

UN Human Rights Council 47: High-Level Panel on Prevention of and Response to Female Genital Mutilation

World news story

The statement was delivered during the high level panel on prevention and response to female genital mutilation.



The Human Rights Council takes place in Geneva.

The United Kingdom is a staunch defender of sexual and reproductive health and rights and we are proud of our support to end Female Genital Mutilation globally. Ending FGM is a key part of the UK government's commitment to gender equality, girls' education, and ending the preventable deaths of mothers, newborns, and children. Since 2013, we have supported a comprehensive approach with long-term community and grass-roots efforts at its heart, supported by advocacy, services, legislation and policies. The UK government stands by the Africa-led movement to end FGM, and we are pleased to have partnered with the UN Joint Programme and the WHO.

FGM is one of the most extreme manifestations of gender inequality. It is a deeply embedded practice held in place by social norms. Change is being led from within affected communities and countries and our role is to support and help accelerate the pace of change. Women and girls are speaking out and thousands of communities have decided to abandon FGM. Tireless campaigning by courageous activists has helped to put these issues on the agenda and we are seeing more and more legislation and policy supporting an end to the practice.

Despite this progress, millions of girls continue to be at risk of FGM and COVID-19 has exacerbated these risks. It is a truly sobering picture. We would like to ask the panellists, what more can States do to ensure the prevention and permanent abandonment of FGM as we seek to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic?

Thank you.

Published 23 June 2021