

**DONOR'S WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE
ELIMINATION OF FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING/MUTILIATION
'HOT TOPICS'**

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December 3, 2001

Ethical Considerations: Medicalization

Controversy over medicalization on FGC/FGM has been discussed this morning. This debate polarizes the proponents of the practice who believe that a mild operation performed by medically trained personnel is a safer option and those who condemn all forms of the practice, as does USAID, no matter how minimal. There are several questions that stem from this morning's session and clearly should be further explored as a hot topic. At this point I would like to throw out include the following:

1. Does the move towards medicalization by doctors and other professionals help or hinder abolition FGC efforts?
2. How are the ethical considerations and allegiance of medical staff to "do know harm" violated by the medicalization of FGC?
3. Does the lack of consent by infants and girls demonstrate a complete violation of individual human dignity and render FGC totally unethical?
4. Does medicalization of the practice downplay the ethical and gender dimensions and soften opposition to FGC elimination?

Promoting FGC and Human Rights.

Since ICPD, international advocacy efforts has focused on urging governments to prohibit FGM where ever it exists and to give vigorous support to NGOs and community organizations to eliminate the practice. Reframing FGC as coercive and discriminatory has lead international organizations and some governments to characterize the practice as a serious a violation of basic human rights and a major lifelong threat to women's health. Some questions which are emerging from this approach is:

1. Has the identifying FGC as a basic human right issued sparked controversy among FGC/FGM opponents and weakened consensus around the issue?
2. Does the label e.g. FGC/FGM result in different approaches and interventions with different outcomes?
3. Does the HR approach offer opportunities for building coalitions among non-health, civil society NGOs who might otherwise not work together on FGC issues?

4. Is there a danger in the HR approach perceived as being imposed from westerners or does it provide an impetus for promoting community support and women's empowerment around RH issues?

Promoting Behavior Change: What Works?

This morning we heard briefly from each of you on the FGC activities you are supporting throughout the region. Before the Break we discussed extensively on Alternative Program Strategies that are being implemented. The biggest gap in our knowledge is which interventions are most likely to create behavior change at the individual and community level in eliminating FGC.

1. Given the complexity and cultural context in which FGC takes place, can there be common elements that offer promise for changing community attitudes and individual behaviors?
2. Due to the complex nature of FGC, is it possible to come up with the same interventions that will work within a country or even within districts or communities?
3. Are there "best practices" that encourage strong community outreach involving village and religious leaders, women and girls and men, which enhance dialogue and promote action against FGC?
4. Can advocacy and coalition building from the indigenous groups and NGOs offer sustained attention to FGC in order to change behavior and gain national government policy support?
5. Can we improve research and evaluation to better measure the effectiveness of behavior change interventions?



AGENDA

**DONORS WORKING GROUP MEETING ON THE
ELIMINATION OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/
FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING (FGM/FGC)
December 3 & 4, 2001**

Sponsored by the Wallace Global Fund and USAID

Day I – CRITICAL PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- 8:30-9:00 Breakfast
- 9:00-9:15 Opening of the Meeting: Welcome and Introduction (Susan Rich and Marge Horn)
- 9:15-10:45 **Overview of FGM/FGC and Donor Activities**
(Moderator: Susan Rich, Wallace Global Fund, Presenter: Amanda Huber, USAID)

This session will set the stage with a quick look at the geographic spread of FGM/FGC and DHS data available. We will also look at the summary of donors' priorities and other information from the survey of participating donors.

Donors are each asked to speak briefly (5 minutes maximum) on their institutions' program strategies and priorities.

- 10:45-11:00 Coffee Break
- 11:00-11:45 **Medicalization of FGM/FGC**
(Moderator: Maha ElAdawy, Ford Foundation – Egypt; Presenter: Heli Bathija, WHO)

This session will highlight FGM/FGC medicalization issues. Focus is on the role of health care providers, who themselves sometimes engage in performing FGM/FGC to reduce the risk of side effects. The topic of donors, knowingly or unknowingly, funding the medicalization of the practice will be addressed.

- 11:45-12:45 **Discussion**
- 12:45-1:45 Networking Lunch



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1:45-2:30 Alternative Program Strategies
(Moderator: Marilen Danguilan, UNICEF; Presenter: Abedelhadi Eltahir, USAID)

This session will present critical elements of effective FGM/FGC interventions and their impact on communities. Various approaches to FGM/FGC elimination will be presented. Documented best practices and “lessons learned” from field projects will be presented. Examples may include:

- **Vertical Programs vs. Integrated Programs**
- **Health and Human Rights Approach**
- **Alternative Rituals and Community Development**

2:30-3:30 Discussion

3:30-3:45 Coffee Break

3:45-5:00 Hot Topics
(Moderator: Khadijat Mojidi, USAID)

This session will focus on identifying critical gaps in our knowledge, and on identifying key issues for future attention in programming.

5:00-6:30 COCKTAIL PARTY

**AGENDA****Day II – STRATEGIC COORDINATION**

8:30-9:00 Breakfast

9:00-9:45 **Evaluation and Scaling Up of FGM/FGC Strategies**
(Moderator: Tshiya Subayi, World Bank; Presenter: Marge Horn, USAID)

This session will present approaches to measuring the effectiveness of FGM/FGC elimination programs, as well as scaling up successful approaches.

9:45-10:45 Discussion

10:45-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-12:15 **Brainstorm on Approaches to Increasing Funds to Support FGM/FGC Elimination**
(Moderator: Susan Rich)

This session will highlight funding mechanisms and increased collaboration for sustained support of FGM/FGC programs and initiatives. It will focus on developing strategies for resource mobilization for FGM/FGC elimination, and increased donor collaboration.

12:15-1:15 Networking Lunch

1:15-3:00 **Strategic Collaboration: Setting Priorities and Ensuring Support**
(Moderator: TBA)

Based on the programmatic priorities and funding opportunities identified in earlier sessions, how can we donors collaborate to coordinate funding and programs for greatest effect?

3:00-3:15 Coffee Break

3:15-4:00 **Where does the Donors Working Group go from here?**
(Moderator: Abedelhadi Eltahir, USAID)

Do we want to form an ongoing working group?

4:00-4:15 Closing Comments