



Community views of Female Genital Cutting in Denmark

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Table 7. Focus group participants – Denmark

Information	Focus group 1	Focus group 2	Focus group 3	Focus group 4
Number of participants	5	4	3	4
Countries represented	Somalia (5)	Somalia (4)	Somalia (3)	Iraq (3); Iran (1)
Sex of participants	Female	Female	Male	Female
Age range	30–44 years	22–32 years	Unknown (3)	27–56 years
Generation	First	Second	First	First
Religion	Muslim (5)	Muslim (4)	Muslim (3)	Muslim (3); Christian (1)

Attitudes towards FGC

- All participants, female and male, held negative views about practice
- Somalis felt that attitudes towards the practice were changing due to better knowledge of consequences
- FGC was linked to virginity. Among Somalis in Denmark virginity is still important but FGC is generally rejected
- Kurdish women's attitudes: it ruins women's lives

“like mud thrown in my face”

“I am a living dead – they have buried me alive. I am like a soldier when I am with a man – I do not feel anything”.

Perceptions of risk

- Neither Somalis nor Kurdish women believe that the practice is still performed in Denmark.
- Somalis stated that the three criminal trials in Denmark were exceptions.

“a few have made a mistake in relation to their girls, but it is not something we do anymore”

Somalis still make sure their daughters are always accompanied by trusted individuals when visiting their country of origin.

Perceptions of risk among Kurdish women

- None of Kurdish participants had ever heard of the practice being performed in Europe.
- Not generally something Kurdish migrants talk about

“I have lived in Denmark for 28 years, and I have never heard about anyone Kurdish cutting their daughters.”

Knowledge of legislation and services

FGM Legislation

- Most Somali women and men believed that FGC was illegal in Denmark. Uncertain about Somalia.
- Some Kurdish women believed that it was illegal in Denmark and in Kurdistan, others knew of no legislation.

Services

- Somali women were aware of the fact that they can turn to the healthsystem if they have problems related to their FGC.
- De-infibulation and re-infibulation requests
- **Kurdish participants unaware of awareness campaign and services!**

Key issues for prevention and service provision

- Somali women complained of stigma attached to FGM, even if they no longer practice
- Danish healthcare system needed a more culturally sensitive approach
- Kurdish community seems to be slipping through the net in terms of sensitisation, awareness campaigns and within health system, hardly informed about practice and available services.