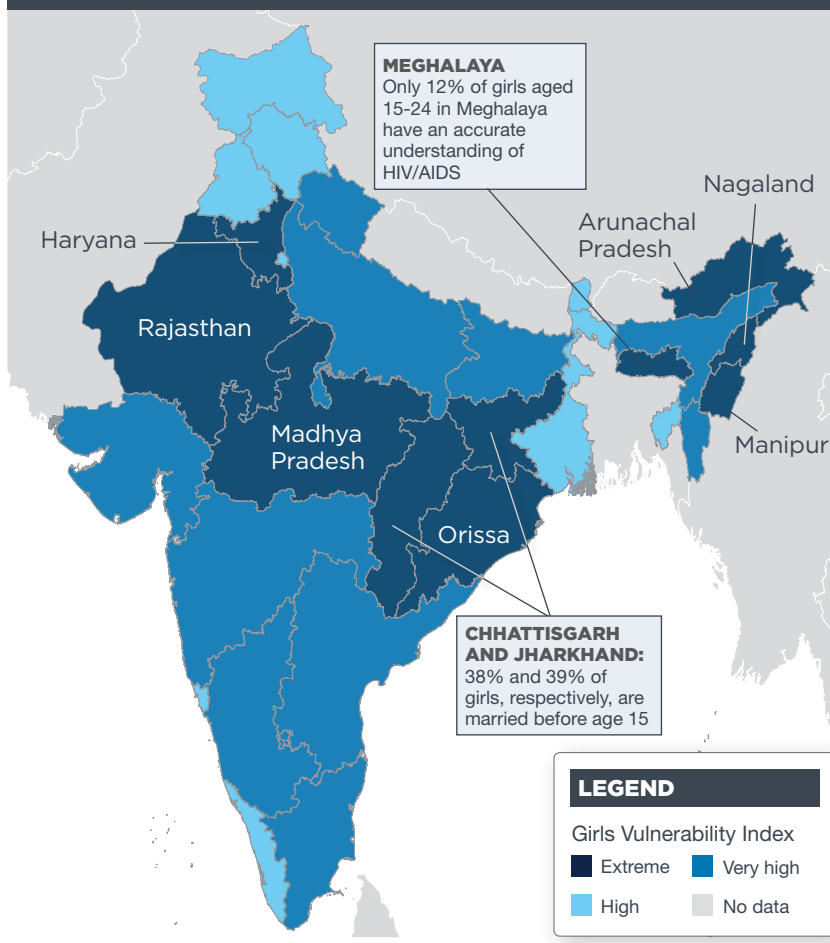


GIRLS VULNERABILITY INDEX

Girls' vulnerability is created through an interplay of factors. What makes a girl vulnerable in one part of the country may be very different in another place. The Girls Vulnerability Index combines numerous indicators to reveal the complexities of vulnerability.

This index reveals some surprises. For example, states in India that are known for their high levels of poverty and low literacy levels, such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, do not fall into the extreme category on the Girls Vulnerability Index. When looking at the individual indicators that make up the index, some regional trends become clear. The boxes below identify two illustrative examples of regional clusters and opportunities for action.

MAP OF GIRLS VULNERABILITY



INDEX COMPOSITION

Combines four sub-indices on girls' health, economic opportunities, education and chore burdens/support systems, which are based on raw data on 25 areas of girls' lives. A scale of 0-10 is devised for each issue area; 0=greater vulnerability and 10=lower vulnerability. The overall scores are divided into three equally sized groups of extreme, very high and high vulnerability.

STATE	Girls Vulnerability Ranking
Nagaland	1
Chhattisgarh	2
Jharkhand	3
Madhya Pradesh	4
Manipur	5
Meghalaya	6
Rajasthan	7
Haryana	8
Orissa	9
Arunachal Pradesh	10
Bihar	11
Karnataka	12
Maharashtra	13
Assam	14
Mizoram	15
Tamil Nadu	16
Uttranchal	17
Andhra Pradesh	18
Gujarat	19
Uttar Pradesh	20
Goa	21
Tripura	22
West Bengal	23
Jammu and Kashmir	24
Punjab	25
Delhi	26
Himachal Pradesh	27
Sikkim	28
Kerala	29

EVIDENCE TO DRIVE CHANGE

POOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE INTERSECTS WITH EARLY MARRIAGE

The **Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Jharkhand** cluster of states face high levels of poverty and child marriage. Many girls marry before the legally permitted age of 18, and significant numbers marry before age 15.

Research shows that there is a strong correlation between secondary school enrollment and delayed marriage. For example, in Jharkhand, where girls' enrollment in secondary school is only 21%, 39% of girls marry before age 15 and 56% marry before age 18. In contrast, in Maharashtra, where 67% of girls are enrolled in secondary school, only 13% of girls are married before the age of 15 and 23% before the age of 18.

Early marriage leads to high fertility at an early age, putting young mothers and their offspring at greater health risks than older mothers. Low education levels, economic imperatives, and lack of birth documentation combine to perpetuate child marriage.

Action to Take: Eliminate marriage before the legal age of 18 by facilitating registration of all births and ensure girls complete secondary school.

CONFLICT AND POOR HIV KNOWLEDGE INCREASES GIRLS' VULNERABILITY

Over half of India's **Northeastern states** fall within the extreme vulnerability cluster. This region faces significant political conflict and drug trade-related violence. Young women are particularly vulnerable to HIV due to limited condom use and poor knowledge of the disease. Entire households are affected by drug addiction/HIV. Here girls face the highest chore burden in India. Drug-, conflict-, and HIV/AIDS-related deaths, along with male migration to find work, have left over 22% of girls in this region as heads of households (11% nationally).

Action to Take: Provide HIV education to girls while building their economic and social assets.

Notes

The Girls Vulnerability Index is made up of raw data on 25 areas of girls' lives:

Health: % girls married by age 15; % girls married by age 18; % married girls (15-24 years) currently using contraception that are using modern methods; fertility rate of girls (15-19 years); fertility rate of young women (20-24 years); % girls (15-24 years) with accurate knowledge of HIV/AIDS; % births by girls (15-24 years) attended by a skilled attendant; maternal mortality rate (15-49 years); % girls (15-24 years) who have experienced sexual violence; % girls (15-24 years) registered at birth; % girls (15-24 years) who have a birth certificate; % girls (15-24 years) who used a condom everytime they had sex with their last partner.

Education: Girls' (15-24) literacy rate (%); girls' primary school gross enrolment ratio; girls' secondary school gross enrolment ratio; girls' tertiary education enrolment ratio; girls' (6-16) school drop out rates; % female teachers at primary school level; % female teachers at secondary school level.

Economic opportunities: % girls (15-24 years) with a bank/savings account; % girls (15-24 years) who decide how to spend their money; % girls (15-24 years) with access to a loan/credit.

Chore burden and support system: % girls (5-14 years) spending +20 hrs/week on household chores; % girls (5-14 years) spending + 20 hrs/week on other family work; % girls (15-24 years) who are heads of household.