

Assessing Opportunities for Family Planning Programming among Adolescents and Youth in South Africa

(%) of WRA who are
15-24 (2023)

4.7 M (29% of WRA)

Married Adolescent/Youth Population
(2023)

501,000

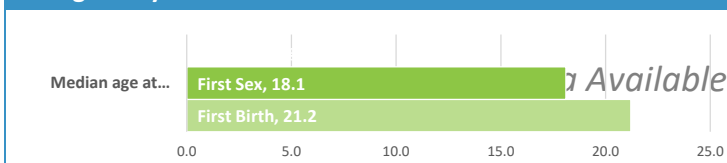
Unmarried Sexually Active
Adolescent/Youth Population (2023)

2,364,000

Unmarried Not Sexually Active
Adolescent/Youth (2023)

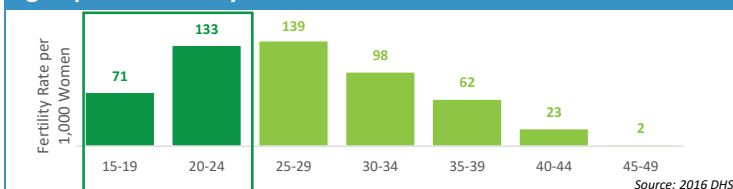
1,847,000

Timing of Key Life Events



Source: 2016 DHS; Median based on women 25-29

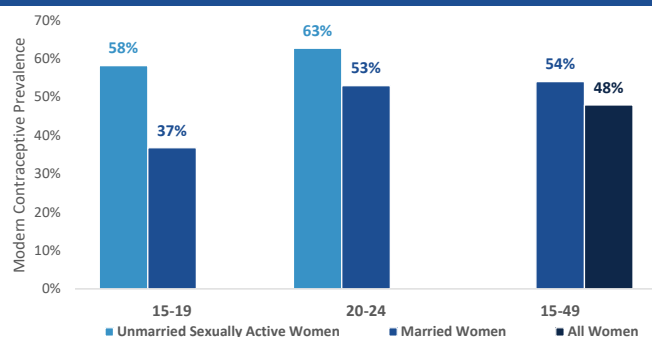
Age-Specific Fertility Rates



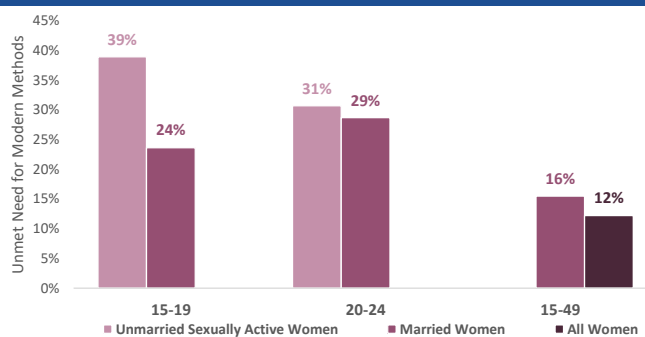
Source: 2016 DHS

Contraceptive Use and Need among Adolescents (15-19) and Youth (20-24)

Modern Contraceptive Use among Adolescents, Youth, and WRA



Unmet Need (Modern) among Adolescents, Youth and WRA



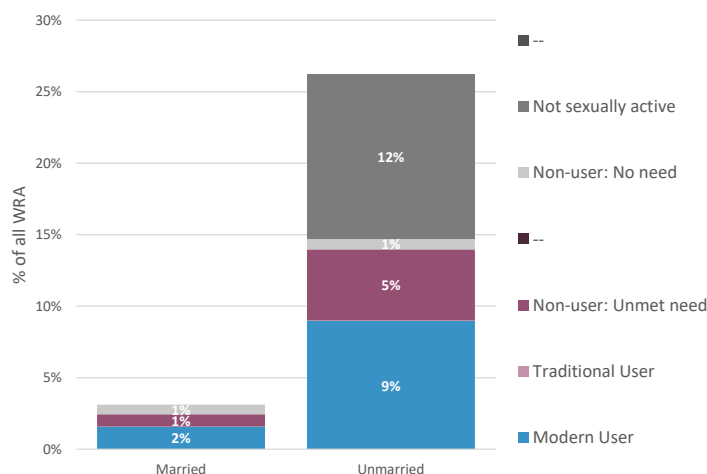
The graphs above show modern contraceptive use and need among married and unmarried sexually active women ages 15-19 and 20-24, and among married and all women of reproductive age (15-49), allowing for comparison between these groups. However, the overall size of these groups can vary widely based on norms around age at marriage, first sexual intercourse, and the occurrence of sex outside of marriage. Understanding the size of the population that falls into each age and marital status group, shown in the graphs below, is key to understanding the potential reach and impact of adolescent- and youth-focused programming.

Opportunities for Reaching Adolescents and Youth with Modern Contraception

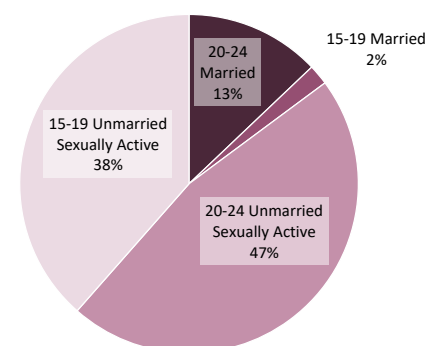
Of all the women of reproductive age (WRA) in the country, 29% are adolescents and youth (15-24). Of these, 1,847,000 (or 12% of WRA) are unmarried and not sexually active. While interventions targeting these young women may impact future behaviors and contraceptive use, these young women do not have a current need for contraception. For the rest of the adolescent and youth population, it is important to consider how contraceptive use and need vary by age and marital status in order to determine where to focus programmatic efforts.

Adolescent and Youth Contraceptive Use and Need, as a % of WRA

In South Africa, around 11% of all women are adolescents/youth using a modern method of contraception (sum of blue segments), while around 5.9% are adolescents/youth with an unmet need for modern methods (sum of purple segments).



Adolescents and Youth with an Unmet Need for Modern Contraception



Among those adolescents and youth with an unmet need for modern contraception, the largest group is made up of unmarried sexually active youth (20-24) who comprise 3% of WRA. To meet the needs of adolescent girls and youth, programming focused on this population has the greatest potential to contribute to increased national prevalence.

Note - Unmarried sexually active was defined as women who are neither married or in union and report last sex within 12 months of the survey. This definition varies from the DHS's definition of sexual activity.