

FIGO – FGC Abstract:

Abstract Title: *Female Genital Cutting(FGC) Status of Daughters and Family Decision-Making Among Somali Refugee Families in Arizona: A Mixed Methods Analysis*

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Objective: The aims of this study include to understand who the most influential decision-makers are within refugee/ displaced Somali families when deciding whether to perform Female Genital Cutting on a girl-child, describe associated sociodemographic factors with cutting, and explore these findings using qualitative data from focus groups with community members.

Method: An explanatory mixed methods research strategy was used beginning with a cross-sectional community-based survey (n=879) using respondent driven sampling via tablet-based electronic data collection. 8 focus groups with 7-10 participants each (approximately n=60-70) are being conducted (on-going to May 2018) with Somali and Somali Bantu women and men using semi-structured discussion guides led by Somali facilitators.

Results: Data analysis will examine the relationships between Somali refugee women's description of decision-making within their own families and whether or not daughters have undergone FGC. Controlling for sociodemographic variables, we use multiple linear regression to examine the relationship between daughter FGC status, family decision making, maternal FGC status, and primary reason for supporting FGC. Content analysis of the qualitative data will be used to code transcripts for themes related the variables assessed during the quantitative analysis to provide additional insights into the survey findings.

Conclusions: In order to eliminate the practice of FGC, it is important to understand how decision-making regarding FGC of daughters occurs in families, particularly in the context of migration. The findings are informative for policy makers as well as practitioners serving at-risk immigrant and refugee survivors of FGC in legal, social service, and physical and mental health settings.