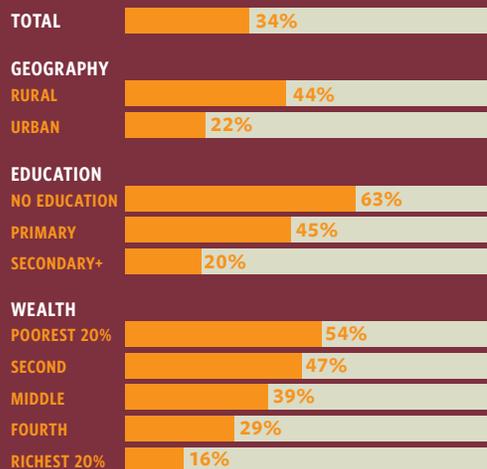


PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AGED 20-24 YEARS MARRIED BEFORE AGE 18, 2000-2010

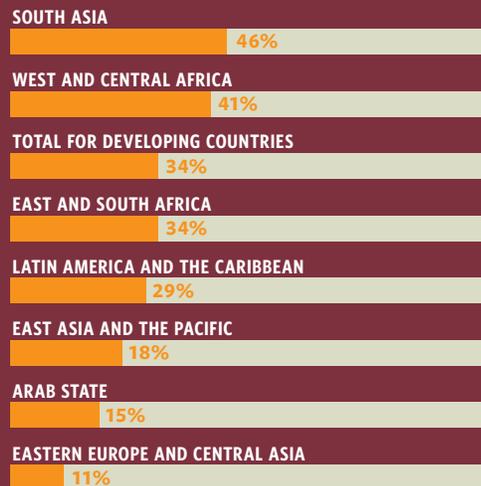
Child marriage is drawing increasing attention, as a violation of individual human rights that impairs the well-being and life options of millions of girls, and holds back the development of their communities. There is some limited progress, and some non-governmental and humanitarian organisations have found ways to help girls and their families. But the political will and financial investments required to end child marriage are still lacking.



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

Data from 78 countries show that the rural, poor, and least-educated girls are most at risk of child marriage:

- Girls living in rural areas are twice as likely to be married before they reach their 18th birthday (44%), compared to girls in urban areas (22%).
- Girls with primary education are twice as likely to be married early (45%), compared to girls with secondary education or higher (20%). Girls with no education at all (63%) are more than three times more likely to be married early than those with secondary education.
- Girls from the poorest households (54%) are nearly four times more likely to be married early than girls from the most affluent families (16%).

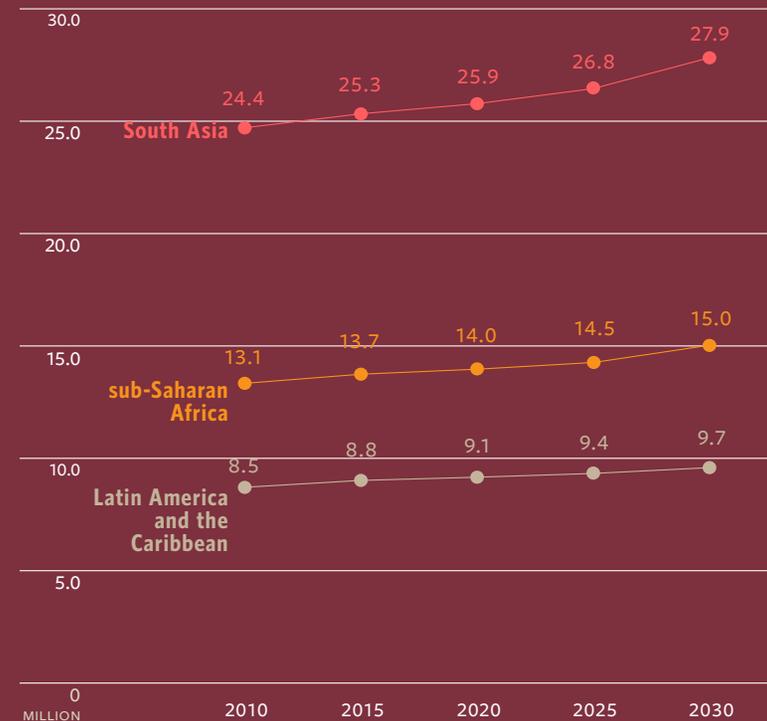


PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGE BY REGION, 2000-2011

Child marriage occurs in many regions of the world. The scale and scope of child marriage is staggering: one out of every three girls in the developing world (excluding China) was married by age 18. The practice is most common in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where rates of adolescent pregnancy and maternal death are among the highest in the world.

- In South Asia, 46% of young women now aged 20-24 were married before the age of 18.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, nearly 37% of young women now aged 20-24 were married before turning 18.
- In Latin America and the Caribbean, 29% of young women now aged 20-24 were married by age 18.

These regional aggregates still mask significant variations among and within countries. For example, 75% of young women ages 20-24 in Niger were married by age 18, compared to 41% for the West and Central African region as a whole. Within countries, there are "hot spots" where large proportions of today's young women were married by their 15th birthday.



NUMBER OF WOMEN 20-24 THAT WILL MARRY OR ENTER INTO UNION BEFORE AGE 18 DURING THE PERIOD 2010-2013 BY REGION (IN MILLIONS)

The majority of girls affected by child marriage are those living in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. For example, in 2010, an estimated 24.4 million girls in South Asia were married by age 18. By 2030, this number will increase to 27.7 million girls. Over these next two decades (2010-2030), a total of 130 million girls in South Asia alone will be married as children.

It is time for policy makers, parliamentarians, communities, families and girls and boys to address the issue head on and end child marriage.



“Whenever I saw him, I hid. I hated to see him,” Tehani recalls of the early days of her marriage to Majed, when she was 6 and he was 25.

TEHANI, NOW 8 YEARS OLD (YEMEN)

Tehani, 8, is seen with her husband Majed, 27, and her former classmate Ghada, 8, and her husband outside their home in Hajjah, Yemen, July 26, 2010. ©Stephanie Sinclair / VII



left

DEBITU, AGE 14 (ETHIOPIA)

Seven month pregnant Debitu, 14, escaped from her husband after months of abuse. She is now homeless and is uncertain of the future of she and her baby. ©Stephanie Sinclair / VII

top right

GHULAM, AGE 11 / FAIZ, AGE 40 (AFGHANISTAN)

Faiz, 40, and Ghulam, 11, sit in her home prior to their wedding, Afghanistan, Sept. 11, 2005. Ghulam said she is sad to be getting engaged as she wanted to be a teacher. Her favorite class was Dari, the local language, before she was made to drop out of school. Married girls are seldom found in school, limiting their economic and social opportunities. Parents sometimes remove their daughters from school to protect them from the possibility of sexual activity outside of wedlock. It is hard to say exactly how many young marriages take place, but according to the Afghan women's ministry and women's NGOs, approximately 57 percent of Afghan girls get married before the legal age of 16. In addition, once the girl's father has agreed to the engagement, she is pulled out of school immediately. Early pregnancies also result in an increase in complications during child birth. ©Stephanie Sinclair / VII

bottom right

NUJOOD, AGE 12 (YEMEN)

Nujoood is seen in Sana'a, Yemen, Feb. 2, 2010. She was married to her husband, more than 20 years her senior, when she was only ten-years old. They are now divorced. Nujoood's story sent shock waves around the country and caused parliament to consider a bill writing a minimum marriage age into law. ©Stephanie Sinclair / VII

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“Whenever I saw him, I hid. I hated to see him,” Tehani recalls of the early days of her marriage to Majed, when she was 6 and he was 25.



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©Stephanie Sinclair / VII



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©Stephanie Sinclair / VII



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