Proportion of women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods: SDG Indicator 3.7.1

Population Division | Department of Economic and Social Affairs | United Nations
3.7.1 PROPORTION OF WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE (AGED 15-49) WHO HAVE THEIR NEED FOR FAMILY PLANNING SATISFIED BY MODERN METHODS
Rationale

- Assess overall levels of coverage for family planning programmes and services
- Achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services
- Enable women and their partners to exercise their rights to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so
- Improve maternal and child health and well-being and prevent unintended pregnancies
Definition

The percentage of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) who desire either to have no (additional) children or to postpone the next child and who are currently using a modern method of contraception.

Ideally, the indicator should be disaggregated by geography (urban/rural), education, income groups, and other relevant characteristics to ensure no one is left behind.
What is a high proportion of need for family planning satisfied by modern methods?

100% is most likely an unrealistic target, as many women choose not to use modern contraceptive methods for a variety of reasons, including:

- Conflict with religious beliefs; Inconvenience or discomfort; Preference for traditional methods, Previously experiencing or fear of side-effects

The region with the highest proportion of demand satisfied by modern methods in 2020 is Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (86.2%)

**Rule of thumb**

- > 75% high level of need satisfied by modern methods
- < 50% low level of need satisfied by modern methods
Components for computation

Need for family planning satisfied by modern methods

Contraceptive use (modern methods)
Contraceptive use (traditional methods)
Unmet need for family planning
• All family planning indicators are calculated for women of reproductive age (15-49 years)

• Depending on survey methodologies, indicators are generally calculated either for married/in-union women, all women or ever-married women within these ages
- **Contraceptive prevalence rate**
  - Percentage of women of reproductive age using any form of contraception

**Concept**
- Can be calculated separately for modern and traditional methods

- Modern methods include condoms, IUDs, implants, pill, etc.
- Traditional methods include withdrawal, rhythm, other folk methods
• **Unmet need for family planning**
  - Percentage of women of reproductive age who want to avoid pregnancy, but are not using any form of contraception

*Concept*
- Measures women and couples’ non-use of contraception when they want to limit or delay childbirth
- Includes pregnant or post-partum women whose last pregnancy was either mistimed or unintended
- Based on the DHS 2012 definition: [https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-as25-analytical-studies.cfm](https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-as25-analytical-studies.cfm)
• Total need for family planning
  • The percentage of all women of reproductive age who want to avoid pregnancy

*Concept*
  • Includes those using contraception *and* those with an unmet need for family planning
• Need for family planning satisfied by modern methods (SDG 3.7.1)
  • Percentage of women who are using a modern contraceptive method among women who want to avoid pregnancy

Concept
• Differs from modern contraceptive prevalence rate because it does not include women without a need for contraception
Data availability for global monitoring

**World Contraceptive Use dataset**

- Survey-based observations of contraceptive use and unmet need for family planning
- Released annually in March
- More than 1,300 surveys from 1950 to 2018
- 195 countries or areas
- SDG 3.7.1. – country data for 130 countries

Data sources

Comparability issues

Sample representativeness.
- Some surveys target populations other than all women aged 15–49, e.g.:
  - Age groups (e.g. 18-44)
  - Geography (e.g. not all regions of a country included)
  - Union status (e.g. only married women asked about family planning)

Questionnaire issues.
- Sensitive nature of asking questions about sexual and reproductive health
- **Contraceptive prevalence**
  - Sterilization excluded from modern method use or included for non-contraceptive reasons.
  - Omission of probing questions to prompt reporting of traditional method use.
- **Unmet need for family planning**
  - Large number of questions need to compute unmet need
  - Inconsistencies across time and across surveys in unmet need measurement
Global monitoring

- Estimates and projections from statistical model
  - Model estimates fill in gaps where no survey data are available
  - Annual data from 1990 to 2030
  - 185 countries or areas
  - Model estimates standardized improving comparability across countries and time
  - Available at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/themes/family-planning

- Global and regional estimates used in SDG reporting
- Country estimates for SDG reporting from survey observation

Online Family Planning Estimation Tool from Track20

- Allows running the model for one country
- Allows adding additional data
Global picture of SDG 3.7.1 in 2020
