

Unmet need for Contraception

Definition:

A woman is having an unmet need for contraception if she is:

- Fertile
- Married or living in union
- Not using any contraception (modern, natural or traditional)
- Not wanting any more children or wanting to postpone for at least two years

Recent Maternal Mortality reviews (2006) have shown that illegal induced abortions are one of the major causes of maternal mortality among married women. Most of these abortions are the result of an unplanned pregnancy due to non use of a contraceptive.

Therefore, to prevent unplanned pregnancies it is imperative to identify women with unmet need for contraception.

For **practical purposes** the following criteria should be used by **public health staff** to categorize women as having an unmet need.

Whether a woman is currently:

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 1. Registered in the Eligible families register | yes | no |
| 2. At risk of getting pregnant | yes | no |
| 3. Using any contraception (modern, natural or traditional) | yes | no |
| 4. Hoping to have a child within the next 2 years | yes | no |

If the answer to questions 1&2 “Yes” and questions 3& 4 “No”, categorize that woman as having an unmet need.