

<b>WOMEN OF CHILDBEARING AGE WORKING IN UNREGULATED WORKPLACES</b>	
<b>GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
<i>Issues</i>	Perinatal diseases
<i>Type of indicator</i>	Exposure (proximal) Can also be used as a measure of action in relation to employment policy.
<i>Rationale</i>	Maternal injuries and exposures to hazardous chemicals in the workplace represent important sources of risk for the child during the prenatal period. Risks tend to be greatest where women are employed in unregulated workplaces, both because these tend to be inherently more hazardous, and because they often do not have effective schemes for worker safety. This indicator, therefore, provides a general and distal measure of the risks of foetal damage due to maternal exposures in the workplace.
<i>Issues in indicator design</i>	By their very nature, unregulated workplaces are extremely diverse in terms of their character and only poorly monitored. In particular, much employment in these types of workplaces is informal and unreported; often it involves family members or casual labour. As a result, the quality of available data is often poor, and difficulties may be met in trying to establish a clear and consistent definition of unregulated workplaces that are supported by reliable data.
<b>SPECIFICATION</b>	
<i>Definition</i>	Percentage (or number) of women aged 15 to 49 years employed on a regular basis in unregulated workplaces
<i>Terms and concepts</i>	<b>Unregulated workplace:</b> an informal workplace, that is not subject to effective regulation or control. Workplaces of this type typically include small, family-run manufacturing or retail establishments. <b>Regular employment:</b> actively engaged (whether paid or unpaid) in the workplace for a substantial part of most days, over a period of several years.
<i>Data needs</i>	Numbers of female employees ages 15-49 years in unregulated workplaces. Total number of women aged 15-49 years.
<i>Data sources, availability and quality</i>	Routine data on employment in unregulated workplaces are inevitably rare. Usually, therefore, data will need to be obtained from special surveys, targeted either at the workplace or home. Considerable problems may be encountered in these surveys, due to the illicit nature of many of these workplaces, and the fear of prosecution amongst both employers and employees. Major uncertainties thus tend to occur in the available data.  Data on the total number of women, by age, are usually available from national censuses and can be considered to be reliable.
<i>Level of spatial aggregation</i>	Community or municipality
<i>Averaging period</i>	Annual or longer term
<i>Computation</i>	The indicator can be computed as a simple percentage, as follows: $100 * W_{unreg} / W_{tot}$ where: <i>W<sub>unreg</sub></i> is the number of women aged 15-49 years employed on a regular basis in unregulated workplaces; <i>W<sub>tot</sub></i> is the total number of women aged 15-49 years.
<i>Units of measurement</i>	Percentage or number

<i>Worked example</i>	<p>Assume that in an area a household survey of 8 420 women aged 15-49 shows that 998 are employed in unregulated workplaces. In this case, the value of the indicator is calculated as:</p> $100 * 998 / 8\,420 = 11.9\%$
<i>Interpretation</i>	<p>This indicator provides a measure of the percentage of women of childbearing age potentially exposed to occupational hazards as a result of employment in unregulated workplaces. It thus gives a general indication of risks to the unborn child as a result of maternal exposures or accidents at work. Because direct measurement or observation of hazards in the workplace are not made, and because it does not relate specifically to pregnant women, the indicator clearly has to be interpreted with care: an increase in the percentage employed in unregulated workplaces <i>suggests</i> an increased level of risk but does not demonstrate it. Major uncertainties are also likely to exist in the data, due to difficulties in obtaining representative samples of employees, incomplete reporting of employment, and problems in defining unregulated workplaces in a consistent way.</p>
<i>Variations and alternatives</i>	<p>Where suitable data are available, this indicator may be better designed on the basis of hazards in the workplace. In this case, it need not be restricted only to unregulated workplaces. Another alternative is to use information on the incident of occupational accidents to women of childbearing age. This is only feasible where reliable reporting of workplace accidents takes place.</p>
<i>Examples</i>	<p>WHO <i>Environmental health indicators: framework and methodologies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Percentage of workers exposed to unsafe, unhealthy or hazardous working conditions</b></li> </ul>
<i>Useful references</i>	<p>WHO 1999 <i>Environmental health indicators: framework and methodologies</i>. Geneva: World Health Organization. (Available at <a href="http://www.who.int/docstore/peh/archives/EHIndicators.pdf">http://www.who.int/docstore/peh/archives/EHIndicators.pdf</a> )</p>