

The Contribution of Civil Registration for the Ending of Child Marriage



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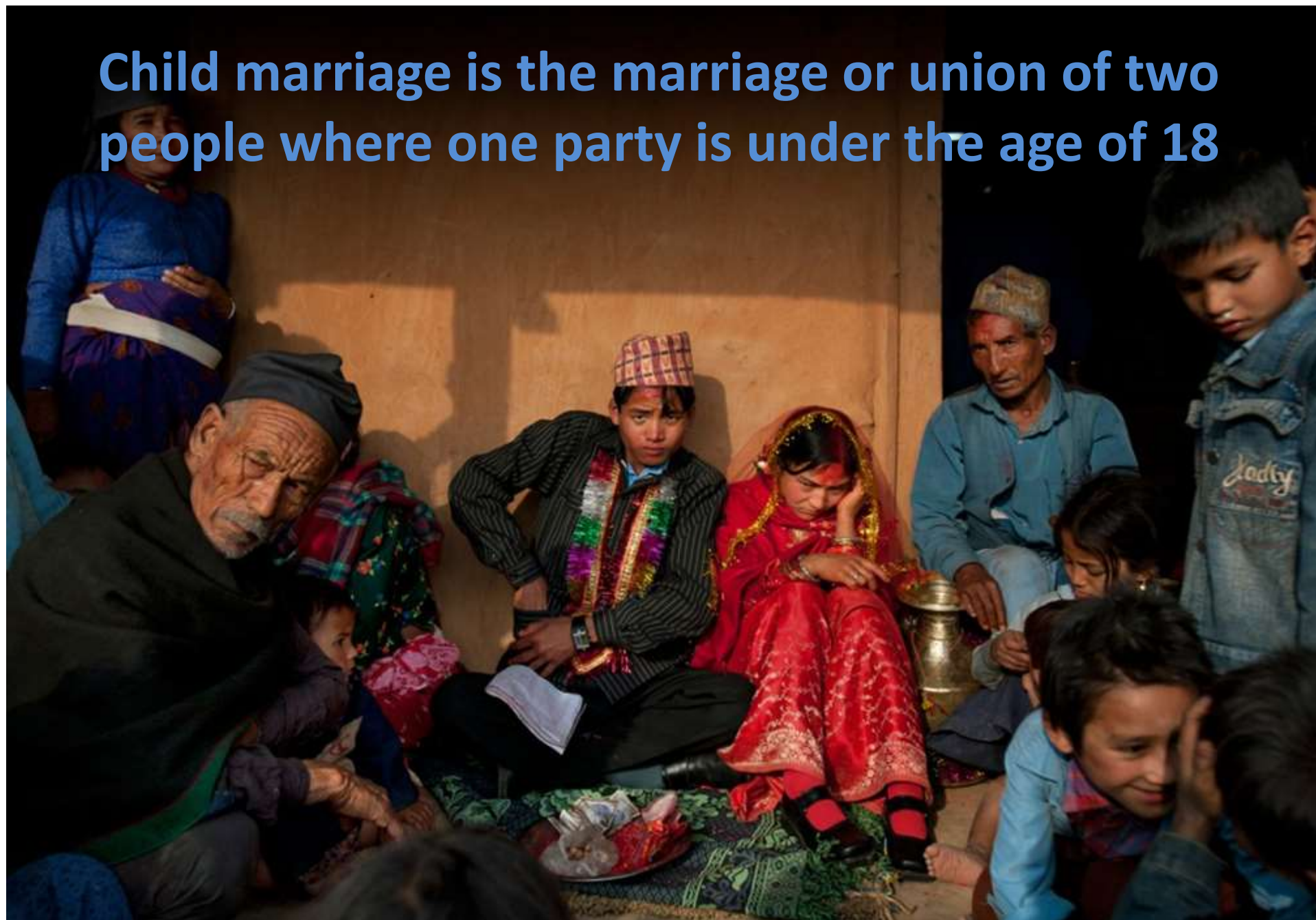
UNICEF Regional Advisor, Child Protection

Outline

- What is child marriage
- Civil registration as a protective mechanism
- Potential uses of civil registration to end child marriage



Child marriage is the marriage or union of two people where one party is under the age of 18



Minimum Age of Marriage in South Asia

Country	Girls	Girls with parental consent/court approval	Boys	Boys with parental consent/court approval
Afghanistan	16	15	18	
Bangladesh	18	No minimum	21	No minimum
Bhutan	16	-	18	-
India	18	-	21	-
Maldives	18		18	
Nepal	20	-	20	-
Pakistan				
Punjab	16	-	18	-
Sindh	18	-	18	-
Hindu marriages	18	-	18	-
Sri Lanka	18	No minimum for Muslim marriages	18	No minimum for Muslim marriages

Child Marriage Risks



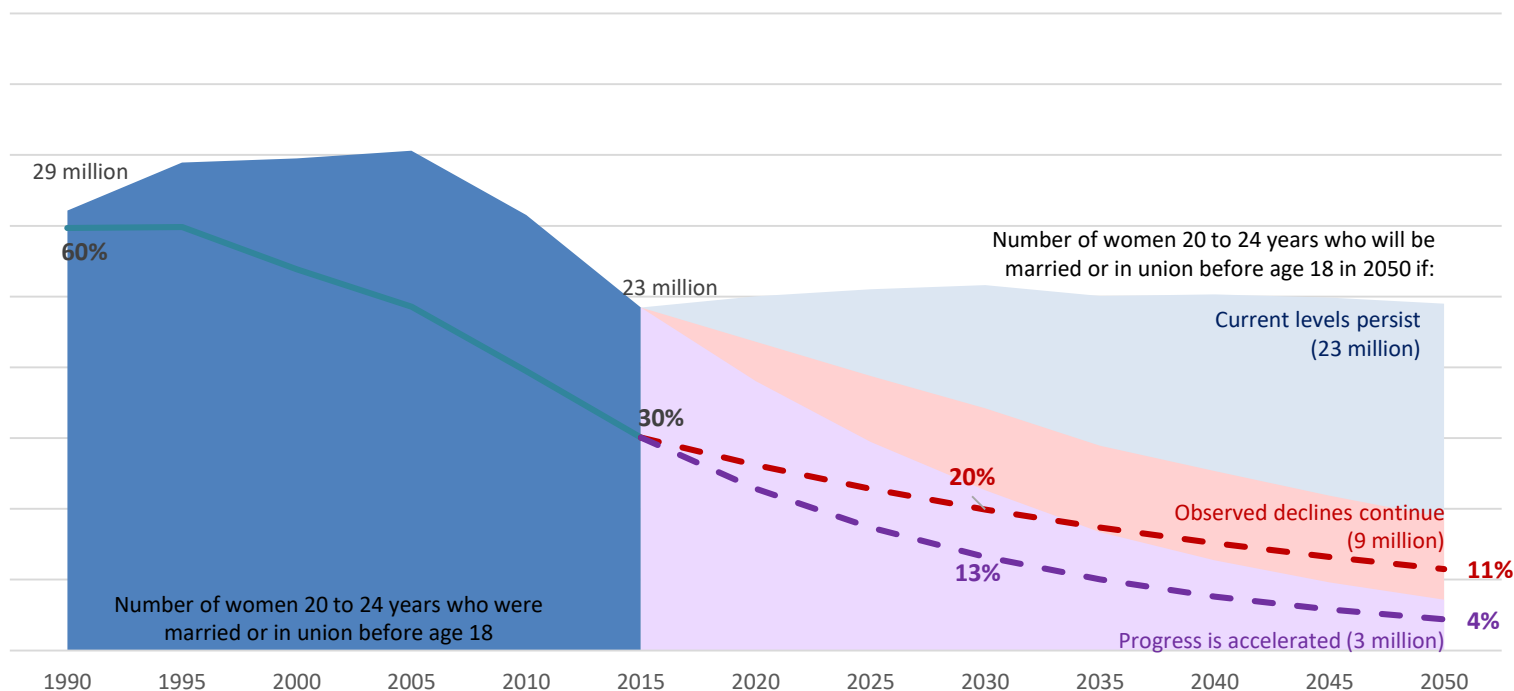
- ❖ Health of the mother due to early child bearing
- ❖ Higher rate of maternal mortality
- ❖ Increased health risks to child
- ❖ Higher rate of infant mortality
- ❖ Higher likelihood not to complete secondary school
- ❖ Negative impact on earning potential
- ❖ Child bride more likely to be victim to domestic violence
- ❖ Social isolation
- ❖ High economic costs for country and global economy



The prevalence of child marriage in South Asia could more than halve by 2030 if progress is accelerated

Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before age 18, observed and projected, South Asia

— Observed prevalence — Projected prevalence if observed declines continue — Projected prevalence if progress is accelerated



Note: The projected percentage based on observed trends (red dotted line) applies the annual rate of reduction observed from the past 25 years. The accelerated scenario (purple dotted line) assumes a doubling in the rate of reduction. Analysis includes data from 6 countries in South Asia, covering 99% of the regional population.

Source: UNICEF global databases, 2018, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys, 2010-2016. Demographic data from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Prospects, 2017 Revision*.

Strategies to End Child Marriage

Enhanced voice and agency of adolescent girls and boys in South Asian countries

Empowerment of girls & boys

Enhanced knowledge, skills, attitudes and capacities, to make informed choices and decide on their relationships

Family and Community Engagement:

Boys, men, mothers, fathers, religious leaders demonstrate more gender-equitable attitudes and support for girls and boys rights contributing to social norm change

Enhanced resources & opportunities for adolescent girls and boys and their families in South Asia

System Strengthening:

Capacity of education, health, CP, systems to deliver integrated and coordinated quality programmes and services for adolescents and their families

Economic Empowerment:

Increased capacity of economic and social protection programmes and services to provide adolescents and their families with life options and alternatives

Enhanced legal & political response to prevent child marriage & to support married, divorced or widowed adolescent girls and boys at risk or married

Laws and Policies:

Capacity of government to implement policies and interventions to end child marriage

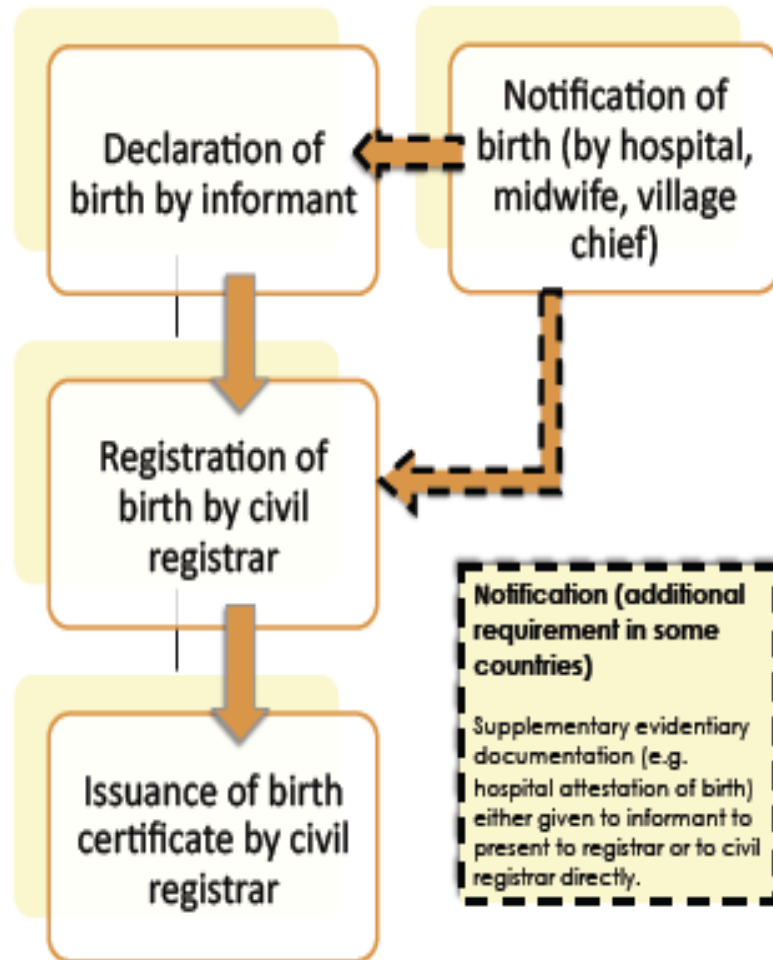
Data and Evidence:

Generate and use evidence to inform policy, programme design and monitor progress

Civil registration provides evidence of a vital event



Legal Certificate



Is the vital record that documents the birth of a child.

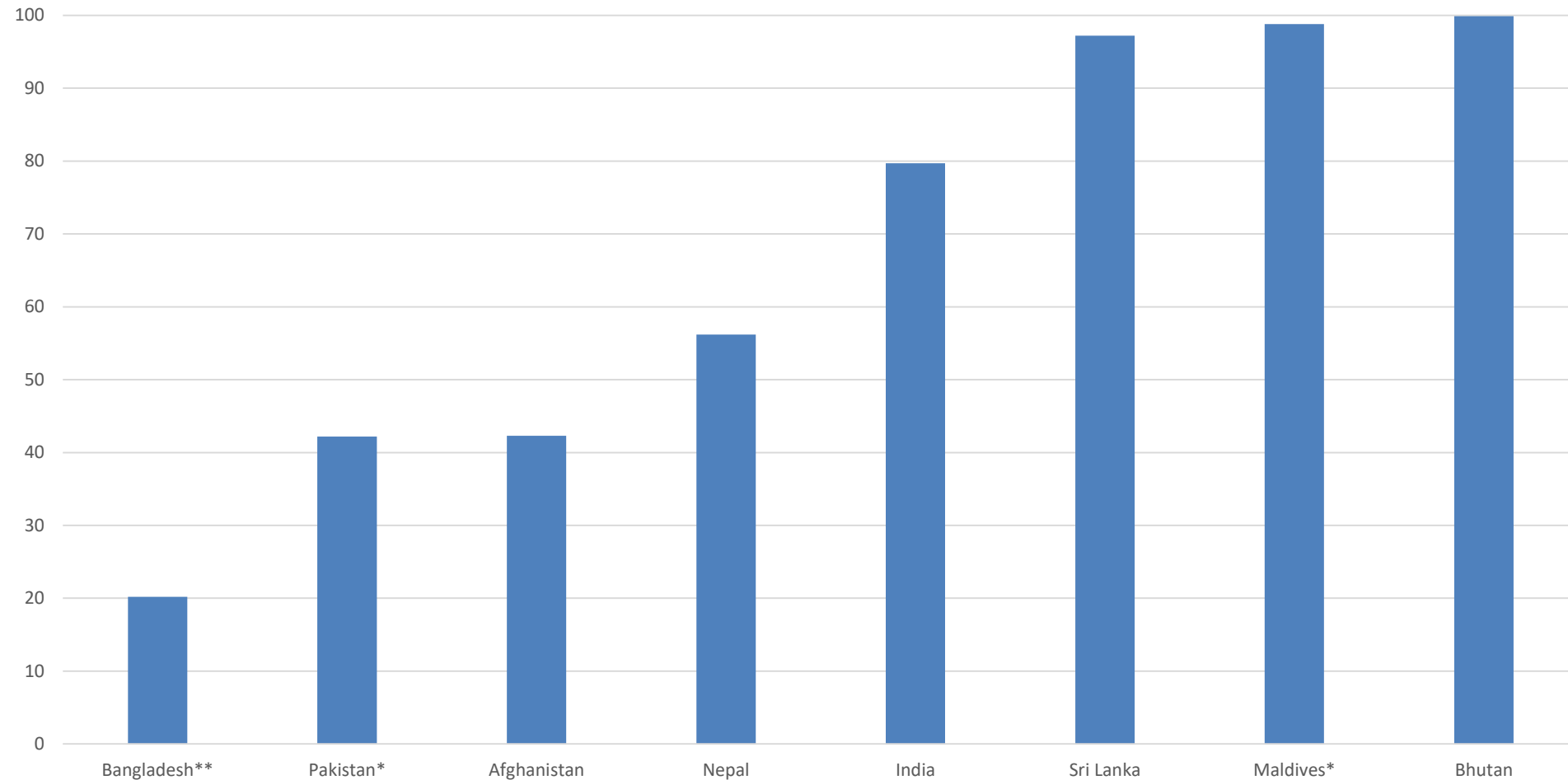
It should contain the minimum information.

The base material should be a security substrate image using secure printing techniques and a unique identifier.

Birth registration determines a person's age



Percentage of children under age five whose births are registered, South Asia



Source: UNICEF global databases, 2019.

*Data which is final and published but has not yet been confirmed through the SDG country consultation exercise for SDG indicator 16.9.1

**More recent data from MICS 2019 will be published soon and these data are included in the upcoming global UNICEF report

Marriage registration can be a requirement:

- for birth registration
- to obtain travel documents



Showing a birth certificate before marriage is a good policy practice.

Birth and marriage registration can be required for annulment



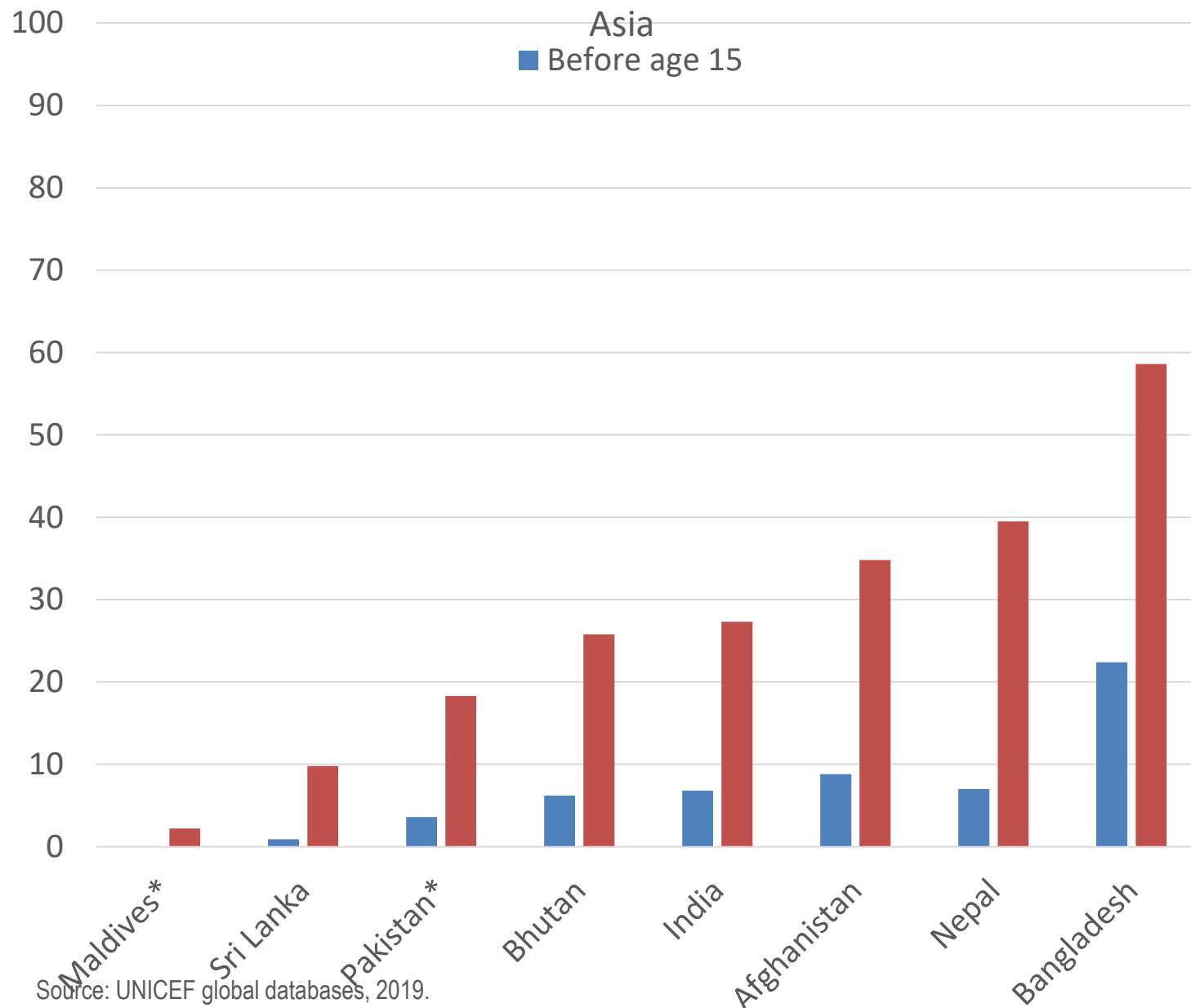
Vital Statistics

❖ Trends

❖ Policy changes

❖ SDG monitoring

Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before age 15 and before age 18, South Asia



Source: UNICEF global databases, 2019.

Note: Countries with an asterisk (*) display data which is final and published but has not yet been confirmed through the SDG country consultation exercise for SDG indicator 5.3.1.

THANK YOU

