



**February 6 Marks “International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation”
Special Event in Sulaimani, Iraq to Raises Awareness of FGM in Kurdistan**

February 6, 2012 (Sulaimani, Iraq) – A special event on Monday, February 6 at 2:15 p.m. will mark the [International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation](#) at Sulaimani’s Culture Café.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is globally recognized as a gross violation of human rights of girls and women. FGM continues to be practiced in Iraq and northern Iraqi Kurdistan, despite ongoing efforts to eradicate the practice.

According to [Wadi](#), a non-governmental organization with headquarters in Sulaimani, FGM rates are approximately 60 percent in Iraqi Kurdistan (KRG), with some villages reporting FGM rates of nearly 100 percent. Wadi conducted between 2007 and 2009 the first study of FGM rates in the KRG and based its data on comprehensive field research.

During the event, the first-ever data on FGM rates in Kirkuk, Iraq will be presented. A new, confidential hotline for victims of FGM and a new television public service campaign for “Stop FGM Kurdistan” also will be announced.

Members of parliament and representatives from Kurdistan’s first “FGM-Free Villages” will participate. Hawlati newspaper also will receive a press award for its continued support for the Campaign to Stop FGM Kurdistan.

The “[Campaign to Stop FGM in Kurdistan](#)” has worked since 2007 to eradicate FGM. In 2011, the KRG passed law number 8, the new Domestic Violence Law, which recognizes FGM as a crime. The KRG became a pioneer in the Middle East by criminalizing FGM.

Passage of this law makes February 6, 2012 particularly powerful. The law is a next step in the eradication of FGM in the KRG. Essential in the fight against FGM is an overall plan of action to eradicate the practice. This plan should address implementation of the new domestic violence law, increased awareness raising campaigns, and increase collaborations between the government, organizations, media, and the community.



International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation
February 6, 2012, 2:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Culture Café, Sulaimani, Iraq

EVENT AGENDA

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| • Overview of International Day of Zero Tolerance Against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) | Shanga Rahim
<i>(5 minutes)</i> |
| • Words from Parliament | Gasha D.Hafeed
<i>(10 minutes)</i> |
| • Viewing of Two TV Spots | Nabaz Ahmad & Shara Nasar
<i>(5 minutes)</i> |
| • “FGM-Free” Village in Kurdistan | Su’ad Aurahman
<i>(10 minutes)</i> |
| • Initial FGM Data from Kirkuk, Pana Center Overview | Awezan Noori
<i>(10 minutes)</i> |
| • Announcing Hotline Project for FGM Victims | Su’ad Aurahman
<i>(5 minutes)</i> |
| • Press Award to Hawlati Newspaper
<i>Presented in recognition for its longstanding support of the campaign of stop FGM in Kurdistan.</i> | Abdulla Sabir, former WADI coordinator
<i>(5 minutes)</i> |
| • Questions & Answers | Gasha ,Shanga, Gula, Su’ad, Awezan
<i>(5 minutes)</i> |



About Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is defined by the United Nations as “all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.” It is also known as female genital cutting and female circumcision. Female genital mutilation of any type has been recognized as a harmful practice and violation of the human rights of girls and women. According to the World Health Organization, FGM is affecting about 140 million girls and women, and more than 3 million girls are at risk every year.

About International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

On February 6, 2003, a conference was held in Nigeria by the International African Committee- IAC for standing against FGM in the world. In cooperation with representatives from international non-governmental organizations and the United Nations, February 6 was nominated as the day of working against FGM. Subsequently, the United Nations Sub-Commission on Human Rights adopted February 6 as the “International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).” Ceremonies marking this date to raise awareness of FGM are now held worldwide.