

**1B.5. Attitude and Self-Efficacy of Women and Adolescent Girls to Abandon FGM Following a One Year Health Awareness Intervention in Upper Egypt**  
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**Background/Significance:** Female Genital Mutilation 'FGM/C' is almost a universal practice among ever married women in Egypt. Egypt's efforts to eliminate the practice started in the 1920s, and intensified following Cairo ICPD 1994. In the 14 years following ICPD 94 the experience that accumulated from using different approaches to eliminate FGM/C in the communities led the [NCCM] National Council of Childhood and Motherhood in 2002 to adopt a 'social development approach' in its nationwide strategy to stop FGM/C. Under the patronage of NCCM, and funding from UNDP 'FGM free village model' was born in 2003. All twelve partner NGOs directed their anti-FGM activities to all community members to remove social pressure around women and supported 60 villages in a self-chosen development project. An interim evaluation that was conducted the Population Council WANA office followed in 2006. A quantitative survey was a part of this evaluation addressing the impact of activities on attitude towards FGM/C. Traditionally, attitudes towards FGM/C, intention to circumcise daughters, prevalence were the main indicators used to measure change. The complexity of FGM/C behavioural change and involvement of multiple players in decision making directs us to explore other dimensions of the decision-making process of individuals; namely perceived self-efficacy in seeking support from others, ability to convince others about harmful effects of FGM, and being resourceful in dealing with opponents of the same family, Lastly, ability to implement their decision. Perceived self-efficacy is concerned with people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce given attainments. Perceived self-efficacy has rarely been documented in relation to anti-FGM activities.

**Main Question/Hypothesis:**

- Has a change in attitude, intention not to circumcise daughter, been observed in the intervention group compared to the control?
- Is the change in attitude reflected in self-efficacy against FGM?
- Is there a difference in the reported self-efficacy against FGM of adolescent girls and adult women?

**Methodology:** A secondary analysis of survey data of the mid-term evaluation. The survey was conducted in 6 Governorates in Upper Egypt. 408 women having a daughter between 7-13 years in 12 randomly selected intervention villages were compared with 203 women in 6 randomly chosen control villages. Also, 579 young girls 16-24 were successfully interviewed; 390 and 189 in the intervention and control sites respectively. Data included were attitude towards FGM, self-efficacy to abandon FGM, as well as FGM status of daughters in an attempt to explore the association between these variables. Self-efficacy was measured by 3 questions: self rating of ability on a scale of 1-4 [never-rarely- mostly –always]: 1. to convince family/others about the hazards of FGM, 2. ask for support from a priest/sheikh to convince family members, 3. implement their decision not to circumcise.

**Findings:** Both adult women and young girls 16-24 showed significant differences in attitude, intention, and self-efficacy compared to the control group. These changes are complex in interpretation. At first glance the observed change in the attitude, intent, self-efficacy is very encouraging, but when comparing them with behavior towards daughters nothing has changed. Moreover, asking about the last daughter circumcised, among Moslem women almost none of the family members opposed circumcision; when 'joint decision' was their norm. A significant difference by religion was observed in adult women or young girls living in villages with a Christian majority who had lower levels of practice and much better outcomes that seem to have preceded the project.

**Knowledge Contribution:** The results will assist project managers in understanding readiness to change of women and girls as well as validating 'declarations of intent to stop FGM/C' as well.