

EARLY MARRIAGE AMONG GIRLS

Impact indicator, Outcome indicator, SDG indicator

Indicator Phrasing

English: % of women aged 18 - 20 who were married or in a union by age 18

French: % de femmes âgées de 18 à 20 ans qui étaient mariées ou en couple à l'âge de 18 ans

Portuguese: % de mulheres com idades entre 18 e 20 anos que casaram ou se uniram em união de facto aos 18 anos

Czech: % žen ve věku 18 - 20 let, které byly vdané nebo ve svazku před 18. narozeninami

What is its purpose?

This indicator measures the prevalence of child marriage, as defined by UNICEF. Girls who marry or enter into union at an early age frequently abandon formal education and many have early and often high-risk pregnancies. Child brides are also at higher risk of abuse, exploitation, and separation from family and friends, which can all have major consequences on health and wellbeing.

How to Collect and Analyse the Required Data

Collect the following data by conducting individual interviews with a [representative sample](#) of women aged 18 to 20 years:

RECOMMENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS (Q) AND POSSIBLE ANSWERS (A)

Q1: *Can you please tell me whether you are or whether you were married or entered into union?*

A1:

- 1) yes, is or was married / in union
- 2) is not married / in union
- 3) does not respond

(ask the following question only if the previous answer is “yes”)

Q2: *Can you please tell me how old you were when you first married or entered into union?*

A2:

1) record age: ____

2) does not know / does not want to say

To **calculate the indicator's value**, divide the number of women who married or entered into union before the age of 18 by the total number of interviewed women that were married / in union (exclude those who did not know or did not reply). Multiply the result by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Disaggregate by

[Disaggregate](#) the data by the respondent's ethnicity, [wealth](#) category, and other factors depending on the local context.

Important Comments

1) Informal unions are generally defined as those in which a couple lives together for some time and intends to have a lasting relationship, but for which there has been no formal civil or religious ceremony.

2) The original SDG indicator (*% of women aged 20 - 24 who were married or in a union by age 18*) collects data from women aged 20 - 24 years. However, development interventions tackling early marriages need to work with families of girls aged 10 to 17 years. It can take up to 10 years for these girls to turn 20 and become one of the respondents. Since very few interventions have such long time-frames, the above described indicator was **changed to collect data from women aged 18 to 20 years**. Despite this change, the indicator still remains suitable only for longer-term interventions (4-5 years), otherwise the implementing organization risks not recording the changes its intervention achieved. Shorter-term interventions should use the indicator [Parents' Attitudes Towards Early Marriage](#).

E-Questionnaire

- [XLS form for electronic data collection - indicator Early Marriage Among Girls](#)