

Nepal 2019



Child Marriage

Multiple Indicator
Cluster Surveys

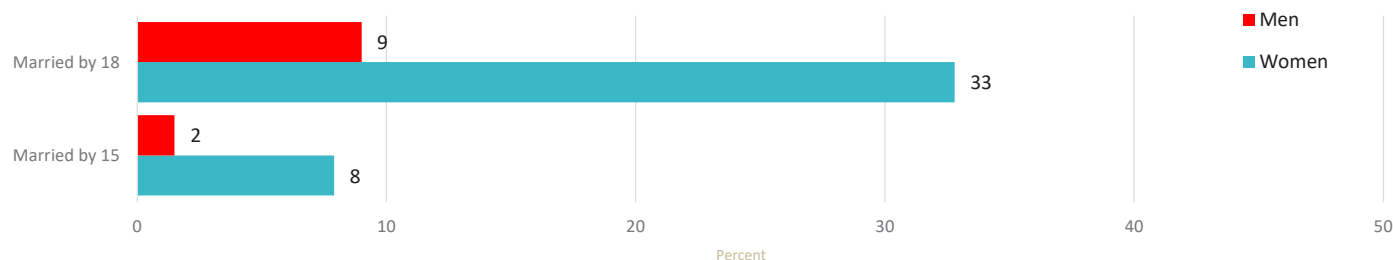
Child Marriage: Levels & Disaggregates



Government of Nepal
National Planning Commission
Central Bureau of Statistics



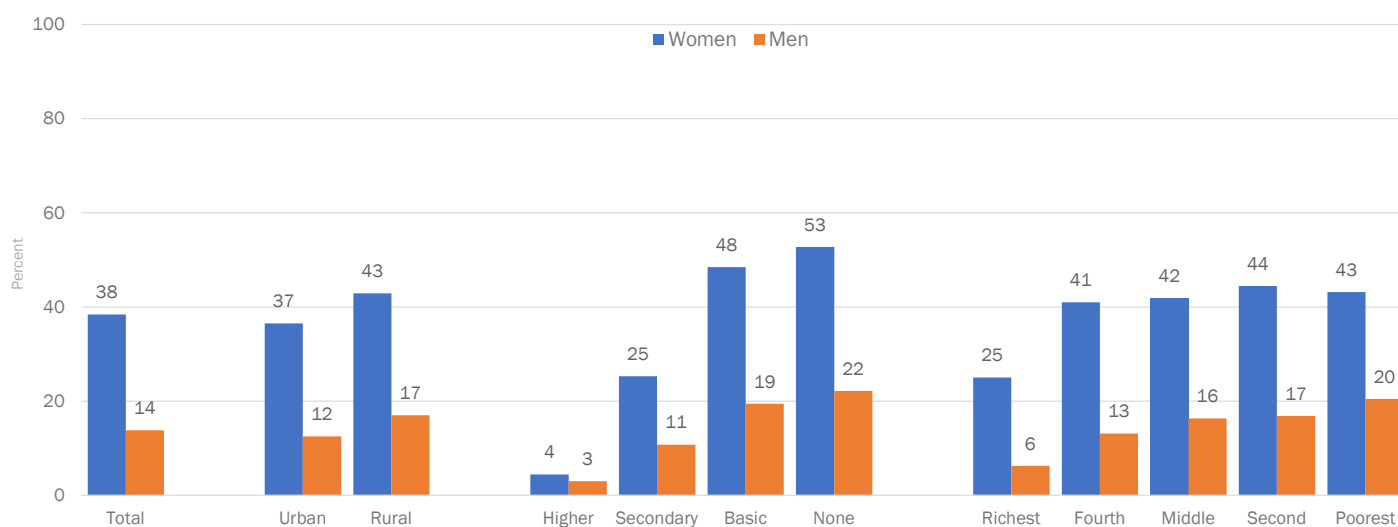
Marriage before Age 15 & Age 18: SDG 5.3.1



Percentage of married men and women aged 20-24 years who were first married or in union before the ages of 15 and 18, by residence

The above chart refers to married men and women aged 20 to 24 years, as this youngest cohort most recently completed exposure to the risk of marrying in childhood, thus giving a closer approximation of the current prevalence of child marriage. The following charts, which show disaggregation by background characteristics, refer to the full cohort of married men and women aged 18 to 49 years.

Disaggregates in Marriage before Age 18



Percentage of married men and women aged 20-49 years who were first married or in union before the age of 18, by wealth quintile and education

Key Messages

- In Nepal women are far more likely to marry young than are men. Eight percent (8%) of women aged 20-24 years were married before the age of 15 and 33% were married before the age of 18. Data for men indicate that 2% of men aged 20-24 were married before the age of 15 and 9% were married before the age of 18.
- Men and women aged 20-49 who live in rural areas were slightly more likely to be married before the age of 18 (17% and 43% respectively) than were men and women aged 20-49 from urban areas (12% and 37%).
- Level of education is strongly associated with the prevalence of child marriage. Men and women with no or basic education are more likely to be married before the age of 18 than are men and women who have secondary or higher educational attainments.
- There is a significant relationship between child marriage and wealth status among married women aged 20-49. Women from the richest households were significantly less likely to be married before the age of 18 (25%) compared to women from the fourth, middle, second and poorest households (range: 41-44%). However, prevalence of child marriage among men increases as household wealth decreases. Men at the ages of 20-49 years from the poorest households were more than three times as likely to be married before the age of 18 (20%) than were men aged 20-49 from the richest households (6%).
- There are disparities in prevalence of child marriage amongst provinces in Nepal. Prevalence of marriage before the age of 18 is highest among women aged 20-49 in Province 2 (52.5%) and the percent of men aged 20-49 married before the age of 18 is highest in Karnali (24.8%). Bagmati has the lowest percent of child marriage amongst women aged 20-49 (28.0%). Province 1, Bagmati and Gandaki have the lowest percent of child marriage among men aged 20-49 (9.7% -9.8% respectively).

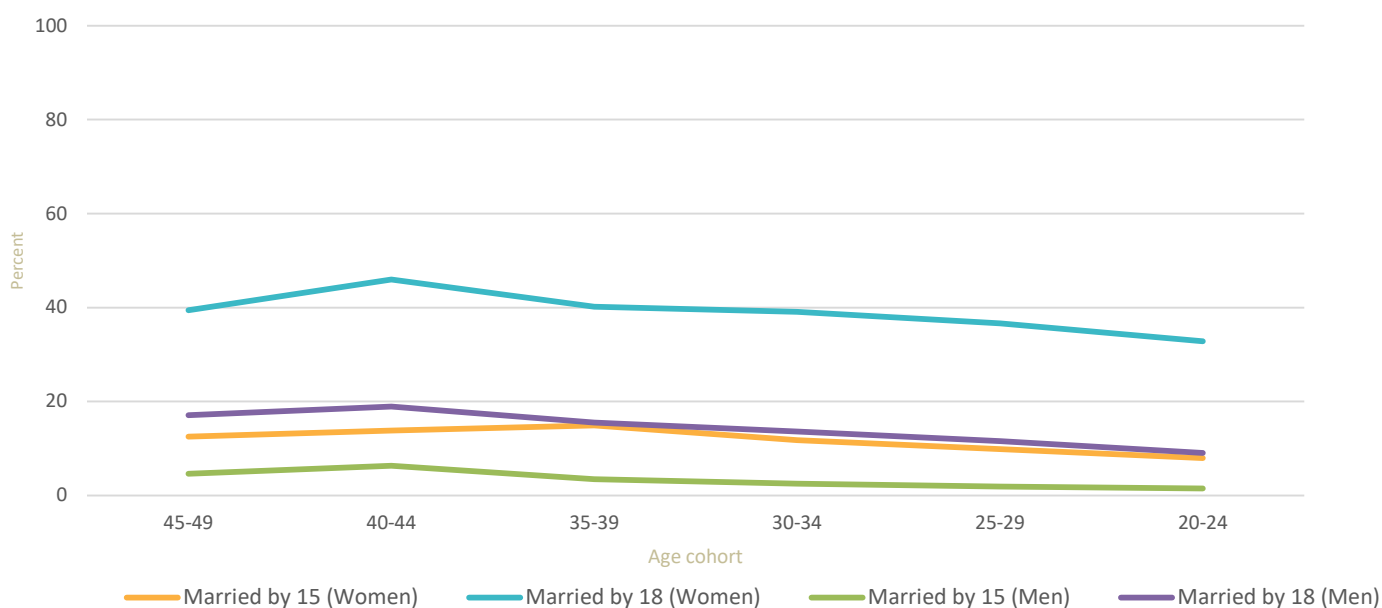
Provincial Data on Child Marriage

Province	Marriage by age 18 (Women)	Marriage by age 18 (Men)
National	38.4	13.8
Province 1	30.9	9.7
Province 2	52.5	17.9
Bagmati Province	28.0	9.8
Gandaki Province	40.5	9.7
Lumbini Province	39.6	15.9
Karnali Province	47.9	24.8
Sudoorpashchim Province	45.4	20.8

Percent of married men and women aged 20 to 49 years who were first married or in union before age 18, by region

Marriage before the age of 18 is a reality for many young girls and boys. In many parts of the world parents encourage the marriage of their daughters and sons while they are still children in hopes that the marriage will benefit them both financially and socially, while also relieving financial burdens on the family. In actual fact, child marriage is a violation of human rights, compromising the development of girls and often resulting in early pregnancy and social isolation, with little education and poor vocational training reinforcing the gendered nature of poverty. The right to 'free and full' consent to a marriage is recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - with the recognition that consent cannot be 'free and full' when one of the parties involved is not sufficiently mature to make an informed decision about a life partner.

Trends in Child Marriage



Percent of married women aged 20-49 years who were first married or in union before the ages of 15 and 18, by age cohort

The Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) was carried out in 2019 by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) as part of the global MICS programme. Technical support was provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). UNICEF and Government of Nepal provided financial support.

The objective of this snapshot is to disseminate selected findings from the Nepal MICS 2019 related to Child Marriage. Data from this snapshot can be found in table PR.4.1W and PR.4.1M in the Survey Findings Report..

Further statistical snapshots and the Survey Findings Report for this and other surveys are available on mics.unicef.org/surveys.