*This is to inform you that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is preparing a compilation of good practices and major challenges in preventing and eliminating female genital mutilation, to be submitted to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-ninth session.*

*Civil society groups, regional organizations, national human rights institutions, and other relevant stakeholders are invited to submit any relevant information for the preparation of this report. In particular, views and information would be welcome on:*

*- Legislation*

*- National policy and regional strategies including education and awareness raising campaigns*

*- Services for women's and girls' living with FGM or who are at risk of FGM*

*- Information on health provider's practicing FGM major challenges in preventing and eliminating female genital mutilation*

*OHCHR would kindly ask you to send your submission to the Women Human Rights and Gender Section by e-mail (akufuor-owusu@ohchr.org<mailto:akufuor-owusu@ohchr.org>) or fax (+41 22 917 9008) by 08 December 2014.*

**WADI e.V. Association for Crisis Assistance and Development Co-operation**

About WADI

WADI (<http://en.wadi-online.de/index.php>) is operating in the Middle East, mainly in Kurdish Northern Iraq, continuously since 1993. Among others, WADI operates and coordinates women’s centres, female mobile health teams, FGM-free villages, a FGM hotline, and a community radio.

The development cooperation approach adopted by WADI implicates that only local staff is working on the ground. The staff teams are self-organised, but act in close cooperation with each other and coordinated with other organizations. Decisions are made in a democratic way involving all teams.

WADI’s mission is to support democracy development, individual freedom based on human rights, gender equality, and non-violent conflict resolution in a society where these values are not deeply rooted or present yet.

WADI seeks to support especially those in Middle Eastern society who suffer the most under the prevailing conditions and are thus the first agents for a change: women, children and adolescents.

**Iraqi Kurdish Region**

The anti-FGM awareness and education campaign in the Iraqi Kurdish Region

In 2004, members of Wadi's female-led Mobile Health Teams reported the existence of FGM in several villages of the Garmyan area, south of Suleymaniah. A preliminary survey showed that more than every second women in the region was affected. At that time the practice was an absolute taboo.

Wadi initiated the first large programme against FGM in Iraq. Activities were conducted on different levels. Wadi cooperated with local NGOs and started the *Stop FGM in Kurdistan* campaign (<www.stopfgmkurdistan.org>) which included awareness training and media campaigning. The Mobile Teams became anti-FGM awareness teams.

A few years later FGM was widely discussed not only in the media but also among ordinary people, men and women alike.

In 2007, the *Stop FGM in Kurdistan* campaign submitted a draft for a Law prohibiting Female Genital Mutilation to the Kurdish Regional Parliament.

Since 2011, Wadi is supporting 7 “FGM-free villages” who are willing to set an example to stop the practice. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/17/iraq-mutilation-idUSL5E8LCBI820121017>)

After the legal ban of FGM had been issued in 2011, Wadi started to raise awareness on the law and its contents.

In 2013 Wadi, in cooperation with the Kurdish Ministry of Health, conducted several trainings for traditional midwives who are notorious perpetrators of FGM.

In 2014 Wadi started cooperation with UNICEF. Wadi had been able to prove a substantial reduction of the FGM rate in areas where it had been active for years, accordingly UNICEF opted for an extension of this successful approach. Wadi is now training members of 6 other local NGOs from different areas of Iraqi Kurdistan to raise awareness on FGM according to the long-standing example of Wadi’s female mobile teams. This way a more area-wide coverage of the region might be achieved.

Research Studies

In 2010, Wadi presented a large scientific study on FGM in Iraqi Kurdistan (<http://stopfgmkurdistan.org/html/english/fgm_study.htm>). It proved that FGM is practiced in almost every part (except the Duhok region). 72.7% were found to be affected.

Shortly after, Human Rights Watch presented their qualitative study “They took me and told me nothing” (<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2010/06/16/they-took-me-and-told-me-nothing-0>)

2012, a similar study on Kirkuk Governorate/Central Iraq followed (<http://www.stopfgmkurdistan.org/html/english/fgm_study2.htm>) In this multi-ethnic governorate the FGM rate found was 38%.

A preliminary study in Qadisiyah Governorate/Central Iraq found a rate of 25% (<http://www.wadinet.de/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/FGM-study-SouthCentral-Iraq-2014.pdf>) . **More studies in other parts of Iraq need to be done.**

Legislation

The campaign finally contributed to the Regional Parliament’s adoption of a comprehensive law against many forms of violence against women and children, including FGM, law No. 8 of 2011.

However, implementation of the law is proceding only slowly. (<http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/08/29/iraqi-kurdistan-law-banning-fgm-not-being-enforced>)

Since the law was adopted, Wadi is distributing tenthousands of copies of the law and raising awareness on the provisions of the law. The trainings are focusing on the ordinary population as well as on professionals and state officials like police, teachers, nurses and lawyers.

Services:

In 2012, Wadi launched an FGM Hotline which provides social, psychological, medical and sexual advice to FGM-affected women throughout the Iraqi Kurdish region.

**Iran**

Preliminary studies show that FGM is widespread in the western and southern parts of Iran. The topic is a taboo in the country, and there is no public awareness and no legal ban of FGM.

However, there are some grassroot activities, like these trainings <http://www.stopfgmmideast.org/tackling-fgm-in-iran-education-about-complications-of-female-genital-mutilation-during-life-skill-classes-for-housewives/>

Please find more information here: <http://www.stopfgmmideast.org/countries/iran/>

and in this report to the UNHRC: <http://www.stopfgmmideast.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/FGM-in-Iran-6-2014.pdf>

We would also like to recommend [www.stopfgmmideast.org](http://www.stopfgmmideast.org) for further information on the situation in other Middle and Far Eastern countries such as Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen and Indonesia.