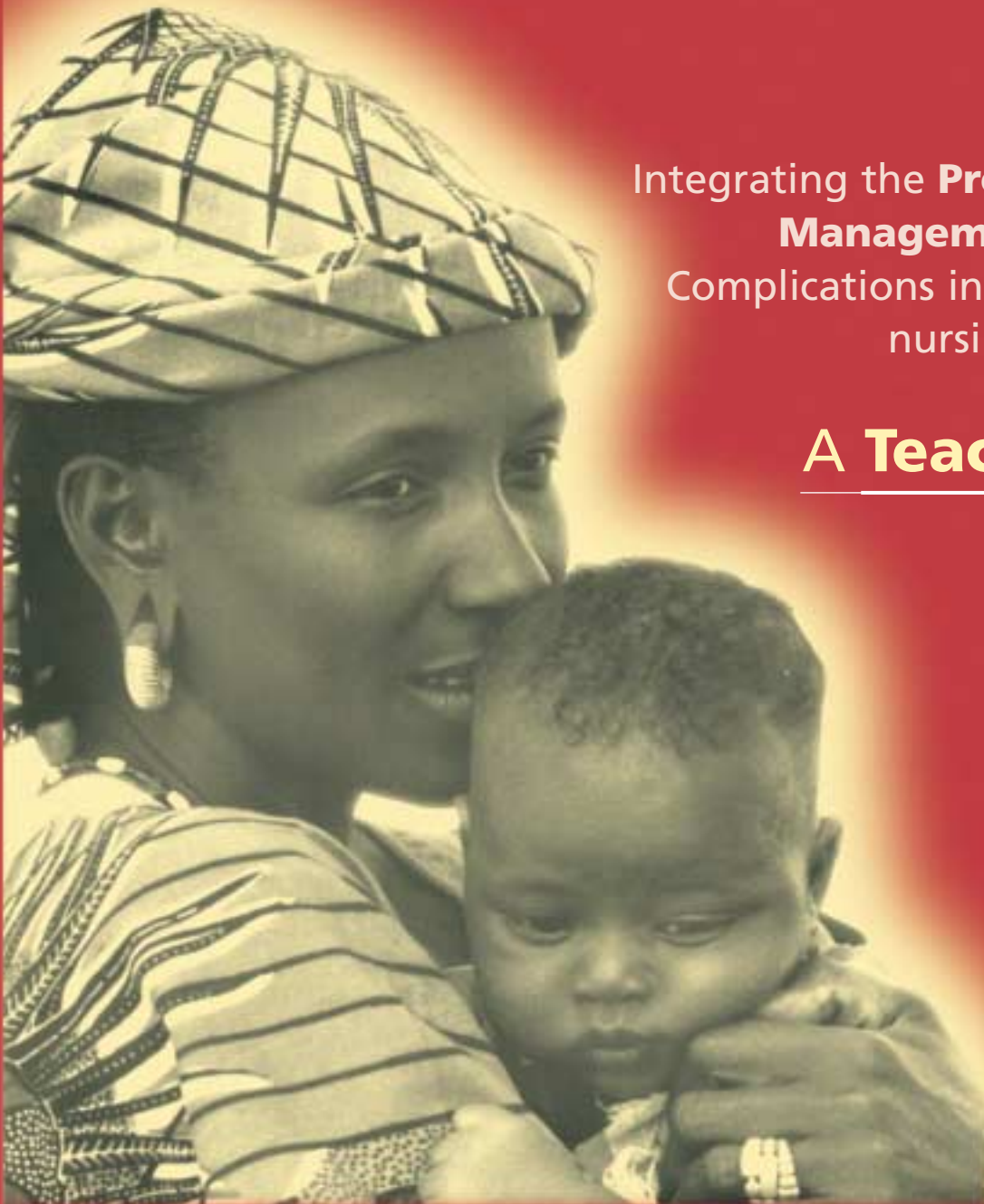


Female Genital Mutilation

Integrating the **Prevention** and the
Management of the Health
Complications into the curricula of
nursing and midwifery.

A Teacher's Guide



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“Tradition! Tradition!” © Efua Dorkenoo, FORWARD (1992)

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FOREWORD

An estimated 100 to 140 million girls and women in the world today have undergone some form of female genital mutilation, and 2 million girls are at risk from the practice each year. The great majority of affected women live in sub-Saharan Africa, but the practice is also known in parts of the Middle East and Asia. Today, women with FGM are increasingly found in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America, largely as a result of migration from countries where FGM is a cultural tradition.

FGM covers a range of procedures, but in the great majority of cases it involves the excision of the clitoris and the labia minora. At its most extreme, the procedure entails the excision of almost all the external genitalia and the stitching up of the vulva to leave only a tiny opening. Whatever form it takes, FGM is a violation of the human rights of girls and women; and it is a grave threat to their health.

The complications of FGM – physical, psychological, and sexual – require skilled and sensitive management by health care workers, yet FGM is rarely mentioned, let

alone covered in detail, in the training curricula of nurses, midwives and other health professionals. WHO is committed to filling these gaps in professional education by producing a range of training materials to build the capacity of health personnel to prevent and to manage the health complications of FGM.

These materials are dedicated to all the girls and women who suffer – very often in silence – the personal violation and pain of FGM, and to those committed to their care and the relief of their suffering. Though much has been achieved over the past two decades in lifting the veil of secrecy surrounding FGM, there is still an enormous amount to be done to provide quality services to those affected, and to prevent other little girls and women from adding to their numbers. It is hoped that bringing FGM into mainstream education for health professionals will increase the pressure for elimination of the practice, while at the same time throwing out a lifeline to those who have felt isolated with their problems for so long.



Dr Tomris Türmen

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INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared by WHO as a teaching guide for those responsible for the training of nurses and midwives. It was developed in response to a proposal on female genital mutilation (FGM) in which nurses and midwives expressed the need for acquiring knowledge and skills that would assist them to prevent the practice and to manage girls and women with FGM complications. The Teacher's Guide is intended for use in conjunction with the student manual and the policy guidelines.

The Teacher's Guide and the student manual provide strategies for the prevention of FGM and the knowledge and skills necessary for nurses and midwives to manage clients with FGM complications. Besides covering theory and principles, they provide

Module 1: Introduction to FGM

This is the foundation module. It can be integrated into medical/surgical nursing and courses in gynaecology, community health and midwifery in places where FGM is practised. The module may also be used with health personnel and other relevant groups during workshops or in-service education to raise awareness on FGM.

Module 2: Community involvement in the prevention of FGM

This module can be integrated into community health nursing and community midwifery courses in places where FGM is practised.

Module 3: Management of girls and women with

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