SOMALIA
Scorecard on Gender-based violence

Population
12,316,895
Female population 6,072,130
Male population 6,244,765

Representation in politics
38 Female 237 Male

Literacy rate
40% Female 43.8% Male

Employment rate
38.1% Overall employment rate 48.8% Male

Maternal mortality rate
732 PER 1,000 live births

Total fertility rate
6.7 children per woman

Prevalence of female genital mutilation (FGM)
98% of women belonging to 15 to 49 years of age

Article 15 of the Provisional 2012 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Somalia states “Female circumcision is a cruel and degrading customary practice, and is tantamount to torture. The circumcision of girls is prohibited.”

Somalia’s National Gender Policy (2013) includes strategies to eradicate harmful traditional practices such as FGM/C and child marriage and to improve services for the management of GBV cases.

Puntland has a zero tolerance FGM policy.
Prevalence of child marriage

- 45% of women aged 20 to 24 were married before their 18th birthday
- 37% of women support early marriage
- 8% of women aged 20 to 24 were married before their 15th birthday
- 47% of men support early marriage

The Family Code sets the minimum age for marriage at 18 for males and females. However, females between the ages of 16 and 18 can marry with their guardian's consent. If the guardian refuses consent, a judge may grant permission for girls to marry without the guardian's consent in exceptional circumstances.

Existing data of GBV**

- 34% of women believe their husbands are justified in beating them to discipline them
- 33% of men believe husbands are justified in beating their wives to discipline them
- 18% of women agree that girls should undergo FGM/C despite the frequency of FGM/C
- 28% of men agree that girls should undergo FGM/C despite the frequency of FGM/C

With respect to intimate partner violence:

- 34% of women currently or previously in a marriage/intimate relationship reported at least one form of controlling behavior by a husband or male partner.
- 25% reported experiencing emotional abuse by their husband or male partner.
- 28% reported physical violence by their husband or male partner.
- 29% of men have experienced non-partner physical violence since the age of 15 with 1.4% reporting being raped.
- 1.4% reported non-partner rape/forced sex.
- 2.3% reported exchanging sex for food, clothing, money or other item of value.
- 31% of the male sample experienced some form of violence since the age of 15 years.

Existing UNFPA programmes against GBV

Advocacy/policy dialogue:
UNFPA is advocating for the ratification of the CEDAW.

Technical support to national partners:
- UNFPA and UNDP support the Ministry of Justice to implement a community police initiative, deploying six female community police to handle cases of GBV. These female police are trained to work sensitively with survivors, recording and reporting incidents of violence, providing initial psychological support, and offering referrals for clinical management and legal aid.
- UNFPA, UNDP, civil society organizations (CSO) support the gender related ministries and Ministry of Justice across the country to enact the Sexual Offences Bills.

Services:
- 2,609 women, 956 girls, 83 boys and 63 men received the dignity kits.
- 30 units of stand-alone poles of solar lights were installed in the internally displaced person (IDP) settlements to mitigate further risks of GBV cases and enhance the protection of displaced people.

UNFPA will work on:
- Policy and legislative reforms to ensure accountability on gender and GBV.
- Quality and comprehensive service provision.
- Social norm and behavior change.

UNFPA in collaboration with UNICEF, and in partnership with the Clinical Management of Rape Task Force, the Reproductive Health Working Group, Ministries of Health, Justice and Women from South Central, Puntland and Somaliland supported the development of a comprehensive Clinical Management of Rape Protocol.

UNFPA supported the Federal Government of Somalia in drafting the FGM Bill and the FGM Protocol.

GBV laws
Somalia has signed but not ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol).

Most domestic violence and sexual violence cases are dealt with through the customary and Sharia-legal systems. Domestic violence is usually addressed within the family according to custom and tradition. The customary system emphasizes consensus, compromise and reduction of social shame. It is administered exclusively by men and relies on the strength of hypertrophied patriarchal control. 

According to Sharia and the local traditions of blood compensation, anyone found guilty of the death of a woman pays to the victim’s family only half the amount required for a man’s death. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women has noted that some survivors of rape are forced to marry their perpetrators, which is a remedial practice in Somalia’s customary justice system. Somalia has not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

UNFPA, UNICEF, World Bank and Johns Hopkins University

** Somalia GBV survey 2016, conducted by UNFPA, UNICEF, World Bank and Johns Hopkins University

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