



UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND - IRAQ
صندوق الأمم المتحدة للسكان - العراق



JOINT STATEMENT

Protecting Girls in Iraq from Female Genital Mutilation

Hadiya was mutilated at the age of five: "I was so scared that day; my mother took me to a room where I was cut. I bled so much and cried all night long. I still have pains to date, 20 years later".

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is one of the most inhuman acts of gender-based violence in the world.

On the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, we reaffirm our commitment to end this violation of human rights, so that girls who are still at risk of being mutilated do not experience the same pain as Hadiya.

According to the UN-supported [2018 Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys \(MICS\)](#) for Iraq, a total of 7.4 per cent of girls get mutilated every year. Although the numbers are relatively low in comparison to the region, one is too many: our goal is to protect all girls from such harmful practices.

In some identified areas of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, where FGM still occurs on a higher rate, the UN is working with government institutions and local NGOs to prevent such harmful practices through awareness campaigns.

Female Genital Mutilation is known to be harmful to girls and women in many ways: it is painful, traumatic, and causes immediate and permanent health consequences. For instance, babies born to women who have undergone FGM are prone to having a higher rate of neonatal death.

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