

# Our Reports

2018

## [Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting & Religion](#)

By Elisa Van Ruiten

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/c), also known as female circumcision, is a form of gender-based violence and sexual discrimination. According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), FGM/c is found worldwide, with an estimated 200 million or more girls and women having been cut. Young girls are targeted in particular, with the majority of victims cut before age five.

Research shows that FGM/c is not inherent to religion but a cultural phenomenon. However, religious justifications are often used in communities that practice FGM/c, and religious leaders often play a role in sustaining and promoting the practice in those communities where FGM is found.

In order to eradicate the practice, it is important to understand what the procedure entails, that there is no FoRB justification for FGM/c, and it is a grave violation of women's rights.

This paper looks at the practice of FGM/c as part of the research that HRWF is conducting on the intersection of Women's Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief with the aim of revealing the misconceptions about the intersection of the two rights and try to find a way forward, together.

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Human Rights Without Frontiers



A chapter of the forthcoming report Women's Rights & Freedom of Religion or Belief which looks at the intersection of women's rights and freedom of religion or belief within Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.

## [Early, Child, and Forced Marriage & Religion](#)

By Elisa Van Ruiten

Early, child, and forced marriage are forms of gender-based violence that pose serious threats to the rights of girls and women. It is estimated globally that one in nine girls will marry before their fifteenth birthday, some as young as five years old.

A number of religious leaders and communities advocate for the marriage of children, justifying it as driven by religious texts or other religious authoritative sources.

On the other hand, religious leaders and governments in some countries are also taking more positive steps to protect the rights of girls and women who become victims of child and forced marriages.

This paper looks at the issue of early, child and forced marriage as part of the research that HRWF is conducting on the intersection of Women's Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief with the aim of revealing the misconceptions about the intersection of the two rights and try to find a way forward, together.

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