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Age and Gender

Fertility among very young adolescents: Data, methods, trends and challenges

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SDG indicator 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate

• Definition: Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group

• UN Population Division: custodian agent for this indicator to report to UNSD on an annual basis

• So far reported to UNSD SDG database on adolescent birth rates 15-19
Making the case – demographic facts 2020

• 545 mio young adolescents ages 10-14 globally;
• 310 mio young adolescent girls ages 10-14 globally;
• Another 15 mio will be added over the next decade;
• Each fourth girl in this age-group lives in sub-Saharan Africa;
• Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to experience a 22 per cent increase of girls in this age-group.
Data, methods and challenges

Established dataset of 1,174 data points for 118 countries between 2000 and 2018;

**Data sources:** DHS (main) and UNSD Demographic Year Book and other surveys

- DHS: birth history data from adolescents 15-19 years 3 – 5 years before the survey;
- UNSD DYB: vital registration data and census data.

**Data quality challenges:**

- Age misreporting;
- Omission of births/incomplete registration;
- Only married girls/women surveyed & births reported/registered.
Number of births per 1,000 girls aged 10 to 14 around the world, most recent estimates (2010 – 2017)
Fertility rates by single age of mother for countries with measurable levels of early fertility, 2000 – 2017 (births per 1,000 girls of the respective age)
Key findings: Early adolescent childbearing

• is much more common in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean than in other parts of the world;

• is currently a matter of high concern in a select number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa and in Bangladesh.

• is often associated with early marriage and child marriage.

• is also associated with high fertility in later adolescence (15-19), higher total fertility levels and high population growth rates.

• Many countries with measurable levels of early fertility recorded a reduction in early adolescent fertility between 2000-2007 and 2010-2017 while others saw an increase.
Thank you

Any questions?

Please contact us at population@un.org