

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The 2016 SLDHS was conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) for the Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine with assistance from the World Bank. It collected information for a series of demographic and health indicators at the national, urban and rural estate and district level to monitor progress and to support the identification and development of policies, programs and interventions. The 2016 SLDHS was successfully implemented in almost all households (99percent) selected and for almost all ever married women (99percent) identified in the household. Data was collected using Computer- Assisted Personal Interviewing technology (CAPI) for the first time in DCS. Some of the key finding of the SLDHS-2016 are given below.

Household Characteristics:

Ninety percent of the households have access to improved source of drinking water with 80 percent with access on premises (compared to 72 percent in the 2006/07 SLDHS). However, for households in the Estate areas, only 43 percent reported access to improved sources (compared to 83 percent in 2006/07). The main reason for this decline is the change in classification of “springs” from protected in 2006 (33percent) to unprotected in 2016 (54 percent). As for sanitation, 90 percent of the households and population have access to improved facilities. In terms of household amenities and practices:

- Almost all households (97 percent) have access to electricity (80 percent in 2006/07)
- Two thirds, or 66 percent use wood and solid fuel for cooking (79 percent in 2006/07)
- TV and mobile phones access has substantially increase to 87 percent and 91 percent respectively (from 77 percent and 39 percent respectively in 2006/07)

Education:

The 2016 SLDHS confirmed the existence of high levels of education across the country with a median of 9.4 years of education (yet 4 percent of the populations have no education). Primary school attendance is almost universal. While net school attendance in secondary education is only 83 percent, indicating that 17 percent of the 10-15 years of age population are not attending school with no differences between boys and girls.

Ever- married Women (E-MW): The distribution of E-MW by place of residence, ethnicity, and religion confirmed previous distributions: 81percent rural residence, 76 percent Sinhalese and 71 percent Buddhist. In addition:

- Ninety percent are currently married, 4 percent are living together and 6 percent are widowed , divorced or separate;
- Only 18 percent have ever use internet and 16 percent use it during the last 12 month;
- One out of three E-MW indicated to be employed during the week before the survey;



- Median age at first sexual intercourse is 23.7 years, but 12 percent of them at age 18;
- The median age at first marriage is 23.7 years, but 12 percent of them married at age 18;

Fertility:

The 2016 SLDHS confirms low levels of fertility already identified in previous surveys (2012 census and 2006/07 SLDHS) with a total fertility rate (TFR) of 2.2 in 2016. Substantial changes are observed among adolescents and young people (15-19 and 20-24). The TFR levels, trends and observed changes are well supported by the observed values under the basic determinants of fertility, such as marriage, sexual intercourse, and contraception for spacing or limiting. The median age at first birth has also increased substantially to 26 years. In addition, only 3 percent of teenagers reported a live birth or to be pregnant at the time of the survey. Fertility preferences show that 47 percent of the ever-married women “want no more children” with 1.9 as the wanted TFR.

Contraception:

Contraception and contraceptive methods are universally known in Sri Lanka. Seventy two percent of the currently married women have a demand for contraception in 2016. Of these, close to two out of three (65 percent) currently married women are using contraception. Of the total demand for contraception, close to 90 percent of the demand for contraception is satisfied, mainly by modern contraception. Other highlights include:

- Increase in the level of contraceptive use was observed among adolescents and young adults 20 – 24, particularly in the use of IUDs and implants.
- Yet 35 percent of the currently married women are not using contraception of which only 8 percent have an unmet need for contraception.
- The public – sector act as the main provider of contraception (97 percent for IUD, 99 percent for implants, 94 percent of sterilizations and 57 percent for pills).
- The private sector’s participation is strong for the provision of injectable (68 percent), male condoms (61 percent) and pills (43 percent).

As per informed choice, there are still challenges since:

- Only 53 percent of current users were informed about side effects.
- Only 51 percent were told what to do in case of experiencing side effects and,
- Only 42 percent were informed about other available methods.

Child mortality:

Under five year mortality is observed in the 2016 SLDHS at 11 per 1,000 live births, down from 21 in 2006/07.

Infant and child mortality continue to decline during the last ten years. Areas of investment are to be on interventions targeting high risk fertility behaviors: first birth, early or late age pregnancies and, short birth intervals.

Reproductive Health:

Ninety nine percent of the pregnancies in the country received antenatal care assistance from health facilities 92 percent of women having their first antenatal care visit before the 12 weeks of pregnancy, 96 percent attended by health personnel and 97 percent protected against neonatal tetanus.

Almost all births taken place in a health facility (94 percent in public and 5 percent in private). As for postnatal care, 99 percent of the births received assistance within two days of birth. Unfortunately, 16 percent of the births have low birth weight at birth (less than 2500 grams). There are eight districts in which this percentage is 18 percent or greater.

Among children age 24-35 months, only one percent was not received any vaccination. In terms of illness affecting children under the age of five (all below the levels observed in 2006).

- 2.4 percent are affected by Acute Respiratory infections(ARI);
- 14.3 percent were affected by fever;
- 2.7 are affected by diarrhea
- Almost all mother's (97 percent) know about ORS;
- 91 percent of the mothers indicated proper ways of stool disposal.

Nutrition of Children and Women:

Stunting (height x age) = 17 percent; Underweight (weight x age) = 21 percent and wasting (height x weight) = 15 percent. Among ever – married women, 9 percent were found to be thin, 32 percent overweight and 13 percent obese (45 either one). The majority (99 percent) of children are breastfed at some time (90 percent) within one hour, 98 percent within one day. Almost all households (95 percent) have supplies of iodized salt at home.

HIV/AIDS:

Almost all ever married women (93 percent) have heard about HIV/AIDS but only one out of three (33 percent) have comprehensive knowledge of AIDS (prevention and misconceptions). Yet this value is only 24 percent among young adults age 15-24. Ten percent of the ever- married women have been tested for AIDS but only 73 percent of them received the results from the test.



Violence by intimate partner:

Overall, 17 percent of the ever-married women reported to be victims of any type of violence, 2.1 percent on a daily basis. Unfortunately, only 28 percent requested help to deal with the events.

Malaria

In Sri Lanka 69 percent of the households possesses at least one mosquito net of any type while all types of insecticide- treated nets (ITNs) are possessed by only 13 percent. Moreover the usage of mosquito nets by under 5 year children (71 percent and pregnant women (60 percent) has increased during this decade (2006/2016)

Women Empowerment and Demographic and Health Outcomes:

The majority of ever – married women (83 percent) have access to a bank account and 78 percent use a mobile phone. Unfortunately, only 35 percent are, alone, making decisions related to her health care, 20 percent on purchasing household amenities and /or 16 percent on when to visit friends or family.

Non Communicable Diseases, Mental Illnesses, Suicides, Smoking and Drug Consumption

Overall, heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes are mostly prevalent among older population (40 or more years of age). Wheezing and asthma, and chronic kidney disease seem to affect all age groups, although with slightly higher percentages among older population. And less than one percent (0.7 percent) of household members were undergoing treatment for any kind of mental illness. In 34 percent of household, at least one member smokes tobacco and another 29 percent use smokeless tobacco.