FGM/C is a widespread practice among ever-married women in Egypt. Some favourable indicators for adolescent girls:

However, for the ongoing efforts to end the practice, the more significant statistics relate to FGM/C prevalence among adolescent girls. It is among this group that the results of the ongoing campaign to eliminate the practice can become apparent. Based on the results of the 2005 EDHS, the average of circumcision prevalence among girls aged 11-12 is 51%, 69% for girls aged 13-14, and 77% for girls aged 15-17, an additional indication of change in the practice of FGM/C.

The 2005 EDHS also found that prevalence among highly-educated women (secondary education or higher) is 92%, and above 98% among uneducated women and those with primary education. Furthermore, it revealed slight differences in prevalence rates throughout the country, where 92% of ever-married women (aged 15-49) living in urban areas have been circumcised, compared to 98% of women living in rural areas. Women in the poorest 20% of the households have the highest prevalence of FGM/C, with 98%, compared to 88% among women in the richest 20% of the households.

Similar indication of change in the FGM/C practice was observed in a study conducted in 2005 by the Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) in 10 (out of a total of 27) selected governorates in Upper and Lower Egypt. This study conducted among school girls between the ages of 10-18 years has shown that 50% of school girls are circumcised. Additionally it shows that the percentage of girls circumcised is higher among girls of non-educated mothers (64.7%) as opposed to those mothers who attended university (22.3%).

For every child:
ADVANCE HUMANITY
Attitudes towards the continuation of FGM/C show some encouraging signs:

The forthcoming 2005 EDHS shows that the support for the elimination of the practice is increasing: 23% of ever-married women aged 15-49 believe FGM/C should be discontinued, an increase of 6% compared to figures from EIDHS 2003. The majority of ever-married women aged 15-49 are still in favour of the practice: 68% of ever-married women between the age of 15 and 49, a small decline from the previous 71% of the EIDHS 2003. Levels of support for discontinuation of the practice vary little by women’s age. Marked differences, however, can be observed by levels of both education and residence. For example, 37% of women with secondary or higher education in Egypt oppose FGM/C, compared to 11% of women with no formal education. Also, 35% of women in urban areas support a discontinuation of the practice, while only 15% in the rural areas share the same attitudes.

In Egypt, the median age at the time of circumcision for daughters is 10 years (EDHS 2005). The median age of circumcision has not change since 1995, when it was at 9.8 years.

Compared to earlier surveys, the 2003 EIDHS shows small declines in the percentage of women reporting either that their daughter has been circumcised or that they intended to have her circumcised in the future: 47% of ever-married women in Egypt aged 15-49 reported having at least one of their daughters circumcised, while 31% who have not their daughter circumcised have reported intending to do so in the future. This is consistent throughout the country, with some difference between urban areas (25%) and rural areas (35%).

The forthcoming EDHS 2005 shows that the percentage of daughters whom mothers intend to have them circumcised is 41%. Congruent to previous findings, the percentage is higher in rural areas, is inversely related to the age of the mother and to the family’s wealth, and is higher among uneducated mothers in comparison to those with secondary or higher education.

Despite a Ministerial decree prohibiting medical personnel from performing this practice, FGM/C in Egypt is still performed by physicians and other trained medical personnel in hospitals, public and private health clinics. 75% of circumcisions of daughters have been performed by trained medical personnel according to EDHS 2005. Dayas, or traditional birth attendants, perform the majority of remaining circumcisions (22%). The medicalization of FGM/C in Egypt is one of the main obstacles in achieving substantial impact in FGM/C abandonment initiatives.

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