



MY BODY, MY LIFE, MY WORLD

A young man and woman are sitting together, looking off to the side. The man is in the foreground, wearing a blue and white striped t-shirt, and is holding a large, weathered wooden object. The woman is behind him, wearing a white top, and is holding a small blue object. The background is a textured, grey wall.

**YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
EMPOWERMENT  
INDEX**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	3
ABBREVIATIONS	4
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
→ DEFINING YOUNG PEOPLE	5
→ DEFINING EMPOWERMENT	6
<b>DEVELOPING THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMPOWERMENT INDEX (YPEI)</b>	<b>7</b>
→ RATIONALE FOR THE YPEI DOMAINS	8
→ INDICATOR SELECTION	10
→ MISSING DATA	12
→ SCALING INDICATORS	12
→ INDICATOR WEIGHTS	13
<b>NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL ADAPTATION</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>THE YPEI DOMAINS IN DETAIL</b>	<b>16</b>
→ MY BODY: SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (SRH) EMPOWERMENT	16
→ MY LIFE: GENDER AND AUTONOMY	19
→ MY LIFE: EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT	21
→ MY LIFE: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT	23
→ MY WORLD: YOUTH POLICY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION	25
→ MY WORLD: SAFETY AND SECURITY	27
<b>ANNEX: YPEI INDICATORS AND REPRESENTATION, 2021</b>	<b>31</b>



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Young People's Empowerment Index was created, and this methodology written, by Kristin Bietsch, Nadia Carvalho, Rebecca Rosenberg and Jessica Williamson (Avenir Health) with Danielle Engel and Tharanga Godallage (UNFPA HQ). The authors gratefully acknowledge the members of the YPEI Reference Group for their collaboration and input: Salah Al-Saleh, Soyoltuya Bayaraa, Rune Brandrup, Baran Cetinkaya, Satvika Chalasani, Witness Chirinda, Marta Diavolova, Francoise Ghorayeb, Jaya Jaya, Tapiwa Jhamba, Eduard Jongstra, Ekin Ilke Kelesoglu, Mathias Kuepie, Sanjay Kumar, Christophe Lefranc, Mengjia Liang, Cécile Mazzacurati, Eduard Mihalas, Sandeep Nanwani, Jaime Nadal Roig, Josephine Sauvarin, Margaretha Sitanggang, Rachel Snow, Hala Youssef and Sainan Zhang.

Copyright © 2022 United Nations Population Fund, all rights reserved. Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.

How to cite this publication: United Nations Population Fund (2022). My Body, My Life, My World Operational Guidance. Young People's Empowerment Index.

## PHOTO CREDITS

Cover: UNFPA LACRO

Page 14: UNFPA Indonesia

Page 30: UNFPA ESARO



# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CSE</b>	comprehensive sexuality education
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic and Health Survey
<b>FP</b>	family planning
<b>HPV</b>	human papilloma virus
<b>IHME GBD</b>	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation – Global Burden of Disease
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>LAPM</b>	long-acting and permanent methods [of contraception]
<b>NCIFP</b>	National Composite Index on Family Planning
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PPP</b>	purchasing-power parity
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SIGI</b>	Social Institutions and Gender Index
<b>SRH</b>	sexual and reproductive health
<b>SRHR</b>	sexual and reproductive health and rights
<b>STM</b>	short-term method [of family planning]
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNPD</b>	United Nations Population Division
<b>YPEI</b>	Young People’s Empowerment Index



# INTRODUCTION

The Young People's Empowerment Index (YPEI) has been developed as an advocacy tool to help policymakers and programme managers at global and regional levels assess to what extent national policies and programmes are empowering young people. Centred on UNFPA's global strategy for adolescents and youth, *My Body, My Life, My World*, it is designed to track changes over time in youth empowerment as a means of measuring the impact of UNFPA's investments in youth programming. The YPEI aims to bring attention and support to the topic of youth empowerment and help to prioritize the rights of youth, especially in the context of COVID-19, which will likely have long-term economic and social consequences for youth.

The YPEI is also intended to address the lack of a standardized measure of youth empowerment. Though many youth indices exist, particularly focusing on development and well-being, the YPEI is one of the first to measure youth empowerment on a global scale, through a composite index of 40 indicators that track data at the country level, while allowing results to be aggregated by region and globally.

The YPEI builds on existing work in the youth empowerment space by incorporating elements of current strategies (e.g., *My Body, My Life, My World* and the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs]) while also integrating data sources available across a wide range of countries. It is made up of six domains, measuring levels and opportunities in sexual and reproductive health (SRH), gender and autonomy, educational empowerment, economic empowerment, youth policy and political participation, and safety and security.

## → DEFINING YOUNG PEOPLE

Definitions of youth vary across countries and institutions. For the purposes of the YPEI, the focus population is young people aged 10-24 years. This includes adolescents (10-19) and youth (15-24). This age range is intended to align with UNFPA's adolescent and youth strategy. Whenever possible, indicators capture this full age range, but the use of a wide and varied set of data sources means that age disaggregation is not always consistent or available.

Many data sources capture only limited information on young adolescents (10-14), so the experience of these young people is not fully represented in the index. As data become more inclusive, the indicators may be revised or exchanged to better include this population. Some data sources included a wider age range, exceeding 24 years, or do not have age-disaggregated data available. In these cases, the sources have been carefully reviewed and only used if they represent a unique concept for which no acceptable alternative existed to capture the experience of young people aged 10-24.

## → DEFINING EMPOWERMENT

Young people's empowerment is the expansion of their knowledge and ability to make informed choices about their bodies and lives, and to participate in transforming their world, in accordance with their evolving capacities. It incorporates three interrelated components:

- **Resources:** human, material and social assets that enhance young people's ability to exercise their agency
- **Agency:** the power of young people to make choices and participate in decision-making
- **Achievements:** the extent to which young people's agency contributes to meaningful change in their lives and their world.

This definition of empowerment was developed for use in this index and is informed by concepts in Naila Kabeer's article *Resources, agency, achievements: reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment* (2002).



# DEVELOPING THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMPOWERMENT INDEX

Development of the YPEI began at the request of UNFPA and was led by Avenir Health, in collaboration with a YPEI Reference Group that included youth experts from UNFPA and partner organizations. Through a series of consultations with the YPEI Reference Group, the domains and subdomains of the YPEI were defined and agreed upon, and a core set of indicators was selected to characterize young people's empowerment.

The YPEI domains were drawn from an extensive review of existing global, regional and national youth indices (Table 1). Based on commonalities among existing measures as well as unique domains identified, a set of six domains was selected to align with *My Body, My Life, My World* (Figure 1). A review of empowerment literature informed the inclusion of subdomains measuring the interrelated dimensions of resources, agency and achievement, as described by Kabeer. A wide range of indicators – sourced from youth indices, empowerment literature and internal (UNFPA) and external measurement frameworks – was reviewed and refined by the YPEI Reference Group to produce a final set of 40 core indicators organized across six domains and 18 subdomains.

TABLE 1. RESOURCES USED TO DEVELOP YPEI DOMAINS

RESOURCE	PURPOSE
<a href="#">Commonwealth Youth Development Index</a> <a href="#">Global Youth Wellbeing Index</a> <a href="#">ASEAN Youth Development Index</a>	To obtain insight into framing of YPEI domains and meaningful use of such indices; used to identify commonly used/available indicators
<a href="#">Demographic Dividend Atlas</a>	Used to define “empowerment” and key indicators
<a href="#">Women's Empowerment Theory and Indices</a>	To determine lessons learned about key concepts of empowerment and how to measure it
<a href="#">Country-level youth empowerment and youth indices shared by UNFPA country offices</a>	To obtain insight into elements specific to youth empowerment
<a href="#">Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) “Measuring Youth Empowerment” brief</a>	To review the feasibility of using DHS data to measure youth empowerment

# → RATIONALE FOR THE YPEI DOMAINS

The YPEI is designed to align with *My Body, My Life, My World*. Domains are grouped under these three areas, based on principles and activities of each component of the strategy. Six domains were selected to capture key areas of youth empowerment and align with existing measures of youth well-being and youth development.



- ▾ Sexual and Reproductive Health Empowerment



- ▾ Gender and Autonomy
- ▾ Educational Empowerment
- ▾ Economic Empowerment



- ▾ Youth Policy and Political Participation
- ▾ Safety and Security





## MY BODY

The focus of the *My Body* pillar is ensuring access to SRH services and information for all young people so they can exercise their right to make informed choices over their own bodies. The single domain housed within *My Body* is **Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Empowerment**. This domain measures the extent to which young people are empowered to make decisions about their fertility and SRH. Many youth indices employ a health-related domain that takes a broad view of health and includes indicators on a wide array of health topics. For the purposes of this index, the health domain focuses specifically on SRH, as this is the core of UNFPA's work among young people.



## MY LIFE

The focus of the *My Life* pillar is addressing the determinants of the health and well-being of young people, so they can enjoy a health life and a successful transition into adulthood. The three domains housed within *My Life* are:

- **Gender and Autonomy:** this domain measures the ability of adolescent girls and young women in particular to increase control over their personal lives, their professional future and their societies. While not consistently included in youth-focused indices, several national and international indices included a gender-focused domain to draw attention specifically to gender equity/inequity among youth. For the purposes of this index, the Gender and Autonomy domain speaks to UNFPA's efforts towards ending gender-based violence and child marriage and supporting young people to address discriminatory power structures and norms related to gender.
- **Educational Empowerment:** this domain measures the extent to which young people's right to education is realized and they are able to gain the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to participate fully in economic and civic life.
- **Economic Empowerment:** this domain measures the extent to which young people are able to access and develop resources to support themselves and their ambitions and participate as contributing members of their community.

Education and economic participation/employment are nearly universally included in youth indices and metrics. For the purposes of the YPEI, Educational Empowerment and Economic Empowerment connect with UNFPA's efforts to support the development of skills and assets to set young people on a positive trajectory for their lives, emphasizing their agency and autonomy.



The focus of the *My World* pillar is promoting the leadership of young people and their fundamental right to participate in sustainable development, humanitarian action and peace-building. Two domains are housed within *My World*:

- **Youth Policy and Political Participation:** this domain measures the extent to which young people are prioritized in public policy and able to participate in political action and decision-making. Common to the reviewed youth indices, a measure of social, civic or political participation highlights the importance of including the voices of young people in decision-making.
- **Safety and Security:** this domain is a measure of the context in which youth live and their ability to participate in humanitarian and peace-building activities.

For the purposes of this index, Policy and Political Participation and Safety and Security speak to UNFPA's support of and collaboration with youth-led organizations to participate in social and political processes that shape their communities and their futures.

Within these six domains, all indicators are organized under one of three subdomains, which are widely accepted components of empowerment, and which are consistent with Kabeer's framework to measure the process of empowerment. These include:

- **Resources:** access to the material, human and social assets that enhance people's ability to exercise choice, including knowledge, attitudes and preferences
- **Agency:** increasing participation, voice, negotiation and influence in decision-making about strategic life choices
- **Achievement:** the meaningful improvement in well-being and life outcomes that results from increasing agency

## → INDICATOR SELECTION

An initial set of indicators was proposed by UNFPA, sourced from the measurement framework for *My Body, My Life, My World*. Following a review of existing youth indices, empowerment measures and global data sources, including the SDG indicators, an expanded list of indicators was presented to the YPEI Reference Group.

Several criteria (Box 1) were used along with feedback from the Reference Group to refine the indicator list and align the indicators with the goals of the index. The YPEI was devised to be as parsimonious as possible, capturing all relevant information while avoiding redundant indicators.

To achieve this end, all indicators were then tested for collinearity. There were seven instances where the correlation between indicators was above 0.75. These instances and the decision of whether to include or drop the indicator can be seen in Table 2.



### BOX 1. YPEI INDICATOR SELECTION CRITERIA

- Are available for as many countries as possible, with a goal of having a consistent source for the data across countries
- Come from publicly available data to ensure replicability
- Measure things that are expected to change over time, so that progress can be tracked
- Can be disaggregated by age, where possible, to ensure that they characterize the unique experience of youth
- Measure concepts that could be impacted by UNFPA's work
- Align with SDG indicators, where possible
- Should represent each of the three subdomains (Resources, Agency, Achievement), with at least one indicator per subdomain.

TABLE 2. INDICATORS WITH CORRELATION >0.75 AND DECISION TO KEEP/DROP FROM YPEI

INDICATOR 1	INDICATOR 2	CORRELATION	DECISION	REASON
Married by 15	Married by 18	0.92	Drop "Married by 15"	"Married by 18" is more inclusive and represents both concepts
HIV knowledge (M)	HIV knowledge (F)	0.90	Keep both	There is value in maintaining gender-specific values
Voter participation (local)	Voter participation (national)	0.89	Drop local	National participation may have larger implications
Literacy rate (15-24)	Upper secondary total enrolment	0.78	Drop literacy rate	"Literacy rate" is used as one of the two "achievement" indicators, so will not impact overall constructions
Married by 15	Adolescent fertility rate	0.76	—	Not an issue if "Married by 15" is dropped
Married by 18	Adolescent fertility rate	0.79	Keep both	This is an expected relationship
Working poverty rate (15-24)	Upper secondary total enrolment	0.77	Keep both	This relationship is unexpected and not well understood, so keep both

The data for the indicators selected represent the most recent data points for each indicator. For each indicator identified, the population captured by the indicator is identified, and in addition to the number of countries represented by the data available for each indicator, the proportion of the population represented by the data available for each indicator is captured using the United Nations [World Population Prospects](#) data.

## → MISSING DATA

For some indicators, data may not be available for all countries of interest. In these cases, the country with missing data should be assigned the population-weighted average score for all non-missing countries from a region expected to perform similarly to the missing country. For example, in the assessment for the Index conducted in 2021, there were missing data in three countries: Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands. Missing data for Australia and New Zealand were replaced with values from Europe, and missing values for the Pacific Islands were replaced with values from Eastern and South-eastern Asia. For regional results, if an indicator is missing for all countries in the region, their subdomain, domain and index results are not produced. For country results, if any given country has data for fewer than 20 indicators, the results for that country are not presented. The Annex shows the representation of each indicator used in the YPEI in 2021.

## → SCALING INDICATORS

For indicators with a range that is not already 0-100% (or 0-100) or for which the expected or ideal maximum was not 100%, indicators are top- or bottom-coded for the purposes of scaling. Items are top-coded if a country in the sample has a number higher than what would be considered the goal. For example, with the indicator measuring the ratio of upper secondary education, the goal is equal educational attainment between young women and young men. In a few countries, young women achieve higher educational attainment than young men, so this indicator is top-coded at 1 as those above 1 have achieved educational parity for women. Family planning demand satisfied is also top-coded at 75% because this is the threshold set in the SDGs. For the indicator measuring total enrolment in secondary education, some countries have over 100% because of older children in lower grades; here the scores are top-coded to 100%. The indicator measuring financial account ownership is top-coded at 1, as this value implies youth have at least equitable access to a resource compared with adults.

The minimum and maximum values for each indicator included in the YPEI can be found in the tables beginning on p. 17. Once all maximum and minimum values were selected, the indicators were rescaled using the following equation:

$$\text{Scaled Indicator} = \frac{\text{Indicator value} - \text{ScaleMin}}{\text{ScaleMax} - \text{ScaleMin}}$$

## → INDICATOR WEIGHTS

Countries are weighted by the relevant population when creating regional and global averages for individual indicators. While all indicators selected for each domain and subdomain capture an element of that particular topic, some indicators better represent the concept than others. Each indicator is assigned a weight that represents its relative importance in capturing the concept of each subdomain, then all three subdomains (Resources, Agency and Achievement) are weighted equally within the domain. All subdomain and domain weights can be found in the tables beginning on p. 17.

From the weighted indicator scores, a subdomain index, domain index and an overall index are calculated using the following three equations:

$$\text{Subdomain Index} = \sum \text{Scaled Value} * \text{SubWeight}$$

$$\text{Domain Index} = \sum \text{Scaled Value} * \text{SubWeight} * \text{DomainWeight}$$

$$\text{Overall Youth Empowerment Index} = \sqrt[6]{\text{Economics} * \text{Education} * \text{Gender} * \text{Safety} * \text{SRH} * \text{Politics}}$$





# NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL ADAPTATION

For a national or subnational application, a technical lead will need to compile the necessary data into the format of file “Full Input Dataset 111221.csv,” available in the [Avenir Health GitHub repository](#).

For a country with DHS data, national or subnational results can be calculated by adapting the code “UNFPA YPEI DHS Microdata Analysis”. Country experts will need to compile the other data at the national or subnational level. If data are not available subnationally, a decision is needed about whether to use national data for all subnational regions or use a different, but similar, indicator with available data. For weighting data, population information is needed at the geographic unit of analysis; refer to “UNFPA YPEI Population Code” to see a full list of needed population groups. Collaboration with a country’s National Office of Statistics may be needed to produce these inputs.

Next, the technical lead should examine the data and compare minimums and maximums to the file “UNFPA Youth Index Scales and Weights 111221.csv.” If subnational data is outside of the range of the rescaling values, these will need to be adjusted accordingly. Weights can also be adjusted to better reflect changes to the indicators made in this setting. Expert opinions are needed to make decisions regarding the handling of missing data, e.g. for a national analysis should a neighbouring country or regional average be used? For a subnational analysis should a neighbouring subnational unit or national average be used? Missing data decisions will need to be added to the R code “UNFPA YPEI Index Creation Code.”

If any variable names are changed, the technical lead must change them throughout the input files and R code.

To display subnational results on a map, the technical lead will need to acquire a shape file with the subnational boundaries and adapt “UNFPA YPEI Mapping Results.”



# THE YPEI DOMAINS IN DETAIL

This section presents a detailed look at each of the domains included in the YPEI, including indicators selected to measure each domain and their data source, and the decisions made around the relative weight of the indicator as well as minimum and maximum values.

## → MY BODY: SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (SRH) EMPOWERMENT

My Body: SRH Empowerment is intended to measure the extent to which young people are empowered to make decisions about their fertility and sexual and reproductive health.

### RESOURCES

The Resources subdomain measures the extent to which SRH information and services are available to youth, a key resource for young people in making informed decisions about their bodies and their health. The indicators identified under “Resources” focus on national policies that guarantee access to SRH health information and services, and potential barriers (in the form of provider discrimination) faced by young people seeking to access those services. The three policy indicators focus on three separate domains of SRH information and care – maternity care, contraception and family planning (FP), and HIV and human papilloma virus (HPV). The policies described by these indicators are not specific to young people, but inclusive of youth 15 and older. The measure of provider discrimination attempts to characterize the actual experience of young people attempting to access SRH services and indicate whether providers are serving as a resource or a barrier to young people’s exercise of free and informed choice.

### AGENCY

The Agency subdomain attempts to measure whether youth have the knowledge and information to make informed decisions about their SRH and whether they are able to have their needs met. The indicators include three measures of SRH literacy among youth 15-24, disaggregated by sex, and demand satisfied with a modern method of contraception among youth 15-24. These serve as a proxy for young people’s ability to make informed decisions, based on accurate knowledge, about their SRH. Demand satisfied is intended to measure the extent to which young women who would like to prevent or delay childbearing have the power to choose a contraceptive method that meets their needs.



## ACHIEVEMENT

The Achievement subdomain measures key SRH outcomes that can impact youth over their lives. The indicators address outcomes related to maternal health, contraception and FP, and HIV. These outcomes can be improved when young people are able to make informed choices about their bodies and their lives and have the resources to support those choices.

TABLE 4. SRH EMPOWERMENT DOMAIN: INDICATORS AND DEFINITIONS

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	INDICATOR DETAILS	SOURCE	AGE RANGE	TREND DATA AVAILABLE	SDG INDICATOR
<b>Resources</b>	SRHR Policy: Maternity Care	Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education: Section 1: Maternity Care (%)	SDG Database	15 +	Anticipated	5.6.2
	SRHR Policy: Contraception and Family Planning	Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education: Section 2: Contraceptive and Family Planning (%)	SDG Database	15 +	Anticipated	5.6.2
	SRHR Policy: HIV and HPV	Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education: Section 4: HIV and HPV (%)	SDG Database	15 +	Anticipated	5.6.2
	Provider Discrimination	Extent to which service providers discriminate against youth	NCIFP	Country-Dependent	Y	

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	INDICATOR DETAILS	SOURCE	AGE RANGE	TREND DATA AVAILABLE	SDG INDICATOR
<b>Agency</b>	Health Literacy: HIV (W/M)	Percentage of women/men 15-24 years old who correctly identify both ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and reject major misconceptions about HIV transmission	DHS	15-24	Y	
	Health Literacy: FP Methods (W/M)	Percentage of women/men 15-24 years old who know about a LAPM & STM	DHS	15-24	Y	
	Health Literacy: SRH (W/M)	Percentage of women/men 15-24 years old with correct knowledge of the fertile period	DHS	15-24	Y	
	Demand Satisfied	Contraceptive demand satisfied with a modern method (women, 15-24)	DHS	15-24	Y	3.7.1
<b>Achievement</b>	HIV Incidence	HIV incidence (15-24)	UNAIDS - AIDSInfo	15-24	Y	3.3.1
	Adolescent Fertility	Adolescent birth rate (15-19)	UNPD	15-19	Y	3.7.2
	Maternal Mortality	Maternal mortality ratio	SDG Database	Undefined	Y	3.1.1

**TABLE 5. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EMPOWERMENT DOMAIN:  
INDICATOR WEIGHTS AND SCALES**

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	MIN	MAX	SUBDOMAIN WEIGHT	DOMAIN WEIGHT
<b>Resources</b>	SRHR Policy: Maternity care	0	100	0.25	0.333333
	SRHR Policy: Contraception and FP	0	100	0.25	
	SRHR Policy: HIV and HPV	0	100	0.25	
	Provider Discrimination	0	100	0.25	
<b>Agency</b>	Health Literacy: HIV (women)	0%	100%	0.125	0.333333
	Health Literacy: HIV (men)	0%	100%	0.125	
	Health Literacy: LAPM + STM (women)	0%	100%	0.125	
	Health Literacy: LAPM + STM (men)	0%	100%	0.125	
	Health Literacy: Fertile Period (women)	0%	100%	0.125	
	Health Literacy: Fertile Period (men)	0%	100%	0.125	
	Demand Satisfied <sup>^</sup>	0%	75%	0.125	
<b>Achievement</b>	HIV Incidence (per 1000 pop) <sup>*</sup>	10	0	0.125	0.333333
	Adolescent Fertility (per 1000 women) <sup>*</sup>	200	0	0.25	
	Maternal Mortality (per 1000 live births) <sup>*</sup>	1150	0	0.333333	

\* Inverted for YPEI  
<sup>^</sup> Top-coded at 75%

## → MY LIFE: GENDER AND AUTONOMY

Gender and Autonomy is intended to measure the ability of adolescent girls and young women in particular to increase control over their personal lives, their professional future, and their societies.

### RESOURCES

The Resources subdomain measures gender equity in resources that support young women and young men’s agency. The indicator, gender parity in educational attainment, is intended as a proxy for the extent to which young women have access to the same resources as young men. The skills and knowledge provided through formal education support adolescent girls and young women in building better futures for themselves, their families and their communities.

## AGENCY

The Agency subdomain measures the extent to which women are able to participate equally in public life in the societies in which they live. The indicator, restricted civil liberties for women as measured by the OECD Development Centre's Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), while not youth-specific, is intended to characterize the environment in which young women are living and the extent to which they may be able to exercise decision-making power in their lives and their societies.

## ACHIEVEMENT

The Achievement subdomain measures key outcomes among young women that can hinder their agency and autonomy over their lives. The indicators – early marriage (before 18), and experience of sexual and/or physical violence – can indicate contexts in which young women have (or lack) the resources and agency to make decisions to protect their bodily autonomy and determine their future.

TABLE 6. GENDER AND AUTONOMY: INDICATORS AND DEFINITIONS

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	INDICATOR DETAILS	SOURCE	AGE RANGE	TREND DATA AVAILABLE	SDG INDICATOR
<b>Resources</b>	Gender Parity in Educational Attainment	Gender parity in educational attainment (ratio of M to F for youth) - Comparative completion rate (Upper Secondary)	World Bank Databank OR SDG Database	Country Dependent (generally 15-17)	Yes	4.1.2
						4.5.1
<b>Agency</b>	Women's Civil Liberties	Restricted civil liberties for women	SIGI	Unspecified	Yes	5.1.1
<b>Achievement</b>	Early Marriage	Among F 20-24, % married by 18	SDG Database	20-24, but refers to events before 18	Yes	5.3.1
	Physical/Sexual Violence	Women who experienced physical or sexual violence	DHS	15-24	Yes	5.2.1

TABLE 7. GENDER AND AUTONOMY: INDICATOR WEIGHTS AND SCALES

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	MIN	MAX	SUBDOMAIN WEIGHT	DOMAIN WEIGHT
<b>Resources</b>	Gender Equity in Education (M to F) <sup>*^</sup>	4.5	1	1	0.333333
<b>Agency</b>	Women’s Civil Liberties	1	0	1	0.333333
<b>Achievement</b>	Early Marriage <sup>*</sup>	80	0	0.5	0.333333
	Physical/Sexual Violence <sup>*</sup>	65	0	0.5	0.333333

\* Inverted for YPEI  
 ^ Top-coded at 1 (Equity)

## → MY LIFE: EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT

Educational Empowerment is intended to measure of the extent to which young people’s right to education is realized and they are able to gain the knowledge, skills and experience to participate fully in economic and civic life.

### RESOURCES

The Resources subdomain measures structures that support young people’s ability to participate in education and receive the information and skills needed to make informed decisions about their bodies and their lives. The indicators focus on overall government spending on education and the availability and quality of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). Government spending on education serves as a direct measure of investment in young people as well as a proxy for the extent to which the government prioritizes the development of youth. CSE is a key component of UNFPA’s work with adolescents and youth. High-quality CSE supports the development of young people’s knowledge, attitudes and skills to protect and advocate for their health, well-being, and dignity as they move towards adulthood.

### AGENCY

The Agency subdomain measures the extent to which young people are able to participate in education and pursue their educational goals. The indicator, secondary education participation, measures the proportion of young people who are currently enrolled in secondary education. It serves as a proxy for young people’s ability to take advantage of educational opportunities and remain in school, despite familial, social and economic pressures and restrictions that might hinder that ability.

## ACHIEVEMENT

The Achievement subdomain measures educational attainment, the realization of young people’s right to education and a key outcome of young people’s empowerment that can function as a resource to support young people’s ability to achieve their goals. The indicator identified under Achievement, total completion rate for upper-secondary education, measures the result of both a society’s investment in young people and young people’s ability to participate in formal education. This indicator serves as a proxy for the extent to which young people have developed sufficient skills and knowledge to participate in the economic, civic and political life of their communities.

TABLE 8. EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT: INDICATORS AND DEFINITIONS

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	INDICATOR DETAILS	SOURCE	AGE RANGE	TREND DATA AVAILABLE	SDG INDICATOR
<b>Resources</b>	Education Spending	Education Spending as % GDP	World Bank	Unspecified	Yes	
	SRHR Policy: Sexuality Education	Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education: Section 3: Sexuality Education (%)	UNESCO Review	15+	TBD	5.6.2
<b>Agency</b>	Secondary Education Enrolment	Total enrolment in secondary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population who fall within the official age range for secondary education	World Bank	Country Dependent (generally 12-17)	Yes	
<b>Achievement</b>	Upper-Secondary Education Completion	Total completion rate of upper secondary education as a percentage of the relevant age group, both sexes	UNICEF	Country Dependent (generally 15-17)	Yes	4.1.2

TABLE 9. EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT: INDICATOR WEIGHTS AND SCALES

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	MIN	MAX	SUBDOMAIN WEIGHT	DOMAIN WEIGHT
<b>Resources</b>	Education Spending	0%	15%	0.5	0.333333
	SRHR Policy: Sexuality Education	0	100	0.5	0.333333
<b>Agency</b>	Secondary Education Enrolment <sup>^</sup>	10%	100%	1	0.333333
<b>Achievement</b>	Upper-Secondary Education Completion	0%	100%	1	0.333333

<sup>^</sup> Top-coded at 100%

## → MY LIFE: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Economic Empowerment is intended to measure the extent to which young people are able to access and develop resources that allow them to support themselves and their ambitions and participate as contributing members of their community.

### RESOURCES

The Resources subdomain measures the extent to which youth have access to key assets that support economic independence. The indicators focus on national strategies to support youth employment and access to the internet and cell phones. The existence of a national youth employment strategy signals a country’s commitment to the economic development of young people and supports young people’s ability to access gainful employment. Access to the Internet and cell phone ownership both link young people to information and economic opportunities and can provide a platform for financial transactions and business endeavours.

### AGENCY

The Agency subdomain measures the extent to which young people are able to make independent economic decisions. The indicator, comparative youth account ownership, compares the proportion of youth vs adults with an account at a financial institution. Ownership of an account serves as a proxy for young people’s ability to manage their own money and save to support their financial goals. Comparing account ownership between youth and adults is intended to ensure that this indicator measures the specific experience of youth within their national context, as opposed to only measuring the national economic situation.

## ACHIEVEMENT

The Achievement subdomain measures key economic outcomes among young people. The indicators – the proportion of youth not in education, employment or training (NEETs), youth perception of their standard of living, and the youth working poverty rate – can indicate contexts in which young people have (or lack) the resources and agency to make decisions that allow them to support themselves and to participate as contributing members of their community.

TABLE 10. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: INDICATORS AND DEFINITIONS

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	INDICATOR DETAILS	SOURCE	AGE RANGE	TREND DATA AVAILABLE	SDG INDICATOR
<b>Resources</b>	Cell Phone Ownership	Physical points of service: access to a mobile phone (% ages 15-34)	World Bank Findex	15-34	Yes	5.b.1
	Internet Access	Physical points of service: access to Internet (% ages 15-34)	World Bank Findex	15-34	Yes	17.8.1
	National Youth Employment Policy	Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy	SDG Database	Country Dependent	TBD	8.b.1
<b>Agency</b>	Comparative Youth Account Ownership	Ratio of the proportion of youth (15-34) to proportion of adults (35+) with an account at a financial institution	World Bank Findex	15-34	Yes	8.10.2
<b>Achievement</b>	NEETS	% of youth (15-24) not in education, employment or training (NEETs)	World Bank Databank OR SDG Database	15-24	Yes	8.6.1
	Standard of Living	% of youth (16-24) who feel their standard of living is better than that of their parents	World Values Survey	16-24	Yes	
	Working poverty rate	% of employed youth (15-24) living below US\$1.90 PPP	ILO	15-24	Yes	1.1.1



TABLE 11. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: INDICATOR WEIGHTS AND SCALES

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	MIN	MAX	SUBDOMAIN WEIGHT	DOMAIN WEIGHT
<b>Resources</b>	Cell Phone Ownership	0%	100%	0.333333333	0.333333333
	Internet Access	0%	100%	0.333333333	
	National Youth Employment Policy	0	3	0.333333333	
<b>Agency</b>	Comparative Youth Account Ownership <sup>^</sup>	0	1	1	0.333333333
<b>Achievement</b>	NEETS <sup>*</sup>	100%	0%	0.333333333	0.333333333
	Standard of Living	0%	100%	0.333333333	
	Working Poverty Rate <sup>*</sup>	100%	0%	0.333333333	

\* Inverted for YPEI  
 ^ Top-coded at 1 (Equity)

## → MY WORLD: YOUTH POLICY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Youth Policy and Political Participation is intended to measure the extent to which young people are prioritized in public policy and able to participate in political action and decision-making.

### RESOURCES

The Resources subdomain measures assets that support young people’s consideration and representation in national policy. The indicators focus on the existence of policies and government data focused on youth. The existence of a national youth policy demonstrates some level of government commitment to young people. Although not sufficient to ensure that young people’s voices are included in policymaking, national youth policies can be used by young people as an advocacy tool. The collection of data on youth also signals an acknowledgement of the importance of this population and the need for information to better meet their needs. Age-disaggregated data can also be leveraged by young people in advocating for better services, policies, and greater representation.

## AGENCY

The Agency subdomain measures the extent to which young people are able to participate in the political and civic life of their communities. The indicators focus on two different ways that youth can participate in decision-making to improve their lives and their societies. Voting is a fundamental act of civic participation, and youth participation in national elections can ensure their voices are heard. Participation in a political or civic organization demonstrates young people's active engagement in working to advocate for their beliefs and transform their world.

## ACHIEVEMENT

The Achievement subdomain measures the extent to which the voices and experiences of young people are represented in national policy-making and the extent to which young people are able to contribute to change. The indicator, the proportion of national members of parliament who are less than 30 years old, serves as a direct measure of young people's political representation. While young people make up quarter of the global population, only 2.6% of members of parliament are under the age of 30, a substantial deficit in young people's political representation.

**TABLE 12. YOUTH POLICY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: INDICATORS AND DEFINITIONS**

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	INDICATOR DETAILS	SOURCE	AGE RANGE	TREND DATA AVAILABLE	SDG INDICATOR
<b>Resources</b>	National Youth Policy	Existence of a national youth policy	<a href="https://www.youthpolicy.org/nationalyouthpolicies/">https://www.youthpolicy.org/nationalyouthpolicies/</a>	Country Dependent	No	
	Data Collection on Youth	Does the government collect data to monitor youth?	NCIFP	Country Dependent	Yes	
<b>Agency</b>	Voter Participation	% of youth (16-24) who report voting in national elections	World Values Survey	16-24	Yes	
	Political/Civic Organization Participation	% of youth (16-24) who report participating in a political/civic organization (e.g. labour union, political party, environmental organization, charitable/humanitarian organization, self-help group, or mutual aid group)	World Values Survey	16-24	Yes	
<b>Achievement</b>	Youth Political Representation	% of national Members of Parliament who are under 30	Inter-Parliamentary Union: Youth Participation in National Parliaments OR SDG Database	18-29	Yes	16.7.1

**TABLE 13. YOUTH POLICY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:  
INDICATOR WEIGHTS AND SCALES**

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	MIN	MAX	SUBDOMAIN WEIGHT	DOMAIN WEIGHT
<b>Resources</b>	National Youth Policy	0	1	0.5	0.333333333
	Data Collection on Youth	0	100	0.5	
<b>Agency</b>	Voter Participation	0%	100%	0.5	0.333333333
	Political/Civic Organization Participation	0%	50%	0.5	
<b>Achievement</b>	Youth Political Representation	0%	15%	1	0.333333333

→ **MY WORLD: SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Safety and Security is intended as a measure of the context in which youth live and their ability to participate in humanitarian and peace-building activities.

**RESOURCES**

The Resources subdomain attempts to measure the environment in which young people live and grow, and the extent to which that environment is a safe and stable place that can serve as an asset. The indicator is the Inform Risk Index, which is a global risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters. Humanitarian crises and disasters pose unique risks and challenges to young people and can limit their ability to make free and informed choices about their bodies and their lives. A second indicator identified under this domain, “Existence of national framework on youth peace and security” is not currently collected, but plans are underway to begin data collection. This indicator, when available, would help indicate the extent to which policies and frameworks that are inclusive of youth can serve as assets to young people working towards peace and security.

**AGENCY**

The Agency subdomain measures the extent to which young people are able to participate in moving their communities towards safety and security. The indicators represent young people’s direct participation in political action, including signing petitions and attending peaceful demonstrations, and their perception of their government’s respect for human rights, which can be a significant determinant of their willingness to participate in humanitarian and peace-building efforts and engage with the government. These indicators can signal both the extent to which young people actually participate in political action and the larger context in which they live and whether that supports or hinders their participation.

## ACHIEVEMENT

The Achievement subdomain measures key outcomes related to the safety and security contexts in which young people live and develop, and the extent to which they hinder young people's contributions towards improving their lives and their world. The indicators identified represent the negative outcomes of a wide range of experiences, from humanitarian crises to crime and violence, isolation and depression. Youth displacement, and youth mortality from interpersonal violence and suicide, can signal contexts in which young people do not have the resources and agency to make decisions to protect their bodily autonomy and determine their future. These also represent a loss to the communities that no longer include those young people who could have worked towards a more peaceful world.

TABLE 14. SAFETY AND SECURITY: INDICATORS AND DEFINITIONS

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	INDICATOR DETAILS	SOURCE	AGE RANGE	TREND DATA AVAILABLE	SDG INDICATOR
<b>Resources</b>	Humanitarian Crisis	Inform Risk Index, a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters	<a href="https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index">https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index</a>	Country Dependent	No	
	<i>Youth Policy: Peacebuilding</i>	<i>Existence of National Framework on Youth Peace and Security (UNFPA plans to collect these data in the future)</i>	<i>Not yet available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Agency</b>	Political/Civic Action Participation	% of youth (16-24) who participated in political action (e.g. signing a petition, attending lawful/peaceful demonstration, joining in boycotts, or joining unofficial strikes)	World Values Survey	16-24	Yes	
	Government Respect for Human Rights	% of youth (16-24) who feel there is a respect for human rights in their country	World Values Survey	16-24	Yes	
<b>Achievement</b>	Youth Displacement	Total youth (12-17) displaced as a % of the youth population (12-17) (based on country of origin)	UNHCR/UNPD	12-17	Yes	10.7.1
	Interpersonal Violence	Youth interpersonal violence: Interpersonal violence death rate, ages 10 to 24, per 100,000	IHME GBD	10-24	Yes	16.1.1 16.1.2
	Mental Health	Youth suicide mortality, ages 10 to 24, per 100,000	IHME GBD	10-24	Yes	3.4.2

TABLE 15. SAFETY AND SECURITY: INDICATOR WEIGHTS AND SCALES

SUBDOMAIN	INDICATOR	MIN	MAX	SUBDOMAIN WEIGHT	DOMAIN WEIGHT
<b>Resources</b>	Humanitarian Crisis*	10	0	1	0.333333333
<b>Agency</b>	Political/Civic Action Participation	0%	100%	0.5	0.333333333
	Government Respect for Human Rights	0%	100%	0.5	
<b>Achievement</b>	Youth Displacement*	50%	0%	0.333333333	0.333333333
	Interpersonal Violence (mortality per 100,000)*	55	0	0.333333333	
	Mental Health (suicide mortality per 100,000)*	45	0	0.333333333	

\* Inverted for YPEI



Symposium sur le Dividende Demographique et le  
Developpement Dakar le 20 juin 2016



COUNTDOWN J-12

"I am Youth, I'm Joy,  
I'm a little bird that  
has broken out of the egg"

**#PutYoungPeopleFirst**



# ANNEX: YPEI INDICATORS AND REPRESENTATION, 2021

DOMAINS	SUBDOMAIN	TOPIC	INDICATOR	COUNTRIES (N)	% OF RELEVANT POPULATION REPRESENTED	INDICATOR POPULATION	
<b>MY BODY</b>							
<b>SRH Empowerment</b>	Resources	Policy	SRHR Policy: Maternity Care	79	39%	Country as Unit	
			SRHR Policy: Contraception and FP	104	51%	Country as Unit	
			SRHR Policy: HIV and HPV	101	50%	Country as Unit	
		Access to SRH Care	Provider Discrimination	82	41%	Country as Unit	
	Agency	SRH Information	Health Literacy: HIV (W)	67	57%	Women, 15-24	
			Health Literacy: HIV (M)	60	54%	Men, 15-24	
			Health Literacy: FP Methods (W)	82	67%	Women, 15-24	
			Health Literacy: FP Methods (M)	67	59%	Men, 15-24	
			Health Literacy: SRH (W)	79	64%	Women, 15-24	
			Health Literacy: SRH (M)	58	51%	Men, 15-24	
			SRH Service Utilization	Demand Satisfied	72	54%	Women, 15-24
			Achievement	SRH Outcomes	HIV Incidence	114	41%
	Adolescent Fertility	202			100%	Women, 15-19	
	Maternal Mortality	185			100%	Women, 15-49	

## MY LIFE

<b>Gender and Autonomy</b>	Resources	Gender Equality	Gender Parity in Educational Attainment	155	96%	All, 15-17
	Agency	Gender Equality	Women's Civil Liberties	137	68%	Country as Unit
	Achievement	Harmful Practices	Early Marriage	128	72%	Women, 20-24
			Physical/Sexual Violence	55	51%	Women, 15-24

DOMAINS	SUBDOMAIN	TOPIC	INDICATOR	COUNTRIES (N)	% OF RELEVANT POPULATION REPRESENTED	INDICATOR POPULATION
<b>MY LIFE</b>						
<b>Education</b>	Resources	Govt Prioritization	Education Spending	171	85%	Country as Unit
		CSE	SRHR Policy: Sexuality Education	98	49%	Country as Unit
	Agency	Participation	Secondary Education Enrolment	171	95%	All, 12-17
	Achievement	Educational Attainment	Upper-Secondary Education Completion	155	96%	All, 12-17
<b>Economic Empowerment</b>	Resources	Resource Access	Cell Phone Ownership	142	96%	All, 15-34
			Internet Access	141	96%	All, 15-34
		Policy	National Youth Policy (Econ)	104	51%	Country as Unit
	Agency	Financial Independence	Account at a Financial Institution	157	99%	All, 15-34
	Achievement	Employment	Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)	153	82%	All, 15-24
			Economic Outcomes	Standard of Living	50	55%
			Poverty	137	90%	All, 15-24
<b>MY WORLD</b>						
<b>Youth Policy and Political Participation</b>	Resources	Policy	National Youth Policy	167	83%	Country as Unit
		Data	Data Collection on Youth	82	41%	Country as Unit
	Agency	Voting/Elections	Voter Participation	74	81%	All, 16-24
		Participation	Political/Civic Organization Participation	73	81%	All, 16-24
	Achievement	Representation	Youth Political Representation	104	63%	All, 18-29
<b>Safety and Security</b>	Resources	National Resilience/Risk	Humanitarian Crisis	184	91%	Country as Unit
	Agency	Participation	Political/Civic Action	71	80%	All, 16-24
			Critical Awareness	Human Rights	74	81%
	Achievement	Humanitarian Outcomes	Youth Displacement	187	100%	All, 12-17
		Individual Safety	Interpersonal Violence Mortality	188	100%	All, 10-24
		Individual Safety	Mental Health	188	100%	All, 10-24



## REFERENCES

- Kabeer N (2002). Resources, agency, achievements: reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and Change*. 30(3):435-64.  
<http://weehub.ku.ac.ke/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Naila-Kabeer-Empowerment.pdf>
- ② Ewerling F, Lynch JW, Victoria CG, van Eerdewijk A, Tyszler M, Barros AJD (2017). The SWPER index for women's empowerment in Africa: development and validation of an index based on survey data. *Lancet Global Health*. 5:e916-12.  
[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(17\)30292-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(17)30292-9/fulltext)
- ③ Rettig EM, Fick SE, Hijmans RJ (2020). The Female Empowerment Index (FEMI): spatial and temporal variation in women's empowerment in Nigeria. *Heliyon*. 6(5):e03829.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e03829>
- ④ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2020). *Women's Empowerment in Kenya*. <https://www.genderinkenya.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/WEI-REPORT-10.08.2020.pdf>
- ⑤ Malhotra A, Schuler SR, Boender C (2002). *Measuring Women's Empowerment as a Variable in International Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.  
[https://www.academia.edu/17726621/Measuring\\_womens\\_empowerment\\_as\\_a\\_variable\\_in\\_international\\_development](https://www.academia.edu/17726621/Measuring_womens_empowerment_as_a_variable_in_international_development)
- ⑥ Hennink M, Kiiti N, Pillinger M, Jayakaran R (2012). Defining empowerment: perspectives from international development organisations. *Development in Practice*. 22(2):202-15.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2012.640987>
- ⑦ Georgia Youth Index, Indonesia Youth Development Index, Moldova Youth Score Card, Oman Youth Development Index, Ukraine Youth Wellbeing Index
- ⑧ MacQuarrie KLD (2020). *Measuring Youth Empowerment*. DHS Working Papers No. 179. Rockville, MD: USAID. <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/WP179/WP179.pdf>
- ⑨ Glenister R, Walsh C, Diaz-Martin L. *A Practical Guide to Measuring Women's and Girls' Empowerment in Impact Evaluations*. J-PAL.  
<https://www.povertyactionlab.org/practical-guide-measuring-womens-and-girls-empowerment-impact-evaluations>
- ⑩ UNFPA. Comprehensive sexuality education [website].  
<https://www.unfpa.org/comprehensive-sexuality-education>

