



UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR  
GENDER EQUALITY AND THE  
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN



**TOPIC A**  
REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS  
AND JUSTICE

**TOPIC B**  
FEMALE GENITAL  
MUTILATION (FGM)

Dear Esteemed Delegates,

**”We strive to reach  
excellence, and we  
aim to achieve it.”**

*On behalf of the Academic Training Committee, I welcome you all into our 2nd Annual Model United Nations Conference at NDU!*

*My dearest delegates, we live in a fallen world where the voice of reason is lost and the power of freedom is forgotten, where man is often seen to be poisoned by greed and blinded by misery and bloodshed, and where man can be the voice of change, but has failed to do so. But, you delegates, can be different. You have the power of change within you. So be courageous and stand up for what you believe in. Believe in yourself and believe in your country. But most importantly, believe that your voice will be heard.*

*In the conference, you will be representing a country that may not be your own. You will be representing the voice of a nation that you may not have heard of before. You will be the reason behind which a nation may stand or fall, and with that lies great responsibility. You will have to fight to make your voice heard, and I urge you delegates to keep fighting. Fight life the same way you will fight in that conference. For when you choose to create change, you will make your country proud, and you will make your school proud, because you chose to be THAT change.*

*I hope that, in return, you will leave the conference with more than just an award. You will leave the conference with everlasting memories, friendships that last a lifetime, and strong determination to handle life the same way you handled your conference.*

---

*Humbly Yours,  
Stephanie Sleilati  
Head of Academic Training*

NDU  
— LOUAIZE —  
MUN

*To the delegates of the second NDU MUN,*

*To the diplomats and leaders of the future,*

*Kofi Annan once said, “Any society that does not succeed in tapping into the energy and creativity of its youth will be left behind.” Today, upon taking this endeavor, you are the youth which unleashes individuality, intelligence and creativity to tackle the issues dwindling our societies. In a time where the world is ruled by inequality, injustice and poverty, it is great minds like yours which show a merrier future. With the world continuously falling behind, the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to bring security, education and well-being back to any and every person on the face of the earth. Given that one of the 17 SDGs is gender equality, it is of no doubt that oppression and inequality are crippling our people and countries from having equity amongst genders in all aspects. This where you, the delegate, are to show your diplomatic skills, public speaking skills, ability to cooperate with others, creativity in devising solutions to real-world issues we currently live in all while still abiding by your assigned country’s ideologies, policies and perspectives. Throughout this background guide, you are provided with information that should benefit you with your research and thinking process in addition to aiding you by providing existent examples of situations occurring in the world we currently live in. Devote your time to opening yourself up to the world and understanding the societies you are surrounded by for it can help you to better understand why we are yet to solve such issues.*

---

*kindest Thoughts and Best Regards,  
 Sam Nsaif  
 Chair of UN Women Committee*

NDU  
— LOUAIZE —  
MUN




---

## General Overview.

- A. Introducing the Committee
- B. Actions of the Committee

## Topic A: Reproductive Rights and Justice

- I. Definition of the Topic
- II. Role of Committee in Current Topic
- III. Case Studies
  - 1. OECD and UN WOMEN
  - 2. Importance of SRHR on the Economy
- IV. Additional Information
  - A. Reports and Analysis
  - B. The Women's Convention
  - C. Resolutions
- V. Questions to Consider
- VI. References

## Topic B: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- I. Definition of the Topic
- II. Role of Committee in Current Topic
- III. Case Studies
  - 1. Guinea and FGM
  - 2. Yemen and FGM/C
  - 3. Umbrella Stakeholders
  - 4. Planet 50-50 by 2030
  - 5. Amref Health Tanzania and UN Trust Fund
- IV. Additional Information
- V. Questions to Consider
- VI. References

---

— **Disclaimer** —

- *Notre Dame University & its Model United Nations program are diligent in promoting human rights & respecting international law.*
- *This guide does not represent the views of Notre Dame University, the NDU MUN program, or any of its members.*
- *All NDU MUN members reserve the right to the privacy & discretion pertaining their individual opinions on all issues.*
- *This guide remains neutral throughout & is not meant to sway public opinion on these sensitive & controversial issues.*
- *This guide features a panoply of references to back up the material being displayed.*

— **Disclaimer** —

---

NDU  
— LOUAIZE —  
MUN

---

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women or “UN Women” is a United Nations organization devoted to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Established in July 2010, and under the UN General Assembly resolution 64/289<sup>1</sup>, UN Women was - and still is - a form of global support for women worldwide, and works on accelerating progress on meeting all their needs and rights. Consisting of forty-five member states, this committee organizes several sessions a year, essentially first regular sessions in February, annual sessions in June, and second regular sessions in September.<sup>[2]</sup>

Not only was the creation of this organization a part of the UN reform agenda, giving mandates and resources a greater impact; it was the merge of four distinct parts of the UN system, which focused on gender equality and women’s empowerment: Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)<sup>3</sup>

This organization, motivated by the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>4</sup>, is working to increase women’s leadership and political participation, enhance their economic empowerment, end all kinds of violence against women, engage women in positions including peace and security procedures, as well as centralizing gender equality in the national development planning and budgeting.<sup>5</sup> UN Women also has an essential role in global awareness to women, hoping to spread alertness on topics such as sexually transmitted diseases. It also highlights the importance of youthful female leaders, who can hasten the process of gender equality and sustainable development.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> “Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 2 July 2010.”, UN General Assembly, 2 July 2010. *UN Docs*, [undocs.org/en/A/RES/64/289](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/64/289).

<sup>2</sup> “Executive Board Calendar.”, UN Women, [www.unwomen.org/en/executive-board](http://www.unwomen.org/en/executive-board).

<sup>3</sup> “About UN Women.” *UN Women*, UN Women, [www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women](http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women).

<sup>4</sup> “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” *UN Women*, UN Women, 2015, [www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/post-2015](http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/post-2015).

<sup>5</sup> “About UN Women.” *UN Women*, UN Women, [www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women](http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women).

<sup>6</sup> “Youth and Gender Equality.” *UN Women*, UN Women, [www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/youth](http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/youth).

Sexual and reproductive health is one of the most transformative elements for the achievement of sustainable development on three factors: economic, social, and environmental. The UN Women committee stresses the fact that every day, approximately 800 women die due to causes related to childbirth and pregnancy. From nations like Niger to Afghanistan, from Bangladesh to Tajikistan, girls continue to be forced to marry against their will which shows a clear violation of their reproductive rights and a disgraceful form of violence.

Women's right to decide if and when to marry and have children is the key to empowering women economically and enabling them to live healthy and dynamic lives. A recent event held by UN Women provided a platform for contributors to discuss the need to fight misperceptions about contraceptive methods such as their risk of infertility due to prolonged use, and address the issue of teenage pregnancy and the dreadful consequences it has on a girl's wellbeing. It has further been announced that the nation of Costa Rica has recently passed a law banning marriage and sexual relationships between minors and adults.<sup>7</sup>

Many factors influence sexual and reproductive health outcomes, from the women's level of education to women's participation in the labor market and in parliament. UN Women strive to strengthen health systems and demand comprehensive sexuality education. Furthermore, it aims at improving the legal justice system, the education system, the political system, and the financial system in order to deliver to women and girls. They want to engage by increasing the presence of women in the political system, financial and economic sector. By acting upon this, it will greatly empower the role of women not just on a health level but rather on the social level. Giving women power to make decisions and play a role in social sectors will greatly strengthen the image of many women and motivate girls at an early age.

In addition, the civil society and UN Women will be joining forces in order to increase and strengthen women's rights in the public name. These forces will have set goals that will address all dimensions of supportable development while prioritizing gender equality and human rights.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> "Making the business case for sexual and reproductive health rights." *UN Women*, [www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/9/news-making-the-business-case-for-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/9/news-making-the-business-case-for-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights).

<sup>8</sup> "Lakshmi Puri speech on sexual and reproductive health rights." *UN Women*, [www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/10/lakshmi-puri-speech-on-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/10/lakshmi-puri-speech-on-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights).

Since the Millennium Development Goals, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launched a committee known as the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), where members aided the development of gender equality goals. Since the application of the post-2015 development agenda, OECD's DAC shifted its attention towards discussing new financial plans to support implementing the then newly-found Sustainable Development Goals, specifically goal 5. The goal is split into several parts discussing specific details and sub-goals to be established and reached in order to make the broader goal more achievable; of the sub-goals, DAC pinpoints the importance of goal 5.6 which discusses ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health rights. DAC also goes to point out other important points discussed in other SDGs that can support increasing women's rights and decreasing the gender gap<sup>9</sup>.

The economic presence of women is highly affected by the degree of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) they receive. On the margins of the 72<sup>nd</sup> UN General Assembly, an event held by the governments of Costa Rica, Finland and Zambia in collaboration with UNFPA and UN Women discussed the importance of SRHR in the economic presence of women. During the event, a study held by Partners for Development (PfD) was cited and stated that if 10% more girls participated in the workforce instead of staying at home, a country's GDP could increase by as high as 3%. The event also highlighted that with better reproductive rights, the amount of women who could participate in the workforce would increase thus supporting economic development. A study by PfD states that around 222 million women around the world do not have proper access to any contraception methods showing that sometimes women are not given the choice in their sexual freedom. With such little access to sexual freedom and reproductive rights, it is of no doubt that women's participation in the economic sector has greatly decreased.

<sup>9</sup> "The Development Assistance Committee: Enabling Effective Development", OECD, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/From%20commitment%20to%20action%20FINAL.pdf>



- i) When Self-Abortion is a Crime: Laws that put Women at risk, National Institute for Reproductive Health
- ii) When Self-Abortion is a Crime: Laws that put Women at risk, National Institute for Reproductive Health
- iii) December 2016, WWDA Position Statement 4: Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA)
- iv) 2014, Reproductive rights are human rights: A handbook for national human rights institutions, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); Danish Institute for Human Rights
- v) 26 January 2018, Lost without knowledge: Barriers to Sexual and Reproductive health information in Zimbabwe, Amnesty International
- vi) State of World Population report 2017, United Nations Population Fund

#### .. . .... **Women's Conven....** .

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), frequently alluded to as the 'Women's Bill of Rights', is one of the center universal human rights arrangements of the United Nations treaty framework, which requires Part States to embrace lawful commitments to regard, ensure and fulfill human rights.

CEDAW was received by the UN General Assembly on December 19, 1979, coming into constrain as an arrangement on December 3, 1981. Nowadays, it is one of the most broadly embraced human rights settlements – it has been approved or agreed to by 187 nations to date, or almost 90 per cent of the UN membership.

The Convention characterizes segregation against women as "...any qualification, avoidance or limitation made on the premise of sex which has the impact or reason of impeding or invalidating the acknowledgment, satisfaction by women, independent of their conjugal status, on a basis of correspondence of men and women, of human rights and crucial opportunities in the political, financial, social, civil or any other field". By tolerating the Convention, States commit themselves to attempt following measures to end the discrimination against women in all shapes. (Shalev, 1998)

With that in mind, this convention acknowledges the inherent relation of gender equality to women's health, especially sexual and reproductive health. It also addresses discrimination against women, and is alluded to as the universal charge of women's rights. In common, States Parties of the Convention sets up a plan for national activity to end discrimination in all its shapes and to ensure women the delight of human rights and crucial freedoms on a basis of uniformity with men. It covers all

regions of women's lives in both the open and private circles, counting segregation in connection to the right to health and wellbeing administrations.

For example, Article 2 of CEDAW urges parties to work on eliminating segregation against women by presenting modern laws or arrangements, changing existing biased laws and giving sanctions for segregation where suitable. Whereas, Article 3 requires parties to advance effectively women's full advancement and progression, so they can appreciate human rights and crucial flexibilities on the same basis as men. (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women).

.  
.. . .... .

- i) Resolution 2002/1, Reproductive rights and reproductive health, including human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), The Commission on Population and Development
- ii) Resolution 2011/1 Fertility, reproductive health and development, The Commission on Population and Development
- iii) 67/144. Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, UN General Assembly, Feb. 2013
- iv) 67/147. Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula, UN General Assembly, March 2013
- v) Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, UN General Assembly, 16 Oct. 2012

.. . .... .

1. How can access to better healthcare and reproductive health be provided to women in developing countries?
2. What role do women play in the economic and social sectors? Can increased reproductive rights and justice make this role even more powerful?
3. How can governmental bodies be forced to address the issue of high child mortality rates and maternal mortality rates?
4. Why do some countries not consider reproductive rights as basic human rights? How can that be addressed and changed?
5. Can Planned Parenthood still enable women to be active members of society?
6. How can safe sexual intercourse be promoted in developing countries?
7. Is it still possible to help women who were not given the choice to have a child and give them their reproductive rights? If yes, how?

- [1] "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 2 July 2010." , UN General Assembly, 2 July 2010. *UN Docs*, [undocs.org/en/A/RES/64/289](http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/64/289).
- [2] "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." *UN Women*, UN Women, 2015, [www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/post-2015](http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/post-2015).
- [3] "Executive Board Calendar." , UN Women, [www.unwomen.org/en/executive-board](http://www.unwomen.org/en/executive-board).
- [4] "About UN Women." *UN Women*, UN Women, [www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women](http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women).
- [5] "Youth and Gender Equality." *UN Women*, UN Women, [www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/youth](http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/youth).
- [6] "Making the business case for sexual and reproductive health rights." *UN Women*, [www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/9/news-making-the-business-case-for-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/9/news-making-the-business-case-for-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights).
- [7] "Lakshmi Puri speech on sexual and reproductive health rights." *UN Women*, [www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/10/lakshmi-puri-speech-on-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/10/lakshmi-puri-speech-on-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights)
- [8] "2017 Report: Gaining Ground: Proactive Reproductive Health and Rights Legislation in the States." , National Institute for Reproductive Health, Jan. 2018, [https://www.nirhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/NIRH\\_2016AR\\_P3\\_TS1-1-1-1.pdf](https://www.nirhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/NIRH_2016AR_P3_TS1-1-1-1.pdf).
- [9] "When Self-Abortion is a Crime: Laws that put Women at risk." , National Institute for Reproductive Health, June 2017, <https://www.nirhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Self-Abortion-White-Paper-Final.pdf>.
- [10] Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) 'WWDA Position Statement 4: Sexual and Reproductive Rights'. WWDA, September 2016, Hobart, Tasmania. ISBN: 978-0-9585269-6-8
- [11] "Reproductive rights are human rights: A handbook for national human rights institutions." , Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2014.
- [12] "Lost without knowledge: Barriers to Sexual and Reproductive health information in Zimbabwe." , Amnesty International, 26 Jan. 2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr46/7700/2018/en/>.
- [13] "State of World Population 2017." , United Nations Population Fund, 2017, [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/sowp/downloads/UNFPA\\_PUB\\_2017\\_EN\\_SWOP.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/sowp/downloads/UNFPA_PUB_2017_EN_SWOP.pdf).
- [14] *Convention On The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. (n.d.). Retrieved January 2018, from UN Women: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

[15] Shalev, D. C. (1998, March 18). *Rights to Sexual and Reproductive Health - the ICPD and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. Retrieved January 2018, from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/shalev.htm>

[16] "Resolution 2002/1 Reproductive rights and reproductive health, including human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS)." , United Nations, 2002, [www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/pdf/35/CPD36\\_Res2002-1.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/pdf/35/CPD36_Res2002-1.pdf).

[17] "Resolution 2011/1 Fertility, reproductive health and development." , United Nations, 2011, [www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/cpd2011/CPD44\\_Res2011-1.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/cpd2011/CPD44_Res2011-1.pdf).

[18] "67/144. Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women." , UN General Assembly, Feb. 2013. *UN Docs*, <https://undocs.org/A/RES/67/144>.

[19] "67/147. Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula." , UN General Assembly, 5 Mar. 2013, [dag.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/301570/A\\_RES\\_67\\_147-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](http://dag.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/301570/A_RES_67_147-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y).

[20] "Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women." , UN General Assembly, 16 Oct. 2012. *Digital Library*, [dag.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/301570/A\\_RES\\_67\\_147-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](http://dag.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/301570/A_RES_67_147-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y).

[21] "Invest in Girl's Progress." *Partners for Development*, Partner for Development, [pfd.org/tag/girls/](http://pfd.org/tag/girls/).

[22] "Making the business case for sexual and reproductive health rights." *UN Women*, UN Women, 20 Sept. 2017, [www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/9/news-making-the-business-case-for-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/9/news-making-the-business-case-for-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights).

Female Genital Mutilation, also known as female circumcision, is an act that is mostly common in Africa, Asia and the Middle East as a ritual. Over 200 million women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation and over 3 million females are at risk of undergoing it yearly<sup>10</sup>. UN Women considers FGM to be a form of violence against women and girls as it is harmful for them, both physically and mentally. Women are viewed as impure and incapable of marriage unless they undergo mutilation. Such beliefs are deeply rooted in cultures that perform these acts as traditions, yet have no scientific proof that shows its benefits, and are just based on the notion that a female is impure until mutilated<sup>11</sup>. The idea that FGM is considered as gender inequality derives from the fact that women and girls are rarely, if ever, given the choice to perform FGM and are in most cases forced to go through the procedure for cultural and religious reasons. In fact, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal Five is to establish gender equality between males and females in order to reach and maintain social justice.

UN Women aims to prevent this phenomena from spreading, and to control the current presence of FGM in some societies, most notably the 17 countries enrolled in the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Program to End FGM<sup>12</sup>, in hopes of having a future with no discrimination, where women and girls have the freedom to do what they want with their bodies. Such a change, however, requires the restructuring of how certain cultures think, and raising awareness to show that these violent acts are still considered the norm in some societies.

Female Genital Mutilation is one of the most pressing problems of our current time and is constantly addressed as more females are falling victims to it. The biggest challenge in facing and ending FGM, however, is the eminent notion that even if ruled against by law or legislated away, social reconstruction of the cultures and societies that believe that FGM is a normal way of cleansing a girl or woman is required to stop the act from occurring<sup>13</sup>.

Nevertheless, changing an entire society is not an easy task to do, the same way changing the work that a group of people have been doing for years cannot be simply done in a matter of days. This is why one of the approaches that UN Women used to deal with FGM is to promote gender equality in general, which helps create a drive to terminate the

<sup>10</sup> "Prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation", UN Women, <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/fgm/prevalence/en/>

<sup>11</sup> "It's Time to End FGM and Give Girls Choices for their Bodies and Futures", Paragraph 3, Phuzmile Mlambo-Ngcuka, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/2/statement-ed-international-day-of-zero-tolerance-for-fgm>

<sup>12</sup> "UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Program to End FGM", [https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/TOR\\_FGMC\\_Final.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/TOR_FGMC_Final.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> "When The Law is Not Enough: International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM", Oxford Human Rights Hub, <http://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/when-the-law-is-not-enough-international-day-of-zero-tolerance-for-fgm/>

causes of gender inequality, and to close the gender gap between males and females. One step that UN Women took was the ..... .. which is a plan to establish complete equality between men and women by 2030, with the help of governments that are willing to participate in the plan to end gender inequality. As of today, 93 countries are partaking in the goal and have Member State Commitments that they are forced to follow in order to reach the goal by 2030<sup>14</sup>. This initiative encouraged many countries to work towards closing gender gaps and to pass bills and laws which provide more equality between the genders. UN Women manages the *UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women* on behalf of the UN System and has allocated part of its funds to fend off the spreading and continuation of FGM. The Trust Fund has helped several governments and countries to work towards ending FGM in their lands.

FGM is considered illegal in Guinea according to article 265 of the penal code of Guinea. This article states that any person who performs genital mutilation/cutting on a female is instantly punished, and forced to perform hard labor for life. Additionally, if the victim dies within 40 days of performing the cutting, the perpetrator is sentenced to death [1]. However, despite the existence of an article which renders FGM illegal, not a single case concerning female cutting was ever brought to Guinean courts, as women have become more supportive of the ritual. In the Guinean society, excision is considered honorable for females, and any female who does not undergo it is considered impure and unfit for marriage. Surprisingly the rate of females who are supportive of FGM in Guinea rose from 65% in 1999, to 76% in 2012, according to a study held by "*Institut national de la statistique*" [2]. Some reasons that lead to this growth include:

- i) Social pressure on the importance of cutting, even at a young age
- ii) The spreading of the notion that un-excised females are impure and left unmarried
- iii) The support that religious and political figures provide for these harmful acts
- iv) The pressure and threat imposed on official personnel who try to fight FGM

These factors, including many more, increased the acceptance of FGM by both genders in the Guinean society, and have turned it into more of a necessity rather than a ritual for women to perform. The effect of a governmental law is rendered useless in such societies, which creates a greater challenge for NGOs to counter the issue knowing that

<sup>14</sup> "Planet 50-50 by 2030", UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/step-it-up>

perpetrators were not even phased by the government and still went through the performance of these horrendous acts.

.

.. . .... .. . . .

.

Yemen, like many other Arab countries, plans on ending the existence of FGM on its national grounds and is in fact one of the few Arab countries that noticed the relevance of FGM for its people. In 1997, the Yemeni government held a demographic study which showed that 24% of Yemeni women were subjected to cutting or excision, and that out of the 21 states in Yemen, 5 of them showed a high percentage of females experiencing cutting, with at least half the women in each of these states having undergone excision or cutting [3]. Later on in 2001, the US State Department released a study about FGM/C, which cited a lot of surveys and studies held by the Yemeni government that showed that usually the cuttings were performed in unprofessional, painful and inhumane ways. These acts were viewed as a violation to the rights of women and girls, which pushed the Yemeni government to take initiative and end the torture they go through. In 2001, the *Ministry of Public Health* sponsored a 2-day seminar to educate the public on female health, in which the dangers of FGM were discussed, and the plan to reduce the presence of FGM in Yemen was put forth. In 2008, the Yemeni government aimed to decrease the prevalence of FGM/C by 30% by 2012. Despite the government's claims that they were going to work on the issue, locals and activists said that the government's efforts were minimal and did not lead to much success. Activists stated that government officials only urged religious figures and influential people to discourage citizens in performing FGM while not taking any direct action. The Yemeni government also released a ministerial decree in 2001, which prohibited the act of FGM in both public and private health organizations, and then later on in 2009, a draft proposal for the Safe Motherhood Law was proposed and submitted to the Parliament. It included laws that prohibit FGM, but never saw a follow up. Despite what was viewed as little effort by the government, a 2013 study by the *Medical University of Tokyo* showed a 7% decrease in the number of females who have undergone FGM and a significant decrease in the number of males and females supportive of the act [4]. The reason that religious figures were able to drive people away from FGM is that citizens of Yemen are predominantly Muslims, which means that a "*fatwa*" or a religious ruling by a higher Muslim figure known as a "*mufti*" can influence people's actions, especially if they are ruled by the mufti to be against the "*sharia law*", and thus against the rules of Islam. This helped governments greatly: "muftis" would release rulings that opposed FGM on the basis that it is against Islamic law for being considered as self-harm, and the preachers would further call for its ending [5].

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.





...

In January 2016, the UN Trust Fund supported Amref Health Tanzania and launched an awareness raising and advocacy program where safe houses were built to house girls from the “high season cut” every other year, which usually takes the lives of many girls due to infection or blood loss after the mutilation. The small number of girls that survive live to carry the mental and physical pain of the abuse they face during the mutilation, which is what encourages a lot of organizations and societies to fend off FGM nowadays. Not only does Amref Health Tanzania shield young girls from FGM, it also supports girls who are escaping from child marriage, domestic abuse, and sexual assault by housing them in closed and organized sanctuaries. The focus, however, still remains on FGM victims and on educating young men and women on the dangers of performing it in hopes of reducing its presence<sup>16</sup>.

---

...

List of reports to consider

...

This report follows resolution 54/7 made by the Commission on the Status of Women and requires a follow up on all member states and their progress towards ending FGM/C [7].

...

This statement was released by the World Health Organization alongside 9 other United Nations committees including UNICEF and UNAIDS to inspect the dangers and consequences of FGM and present them to the world [8].

...

A report released by UNICEF [9] alongside a data brochure [10] showing that despite the fact that the counts of cases of FGM occurring are decreasing, the risks still remain the same and are increasing in certain regions, putting more girls at risk.

<sup>16</sup> “Safe in Seregeti”, UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/feature-tanzania--women-and-girls-seek-refugee-from-female-g>

- 
1. Even if current generations were shielded from FGM, how can it be guaranteed that future generations won't be violated?
  2. What is the best way to interfere with societies where FGM is considered a tradition?
  3. Some countries banned FGM for both medical and non-medical reasons, is this considered fair for women who need to undergo FGM for medical reasons?
  4. What if a female is completely aware of what FGM is and still chooses to go through it in a professional way? How would the UN respond to this?
  5. How can reluctant governments be pushed to actually taking perpetrators to justice?
  6. With very little support programs in the world for FGM, how can other victims of FGM be supported in areas with less aid?
  7. Should different types of FGM be dealt with differently? If yes, how can a type be favoured over the other?
  8. How can FGM-free societies be used as examples for other countries where FGM is deeply rooted?
  9. Should perpetrators be held accountable on the short-term effect or long-term effect of performing FGM?



[1] US Dept. of State Archives. "Laws/Enforcement in Countries where FGM is Commonly Practiced." *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 2001-2009.state.gov/g/wi/rls/rep/9303.htm. Part used: 7, Laws in Guinea

[2] "Female Genital Mutilation in Guinea on the rise." *OHCHR | Female Genital Mutilation in Guinea on the rise – Zeid*, United Nations Human Rights Office of The High Commissioner, www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=19869&LangID=E.

[3] Sarkis, Marianne. "YEMEN: Government Body Moves to Stem Female Genital Mutilation." *The Female Genital Cutting Education and Networking Program*, The Female Genital Cutting Education and Networking Program, 9 July 2008, www.fgmnetwork.org/gonews.php?subaction=showfull&id=1215632900&ucat=1&.

[4] "Yemen: Plenty of studies but little action." *Stop FGM Middle East*, Stop FGM Middle East, 3 Feb. 2014, stopfgmmiddleeast.wordpress.com/countries/yemen/. Further readings were used for additional information on the topic

[5] "Fatwas against FGM." *Stop FGM Middle East*, Stop FGM Middle East, 19 Feb. 2014, stopfgmmiddleeast.wordpress.com/fatwas-against-fgm/. Further readings and additional links were used for additional information

[6] Lee, Kyung Sun. "Female Genital Mutilation: multiple-Case studies of communication strategies against a taboo practice." *Iowa State University Digital Repository*, Iowa State University, 2008, lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=16451&context=rtd. The section used from this report is 4.1

[7] "United Nations Official Document." *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/ga/search/view\_doc.asp?symbol=E%2FCN.6%2F2012%2F8.

[8] "Eliminating Female genital mutilation." *United Nations*, United Nations World Health Organisation, Eliminating Female genital mutilation.

[9] "New UNICEF report on female genital mutilation/Cutting: Turning opposition into action." *UNICEF*, UNICEF, 19 July 2013, www.unicef.org/protection/57929\_69881.html.

[10] UNICEF. *UNICEF'S DATA WORK ON FGM/C. UNICEF'S DATA WORK ON FGM/C*, UNICEF, 2016, www.unicef.org/media/files/FGMC\_2016\_brochure\_final\_UNICEF\_SPREAD.pdf.