

Beat: Lifestyle

## WORLD FASHION WEEK SAYS NO MORE FGM

### Female Genital Mutilation Stops

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**USPA NEWS** - "Just twelve months after the "World Fashion Week" (WFW) Paris 2014 Fashion event for FGM Global Awareness, the former President Johnathan of Nigeria banned the horrendous practice of Female Genital Mutilation FGM in Nigeria," said CEO and Founder of World Fashion Week Paco De Jaimes.

Nigeria made history this month by banning "Female Genital Mutilation", but there's still one thing in the way according to former President Johnathan and that is educating families that abuse against women is not acceptable. More than 125 million girls and women alive today have been cut in the 29 African and Middle Eastern countries where FGM takes place. President Jonathan went out on a high note when he signed the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) act into law on May 25, 2015 which came into effect today, which bans female genital mutilation in Nigeria and forbids men from leaving their families without providing financial support. "Outlawing a practice is often the first step toward making it culturally unacceptable. Laws are super important, but the practice of FGM is so ingrained within many cultures that the attitudes around it need to change first." Said former President Johnathan.

It may be difficult for families to abandon the practice without support from the wider community. In fact, it is often practiced even when it is known to inflict harm upon girls because the perceived social benefits of the practice are deemed higher than its disadvantages according to World Health Organizations research into FGM in 2008

"Momentum is happening all over the World to get FGM outlawed everywhere. We need to talk about it. WFW Paris 2014 event against FGM was an opportunity for former President of Nigeria Johnathan to hear the opinions of dignitaries and models of all ages from every corner of the World concerned about this horrific practice and we made a difference," said De Jaimes. If just hearing about female genital mutilation makes you uncomfortable, that's exactly why it needs to be talked about. Imagine what the women and girls who have experienced it have gone through! World Fashion Weeks (WFW) Ethos is to globally expand the power of Fashion as a tool to fight poverty, further develop economies and implementing corporate social responsibility and social business principals. WFW believes in sustainable fashion, fashion for life.

According to the "Office of the High Commissioner For Human Rights", Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Development Programme, et al. Eliminating female genital mutilation: an interagency statement. Geneva:

"The practice of female genital mutilation

FGM involves the intentional, non-therapeutic physical modification of female genitalia. It is a cultural practice that has been experienced by 100-140 million girls and women currently living, and, although concentrated in Africa and some Asian nations, has been reported worldwide. About three million girls in Africa are at risk every year of suffering FGM. Eleven African nations have rates of FGM in girls and women aged 15-49 years of 70%-98%: in descending order, these are Somalia, Egypt, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Sudan, Eritrea, Gambia, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Mauritania.

There are considered to be four different forms of FGM, which may be administered separately or in combination: clitoridectomy (partial or total removal of the clitoris); excision (partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, and sometimes also the labia majora); infibulation (narrowing or closing of the vaginal opening); and all other harmful non-therapeutic procedures (including pricking, and nicking or incising). Infibulation is estimated to affect 10% of those who have experienced FGM and is especially likely to occur in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, with clitoridectomy and excision more typical in the other African nations."

"I think the fact that over 100 million females worldwide have already suffered the inhumane act of "FGM", or "circumcision" as some refer to it is disgusting. 'Do NOT' call it circumcision. It is a vile mutilation of a woman's private parts, completely unnecessary in every way, sadistic and perverted! If anything, that part of a woman should be cherished and treasured. It's what gives us 'Life', the greatest gift of all and yes also pleasure. Why on earth would anyone want to cut and slice and destroy such a beautiful and miraculous thing." said outspoken model Lauren Ashley. She then went on to say, "Most victims are young innocent girls, virgins, not knowing or understanding what's about to happen to them. Scared, frightened and then hacked apart with at times "rusty razor blades", in

many cases resulting in blood infection or death!"

"Talking and reading about it is the first start I believe. I really admire President Jonathan for what he has done to approve the "Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) act and making it law in Nigeria and thank you to World Fashion Week for being the catalyst. It should have been done years ago, but thank god this man has stepped up finally said - "FGM' is wrong and that it "WILL' be a crime in Nigeria." Lauren went on to say , "as an Australian model I struggle with body image all day, all women have body concerns and need to be comfortable in themselves. I know I will have millions of people support my stand on this disturbing practice. When I found out that WFW was selling "FGM Bracelets "made by young victims in African villages to increase awareness and help pay for their education , I had to say something, I have to make a difference, we all can. Please help stop FGM NOW." Said Lauren. Steve Maraboli once said, "There is nothing more rare, nor more beautiful, than a woman being unapologetically herself; comfortable in her perfect imperfection. To me, that is the true essence of beauty." Namaste.

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