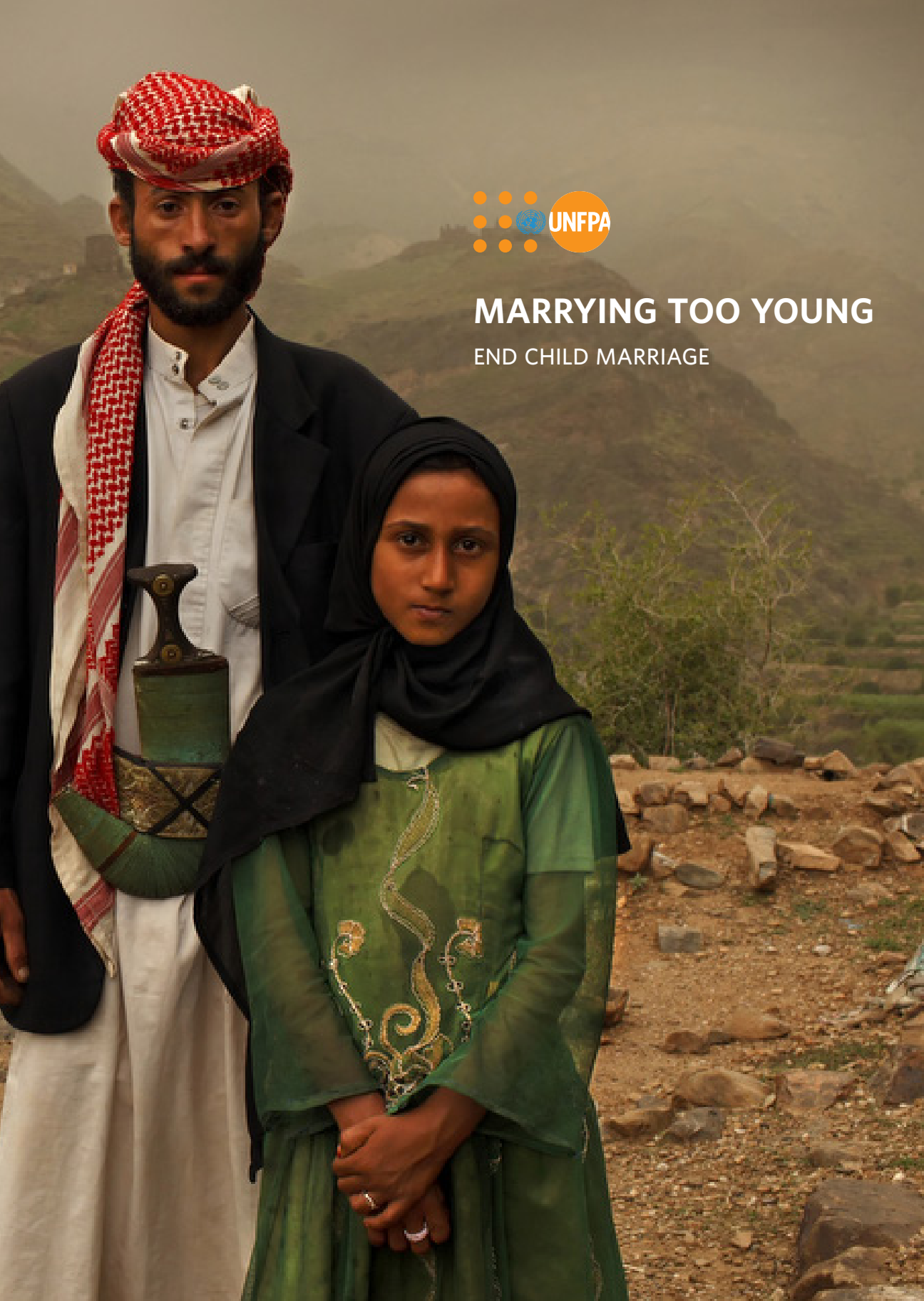

MARRYING TOO YOUNG

END CHILD MARRIAGE

Marrying Too Young
End Child Marriage
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United Nations Population Fund
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hq@unfpa.org
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Cover and Back Photo:
TEHANI, AGE 8 (Yemen)
"Whenever I saw him, I hid. I hated to see him," Tehani (in pink) recalls of the early days of her marriage to Majed, when she was 6 and he was 25. The young wife posed for a portrait with former classmate Ghada, also a child bride, outside their home in Hajjah.

Photo by Stephanie Sinclair / VII Photo / Too Young To Wed

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PREFACE

Child marriage is a human rights abuse. It constitutes a grave threat to young girls' lives, health and future prospects. Marriage for girls can lead to complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, and in developing countries these are the main causes of death among 15–19 year-old girls. Girls who are married are also exposed to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. For a girl, marriage can mean the end of her education, can set aside her chances of a vocation or career, and can steal from her foundational life choices.

Choosing when and who to marry is one of life's most important decisions. No one else, however well-meaning, has the right to make that decision. The decision to marry should be a freely made, informed decision that is taken without fear, coercion, or undue pressure. It is an adult decision and a decision that should be made, when ready, as an adult. On that virtually all countries agree. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), both human rights instruments, outlaw child marriage. The International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 (ICPD) called on countries to eliminate child marriage and to enforce laws that ensure free and full consent.

Yet child marriage persists, especially in poor and rural parts of countries in the developing world. It may be part of local tradition; parents may believe it safeguards their daughters' future; poverty or conflict may propel it. But more often than not, child marriage is the outcome of fewer choices. Girls who miss out or drop out of school are especially vulnerable to it—while the more exposure a girl has to formal education and the better-off her family is, the more likely marriage is to be postponed.

And that is the heart of the matter – when girls have a choice, they marry later. Parents, communities and countries want the very best for their girls. The best for girls is the product of education, good health, including sexual and reproductive health, and broad choices that are to be freely made, not only in regards to marriage, but in all aspects of her life.

Investing in girls, developing their social and economic assets, ensuring they have access to education and health services, and ensuring that they can postpone marriage until they are ready; all this means greater dignity for women. It also means healthier families and higher levels of gender equality. This in turn makes for stronger societies and more vibrant economies. Investment in later marriage for girls is investment in development for everyone.

No society can afford the lost opportunity, waste of talent, or personal exploitation that child marriage causes. And that is why we are publishing this study to show what the evidence tells us about this harmful practice and to assist decision makers sharpen their focus on the urgent protection of girls' human rights. Respect for girls' human rights requires that we prevent and end child marriage and demands that we actively support girls who are already married. Human rights realized for girls is simply the fulfillment of our duty to them. It is the only course by which we can avert what otherwise is the human tragedy of child marriage.

Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin
Executive Director, UNFPA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite near-universal commitments to end child marriage, one in three girls in developing countries (excluding China) will probably be married before they are 18. One out of nine girls will be married before their 15th birthday. Most of these girls are poor, less-educated, and living in rural areas. Over 67 million women 20-24 year old in 2010 had been married as girls. Half were in Asia, one-fifth in Africa. In the next decade 14.2 million girls under 18 will be married every year. This will rise to an average of 15.1 million girls a year, starting in 2021 until 2030, if present trends continue.

While most countries allow girls to marry before they turn 18 with parental or other consent, poverty often underlies child marriage. Humanitarian crises exacerbate girls' vulnerability. Some parents genuinely believe that marriage will secure their daughters' future, while others see their daughters as a burden or even a commodity. Child marriage stands in the way of ensuring that girls have healthy and productive lives. Child marriage directly threatens health and wellbeing: complications from pregnancy and childbirth together are the main cause of death among adolescent girls 15-19 in developing countries.

Reaching puberty should mark the beginning of a gradual transition to a healthy and productive adulthood. Instead, for many girls, puberty marks an accelerating trajectory into inequality. Child marriage is a primary source of this, curtailing a critical period for growth, learning, identity formation and experimentation: each of which is essential if maturation into fully rounded human beings is to be unhindered.

International conventions declare that child marriage is a violation of human rights because it denies girls the right to decide when and with whom to marry. This report is intended to help policymakers prevent this violation of girls' rights. It summarizes available data and evidence, while offering advice on the thicket of issues involved, and suggests prioritized actions to reduce and eventually eliminate child marriage.

If nothing changes, developing countries will witness an increase in child marriage: 142 million child marriages in 2011-2020 and 151 million in the subsequent decade. As the numbers of girls who are married as children grows, the numbers of children bearing children will increase and deaths among girls will rise. Given the time lag in the impacts of changing population dynamics, even a reduced rate of child marriage, will mean that absolute numbers may grow for some time ahead.

It is urgent therefore that social norms that serve to legitimate child marriage change. These can and do start to change, once parents and communities understand the harm that child marriage does and once they are able to identify alternatives that discourage and eventually will end the practice. Promising strategies for change are in evidence but they need more investment.

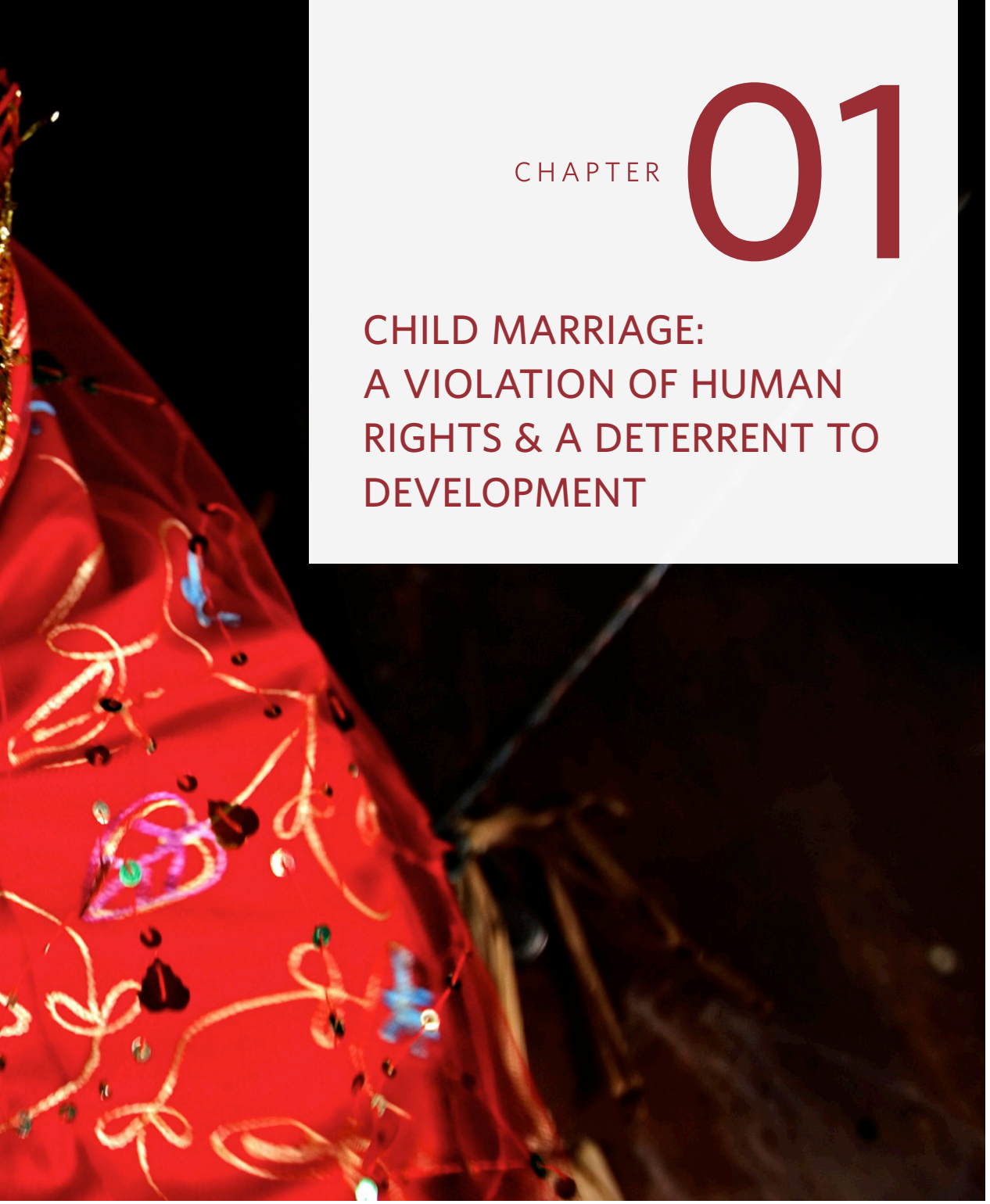
Ending child marriage will help countries reach the Millennium Development Goals, and should be a high priority in the post-2015 development agenda. Each country should collect and analyze its own data to help target geographic "hotspot" areas where high proportions and numbers of girls are at risk. Policies and programmes should be designed accordingly. Policies are needed across sectors to delay marriage, including raising the legal minimum age at marriage to 18, ensuring that girls go to school and attend beyond primary level, addressing underlying factors perpetuating the practice, identifying alternatives and creating opportunities for girls, and

reaching out to communities to support these moves. Girls need, education, health, social and livelihood skills to become fully empowered citizens. Most immediately important is helping already married girls to avoid early pregnancy and when pregnant have access to appropriate care during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum (including access to family planning).

UNFPA works with governments and civil society partners at all levels to promote and protect the human rights of girls. We support the development of girls' education, economic and health assets, including by enabling the provision of sexual and reproductive health information and services, drawing attention to the risks associated with child marriage, and supporting community-owned solutions. UNFPA also advocates steps to enable the most vulnerable girls to defer marriage and more fully access their human rights to make an appropriate and gradual transition into adulthood.

SUMEENA, AGE 15 (Nepal)
Sumeena leaves her home to meet her groom, Prakash, 16. The harmful practice of child marriage is common in Nepal. Many Hindu families believe blessings will come upon them if they marry off their girls before their first menstruation.

Photo by Stephanie Sinclair / VII Photo / Too Young To Wed



CHAPTER 01

CHILD MARRIAGE: A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS & A DETERRENT TO DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1

CHILD MARRIAGE: A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS & DETERRENT TO DEVELOPMENT

Despite national laws and international agreements, child marriage remains a real and present threat to the human rights, lives and health of children, especially girls, in more than a hundred countries. One in three girls in low and middle-income countries (excluding China) will marry before the age of 18. One in nine girls will marry before their fifteenth birthday. In the least-developed countries the prevalence of child marriage is even higher—nearly one in two.[1] If present trends continue, the number of child marriages each year, 14.2 million in 2010, will be over 14 per cent higher by 2030, nearly 15.1 million. In South Asia alone, 130 million girls are likely to marry as children between 2010 and 2030.

Child marriage occurs when one or both of the spouses are below the age of 18. Child marriage is a violation of Article 16(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses." Article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) states that women should have the same right as men to "freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent", and that the "betrothal and marriage of a child shall have no legal effect" [2].

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) sets out the human rights of children: the right to survive; the right to develop to their fullest; the right to protection from harmful practices, abuse and exploitation, and the right to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. In signing the Convention, governments also committed to take "all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolish traditional practices prejudicial to the health of the children,"[3] which includes, among other practices, female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage.

Any departure from the obligations enshrined in these conventions is a violation of human rights. By becoming party to these conventions, governments agree to hold themselves accountable for violations.

In a landmark international consensus, the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994, countries agreed on measures to eliminate child marriage [4] as well as to "strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses" [5].

As a grave and continuing violation of human rights, the persistence, incidence and prevalence of child marriage are attracting broad attention. This report presents policy makers and programme managers with evidence and recommendations designed to assist needed efforts to reduce and eventually eliminate this harmful practice, and the disparities associated with it, in order to better protect and uphold girls' human rights.

DEVASTATING – EVEN LIFE-THREATENING – CONSEQUENCES

The term "child marriage" is used to describe a legal or customary union between two people, of whom one or both spouses is below the age of 18.[6] While boys can be subjected to child marriage, the practice affects girls in greater numbers and with graver consequences. Child marriage is often referred to as "early" and/or "forced" marriage since children, given their age, are not able to give free, prior and informed consent to their marriage partners or to the timing of their marriage. Many girls, for example, may have little understanding of or exposure to other life options. They may "willingly" accept marriage as their allotted fate. An element of coercion may also be involved if families apply social or emotional pressure or urge marriage for economic reasons, or further advocate marriage in the (misguided) belief that such a union will keep their daughters safe.

Yet, for millions of girls, marriage is anything but safe and anything but consistent with their best interests. Child marriage violates girls' rights and it does so in a number of ways. It effectively brings a girl's childhood and adolescence to a premature and unnatural end by imposing adult roles and responsibilities before she is physically, psychologically and emotionally prepared. It is not uncommon for marriage to impose social isolation on girls bringing unwanted separation from their friends and family. Often child marriage brings an end to a girl's chance of continued education.[7] Girls may be removed from school for many reasons: recent research suggests that dropping out of school is less likely to be a direct consequence of child marriage than of poverty, the low status afforded to women, and social norms that lead parents to discount the value of investing in girls and their education. But under these conditions, when girls drop out of school, they become even more vulnerable to child marriage.[8]

Once married, girls are likely to feel, and in many cases are, powerless to refuse sex. They are likely to find it difficult to insist on condom use by their husbands, who commonly are older and more sexually experienced, making the girls especially vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.[9] At its worst, child marriage can be tantamount to bonded labour or enslavement. It can be a sentence to regular exposure to domestic or sexual violence, and a pathway to commercial exploitation.[10]

Married girls are often under pressure to become pregnant immediately or soon after marriage, although they are still children themselves and know little about sex or reproduction. A pregnancy too early in life before a girl's body is fully mature is a major risk to both mother and baby. Complications of pregnancy and childbirth are the main causes of death among adolescent girls ages 15-19 years old in developing countries. Among the disabilities associated with early childbirth is obstetric fistula, an injury which leaves girls in constant pain, vulnerable to infection, incontinent, and often shunned by their husbands, families and communities.

Nearly 16 million teenage girls aged 15-19 years old in developing countries give birth every year. In nine out of ten cases, the mother is already married. Preventing child marriage would significantly help to reduce early pregnancy, and the associated maternal death or disability. At the same time, girls would face a reduced risk of HIV infection.

Beyond the immediate implications, child marriage denies girls the opportunity to fully develop their potential as healthy, productive and empowered citizens. Child marriage robs girls of their girlhood, entrenching them and their future families in poverty, limiting their life choices, and generating high development costs for communities.

THE LEGAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

A recent analysis of the world's marriage patterns showed that although child marriage persists, the minimum legal age for marriage without parental consent is 18 years in most countries.[11] Families and girls themselves may simply not know that laws against child marriage exist, and enforcement of such laws is often lax. Laws also vary widely, and exceptions are made on different

grounds, most commonly when parents or other authorities, such as a judge or community elder, grant their consent.

In 2010, 158 countries reported that 18 years was the minimum legal age for marriage for women without parental consent or approval by a pertinent authority.[12] However, in 146 countries, state or customary law allows girls younger than 18 to marry with the consent of parents or other authorities; in 52 countries, girls under age 15 can marry with parental consent. In contrast, 18 is the legal age for marriage without consent among males in 180 countries. Additionally, in 105 countries, boys can marry with the consent of a parent or a pertinent authority, and in 23 countries, boys under age 15 can marry with parental consent.[13] The lack of gender equality in the law's treatment of the issue of consent reinforces social norms that dictate it is somehow acceptable for girls to marry earlier than boys. Social norms and customs may further dictate that once a girl is married, she be regarded as a woman, even though she may be barely 12 years old.

Even with the appropriate laws against child marriage in place, the practice persists for a variety of complex, interrelated reasons. Men exercise the preponderance of power in nearly every aspect of life, which restricts women's and girls' exercise of their rights and denies them an equal role in their households and communities. Unequal gender norms put a much higher value on boys and men than on girls and women. When girls from birth lack the same perceived value as boys, families and communities may discount the benefits of educating and investing in their daughters' development.

In addition, girls' perceived value may shift once they reach puberty and their sexuality suddenly looms front and centre. Child marriage is often seen as a safeguard against premarital sex, and the duty to protect the girl from sexual harassment and violence is transferred from father to husband.

Poverty is a major factor underlying child marriage. Many parents genuinely believe that marriage will secure their daughters' futures and that it is in their best interests. Alternatively, girls may be viewed as an economic burden, as a commodity, or a means for settling familial debts or disputes, or securing social, economic or political alliances.[14] Customary requirements such as dowries or bride prices may also enter into families' considerations, especially in communities where families can give a lower dowry for younger brides.[15]

Girls' vulnerability to child marriage can increase during humanitarian crises when family and social structures are disrupted. In times of conflict and natural disaster, parents may marry off their young daughters as a last resort, either to bring the family some income in time of economic hardship, or to offer the girl some sort of protection, particularly in contexts where sexual violence is common. These girls are called "famine brides", for example, in food-insecure Kenya.[16] Young girls were married to "tsunami widowers" in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and India[17] as a way to obtain state subsidies for marrying and starting a family.[18] During the conflicts in Liberia, Uganda and Sudan, girls were abducted and given as "bush wives" to warlords, or even given by their families in exchange for protection.

Social norms and perceptions that tolerate inequity in gender roles and responsibilities must change, Programmes around the world, including those supported by UNFPA, are making headway. Once parents and communities understand the irreparable harm that the practice of child marriage can inflict on girls, practices can shift. Alternatives to child marriage that build up girls' assets, coupled with activities to change harmful social norms, must be introduced and implemented so that girls can enjoy the childhood to which they are entitled, and have the space to grow, learn and be a girl. Just as important is instilling the notion that every person is endowed with inalienable human rights and should be treated with dignity and respect.

CHILD MARRIAGE AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As the 2015 deadline for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) approaches, governments and development partners are recognizing that tackling the issue of child marriage will help many countries to close the gap in progress towards the Goals.

GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Supporting girls to avoid child marriage, to stay in school, and to delay having children translates into greater opportunities for them to develop new skills and generate income, building an economic base that will help lift future generations out of poverty.

GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

A girl's life options can be abruptly diminished if she drops out of school and marries young. Their limited education reduces their chances of acquiring skills and economic opportunities. Mothers with little education are less likely to keep their own children in school, perpetuating a downward cycle of deprivation.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

Child brides have little say in when or whom they will marry, have little influence with their husbands and in-laws, have little opportunity to develop awareness of their rights, and are in no position to claim or demand them. Their husbands tend to be older, sometimes much older. These large age gaps reinforce power differentials between girls and their husbands. Girls who marry before age 18 are more likely to experience violence within marriage than girls who marry later.[19] Marriage often ends a girl's opportunity for education, and with it the possibility of access to better-paid work and decision-making positions outside the home.

GOAL 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

Stillbirths and deaths during the first week of life are 50 per cent higher among babies born to adolescent mothers than among babies born to mothers in their twenties.[20] Children of adolescent mothers are more likely to be premature and have low birth weight.

GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

Every year, nearly 16 million adolescent girls aged 15-19 years old give birth; about 95 per cent of these births occur in low- and middle-income countries.[21] Ninety per cent of these adolescent mothers in developing countries are married. These young, first-time mothers face much higher risks during pregnancy and childbirth than older women. Early childbearing is associated with more pregnancies at shorter intervals during a mother's lifetime. These factors—a young age, multiple children and a short interval between births—are all linked to a higher risk of death and disability related to pregnancy or childbirth.[22] Use of contraception is lowest among the poorest women and those with no education – including the girls most vulnerable to child marriage.[23]

GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES

Young girls are especially vulnerable to HIV because of their biology, and the heightened risk can increase with marriage, especially for child brides who marry older, more sexually-experienced husbands.[24] At the same time, girls may lack the power to negotiate safer sex and have little access to information or services to prevent either pregnancy or infection.

The MDGs remain unfinished business, and preparations for a post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda are underway. Political and financial investments are urgently needed as part of national strategies for poverty reduction and social justice to end the practice of child marriage, and to make programmes for the most vulnerable girls a higher priority in the post-2015 development agenda. Promising strategies and evidence-based approaches for girls most at risk have been developed and tested, but require more targeted investments. With the full commitment of governments, development practitioners, civil societies, communities, families and girls themselves, a world without child marriage can become a reality.

HOW THIS REPORT IS ORGANIZED

This report presents a summary of the empirical evidence surrounding child marriage in developing countries—prevalence, trends and disparities—using data drawn from household surveys. It also provides a glimpse into the future by sketching out what countries may face if current trends in child marriage continue.

CHAPTER 2 looks at how rates of child marriage are calculated. It explains the main indicators, describes data sources and limitations, and defines background variables used to disaggregate data.

CHAPTER 3 describes the extent and geographic distribution of child marriage among developing countries at the global, regional and country level, using the latest available data. It also assesses trends in child marriage, explores disparities within and among countries and regions, and provides evidence of some of the ways in which child brides are disadvantaged.

CHAPTER 4 looks at disparities in rates of child marriage associated with key social and economic variables (age, urban or rural residence, educational attainment and household wealth), school participation and access to reproductive health services. Disaggregating data according to these background characteristics reveals the extent and growth of internal disparities that may easily be overlooked when relying on global, regional or national averages. It also provides entry points for the development of appropriate policies and programmes to prevent child marriage and address the needs of girls who are already married.

CHAPTER 5 describes the challenges that developing countries can expect if nothing is done to reduce the incidence of child marriage. The chapter estimates the number of girls already born that are likely to enter into marriage or union over the period 2010–2030, based on current levels of child marriage and past and current population dynamics.

CHAPTER 6 concludes the report with a summary of key findings and their implications for policies and programmes. It describes strategies and approaches that have worked to discourage child marriage, presents successful or promising programmes supported by UNFPA, and outlines an agenda for action.

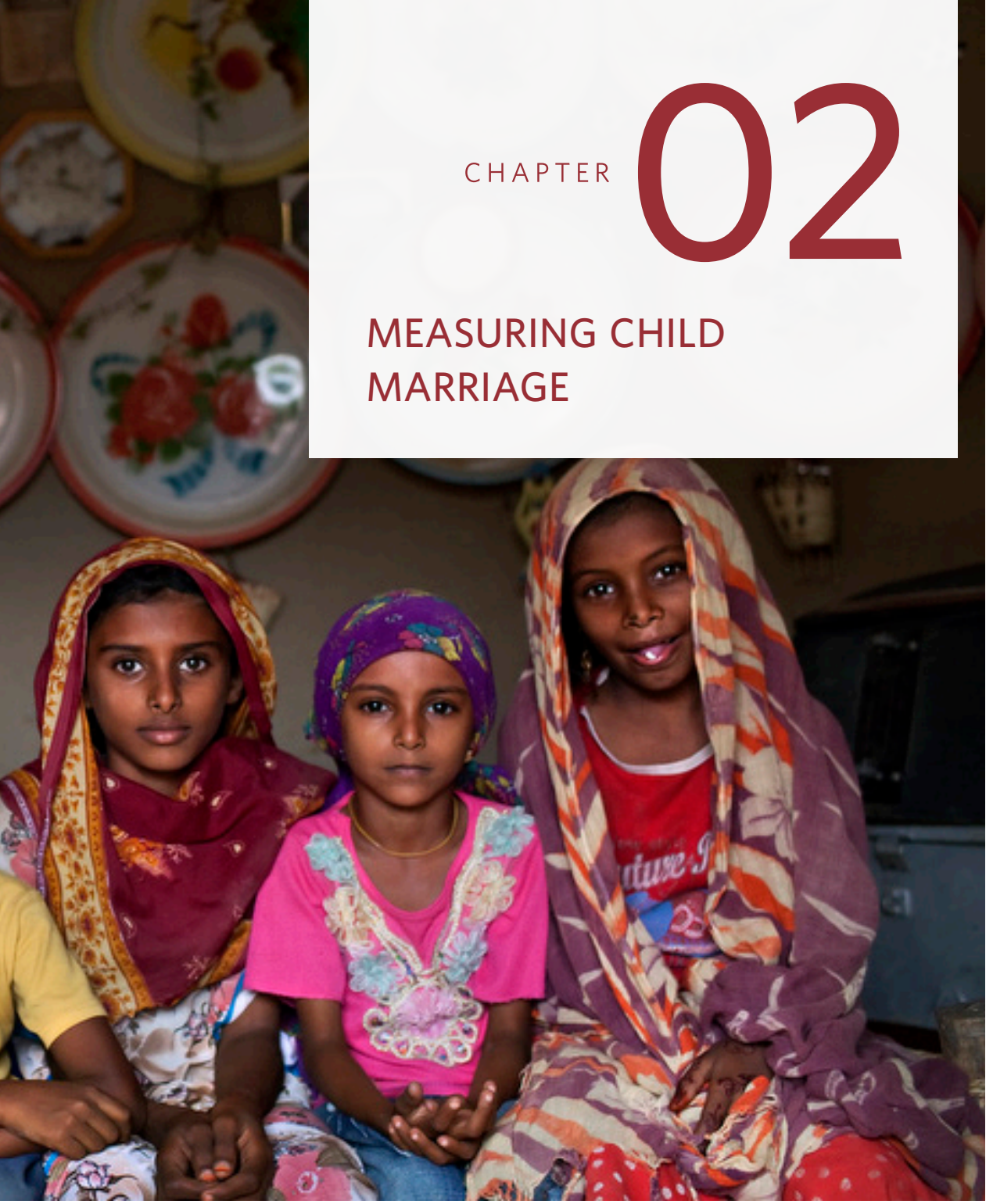
Two **annexes** are included to present country profiles for the ten countries with the levels of child marriage (Annex 1), and the levels if child marriage by country and social and economic characteristics (Annex 2). The data used to produced this report can be accessed at **www.devinfo.info/mdg5b.**

YEMEN
Young girls sit inside a home outside of Al Hudaydah. Yemeni women's rights groups agree that child marriage is rampant in every part of Yemeni society.

Photo by Stephanie Sinclair / VII Photo / Too Young To Wed

CHAPTER 02

MEASURING CHILD MARRIAGE



CHAPTER 2
MEASURING CHILD MARRIAGE

The incidence and prevalence of child marriage is analysed and reported in a variety of ways. A 2012 report from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provides evidence that "Nearly one in every four adolescent girls aged 15-19 in the developing world (excluding China) is currently married or in union." The report goes on to say that "More than one third of women aged 20-24 in the developing world were married by age 18....."[25] Although both estimates approximate the extent of child marriage, it is also true that the indicators provide different information.

For the purposes of this report, the latter indicator – women 20 to 24 years old who first married or entered into union before age 18 – will be used exclusively, for two reasons: First, the percentage of girls aged 15 to 19 who are married or in union at any given time includes girls who are 18 and 19 and no longer children, according to the internationally accepted definition. Second, the indicator includes girls aged 15, 16 and 17 who are classified as single, but who could eventually marry or enter into a union before the age of 18. By taking a retrospective view, the preferred indicator – covering women aged 20 to 24 – is not affected by these limitations and so more accurately approximates the real extent of child marriage.

DATA SOURCES AND LIMITATIONS

The bulk of data on child marriage has been collected though household surveys —specifically, the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) and the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS)[26] — using national representative samples. The surveys were conducted in close collaboration with national counterparts, such as national statistics offices or ministries of health.

The resulting data were used to produce country, regional and global estimates of child marriage and to assess trends over time. Estimates are also provided on disparities in the rates of child marriage based on wealth, education and rural or urban residence. Although other variables, such as ethnicity and religion, also appear to influence child marriage levels and trends, they are absent from this report and will undergo later, more detailed, analysis.

Statistics on child marriage reflect data available for 107 developing countries. Together, these countries represented over two thirds (68 per cent) of the developing world's women aged 20 to 24 years in 2010. Every developing region, with the exception of East Asia and the Pacific, has information on child marriage for countries representing 60 per cent or more of its population.[27]

The analysis of trends in child marriage in Chapter 3 is based on results from the two most recent household surveys available in 48 countries. These countries represent half the population of all developing countries (80 per cent in the case of African countries with two available data points). The first surveys were conducted during the period 1986-2006; the second surveys were between 2001 and 2010.

The analysis of disparities and inequalities in Chapter 4 is based on household survey data from 78 developing countries. Trends in disparities (over the period 2000-2010) reflect the situation in only 48 countries due to the lack of sufficient survey data.

The five regional groupings covered in this report are those used by UNFPA to monitor its work in developing countries. They include Asia and the Pacific, the Arab States, Eastern Europe and

Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa. Asia is broken down into two subregions: East Asia and the Pacific (China is not included for lack of available data) and South Asia. African subregions include Eastern and Southern Africa and Western and Central Africa.

Periodically estimating the extent of child marriage at the global, regional and country levels is a legitimate way to track progress towards its elimination. However, it should also be understood that such estimates represent *averages* only, and mask deviations within and among countries and regions. To identify the most marginalized, excluded or otherwise disadvantaged groups, data are disaggregated according to key variables.

CHILD MARRIAGE INDICATORS

The prevalence of child marriage is calculated as:

$$\frac{\textit{Number of women aged 20 to 24 who indicated that they were married or in union before the age of 18}}{\textit{Total number of women aged 20 to 24}}$$

The background characteristics of women aged 20 to 24, which were used to disaggregate data, are defined as follows:

Place of residence relies on two basic indicators:
- region of country of residence
- urban or rural residence

The levels of education considered are:
- No education
- Primary education
- Secondary or higher education

Household wealth is measured by quintiles:
- Poorest 20%
- Second 20%
- Middle 20%
- Fourth 20%
- Richest 20%

Thus, the prevalence of child marriage among the poorest quintile is interpreted as the percentage of women 20 to 24 years of age from the poorest 20 per cent of households, who were married or in union before their eighteenth birthdays.

The data used to produced this report can be accessed at **www.devinfo.info/mdg5b.**

MAYA, AGE 8 / KISHORE, AGE 13 (India)
Maya and Kishore pose for a wedding photo in their new home.

Photo by Stephanie Sinclair / VII Photo / Too Young To Wed

CHAPTER 03

GLOBAL & REGIONAL LEVELS AND TRENDS

CHAPTER 3

GLOBAL & REGIONAL LEVELS AND TRENDS

This chapter describes the extent and geographic distribution of child marriage among developing countries at the global, regional and country level. It also looks at recent trends. Comparing the prevalence of child marriage across regions reveals the diversity of situations behind the global average. Comparing regions as well as countries highlights existing challenges along with signs of progress towards the elimination of this harmful practice.

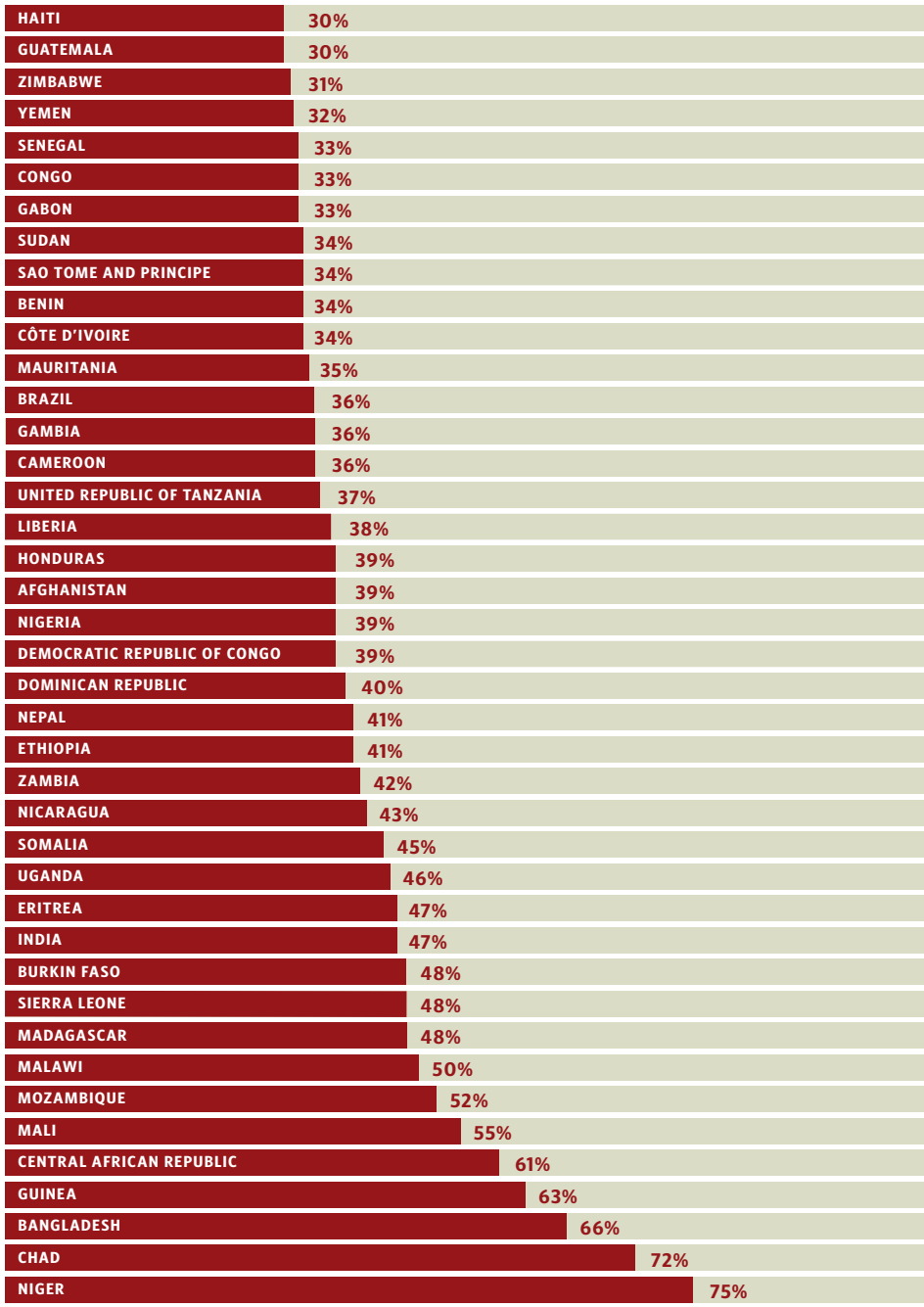
CHILD BRIDES: MORE THAN ONE WOMAN IN THREE

For the period 2000-2011, just over one third (an estimated 34 per cent) of women aged 20 to 24 years in developing regions were married or in union before their eighteenth birthday. In 2010 this was equivalent to almost 67 million women. About 12 per cent of them were married or in union before age 15.

The prevalence of child marriage varies substantially among countries, ranging from only 2 per cent in Algeria to 75 per cent in Niger. In 41 countries, 30 per cent or more of women aged 20 to 24 were married or in union when they were still children (Figure 1).

In 41 countries, the prevalence of child marriage is 30 per cent or more

FIGURE 1
41 COUNTRIES WITH 30 PERCENT OR MORE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO MARRIED OR ENTERED INTO UNION BY AGE 18, 2000-2011



Source: UNFPA database using household surveys (DHS and MICS) completed during the period 2000-2011.

Trends in child marriage are more difficult to assess, since not all 107 developing countries with data on child marriage have conducted two consecutive household surveys. Table 1 is based on 48 countries with adequate trend data. It shows countries by region that have experienced a decline in the prevalence of child marriage, disaggregated by urban and rural populations. Some countries have managed to reduce the incidence of child marriage in either urban or rural areas or both. However, the weight of evidence from these countries suggests that little progress has been made in reducing rates of child marriage globally.

Despite gains in selected countries, little progress has been made in preventing child marriage in developing countries

TABLE 1
COUNTRIES SHOWING A DECLINE IN THE RATE OF CHILD MARRIAGE BY REGION

REGION	COUNTRIES WITH SIGNIFICANT* DECLINES IN RATES OF CHILD MARRIAGE
Sub-Saharan Africa	Benin (U), Cameroon (U), Congo (R), Ethiopia, Lesotho, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe (R)
Arab States	Jordan (R)
East Asia and the Pacific	Indonesia (R), Philippines (R)
South Asia	Bangladesh (U), Nepal
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Armenia
Latin America and the Caribbean	Bolivia, Guyana (R)

Source: Results from two consecutive household surveys (MICS and DHS) in 48 countries.
* Measured as changes of 10% or more in the prevalence of child marriage between the two surveys.
(U) Changes observed in the urban areas only.
(R) Changes observed in the rural areas only.

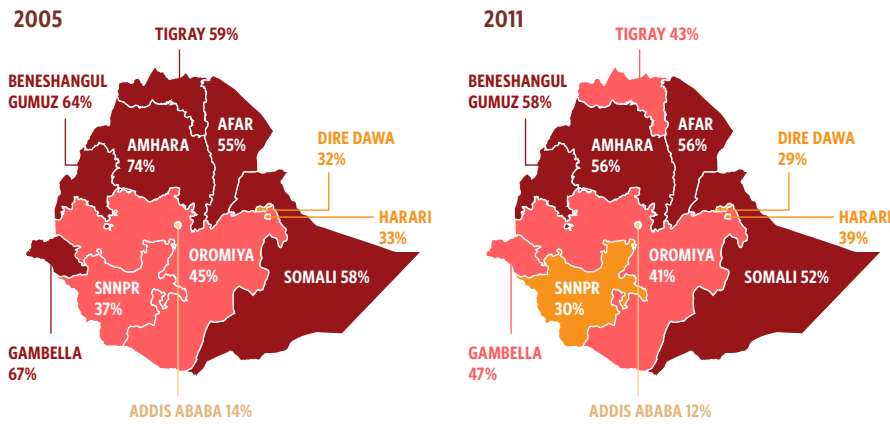
However, we know that the incidence of child marriage had already to drastically changed in some countries across different regions. In Ethiopia and Nepal, the prevalence of child marriage declined substantially (20 per cent or more) during a short period of five years (Map 1 below). This is also observed across regions: SNNPR, Tigray and Gambella in Ethiopia and in all regions but the Far West Region of Nepal. Similarly, in Bolivia, the prevalence of child marriage has declined in both urban and rural areas of four of the country's nine departments.[28] Other countries showing significant decreases of 10 per cent or more in the prevalence of child marriage include Armenia, Guyana, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The incidence of child marriage has already started to change in countries such as Ethiopia, Nepal and Bolivia

MAP 1
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BY AGE 18

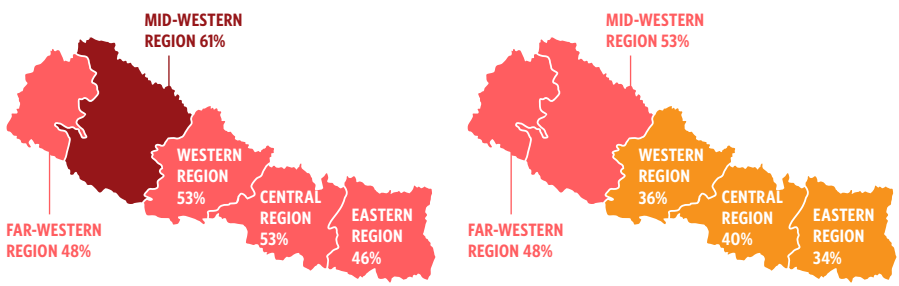
ETHIOPIA

PERCENTAGE
- Less than 20.0
- 20.0–34.9
- 35.0–49.9
- 50.0 and above
- Data not available



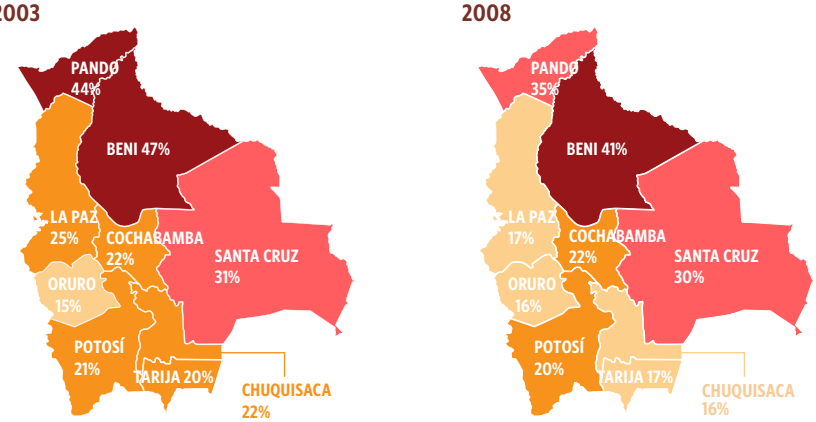
NEPAL

PERCENTAGE
- Less than 20.0
- 20.0–39.9
- 40.0–54.9
- 55.0 and above
- Data not available



BOLIVIA

PERCENTAGE
- Less than 20.0
- 20.0–29.9
- 30.0–39.9
- 40.0 and above
- Data not available



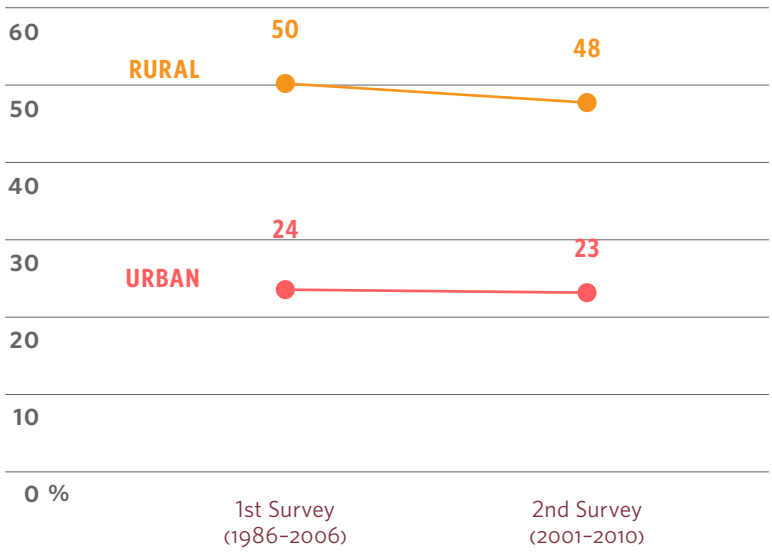
CHILD MARRIAGE LEVELS HAVE NOT CHANGED DURING THE PERIOD 2000-2010

The results to date point to three main conclusions:

- The practice of child marriage is still high in many developing countries (61 countries have a child marriage prevalence of 20 per cent or higher).
- Child marriage at the global level has remained relatively constant over the last 10 years (at around 50 per cent in rural areas and 23 per cent in urban areas) (Figure 2).
- Many developing countries lack evidence to document prevalence and trends in child marriage and are therefore unable to develop appropriate policies and programmes to address it. For the preparation of this report, for example, data disaggregated by demographic, social and economic characteristics were unavailable for Afghanistan, Bhutan, Brazil, Central African Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nauru, Marshall Islands, Mexico, El Salvador, South Sudan and Yemen—all countries in which the prevalence of child marriage is high.

Over the last 10 years, little change has been seen in the rates of child marriage in either rural and urban areas

FIGURE 2
TRENDS IN THE PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGE BY URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENCE



Source: UNFPA database using DHS and MICS for 48 countries with two data points.

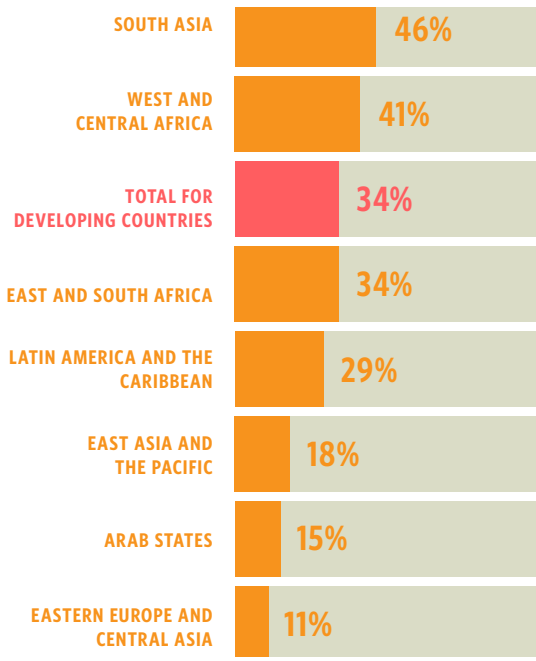
WIDE DISPARITIES IN CHILD MARRIAGE BOTH WITHIN AND AMONG REGIONS AND COUNTRIES

While the practice of child marriage is a global issue affecting most regions, it is most common in South Asia and in West and Central Africa, where two out of five girls marry or enter into union before age of 18 (46 per cent and 41 per cent, respectively), as shown in Figure 3. Lower percentages are observed in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Arab States and East Asia and the Pacific (11 per cent, 15 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively). In Latin America and the Caribbean, prevalence is higher, at 29 per cent, just under East and Central Africa (34 per cent).

Substantial variations in the rates of child marriage are also found among countries within regions. The highest prevalence in South Asia, for example, is found in Bangladesh (66 per cent); in West and Central Africa, in Niger (75 per cent) and Chad (72 per cent). In Latin America and the Caribbean and East and Southern Africa, values are 40 per cent or more in the Dominican Republic (40 per cent) and Mozambique (52 per cent). Among the regions with a lower prevalence of child marriage—Eastern Europe and Central Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, and the Arab States—we also find countries where a relatively large proportion of children become brides, as in the Republic of Moldova (19 per cent), Indonesia (22 per cent) and Yemen (32 per cent). Naturally, heavily populated countries tend to outweigh regional averages.

In South Asia and West and Central Africa, two out of five girls are child brides

FIGURE 3
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BY AGE 18, BY REGION, 2000-2010

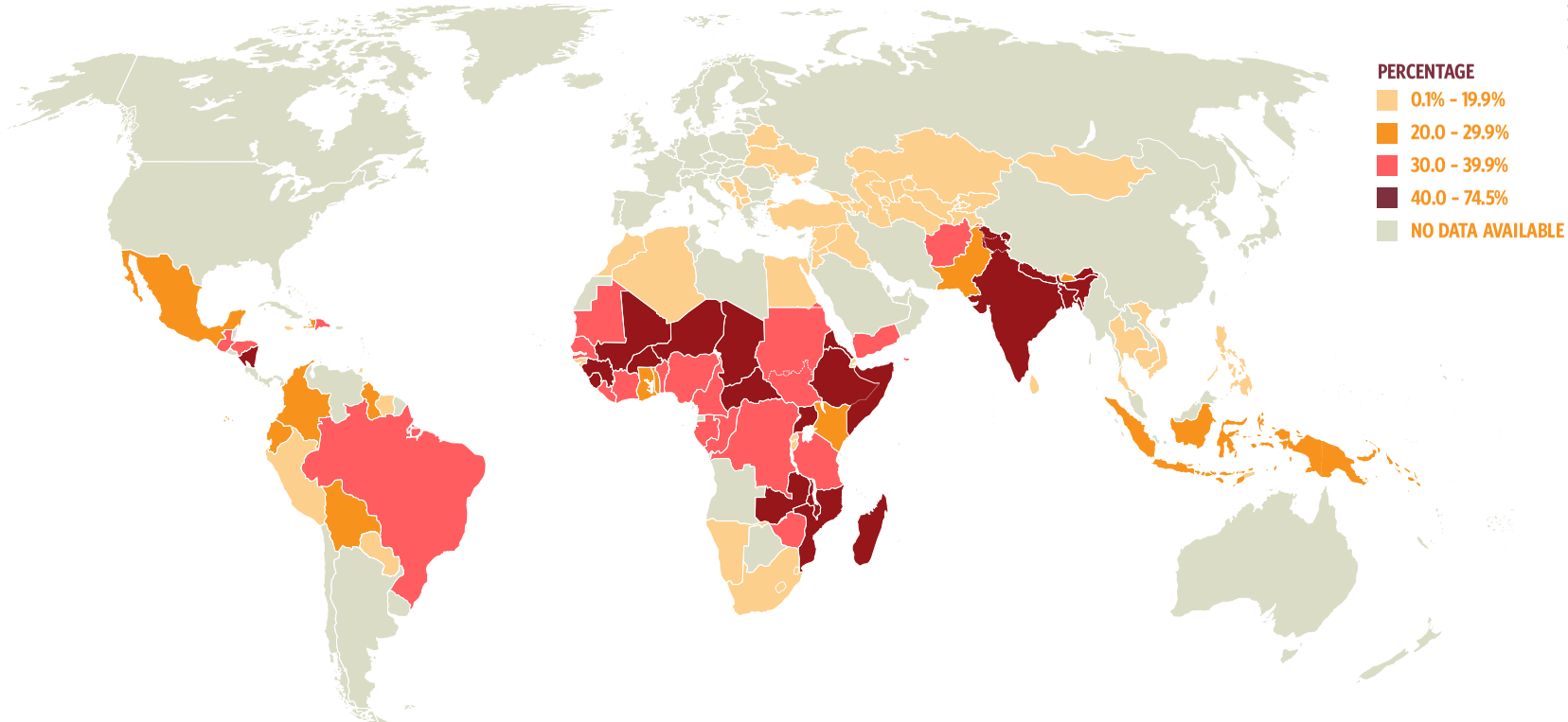


Source: UNFPA database using DHS, MICS and other household surveys.

It is also true that groups of countries with high levels of child marriage tend to be concentrated in particular regions. Map 2 shows that the highest concentration of such countries are found in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where both the regional average and data for individual countries reveal very high rates that are above the global average (34 per cent).

Rates of child marriage show wide variations within regions.

MAP 2
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BY AGE 18, 2000-2011

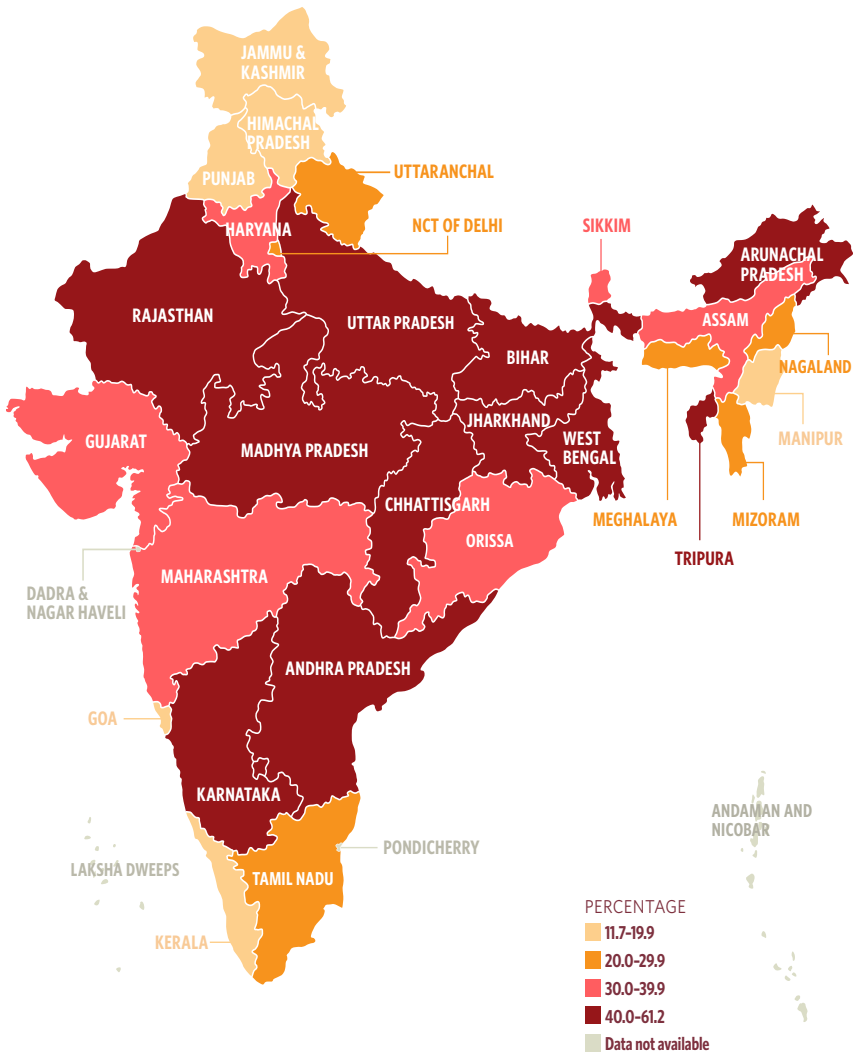


Source: UNFPA database using DHS, MICS and other household surveys.

Wide variations in the prevalence of child marriage are also found within countries, as Map 3, of India, illustrates. Data from a 2006 National Family Health Survey (NFHS) show that Indian states such as Goa, Manipur and Kerala have prevalence rates of 15 per cent or less (11 per cent, 13 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively). At the opposite extreme, in a number of states, at least half of girls are married or in union before age 18, as in Uttar Pradesh (53 per cent), Andhra Pradesh (55 per cent) and Bihar (60 per cent). Such variations are common within most of the countries analysed and provide an important entry point for policymakers and programmers seeking to eliminate this harmful practice.

Wide disparities in the prevalence of child marriage are also found within countries

MAP 3
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BY AGE 18, IN 2006



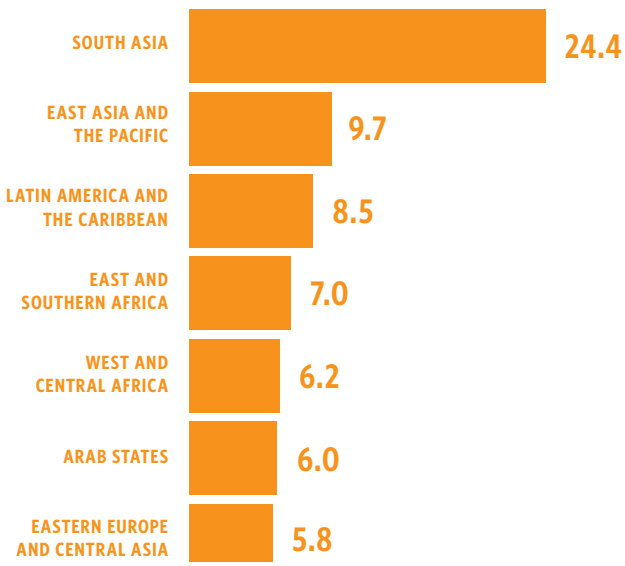
Source: UNFPA database using DHS, MICS and other household surveys.

CHILD MARRIAGE IN ASIA: A QUESTION OF NUMBERS

Looking at absolute numbers rather than rates, a different picture emerges. This is the result of large variations in population size from region to region. For example, although West and Central Africa has a much higher prevalence of child marriage than East Asia and the Pacific (41 per cent versus 18 per cent), far more women aged 20-24 in East Asia and the Pacific were married as children, 9.7 million compared with 6.2 million in West and Central Africa (Figure 4). South Asia has an even higher prevalence of child marriage in both relative and absolute terms (46 per cent and 24.4 million). Overall, in 2010, over 67 million women aged 20 to 24 had been married or in union before their eighteenth birthday. Asia (excluding China) accounted for half of these child brides; sub-Saharan Africa for 13.2 million (almost 20 per cent) of them.

About half of the child brides in the developing world live in Asia, excluding China

FIGURE 4
NUMBER OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD IN 2010 WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BY AGE 18, BY REGION IN 2010 (MILLION)



Source: UNFPA database using DHS, MICS and other household surveys.

GHULAM, AGE 11 / FAIZ, AGE 40 (Afghanistan)
Ghulam and Faiz, age 40, sit for a portrait in her home before their wedding in Afghanistan. According to the U.S. Department of State report "Human Rights Practices for 2011," approximately 60 percent of girls were married younger than the legal age of 16. Once the girl's father has agreed to the engagement, she is pulled out of school immediately.

Photo by Stephanie Sinclair / VII Photo / Too Young To Wed

CHAPTER 04

DISPARITIES & INEQUALITIES

CHAPTER 4
DISPARITIES & INEQUALITIES

A girl's level of education, the wealth and the location of the household in which she lives, all affect the likelihood that she will become a child bride. This chapter examines disparities in the prevalence of child marriage with the aim of giving policymakers and programmers the knowledge they need to reduce and eventually eliminate this harmful practice and the inequities associated with it. Data for this analysis are drawn from 78 developing countries in which a Demographic and Health Survey or Multiple Indicators Clusters Survey was undertaken over the period 2000–2011. These countries represent close to 60 per cent of the population of all developing countries.

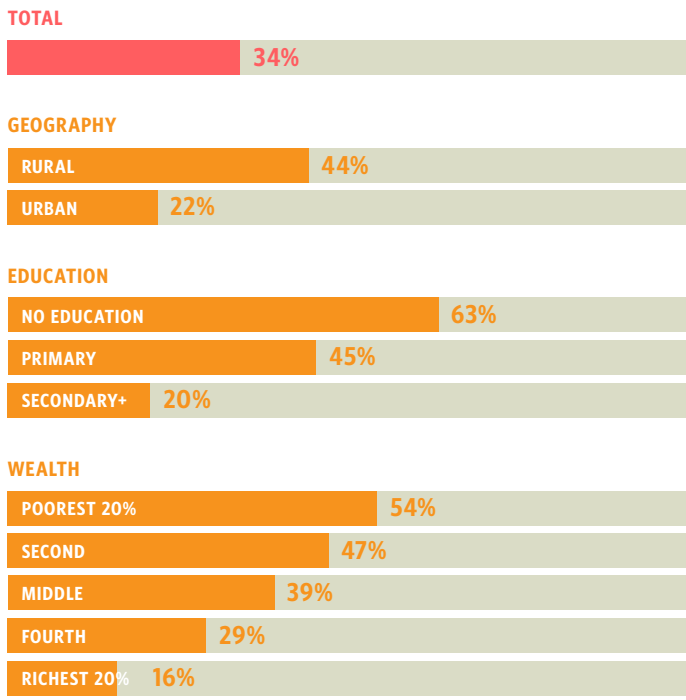
EFFECTS OF RESIDENCE, EDUCATION AND WEALTH

The results show that girls living in rural areas of the developing world tend to marry or enter into union at twice the rate of their urban counterparts (44 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively). A correspondence can also be found between the prevalence of child marriage in rural areas generally and the values observed among remote rural regions of a country (individual country profiles on child marriage can be found at: www.devinfo.info/mdg5b/profiles).

Education is one of the interventions that tend to lessen the probability that girls will marry before their eighteenth birthday. Girls with a primary education are twice as likely to marry or enter into union as those with a secondary or higher education. However, those with no education are three times more likely to marry or enter into union before age 18 as those with a secondary or higher education (Figure 5). In the case of Ethiopia, for example, women 20 to 29 years old with secondary or higher education marry at an average age that is 3.2 years higher than that of women of the same age with no education. They also have an average of 1.7 fewer children than their counterparts with no education.

Girls who are poor, have little or no education and live in rural areas are most likely to marry or enter into union before age 18

FIGURE 5
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BEFORE AGE 18 BY BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS. 2000-2010



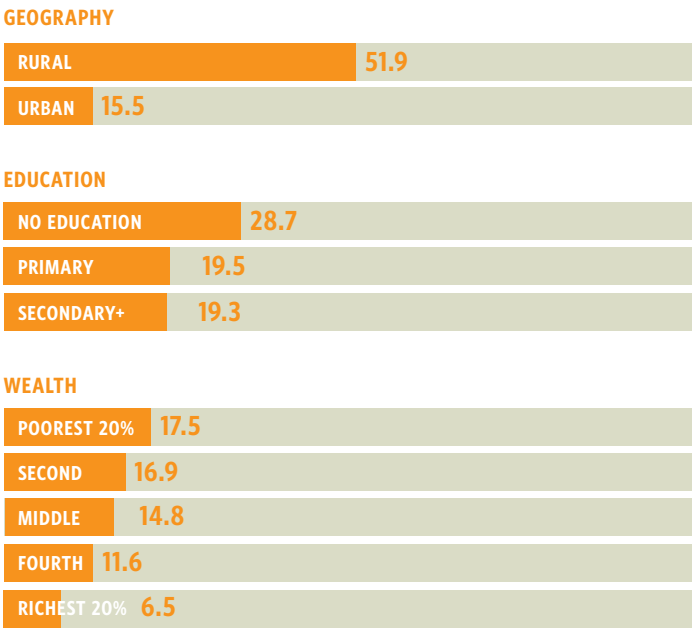
Source: UNFPA database using DHS/MICS from 78 developing countries over the period 2000-2011.

Household wealth, represented in Figure 7 by wealth quintiles, also appears to affect the rate of child marriage. According to this analysis, more than half (54 per cent) of girls in the poorest 20 per cent of households are child brides, compared to only 16 per cent of girls in the richest 20 per cent of households. Note that although there is a gradual decline in child marriage as wealth increases, the prevalence of child marriage is still substantially higher in the fourth quintile than in the richest quintile. There is a remarkable correspondence between lower rates of child marriage and characteristics commonly associated with higher levels of development such as urban residence, secondary or higher education and wealth.

A somewhat different perspective emerges when disparities are analysed by absolute numbers of women (Figure 6) versus relative values (Figure 5). In 2010, over 67 million of women aged 20 to 24 were married or in union before age 18. This means that, on average, 13.5 million of them wed or entered into union every year before age 18. The majority of these girls lived in rural areas (51.9 million) – three times the number estimated for their urban counterparts (15.5 million). The more extreme disparity indicated by absolute numbers of women living in rural or urban areas, compared to relative values, is explained by the fact that rural populations are bigger overall. This emphasizes the importance for policymakers of considering population dynamics and geographic distribution.

Most child brides live in rural areas – three times as many in urban areas

FIGURE 6
NUMBER OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD IN 2010 WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BEFORE AGE 18 IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN 2012 BY BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS (MILLION)



Source: UNFPA database using DHS or MICS data from 78 developing countries over the period 2000–2011.

Looking at disparities of education and wealth reveals other differences between relative and absolute numbers. The absolute numbers of women aged 20 to 24 with primary education who were married as children (19.5 million) is very similar to the numbers of women with secondary or higher education (19.3 million), despite the fact that girls with primary education have more than twice the probability of marrying or entering into a union before age 18. This is explained by the fact that household surveys asked women aged 20-24 years about their current state of educational attainment—not their educational level at the time they were married. Thus, the calculation of absolute numbers of women reflects a higher number of women with a secondary or higher education than would be the case if educational attainment were reported at the time of marriage or union. Many married girls may well have continued their education, but the exact number is unknown.

When looking at absolute numbers of women married or in union by age 18 in terms of wealth quintiles, the extreme disparities shown in Figure 5 soften somewhat. However, the richest 20% of the households have 2.7 times less women 20-24 years old married before the age 18 than the poorest 20%.

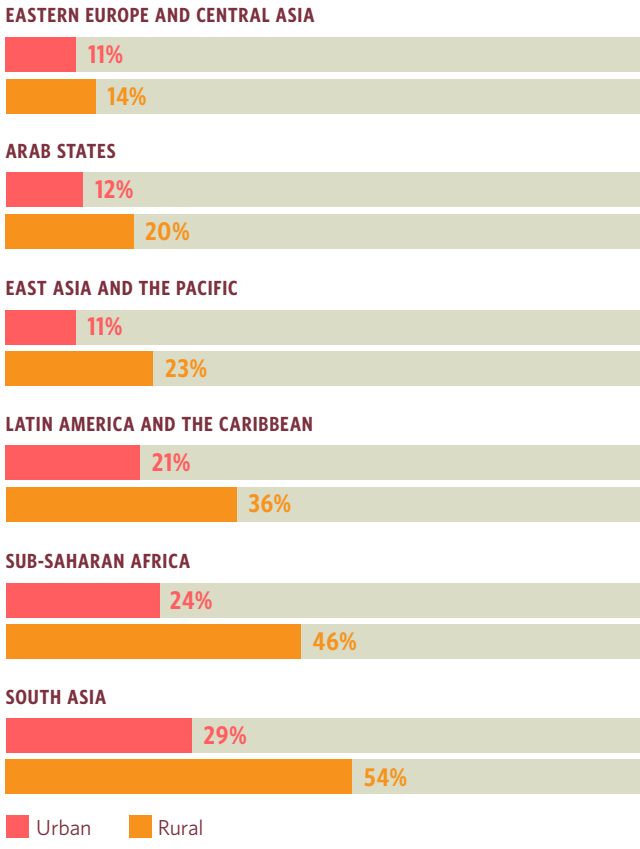
WIDE DISPARITIES IN ALL REGIONS

South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa have the highest prevalence of child marriage (46 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively). They also show the greatest disparities, with 50 per cent or more of girls belonging to the least advantaged groups being married—that is, girls who live in rural areas, have no education and live in the poorest 20 per cent of households (Figures 7, 8 and 9).

In South Asia, the greatest disparity is observed in terms of wealth: girls in the poorest quintile were four times more likely to be married than those in the richest quintile (72 per cent versus 18 per cent). In sub-Saharan Africa, the largest disparities are associated with the level of education: two thirds (66 per cent) of women with no education became child brides, versus 13 per cent of those with secondary of higher education—a rate over five times higher. The other three regions—Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Arab States, and Eastern Asia and the Pacific—which have a lower prevalence of child marriage also show lower disparities among various social and economic groups (Annex 3). Nevertheless, approaches to reducing, and eliminating child marriage among girls should be strongly rooted in providing them with the tools and opportunities for a complete and relevant education, for better economic opportunities and to provide sexual and reproductive health information and services, regardless of where they live.

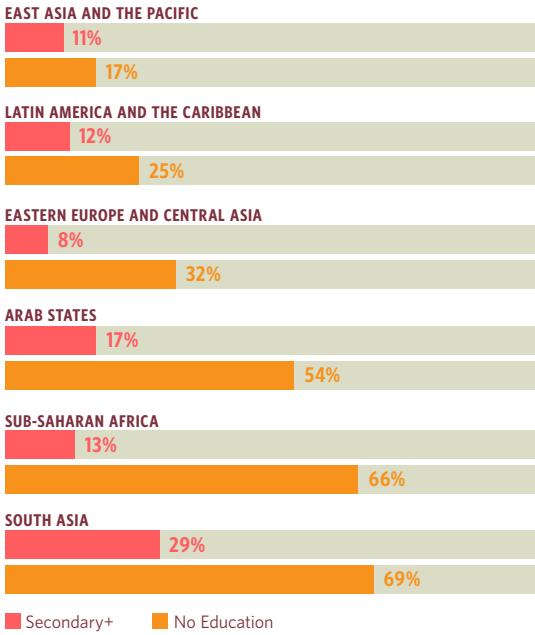
South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa show the greatest disparities in the rates of child marriage.

FIGURE 7
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BEFORE 18 BY REGION AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE. 2000-2011



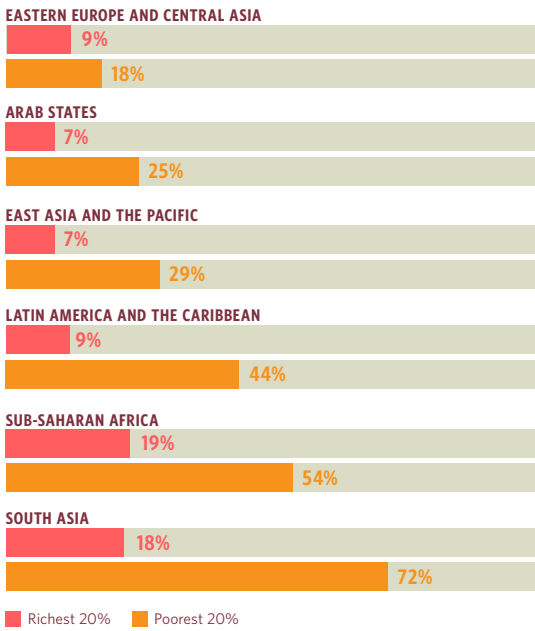
Source: UNFPA database using DHS or MICS data from 78 developing countries over the period 2000–2011.

FIGURE 8
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BEFORE 18 BY REGION AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION. 2000-2011



Source: UNFPA database using DHS or MICS data from 78 developing countries over the period 2000–2011.

FIGURE 9
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WERE MARRIED OR IN UNION BEFORE 18 BY



Source: UNFPA database using DHS or MICS data from 78 developing countries over the period 2000–2011.

EDUCATION

Not surprisingly, rates of child marriage tend to be highest in regions where a large proportion of girls are out of school or whose education has been stalled. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), an estimated 75 million girls of lower secondary school age[29] were either out of school or enrolled in primary school in 2007.[30] The majority of these girls live in South and Western Asia (28 million) and sub-Saharan Africa (21 million). The absolute number of girls out of school or lagging behind for their age points to regions of greatest need. However, expressing the same situation as a percentage of the population provides a different picture. Thus, while South and Western Asia has the highest absolute number of children falling behind or out of school, it is in sub-Saharan Africa where the highest proportion of such girls are found (37 per cent, compared to 27 per cent for South and Western Asia).[31]

HEALTH

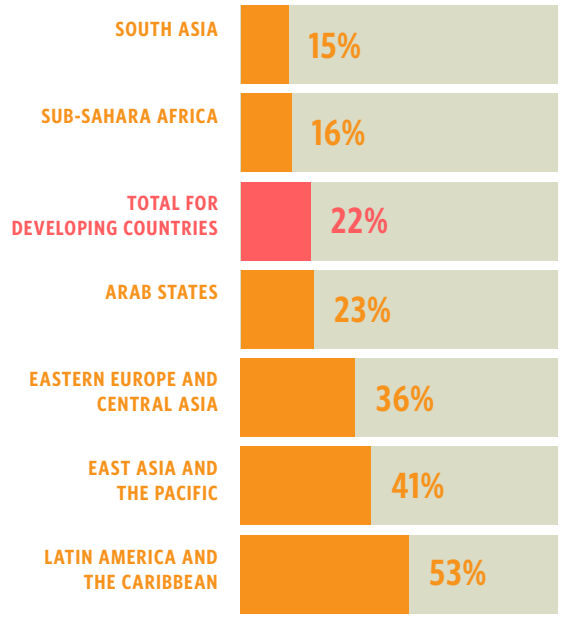
Married girls' reproductive health needs are not being met. Contraceptive use is low overall among adolescents who are married or in union. In developing countries overall, 22 per cent of adolescent girls (aged 15 to 19) who are married or in union use contraceptives, versus 61 per cent of married girls and women aged 15 to 49 years of age.

Nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of married adolescents show a high unmet need for contraception, versus 11 per cent for married women aged 15 to 49. This indicates relatively low levels of total demand satisfied for contraceptives[32] (43 per cent among married adolescents versus 85 per cent for married women aged 15 to 49).

Rates of contraceptive use are lowest in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (Figure 10), where the prevalence of child marriage is highest and the largest numbers of girls are lagging behind or are out of secondary school. A relatively high prevalence of contraceptive use among married adolescents is found only in Latin America and the Caribbean (53 per cent), as shown in Figure 5. Still, this is substantially lower than the rate of 73 per cent observed for all married women and girls in the region as a whole.

The lowest rates of contraceptive use among married adolescents are found in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa

FIGURE 10
CONTRACEPTIVE PREVALENCE RATE AMONG GIRLS 15-19 YEARS OLD WHO ARE MARRIED OR IN UNION, 2000-2010



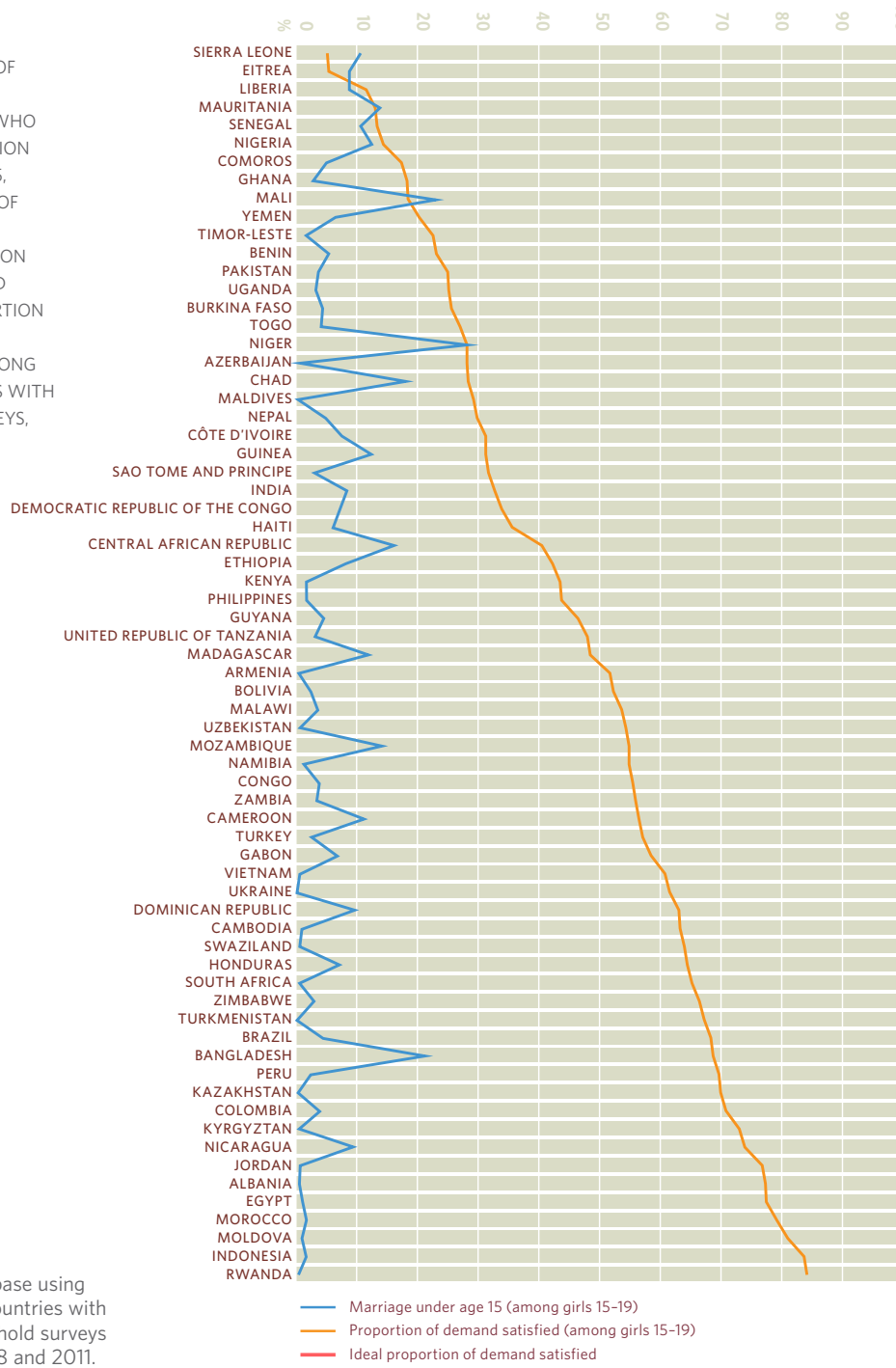
Source: UNFPA database using DHS or MICS data from 78 developing countries over the period 2000–2011.

SATISFIED DEMAND FOR CONTRACEPTION

Adolescents 15-19 years of age not only have lower use of contraception but also high levels of demand not satisfied for contraception. Figure 11 presents the proportion of demand satisfied for contraception among adolescents 15-19, together with the prevalence of child marriage. At one extreme are countries such as Sierra Leone, where 10 per cent of adolescents (aged 15 to 19) married before age 15, but only 5 per cent of married adolescents overall have their demand for contraception satisfied (in other words, 95 per cent of the girls who indicated that they wanted to use contraceptives were not using them). At the other extreme, in Rwanda, a very small proportion of adolescents married before age 15 (0.2 per cent), but the large majority—84 per cent—of adolescents who were married or in union have their demand for contraception satisfied. In the middle is Niger, where almost a third (28 per cent) of adolescent girls married before age 15, but only 28 per cent of married adolescents have their demand for contraception satisfied (72 per cent indicated that they wanted to use contraceptives, but were not using them). All three scenarios are a source of concern all women and girls who wish to use contraception should be able to do so.

Levels of satisfied demand for contraception among adolescents are very low across the majority of developing countries

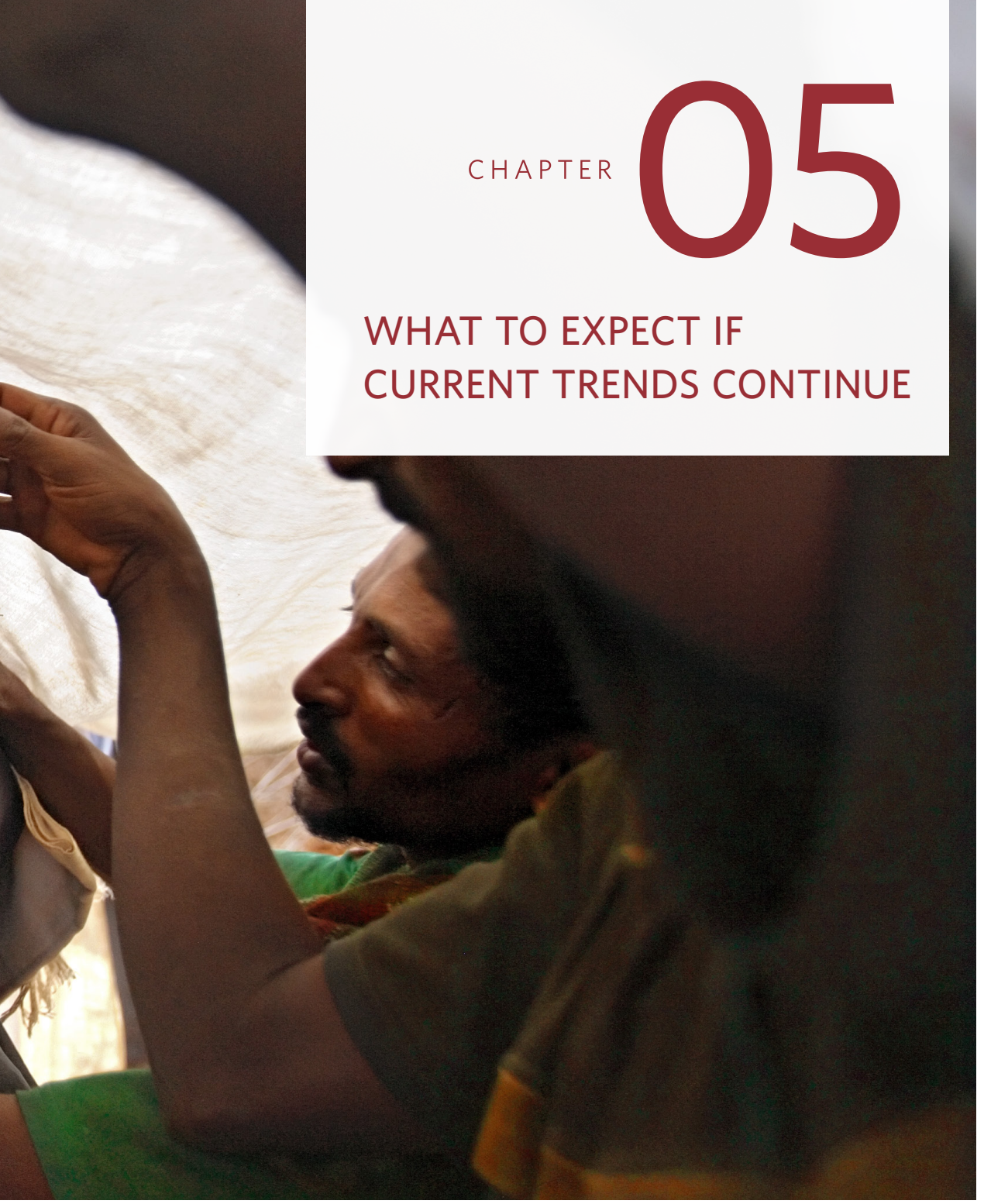
FIGURE 11
PERCENTAGE OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS (15-19) WHO MARRY/IN UNION BEFORE AGE 15, PROPORTION OF DEMAND FOR CONTRACEPTION SATISFIED AND IDEAL PROPORTION OF DEMAND SATISFIED AMONG 68 COUNTRIES WITH RECENT SURVEYS, 1988-2011



Source:
UNFPA database using sixty-eight countries with recent household surveys between 1988 and 2011.

LEYUALEM, AGE 14 (Ethiopia)
Family members place a white cloth over the head of Leyualem as they prepare to take her to her new groom's home in Ethiopia.

Photo by Stephanie Sinclair / VII Photo / Too Young To Wed



CHAPTER 05

WHAT TO EXPECT IF CURRENT TRENDS CONTINUE

CHAPTER 5

WHAT TO EXPECT IF CURRENT TRENDS CONTINUE

This chapter describes the challenges that developing countries can expect if current levels of child marriage continue—a future that, in some senses, is already defined by the past and present population dynamics. The analysis is based on girls already born who could marry or enter into union during the period 2010-2030. Over 67 million women aged 20 to 24 in 2010 had entered into marriage or union before age 18—about 13.5 million girls every year. Developing countries face the prospect of a growing number of child marriages, more teenage pregnancies and more girls suffering maternal death and disability. They also face the multiple impacts of population growth.

TARGETING CURRENT AND FUTURE CHILD BRIDES

Looking to the future, it is important to understand who child brides are and what challenges they face. As we know, the majority of child marriages are concentrated in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Just over sixty percent of child brides in developing regions have no education.

When formulating a course of action targeting child marriage, at least two key population groups should be considered: 1) girls under 18 who are already married or in union and facing the consequences of child marriage, and 2) girls already born that are *at risk* of child marriage, in particular girls living in rural areas in situation of poverty, and with low education levels. The latter include girls aged 0–4, 5–9, 10–14 and 15–19 in 2010. Chapter 6 discusses the options available for the development of policies and programmes to benefit both groups.

If child marriage trends are to continue, worldwide, 142 million girls will be married in the next decade (during the period 2011-2020)[33]. This translates into an average of 14.2 million girls who will marry every year. These numbers could be even higher, reaching 151 million girls by the end of the period 2021-2030 (Table 2). This potential increase in the total number of girls marrying before age 18 is determined by already bigger cohorts of already born girls. The majority of developing societies are still growing in size as a result of declining levels of mortality and slower reductions in fertility, resulting in age structures dominated by younger cohorts.

If current trends continue, worldwide, 142 million girls will be married in the next decade.

By 2030, the number of child brides marrying each year will have grown from 14.2 in 2010 to 15.1 million, that is over 14 per cent if current trends continue

TABLE 2
NUMBER OF WOMEN 20 TO 24 YEARS OLD WHO WILL MARRY OR ENTER INTO UNION ANNUALLY BEFORE AGE 18 IF CURRENT LEVELS OF CHILD MARRIAGE PERSIST FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS (MILLION)

REGION	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Sub-Saharan Africa	13.1	13.7	14.0	14.5	15.0
East and Southern Africa	7.0	7.2	7.4	7.7	8.0
West and Central Africa	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.8	7.1
Arab States	6.0	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.9
East Asia and the Pacific*	9.7	10.1	10.3	10.7	11.1
South Asia	24.4	25.3	25.9	26.8	27.9
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	5.8	6.0	6.1	6.3	6.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	8.5	8.8	9.1	9.4	9.7
TOTAL	67.4	70.2	71.8	74.3	77.2
TOTAL PER YEAR	13.5	14.0	14.4	14.9	15.4

Source: UNFPA database.

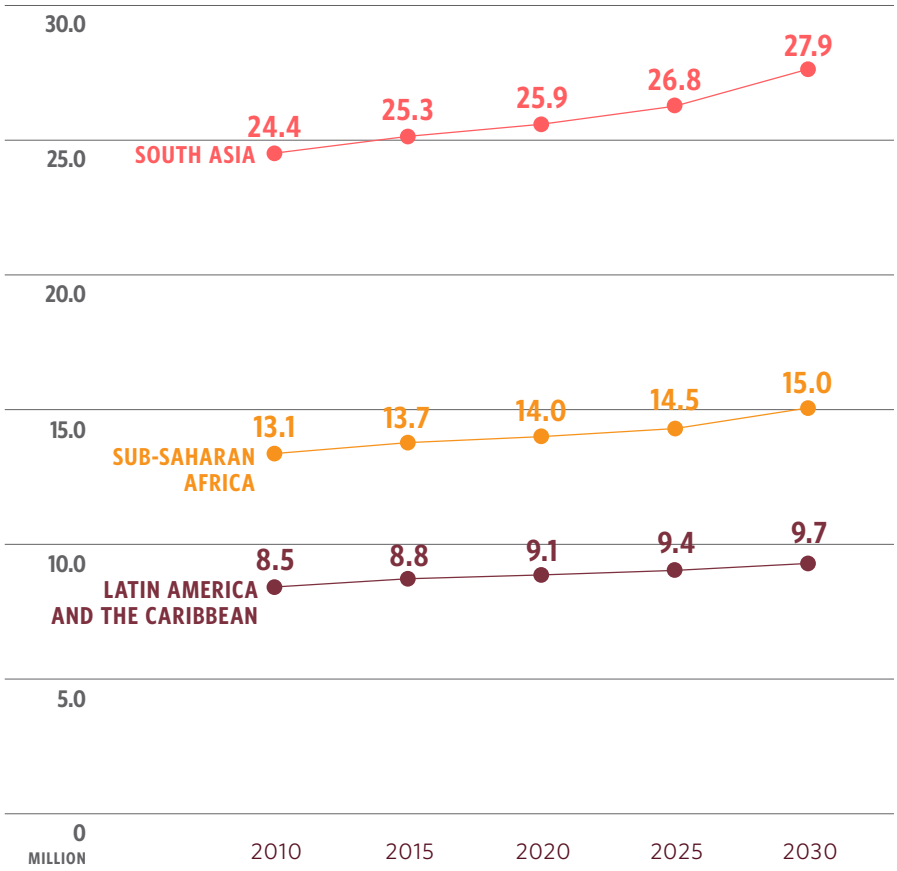
NO TIME TO LOSE

The majority of girls affected by child marriage are living in South Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa (Table 2 and Figure 13). In South Asia, the number of child brides is likely to increase from 24.4 million (4.9 million per year) girls in 2010 to 27.9 million (5.6 million per year) in 2030. Over a 20-year period (2010–2030), a total of 130 million girls in South Asia alone are likely to marry or enter into union as children. This analysis is based on trends in the population dynamics from the past 15 years and assumes no change in the prevalence of child marriage estimated for 2010 through to 2030.

The implications are staggering, and demand swift action. First, strong commitment is needed from all parties to eliminate the practice of child marriage. Even at lower rates, the absolute number of girls likely to marry before age 18 will remain high as a result of population growth. Extra efforts will therefore be required to sustain the reduction in the total number of girls affected by child marriage. Second, even under the best possible scenario, it should be assumed that some girls will marry before age 18. This will demand action on an array of issues around sexual and reproductive health for which societies, governments and communities in particular, should be prepared.

Over the next 20 years, 130 million girls in South Asia alone are likely to marry as children

FIGURE 12
NUMBER OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OLD WHO WILL MARRY OR ENTER INTO UNION BEFORE AGE 18 OVER THE PERIOD 2010-2030 BY REGION (MILLION)



Source: UNFPA database using DHS or MICS data from 78 developing countries over the period 2000–2011.

Understanding the dynamics of child marriage within countries will also enable policymakers and programmers to target their efforts most effectively to curb this harmful practice. In India, for example, data from three consecutive household surveys showed that the rate of child marriage among girls under age 15 is declining at more than twice the rate than among girls under18 years of age (30 per cent reduction versus 13 per cent reduction) (Table 3). While this can be interpreted as a sign of progress, it is still not sufficient to guarantee children their full rights in terms of education, sexual and reproductive health and the right to self-determination.

Progress, but not enough: In India, rates of child marriage among girls under age 15 are falling twice as fast as those among girls under 18

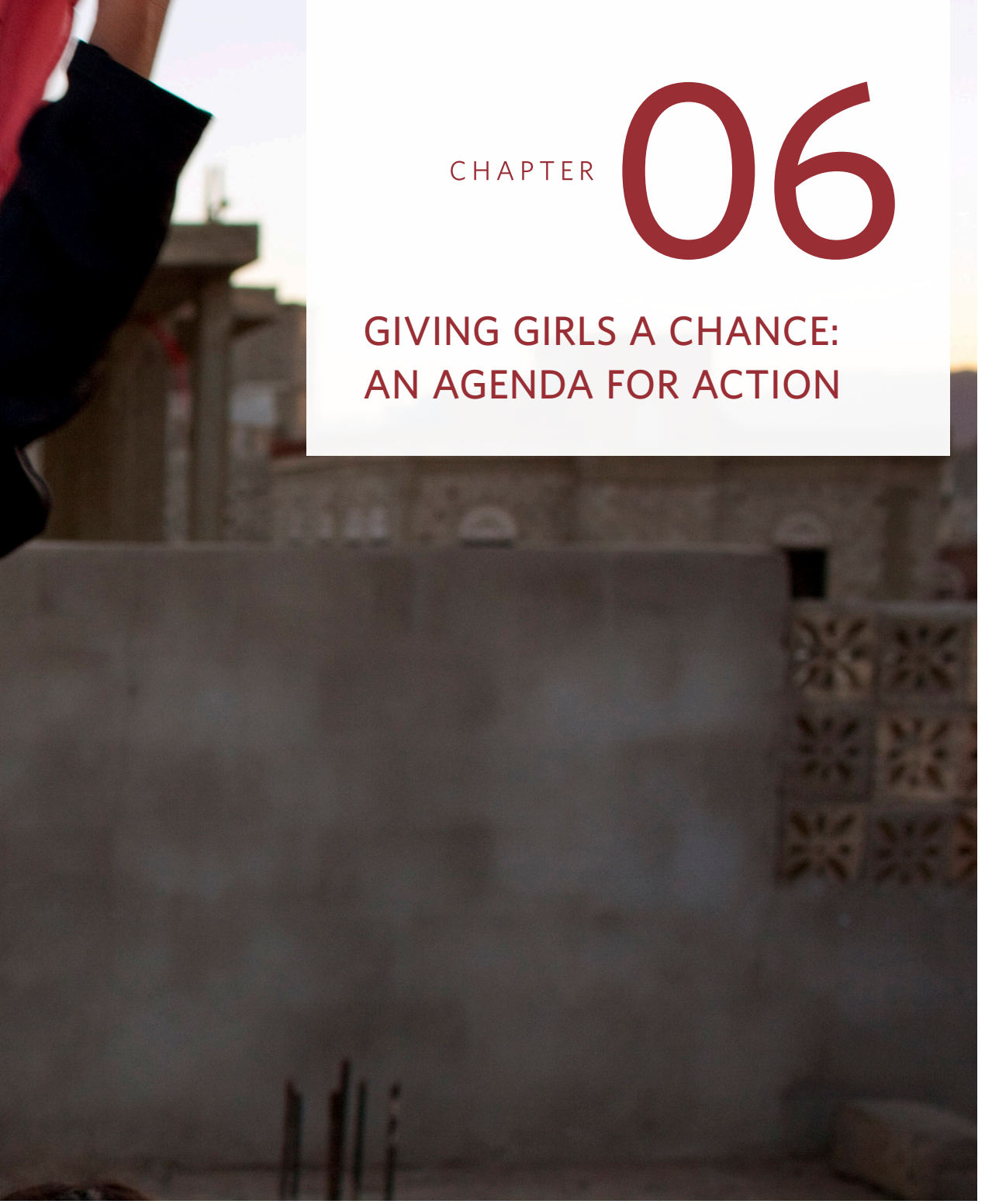
TABLE 3: INDIA
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AGED 20 TO 24 WHO MARRIED BEFORE AGE 15 AND BEFORE AGE 18 AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE OBSERVED IN RATES OF CHILD MARRIAGE RECORDED IN THREE NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEYS

AGE AT MARRIAGE OR UNION	NFHS 1992-1993 (1)	NFHS 1999 (2)	NFHS 2005-2006 (3)	CHANGE (1)-(3)	CHANGE (2)-(3)	CHANGE (1)-(2)
Before 18 years	54.2%	50.0%	47.4%	12.5%	5.2%	7.8%
Before 15 years	26.1%	23.5%	18.2%	30.3%	22.6%	10.0%

Source: National Family Health Surveys (NFHS) in India, 1992–1993, 1999, and 2005–2006.

NUJOOD, AGE 12 (Yemen)
Nujood Ali was ten when she fled her abusive, much older husband and took a taxi to the courthouse in Sanaa, Yemen. The girl's courageous act—and the landmark legal battle that ensued—turned her into an international heroine for women's rights. Now divorced, she is back home with her family and attending school again.

Photo by Stephanie Sinclair / VII Photo / Too Young To Wed



CHAPTER 06

GIVING GIRLS A CHANCE: AN AGENDA FOR ACTION

CHAPTER 6

GIVING GIRLS A CHANCE: AN AGENDA FOR ACTION

The evidence presented in the previous pages amounts to a clarion call for action: for policies and programmes to accelerate the prevention of child marriage for the millions of young girls at risk, and to accelerate the provision of adequate support to girls who are already married. Rates of child marriage remain high. This is despite the overwhelming majority of countries being signatories to international charters and covenants that discourage child marriage and having laws and policies in place to prevent it. Gender inequality, lack of protection of girls' human rights, persistent traditions in favor of early marriage, poverty, humanitarian crises and tough economic realities all work to set conditions in which the practice continues.

KEY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PROGRAMMING

The girls most likely to marry before the age of 18 reside in rural and remote areas, have little or no education, and reside in the poorest households. To assess the patterns and prevalence of child marriage, a precondition for effective policy and programmes, each country should collect and analyze its own data so that it can identify and target areas with high proportions of girls at risk. On this basis, programmes should be put in place, supported by appropriate allocation of resources, to prevent and end child marriage and to manage its consequences.

It is no coincidence that countries with high rates of child marriage are also grappling with high adolescent birth rates and high levels of maternal mortality. This calls for targeted interventions to support both married and unmarried girls. Married girls should have systematic support to help them avoid early and frequent childbearing. They should have ready access to sexual and reproductive health information and programmes that provide family planning, maternal health services, and HIV prevention and treatment. The fact that data show very low levels of satisfied demand for family planning, including contraception, among married girls underscores this need. Programmes must be put in place that enable married girls to exercise their right to identify and understand their options to delay or limit childbearing, and to receive support from their husbands and in-laws accordingly.

Countries with high rates of child marriage, high adolescent birth rates, and low levels of satisfied demand for family planning should consider a multi-pronged approach across sectors that encourages delayed marriage for girls. Such approaches should include the enforcement of laws against child marriage including the enactment and enforcement of laws that raise the minimum age at marriage to 18 for both girls and boys. Countries should expand girls' opportunities for post-primary education, especially for rural and isolated girls during adolescence, and consider incentives to families and communities to address the economic and social factors underlying child marriage. Equally important is offering girls themselves the opportunity to develop new skills and to show their families a positive alternative to child marriage. Investment in girls is not only a good in itself, but can also have a powerful multiplier effect on a range of outcomes, including population dynamics (see box - opposite page).

INVESTMENTS IN GIRLS – A DEMOGRAPHIC "THREE-FOR"

Investments in girls through adolescence provide a demographic "three-for": reducing population momentum by delaying marriage and childbearing, thereby increasing the space between generations; lowering desired family size as more educationally accomplished girls are less reliant on multiple children for security; and decreasing the age and power differential between partners, thus positively affecting women's ability to meet their fertility goals. Benefits also extend to the next generation, because those who marry later and with more authority are likely to invest in their children (especially their girl children) in ways that establish a virtuous cycle of improved health and education. Specifically, we must (1) help girls stay in school through adolescence, (2) provide social and economic alternatives to early marriage and childbearing, (3) end child marriage and support married girls, and (4) focus on the youngest first-time mothers.

Source: Bruce, J. and J. Bongaarts. "The New Population Challenge". From Laurie Mazur (ed.) 2009, *A Pivotal Moment: Population, Justice, and the Environmental Challenge*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM EFFORTS TO ADDRESS CHILD MARRIAGE

Innovative programmes, policies and strategies to tackle child marriage are building on the growing international concern and recognition of the costs of this harmful practice to girls, their families and communities. A systematic analysis of these efforts to discourage child marriage identified five core approaches that are being implemented and their lessons learned so far: [34]

1. Empower girls by building their skills and enhancing their social assets

Among the successful programmes are those that empower girls at risk of child marriage through, for example, life skills training, provision of safe spaces for girls to discuss their futures, the provision of information about their options, and the development of support networks. [35] Such interventions can equip girls with knowledge and skills in areas relevant to their lives, including sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, and their rights under the law. Girls are empowered when and if they are able to learn skills that help them to develop a livelihood, help them to better communicate, to negotiate and make decisions that directly affect their lives.

Safe spaces and the support they offer help girls overcome their social isolation, interact with peers and mentors, and assess alternatives to marriage.[36] As the girls develop their abilities and self-confidence, parents and community members come to regard them differently, which can help to re-shape long held views and customary assumptions. Reviews of such programmes have documented changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour related to child marriage over a period of just a few years. However, the comparative effectiveness of specific interventions (life skills versus safe spaces, for example) requires further study.

2. Improve girls' access to quality formal education

Girls' education, especially at the secondary level, is strongly associated with later marriage. Research has suggested that girls with secondary schooling are up to six times less likely to marry while children, compared to girls with little to no education.[37] Education is a right in itself, and being in school confers numerous protections and benefits for girls. Educational opportunities offer girls positive alternatives to child marriage that are generally acceptable to the family and community.[38] From a cultural standpoint, being in school can support the perception that girls are still children and hence not marriageable. Schooling helps a girl develop social networks and acquire skills and information, all of which contribute to her ability to communicate, negotiate for her best interests and participate in decisions that affect her life.[39]

To increase girls' school access and attendance, the first requirement is that her education be free and compulsory. The second is that schools be girl-friendly. This entails improving the relevance and inclusiveness of curricula, the quality of teaching of girls, and the safety of the school environment. In particular, school policies should not discriminate against or seek to exclude married and pregnant girls. Teachers should be sensitized about issues that make girls vulnerable to dropping out of school and be encouraged to urge parents to continue to send their daughters to school. Where girls do not return to formal schooling, non-formal or alternative education programmes should be available and tailored to a girl's particular circumstances.

Many of the programmes supported by non-governmental organizations to facilitate girls' enrolment or re-enrolment in formal education have helped girls postpone marriage. However, these programmes are rarely taken to scale, and rarely integrated into the wider education system. Governments have experimented with and are increasingly supporting incentives to keep girls in school, for example by offering subsidies, scholarships, or direct cash incentives to families. The Zomba cash transfer programme in Malawi is one such approach. After just one year, girls in the programme who received conditional cash transfers were 40 per cent less likely to be married than girls in the control group.[40]

3. Mobilize communities to transform detrimental social norms

Traditionally the family and elders of the community have made the decision whether, when and whom a girl will marry. Working with parents and other community stakeholders is therefore vital in changing the attitudes and social norms that perpetuate harmful practices such as child marriage. A primary goal is to create an environment in which delayed marriage becomes more socially acceptable than child marriage. At the same time, girls must be able to pursue an education or other alternatives to marriage without the fear of criticism or ridicule. Interventions that spark attitudinal change have included community dialogue, information and education sessions; efforts involving men and husbands; along with mass media messages that spread the word about the dangers of child marriage, the alternatives, and the rights of girls.[41] A review of the evidence suggests that community mobilization is most effective in shifting norms when it is used in conjunction with the other interventions considered here.[42]

4. Enhance the economic situation of girls and their families

Given that child marriage is linked to poverty, incentive-based programmes have been used to encourage and enable families to postpone the marriage of their daughters and to keep them in school through post-primary and secondary level. Incentives may include loans, scholarships, subsidies and conditional cash transfers. Employment opportunities for girls, such as those supported by microfinance schemes or opened up through vocational training, can generate viable alternatives to child marriage, especially for girls unable to continue their formal schooling.[43] Improving girls' economic standing can also give them a higher status in their families and on this basis, greater control over their lives. For families themselves, direct cash transfers and income-generating activities for their daughters can help to alleviate the economic and social pressures in favor of early marriage.

5. Generate an enabling legal and policy environment

Legislation against child marriage is a critical element of a comprehensive human rights approach. Legislation and appropriate enforcement measures are fundamental for defending the human rights of girls at risk. A crucial step is national and sub-national legislation to ensure that, in line with international human rights standards, the age of 18 is upheld as the minimum legal age of marriage for both males and females.

It is also imperative to promote birth and marriage registration: child marriage often goes unregistered, undermining legislation against it, making it difficult to monitor and complicating access to those subjected to it. Millions of births also go unregistered, making it difficult for girls later to ascertain what is their actual as compared to imputed age, and thus claim due protection under the law. Yet birth registration is a human right to be protected and upheld. [44]

Challenging harmful customs, traditions and practices that do not comply with human rights standards (such as tolerance for gender-based violence) through national and sub-national laws and through social programmes is also an essential step. Such harmful customs and practices erode the status and dignity of girls and young women. [45] Community leaders must also be challenged to support such changes and to advocate for enforcement of legislation that prevents child marriage.

Overall, it should be noted that the analysis of these five approaches also found that many programmes to end child marriage were not well-documented or well-evaluated. However, the most promising programmes combined asset-building approaches for girls with community mobilization activities. Nonetheless, this set of five approaches that are beginning to impact on child marriage warrants further attention and suggests directions for investments in an agenda for change (described below).

UNFPA SUPPORT IN ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE

Addressing child marriage is a key component of UNFPA's work to uphold the rights of adolescents and youth. UNFPA supports partnerships and advocacy efforts to raise awareness about child marriage, including its causes and consequences. UNFPA also works with governments and partners at all levels to foster supportive policies, legislation and dialogue to promote the dignity and rights of both married and unmarried girls. Through a variety of means, including advocacy and communications efforts, UNFPA draws attention to girls' needs and realities, given the harmful and life-threatening risks they face from child marriage. In collaboration with communities, UNFPA supports programmes that enable parents, elders, religious and other leaders to identify the dangers of child marriage, promote the rights of girls, and find community-owned, collective solutions to discourage and eventually end the practice. UNFPA also assists the most marginalized and vulnerable girls in deferring marriage by advocating that they stay in school; supporting programmes that build their life skills; providing safe spaces to learn, play and make friends; delivering sexual and reproductive health and HIV information and services; and improving their economic and social well-being.

A few examples of this work in practice at country level are highlighted below:

ETHIOPIA: Changing social norms and delaying marriage for girls

In the Amhara region of Ethiopia, rates of child marriage are among the highest in the world: about 56 per cent of the girls are married by age 18, and 1 in 4 girls has given birth by age 18.[46] With the support of UNFPA in its first stage, *Berhane Hewan*[47] was one of a number of programmes that supported girls to avoid child marriage by increasing their life options.

Berhane Hewan incorporates many of the action elements described above. It promoted: schooling, functional literacy, life skills; and sexual and reproductive health and HIV information and services for girls. Girls' clubs served as platforms from which married and unmarried girls found social support, accessed mentors, and learned new skills.

At the same time, the programme sensitized communities to the risks associated with child marriage and promoted alternatives to the practice. Community "conversations" helped change

social norms that sanctioned child marriage, while economic incentives addressed the economic drivers of the practice. Families were encouraged to keep girls in school, and girls were provided with school supplies. UNFPA also worked, through the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, to encourage priests to refrain from conducting or blessing child marriages. The programme has since expanded to include the provision of water wells and husbands' clubs. Three years after the initiative was piloted in 2004, an evaluation found that girls in the programme area were nearly three times more likely to be in school than non-programme participants, and were 90 percent less likely to be married. Moreover, married girls in the programme area were nearly three times more likely to have used family planning compared to married girls in the control group.[48] The programme had the greatest impact among girls aged 10 to 14. With support from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), the progamme is now being taken to scale.

A similar programme, known as *Biruh Tesfa*, is underway and provides a combination of health, literacy, civic education and mentorship opportunities for girls who have run away from their villages to escape marriage and are now living in the slums of Addis Ababa.

MALAWI: Confronting child marriage at the highest levels of government

In this southern African country, nearly half of young women aged 20 to 24 are married by age 18.[49] In response, UNFPA worked with Malawi's National Youth Council to launch an advocacy campaign aimed at parliamentarians, calling on their support to end the practice of child marriage. The effort resulted in the repeal of a law that would have established 16 as the legal age for marriage. Plans are under way to redraft the law and high-level commitment has been given to address inconsistencies in the laws related to the minimum age of marriage. The campaign also resulted in a UN Joint Programme on Adolescent Girls that supports governments and partners to target girls at risk of child marriage and early pregnancy. The programme, led by UNFPA, encompasses non-formal education, protection from violence, mentors for vulnerable girls, and access to sexual and reproductive health and HIV services.

The new Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II, which represents the government's national blueprint for poverty reduction, highlights girls' education and delayed marriage as essential to social development. The strategy also supports advocacy for delayed marriage, girls' retention in school at all levels, and the provision of scholarships for girls most in need.

NEPAL: Helping girls help themselves—and other girls

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. According to the 2011 Demographic Health Survey, 41 per cent of Nepalese women aged 20-24 years were married before they turned 18. UNFPA Nepal has conducted a series of advocacy efforts to empower adolescents and young girls in all 75 districts to mobilize their out-of-school peers. Resource centres were set up by local women's cooperatives in which adolescent girls could interact with their peers and other stakeholders and could participate in learning opportunities. In all, more than 5,000 adolescent girls in 18 districts participated in two months of training in reproductive health, focusing also on life skills. It was an engaging way for adolescent girls to learn about the changes taking place in their bodies, enhance their self-confidence and self-reliance, and consider their options in regards to education, work, legal rights, marriage, childbearing, family relations and community involvement. Many of the girls initiated dialogues with their parents concerning the risks associated with child marriage and sought support from others in their community. The project also honed the girls' problem-solving, decision-making and negotiation skills, and helped them establish supportive relationships with their peers. Following these "Choose your Future" trainings, girls spoke out against child marriage and, in several cases, were actually able to persuade parents to stop planned weddings or to refer their cases to paralegal committees.

Girls also organized programmes to encourage parents to send their daughters to school. In some cases, with others' help, girls who had been trained were able to stop weddings planned for

them and later went back to school. Other girls started savings and credit programmes linking to women's cooperatives where they further advocated against child marriage.

NIGER: Tapping the influence of village chiefs and religious leaders

In 2006, three out of four women aged 20 to 24 in Niger were married by age 18, the highest proportion in the world.[50] Moreover, women in Niger give birth to an average of seven children.[51] Recognizing the socio-cultural factors at work that increase girls' vulnerability to child marriage, UNFPA is working at the community level with the Association of Traditional Chiefs to raise awareness of the perils of this practice, including the risk of maternal death and disability. Chiefs and religious leaders from the country's eight regions are identifying culturally sensitive ways to discuss child marriage and the importance of girls' education. In addition, televised Islamic religious programming is addressing the links between child marriage and maternal health. Working with traditional chiefs, the Schools of Husbands ("Ecoles de Maris") are introducing child marriage prevention in their curricula to engage men in sexual and reproductive health and to foster positive norms change for women and girls. The Schools operates in the Zinder region, where 58 per cent of young women aged 20-24 were married by age 15[52] (compared to the national figure which is 36 per cent). Plans are underway to expand the Husbands' Schools to all regions starting in 2013.

PAKISTAN: Targeting child marriage and obstetric fistula

In Pakistan, approximately 5,000 new cases of obstetric fistula occur every year, with young girls disproportionately affected.[53] In 2006, UNFPA launched a fistula repair project as part of an overall programme to improve maternal health. A principal component of this four year project consists of seminars targeted at community members and healthcare professionals that explain, in a culturally-appropriate manner, the direct links between child marriage, early pregnancy and fistula.

In a further effort to create awareness, the project also runs workshops to sensitize media personnel about women's rights, child marriage, and fistula prevention and treatment. More recently, in Punjab province, UNFPA supported the formulation of a youth policy that addresses child marriage and early pregnancy. Youth networks have also raised awareness in their communities about the dangers of child marriage. Building on this work, UNFPA's next country programme will include a strong focus on ending this harmful practice.

AN AGENDA FOR CHANGE

Programmes to end child marriage have yielded promising results, created momentum and provided evidence that the right policies and programmes can make the difference that girls need and to which, by virtue of their rights, they are entitled. A growing body of evidence suggests that successful efforts reach across sectors to integrate a range of approaches that address the root causes of child marriage and simultaneously promote girls' human rights.

The evidence to date, our knowledge and experience suggest that priority should be given to actions that include the following components:

Enact and enforce national legislation that raise the age of marriage to 18 for both girls and boys.

Legislators and policymakers must review national legislation, as well as customary laws, in light of international human rights standards. But even strong legislation regarding child marriage can

be enforced too weakly or applied unevenly to the detriment of girls. Greater efforts are needed to raise awareness of and enforce existing laws at the community level, while fostering a rights culture among the judiciary, legislators and the police to protect girls from child marriage and uphold their rights overall. Birth and marriage registration systems must also be strengthened to support the enforcement of child marriage laws.

More broadly, strengthening and implementing laws on child marriage must be part of a national action plan, which should be a wide ranging and systematic effort to move towards gender equality in practice as well as under the law, remove the impediments to women's empowerment and promote their human rights.

The CEDAW[54] and CRC Committees[55] have a critical role to play by asserting pressure on individual governments to enforce laws prohibiting child marriage in line with international norms and to address the root causes of girls' disadvantaged status compared to boys. More generally, governments should promote policies of zero tolerance toward all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful practices such as child marriage.

Use data to identify and target geographic "hotspots"—areas with high proportions and numbers of girls at risk of child marriage.

Despite a range of efforts, child marriage rates have not changed significantly for the poorest and least educated girls and those who live in rural areas. Policymakers and programme managers should utilize available Demographic and Health Surveys, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and/or census data to identify administrative sub-regions with high concentrations of girls at risk (in terms of either high proportions or absolute numbers).

In addition to looking at sub-regions where marriages of girls before age 18 are prevalent, programme designers and managers should identify whether these same subregions also have low levels of demand for family planning satisfied among young women; large age differences between girls and their partners; high proportions of young women experiencing violence, and other indicators of vulnerability. Subregions showing multiple levels of risk for married girls should be prioritized and would benefit from political and financial commitments and corresponding actions to end the practice of child marriage.

Data also suggest that rates of marriage among girls under age 15 are declining in some countries, while the prevalence of marriage before age 18 has remained roughly constant. This suggests that girls today may be able to avoid marriage during their early adolescence, but that the pressure is still strong to marry before 18. More follow-up studies are needed to understand this phenomenon and other issues surrounding the timing of marriages, including the protective factors associated with the avoidance of marriage before 15. That said, marriage before age 15 is still commonplace in many subregions within high-prevalence countries. Such "hotspots" should receive the bulk of policy and programmatic resources aimed at making marriage later, safer and fully consensual.

A significant part of these resources should be devoted to improving the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents, including married girls. Universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services is a human right; but given the scale of unsatisfied demand for contraception, it will also contribute to turning downwards the curve of population growth in high-fertility countries.

Expand prevention programmes that empower girls at risk of child marriage and address the root causes underlying the practice.

Programmes aimed at preventing child marriage must employ a variety of key strategies, and the more successful ones often combine interventions into an integrated and multi-sectoral response targeted at girls and their families. These programmes must improve access to and quality

of formal education for girls, especially the post-primary and secondary level; build up girls' economic, health and social assets through the safe spaces model; address underlying economic motivations; seek to change social norms that undervalue girls; and reduce the social pressures on families to marry off their girls at early ages. Timing is key; these interventions, especially schooling and asset-building for girls, must be directed during very young adolescence (10-14 years old), a crucial period around puberty in order to counter pressures on girls for marriage and childbearing for social and economic security. Even in a short amount of time, such programmes have yielded demonstrable results at the community level. Policymakers and programme managers can adapt these models to new settings, monitor and evaluate them for feasibility and impact, and take them to scale.

Policymakers and programme managers should also leverage new opportunities offered by larger scale efforts in other sectors, especially education (for example, policies and programmes that offer incentives to keep girls in school at the secondary level, improve the quality of schooling, and teach comprehensive sexuality education); health (sexual and reproductive health programmes, including maternal health, family planning, and HIV-related services targeting the most marginalized and vulnerable girls); and poverty reduction (such as life skills, vocational training and livelihood programmes directed to adolescent girls). Strong coordination across these different sectors will be needed to promote greater synergy and maximize impact from these efforts.

Mitigate the harmful impact of child marriage on married girls.

Zero tolerance towards child marriage is the goal. However, until that aspiration becomes a reality, millions of girls will become child brides with irreparable harm to their lives, their well-being, and their future life prospects. These girls occupy a difficult and oft neglected space within society, receiving scant, if any, attention from social protection programmes. While they are still children in all respects—developmentally, biologically, physically, psychologically and emotionally—their marital status signals an end to their childhood—however premature and unwelcome—and renders them women in the eyes of society. Neither youth-oriented programmes on their own nor those targeting adult women will consider the unique circumstances of married girls or the needs of those girls at risk of marriage, unless they do so deliberately and in a planned manner.

Dedicated and well-resourced efforts are needed to make the needs of married girls a priority in health and development efforts. For example, examining the unique circumstances of married girls and tailoring specific interventions accordingly, with measurable targets and indicators, could strengthen maternal health and family planning programmes. Maternal health programmes should also develop effective outreach strategies to draw in girls from remote and isolated communities, girls who are pregnant for the first time, and to help girls access comprehensive antenatal care, prepare for and utilize delivery services, and to ensure they return for post-partum and infant care. The goal must be to promote the rights of girls, to help families including in-laws understand the dangers of early and frequent childbearing, and to make it culturally acceptable for married girls to delay childbearing and use family planning.

Programmes should provide for safe spaces and other social platforms for married girls to gain access to peer support, critical information (including on sexual and reproductive health and HIV), develop life skills and engage in livelihood programmes. Programmes should also advocate for policies calling for compliance with the legal age of 18 for both spouses and that steps that ensure both the bride and groom have given their free, prior and full consent, as set out in the ICPD Programme of Action and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[56]

Invest in efforts to improve data on monitoring and evaluation in order to strengthen programmes for girls at risk and married girls.

Data collection systems such as the Demographic Health Surveys (DHS) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) should collect sufficient and appropriate data to inform public policy

and decision-making processes that aim to end child marriage including data on cultural and social practices that embed child marriage such as gender based violence. Efforts are also needed in the development of further analysis of the determinants of child marriage (demographic, cultural, social and economic factors) to better inform policies and programmes and to strengthen the evidence base and programmatic linkages with education, health, and poverty reduction. Under-researched areas such as the experience, needs and concerns of girls in humanitarian situations require greater attention. Further research is also needed to evaluate and document programmatic approaches to end child marriage and mitigate the impact on married girls which might serve as examples for other countries in similar conditions.

CONCLUSION

This report describes the cost and consequences of child marriage. While arguably child marriage does close certain options for boys, the data make it clear that child marriage is first and foremost a threat to girls and, then when realised, a breach of girls' fundamental human rights. The evidence is clear: for girls, marriage too soon of the too young brings negative impacts on girls' rights to education and health, to life opportunities and indeed, to life itself. For the sake of the more than 142 million girls at risk of this human rights abuse over the next decade, it is high time to end child marriage.

However, this report reveals that globally, rates of child marriage have not much altered in the recent past. Across continents and in the regions of the developing world, child marriage occurs at high rates bringing the gravest consequences for the poorest, the least educated and those living in rural and isolated areas. There is evidence of some small shifts of prevalence in a handful of countries, in a few areas, and for some age groups, notably girls under 15. However, the pace and reach of change is neither fast nor far enough.

Setting to one side for just a moment, the matter of the human suffering involved, it is simply true that the world can ill afford to squander the well-being, talents and contributions of the 37,000 girls who are married each day. It is time to end child marriage, simply for the sake of those who are subjected to it. Yet, the costs of inaction extend far beyond the price paid by girls themselves. The costs of inaction, in terms of rights unrealized, foreshortened personal potential and lost development opportunities, far outweigh the costs of interventions. It is time to end child marriage, also for the sake of families, communities and countries.

Promising interventions and strategic policy choices are available to avert this human tragedy of child marriage and put girls on another path instead: a path for prosperity, progress and peace. Investments targeting support for married girls and interventions that reduce vulnerability to early marriage for the poorest, least educated and rural or isolated girls are investments in social justice and human rights, producing benefits for the individual, their families and for generations to come. Such investments are a sure and certain means by which to turn the tides of gender inequality, illiteracy, adolescent pregnancies, and the associated rates of maternal mortality and morbidity. In today's demographic realities, reducing child marriage, delaying pregnancies and securing the rights of young women to education can also help offset population momentum.

Bringing an end to child marriage, therefore, is a matter of national priorities and political will. It requires effective legal frameworks that protect the rights of the children involved and it requires enforcement of those laws in compliance with human rights standards. It requires the engagement and support of families and communities who, when they do stand up for their daughters and granddaughters, will win change in otherwise longstanding but harmful social norms and traditions. Most of all, it requires the empowerment of girls themselves; empowerment so that girls are positioned to make decisions at the right time; empowered so that, exercising free and informed consent, girls can make the decisions that will safeguard their own futures, transform their own lives and enable them to live in the dignity to which they, as human beings, are entitled.

ENDNOTES

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20 World Health Organization, 2012, Fact Sheet on Adolescent Pregnancy, WHO, Geneva. Available at: http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs364/en/index.html, accessed August 2012.

21 World Health Organization, 2011, *Early Marriages, Adolescent and Young Pregnancies*. Report by the Secretariat to the WHO Executive Board, 130th session, Provisional agenda item 6.4 (EB 130/12).

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25 UNICEF 2012, p. 8.

26 Demographic and Health Surveys are sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), www.measuredhs.com; Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys are sponsored by UNICEF,www.childinfo.org.

27 Data for East Asia and the Pacific represent only 27 per cent of the region's population. No data were available for China.

28 Including La Paz, Pando, Chuquisaca and Beni.

29 Ranging from 10 to 16 years of age.

30 UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2010, *Out-of-School Adolescents*, Montreal, Canada.

31 UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2010, pp. 9-10.

32 The total demand for contraception is obtained by adding to the contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) the unmet need rate for contraception (UNR). The proportion of demand for contraception satisfied (PDS) is obtained as: PDS = CPR/(CPR+UNR)*100.

33 These estimates do not include women 20-24 who die before age 20 and could be underestimates of number of women 20-24 years of age who married before age 18 if the levels of mortality are higher for these group of women than the one observed for those marrying after age 18.

34 Malhotra, A., et al., 2011, Solutions to End Child Marriage: What the evidence shows, International Center for Research on Women, Washington, D.C.

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35 Muthengi, E., and A. Erulker, May 2011. "Delaying early marriage among disadvantaged rural girls in Amhara, Ethiopia, through social support, education, and community awareness". *Promoting Healthy, Safe and Productive Transitions to Adulthood*. Population Council Brief No. 20.

36 Muthengi, E., and A. Erulker, 2010. *Building Programmes to Address Child Marriage: the Berhane Hewan Experience in Ethiopia*. Population Council, New York.

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46 UNFPA Database using EDHS 2011.

47 *Berhane Hewan* has included many partners: the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Amhara Regional Bureau of Women, Children and Youth, the Population Council, UNFPA, Nike Foundation, UN Foundation and USAID.

48 Muthengi, E., and A. Erulker, 2010. *Building Programmes to Address Child Marriage: the Berhane Hewan Experience in Ethiopia*. Population Council, New York.

49 National Statistical Office (Malawi) and ICF Macro, 2011, *Malawi Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, NSO and ICF Macro, Zomba, Malawi, and Calverton, Maryland, USA.

50 Population Council, and UNFPA, 2009, *The Adolescent Experience In-depth: Using data to identify and reach the most vulnerable young people*, DHS Country Reports from Niger (DHS 2006), Population Council, New York. http://www.unfpa.org/youth/dhs_adolescent_guides.html

51 Niger 2006 Demographic and Health Survey. Accessed at: http://measuredhs.com/Where-We-Work/Country-Main.cfm?ctry_id=29&c=Niger&Country=Niger&cn=

52 Niger 2006 Demographic and Health Survey.

53 Ebrahim, Zofeen, 2012, 'Fistula – Another Blight on the Child Bride'. Available at: http://ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=107421

54 The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of CEDAW. The committee consists of 23 experts on women's rights from around the world and country parties to the treaty are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights of CEDAW are implemented. On 6 October 1999, the Optional Protocol was adopted, which allows the committee to receive complaints from individual persons within their jurisdiction alleging violations of their rights under the CEDAW. (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/index.htm)

55 The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by its State parties. All state parties are obliged to submit regular reports, initially two years after acceding to the Convention and every five years onward, on how the rights of CRC are being implemented. Through two Optional Protocols, individual persons can submit complaints alleging violations of rights under CRC. A third Optional Protocol will soon allow individual children to submit complaints. (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/index.htm)

56 Santhya. *Early Marriage and Sexual and Reproductive Health Vulnerabilities of Young Women: a Synthesis of Recent Evidence from Developing Countries.* Current Opinion in Obstetrics and Gynecology, 2011, 23:334–339

ANNEX 1

PROFILES OF 10 COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST RATES OF CHILD MARRIAGE

Country profiles for 41 countries with a child marriage prevalence of 30 per cent or more can be found at:

www.devinfo.info/mdg5b/profiles

NIGER

CHAD

BANGLADESH

GUINEA

MALI

MOZAMBIQUE

MALAWI

MADAGASCAR

SIERRA LEONE

BURKINA FASO

ANNEX 2

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 YEARS OF AGE THAT MARRY/IN UNION BEFORE AGE 18 BY BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

NIGER

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

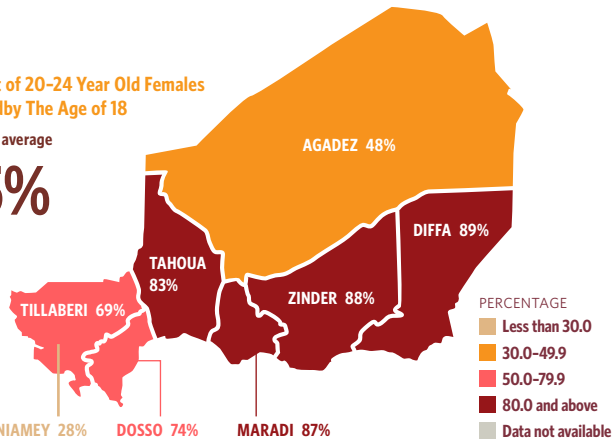
Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 15/<15 Male 18/<18

Current Law in Place: Children's Code and Civil Code

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

75%



Source: DHS, 2006

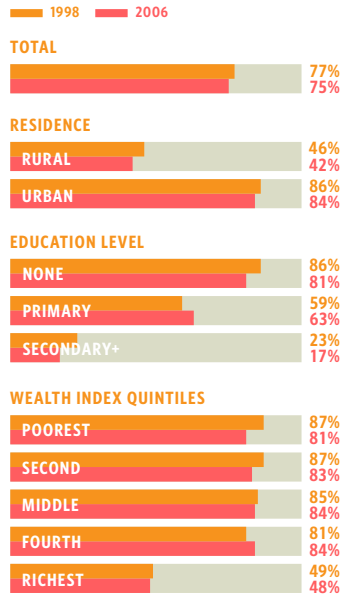
NIGER HAS THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATE IN THE WORLD. On average, three out of four girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2006, three quarters of the women aged 20-24 (75%) were married/in union before age 18. Data shows little to no change since 1998 (77%).¶ **While child marriage is very common in Niger, prevalence is highest in south Niger,** specifically, Diffa Region (89%), Zinder Region (88%), Maradi Region (87%) and Tahoua Region(83%), followed by Dosso Region (74%), Tillaberi Region (69%), Agadez Region (48%), and Niamey Region (28%).¶ Child marriage prevalence in Niger is significantly higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa (37%). Once girls in Niger are married, very few of them (4.3%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Only 26.1% of them have their demand for contraception satisfied.

CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2006, women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas were twice as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts. This urban-rural divide has remained at roughly the same level since 1998.¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Niger.** 81% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 63% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 17% of women with secondary education or higher. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage only for girls from the richest 20% of the households**. The prevalence remains high and stubbornly the same among all other wealth quintiles.

DEMOGRAPHICS	
Total Population (000)	15,512 *UNPD, 2010*
Population under 18 (%)	56 *UNPD, 2010*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	53 *UNPD, 2010*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	199.0 *DHS, 2006*
CPR (15-19) (%)	4.3 *DHS, 2006*
UNR (15-19) (%)	12.2 *DHS, 2006*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	26.1 *DHS, 2006*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	8 *SOWC, 2007-2010*

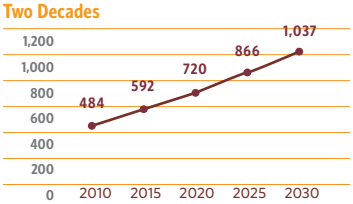
*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: DHS

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN NIGER TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 484,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 1,037,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection is more than double the 2010 estimate of married girls, an increase that is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past.¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

CHAD

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 15/NA Male 18/NA

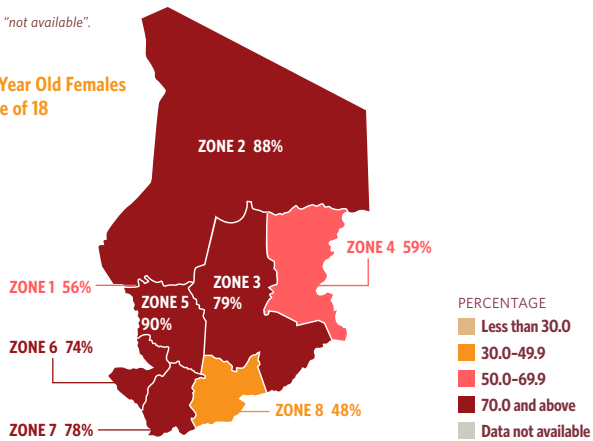
Current Law in Place: Civil Code (1958), Article 144

Note:: "N/A" stands for "not available".

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

72%



Source: DHS, 2004

CHAD HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATES IN THE WORLD. On average, almost three out of four girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2004, neary three quarters of the the women aged 20-24 (72%) were married/in union before age 18. Data shows very slow decline since 1996 (71%). ¶ **While child marriage is very common in Chad, prevalence is highest in Zone 5 (90%)**, followed by Zone 2 (88%), Zone 3 (79%), Zone 7 (78%), Zone 6 (74%), Zone 4 (59%), Zone 1 (56%), and Zone 8 (48%). Child marriage prevalence in Chad is significantly higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa (37%). ¶ Once girls in Chad are married, very few of them (7.4%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Only 28.6% of them have their demand for contraception satisfied.

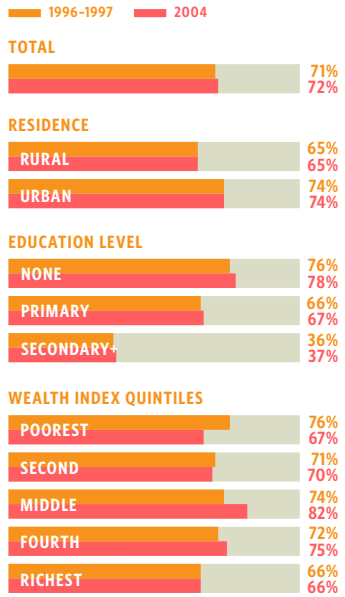
CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED. There seems to be no difference in child marriage prevalence between girls living in urban areas and girls living in rural areas. ¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Chad.** 78% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 67% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to 37% of women with secondary education or higher. In Chad, only 5% of girls of secondary school age are enrolled in secondary school. ¶ **Household wealth seems to have no influences on the prevalence of child marriage.** The prevalence remains high and stubbornly the same among all wealth quintiles.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Population (000)	**11,227 / 11,040** *UNPD, 2010 / Census, 2009*
Population under 18 (%)	**52 / 44** *UNPD, 2011 / Census, 2009*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	**49 / 52** *UNPD, 2011 / Census, 2009*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	**187.0** *DHS, 2004*
CPR (15-19) (%)	**7.4** *DHS, 2004*
UNR (15-19) (%)	**18.5** *DHS, 2004*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	**28.6** *DHS, 2004*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	**5** *SOWC, 2005-2009*

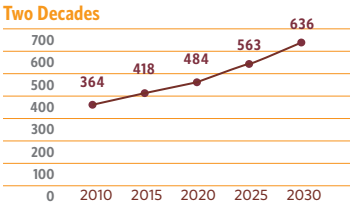
*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: DHS

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN CHAD TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 364,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 636,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection shows an increases of 75% from the 2010 estimate of married girls, which is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past. ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for grils' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

BANGLADESH

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 18/NA Male 21/NA

Current Law in Place: Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929), Art. 2

Note:: "N/A" stands for "not available".

DEMOGRAPHICS

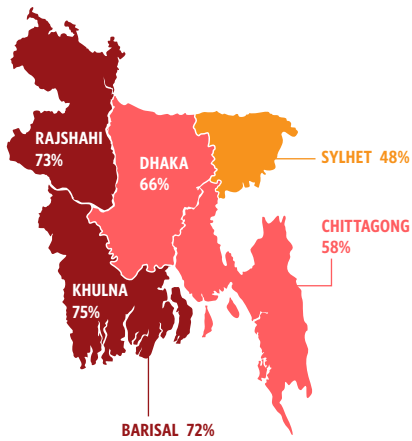
Total Population (000)	**148,692** *UNPD, 2010*
Population under 18 (%)	**38** *UNPD, 2010*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	**67** *UNPD, 2010*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	**126.2** *DHS, 2007*
CPR (15-19) (%)	**41.8** *DHS, 2007*
UNR (15-19) (%)	**19.5** *DHS, 2007*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	**68.2** *DHS, 2007*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	**43** *SOWC, 2007-2010*

*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Married by The Age of 18

National average

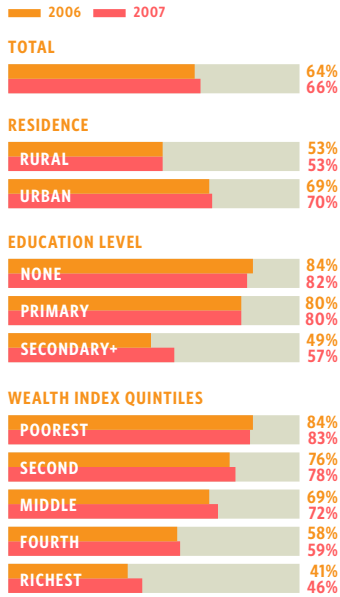
66%



Source: DHS, 2007

BANGLADESH HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATES IN THE WORLD. On average, about two out of three girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2007, over half of the women aged 20-24 (66%) were married/in union before age 18. Data shows little to no change since 2006 (64%). ¶ **While child marriage is very common in Bangladesh, prevalence is highest in west Bangladesh,** specifically, Khulna Region (75%), Rajshahi Region (73%), and Barisal Region (72%), followed by Dhaka Region (66%), Chittagong Region (58%), and Sylhet Region (48%). Child marriage prevalence in Bangladesh is much higher than the regional average for South Asia (46%). Once girls in Bangladesh are married, only a few of them (41.8%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Of them, 68.2% have their demand for contraception satisfied.

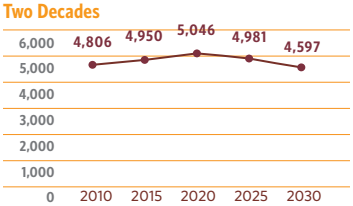
Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source:MICS 2006/DHS 2007

CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2007, women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas (70%) were more likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts (53%). This urban-rural divide has remained at the same level since 2006. ¶ **Education is associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Bangladesh.** In 2007, 82% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 80% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to 57% of women with secondary education or higher. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage among all wealth quintiles.** Girls from the poorest 20% of the households were almost twice as likey to be married/in union before age 18 than girls from the richest 20% of the households.

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN BANGLADESH TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 4,806,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 4,597,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

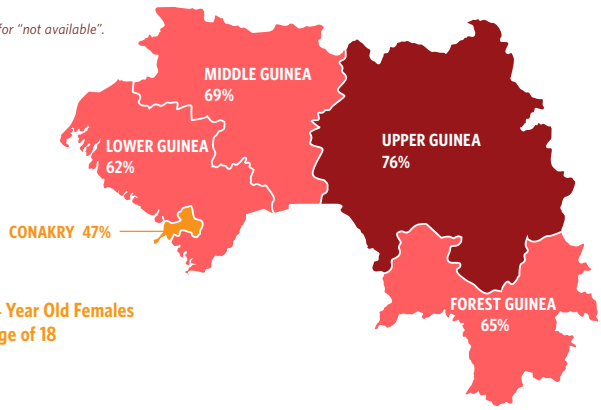
GUINEA

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 18/NA Male 18/NA

Current Law in Place: Child Code (2011)

Note:: "N/A" stands for "not available".



Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

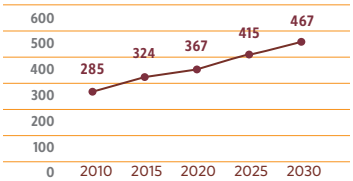
63%

Source: DHS, 2005

GUINEA HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATES IN THE WORLD. On average, three out of five girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2005, over half of the women aged 20-24 (63%) were married/in union before age 18. Data shows little to no change since 1999 (65%). ¶ **While child marriage is very common in Guinea, prevalence is highest in Upper Guinea Region (76%)**, followed by Middle Guinea Region (69%), Forest Guinea Region (65%), Lower Guinea Region (62%), and Conakry (47%). Child marriage prevalence in Guinea is much higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa (37%). ¶ Once girls in Guinea are married, only a few of them (8.8%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Only 30.0% of them have their demand for contraception satisfied.

CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2005, women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas were about 1.7 times as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts. This urban-rural divide has remained at roughly the same level since 1999. ¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Guinea.** 73% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 48% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 27% of women with secondary education or higher. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage only for girls from the richest 20% and the fourth 20% of the households.** The prevalence remains high and stubbornly the same among all other wealth quintiles.

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

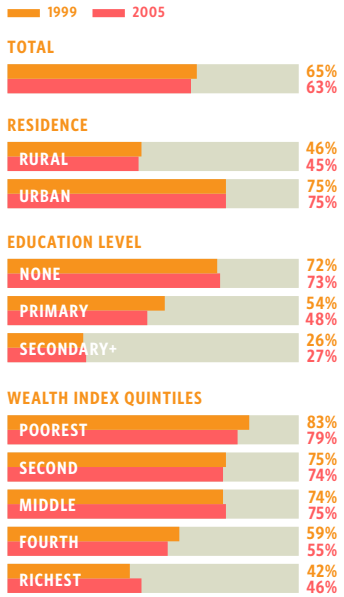
URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN GUINEA TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 285,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 467,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection shows an increases of 64% from the 2010 estimate of married girls, which is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past. ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Population (000)	**9,982 / 11,300** *UNPD, 2010 / INS 2012*
Population under 18 (%)	**49 / 53** *UNPD, 2010 / INS 2012*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	**59** *UNPD, 2010*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	**154.0** *DHS, 2005*
CPR (15-19) (%)	**8.8** *DHS, 2005*
UNR (15-19) (%)	**20.2** *DHS, 2005*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	**30.0** *DHS, 2005*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	**22** *SOWC, 2007-2010*

*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: DHS

MALI

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 18/16 Male 21/18

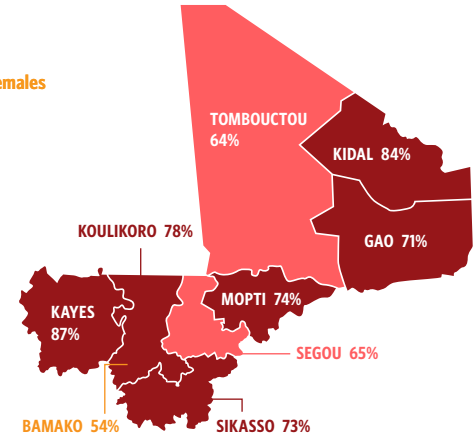
Current Law in Place: Personal and Family Code (2009), Article 282 (adopted but not signed into law yet)

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

55% (2010 MICS)

71% (2006 DHS)



Source: National estimates: MICS, 2010 / Regional estimates: DHS, 2006

MALI HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATES IN THE WORLD. On average, one out of two girls will be married by their 18th birthday. In 2010, more than half of the women 20-24 years of age (55%) were married/in union before age 18. Child marriage prevalence rate has been declined about 16% since 2006 (71%) but still remians high. ¶ **While child marriage is common accross Mali, prevalence is highest in Kayes Region (87%)**, followed by Kidal Region (84%), Koulikoro Region (78%), Mopti Region (74%), Sikasso Region (73%), Gao Region (71%), Segou Region (65%), Tombouctou Region (64%) and Bamako Region (54%). Child marriage prevalence in Mali is also higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa (37%). ¶ Once girls in Mali are married, very few of them (7.7%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Only 17.9% of them have their demand for contraception satisfied.

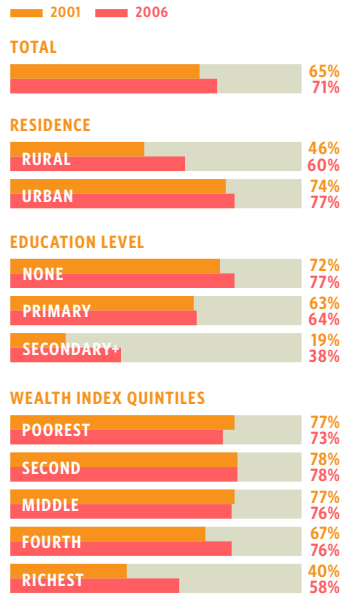
CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2006, women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas were almost 1.3 times as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts. This urban-rural divide has declined 30% since 2001 (1.6 times). ¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Mali.** 77% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 64% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to 38% of women with secondary education or higher. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage only for girls from the richest 20% of the households.** The prevalence remains high and stubbornly the same among all other wealth quintiles.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Population (000)	**15,370** *UNPD, 2010*
Population under 18 (%)	**54** *UNPD, 2010*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	**49** *UNPD, 2010*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	**188.0** *DHS, 2006*
CPR (15-19) (%)	**7.7** *DHS, 2006*
UNR (15-19) (%)	**35.4** *DHS, 2006*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	**17.9** *DHS, 2006*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	**23** *SOWC, 2007-2010*

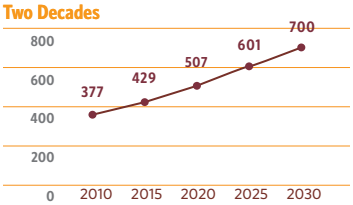
*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: DHS

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN MALI TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 377,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 700,000 of the young girls born between 2005-2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection is almost twice the 2010 estimate of married girls, an increase that is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past. ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

MOZAMBIQUE

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 18/16 Male 18/16

Current Law in Place: Family Law Act (10/2004), Art. 30

DEMOGRAPHICS

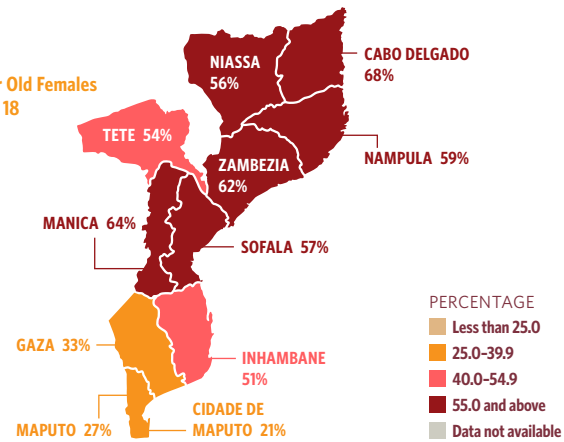
Total Population (000)	**23,391 / 23,701** *UNPD, 2010 / INE 2012*
Population under 18 (%)	**51 /52** *UNPD, 2010 / INE 2012*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	**48 / 53** *UNPD, 2010 / INE 2012*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	**167.0** *DHS, 2011*
CPR (15-19) (%)	**11.0** *DHS, 2003*
UNR (15-19) (%)	**16.7** *DHS, 2003*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	**39.7** *DHS, 2003*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	**14** *SOWC, 2007-2010*

*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

52%

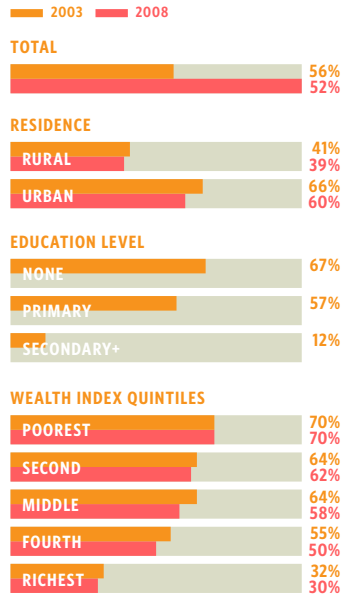


Source: MICS, 2008

MOZAMBIQUE HAS THE SEVENTH HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATE IN THE WORLD. On average, one out of two girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2008, over half of the women aged 20-24 (52%) were married/in union before age 18. Data shows slow decline since 2003 (56%). ¶ **While child marriage is very common in Mozambique, prevalence is highest in Cabo Delgado Region (68%)**, followed by Manica Region (64%), Zambezia Region (62%), Nampula Region (59%), Sofala Region (57%), Niassa Region (56%), Tete Region (54%), Inhambane Region (51%), Gaza region (33%), Maputo Region (27%) and Cidade de Maputo Region (21%). Child marriage prevalence in Mozambique is also higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa (37%). ¶ Once girls in Mozambique are married, only a few of them (11.0%) are usingcontraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Of them, about 39.7% have their demand for contraception satisfied.

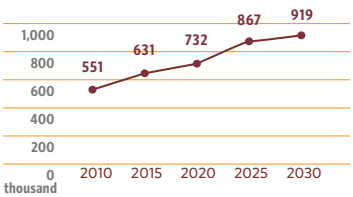
CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2008, women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas were about 1.5 times as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts. This urban-rural divide has remained at roughly the same level since 2003. ¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Mozambique.** 67% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 57% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 12% of women with secondary education or higher. Similar trend has been observed since 2003. DHS 2011 will provide new data on the education disparity. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage among all wealth quintiles.** Girls from the poorest 20% of the households were more than twice as likey to be married/in union before age 18 than girls from the richest 20% of the households.

Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: DHS 2003/MICS 2008

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN MOZAMBIQUE TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 551,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 919,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection shows an increases of 67% from the 2010 estimate of married girls, which is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past. ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services. The government and civil society in Mozambique are working together to end child marriage.

MALAWI

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 18/15 Male 18/15

Current Law in Place: Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (1994), Article 6-8

DEMOGRAPHICS

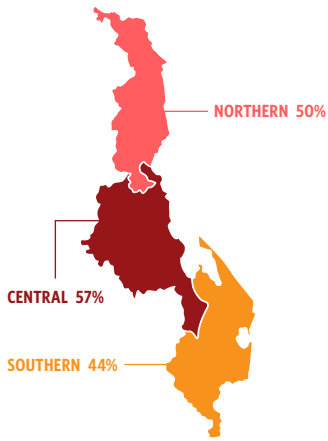
Total Population (000)	**14,901 / 14,800** *UNPD, 2010 / NSO 2010*
Population under 18 (%)	**53** *UNPD, 2010*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	**54** *UNPD, 2010*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	**152.0** *DHS, 2010*
CPR (15-19) (%)	**28.8** *DHS, 2010*
UNR (15-19) (%)	**24.9** *DHS, 2010*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	**53.7** *DHS, 2006*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	**24** *SOWC, 2007-2010*

*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

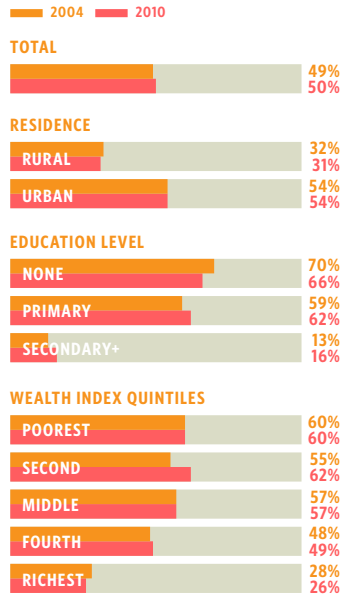
50%



Source: DHS, 2010

MALAWI HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATES IN THE WORLD. On average, one out of two girls will be married by their 18th birthday. In 2010, half of the women 20-24 years of age (50%) were married/in union before age 18. Data shows little to no change since 2000 (47%). ¶ **While child marriage is common accross Malawi, prevalence is highest in the Central Region (57%)**, followed by the Northern Region (50%) and Southern Region (44%). Child marriage prevalence in Malawi is also higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa (37%). ¶ Once girls in Malawi are married, only a few of them (18.9%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Only 42.1% of them have their demand for contraception satisfied.

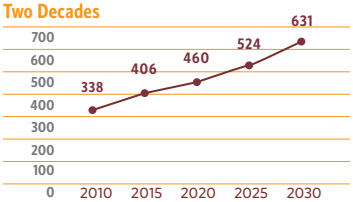
Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: DHS

CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2010, women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas were almost twice as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts. This urban-rural divide has been stagnant since 2004. ¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Malawi.** 66% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 62% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 16% of women with secondary education or higher. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage only for girls from the richest 20% of the households.** The prevalence remains high and stubbornly the same among all other wealth quintiles.

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN MALAWI TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 338,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 631,000 of the young girls born between 2005-2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection is almost twice the 2010 estimate of married girls, an increase that is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past. ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

MADAGASCAR

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 18/NA Male 18/NA

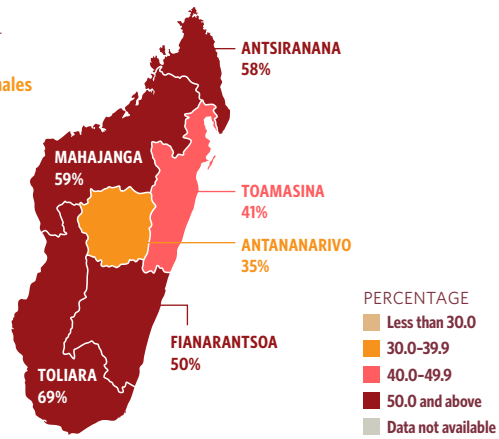
Current Law in Place: Private Law, LOI N° 2007-022, Art. 3

Note:: "N/A" stands for "not available".

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

48%



Source: DHS, 2009

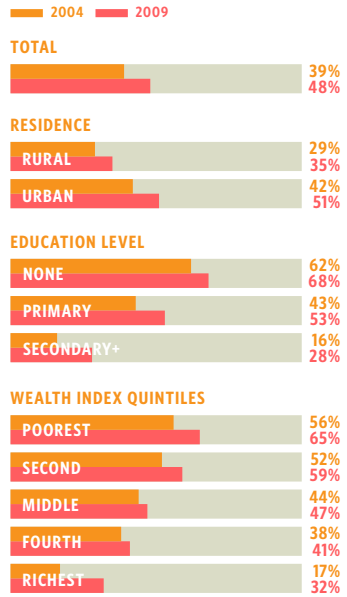
DEMOGRAPHICS	
Total Population (000)	20,714 *UNPD, 2010*
Population under 18 (%)	50 *UNPD, 2010*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	61 *UNPD, 2010*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	147.7 *DHS, 2009*
CPR (15-19) (%)	24.6 *DHS, 2009*
UNR (15-19) (%)	14.0 *DHS, 2009*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	63.7 *DHS, 2009*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	24 *SOWC, 2007-2010*

*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

MADAGASCAR HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATES IN THE WORLD. On average, one out of two girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2009, about half of the women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. The child marriage prevalence rate has increased about 10% from 39% in 2004 to 48% in 2009. ¶ **While child marriage is very common in Madagascar, prevalence is highest in Toliara Region (69%)**, followed by Mahajanga Region (59%), Antsiranana Region (58%), Fianarantsoa Region (50%), Toamasina Region (41%), and Antananarivo Region (35%). Child marriage prevalence in Madagascar is higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa (37%). Once girls in Madagascar are married, only less than a quarter of them (24.6%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Of them, 63.7% have their demand for contraception satisfied.

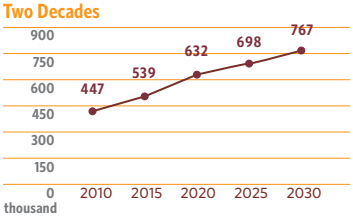
CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2009, women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas were approximately 1.5 times as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts. This urban-rural divide has remained at roughly the same level since 2004. ¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Madagascar.** 68% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 53% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 28% of women with secondary education or higher. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage among all wealth quintiles.** Girls from the poorest 20% of the households were twice likey to be married/in union before age 18 than girls from the richest 20% of the households.

Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: DHS

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN MADAGASCAR TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 447,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 767,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection shows an increases of 72% from the 2010 estimate of married girls, which is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past. ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

SIERRA LEONE

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

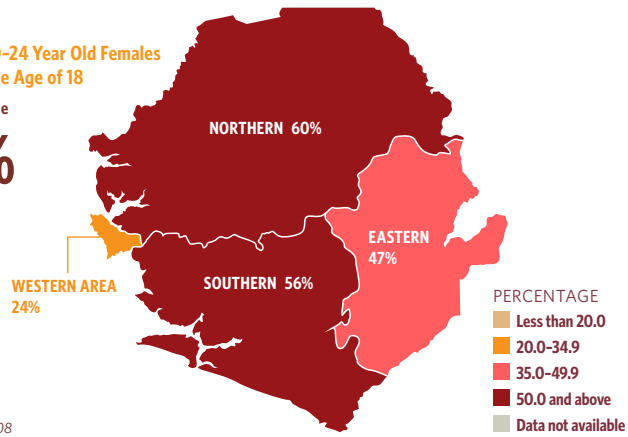
Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 21/<21 Male 21/<21

Current Law in Place: Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act (2007), Art. 2; Child Rights Act (2007), art.34

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

48%



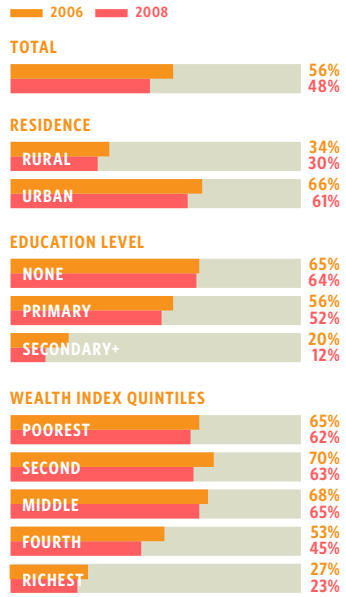
Source: DHS, 2008

DEMOGRAPHICS	
Total Population (000)	5,868 *UNPD, 2010*
Population under 18 (%)	49 *UNPD, 2010*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	49 *UNPD, 2010*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	145.9 *DHS, 2008*
CPR (15-19) (%)	1.2 *DHS, 2008*
UNR (15-19) (%)	19.5 *DHS, 2008*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	5.8 *DHS, 2008*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	20 *SOWC, 2005-2009*

*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

SIERRA LEONE HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATES IN THE WORLD. On average, almost one out of two girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2008, about 48% of the women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. Data shows a 14% decline since 2006 (56%). ¶ **While child marriage is very common in Sierra Leone, prevalence is highest in Northern (60%)**, followed by Southern (56%), Eastern (47%), and Western Area (24%). Child marriage prevalence in Sierra Leone is higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa (37%). ¶ Once girls in Sierra Leone are married, very few of them (1.2%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Only 5.8 of them have their demand for contraception satisfied.

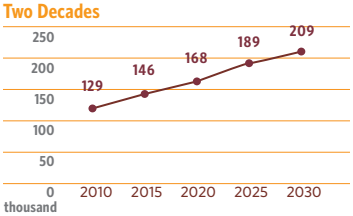
Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: MICS 2006/DHS 2008

CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2008 women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas were more than twice as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts. This urban-rural divide has remained at roughly the same level since 2006. ¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Sierra Leone.** 64% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 52% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 12% of women with secondary education or higher. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage only for girls from the richest 20% and the fourth 20% of the households.** The prevalence remains high and stubbornly the same among all other wealth quintiles.

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN SIERRA LEONE TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 129,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 209,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection shows an increases of 62% from the 2010 estimate of married girls, which is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past. ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

BURKINA FASO

CHILD MARRIAGE occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often refered to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

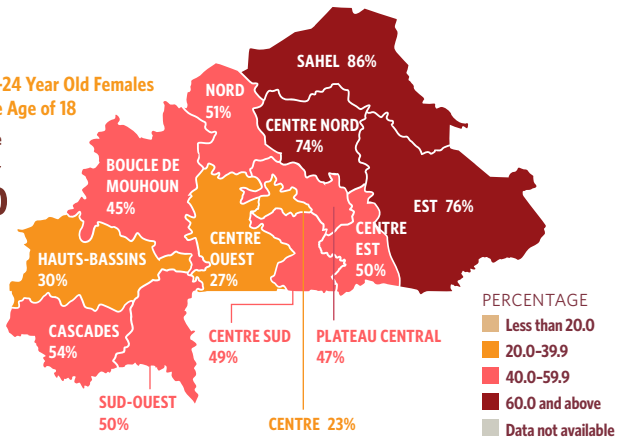
Legal Age at Marriage (2010) Without/with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority:
Female 18/16 Male 20/18

Current Law in Place: Family Code (1989), Article 238

Percent of 20-24 Year Old Females Marriedby The Age of 18

National average

48%



Source: MICS, 2006

BURKINA FASO HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE RATES IN THE WORLD. On average, almost one out of two girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2006, about 48% of the women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. Data shows a 8% decline since 2003 (52%). ¶ **While child marriage is very common in Burkina Faso, prevalence is highest in Sahel (86%)**, followed by Est (76%), Centre-Nord (74%), Cascades (54%), Nord (51%), Sud-Ouest (50%), Centre-Est (50%), Centre- Sud (49%), Plateau-Central (47%), Boucle du Mouhoun (45%), Hauts- Bassins (30%), Centre-Ouest (27%), and Centre (23%). Child marriage prevalence in Burkina Faso is higher than the regional average for sub- Saharan Africa (37%). Once girls are married, only a few of them (8.3%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Of them, 55.7% have their demand for contraception satisfied.

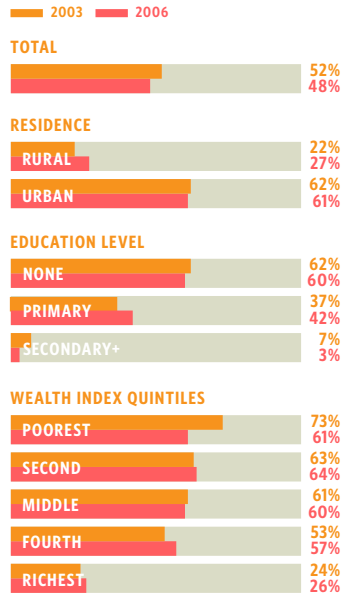
CHILD MARRIAGE OCCURS MORE FREQUENTLY AMONG GIRLS WHO ARE THE LEAST EDUCATED, POOREST AND LIVING IN RURAL AREAS. In 2006 women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas were more than twice as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts. This urban-rural divide has remained at roughly the same level since 2003. ¶ **Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Burkina Faso.** 60% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 42% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 3% of women with secondary education or higher. ¶ **Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage only for girls from the richest 20% of the households**. The prevalence remains high and stubbornly the same among all other wealth quintiles.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Population (000)	**16,469** *UNPD, 2010*
Population under 18 (%)	**52** *UNPD, 2010*
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	**54** *UNPD, 2010*
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	**127.5** *UNSD, 2006*
CPR (15-19) (%)	**8.3** *MICS, 2006*
UNR (15-19) (%)	**6.6** *MICS, 2006*
PDS* (15-19) (%)	**55.7** *MICS, 2006*
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	**13** *SOWC, 2007-2010*

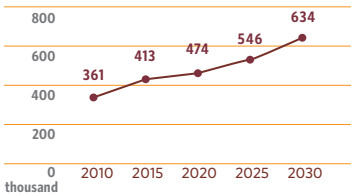
*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR+CPR)

Background Characteristics—Which Girls are Affected?



Source: DHS 2003/MICS 2006

Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO TAKE SOLUTIONS TO SCALE AND PREVENT THE THOUSANDS OF GIRLS IN BURKINA FASO TODAY FROM BEING MARRIED IN THE NEXT DECADE(S). In 2010, 361,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 634,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.** This projection shows an increases of 76% from the 2010 estimate of married girls, which is compounded by high fertility and low mortality in the recent past. ¶ **Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

ANNEX 2

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 MARRIED/IN UNION BEFORE AGE 18 BY BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS. 2000-2011

		Residence (percent)		Level of Education (percent)			Household wealth (Wealth Index Quintiles) (percent)					
Country or territory	Total (%)	Rural	Urban	No Education	Primary	Secondary or higher	Poorest 20%	Second	Middle	Fourth	Richest 20%	Source
Afghanistan	39.0	-	-	-	-	`	-	-	-	-	-	NRVA 2007/2008
Albania	9.6	11.6	7.3	18.7	14.3	4.5	6.6	12.9	17.6	7.7	4.8	DHS 2008-09
Algeria	1.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	MICS 2006
Armenia	7.2	8.5	6.2	0.0	39.2	6.0	10.2	6.0	11.1	3.7	5.0	DHS 2010
Azerbaijan	12.2	15.2	9.6	11.3	26	11.8	17.2	14	14.5	8.9	7.5	DHS 2006
Bangladesh	66.2	70.3	53.3	82	80.4	57.2	83.2	78	72.3	58.8	46.3	DHS 2007
Belarus	6.6	9.6	5.8	16.9	19.1	3.9	16.0	8.9	7.5	5.3	1.8	MICS 2005
Benin	34.4	46.8	18.8	47.1	27.8	6.1	56.9	51.1	45.1	27.2	10.5	DHS 2006
Bhutan	25.8	-	-									MICS 2010
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	21.7	29.8	18.4	19.3	44.9	12.5	34.7	30.2	30.7	18.6	5.0	DHS 2008
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5.5	7.0	2.4	50	22.6	2.5	14.0	5.9	3.1	3.6	2.7	MICS 2006
Brazil	35.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	PNDS 2006
Burkina Faso	47.8	61.2	26.8	59.8	41.5	3.0	60.6	63.5	60.2	56.5	25.6	MICS 2006
Burundi	17.8	18.1	13.4	20.9	18.4	4.0	20.6	22.5	19.9	13.2	12.6	MICS 2005
Cambodia	18.4	24.6	18.0	28.0	27.0	13.1	28.9	26.3	25.2	23.3	16.2	DHS 2010
Cameroon	36.3	56.5	22.7	79.0	44.7	12.5	70.9	53.5	46.8	28.3	11.2	MICS 2006
Cape Verde	18.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2005
Central African Republic	60.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	MICS 2006
Chad	71.5	73.9	65.4	78.3	67.1	37.0	67.3	70.2	82	75.2	66.2	DHS 2004
Colombia	23.0	36.4	19.9	53.0	53.3	18.8	43.1	33.1	23.2	13.1	7.2	DHS 2010
Congo	33.3	43.0	28.7	38.4	45.6	28.0	43.9	38.6	41.7	24.2	17.2	AIS 2009
Djibouti	5.4	12.7	5.2	9.6	6.8	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	MICS 2006
Dominican Republic	39.6	50.1	35.6	56.4	75.3	27.5	64.2	51.4	40.0	28.7	21.2	DHS 2007
Ecuador	22.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ENDEMAIN 2004
Egypt	16.6	22.0	9.4	34.1	32.5	14.8	30.1	19.4	19.4	11.9	4.8	DHS 2008
El Salvador	25.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	FESAL 2008
Eritrea	47.0	59.8	30.5	64.1	53.3	12.0	46.4	63.7	66.2	47.8	20.6	DHS 2002
Ethiopia	41.2	49.0	21.7	62.9	37.5	10.3	59.2	56.4	46.8	42.2	22.0	DHS 2011
Gabon	33.6	48.6	30.3	41.1	44.7	27.4	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2000
Gambia	35.9	45.3	24.4	51.1	42.1	10.5	56.3	42.2	39.5	35.1	18.1	MICS 2005-06
Georgia	17.2	23.1	12.4	49.1	34.0	7.1	29.1	21.0	18.3	11.3	12.6	MICS 2005
Ghana	24.6	37.7	12.7	46.5	41.6	15.3	22.4	31.0	51.8	5.2	26.9	DHS 2008
Guatemala	30.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ENSMI 2008/09
Guinea	63.1	74.9	44.5	72.7	47.9	27.3	78.9	74.2	74.8	54.9	45.7	DHS 2005
Guinea-Bissau	22.0	31.5	14.2	32.7	21.1	7.9	33.2	32.8	28.3	24.9	10.1	MICS 2010

		Residence (percent)		Level of Education (percent)			Household wealth (Wealth Index Quintiles) (percent)					
Country or territory	Total (%)	Rural	Urban	No Education	Primary	Secondary or higher	Poorest 20%	Second	Middle	Fourth	Richest 20%	Source
Guyana	23.0	22.2	14.5	12.4	44.7	16.6	39.9	22.4	23.6	15.0	9.6	DHS 2009
Haiti	29.9	32.6	27.4	47.7	40.6	19.8	38.4	32.0	32.0	34.7	19.4	DHS 2005-06
Honduras	38.8	32.5	45.8	62.9	51.4	18.9	52.2	50.6	46.0	34.5	19.3	DHS 2005-06
India	47.4	56.2	29.3	76.5	61.8	27.2	75.3	66.6	52.4	36.7	16.3	NFHS 2005-06
Indonesia	22.0	30.1	13.1	30.1	45.2	12.5	28.9	28.0	20.0	17.0	13.2	DHS 2007
Iraq	17.0	19.1	15.9	26.5	19.6	10.3						MICS 2006
Jamaica	8.6	10.7	7.4	0.0	0.0	8.7	-	-	-	-	-	MICS 2005
Jordan	10.2	7.1	10.8	14.1	17.7	15.5	13.6	12.6	12.5	10.8	4.2	Interim DHS 2009
Kazakhstan	7.3	9.2	6.0	22.5	12.8	2.8	8.3	9.8	7.9	4.9	6.1	MICS 2006
Kenya	26.4	31.3	15.6	66.7	35.9	5.6	52.3	28.9	29.2	22.8	13.9	DHS 2008-09
Kiribati	20.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2009
Kyrgyzstan	10.4	13.6	6.7	0.0	24.1	8.6	16.8	6.8	13.9	11.8	5.0	MICS 2006
Lebanon	11.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	MICS 2000
Lesotho	18.8	21.4	13.6	63.1	32.6	9.4	35.3	26.7	19.9	15.1	8.5	DHS 2009
Liberia	37.9	48.6	24.9	56.3	42.3	17.3	56.9	48.0	42.9	30.5	17.7	DHS 2007
Madagascar	48.2	51.0	35.4	67.9	52.9	27.6	65.4	59.4	47.2	41.2	31.9	DHS 2008-09
Malawi	49.6	54.4	31.0	65.6	62.2	16.4	59.8	61.7	56.7	48.9	25.7	DHS 2010
Maldives	3.9	3.8	4.0	16.2	12.0	2.7	4.3	4.3	3.6	4.2	3.4	DHS 2009
Mali	55.0	76.5	60.4	77.0	64.3	37.9	72.6	77.9	76.3	75.8	57.7	MICS 2010
Marshall Islands	26.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2007
Mauritania	35.4	44.1	27.3	51.0	41.3	15.3	50.7	45.5	38.7	33.1	19.7	MICS 2007
Mexico	22.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ENADID 2009
Mongolia	3.9	11.9	7.0	17.9	13.8	7.5	14.2	11.7	7.5	7.1	4.4	RHS 2008
Montenegro	4.8	4.5	4.9	0.0	18.8	2.5	9.7	9.1	2.3	3.3	1.2	MICS 2005
Morocco	15.9	21.1	12.0	24.1	16.4	6.2	22.7	22	15.8	11.4	8.3	DHS 2003-04
Mozambique	51.8	65.5	40.6	67.2	56.6	11.5	69.8	63.8	63.9	54.6	32.1	MICS 2008
Namibia	8.6	11.4	5.6	32.5	18.7	5.1	18.3	7.2	13.4	5.9	1.1	DHS 2006-07
Nauru	26.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2007
Nepal	40.7	42.9	26.9	71.7	56.7	22.9	61.8	52.2	47.7	35.8	17.0	DHS 2011
Nicaragua	40.6	55.1	36.4	69.1	62.5	25.2	-	-	-	-	-	ENDESA 2006-07
Niger	74.5	83.5	42.1	81.2	62.7	17.2	80.5	83.3	84.3	83.5	47.5	DHS 2006
Nigeria	39.4	49.8	21.6	82.1	53.8	12.5	70.8	64.7	43.1	23.1	10.6	DHS 2008
Occupied Palestinian Territory	18.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	PCBS 2004
Pakistan	24.0	29.3	15.6	40.0	22.8	9.9	48.9	33.3	23.8	17.7	9.5	DHS 2006-07
Papua New Guinea	21.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2006
Paraguay	17.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	RHS 2004
Peru	17.5	34.3	11.8	52.2	45.0	11.3	43.4	34.4	20.7	12.0	3.7	DHS 2008

ANNEX 2 (CONTINUED)

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20-24 MARRIED/IN UNION BEFORE AGE 18 BY BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS. 2000-2011

		Residence (percent)		Level of Education (percent)			Household wealth (Wealth Index Quintiles) (percent)					
Country or territory	Total (%)	Rural	Urban	No Education	Primary	Secondary or higher	Poorest 20%	Second	Middle	Fourth	Richest 20%	Source
Philippines	14.2	18.6	11.1	43.3	40.8	10.8	35.4	23.3	12.6	7.6	4.7	DHS 2008
Republic of Moldova	18.9	22.2	15.5	100.0	0.0	10.0	23.3	27.8	18.6	12.6	17.4	DHS 2005
Rwanda	8.1	8.2	7.5	19.6	8.1	3.1	12.9	7.5	7.8	7.1	6.0	DHS 2010
Sao Tome and Principe	34.4	41.9	27.2	48.7	51.2	13.5	38.4	45.0	42.8	39.5	6.5	DHS 2008-09
Senegal	32.9	49.3	16.9	48.1	26.0	6.2	65.9	46.2	32.1	22.2	13.2	DHS 2010-11
Serbia	5.8	8.3	3.8	0.0	30.4	2.5	17.8	6.2	6.3	2.6	0.8	MICS 2005
Sierra Leone	47.9	61.1	30.4	64.2	51.8	12.1	61.8	63.1	65.2	45.4	23.1	DHS 2008
Solomon Islands	22.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2007
Somalia	45.3	52.4	35.2	51.7	41.0	11.2	43.7	58.7	56.4	43.4	27.9	MICS 2006
South Africa	5.6	12.3	4.7	17.6	16.2	6.3	11.0	13.0	9.4	2.2	4.4	DHS 2003
Sri Lanka	11.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2006-07
Sudan	34.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	SHHS 2006
Suriname	19.1	32.6	14.1	61.2	42.7	11.1	44.5	17.6	14.9	11.8	10.8	MICS 2006
Swaziland	5.0	6.4	1.4	15	11.1	2.0	12.9	5.8	6.0	1.7	1.5	DHS 2006-07
Syrian Arab Republic	13.3	11.8	14.6	17.5	15.3	0.7	10.9	15.7	15.4	14.8	10.2	MICS 2006
Tajikistan	12.7	12.6	13.1	20.5	27.7	12.1	17.1	10.8	8.6	14.8	13.4	MICS 2005
Thailand	19.6	23.1	12.2	17.2	46.6	14.3	30.1	27.9	22.9	16.1	5.4	MICS 2005-06
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3.6	4.1	3.3	25.7	10.8	1.0	10.9	3.5	2.9	3.0	0.2	MICS 2005
Timor-Leste	18.9	20.4	15.1	24.3	33.9	12.6	28.1	18.3	20.2	18.4	13.0	DHS 2009
Togo	25.2	40.8	16.9	43.6	29.2	8.0	49.3	47.9	34.6	22.2	15.6	MICS 2010
Trinidad and Tobago	8.1	-	-	27.4	8.4	2.4	3.5	5.7	17.1	3.0	11.8	MICS 2006
Turkey	14.0	21.6	16.9	33.6	25.5	12.1	26.5	22.1	21.8	18.9	16.1	DHS 2008
Turkmenistan	7.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	MICS 2006
Tuvalu	9.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DHS 2007
Uganda	46.3	51.8	26.9	66.8	58.4	13.8	61.8	58.6	46.8	48.8	26.3	DHS 2006
Ukraine	9.9	17.5	7.5	0.0	0.0	9.9	21.0	11.4	9.2	7.6	7.7	DHS 2007
United Republic of Tanzania	36.9	43.9	22.5	60.9	39.2	4.9	50.1	45.7	45.3	33.7	18.6	DHS 2010
Uzbekistan	7.2	6.5	9.0	0.0	14.0	5.9	6.7	6.5	9.5	6.4	6.5	MICS 2006
Vanuatu	27.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	MICS 2007
Viet Nam	10.4	12.9	2.6	11.5	17.8	5.0	26.1	10.8	11.3	7.2	2.1	MICS 2006
Yemen	32.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	MICS 2006
Zambia	41.6	53.3	26.2	64.8	57.5	17.1	63.2	54.5	48.0	41.0	13.0	DHS 2007
Zimbabwe	30.5	38.5	19.8	33.0	55.0	23.4	47.3	45.0	37.9	24.5	11.1	DHS 2010-11

Source: UNFPA database using household surveys (DHS and MICS) and UNICEF database (www.childinfo.org) for total estimates

INDICATOR DEFINITIONS

TOTAL POPULATION (000)	Estimates produced by the United Nations Population Division based on population projections.
POPULATION UNDER 18 (000)	Estimates produced by the United Nations Population Division based on population projections.
LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (YEARS)	Number of years newborn children would live if subject to the mortality risks prevailing for the cross section of population at the time of their birth.
ADOLESCENT BIRTH RATE (PER 1,000 WOMEN)	The adolescent birth rate measures the annual number of births to women 15 to 19 years of age per 1,000 women in that age group. It represents the risk of childbearing among adolescent women 15 to 19 years of age. It is also referred to as the age-specific fertility rate for women aged 15-19.
ADOLESCENT CONTRACEPTIVE	Percentage of women 15-19 years old married or in union currently using contraception.
ADOLESCENT UNMET NEED FOR	Percentage of women 15-19 years old married or in union currently with unmet need for contraception. They expressed a desire to control their fertility but were not using contraception.
ADOLESCENT PECENTAGE OF DEMAND	Percentage of the total demand for contraception that is satisfied and is obtained as : PDS = CPR/(UNR+CPR).
NET ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY	Number of girls enrolled in secondary school who are of official secondary school age, expressed as a percentage of the total number of girls of official secondary school age.
CHILD MARRIAGE (%)	Child marriage is presented here as the percentage and number of women 20-24 that marry/in-union before reaching age 18.

ABBREVIATIONS

CSA	Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
INE	National Institute of Statistics of Mozambique
INS	National Institute of Statistics of Guinea
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NSO	National Statistical Office of Malawi
SOWC	The State of the World's Children reports, produced by the United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNPD	United Nations Population Division

The United Nations Population Fund: Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

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