



# **Health Inequality Data Repository**

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## INDICATOR METADATA

Women's empowerment index (SWPER) (DHS re-analyzed by ICEH)

**October 2024**

## Women's empowerment index (SWPER) (DHS re-analyzed by ICEH)

### About

This dataset is from the [WHO Health Inequality Data Repository](#).

This dataset contains 9 indicators from the survey-based women's empowerment (SWPER) index, disaggregated by age, economic status, education, place of residence and subnational region.

The SWPER index includes three domains:

1. **Social independence:** preconditions that enable women to achieve their goals (schooling attainment, access to information, age at pivotal life events and spousal asset differentials), derived from 6 indicators.
2. **Decision-making:** the extent of the woman's participation in household decisions, which may also be considered a measure of instrumental agency, derived from 3 indicators.
3. **Attitude to violence:** closely related to the concept of intrinsic agency, it is a proxy for the woman's incorporation of gender norms-related to the acceptability of intimate-partner violence, derived from 5 indicators.

### Data source

Data are derived from re-analysis of Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) micro-data, which are publicly available. The analysis was done by the WHO Collaborating Center for Health Equity Monitoring (International Center for Equity in Health, Federal University of Pelotas, Brazil).

### Methodology

Information about estimation methodology of the SWPER index is available here: [Ewerling F, Raj A, Victora CG, Hellwig F, Coll CV, Barros AJ. SWPER Global: A survey-based women's empowerment index expanded from Africa to all low- and middle-income countries. J Glob Health. 2020;10\(2\):020343. doi:10.7189/jogh.10.020434](#)

### Dataset metadata

<b>Date of first publication</b>	April 2023
<b>Date of updated publication</b>	October 2024
<b>Expected frequency of update</b>	Annual
<b>Date of data extraction</b>	01 October 2024
<b>Temporal coverage</b>	1991–2023
<b>Spatial coverage</b>	Global
<b>Spatial granularity</b>	National
<b>Number of countries, territories or areas</b>	120
<b>Number of indicators</b>	9
<b>Number of dimensions of inequality</b>	5

## Inequality dimensions

Data disaggregation by **age** encompassed two subgroups (15-19 years, 20-49 years).

**Economic status** was determined using a wealth index. Country-specific indices were based on owning selected assets and having access to certain services, and constructed using principal component analysis. For wealth quintiles, within each country the index was divided into five equal subgroups that each account for 20% of the population. For wealth deciles, within each country the index was divided into ten equal subgroups that each account for 10% of the population. Note that certain indicators have denominator criteria that do not include all households and/or are more likely to include households from a specific quintile or decile; thus the quintile or decile share of the population for a given indicator may not equal 20% or 10%, respectively.

**Education** refers to the highest level of education attained by the woman and comprises three subgroups (no education, primary education, secondary or higher education).

For **place of residence** and **subnational region**, country-specific criteria were applied.

## Disclaimer

The estimates presented may differ from, and should not be regarded as, the official national statistics of individual WHO Member States or official WHO estimates.

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Indicator metadata

Indicator name	Disaggregation	Definition / Further information	Notes
Women with high empowerment in the social independence domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with high empowerment score in the social independence domain (score >0.293).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a high empowerment score in the social independence domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union.	
Women with medium empowerment in the social independence domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with medium empowerment score in the social independence domain (score >-0.559 ≤0.293).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a medium empowerment score in the social independence domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union.	
Women with low empowerment in the social independence domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with low empowerment score in the social independence domain (score ≤-0.559).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a low empowerment score in the social independence domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union	
Women with high empowerment in the decision-making domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with high empowerment score in the decision-making domain (score >0.600).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a high empowerment score in the decision-making domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union.	
Women with medium empowerment in the decision-making domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with medium empowerment score in the decision-making domain (score >-1.000 ≤0.600).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a medium empowerment score in the decision-making domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union.	
Women with low empowerment in the decision-making domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with low empowerment score in the decision-making domain (score ≤-1.000).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a low empowerment score in the decision-making domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union.	

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Indicator name	Disaggregation	Definition / Further information	Notes
Women with high empowerment in the attitude to violence domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with high empowerment score in the attitude to violence domain (score >0.400).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a high empowerment score in the attitude to violence domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union.	
Women with medium empowerment in the attitude to violence domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with medium empowerment score in the attitude to violence domain (score >-0.700 ≤0.400).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a medium empowerment score in the attitude to violence domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union.	
Women with low empowerment in the attitude to violence domain (%)	Age Economic status Education Place of residence Subnational region	The percentage of women with low empowerment score in the attitude to violence domain (score ≤-0.700).  <u>Numerator</u> : Women with a low empowerment score in the attitude to violence domain.  <u>Denominator</u> : Women aged 15-49 years currently married or in a union.	