



## **Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting happens in the US too. Here are five facts you need to know:**

When people travel and emigrate, their practices and beliefs travel and emigrate, too. Included is female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). More than 200 million women worldwide live with scars from FGM/C and in 2016, the Population Reference Bureau estimated that 507,000 girls and women in the United States have either undergone or are at risk of FGM/C- 65,000 of them are in the NY metropolitan area. That number grows steadily. Here are some other important things to know:

1. The United Nations declared FGM/C a violation of human rights in 2016, in part, because there is no identified medical nor religious benefit to the practice.
2. FGM/C is practiced across Africa, the Middle East and Asia as a form of cleansing, marriage rite and/or social ascension. Cases in the U.S. have tripled since 1990 according to CNN.
3. The practice causes a host of physical and psychological effects including infertility, low sex drive, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, bladder/urinary infections, difficult birthing, family counseling, sex therapy, and ongoing medical needs.
4. In the United States 27 out of 52 states have legislation referencing the coordination or practice of FGM/C, and a decision deeming FGM/C constitutional was upheld on appeal April 2019.
5. FGM/C has been reported in every state with the exception of Hawaii with the greatest concentrations in New York, California, and Minnesota. NY criminalizes FGM/C and Vacation Cutting.

As a “sanctuary city” NY can offer more than criminalization and/or deportation. Government and advocates are invited to create a coordinated mechanism that responds to the psycho-social, medical, and environmental factors impacted by FGM/C and Vacation Cutting. This will be the first of its’ kind in the country.

Who we are: Globalizing Gender is a New York-based organization seeking sustainable, culturally aware alternatives for women and girls in the continental U.S. and abroad. We work on issues of gender-based violence including FGM/C, child marriage/forced marriage, human trafficking, breast ironing and domestic violence.