

9 Formerly Married Women

Although the currently married and never-married women constitute by far the largest groups in the population, the formerly married, including divorced, separated and widowed, may also be exposed to the risk of unintended pregnancy. This marital status category was not included in the DHS-I comparative study of unmet need.

Because of some of the same limitations that restricted the analysis of never-married women to sub-Saharan Africa, particularly the inclusion of questions on sexual activity as well as doubts about the quality of the sexual activity data, the analysis for the formerly married has also been confined to the same African countries.

9.1 MEASUREMENT

The measurement of unmet need for the formerly married women (Figure 9.1) is similar to that for never-married women. The basic difference is that for formerly married women, there is

no assumption that a certain fraction are indifferent to the risk of pregnancy or, stated differently, it is assumed that all formerly married women are more or less motivated to avoid pregnancy in their present status. The fact that some formerly married women are pregnant or amenorrheic and report that the pregnancy was intended is less revealing than for never-married women because some of those women were married at the time of the conception.

9.2 ESTIMATES OF UNMET NEED AND DEMAND

A considerable fraction of formerly married women are indeed pregnant or amenorrheic, ranging from about 10 to 25 percent. In most but not all of the African countries included, that pregnancy or birth was reported as intended (Table 9.1). Because of the generally older ages of these women, the proportions infecund are higher than for currently married women. The percentage using contraception tends to be lower among the formerly married than among the currently married, but there are numerous exceptions.

Figure 9.1 Unmet need among formerly married women: Kenya, 1993

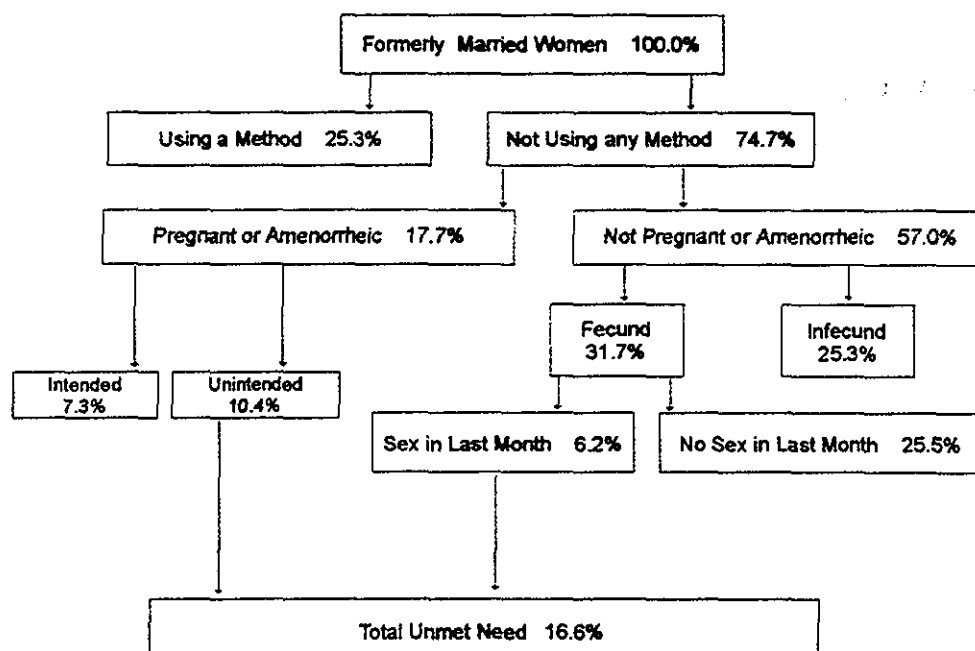


Table 9.1 Exposure status: Formerly married women

Percent of formerly married women by exposure status, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1987-1993

Country	Percent total	Using a method	Not using any method					Number of women
			Pregnant or amenorrheic ^a		Not pregnant or amenorrheic			
			Intended	Unintended	Infecund	Fecund, sexually inactive	Fecund, sexually active	
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA								
Botswana	100.0 ^b	29.5	5.0	7.6	31.2	14.4	10.9	349
Burkina Faso	100.0	10.0	17.0	4.6	26.6	35.0	6.8	173
Burundi	100.0	5.8	15.9	9.0	38.8	29.5	1.0	255
Cameroon	100.0	20.9	12.1	2.9	28.8	21.3	14.0	283
Ghana	100.0	14.4	4.7	5.2	35.7	29.0	11.0	465
Kenya	100.0	25.3	7.3	10.4	25.3	25.5	6.2	631
Liberia	100.0	12.5	13.4	10.4	23.1	17.9	22.8	577
Madagascar	100.0	7.1	16.9	9.9	29.9	22.1	14.1	845
Mali	100.0	6.8	13.3	1.7	42.0	33.1	3.1	109
Namibia	100.0	23.5	10.8	5.3	26.6	21.7	12.1	379
Niger	100.0	6.8	12.8	7.2	36.3	34.4	2.5	261
Nigeria	100.0	4.8	14.2	4.0	42.7	23.3	10.9	388
Rwanda	100.0	10.0	14.1	10.7	32.8	28.9	3.5	665
Senegal	100.0	15.6	8.2	7.8	34.4	31.6	2.5	282
Tanzania	100.0	11.9	16.1	7.9	28.3	19.8	16.0	939
Togo	100.0	32.3	5.8	3.2	18.0	37.1	3.6	167
Uganda	100.0	9.0	14.5	9.7	30.5	26.3	10.0	629
Zambia	100.0	9.8	10.4	8.9	25.8	31.5	13.6	811
Zimbabwe	100.0	31.5	5.5	3.7	21.6	26.6	11.1	425

^a The distribution of planning status for currently pregnant women is based on the distribution for amenorrheic women for Botswana, Burundi, Liberia, Mali, Togo and Uganda. The estimate for Zimbabwe is based on the average figure for the region.

^b Includes contraceptive failure (1.3%) among pregnant or amenorrheic women.

The formerly married at high risk of unintended pregnancy are those fecund women who are sexually active and not using any method. An average of about 9 percent of formerly married women fall into this category. This group, plus those pregnant or amenorrheic women whose pregnancy was unintended, constitute the unmet need category for formerly married women (Table 9.2).¹⁶ The percentages currently using a method and the proportions classified as having an unmet need are about the same on average, i.e., 15 and 16 percent, respectively (Figure 9.2). The percentage of demand satisfied ranges from a quarter to two-thirds.

The formerly married category includes two very different subgroups: the widowed who tend to be older and younger women whose marriages were dissolved by divorce or separation. The basic estimates of unmet need and demand for two, broad, age groups are shown in Table 9.3. The demand for family planning is significantly higher for the younger than for the older women because both use and unmet need are greater and infecundity is lower. Almost without exception, formerly married women in cities are more likely to use contraception than those in rural areas. Use rises sharply with education and is also directly and strongly associated with exposure to the mass media (Table 9.4).

¹⁶ Unlike the procedure followed for never-married women, there is only one definition of need for formerly married women, based on those who reported sex in the past month. Since virtually all formerly married women have had sex at some time in the past, the inclusion of all fecund nonusers would greatly exaggerate the amount of need.

Table 9.2 Demand and unmet need: Formerly married women

Unmet need and the demand for contraception among formerly married women, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1987-1993

Country	Demand for contraception	Current use	Unmet need ^a	Percentage of demand satisfied
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA				
Botswana	49.3 ^b	29.5	18.5	62.5
Burkina Faso	21.4	10.0	11.4	46.7
Burundi	15.8	5.8	10.0	36.7
Cameroon	37.8	20.9	16.9	55.3
Ghana	30.5	14.4	16.1	47.2
Kenya	41.9	25.3	16.6	60.4
Liberia	45.7	12.5	33.2	27.3
Madagascar	31.0	7.1	23.9	22.9
Mali	11.6	6.8	4.8	58.6
Namibia	40.9	23.5	17.4	57.5
Niger	16.5	6.8	9.7	41.2
Nigeria	19.8	4.8	15.0	24.2
Rwanda	24.1	10.0	14.1	41.5
Senegal	25.9	15.6	10.3	60.2
Tanzania	35.8	11.9	23.9	33.2
Togo	39.2	32.4	6.8	82.6
Uganda	28.7	9.0	19.7	31.4
Zambia	32.3	9.8	22.5	30.3
Zimbabwe	46.2	31.5	14.7	68.2

^a Limited to fecund women who had sex within the last month or to pregnant or amenorrheic women whose pregnancy was mistimed or unwanted.

^b Included contraceptive failure among pregnant or amenorrheic women.

Figure 9.2 Total demand for family planning among formerly married women in 19 sub-Saharan countries, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1987-1993

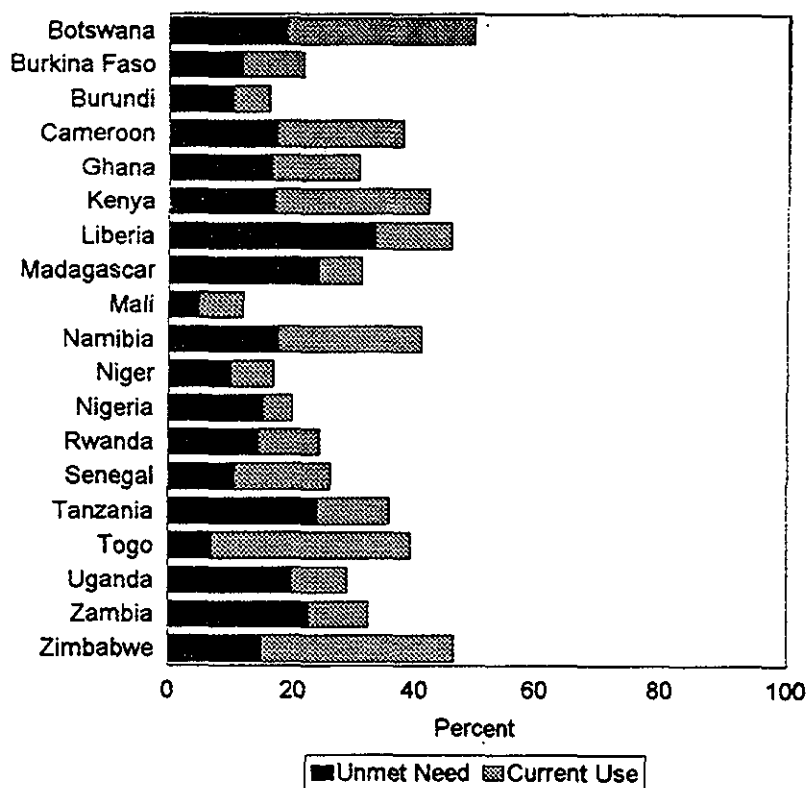


Table 9.3 Demand and unmet need by age groups: Formerly married women

Unmet need and the demand for family planning among formerly married women under 30 years old and 30-49, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1987-1993

Country	Demand for contraception	Current use	Unmet need	Percent of total demand satisfied
FORMERLY MARRIED WOMEN UNDER 30 YEARS				
Botswana	61.1	35.7	22.9	62.5
Burkina Faso	36.0	11.0	25.0	30.5
Burundi	20.7	7.9	12.8	38.2
Cameroon	44.8	24.3	20.5	54.2
Ghana	37.4	12.3	25.1	32.9
Kenya	54.9	32.8	22.1	59.7
Liberia	57.0	11.8	45.2	20.7
Madagascar	44.7	7.1	37.6	15.9
Mali	19.0	14.6	4.4	76.8
Namibia	50.7	29.5	21.2	58.2
Niger	21.2	7.2	14.0	34.0
Nigeria	32.4	8.4	24.0	25.9
Rwanda	32.4	12.4	20.0	38.3
Senegal	32.5	15.8	16.7	48.6
Tanzania	41.5	7.1	34.4	17.1
Togo	43.7	33.3	10.4	76.2
Uganda	36.1	10.3	25.8	28.5
Zambia	38.1	8.2	29.9	21.5
Zimbabwe	56.9	36.4	20.5	64.0
FORMERLY MARRIED WOMEN 30-49 YEARS				
Botswana	44.5	26.9	16.8	62.3
Burkina Faso	12.9	9.4	3.5	72.9
Burundi	13.0	4.7	8.3	36.1
Cameroon	33.3	18.7	14.6	56.2
Ghana	25.9	15.8	10.1	61.0
Kenya	34.2	20.9	13.3	61.1
Liberia	34.1	12.9	21.2	37.8
Madagascar	21.2	7.1	14.1	33.5
Mali	7.1	2.4	4.7	33.8
Namibia	36.9	21.0	15.9	56.9
Niger	12.4	6.5	5.9	52.4
Nigeria	15.2	3.6	11.6	23.7
Rwanda	21.1	9.1	12.0	43.1
Senegal	20.9	15.4	5.5	73.7
Tanzania	32.0	15.0	17.0	46.9
Togo	37.1	31.9	5.2	86.0
Uganda	23.0	8.0	15.0	34.8
Zambia	27.3	11.3	16.0	41.4
Zimbabwe	38.1	27.8	10.3	73.0

Table 9.4 Use by residence, education and media exposure: Formerly married women

Percent of formerly married women using any method, by urban-rural residence, education and exposure to mass media, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1987-1993

Country	Residence		Level of education			Media exposure			
	Urban	Rural	None	Primary	Secondary+	0	1	2	3
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA									
Botswana	38.0	25.8	13.7	35.0	60.0	19.6	34.2	-	-
Burkina Faso	18.9	4.1	5.2	18.4	36.3	2.6	13.2	26.0	23.5
Burundi	24.6	3.6	3.1	18.0	16.1	4.3	9.2	-	-
Cameroon	33.6	8.3	8.3	17.1	55.7	8.0	29.8	39.5	-
Ghana	16.5	12.9	7.8	13.5	18.9	9.2	13.4	14.7	42.1
Kenya	38.6	21.6	13.8	29.6	35.5	19.2	24.1	30.3	54.9
Liberia	19.8	6.2	6.7	4.2	37.1	3.6	16.0	-	-
Madagascar	13.0	4.7	1.5	6.2	20.4	3.6	7.9	27.6	34.8
Mali	9.4	5.1	4.8	17.5	33.3	5.4	7.9	-	-
Namibia	36.0	14.5	12.2	20.8	38.0	13.0	10.4	26.5	47.6
Niger	15.9	1.7	4.0	21.7	25.8	3.0	6.4	11.7	42.9
Nigeria	12.0	2.5	2.8	3.7	21.3	2.0	5.5	10.4	-
Rwanda	15.6	9.6	6.5	14.1	12.6	NA	-	-	-
Senegal	20.5	4.6	9.0	19.6	35.4	5.6	11.2	16.2	36.0
Tanzania	20.0	8.5	7.9	14.7	15.4	4.8	17.0	22.7	36.2
Togo	37.5	28.4	22.9	38.8	59.1	23.6	47.5	-	-
Uganda	17.6	7.6	4.9	9.3	26.7	7.9	11.6	-	-
Zambia	12.7	7.1	5.7	7.3	19.6	5.6	9.3	12.6	19.3
Zimbabwe	36.1	28.5	15.5	31.7	44.3	24.5	41.1	40.7	-

NA = Not available

- = All three media exposure questions not included