

Women and Health: Concepts and Evidence from the Arab Region Focus: Data gaps

**Arab Regional Conference on Population and Development:
Five Years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration
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Critical analysis of data gaps and available evidence: need for input from researchers

By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes

What does SDG target 3.7 mean in the conflict-affected Arab region?

Who -- and what issues -- are 'left behind'?

WHO is 'left behind' in terms of SRH data?

Examples of Neglected populations in Population-based Surveys in the Region

- Very early adolescents under 15
- Unmarried adolescents 15 - 19
- Older women post reproductive age
- Never married, divorced or separated women
- Non-nationals (refugees; migrant workers)

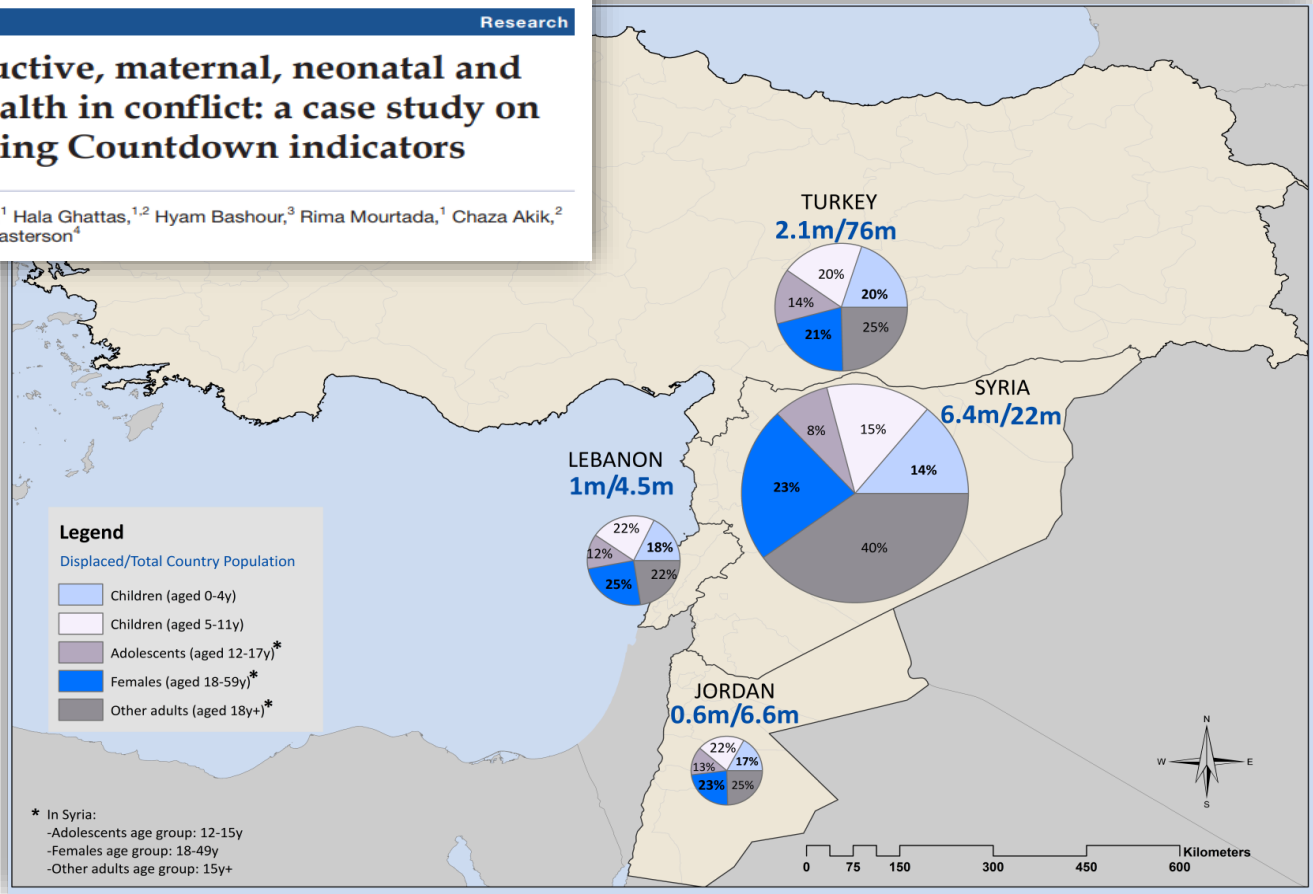
And MEN!

Syria conflict: majority of forcibly displaced in neighboring countries are women and children

Research

BMJ Global Health **Reproductive, maternal, neonatal and child health in conflict: a case study on Syria using Countdown indicators**

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Forcibly displaced not sufficiently ‘counted’

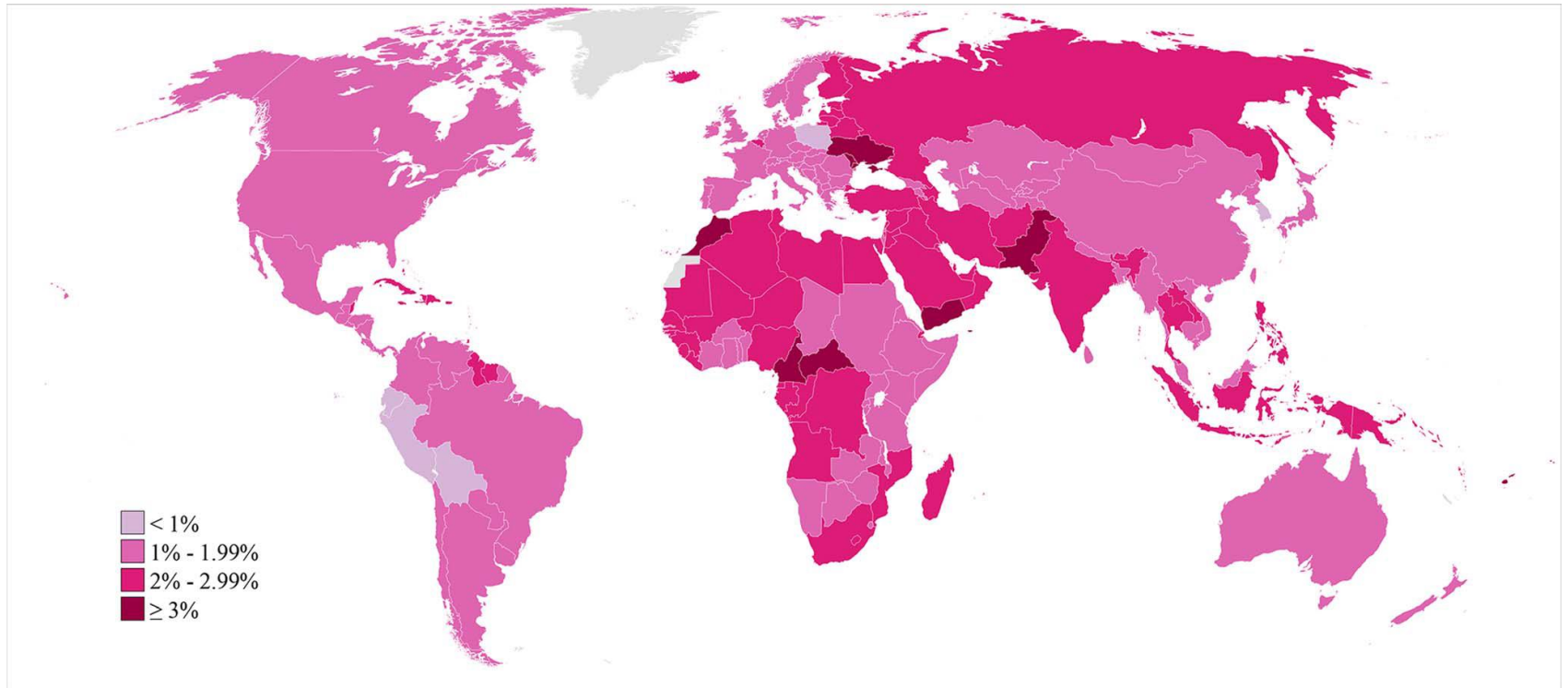
- Multiplicity of data collected by humanitarian agencies but not standardized, comparable or comprehensive and therefore lack a full picture of SRH situation
- Global health accountability frameworks such as Countdown to RMNCH 2030 – rely on nationally representative surveys such as MICS and DHS – often not possible in conflict-affected countries or sub-regions

What is left behind?

Example of neglected issues: infertility

- No recent population-based estimates
- Area of huge medical expansion and high out-of-pocket expenditures
- Yet very little regulation over quality and ethics of care
- Minimal emphasis on prevention (e.g. reproductive tract infections)
- High psychological and social impact particularly on women

Lack of data on full range of SRH issues e.g. infertility - What do we know?

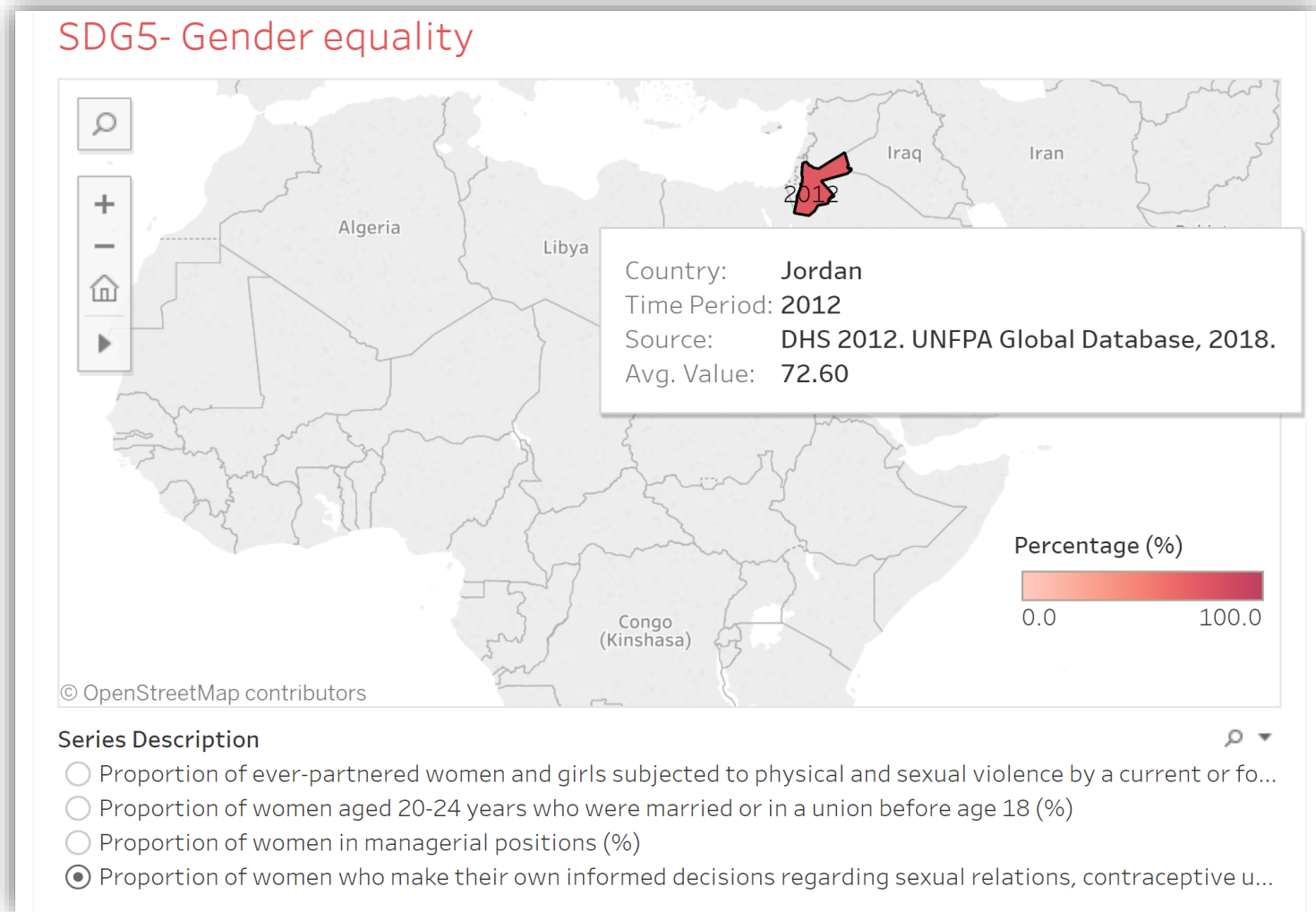


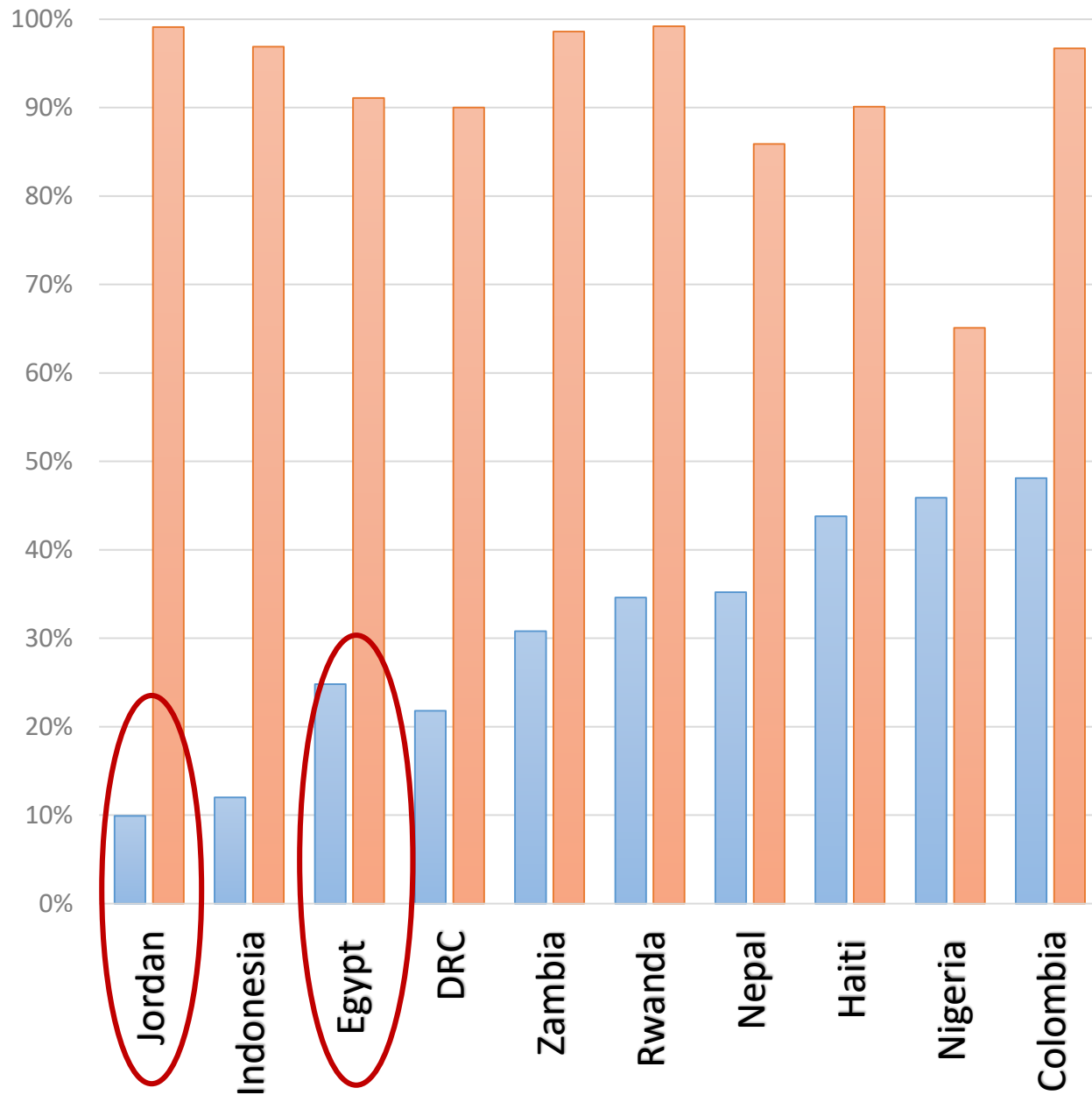
Note: For the Middle East region are the PAPFAM between the years 2002-2004 (for 6 Arab countries) and the PAPChild (1990-1997, for 10 countries).

Source: Mascarenhas et al. 2012. National, Regional, and Global Trends in Infertility Prevalence Since 1990: A Systematic Analysis of 277 Health Surveys. *PLOS Medicine* 9(12): e1001356. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1001356.g003

SDG5: Data gap

Proportion of women who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (% of women aged 15-49 years)





% women with 1+ ANC

% women with 1+ ANC receiving 6 essential elements of ANC

Conclusion:

1. Region needs better data on continuum of life-cycle with comprehensive approach to SRH in line with the SDGs
2. Have data on coverage of interventions but not **quality**
3. Researchers – with knowledge of context and critical lens -- need to be involved in both the design and utilization of surveys in the region
4. This needs to be combined with multidisciplinary and qualitative perspectives to capture the lived experience of SRH and the specificities of the region