

VISUALIZE GENDER EQUALITY



Visualize Gender Equality - Viz5 - is an effort to help realize UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

THEME 7 - Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

This month Viz5 wanted to tackle a dataset that exposes the challenges faced by women and girls in low- and lower-middle income countries (LMICs) in accessing contraception and sexual and reproductive health services.

"Rooted in fundamental human rights and serving as a powerful development accelerator, sexual and reproductive health and rights benefits individuals, communities, and nations. Investing in women's sexual and reproductive health and rights is one of the best investments in international development. When a woman can plan her pregnancy, she can plan her future. Her prospects increase for completing education and securing an income. Her children are more likely to be healthy and educated, and poverty is less likely to be transferred to the next generation." - UNFPA 2018-2021 Strategic Plan.

ABOUT THE THEME

The data for this month's Viz5 effort, comes from Guttmacher Institute's report: *Adding It Up: Investing in Contraception and Maternal and Newborn Health, 2017*. This report is representative of an ongoing

research project at Guttmacher Institute which assesses the need and use, as well as the cost and impact, of sexual and reproductive health services in LMICs.¹

The expansion and adoption of sexual and reproductive health rights is a critical priority within the 2030 SDG Agenda. SDG 5 target 5.6 seeks to, “ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.”² Contained within target 5.6 are a number of indicators, including: “the proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care,” and the “number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education.”³ In LMICs there are currently as many as 923 million women of reproductive age who want to avoid pregnancy. Out of that number, around 218 million have an unmet need for modern contraception.⁴

Unmet need is disproportionately high among adolescents, with 43% of them being 15-19 year olds. Once pregnant, these adolescent girls often find that their journeys through education systems come to end. This makes them less likely to be able to work, placing them in a position of economic and social dependence, and increasing the likelihood that they will be victims of gender-based violence and sexual abuse. Unmet contraceptive need has a lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of these women and girls for the remainder of their lives. Beyond that, there is also a long lasting generational impact:

Globally there are 218 million women with an unmet need for contraception. This signals a disconnect between a woman’s desire to plan her pregnancies and her ability to do so. Unmet need can lead to shorter birth-spacing, which has a negative impact on both maternal and newborn health, and can put additional economic strain on a family, perpetuating the poverty cycle. - Dr Anita Makins, Deputy Director, PPIUD Initiative, FIGO.

Enabling safe access to sexual and reproductive health services and contraception empowers all women and girls to have agency over critically important life-decisions, such as when they wish to begin sexual activity, marry, or in deciding the number of children they wish to have. It also frees them to have control over their bodies, and agency over their fertility and sexual health.

Unmet need for contraception remains high in many settings, and is highest among the most vulnerable in society: adolescents, the poor, those living in rural areas and urban slums, people

¹ The Guttmacher Institute is one of the world’s leading research and policy organizations dedicated to the advancement of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) globally, and in the USA.

² <https://sdg-tracker.org/gender-equality>

³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/adding-it-up-investing-in-sexual-reproductive-health>

living with HIV, and internally displaced people...and the need is greatest where the risks of maternal mortality are highest. - World Health Organization.⁵

FACTS & FIGURES

All of the below are taken from Guttmacher Institute's latest summary fact sheet, published in July 2020.⁶

- *Each year, 111 million unintended pregnancies occur in LMICs, and they account for 49% of all pregnancies in those countries.*
- *Annually, 127 million women in LMICs give birth, and many do not receive necessary care.*
 - *50 million make fewer than four antenatal care visits.*
 - *31 million do not deliver in a health facility.*
 - *16 million do not receive the care they need following a major obstetric complication.*
 - *13 million have newborns who do not receive the care they needed for complications.*
- *Lack of high-quality sexual and reproductive health care puts women at risk.*
 - *299,000 die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.*
 - *133 million do not receive the treatment they need for chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and trichomoniasis.*
- *Unmet needs for services are greatest in the poorest countries. For example, only 59% of women in low-income countries deliver their babies in a health facility, compared with 97% in upper-middle-income countries.*

For more facts and figures relating to Guttmacher Institute's SRHR work, check out their latest [fact sheet](#).

ABOUT THE DATA

This month's Viz5 data comes from Guttmacher Institute's report: *Adding It Up: Investing in Contraception and Maternal and Newborn Health, 2017*.⁷ The 2017 report estimates contraception and maternal and newborn health needs, impacts, and costs. It includes measures in the analysis by geographical sub-regions for all developing countries and by income level for countries with the LMIC

⁵ [Ensuring human rights in the provision of contraceptive information and services, Guidance and recommendations, World Health Organization, p. 1.](#)

⁶ <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/adding-it-up-investing-in-sexual-reproductive-health>

⁷ <https://www.guttmacher.org/report/adding-it-up-investing-in-contraception-maternal-newborn-health-2017-methodology>

classification.⁸ The goal of the report is to give a comprehensive estimate of the amount of resources needed to meet the need for sexual and reproductive health services in these countries. The estimates included in the report cover all 148 countries that are classified as developing, or LMIC, by the United Nations Development Programme.⁹

Adding It Up estimates the current level of existing need, the degree of pre-existing coverage, and the level of unmet need existing in the countries' sexual and reproductive healthcare infrastructure. It is calculated as $\text{Need} - \text{Coverage} = \text{Unmet Need}$.¹⁰

In the project, they estimate need based on a large number of data sources, including, existing literature and research, statistical modeling, surveys, and census information. In this way, the report synthesizes a large amount of information and data from diverse sources, so as to:

- Comprehensively and coherently present a group of estimates that cover all developing regions.
- Highlight the areas of synergy between different countries' areas of focus in sexual and reproductive health work.
- Reveal the need for integrated solutions in the work to address and improve sexual and reproductive health services.
- Couch all of these findings within the fuller context of women's lives, and magnify the interconnections between sexual and reproductive health services, and the other priorities set out in the 2030 SDG Agenda.¹¹

The focus of the data we are sharing this month, relates to unmet need in the accessing of modern contraception. The impact this has on the lives of women and girls, and the generational consequences are hard to overstate.

Providing access to all women in developing countries who currently have an unmet need for modern methods of contraception would prevent [...] 79,000 maternal deaths and 1.1 million infant deaths.¹² This situation would particularly benefit adolescent girls, who are at increased risk for medical complications associated with pregnancy and who are often forced to make

⁸ Population Division, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, Classification of countries by region, income group and subregion of the world, New York: United Nations, 2015, <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/adding-it-up-2017-estimation-methodology.pdf, p. 3.

¹¹ Ibid, pp. 4-5.

¹² Singh S, Darroch JE. Adding it up: costs and benefits of contraceptive services – estimates for 2012. New York (NY): Guttmacher Institute and United Nations Population Fund; 2012, p. 4 (<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/AIU-2012-estimates.pdf>, accessed 3 October 2013).

compromises in education and employment that may lead to poverty and lower educational attainment.¹³

We have provided detailed information regarding the specifics of the data and definitions in the accompanying Data Dictionary, which we encourage you to explore before you begin visualizing!

ABOUT VIZ

The ultimate goal of Viz5 is to create a space where data advocacy and insights meet impact. This work seeks to ignite a data advocacy effort with the power to not only raise awareness of extreme gender inequality, but also catalyze global action to end it.

Viz5 is led by Operation Fistula, with #MakeoverMonday and Tableau Foundation operating as critical partners.

OPERATION
FISTULA

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FOUNDATION



Viz5 will mobilize the power of the #MakeoverMonday and Tableau communities, to visualize 12 data sets, over 12 months. These data sets will feature 12 themes, curated to present different areas of gender inequality. Collectively, these data sets and visualizations will begin to tell the story of where and how gender inequality is at its most extreme.

The visualizations that are produced during Viz5 will serve as advocacy tools, awareness-raising artifacts, and data-driven insight drivers for anyone working to end gender inequality.

Join us as we work to visualize a more equal world! Sign up to our community at www.viz5.org.

¹³ Ensuring Human Rights in the Provision of Contraceptive Information and Services, Guidance and Recommendations, World Health Organization, 2014, p.5.