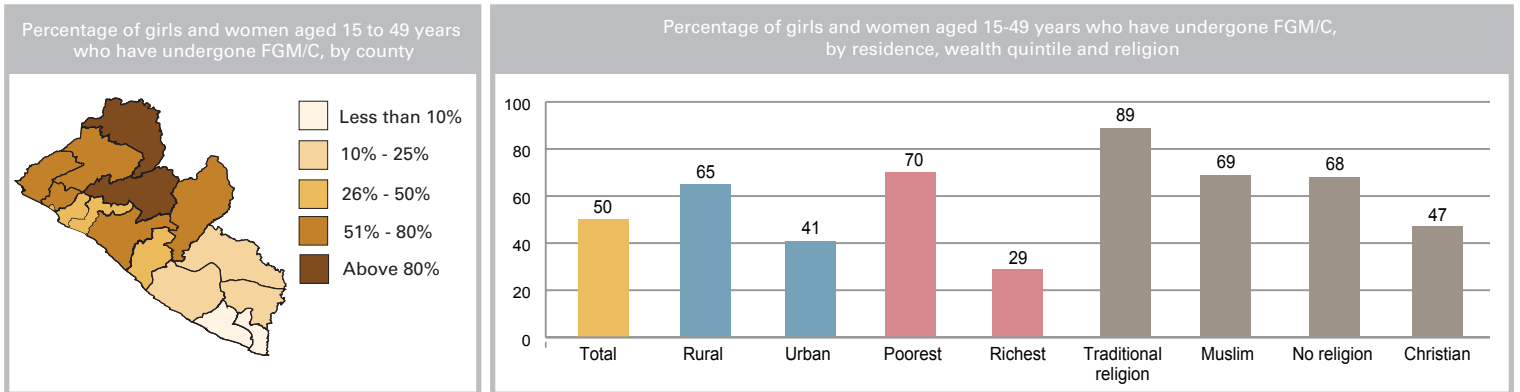
**43%** of women 15-49 years old think that a husband/partner is justified in hitting/beatng his wife/partner under certain circumstances

**45%** of women 15-49 years old make use of at least one type of information media at least once a week (newspaper, magazine, television or radio)

Source: DHS 2013

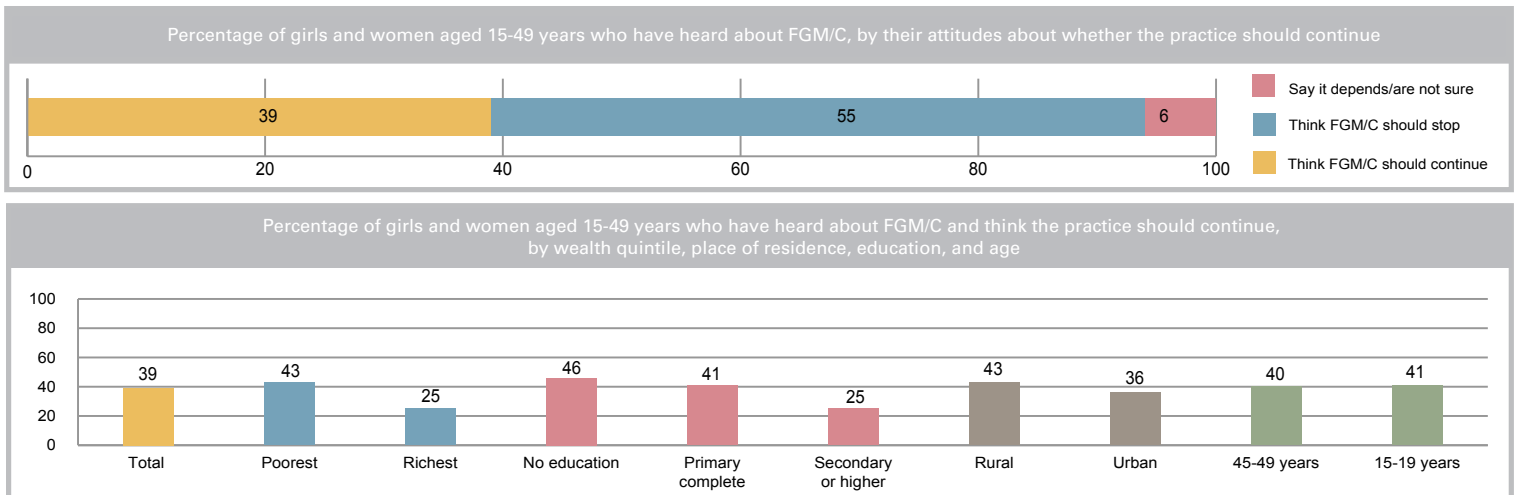
## HOW WIDESPREAD IS THE PRACTICE?

Half of girls and women in Liberia have undergone FGM/C, with variations by county, place of residence, wealth and religion



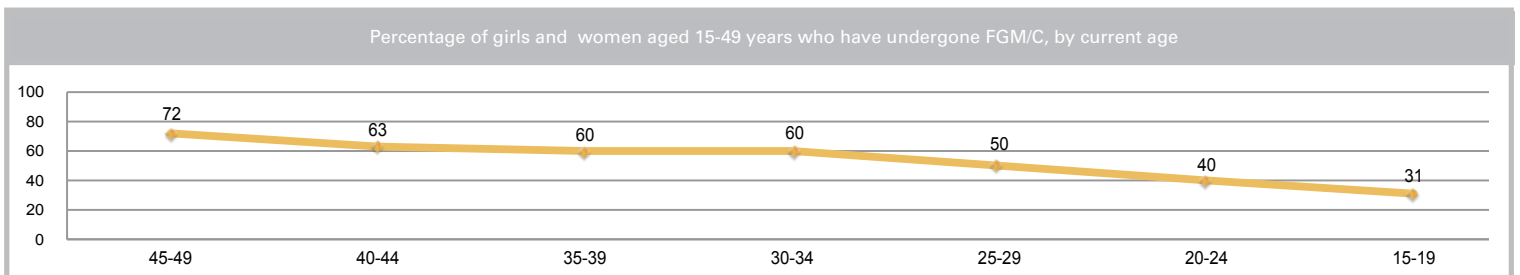
## WHAT ARE THE PREVAILING ATTITUDES TOWARDS FGM/C?

Slightly more than half of girls and women in Liberia think that the practice should stop while around one in three think it should continue



## IS THE PRACTICE OF FGM/C CHANGING?

The prevalence of FGM/C in Liberia has halved in three decades



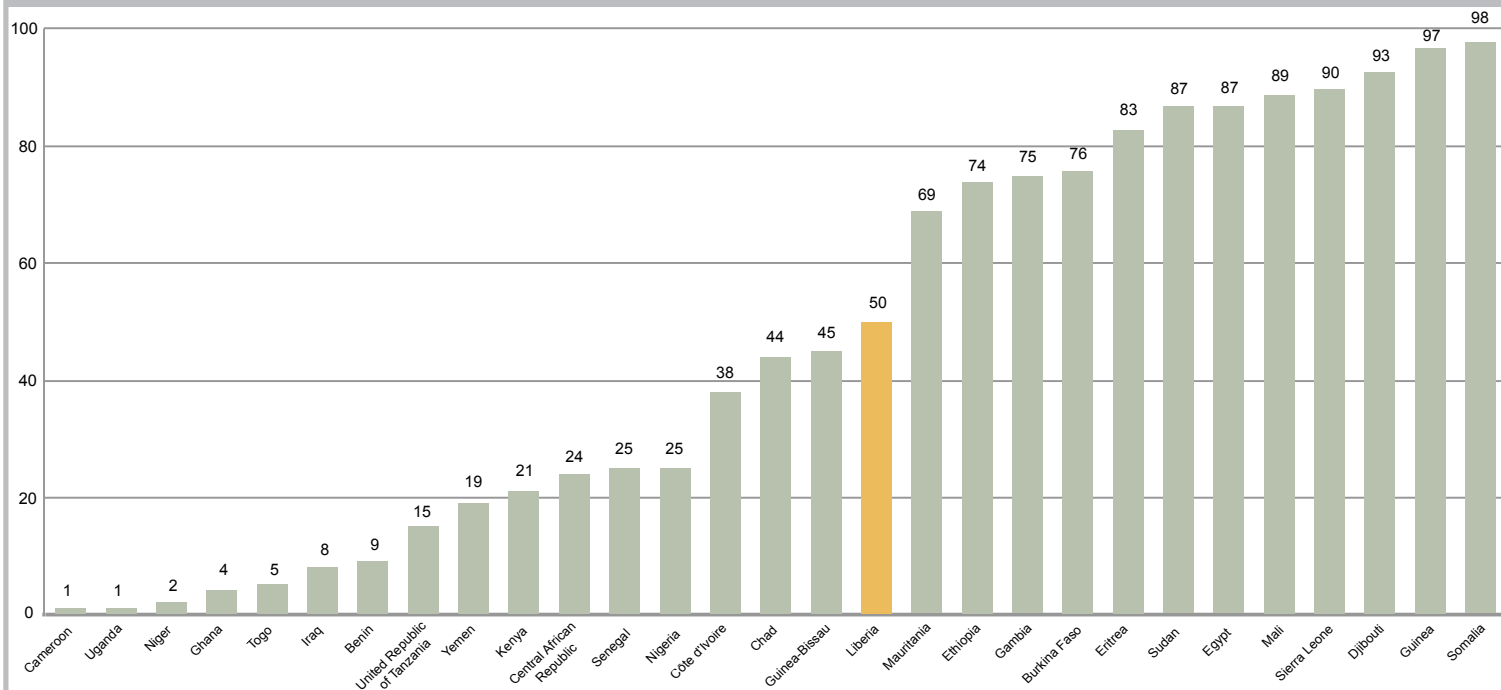
Notes: The boundaries and the names shown and the designations used on the map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Only categories with 25 or more unweighted cases are presented. Due to rounding, some of the data presented may not add up to 100 per cent. Data on the prevalence of FGM/C among girls and women with traditional religion are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. In Liberia, girls and women who have heard of the Sande society were asked whether they were members; this provides indirect information on FGM/C since it is performed during initiation into the society. Data for daughters were never collected for Liberia. In Liberia, only cut girls and women were asked about their attitudes towards FGM/C; since girls and women from practising communities are more likely to support the practice, the level of support in this country as captured by the DHS 2013 is higher than would be expected had all girls and women been asked their opinion.

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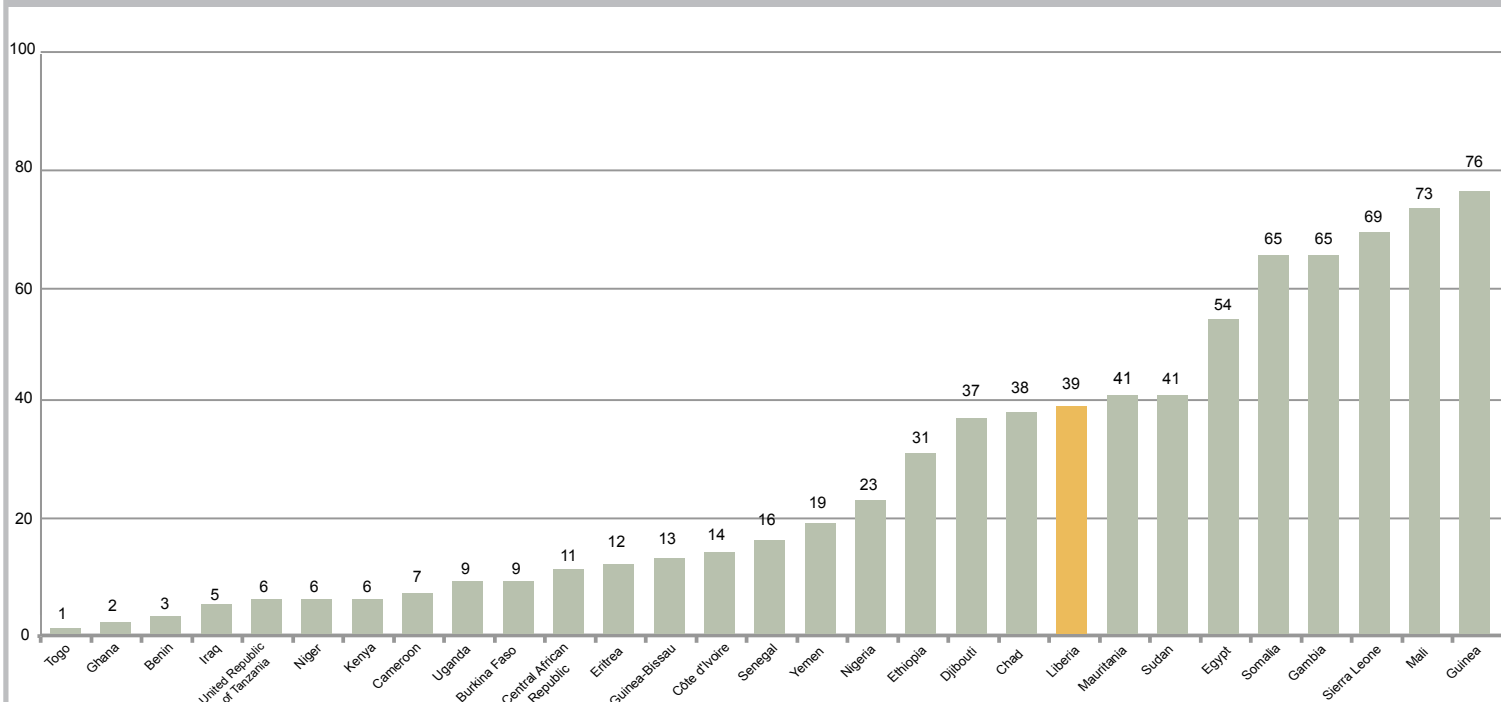


## INTER-COUNTRY STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C



Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have heard about FGM/C and think the practice should continue



Notes: MICS data for Ghana (2011) could not be used to report on attitudes towards FGM/C due to the fact that information is missing for girls and women with no living daughters; data from MICS 2006 are used instead. In Liberia, only cut girls and women were asked about their attitudes towards FGM/C; since girls and women from practising communities are more likely to support the practice, the level of support in this country as captured by the 2013 DHS is higher than would be expected had all girls and women been asked their opinion.

Updated February 2016

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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The Data and Analytics Section gratefully acknowledges inputs shared by UNICEF country offices.