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# COMPARATIVE STUDIES 10

## MARRIAGE AND ENTRY INTO PARENTHOOD



Demographic  
and Health  
Surveys



The Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) is a 13-year project to assist government and private agencies in developing countries to conduct national sample surveys on population and maternal and child health. Funded primarily by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), DHS is administered by Macro International Inc. in Calverton, Maryland.

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**Demographic and Health Surveys  
Comparative Studies No. 10**

**Marriage and Entry  
into Parenthood**

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# Preface

One of the most significant contributions of the DHS program is the creation of an internationally comparable body of data on the demographic and health characteristics of populations in developing countries. The *DHS Comparative Studies* series examines these data across countries in a comparative framework, focusing on specific topics.

The objectives of the *DHS Comparative Studies* are: to describe similarities and differences between countries and regions, to highlight subgroups with specific needs, to provide information for policy formulation at the international level, and to examine individual country results in an international context. The comparative analysis of DHS data is carried out primarily by staff at the DHS headquarters in Calverton, Maryland. The topics covered in the series are selected by DHS staff in conjunction with the DHS Scientific Advisory Committee and USAID.

The reports in this series are based on a variable number of data sets that generally represent those countries for which data sets were available at the time the report was prepared. Each report provides detailed tables and graphs for countries in four regions: sub-Saharan Africa, Near East/North Africa, Asia, and Latin America/Caribbean. Survey-related issues such as questionnaire comparability, survey procedures, data quality, and methodological approaches are addressed in each report, as necessary. Where appropriate, data from previous survey programs, primarily the World Fertility Survey and the Contraceptive Prevalence Surveys, are used to evaluate trends over time.

As more surveys are conducted under the DHS program and additional data sets become available, some of the reports published early in the series will be updated.

It is hoped that the availability of comparable information for a large number of developing countries will have long-term usefulness for analysts and policymakers in the fields of international population and health.

Martin Vaessen  
Project Director

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# 1 Introduction

In spite of the increasing incidence of nonmarital childbearing, most fertility in the developing world occurs within marital unions. As a result, the age at which women enter marriage and for how long they remain married directly influences fertility rates. Differences in age at marriage have been shown to account for a significant proportion of the variation in fertility across populations and changes in age at marriage can help to explain changes in fertility (Adlakha et al., 1991; Bongaarts and Potter, 1983; Moreno, 1991; United Nations, 1987; Casterline et al., 1984; Arias de Blois, 1990). The effect of female education on fertility can work in part through its effect on age at marriage and, consequently, age at first birth.

In addition to their demographic importance, marriage and first-birth patterns provide useful indicators of the situation of women (United Nations, 1984) and are widely used as measures

of one dimension of women's status (Mason, 1984). More recently, patterns of marriage and other types of sexual unions have become important for the study of AIDS transmission and its potential demographic impact (van de Walle, 1993).

The primary purpose of this report is to present comparable information on marriage and first birth for countries participating in the DHS program. The report is divided into seven sections: the next section describes DHS procedures for the collection of data on marriage and first birth and discusses issues related to data quality; the following two sections present a set of international comparisons for DHS countries on several measures of current marital status and marital stability; the fifth section focuses on exposure to childbearing among never-married women; age at marriage and age at first birth are described in section 6, and the results are summarized in section 7.

## 2 Data

Information collected in DHS surveys on marriage includes: current marital status, date or age at first union, whether the respondent's husband/partner is currently living with her or staying elsewhere, and whether the respondent has been married once or more than once. In countries where polygyny is common, information is collected on whether the respondent is in a polygynous marriage, the number of co-wives she has, and her rank. Information on age at first birth is derived from the birth history and the respondent's birth date.

In surveys conducted under the first phase of the DHS program (DHS-I), women were asked whether they have ever been married or lived with a man. Those who reported having ever been in a union were then asked about their current union status with the question, "Are you now married or living with a man, or are you widowed, divorced, or not now living together?" Next, women were asked whether they had been in one or more than one union. Finally, respondents were asked to provide the month and year they started living with their first husband or partner. Those respondents who could not supply a year of first union were asked to give their age at the time of their first union. In the second phase of the DHS program (DHS-II), the procedure for obtaining information on when the first union began was modified so that all women were asked to report both the date of their first union *and* their age at first union. Interviewers were required to verify the consistency of these two pieces of information. In addition, in countries using the Model "A" Questionnaire (for use in high contraceptive prevalence countries), a monthly marriage history was collected for the 5 to 6 years prior to the survey. Age at marriage is calculated by subtracting the respondent's date of birth from her date of marriage. If no date is provided by the respondent, a date of marriage is imputed on the basis of the age at marriage given. Modifications to the standard information on marriage were introduced in some countries (see Blanc and Rutenberg, 1990, Table 1.1). These modifications mostly involve the collection of supplementary information or the addition of probe questions.

For analysis purposes, the concept of "in union" or "married," as used throughout DHS, means either formally married or living together in a consensual union. A broad definition of marriage is employed because the primary purpose of collecting these data is to provide an indicator of the beginning of exposure to pregnancy. It is worth noting, however, that in spite of this broad definition, DHS data on age at first sexual intercourse show that, in some countries, a considerable number of women report having sexual intercourse before their first marriage and a substantial number of births occur prior to the reported date of first union (Blanc and Rutenberg, 1991; also, see Meekers, 1991). Thus, although the data were collected in a comparable manner in all countries, it is important to recognize

that widely differing cultural norms and practices regarding union formation and dissolution have undoubtedly affected the way in which these events are reported by respondents. (For a recent critical review of survey data collection on marriage, see van de Walle, 1993.)

Information from 37 surveys with data files available in mid-1993 are included in this report—19 from sub-Saharan Africa, 4 from the Near East/North Africa, 4 from Asia, and 10 from Latin America and the Caribbean. For those countries in which two DHS data sets were available by mid-1993, the more recent data are included here (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Year of fieldwork, selected Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Year of Fieldwork	Country	Year of Fieldwork
<u>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</u>		<u>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</u>	
Botswana	1988	Egypt <sup>2</sup>	1988/89
Burundi	1987	Jordan <sup>2</sup>	1990
Cameroon	1991	Morocco	1992
Ghana	1988	Tunisia <sup>2</sup>	1988
Kenya	1988/89	<u>ASIA</u>	
Liberia	1986	Indonesia <sup>2</sup>	1991
Madagascar	1992	Pakistan <sup>2</sup>	1990/91
Mali	1987	Sri Lanka <sup>2</sup>	1987
Namibia	1992	Thailand <sup>2</sup>	1987
Niger	1992	<u>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</u>	
Nigeria	1990	Bolivia	1989
Rwanda	1992	Brazil <sup>3</sup>	1986
Senegal	1986	Colombia	1990
Sudan <sup>1</sup>	1989/90	Dominican Republic	1991
Tanzania	1991/92	Ecuador	1987
Togo	1988	Guatemala <sup>3</sup>	1987
Uganda	1988/89	Mexico	1987
Zambia	1992	Paraguay	1990
Zimbabwe	1988/89	Peru	1991/92
		Trinidad & Tobago	1987

<sup>1</sup>Ever-married women 15-49 in the six northern regions

<sup>2</sup>Ever-married women 15-49

<sup>3</sup>Women 15-44

Most DHS surveys are samples of all women age 15 to 49<sup>1</sup> regardless of marital status, but in eight of the surveys included in this report, individual interviews are restricted to ever-married women—in Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, and Tunisia. In these surveys, whether or not female household members have ever been married is determined during administration of the household questionnaire;

<sup>1</sup>The samples from Brazil and Guatemala are women 15-44.

current marital status is obtained during the interview with the individual woman. Estimates for the total population of women age 15 to 49 are derived from the ever-married samples by multiplying the number of ever-married women by a set of inflation factors which are the ratios of all women to ever-married women obtained in the household questionnaire for each single year of age.

A detailed assessment of the quality of DHS-I data on age at first marriage and age at first birth has been carried out under the DHS Program (Blanc and Rutenberg, 1990)<sup>2</sup>. The principal conclusions of this assessment are: 1) the completeness of reporting of the date of first marriage varies substantially between regions, but in all DHS-I surveys included in the analysis, ex-

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<sup>2</sup> The assessment was conducted using 22 countries for which data were available in mid-1989. It does not include all countries covered in this report.

cept Mali, at least 90 percent of the women provided either a date of or age at first marriage; 2) there is evidence of an appreciable amount of forward displacement of date of first union among older women, and some evidence of misreporting of age or marital status among the youngest women; 3) the data suggest that DHS surveys obtained levels of coverage of first unions that are at least as complete as other sources; a greater proportion of women were able to provide a complete date for the birth of their first child than for their first marriage; 4) there are indications that some forward displacement of first births or omission of early births has occurred among the oldest cohorts of women. Analysis of the quality of nuptiality data collected under DHS-II is in progress. Preliminary results show that, in all countries, more than 90 percent of women supplied either a date or age at first marriage. Forward displacement of age at marriage by older women appears to be less severe in these surveys than in DHS-I surveys.

## 3 Marital Status

### 3.1 CURRENT MARITAL STATUS

The distribution of all women by current marital status for five-year age groups is shown in Table 3.1. Variations in the categories of marital status shown for each country reflect differences resulting from the adaptation of the questionnaire to marriage practices in each country. "Married" includes legal and religious marriages, while "living together" includes informal or consensual unions. Aside from Botswana and Namibia, the proportion of women in a union (either married or living together) varies from 53 percent in Colombia to 92 percent in Mali.

Relative to other sub-Saharan countries, the proportions of women currently in a union are very low in Botswana and Namibia. In Botswana, this pattern is seen in the 1988 DHS survey and in previous censuses in 1971 and 1981, but the 1984 Botswana Family Health Survey revealed much higher proportions of women in union (van de Walle, 1993). A feature of the three data sources that show low proportions in union is that the question on current marital status asked about being married or "living with a man," whereas the 1984 survey simply asked women about having a "partner." Evidently, many women in Botswana have stable sexual relationships that do not involve regular cohabitation and in which childbearing is common. Approximately half of the women classified as "never married" in the 1988 DHS survey in Botswana reported having sexual intercourse in the month prior to the survey, and virtually all of those age 20 or over had had sexual intercourse at some time. The survey also shows that while the median age at first union (married or living together) is around 24 years, the median age at first birth is 19 years, or five years earlier (Lesetedi et al., 1989). A large proportion (59 percent) of never-married women have given birth. The late age at marriage in Botswana and the significance of the various types of sexual unions in that country have been documented in numerous studies (see, for example, a literature review in Alexander et al., 1992; Timæus and Graham, 1989; Working Group on the Social Dynamics of Adolescent Fertility, 1993; van de Walle, 1993). The pattern of marriage in Botswana appears to be the result of several factors, including a lengthy bridewealth process, very high levels of labor migration, and the decline of polygyny. The fact that unmarried women (but not married women) have the same rights to land and property as married men has recently been suggested as an additional factor that may discourage women from marrying or at least reduce the incentive to do so (Working Group on the Social Dynamics of Adolescent Fertility, 1993).

A similar pattern of late marriage with only a small proportion of women in union appears in Namibia. The Namibia DHS survey (NDHS) is the only national survey conducted in Namibia since independence in 1990; thus, there is little

comparative information that can be used to interpret the results on marriage. As in Botswana, a large proportion of women (two-thirds) who are classified as never married in the NDHS have had sexual intercourse at some time; although, compared to women who are married or in a consensual union, these women have intercourse less frequently. Forty-four percent of never-married women in Namibia have had children. It is likely that this pattern of marriage is related to the high levels of labor migration and may have been affected also by the long struggle for independence that resulted in the displacement of thousands of people to neighboring countries (Katjuijanjo et al., 1993).

Aside from Botswana and Namibia, sub-Saharan Africa contains the countries with the highest proportions of women in union, including Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal, where more than 75 percent of women are married or living together. In the North African and Asian countries, the percentages in union are lower, ranging from 55 to 71 percent. This pattern is also characteristic of the Latin American and Caribbean countries, which range from a low of 53 percent in Colombia to 69 percent in Trinidad and Tobago (including visiting unions). In all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Botswana, Cameroon, Liberia, Madagascar, Namibia, Rwanda, and Uganda, 15 percent or more of women in a union are in an informal or consensual union.

Much of the variation across countries in the proportion of women in union is due to differences in the proportions never married; in most countries, a narrow range of between 4 and 10 percent of women are divorced, widowed, or separated (not living together<sup>3</sup>). In a few countries, however, there is an exceptionally high proportion of women formerly in a union. For example, in Madagascar, Uganda, and Zambia, the proportion of women who are either divorced, widowed, or not living together exceeds 12 percent, while in the Dominican Republic 15 percent are formerly in union; most of these women are in the "not living together" category.

At the younger ages, we see considerable variation in the proportions in union due to differences in age at first marriage. In sub-Saharan Africa, variation in the percentage of 15- to 19-year-olds who are never married ranges from 25 percent in Mali to 94 percent in Botswana. In the Near East and North Africa, few teenagers are in a union; 85 to 90 percent of 15- to 19-year-olds are never married in Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco. In Tunisia, 96 percent of teenagers have never been married. Rela-

<sup>3</sup>This category included both women who are legally married but not living with their husbands as well as women who were in consensual or informal unions but are no longer living with their partner.

Table 3.1 Marital status by age

Percent distribution of women by marital status, according to 5-year age groups, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>								
<b>Botswana</b>								
15-19	93.9	3.0	2.8	0.0	0.1	0.3	100.0	937
20-24	69.7	14.3	11.4	0.0	0.7	3.9	100.0	926
25-29	43.3	33.6	16.1	0.7	2.2	4.2	100.0	846
30-34	30.4	43.7	14.7	1.0	5.1	5.1	100.0	653
35-39	25.1	49.3	13.3	2.8	3.9	5.6	100.0	464
40-44	18.5	54.3	8.5	6.2	5.8	6.7	100.0	290
45-49	20.2	47.4	8.7	11.0	8.2	4.5	100.0	251
Total	52.9	28.3	10.8	1.6	2.6	3.8	100.0	4368
<b>Burundi</b>								
15-19	93.2	5.8	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.6	100.0	731
20-24	33.3	61.1	1.0	0.5	1.1	3.0	100.0	779
25-29	8.3	85.5	0.5	0.9	1.8	3.0	100.0	803
30-34	3.9	89.5	0.9	2.7	0.9	2.1	100.0	622
35-39	1.7	87.0	1.1	5.3	1.4	3.4	100.0	486
40-44	0.9	84.0	0.9	8.2	3.5	2.6	100.0	269
45-49	1.2	82.3	0.8	12.0	2.2	1.4	100.0	279
Total	26.4	66.5	0.7	2.7	1.3	2.3	100.0	3970
<b>Cameroon</b>								
15-19	55.8	29.7	11.4	0.1	1.1	1.9	100.0	919
20-24	18.6	58.3	18.5	0.3	1.4	3.1	100.0	778
25-29	5.6	73.5	13.5	1.4	2.4	3.6	100.0	618
30-34	3.2	76.9	9.9	2.8	2.3	5.0	100.0	562
35-39	1.5	83.8	7.8	3.0	2.5	1.4	100.0	418
40-44	0.7	77.8	6.8	9.3	2.8	2.6	100.0	332
45-49	0.7	78.5	5.4	10.7	1.3	3.5	100.0	244
Total	18.6	62.3	11.8	2.5	1.8	3.0	100.0	3871
<b>Ghana</b>								
15-19	75.6	17.0	3.5	0.1	1.3	2.4	100.0	849
20-24	22.6	62.3	6.1	0.1	5.2	3.7	100.0	867
25-29	4.5	80.9	5.9	0.8	5.8	2.2	100.0	867
30-34	1.2	81.1	7.3	1.6	6.1	2.8	100.0	644
35-39	0.6	84.9	4.1	1.5	6.0	2.8	100.0	531
40-44	0.3	78.3	6.9	4.4	7.1	3.0	100.0	364
45-49	0.0	72.4	5.5	7.1	12.8	2.2	100.0	366
Total	19.8	64.8	5.5	1.5	5.6	2.7	100.0	4488
<b>Kenya</b>								
15-19	79.8	17.2	1.2	0.0	1.1	0.5	100.0	1497
20-24	31.8	58.6	4.0	0.7	2.7	2.3	100.0	1321
25-29	10.7	78.6	4.1	1.5	3.6	1.3	100.0	1334
30-34	5.4	79.6	5.3	2.1	5.4	2.2	100.0	981
35-39	3.2	82.4	4.5	4.7	3.8	1.4	100.0	898
40-44	1.5	82.4	3.1	8.2	3.0	1.8	100.0	674
45-49	2.4	79.7	3.2	11.0	3.1	0.6	100.0	445
Total	26.0	63.1	3.6	2.7	3.1	1.5	100.0	7150
<b>Liberia</b>								
15-19	64.0	9.7	22.0	0.4	1.4	2.5	100.0	1137
20-24	24.7	20.2	45.3	0.1	2.5	7.1	100.0	1030
25-29	7.9	34.2	45.1	0.6	3.2	9.0	100.0	1081
30-34	6.2	38.3	43.5	1.7	3.5	6.8	100.0	658
35-39	1.2	42.4	43.1	2.4	4.5	6.4	100.0	626
40-44	1.7	40.3	39.7	6.6	4.4	7.3	100.0	327
45-49	0.5	51.0	30.8	6.2	5.7	5.8	100.0	380
Total	21.4	29.2	38.3	1.6	3.1	6.3	100.0	5239

Table 3.1—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
Madagascar								
15 - 19	73.3	16.1	5.2	0.0	4.9	0.4	100.0	1420
20 - 24	31.7	45.7	10.8	0.4	10.5	0.9	100.0	1266
25 - 29	13.1	61.0	13.4	1.4	10.7	0.3	100.0	1027
30 - 34	5.4	67.6	11.4	2.7	12.1	0.8	100.0	907
35 - 39	3.8	68.6	8.9	3.3	14.7	0.6	100.0	753
40 - 44	3.1	64.5	9.8	7.3	14.6	0.8	100.0	549
45 - 49	2.9	63.1	9.2	11.9	12.6	0.3	100.0	339
Total	26.8	50.0	9.7	2.4	10.5	0.6	100.0	6260
Mali								
15-19	24.6	71.5	U	0.2	0.8	2.9	100.0	523
20-24	2.0	95.9	U	0.2	0.9	1.0	100.0	530
25-29	0.4	98.6	U	0.0	0.4	0.7	100.0	623
30-34	0.0	97.2	U	1.4	1.0	0.3	100.0	515
35-39	0.0	95.6	U	3.2	0.5	0.7	100.0	426
40-44	0.3	93.2	U	6.0	0.5	0.0	100.0	317
45-49	0.0	93.7	U	5.6	0.8	0.0	100.0	265
Total	4.4	92.1	U	1.8	0.7	0.9	100.0	3200
Namibia								
15 - 19	92.3	2.9	4.0	0.0	0.3	0.5	100.0	1259
20 - 24	68.9	15.0	12.4	0.1	1.1	2.3	100.0	1119
25 - 29	46.9	28.6	17.9	1.0	3.2	2.3	100.0	890
30 - 34	25.8	44.0	19.6	2.0	5.5	3.1	100.0	722
35 - 39	19.2	48.5	21.5	2.5	5.4	2.9	100.0	567
40 - 44	18.9	44.1	24.0	4.0	6.7	2.3	100.0	507
45 - 49	11.9	54.6	15.5	4.9	8.9	4.2	100.0	358
Total	51.3	27.1	14.5	1.4	3.3	2.2	100.0	5421
Niger								
15 - 19	41.4	56.5	U	0.0	1.8	0.3	100.0	1379
20 - 24	7.1	88.7	U	0.6	3.4	0.2	100.0	1193
25 - 29	1.7	94.8	U	0.5	2.5	0.4	100.0	1278
30 - 34	0.1	95.0	U	1.2	3.5	0.3	100.0	974
35 - 39	0.2	95.6	U	2.2	1.9	0.1	100.0	746
40 - 44	0.1	95.2	U	2.4	2.3	0.0	100.0	528
45 - 49	0.0	91.7	U	5.6	2.4	0.3	100.0	404
Total	10.5	85.5	U	1.2	2.6	0.3	100.0	6503
Nigeria								
15 - 19	61.4	34.0	3.0	0.3	0.7	0.6	100.0	1612
20 - 24	21.7	70.8	5.5	0.5	0.7	0.8	100.0	1676
25 - 29	7.9	81.5	7.9	1.0	0.7	0.9	100.0	1669
30 - 34	0.9	84.9	10.8	1.4	1.4	0.7	100.0	1409
35 - 39	1.2	83.7	9.8	3.7	0.5	1.1	100.0	954
40 - 44	0.3	77.7	9.8	7.8	2.8	1.7	100.0	836
45 - 49	0.1	78.7	8.2	10.3	1.8	0.8	100.0	624
Total	17.2	70.9	7.4	2.4	1.1	0.9	100.0	8781
Rwanda								
15 - 19	90.2	1.3	7.0	0.0	1.4	U	100.0	1464
20 - 24	44.9	20.9	28.8	0.8	4.6	U	100.0	1247
25 - 29	14.9	39.9	36.5	2.2	6.5	U	100.0	1050
30 - 34	4.3	49.4	32.7	3.9	9.6	U	100.0	1030
35 - 39	1.5	55.3	25.9	7.9	9.4	U	100.0	745
40 - 44	0.6	58.7	20.1	11.3	9.3	U	100.0	615
45 - 49	0.7	61.0	15.2	16.5	6.7	U	100.0	399
Total	32.1	34.0	23.8	4.1	6.1	U	100.0	6551

Table 3.1—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<b>Senegal</b>								
15-19	56.5	41.7	0.2	0.3	1.2	0.0	100.0	975
20-24	22.6	72.8	0.2	0.4	3.6	0.3	100.0	895
25-29	7.2	85.6	0.6	1.2	5.0	0.5	100.0	838
30-34	2.7	92.5	0.0	0.8	3.8	0.2	100.0	656
35-39	0.0	93.5	0.0	1.0	5.4	0.0	100.0	480
40-44	0.0	90.3	0.7	4.3	4.7	0.0	100.0	300
45-49	0.0	92.3	0.4	4.1	3.3	0.0	100.0	271
Total	18.8	75.9	0.3	1.2	3.6	0.2	100.0	4415
<b>Sudan</b>								
15-19	84.1	15.4	U	0.0	0.5	U	100.0	2386
20-24	54.2	43.9	U	0.2	1.7	U	100.0	2048
25-29	27.8	68.0	U	0.5	3.7	U	100.0	1878
30-34	13.2	81.1	U	1.3	4.5	U	100.0	1117
35-39	5.4	86.3	U	3.6	4.7	U	100.0	1106
40-44	3.0	83.6	U	9.1	4.3	U	100.0	650
45-49	1.3	82.8	U	12.1	3.8	U	100.0	547
Total	39.8	55.5	U	2.0	2.7	U	100.0	9732
<b>Tanzania</b>								
15-19	71.7	23.5	2.1	0.2	2.6	U	100.0	2183
20-24	25.1	64.3	3.9	0.7	6.0	U	100.0	1882
25-29	8.9	74.8	4.8	1.8	9.7	U	100.0	1599
30-34	4.1	77.6	2.7	4.2	11.4	U	100.0	1165
35-39	2.4	78.6	5.5	5.0	8.5	U	100.0	1000
40-44	0.9	80.3	4.0	6.7	8.1	U	100.0	715
45-49	0.4	77.0	1.4	10.4	10.7	U	100.0	695
Total	24.5	61.9	3.5	2.9	7.3	U	100.0	9238
<b>Togo</b>								
15-19	72.8	26.5	U	0.1	0.6	U	100.0	724
20-24	24.2	73.2	U	0.2	2.4	U	100.0	661
25-29	5.8	90.0	U	0.6	3.5	U	100.0	620
30-34	2.3	91.4	U	1.7	4.6	U	100.0	479
35-39	1.1	91.9	U	3.8	3.2	U	100.0	370
40-44	0.4	89.7	U	4.6	5.3	U	100.0	263
45-49	0.0	84.8	U	5.3	9.9	U	100.0	243
Total	22.0	73.0	U	1.6	3.4	U	100.0	3360
<b>Uganda</b>								
15-19	59.2	26.9	9.6	0.4	1.7	2.2	100.0	1157
20-24	17.0	56.3	15.8	1.1	3.6	6.3	100.0	985
25-29	4.8	65.5	16.6	1.9	4.8	6.4	100.0	859
30-34	2.5	64.9	16.7	3.6	5.4	6.9	100.0	620
35-39	1.0	64.9	14.1	6.0	7.4	6.5	100.0	459
40-44	1.0	63.6	9.5	10.0	10.4	5.6	100.0	345
45-49	0.9	64.4	8.8	10.7	9.1	6.1	100.0	304
Total	19.5	53.8	13.5	3.1	4.8	5.3	100.0	4730
<b>Zambia</b>								
15-19	70.4	26.0	0.5	0.2	1.8	1.1	100.0	1984
20-24	21.2	66.5	2.1	1.1	6.2	2.9	100.0	1441
25-29	5.7	76.7	3.2	2.1	8.7	3.6	100.0	1179
30-34	2.0	79.5	3.0	3.8	10.3	1.5	100.0	915
35-39	0.7	79.7	2.2	3.5	11.8	2.2	100.0	656
40-44	0.1	79.3	2.3	5.7	9.8	2.8	100.0	505
45-49	0.0	75.2	2.5	8.5	11.6	2.2	100.0	380
Total	25.4	61.1	2.0	2.3	7.0	2.2	100.0	7060
<b>Zimbabwe</b>								
15-19	80.2	17.6	U	0.0	2.2	U	100.0	1021
20-24	28.5	61.1	U	0.5	10.0	U	100.0	840
25-29	6.8	82.3	U	1.8	9.1	U	100.0	679
30-34	2.5	85.4	U	2.5	9.5	U	100.0	589
35-39	1.5	86.9	U	3.7	8.0	U	100.0	464
40-44	0.9	79.6	U	8.8	10.7	U	100.0	318
45-49	1.4	80.0	U	10.0	8.6	U	100.0	290
Total	27.0	62.9	U	2.5	7.6	U	100.0	4201

Table 3.1—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<u>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</u>								
Egypt								
15-19	84.5	15.3	U	0.0	0.2	U	100.0	2718
20-24	40.3	57.7	U	0.6	1.4	U	100.0	2374
25-29	15.6	81.2	U	1.3	1.8	U	100.0	1978
30-34	5.1	89.7	U	2.5	2.7	U	100.0	1642
35-39	2.2	89.6	U	5.8	2.4	U	100.0	1640
40-44	1.5	85.0	U	11.5	2.0	U	100.0	1226
45-49	1.8	80.2	U	16.2	1.8	U	100.0	1053
Total	29.5	65.1	U	3.9	1.6	U	100.0	12631
Jordan								
15 - 19	89.4	10.4	U	0.0	0.2	0.0	100.0	3394
20 - 24	54.8	44.5	U	0.2	0.4	0.1	100.0	2374
25 - 29	26.3	71.2	U	0.4	1.9	0.2	100.0	1781
30 - 34	10.9	86.0	U	1.4	1.5	0.2	100.0	1277
35 - 39	5.4	89.3	U	3.5	1.6	0.2	100.0	1014
40 - 44	2.7	90.8	U	5.2	1.3	0.0	100.0	890
45 - 49	2.0	88.3	U	8.7	0.8	0.2	100.0	770
Total	43.8	53.6	U	1.6	0.9	0.1	100.0	11499
Morocco								
15-19	87.5	11.8	U	0.0	0.7	U	100.0	2145
20-24	56.0	40.2	U	0.2	3.6	U	100.0	1686
25-29	34.3	60.1	U	0.3	5.2	U	100.0	1468
30-34	13.9	80.0	U	1.7	4.3	U	100.0	1372
35-39	6.7	86.0	U	3.2	4.1	U	100.0	1173
40-44	2.6	86.7	U	5.5	5.2	U	100.0	744
45-49	0.4	82.8	U	13.2	3.6	U	100.0	668
Total	39.1	55.3	U	2.1	3.5	U	100.0	9256
Tunisia								
15-19	95.6	4.3	U	0.0	0.0	0.1	100.0	1466
20-24	64.1	34.9	U	0.1	0.8	0.1	100.0	1512
25-29	30.0	68.2	U	0.3	1.1	0.3	100.0	1225
30-34	11.5	85.9	U	1.0	1.3	0.3	100.0	1073
35-39	4.8	90.8	U	2.4	1.8	0.3	100.0	796
40-44	3.5	91.1	U	3.6	1.4	0.5	100.0	591
45-49	8.4	83.7	U	6.6	1.0	0.2	100.0	482
Total	41.4	56.2	U	1.2	0.9	0.2	100.0	7144
<u>ASIA</u>								
Indonesia								
15-19	80.2	18.3	U	0.1	1.4	U	100.0	6280
20-24	35.6	61.3	U	0.4	2.7	U	100.0	5523
25-29	11.5	84.5	U	0.8	3.2	U	100.0	5408
30-34	4.7	89.8	U	1.6	3.9	U	100.0	4456
35-39	2.3	89.8	U	4.3	3.7	U	100.0	3772
40-44	2.4	86.9	U	6.5	4.2	U	100.0	2646
45-49	1.4	81.3	U	13.5	3.8	U	100.0	2847
Total	25.9	68.2	U	2.8	3.1	U	100.0	30933
Pakistan								
15-19	75.1	24.3	U	0.3	0.0	0.2	100.0	1720
20-24	39.4	59.6	U	0.1	0.3	0.7	100.0	1747
25-29	14.4	83.2	U	1.0	0.2	1.3	100.0	1745
30-34	4.3	92.4	U	1.5	0.5	1.2	100.0	1241
35-39	2.4	92.7	U	4.0	0.5	0.4	100.0	1005
40-44	2.4	92.8	U	4.2	0.1	0.5	100.0	865
45-49	2.1	90.8	U	6.5	0.2	0.5	100.0	630
Total	26.2	71.1	U	1.8	0.2	0.7	100.0	8953



Table 3.1—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<b>Sri Lanka</b>								
15-19	93.1	6.5	U	0.1	0.0	0.3	100.0	1949
20-24	57.7	40.6	U	0.5	0.1	1.1	100.0	1711
25-29	31.2	66.2	U	0.7	0.0	1.9	100.0	1617
30-34	15.2	80.7	U	1.7	0.2	2.1	100.0	1420
35-39	10.0	83.1	U	3.2	0.2	3.5	100.0	1256
40-44	6.8	83.3	U	6.2	0.6	3.2	100.0	989
45-49	3.6	80.8	U	11.5	0.3	3.8	100.0	663
Total	38.9	56.7	U	2.3	0.2	1.9	100.0	9604
<b>Thailand</b>								
15-19	82.6	17.0	U	0.0	0.0	0.3	100.0	1963
20-24	48.1	49.5	U	0.3	0.2	1.8	100.0	1932
25-29	23.8	72.4	U	0.6	1.0	2.1	100.0	1718
30-34	13.6	81.4	U	1.1	1.0	2.9	100.0	1537
35-39	8.8	83.7	U	3.3	1.2	2.7	100.0	1218
40-44	6.4	80.8	U	6.6	1.5	4.4	100.0	937
45-49	3.9	80.7	U	8.9	1.1	5.2	100.0	837
Total	33.2	61.5	U	2.1	0.8	2.4	100.0	10142
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>								
<b>Bolivia</b>								
15-19	85.7	6.4	6.1	0.1	0.1	1.6	100.0	1682
20-24	42.7	34.9	18.8	0.5	0.0	3.0	100.0	1311
25-29	17.3	59.3	15.7	1.0	1.3	5.5	100.0	1341
30-34	8.3	75.8	9.4	1.4	1.3	3.9	100.0	1117
35-39	4.7	75.8	10.2	2.7	2.1	4.5	100.0	1073
40-44	4.3	76.8	6.8	5.4	1.3	5.4	100.0	740
45-49	4.1	74.5	5.9	7.1	2.1	6.4	100.0	659
Total	30.7	51.5	10.9	1.9	1.0	4.0	100.0	7923
<b>Brazil</b>								
15-19	85.3	8.8	4.5	0.0	0.5	0.9	100.0	1305
20-24	44.1	40.8	10.2	0.6	2.8	1.5	100.0	1167
25-29	20.7	60.5	11.3	0.7	4.8	2.1	100.0	1046
30-34	10.5	71.1	11.2	0.6	5.1	1.5	100.0	934
35-39	6.6	72.7	9.4	4.2	6.0	1.1	100.0	788
40-44	4.5	73.8	8.6	4.5	8.0	0.5	100.0	651
Total	34.4	49.9	9.0	1.4	4.0	1.3	100.0	5892
<b>Colombia</b>								
15-19	86.7	3.1	8.2	0.0	0.0	2.0	100.0	1794
20-24	48.3	19.2	25.1	0.1	0.0	7.4	100.0	1676
25-29	25.3	38.5	26.1	1.1	0.0	8.8	100.0	1467
30-34	14.7	44.1	25.6	2.0	0.0	13.6	100.0	1193
35-39	9.3	54.2	20.5	3.1	0.0	12.9	100.0	954
40-44	7.3	53.9	21.6	4.4	0.1	12.6	100.0	736
45-49	7.0	54.1	14.9	5.8	0.1	18.1	100.0	669
Total	36.5	32.3	20.1	1.7	0.0	9.3	100.0	8489
<b>Dominican Republic</b>								
15-19	76.9	2.4	15.3	0.1	0.5	4.8	100.0	1711
20-24	39.4	14.2	33.8	0.0	0.5	12.0	100.0	1435
25-29	14.7	27.3	42.4	0.1	1.6	13.8	100.0	1258
30-34	5.6	34.3	43.8	0.1	3.4	12.7	100.0	1061
35-39	1.8	40.0	38.5	2.0	4.0	13.7	100.0	815
40-44	1.0	35.9	37.1	3.9	6.0	16.0	100.0	581
45-49	1.0	34.6	35.4	6.6	4.2	18.2	100.0	459
Total	29.4	22.5	33.3	1.0	2.2	11.6	100.0	7320
<b>Ecuador</b>								
15-19	80.8	8.2	9.2	0.0	0.0	1.8	100.0	1041
20-24	40.5	33.0	21.7	0.3	0.4	3.9	100.0	920
25-29	15.2	53.2	26.5	0.8	0.1	4.1	100.0	834
30-34	8.1	58.9	26.5	0.8	0.6	5.1	100.0	664
35-39	7.1	58.2	25.9	3.0	1.1	4.8	100.0	567
40-44	4.8	65.4	18.2	5.8	0.5	5.3	100.0	396
45-49	2.7	60.1	19.6	6.2	2.4	8.9	100.0	291
Total	31.0	42.2	20.6	1.5	0.5	4.2	100.0	4713

Table 3.1—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<b>Guatemala</b>								
15-19	73.8	10.0	13.6	0.1	0.0	2.5	100.0	1182
20-24	29.8	35.3	28.3	0.8	0.0	5.8	100.0	1014
25-29	11.0	50.6	30.4	2.0	0.4	5.7	100.0	965
30-34	6.4	54.4	30.8	2.5	0.3	5.7	100.0	793
35-39	5.1	51.2	32.3	4.4	0.7	6.3	100.0	709
40-44	2.8	53.7	27.8	7.6	0.6	7.4	100.0	497
Total	26.8	39.2	26.2	2.3	0.3	5.3	100.0	5160
<b>Mexico</b>								
15-19	80.1	12.3	6.1	0.0	0.0	1.6	100.0	2212
20-24	41.7	44.2	11.3	0.1	0.2	2.5	100.0	1683
25-29	17.9	64.8	11.4	0.6	0.9	4.3	100.0	1602
30-34	9.7	72.5	9.9	1.9	2.1	4.0	100.0	1294
35-39	8.5	69.8	10.9	2.1	2.0	6.6	100.0	1041
40-44	4.2	73.9	7.9	6.6	0.7	6.7	100.0	825
45-49	4.7	69.8	9.9	7.5	1.9	6.2	100.0	653
Total	32.6	51.4	9.4	1.7	0.9	3.9	100.0	9310
<b>Paraguay</b>								
15-19	84.6	8.2	5.9	0.0	0.0	1.3	100.0	1263
20-24	43.2	34.8	18.0	0.1	0.0	3.9	100.0	1003
25-29	21.5	52.9	18.4	0.4	0.3	6.5	100.0	988
30-34	9.3	67.6	16.6	0.8	0.0	5.6	100.0	839
35-39	9.2	67.0	15.6	0.5	0.2	7.5	100.0	690
40-44	4.5	73.1	14.4	1.0	0.0	6.7	100.0	577
45-49	7.4	69.6	11.4	4.9	0.0	6.7	100.0	468
Total	32.9	47.2	14.1	0.7	0.1	5.0	100.0	5827
<b>Peru</b>								
15-19	89.3	2.9	6.7	0.1	0.0	1.0	100.0	3477
20-24	55.5	18.9	21.9	0.4	0.0	3.2	100.0	3072
25-29	26.1	40.8	27.0	0.6	0.1	5.4	100.0	2550
30-34	13.6	56.4	21.7	1.3	0.4	6.5	100.0	2119
35-39	7.7	62.2	19.1	2.5	1.0	7.4	100.0	1923
40-44	5.7	65.1	16.1	3.8	1.1	8.2	100.0	1545
45-49	5.0	68.2	11.3	6.0	1.2	8.4	100.0	1196
Total	38.1	37.4	17.7	1.5	0.4	4.9	100.0	15882
<b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>								
				Visiting Relationships		Widowed/ Divorced		
15-19	75.4	5.4	3.2	11.7		4.2	100.0	683
20-24	31.8	29.0	12.1	19.3		7.8	100.0	745
25-29	9.9	49.3	18.3	16.2		6.3	100.0	745
30-34	4.4	54.0	18.0	14.4		9.2	100.0	543
35-39	3.4	59.9	15.6	12.7		8.4	100.0	441
40-44	3.0	57.6	15.4	11.4		12.7	100.0	370
45-49	1.4	59.9	15.1	9.0		14.7	100.0	279
Total	23.1	40.9	13.5	14.3		8.1	100.0	3806

Note: For surveys with ever-married samples, information on never-married women is obtained by using expansion factors derived from the household questionnaire as described in the text (p.3). In Tables 3.1 - 3.3, the total number of women for these surveys varies due to differential completion rates by urban-rural residence and education for the individual questionnaire.

U=Unknown, no information was collected for this category

tively few teenagers in the four Asian countries are in a union, especially in Sri Lanka where 93 percent are never married. In Latin America and the Caribbean, between 74 and 89 percent of teenagers are never married. In a few countries—Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Peru—the proportion of teenagers in an informal union exceeds the proportion married, a pattern that is reversed for the older age groups.

The tendency for rural areas to provide more traditional supports for marriage and for cities to encourage or select women more likely to postpone marriage is evident in these countries (McCarthy, 1982). Of the 37 countries included in Table 3.2, all but three show higher proportions of rural than urban women in union. There is no clear tendency for informal unions to occur more frequently in urban or rural areas, although in a few countries large differences occur. For example, in Botswana, 42 percent of urban women in union are in informal unions, compared to 21 percent of rural women. In the Dominican Republic, the percentages are 52 and 73, respectively.

Part of the pervasive rural-urban difference in the proportion of women married is due to differences in the level of education in the more developed and less developed parts of the country (see Table 3.3). The association of marriage with level of education is complicated by the correlation between age and education. However, by and large, there is the expected negative association between educational level and the percent in union, a relationship that is quite strong in many countries. With only a few exceptions, women with no education are the highest proportion in union, followed by those at the primary school level and then those with higher education.

The distribution of ever-married women by the number of years since first marriage varies little across countries, with 40 to 50 percent of women married less than 10 years, 28 to 38 percent married 10 to 19 years, and the remainder married 20 or more years (see Table 3.4).

### 3.2 POLYGyny

Polygynous unions are common in many sub-Saharan countries and continue to be a distinguishing feature of marriage in these countries. Demographers have traditionally been inter-

ested in polygyny because of its possible effects on fertility. There is little consensus as to the direction or magnitude of the polygyny-fertility relationship or about the mechanisms through which polygyny works to influence fertility. When examining this relationship, a distinction is usually made between the effects on individual fertility versus aggregate-level fertility. At the individual level, it is suggested that fertility may be lower among women in polygynous unions due to less frequent sexual intercourse and/or to lower male fertility related to the typically large age differentials between spouses. At the aggregate level, fertility may be maximized as the polygynous social structure ensures that most women will be in union continuously during their childbearing years. Interest in polygyny has also focused on its relationship to marital stability (Gage-Brandon, 1992), the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (Dyson, 1992), and sexual networking (Orubuloye et al., 1991).

Data on polygyny are available for 19 countries (see Table 3.5). Polygyny is particularly prevalent in Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo, where half or more of the married women over 30 years of age are currently in a union with a partner who has at least one other wife. Madagascar, Morocco, and Pakistan have the lowest levels of polygyny with 4 to 5 percent of currently married women in such unions. Within sub-Saharan Africa there is a regional pattern. All the East African countries, except Uganda, have lower levels of polygyny than the West African countries.

Cohort analysis reveals that women in the older age categories are more likely than younger women to be in polygynous unions. Since the data are cross-sectional, this difference cannot be interpreted as an indication that polygyny is decreasing as younger women have had less time to enter into a polygynous union or for their husbands to marry a second wife.

The mean number of co-wives varies from 1.2 in Mali, Morocco, and Niger to 1.9 in Cameroon and Ghana, with no apparent regional pattern. There is also no evident association between the level of polygyny and number of co-wives. Some highly polygynous countries (Mali) have a low mean number of co-wives, while some countries with relatively low levels of polygyny (Zambia) have a high mean number of co-wives.

Table 3.2 Marital status by urban-rural residence

Percent distribution of all women by current marital status, according to urban-rural residence, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>								
<b>Botswana</b>								
Urban	50.8	23.8	17.3	1.3	2.4	4.5	100.0	1316
Rural	53.8	30.2	8.0	1.8	2.7	3.5	100.0	3052
<b>Burundi</b>								
Urban	25.7	52.3	3.8	7.4	4.5	6.5	100.0	156
Rural	26.4	67.1	0.6	2.6	1.2	2.2	100.0	3814
<b>Cameroon</b>								
Urban	23.8	54.8	12.8	2.9	2.2	3.6	100.0	1625
Rural	14.9	67.7	11.1	2.2	1.6	1.8	100.0	2247
<b>Ghana</b>								
Urban	26.1	58.5	4.6	1.6	6.0	3.1	100.0	1523
Rural	16.6	68.0	6.0	1.5	5.3	2.6	100.0	2965
<b>Kenya</b>								
Urban	30.6	57.4	3.1	2.6	4.5	1.8	100.0	1236
Rural	25.1	64.3	3.7	2.8	2.8	1.4	100.0	5914
<b>Liberia</b>								
Urban	29.7	23.3	35.2	1.5	2.6	7.7	100.0	2262
Rural	15.2	33.7	40.7	1.7	3.5	5.2	100.0	2977
<b>Madagascar</b>								
Urban	36.6	46.3	5.2	2.5	9.0	0.4	100.0	1253
Rural	24.4	51.0	10.8	2.4	10.9	0.7	100.0	5007
<b>Mali</b>								
Urban	5.7	89.1	U	2.2	1.2	1.7	100.0	836
Rural	4.0	93.2	U	1.6	0.5	0.7	100.0	2364
<b>Namibia</b>								
Urban	50.2	26.7	15.6	1.4	2.3	3.8	100.0	2077
Rural	52.1	27.4	13.9	1.4	4.0	1.2	100.0	3344
<b>Niger</b>								
Urban	21.4	70.3	U	1.8	5.9	0.6	100.0	1126
Rural	8.2	88.7	U	1.1	1.9	0.2	100.0	5377
<b>Nigeria</b>								
Urban	28.1	61.3	6.2	1.6	1.3	1.6	100.0	2187
Rural	13.6	74.1	7.8	2.7	1.0	0.7	100.0	6594
<b>Rwanda</b>								
Urban	41.5	26.9	19.9	4.6	7.1	U	100.0	408
Rural	31.4	34.4	24.1	4.0	6.0	U	100.0	6143
<b>Senegal</b>								
Urban	31.8	59.9	0.4	1.8	5.7	0.4	100.0	1812
Rural	9.8	87.1	0.2	0.7	2.2	0.0	100.0	2603
<b>Sudan</b>								
Urban	45.8	49.2	U	2.3	2.7	U	100.0	4022
Rural	35.1	60.3	U	1.8	2.8	U	100.0	5672
<b>Tanzania</b>								
Urban	30.7	51.2	6.0	2.6	9.4	U	100.0	2294
Rural	22.4	65.4	2.6	2.9	6.6	U	100.0	6944

Table 3.2—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
Togo								
Urban	34.3	59.6	U	1.4	4.7	U	100.0	1182
Rural	15.3	80.3	U	1.7	2.7	U	100.0	2178
Uganda								
Urban	30.0	41.0	12.6	3.0	6.5	7.0	100.0	542
Rural	18.1	55.4	13.6	3.2	4.6	5.1	100.0	4188
Zambia								
Urban	31.5	54.5	3.0	2.4	6.5	2.2	100.0	3636
Rural	18.9	68.2	0.9	2.2	7.5	2.3	100.0	3424
Zimbabwe								
Urban	32.4	55.4	U	2.8	9.4	U	100.0	1407
Rural	24.2	66.7	U	2.3	6.7	U	100.0	2794
<u>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</u>								
Egypt								
Urban	34.0	61.4	U	3.1	1.5	U	100.0	6520
Rural	24.7	68.9	U	4.7	1.7	U	100.0	6119
Jordan								
Urban	45.1	52.4	U	1.6	0.9	0.1	100.0	8681
Rural	40.2	57.3	U	1.5	0.9	0.1	100.0	2831
Morocco								
Urban	44.2	48.8	U	2.3	4.7	U	100.0	4550
Rural	34.1	61.5	U	2.0	2.3	U	100.0	4706
Tunisia								
Urban	43.7	53.7	U	1.3	1.1	0.2	100.0	4375
Rural	38.9	59.0	U	0.7	0.7	0.3	100.0	2817
<u>ASIA</u>								
Indonesia								
Urban	35.3	59.2	U	2.6	2.9	U	100.0	10341
Rural	21.4	72.7	U	2.8	3.1	U	100.0	20621
Pakistan								
Urban	31.8	65.2	U	2.1	0.2	0.6	100.0	2959
Rural	23.4	74.0	U	1.6	0.3	0.8	100.0	5991
Sri Lanka								
Urban	42.3	54.1	U	2.1	0.1	1.4	100.0	1636
Rural	38.2	57.3	U	2.4	0.2	2.0	100.0	7954
Thailand								
Urban	47.9	47.4	U	1.3	0.9	2.2	100.0	2369
Rural	29.3	65.2	U	2.3	0.7	2.4	100.0	7838
<u>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</u>								
Bolivia								
Urban	34.5	48.6	9.0	1.7	1.3	4.9	100.0	4753
Rural	25.1	55.8	13.8	2.3	0.6	2.5	100.0	3170
Brazil <sup>1</sup>								
Urban	35.8	47.5	9.0	1.5	4.7	1.5	100.0	4457
Rural	29.8	57.6	9.1	1.1	1.8	0.7	100.0	1435
Colombia								
Urban	38.7	31.6	17.6	1.7	0.0	10.4	100.0	5100
Rural	33.2	33.3	24.0	1.7	0.0	7.6	100.0	3389

Table 3.2—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
Dominican Republic								
Urban	32.5	24.6	26.7	1.1	2.7	12.3	100.0	5005
Rural	22.6	17.9	47.5	0.8	1.1	10.1	100.0	2315
Ecuador								
Urban	33.9	40.4	19.1	1.2	0.8	4.6	100.0	2790
Rural	26.8	44.7	22.7	2.1	0.2	3.5	100.0	1923
Guatemala <sup>1</sup>								
Urban	34.2	36.8	19.6	2.2	0.5	6.6	100.0	1919
Rural	22.4	40.7	30.1	2.3	0.1	4.4	100.0	3241
Mexico								
Urban	35.4	48.0	9.1	1.9	1.2	4.4	100.0	6855
Rural	25.0	60.8	10.5	1.4	0.0	2.4	100.0	2455
Paraguay								
Urban	34.1	44.8	13.9	0.9	0.1	6.2	100.0	3278
Rural	31.3	50.3	14.4	0.6	0.0	3.4	100.0	2549
Peru								
Urban	42.4	35.8	14.9	1.3	0.5	5.1	100.0	12307
Rural	23.5	42.9	27.1	2.1	0.1	4.3	100.0	3575
Trinidad and Tobago								
Urban	20.2	35.7	15.1	10.4		18.5	100.0	1690
Rural	25.4	45.1	12.2	6.3		11.0	100.0	2116

Note: For surveys with ever-married samples, information on never-married women is obtained by using expansion factors derived from the household questionnaire as described in the text (p.3). In Tables 3.1 - 3.3, the total number of women for these surveys varies due to differential completion rates by urban-rural residence and education for the individual questionnaire.

U=Unknown, no information was collected for this category

<sup>1</sup>Women 15-44

Table 3.3 Marital status by education

Percent distribution of all women by current marital status, according to education, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>								
<b>Botswana</b>								
No Education	35.0	37.7	14.9	2.7	3.7	5.9	100.0	1045
Primary	53.5	26.8	11.2	1.9	2.9	3.7	100.0	2188
Higher	68.2	22.5	6.3	0.1	1.0	1.8	100.0	1135
<b>Burundi</b>								
No Education	24.3	68.6	0.6	2.8	1.2	2.5	100.0	3186
Primary	35.6	57.6	0.8	2.4	1.7	1.8	100.0	698
Higher	26.6	62.5	4.1	2.7	2.4	1.7	100.0	86
<b>Cameroon</b>								
No Education	4.4	85.3	3.1	3.6	2.6	1.1	100.0	1557
Primary	17.2	59.5	14.3	2.4	1.7	5.0	100.0	1288
Higher	41.9	31.0	21.8	1.1	0.8	3.4	100.0	1026
<b>Ghana</b>								
No Education	7.5	76.5	5.8	2.9	5.2	2.1	100.0	1783
Primary	26.7	58.4	5.4	0.6	5.8	3.1	100.0	2369
Higher	36.6	47.9	5.1	0.9	6.0	3.6	100.0	336
<b>Kenya</b>								
No Education	5.4	79.4	4.4	6.2	2.9	1.6	100.0	1797
Primary	30.3	59.5	3.5	1.9	3.4	1.4	100.0	3887
Higher	40.2	52.4	2.8	0.7	2.6	1.3	100.0	1456
<b>Liberia</b>								
No Education	9.2	37.1	43.1	1.7	3.4	5.5	100.0	3283
Primary	40.8	16.4	31.3	1.3	2.9	7.2	100.0	963
Higher	42.9	15.7	29.4	1.4	2.5	8.1	100.0	993
<b>Madagascar</b>								
No Education	14.1	53.1	13.5	3.5	15.0	0.8	100.0	1227
Primary	25.4	50.3	10.3	2.6	10.8	0.7	100.0	3368
Higher	39.0	47.3	5.7	1.1	6.5	0.4	100.0	1663
<b>Mali</b>								
No Education	3.6	92.9	U	2.0	0.7	0.8	100.0	2733
Primary	9.8	87.1	U	0.7	0.7	1.7	100.0	431
Higher	1.6	93.6	U	0.0	1.6	3.2	100.0	36
<b>Namibia</b>								
No Education	24.1	35.3	29.6	2.5	5.4	3.2	100.0	785
Primary	53.9	24.0	14.9	1.4	3.7	2.1	100.0	2623
Higher	58.6	28.0	8.2	1.0	2.1	2.0	100.0	2013
<b>Niger</b>								
No Education	7.8	88.4	U	1.3	2.3	0.3	100.0	5809
Primary	24.7	70.5	U	0.4	4.3	0.1	100.0	493
Higher	54.4	38.8	U	0.5	5.5	0.8	100.0	201
<b>Nigeria</b>								
No Education	3.5	84.2	7.6	3.2	1.0	0.5	100.0	5020
Primary	22.5	62.5	9.4	2.1	1.8	1.7	100.0	2099
Higher	52.0	41.5	4.3	0.6	0.5	1.1	100.0	1662
<b>Rwanda</b>								
No Education	15.7	39.7	30.5	6.1	8.0	U	100.0	2488
Primary	40.0	30.5	21.3	2.9	5.2	U	100.0	3544
Higher	56.0	30.5	8.6	2.3	2.7	U	100.0	519
<b>Senegal</b>								
No Education	10.8	84.7	0.2	1.2	2.9	0.1	100.0	3409
Primary	39.0	53.3	0.3	1.2	5.9	0.3	100.0	598
Higher	56.4	35.5	1.0	0.5	6.4	0.2	100.0	408

Table 3.3—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<b>Sudan</b>								
No Education	18.8	74.2	U	3.3	3.7	U	100.0	4216
Primary	41.6	54.3	U	1.5	2.6	U	100.0	2643
Higher	69.2	28.9	U	0.6	1.4	U	100.0	2893
<b>Tanzania</b>								
No Education	7.4	77.5	2.6	4.8	7.7	U	100.0	3122
Primary	31.2	55.6	4.1	1.9	7.2	U	100.0	5669
Higher	59.3	32.3	1.8	1.2	5.4	U	100.0	444
<b>Togo</b>								
No Education	10.0	85.1	U	2.0	2.9	U	100.0	1956
Primary	34.8	60.3	U	1.0	4.0	U	100.0	984
Higher	47.9	46.9	U	1.0	4.3	U	100.0	420
<b>Uganda</b>								
No Education	7.7	62.4	16.4	4.8	4.1	4.6	100.0	1787
Primary	23.8	50.5	12.0	2.3	5.4	6.0	100.0	2476
Higher	41.4	38.3	9.7	1.3	4.3	5.1	100.0	467
<b>Zambia</b>								
No Education	10.8	73.3	1.1	4.3	8.0	2.4	100.0	1161
Primary	24.0	63.4	2.0	1.7	6.9	2.0	100.0	4213
Higher	38.8	47.2	2.6	2.3	6.4	2.7	100.0	1685
<b>Zimbabwe</b>								
No Education	3.4	86.4	U	3.0	7.2	U	100.0	566
Primary	19.2	68.2	U	3.4	9.3	U	100.0	2349
Higher	51.6	43.0	U	0.7	4.7	U	100.0	1286
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>								
<b>Egypt</b>								
No Education	16.4	75.8	U	6.0	1.8	U	100.0	5414
Primary	40.1	55.4	U	2.9	1.6	U	100.0	4730
Higher	37.4	60.5	U	1.0	1.1	U	100.0	2476
<b>Jordan</b>								
No Education	9.2	37.1	43.1	1.7	3.4	5.5	100.0	3283
Primary	40.8	16.4	31.3	1.3	2.9	7.2	100.0	963
Higher	42.9	15.7	29.4	1.4	2.5	8.1	100.0	993
<b>Morocco</b>								
No Education	26.5	67.0	U	2.8	3.6	U	100.0	5866
Primary	53.0	41.3	U	1.3	4.4	U	100.0	1561
Higher	67.5	29.6	U	0.5	2.4	U	100.0	1829
<b>Tunisia</b>								
No Education	25.7	71.1	U	2.0	0.9	0.3	100.0	3194
Primary	46.8	51.1	U	0.7	1.1	0.3	100.0	2449
Higher	65.6	33.0	U	0.5	0.7	0.1	100.0	1484
<b>ASIA</b>								
<b>Indonesia</b>								
No Education	7.1	81.7	U	6.5	4.8	U	100.0	4720
Primary	20.9	73.2	U	2.5	3.4	U	100.0	17630
Higher	46.8	50.5	U	1.2	1.5	U	100.0	8613
<b>Pakistan</b>								
No Education	18.7	78.3	U	2.0	0.2	0.8	100.0	6441
Primary	37.1	60.0	U	1.5	0.2	1.2	100.0	955
Higher	47.3	51.0	U	1.0	0.4	0.3	100.0	1466
<b>Thailand</b>								
No Education	15.8	75.0	U	3.8	0.4	5.0	100.0	780
Primary	26.9	67.5	U	2.3	0.7	2.5	100.0	7277
Higher	62.4	34.8	U	0.7	1.2	0.8	100.0	2133



Table 3.3—Continued

Country	Never married	Married	Living together	Widowed	Divorced	Not living together	Total	Number
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>								
<b>Bolivia</b>								
No Education	11.8	70.9	10.1	3.7	0.4	3.0	100.0	1379
Primary	24.4	51.9	16.8	2.2	0.4	4.3	100.0	3288
Higher	45.2	42.8	5.3	0.9	1.8	4.0	100.0	3256
<b>Brazil<sup>1</sup></b>								
No Education	10.8	60.7	18.9	2.9	5.6	1.2	100.0	433
Primary	30.1	52.7	10.4	1.4	4.1	1.4	100.0	3918
Higher	52.2	39.8	2.7	1.1	3.2	1.1	100.0	1532
<b>Colombia</b>								
No Education	14.5	24.7	46.3	1.2	0.0	13.4	100.0	360
Primary	26.0	34.1	26.9	2.7	0.0	10.3	100.0	3502
Higher	46.2	31.6	13.0	0.9	0.0	8.2	100.0	4625
<b>Dominican Republic</b>								
No Education	6.3	15.4	60.8	1.8	0.5	15.2	100.0	435
Primary	21.8	17.8	43.7	1.2	1.4	14.2	100.0	3778
Higher	41.9	29.2	16.8	0.7	3.4	8.0	100.0	3107
<b>Ecuador</b>								
No Education	11.1	50.0	31.0	4.3	0.0	3.5	100.0	368
Primary	20.9	44.6	27.4	1.9	0.2	5.1	100.0	2238
Higher	45.3	38.3	11.5	0.7	0.9	3.3	100.0	2107
<b>Guatemala<sup>1</sup></b>								
No Education	12.7	43.7	35.4	3.9	0.2	4.2	100.0	1979
Primary	30.0	37.3	24.8	1.1	0.2	6.5	100.0	2428
Higher	53.3	33.7	6.8	1.7	0.7	3.9	100.0	753
<b>Mexico</b>								
No education	7.6	66.5	15.2	4.9	0.7	5.0	100.0	1007
Primary	19.9	61.2	11.8	2.1	0.7	4.4	100.0	4534
Higher	54.6	35.6	5.0	0.5	1.2	3.0	100.0	3768
<b>Paraguay</b>								
No education	22.4	43.4	27.4	1.7	0.0	5.2	100.0	155
Primary	26.1	49.4	18.3	0.7	0.0	5.5	100.0	3568
Higher	45.1	43.9	5.9	0.8	0.2	4.1	100.0	2102
<b>Peru</b>								
No education	7.3	56.4	26.6	3.8	0.1	5.8	100.0	978
Primary	19.1	42.9	28.6	2.5	0.1	6.7	100.0	4484
Higher	49.2	33.2	12.1	0.8	0.5	4.1	100.0	10420
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>								
No Education	9.4	50.0	25.0	Widowed/ Divorced 6.3		Visiting Relationships 9.4	100.0	32
Primary	9.7	50.4	18.8	9.3		11.7	100.0	1725
Higher	34.6	32.8	8.8	7.1		16.7	100.0	2048

Note: For surveys with ever-married samples, information on never-married women is obtained by using expansion factors derived from the household questionnaire as described in the text (p.3). In Tables 3.1 - 3.3, the total number of women for these surveys varies due to differential completion rates by urban-rural residence and education for the individual questionnaire.

Sri Lanka is not included because no information was collected on education of never-married women.

In some countries, the number of cases may not add to the total shown in previous tables due to missing information on education for some women.

U=Unknown, no information was collected for this category

<sup>1</sup>Women 15-44

Table 3.4 Number of years since first marriage

Percent distribution of ever-married women by number of years since first marriage, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Years Since First Marriage							Total	Number of ever-married women
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+		
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>									
Botswana	23.5	22.0	21.4	16.6	9.1	6.0	1.4	100.0	2056
Burundi	20.5	23.7	21.1	14.8	10.7	7.1	2.1	100.0	2924
Cameroon	21.0	19.9	16.8	15.8	12.2	7.8	6.5	100.0	3151
Ghana	20.0	21.6	18.5	16.0	11.1	8.1	4.7	100.0	3599
Kenya	20.1	18.8	16.4	17.4	13.1	10.3	3.8	100.0	5289
Liberia	21.3	21.3	19.6	14.7	10.0	8.1	4.9	100.0	4116
Madagascar	22.3	20.3	17.5	14.9	13.7	7.4	3.8	100.0	4581
Mali	17.1	18.1	18.0	15.9	13.6	9.8	6.7	100.0	3057
Namibia	25.6	22.0	18.3	14.4	11.0	6.9	1.8	100.0	2638
Niger	16.5	17.6	21.5	16.6	12.7	8.4	6.8	100.0	5821
Nigeria	18.9	19.3	18.9	17.4	11.7	8.8	5.0	100.0	7268
Rwanda	20.6	20.3	20.3	15.4	12.9	7.7	2.9	100.0	4451
Senegal	19.8	21.8	18.7	15.3	10.9	7.5	5.1	100.0	3554 <sup>a</sup>
Sudan	20.6	19.3	16.9	14.3	13.3	9.9	5.7	100.0	5860
Tanzania	25.1	20.2	14.1	14.0	11.6	8.5	6.5	100.0	6977
Togo	21.0	21.4	18.9	16.1	10.9	8.5	3.3	100.0	2621
Uganda	24.3	22.0	16.8	14.2	9.8	8.1	4.7	100.0	3809
Zambia	24.8	20.8	16.3	14.6	10.9	7.5	5.1	100.0	5269
Zimbabwe	22.0	20.2	19.5	15.9	9.6	8.6	4.1	100.0	3068
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>									
Egypt	19.1	19.0	17.2	15.7	13.1	9.8	6.2	100.0	8911
Jordan	22.6	18.3	16.9	14.1	14.0	10.1	4.0	100.0	6461
Morocco	18.6	17.4	18.2	16.5	13.4	9.2	6.8	100.0	5639
Tunisia	20.6	21.4	20.0	14.6	11.1	8.9	3.4	100.0	4184
<b>ASIA</b>									
Indonesia	17.4	18.7	18.1	15.5	12.7	10.3	7.3	100.0	22909
Pakistan	19.2	20.3	19.6	16.0	12.6	7.9	4.5	100.0	6611
Sri Lanka	21.0	22.0	19.9	14.9	10.6	7.4	4.2	100.0	5864
Thailand	20.3	21.0	19.4	14.7	12.3	9.0	3.4	100.0	6775
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>									
Bolivia	18.7	20.7	21.1	16.5	12.6	7.3	3.0	100.0	5488
Brazil <sup>b</sup>	23.6	24.7	21.9	15.6	10.6	3.3	0.3	100.0	3867
Colombia	21.9	21.5	20.3	14.2	10.7	8.0	3.5	100.0	5391
Dominican Republic	23.0	20.3	19.0	13.7	11.6	8.0	4.4	100.0	5168
Ecuador	21.6	22.4	20.0	15.2	11.1	7.0	2.6	100.0	3251
Guatemala <sup>b</sup>	20.6	24.0	20.8	17.5	12.1	4.8	0.2	100.0	3779
Mexico	21.3	20.4	19.9	15.9	11.0	7.6	4.0	100.0	6271
Paraguay	21.4	21.8	20.5	15.0	11.1	7.5	2.7	100.0	3911
Peru	19.8	20.8	18.9	16.0	13.4	8.1	3.0	100.0	9824
Trinidad & Tobago	21.1	24.8	17.7	14.6	10.5	7.4	4.0	100.0	2926

<sup>a</sup>Excludes 30 ever-married women whose marriages were not consummated.

<sup>b</sup>Women 15-44

Table 3.5 Polygyny

Percentage of currently married women in polygynous unions by current age, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Current Age							Total	Number of currently married women	Mean number of co-wives
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49			
<u>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</u>										
Burundi	1.1	6.3	8.8	13.1	12.9	20.2	18.8	11.6	2669	1.3
Cameroon	27.0	31.6	36.1	43.0	44.9	47.9	51.6	38.6	2868	1.9
Ghana	16.1	25.5	28.1	34.3	42.7	41.9	39.3	32.6	3156	1.9
Kenya	12.7	17.5	17.6	27.6	26.3	33.0	31.2	23.4	4765	1.6
Liberia	32.4	33.7	37.7	40.8	41.2	39.9	42.6	38.0	3538	U
Madagascar	4.1	3.7	4.0	3.7	3.5	2.2	3.1	3.5	3736	1.5
Mali	27.8	35.9	39.3	53.2	52.1	55.8	62.5	45.0	2948	1.2
Namibia	6.9	11.3	12.2	11.0	14.4	15.7	13.0	12.6	2259	1.7
Niger	13.7	26.1	36.0	45.8	45.9	46.3	56.1	36.2	5561	1.2
Nigeria	27.0	33.7	35.6	47.3	47.3	46.8	53.4	40.9	6880	1.6
Rwanda	11.7	8.4	9.6	13.0	18.5	19.8	27.3	14.4	3785	1.3
Senegal	26.7	33.2	40.9	56.0	63.5	59.3	61.8	46.4	3365	1.4
Sudan	11.2	13.3	17.5	23.4	24.3	26.2	26.0	20.1	5400	1.3
Tanzania	16.7	17.9	27.1	30.6	33.8	36.2	37.0	27.5	6038	1.6
Togo	39.1	39.9	50.9	53.7	57.1	65.3	72.3	52.4	2454	1.5
Uganda	23.1	31.6	32.0	38.2	38.2	44.3	39.2	34.1	3180	1.6
Zambia	9.1	10.6	17.2	22.6	22.3	22.6	30.2	17.7	4457	1.6
<u>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</u>										
Morocco	1.2	3.2	4.5	3.6	6.8	7.0	8.0	5.1	5118	1.2
<u>ASIA</u>										
Pakistan	3.4	3.6	4.5	4.0	4.5	3.9	8.7	4.5	6364	1.1

U=Unknown, not asked

## 4 Marital Stability

Marital stability and remarriage influence the amount of time women are exposed to the risk of pregnancy. The stability of marriages and the degree of remarriage are also of importance for the welfare of women and children, generating interest in female-headed households (Ono-Osaki, 1991; Lloyd and Gage-Brandon, 1993).

Since marital histories are not collected in DHS surveys, the analysis of marital stability is limited to a few basic indicators. One indicator of marital stability is the percent of ever-married women still in their first marriage (see Table 4.1). Ever-married women who are no longer in their first marriage can be either divorced, separated, widowed, or remarried. As expected, the pro-

Table 4.1 Marital stability by duration of union

Percentage of ever-married women still in their first union, by duration of union in years, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Duration of Union (Years)							Total	Number
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+		
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>									
Botswana	84.3	80.0	75.1	68.5	68.4	57.4	51.1	75.3	2056
Burundi	90.9	86.7	81.7	72.3	63.8	61.5	61.1	79.6	2924
Cameroon	82.0	70.5	68.4	61.9	60.9	51.4	52.5	67.4	3151
Ghana	80.3	66.2	53.7	53.0	46.7	35.8	36.7	58.6	3599
Kenya	86.6	87.7	84.9	83.9	80.5	74.4	80.3	83.8	5289
Liberia	79.3	59.4	50.9	46.9	43.6	40.9	38.5	56.0	4166
Madagascar	77.2	59.8	54.0	51.9	51.6	41.5	41.3	58.3	4581
Namibia	79.0	70.7	65.3	64.2	61.0	65.7	47.2	69.1	2638
Niger	88.4	72.6	66.4	61.6	57.7	56.1	52.2	67.4	5821
Nigeria	92.5	86.2	78.8	77.5	73.1	66.8	64.0	80.1	7268
Rwanda	84.5	79.2	71.9	65.9	62.7	63.3	51.7	72.6	4451
Senegal	91.5	80.8	72.6	69.3	63.9	57.4	54.3	74.7	3554 <sup>a</sup>
Sudan	94.9	88.2	83.9	79.7	75.5	73.2	65.8	83.2	5860
Tanzania	82.3	74.4	63.6	61.8	58.3	56.1	49.8	68.1	6977
Togo	93.8	78.3	67.9	63.9	57.2	55.0	43.7	71.8	2621
Uganda	80.5	66.8	60.5	54.9	49.7	48.3	50.0	63.4	3809
Zambia	84.0	71.2	61.9	57.6	56.0	52.6	38.8	66.2	5269
Zimbabwe	83.3	76.6	72.4	72.2	68.9	63.3	58.7	73.9	3068
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>									
Egypt	97.1	92.2	88.6	86.3	82.1	76.8	68.1	87.3	8911
Jordan	97.8	94.0	91.7	90.7	89.3	88.8	85.9	92.5	6461
Morocco	89.6	84.7	83.1	77.2	74.3	72.5	61.9	80.0	5639
Tunisia	97.3	95.1	93.9	92.3	91.4	86.6	81.9	93.3	4184
<b>ASIA</b>									
Indonesia	93.6	86.5	82.3	76.0	69.5	60.9	50.7	77.9	22909
Pakistan	95.9	95.7	95.7	93.0	93.2	88.9	87.1	94.1	6611
Sri Lanka	95.9	94.0	92.3	89.0	86.7	81.7	72.1	90.7	5864
Thailand	94.1	87.3	85.7	80.4	77.7	73.0	63.9	84.1	6775
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>									
Bolivia	90.9	85.9	85.7	81.7	81.0	74.0	65.5	84.0	5488
Brazil <sup>b</sup>	89.0	84.9	80.5	76.3	74.7	66.3	*	81.8	3867
Colombia	82.1	75.0	72.3	70.0	62.8	64.8	45.0	72.1	5391
Dominican Republic	70.5	54.8	48.3	49.5	46.7	42.9	31.6	53.5	5168
Ecuador	89.2	84.2	81.3	80.3	76.0	65.1	52.3	81.0	3251
Guatemala <sup>b</sup>	86.4	83.4	80.7	77.1	69.2	67.2	*	79.8	3779
Mexico	92.0	87.8	84.1	79.3	78.6	72.5	58.3	83.3	6271
Paraguay	90.9	84.4	85.5	83.5	78.7	79.9	68.3	84.5	3911
Peru	89.3	84.3	81.1	77.5	73.1	70.4	62.0	80.3	9824

Note: Mali and Trinidad and Tobago are not included because information on number of unions is not available.

\* Fewer than 25 unweighted cases

<sup>a</sup>Excludes 30 ever-married women whose marriages were not consummated

<sup>b</sup>Women 15-44

portion still in their first union declines with increasing duration since first marriage. There is a wide range of variation in marital stability with lows of 54 to 60 percent still in their first union in the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Liberia, and Madagascar to highs of 90 to 94 percent in Jordan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Tunisia.

There is no distinct urban-rural differential in marital stability, though the proportion of women in intact first unions is generally somewhat higher in rural than in urban areas (see Table 4.2). Some countries have more pronounced urban-rural differentials than others. For example, in Burundi, 62 percent of urban women are still in their first union compared to 80 percent in rural areas, while in Sudan the comparable figures are 83 percent for urban areas and 84 percent for rural areas. There are also exceptions to this pattern with Egypt, Indonesia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and Zambia having higher marital stability in the urban rather than rural areas.

There are not large differences in marital stability by educational levels once duration of union is controlled, although the proportion of women still in their first union tends to increase with increasing education (see Table 4.3). In Senegal, however, women with more education have higher levels of marital dissolution than those with less education.

The percentage of women who have married more than once is shown in Table 4.4. This is a crude measure of marital dissolution which incorporates the effects of both the level of marital dissolution and the level of remarriage. The proportion married more than once ranges from below 3 percent in Sri Lanka and Tunisia to above 30 percent in the Dominican Republic, Ghana, and Liberia. The level of remarriage tends to be higher in sub-Saharan Africa than elsewhere.

There is no apparent urban-rural distinction in levels of remarriage, with the countries divided fairly evenly between higher rates of remarriage in the rural compared to the urban areas and vice versa. On average, the differentials between rural and urban areas are a few percentage points, with the largest differential being 11 percent in Zambia.

Most countries exhibit a pattern of remarriage in which the highest levels are among women with no education and the lowest levels among those with higher education. Cameroon, Ghana, and Senegal are exceptions to this pattern: women with primary education in Cameroon and Senegal have slightly lower levels of remarriage than either women with no education or those with higher education, while in Ghana women with primary education have higher levels of remarriage than women in the other two education categories.

Table 4.2 Marital stability by urban-rural residence

Percentage of ever-married women still in their first union, by urban-rural residence, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Urban	Rural	Total
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>			
Botswana	74.2	75.8	75.3
Burundi	61.7	80.4	79.6
Cameroon	65.9	68.3	67.4
Ghana	55.6	59.9	58.6
Kenya	82.3	84.0	83.8
Liberia	56.3	55.9	56.0
Madagascar	63.5	57.2	58.3
Namibia	68.3	69.6	69.1
Niger	61.6	68.4	67.4
Nigeria	83.2	79.3	80.1
Rwanda	70.9	72.7	72.6
Senegal	67.0	78.8	74.7
Sudan	82.6	83.5	83.2
Tanzania	64.7	69.0	68.1
Togo	68.3	73.3	71.8
Uganda	59.6	63.8	63.4
Zambia	70.4	62.3	66.2
Zimbabwe	71.4	75.1	73.9
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>			
Egypt	88.5	86.1	87.3
Jordan	92.4	92.6	92.5
Morocco	78.3	81.4	80.0
Tunisia	92.7	94.1	93.3
<b>ASIA</b>			
Indonesia	80.7	76.8	77.9
Pakistan	93.6	94.3	94.1
Sri Lanka	92.3	90.4	90.7
Thailand	83.2	84.3	84.1
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>			
Bolivia	81.7	87.0	84.0
Brazil <sup>1</sup>	79.6	88.0	81.8
Colombia	71.5	73.1	72.1
Dominican Republic	51.9	56.6	53.5
Ecuador	79.3	83.2	81.0
Guatemala <sup>1</sup>	75.0	82.2	79.8
Mexico	82.1	88.5	83.3
Paraguay	82.3	87.2	84.5
Peru	79.4	82.6	80.3

Note: Mali and Trinidad and Tobago are not included because information on number of unions is not available.

<sup>1</sup>Women 15-44

Table 4.3 Marital stability by education

Percentage of ever-married women still in their first union, by duration of union and level of education, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Duration of Union (Years)							Total	Number
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+		
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>									
Botswana									
None	82.4	83.4	70.7	65.1	67.4	57.0	*	72.4	679
Primary	82.2	77.7	75.7	67.5	64.5	53.9	*	73.5	1017
Higher	90.1	81.0	84.6	81.9	*	*	*	85.7	361
Burundi									
None	90.1	87.1	82.0	71.0	62.6	62.0	59.1	78.9	2411
Primary	93.6	84.5	80.1	78.8	77.0	60.2	*	82.9	449
Higher	93.5	90.0	80.1	*	*	*	*	82.5	63
Cameroon									
None	81.6	69.5	65.8	58.3	57.5	51.2	52.5	62.2	1489
Primary	83.2	71.3	74.9	65.7	65.3	52.8	50.2	71.5	1067
Higher	81.3	70.7	61.1	68.4	66.6	*	*	73.0	596
Ghana									
None	84.5	74.5	62.0	58.1	50.8	40.6	38.1	60.5	1649
Primary	78.4	61.9	46.2	47.0	38.8	25.8	31.4	56.1	1737
Higher	77.6	58.6	62.8	65.4	*	*	*	63.8	213
Kenya									
None	89.5	85.9	82.0	83.3	74.1	72.0	78.7	79.3	1701
Primary	85.1	85.2	84.8	84.0	86.7	77.9	84.5	84.5	2710
Higher	88.9	94.9	89.6	86.4	87.1	*	*	90.5	871
Liberia									
None	83.1	63.7	52.6	48.9	43.8	44.7	40.0	56.6	2979
Primary	72.5	44.6	41.2	41.9	35.4	20.3	*	52.3	570
Higher	76.1	57.4	51.8	*	*	*	*	56.6	567
Madagascar									
None	67.0	44.3	45.1	44.7	39.4	32.8	38.9	44.7	1053
Primary	74.9	58.2	53.1	52.1	56.8	44.8	45.2	58.2	2513
Higher	84.9	71.1	65.1	62.6	58.2	66.1	*	72.6	1014
Namibia									
None	76.4	64.1	64.3	58.7	54.4	64.8	48.1	63.0	596
Primary	77.0	67.9	60.9	61.2	63.6	58.2	*	66.7	1208
Higher	82.2	76.9	72.4	76.3	66.4	79.5	*	76.9	833
Niger									
None	88.7	73.4	66.9	61.4	57.5	55.7	52.1	67.0	5359
Primary	86.3	66.7	62.3	64.7	65.2	*	*	71.6	371
Higher	87.6	70.3	56.1	71.1	*	*	*	73.2	92
Nigeria									
None	93.1	83.7	78.1	77.2	71.6	65.5	64.4	77.5	4843
Primary	90.6	88.6	79.7	79.4	77.9	71.2	*	83.6	1627
Higher	93.6	90.9	82.0	74.7	80.2	*	*	89.3	798
Rwanda									
None	76.4	78.9	72.1	68.3	60.4	61.8	53.1	69.1	2097
Primary	86.8	79.9	71.1	63.1	64.3	67.2	47.7	75.0	2126
Higher	93.8	76.1	81.0	63.7	97.4	*	*	*	228
Senegal									
None	92.0	82.6	74.2	71.0	65.2	57.7	55.0	75.2	3014
Primary	91.6	73.7	66.3	63.0	*	*	*	73.8	362
Higher	85.4	72.4	63.4	*	*	*	*	66.3	178
Sudan									
None	93.2	88.6	83.0	77.7	73.4	73.4	65.7	79.9	3425
Primary	95.8	87.4	84.6	84.6	80.1	72.1	71.4	86.1	1543
Higher	95.7	88.6	87.3	78.4	87.1	*	*	90.8	892
Tanzania									
None	75.4	70.8	61.7	63.7	56.9	55.8	51.6	61.9	2891
Primary	83.9	75.7	65.0	58.7	60.8	56.6	44.3	72.4	3903
Higher	84.0	70.8	68.2	73.1	*	*	*	73.9	181

Table 4.3—Continued

Country	Duration of Union (Years)							Total	Number
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+		
Togo									
None	94.6	81.8	71.1	66.8	61.0	58.5	42.4	71.7	1760
Primary	92.7	72.1	60.5	57.5	38.6	36.7	*	71.2	642
Higher	94.7	74.4	61.5	*	*	*	*	74.9	219
Uganda									
None	77.2	69.7	64.6	57.4	53.0	48.9	53.0	62.2	1650
Primary	80.6	63.9	58.2	54.6	44.7	46.1	42.7	63.4	1886
Higher	88.5	72.6	52.3	39.4	*	*	*	70.9	274
Zambia									
None	78.7	68.7	52.8	53.4	51.0	51.1	38.6	57.4	1035
Primary	84.2	70.0	63.4	60.0	56.5	52.1	37.0	66.8	3201
Higher	86.6	75.9	63.1	54.0	62.9	*	*	72.9	1031
Zimbabwe									
None	72.9	77.1	66.1	82.2	60.9	50.0	62.8	68.4	547
Primary	80.3	74.9	74.0	68.6	70.1	68.8	57.3	72.7	1898
Higher	87.9	82.3	73.5	74.6	76.3	*	*	82.5	623
<u>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</u>									
Egypt									
None	96.6	90.4	86.3	84.5	79.9	75.7	68.4	84.2	4529
Primary	95.8	92.2	89.5	87.8	84.7	78.2	67.2	87.8	2832
Higher	98.5	95.7	93.4	90.6	86.5	89.2	*	95.2	1550
Jordan									
None	99.3	90.2	89.8	88.1	90.2	87.8	85.5	89.1	1516
Primary	95.9	93.9	89.3	89.2	87.2	88.8	86.9	90.0	1456
Higher	97.9	94.5	93.0	93.7	90.6	93.9	*	95.0	3489
Morocco									
None	89.7	84.5	83.1	76.7	73.1	71.6	61.4	78.8	4310
Primary	89.1	82.6	81.0	78.2	83.1	75.9	63.0	82.3	734
Higher	89.8	87.3	85.4	80.9	75.6	*	*	86.2	595
Tunisia									
None	97.9	94.4	94.6	92.4	91.4	87.0	81.4	92.3	2372
Primary	96.9	95.5	92.4	92.1	92.9	84.2	*	94.4	1302
Higher	97.4	95.7	95.2	92.3	*	*	*	94.9	510
<u>ASIA</u>									
Indonesia									
None	91.1	81.7	79.0	68.2	65.8	55.8	48.1	66.3	4385
Primary	91.7	84.4	81.6	75.4	68.4	60.3	51.2	77.3	13942
Higher	96.9	93.9	88.3	88.8	81.0	81.5	68.7	91.1	4581
Pakistan									
None	95.5	95.2	96.1	93.3	92.8	90.0	87.4	93.9	5237
Primary	96.8	97.2	92.7	95.0	95.0	79.1	*	94.3	601
Higher	96.9	96.9	95.9	89.0	95.7	85.0	*	94.8	773
Sri Lanka									
None	91.6	86.8	90.3	85.7	79.8	84.3	69.6	84.5	654
Primary	91.8	93.1	90.8	87.5	86.3	79.8	72.6	87.6	1739
Higher	97.5	95.3	93.2	90.4	89.8	82.8	74.5	93.5	3468
Thailand									
None	78.4	78.6	92.0	74.1	79.3	78.3	64.8	78.4	657
Primary	94.3	87.8	84.9	80.0	78.0	72.5	63.4	84.0	5316
Higher	97.2	87.8	88.4	88.8	69.3	55.8	*	89.4	802

Table 4.3—Continued

Country	Duration of Union (Years)							Total	Number
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+		
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>									
<b>Bolivia</b>									
None	92.6	87.0	87.9	88.6	85.3	74.2	64.0	84.3	1216
Primary	91.9	87.6	87.7	77.1	80.4	73.3	71.4	84.4	2486
Higher	89.8	83.4	82.0	80.6	74.1	75.3	*	83.3	1785
<b>Brazil<sup>1</sup></b>									
None	81.4	90.4	77.5	78.3	71.1	50.8	*	76.7	386
Primary	88.4	82.5	80.5	77.9	76.6	70.6	*	81.6	2739
Higher	91.4	90.3	82.0	65.7	70.7	*	*	85.6	733
<b>Colombia</b>									
None	98.4	58.2	63.5	55.8	56.2	63.0	11.0	60.3	308
Primary	77.3	76.8	72.6	71.2	59.9	64.1	49.2	70.2	2592
Higher	84.0	74.6	72.6	70.8	71.4	68.0	57.2	75.7	2491
<b>Dominican Republic</b>									
None	57.0	40.9	49.4	48.8	22.2	31.9	42.9	42.0	407
Primary	63.6	47.5	46.1	50.5	48.0	45.2	29.5	49.3	2956
Higher	77.2	64.5	51.4	47.3	56.0	37.4	*	63.0	1805
<b>Ecuador</b>									
None	90.0	89.2	80.6	75.4	72.3	67.9	*	77.4	327
Primary	87.3	82.5	80.5	81.0	77.6	62.3	51.9	79.6	1771
Higher	90.8	85.6	82.6	81.2	72.9	71.1	*	84.2	1153
<b>Guatemala<sup>1</sup></b>									
None	89.0	87.3	82.3	79.5	71.3	68.5	*	81.1	1728
Primary	84.0	80.2	79.9	74.4	67.6	64.6	*	78.2	1699
Higher	89.2	81.1	75.8	73.2		*	*	80.7	352
<b>Mexico</b>									
None	96.3	84.1	85.3	80.7	76.6	75.9	61.4	79.6	930
Primary	90.7	88.4	85.4	81.8	79.9	70.6	56.0	83.3	3631
Higher	92.6	87.7	80.5	70.2	76.3	72.8	*	85.1	1709
<b>Paraguay</b>									
None	*	*	*	67.4	82.5	*	*	82.2	120
Primary	90.5	82.2	84.0	85.3	77.7	79.9	66.7	83.3	2635
Higher	91.5	88.4	88.1	81.1	81.5	78.4	*	87.5	1154
<b>Peru</b>									
None	85.2	84.2	82.5	79.8	77.8	68.0	62.2	76.6	907
Primary	86.7	84.1	79.7	75.6	73.2	71.4	61.6	78.0	3627
Higher	90.3	84.4	81.9	78.6	71.1	70.4	62.7	82.5	5290

Note: Mali and Trinidad and Tobago are not included as information on the number of unions is not available.

In some countries, the number of cases may not add to the total shown in previous tables due to missing information on education for some women.

\* Fewer than 25 unweighted cases

<sup>1</sup>Women 15-44



Table 4.4 Multiple marriage by urban-rural residence and education

Percentage of ever-married women married more than once, by urban-rural residence and by level of education, Demographic and Health Survey, 1986-1992

Country	Residence		Education			Total
	Urban	Rural	None	Primary	Higher	
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>						
Botswana	11.1	8.0	10.8	9.2	5.0	9.0
Burundi	18.8	12.9	13.8	10.0	8.9	13.1
Cameroon	25.9	26.5	33.1	19.7	21.0	26.3
Ghana	34.4	33.1	32.7	35.1	25.8	33.5
Kenya	5.9	7.2	10.4	6.2	2.5	7.0
Liberia	33.9	35.4	36.2	34.4	28.1	34.8
Madagascar	24.2	30.6	43.7	28.6	17.1	29.5
Namibia	19.9	19.3	25.1	21.4	13.0	19.6
Niger	31.6	29.3	30.4	22.4	16.2	29.7
Nigeria	11.7	16.0	18.2	9.9	6.6	15.1
Rwanda	15.4	17.5	20.3	15.7	6.9	17.4
Senegal	25.1	18.9	21.4	17.8	21.9	21.0
Sudan	9.3	10.5	13.0	7.4	3.3	10.0
Tanzania	21.3	20.2	27.5	15.6	11.1	20.4
Togo	24.6	23.2	24.4	23.4	17.4	23.6
Uganda	23.4	24.7	27.7	23.4	13.9	24.6
Zambia	16.5	27.3	32.1	22.9	10.0	22.2
Zimbabwe	13.3	14.7	22.3	14.0	7.7	14.2
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>						
Egypt	5.1	6.3	7.4	5.3	1.4	5.7
Jordan	3.3	3.3	5.3	4.3	2.0	3.3
Morocco	12.0	13.5	14.9	6.7	5.3	12.8
Tunisia	3.1	2.7	3.8	2.1	1.4	2.9
<b>ASIA</b>						
Indonesia	12.4	17.6	25.5	17.0	4.3	16.1
Pakistan	2.0	2.5	2.5	1.1	1.9	2.3
Sri Lanka	1.4	2.6	3.7	3.9	1.4	2.4
Thailand	8.6	9.0	12.4	9.3	3.6	8.9
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>						
Bolivia	7.5	6.4	7.8	7.8	5.4	7.0
Brazil <sup>1</sup>	10.3	7.4	14.4	10.2	4.6	9.6
Colombia	11.8	16.5	28.1	16.5	9.2	13.8
Dominican Republic	33.4	34.3	50.4	39.0	21.4	33.7
Ecuador	12.5	10.1	14.4	13.6	7.5	11.5
Guatemala <sup>1</sup>	12.7	10.5	11.2	12.3	6.5	11.2
Mexico	8.1	6.7	10.6	8.4	4.7	7.7
Paraguay	8.7	7.7	10.3	10.0	4.0	8.2
Peru	9.0	8.8	14.1	10.7	6.9	9.0

Note: Mali and Trinidad and Tobago are not included because information on the number of unions is not available.

<sup>1</sup>Women 15-44

## 5 Never-Married Women

Never-married women are included in this report for three reasons. First, an assumption is often made that age at first marriage is an indicator of entry into sexual union and of exposure to the risk of childbearing. For many countries, especially some of those in sub-Saharan Africa, this is not an accurate assumption. Secondly, targeting young unmarried women for family planning services is often socially or politically unacceptable, yet the figures on premarital sex and childbearing, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, indicate that this group is in need of services (Blanc and Rutenberg, 1991). Never-married women may be especially vulnerable to unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. Despite widespread knowledge of contraception among this group, there are very low levels of actual use (Gage-Brandon and Meekers, 1992). For example, in Kenya and Ghana, over 80 percent of never-married women know of modern contraception, but less than 20 percent have ever used a modern method. Finally, recent interest in unmarried women has focused on their possible role in the fertility transition in sub-Saharan Africa (Caldwell et al., 1992).

Table 5.1 shows the percentages of never-married women who have had sexual intercourse and who have given birth. There is large variance in these figures between countries and between world regions. In general, more never-married women have had sexual intercourse and given birth to a child in sub-Saharan Africa than in Latin America, though there are exceptions in both regions. In sub-Saharan Africa, the percentage of never-married women who have had intercourse ranges from a low of 5 percent in Burundi to a high of 85 percent in Botswana. The figures for Botswana and Namibia again reflect the high prevalence of sexual unions that do not include cohabitation of the partners. For other countries, like Mali and Niger, low levels of premarital sexual intercourse may be due to the early age at marriage which reduces the amount of time that women are exposed to the risk of premarital intercourse. In 12 of the 17 sub-Saharan countries with information on premarital sexual activity, 40 percent or more of never-married women have had intercourse. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the percentage of women who have had premarital intercourse is generally lower than in Africa, although data from comparable surveys suggest that there may be some under-reporting of sexual experience among never-married women in some of the DHS surveys in Latin America (Morris, 1993). Of the countries shown in Table 5.1, the highest percentage is found in Paraguay (35 percent), while Trinidad and Tobago has the lowest (3 percent).

The percentage of never-married women giving birth follows a similar pattern. In sub-Saharan Africa, the range is once again large, varying from a low of 2 percent in Mali to a high of 59 percent in Botswana. In 7 countries—Botswana, Cameroon,

Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Namibia, and Tanzania—more than 20 percent of never-married women have given birth. In Botswana, Liberia, and Namibia, this figure exceeds 40 percent. In Latin America and the Caribbean, births among never-married women vary from less than 1 percent in Trinidad and Tobago to 17 percent in Paraguay. Only in Bolivia, Colombia, and Paraguay have 10 percent or more of never-married women given birth.

Table 5.1 Sexual activity and motherhood among never-married women

Percentage of all women who have never married and percentage of never-married women who ever had sexual intercourse and ever gave birth, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Percent never married	Never-married women		Number
		Percent who had intercourse	Percent who gave birth	
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>				
Botswana	52.9	85.3	59.2	2311
Burundi	26.4	5.3	3.2	1048
Cameroon	18.6	57.0	21.4	720
Ghana	19.8	47.5	10.1	889
Kenya	26.0	51.5	28.1	1859
Liberia	21.4	81.4	40.5	1140
Madagascar	26.8	49.1	21.4	1678
Mali	4.4	7.7	2.2	141
Namibia	51.3	63.2	45.0	2781
Niger	10.5	10.0	6.6	683
Nigeria	17.2	41.2	4.7	1510
Rwanda	32.1	12.0	8.5	2103
Senegal	18.8	U	12.9	830
Tanzania	24.5	44.2	21.0	2263
Togo	22.0	61.4	12.0	739
Uganda	19.5	45.5	18.1	922
Zambia	25.4	52.2	19.4	1793
Zimbabwe	27.0	26.2	11.8	1134
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>				
Bolivia	30.7	26.2	12.5	2432
Brazil <sup>1</sup>	34.4	14.8	5.6	2027
Colombia	36.5	22.4	10.4	8489
Dominican Republic	29.4	7.3	2.3	2154
Ecuador	31.0	10.8	5.8	1461
Guatemala <sup>1</sup>	26.8	9.2	7.1	1383
Mexico	32.6	8.4	4.0	3035
Paraguay	32.9	35.4	16.6	1917
Peru	38.1	20.2	7.4	6164
Trinidad & Tobago	23.1	3.4	0.5	879

U=Unknown, not available

<sup>1</sup>Women 15-44

## 6 Age at First Marriage and First Birth

### 6.1 SIGNIFICANCE FOR FERTILITY

Historically, the evidence is mixed but generally supports the proposition that increases in age at marriage have typically preceded the adoption of family planning. Many examples can be found in Asia and in North Africa but fewer in Latin America (see Rosero-Bixby, [1994]). One major difficulty in sorting out these time sequences in more recent periods is that social changes are now developing with such rapidity that changes in nuptiality and marital fertility may occur more or less simultaneously.

How much difference can changes in age at marriage have for the rate of fertility? The formal answer to this question has been provided by Trussell, Menken, and Coale (1979). In a population with little contraceptive practice where fertility occurs within marriage, the effect on fertility results from a reduction of exposure of women at young ages. More precisely, the fertility of a specific age group is the product of the proportion married at that age and the rate of marital fertility at that age. Their model indicates that for such "natural fertility" populations, the effect on the total fertility rate would be a 5 to 6 percent decline with each year of increase in age at marriage. This model is relevant for many of the sub-Saharan countries participating in the DHS program.

At the opposite extreme are countries like Sri Lanka or Thailand where fertility has fallen to low levels as the result of extensive contraceptive practice as well as from earlier and continuing increases in age at marriage. It is more complicated to estimate the effects of a rising age at marriage on total fertility in a population with high levels of contraceptive practice. The demographic effects are generally more attenuated (depending upon the degree of control), but there can be significant period effects in a transitional stage as dramatically indicated by China when the minimum legal age at marriage was relaxed and a marriage boom and subsequent baby boom ensued (Coale et al., 1991). In effect, the greater the degree of fertility regulation in a population, the less the impact on total fertility of changes in age at marriage.<sup>4</sup>

A recent analysis of the contribution of increased age at marriage to the decline of the total fertility rate indicates that changes in the proportion of women married at younger ages have been more responsible for declining fertility in some African countries<sup>5</sup> than changes in marital fertility (Adlakha et al., 1991). In other words, the postponement of marriage and, by implication,

<sup>4</sup> Of course, there can be reductions in teenage fertility in low fertility populations that have positive health and social implications despite the lack of significant effects on cohort total fertility.

<sup>5</sup> These are Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Senegal, Sudan, and Tunisia.

the postponement of childbearing,<sup>6</sup> has had more of a demographic impact over the last decade or so in these African countries than increases in the use of contraception (see also Jolly and Gribble, 1993). On the other hand, a separation of the components of fertility shows just the opposite in Latin America (Moreno, 1991) and in the three Asian countries surveyed in DHS-I where contraception is the dominant force (Adlakha et al., 1991).

Childbearing that occurs outside of marriage also confounds the direct relationship between age at marriage and fertility. In the absence of fertility control, the total number of births women have is a function of age at first birth and, where a significant proportion of fertility is premarital, age at first birth will be more closely related to fertility levels than age at marriage. In addition, holding constant average completed family size, lower age at first birth implies higher rates of population growth (Casterline and Trussell, 1980).

In this section, we examine two indicators of age at marriage and age at first birth, the percentage who married and who gave birth by exact age 20, and the median age at first marriage and first birth.

### 6.2 PERCENT MARRIED AND HAVING A BIRTH BY AGE 20

Table 6.1 presents the percentage of all women who married and who had their first birth by exact age 20. Among the cohort of sub-Saharan women age 25 to 29 at the time of the survey, between 20 and 94 percent were married by age 20. Again, Botswana and Namibia stand out as having a markedly different pattern from other countries in the region. The proportion of women married is low across all age cohorts in these two countries, although it is lowest in the youngest cohorts. Rwanda and Sudan also have relatively few women marrying before age 20. At the other extreme, almost all women in Mali and Niger are married by age 20 and there does not appear to be any change across cohorts.

In the Near East/North African countries, there is a clear trend among the younger cohorts for fewer women to marry before age 20. For example, in Morocco, 74 percent of 45- to 49-year-olds report having married prior to age 20 compared to only 31 percent of women currently age 20 to 24. The four Asian countries also show a trend toward later marriage across cohorts. This pattern is quite strong in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, but somewhat less marked in Pakistan.

<sup>6</sup> There is disagreement regarding the case of Kenya where there is a significant amount of premarital fertility. See Njogu and Castro-Martin (1991).

**Table 6.1 Age at first marriage/first birth**

Percentage of women age 20-49 married by exact age 20 and the percentage giving birth by exact age 20, by current age, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Percent of all women married by age 20						Percent of all women having a first birth by age 20					
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>												
Botswana	18.7	29.6	31.5	34.2	32.6	26.9	54.8	61.2	60.3	56.5	49.8	38.6
Burundi	44.3	56.6	57.5	54.3	57.8	53.7	27.1	36.7	36.2	37.2	38.5	36.5
Cameroon	73.1	74.8	78.7	83.1	85.7	85.7	66.8	65.2	64.6	65.1	64.4	56.0
Ghana	63.3	66.3	71.6	72.3	76.6	73.0	50.6	49.7	57.8	55.7	62.6	57.4
Kenya	51.7	65.2	68.1	71.3	75.1	65.8	58.4	67.3	69.5	67.3	64.7	54.2
Liberia	64.2	68.6	70.8	69.4	80.6	69.4	64.1	61.9	55.4	52.0	58.9	43.9
Madagascar	54.1	58.2	65.1	65.1	70.2	70.8	52.9	53.3	60.1	57.2	60.0	61.1
Mali	92.6	89.6	93.2	91.7	90.0	89.5	66.9	61.3	64.2	58.5	61.9	47.7
Namibia	20.1	20.4	24.7	26.3	28.2	23.1	41.6	38.9	44.5	39.5	37.9	28.0
Niger	90.0	93.5	94.4	94.7	94.4	92.9	75.1	74.2	73.1	65.8	62.5	59.5
Nigeria	67.6	68.8	76.0	70.1	70.6	71.9	53.6	53.8	57.4	49.0	49.1	48.7
Rwanda	35.1	40.8	47.9	49.9	57.5	64.0	24.6	27.9	27.4	31.3	35.5	43.5
Senegal	69.6	76.1	79.1	85.4	85.7	86.3	59.4	61.1	59.6	61.2	61.3	56.8
Sudan	36.6	47.2	59.7	72.9	77.9	76.6	26.2	36.3	44.9	53.6	60.5	52.8
Tanzania	61.0	59.1	69.5	74.3	76.2	76.1	56.9	56.3	65.6	66.9	65.3	60.1
Togo	63.1	69.4	71.4	65.9	69.2	66.3	56.1	57.7	64.1	55.1	58.6	49.8
Uganda	72.9	74.3	79.2	80.2	83.0	80.8	67.5	67.9	71.5	72.5	68.7	64.5
Zambia	63.6	69.5	78.4	82.7	81.2	79.3	61.4	64.5	71.8	75.8	67.7	69.7
Zimbabwe	53.1	65.7	69.8	62.1	68.6	63.1	48.9	58.3	59.3	52.8	56.9	53.8
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>												
Egypt	45.1	53.2	56.2	63.1	67.2	70.4	30.6	38.0	39.6	45.9	49.8	50.0
Jordan	29.7	42.2	52.0	61.1	62.1	62.6	20.8	29.9	40.4	45.5	44.1	42.1
Morocco	31.4	36.4	50.4	56.2	64.1	73.5	19.2	23.4	30.1	34.4	39.2	45.5
Tunisia	20.8	27.4	35.7	43.6	53.8	50.9	13.1	14.4	19.5	26.5	35.9	26.0
<b>ASIA</b>												
Indonesia	51.4	62.2	67.2	70.9	76.1	75.8	36.4	46.3	50.1	50.7	51.4	49.5
Pakistan	48.9	58.4	63.1	60.5	60.9	57.4	30.4	42.0	41.7	38.2	37.4	32.9
Sri Lanka	27.8	29.8	28.6	30.0	40.5	49.8	16.6	18.9	16.8	20.5	30.4	35.5
Thailand	37.1	41.1	44.5	46.6	47.6	54.6	23.9	25.1	28.1	29.8	28.3	32.1
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>												
Bolivia	40.7	50.4	49.4	44.6	42.7	46.8	37.0	44.5	41.5	37.6	34.3	38.1
Brazil	39.5	39.4	35.4	37.7	43.7	U	31.0	28.1	26.9	26.8	30.8	U
Colombia	37.4	39.3	42.2	37.6	41.5	49.6	30.9	30.7	33.2	29.4	36.5	37.0
Dominican Republic	46.5	51.9	53.5	59.8	63.2	68.9	33.1	37.2	40.9	46.7	51.5	53.0
Ecuador	43.9	51.7	48.5	48.3	50.5	46.0	35.3	43.5	39.8	40.4	39.1	35.7
Guatemala	60.0	64.9	63.4	62.5	56.1	U	50.4	54.0	54.0	48.8	47.7	U
Mexico	43.9	48.6	53.3	46.5	53.3	58.1	34.8	40.6	45.1	37.1	40.6	43.0
Paraguay	40.6	44.7	43.1	38.8	44.4	42.3	37.1	35.8	33.7	31.2	34.4	35.4
Peru	31.0	37.5	40.1	42.9	45.0	44.4	26.9	33.1	36.0	36.0	35.9	33.1
Trinidad & Tobago	53.4	52.9	52.7	54.0	52.2	62.4	29.8	31.1	34.8	35.6	40.0	45.5

U=Unknown, not available for women 45-49 in Brazil and Guatemala.

Between 31 and 60 percent of women age 20 to 24 were married prior to their 20th birthday in the 10 Latin American/Caribbean countries. This proportion varies little across age

cohorts, except for relatively substantial downward trends in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Peru.

The proportion of women having a birth by age 20 is much more uniform among the sub-Saharan countries than is the proportion married by age 20, although there is still considerable variation. Among those age 20 to 24, this percentage ranges from 25 to 26 percent in Rwanda and Sudan to 75 percent in Niger. Botswana and Namibia are not conspicuous outliers in this instance. Although the proportion having a birth by age 20 is relatively low in Namibia at 42 percent, there are three countries (Burundi, Rwanda, and Sudan) where the percentages are even lower. Botswana, at 55 percent, is in the middle of the range exhibited by the 19 countries. Patterns in the percentages across cohorts are erratic; a few countries, such as Botswana and Niger, show an increase in the proportion having a birth by age 20, while others such as Madagascar, Rwanda, and Sudan show a decrease across cohorts, but most show no clear pattern.

Unlike sub-Saharan Africa, the Near East/North African countries all exhibit a clear tendency for fewer younger than older women to have a birth by age 20. The overall proportions in this region are also lower than in sub-Saharan Africa with only 13 to 31 percent of 20- to 24-year-olds having a birth before age 20. Among the Asian countries, Sri Lanka stands out as having a very low proportion of women with early births (17 percent among women 20-24) and a clear tendency for younger women to have their first birth later. The comparable percentages for Indonesia and Pakistan are about twice as high and the patterns across cohorts are more erratic.

On average, about a third of 20- to 24-year-old women in the Latin America/Caribbean region had a birth before age 20; in Bolivia and Paraguay this percentage reaches 37 and in Guatemala, it is 50. In most of the countries in this region, there is little evidence of change across age cohorts. In the Dominican Republic, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago, however, there is a consistent trend toward later births.

Almost without exception, the percentages of women married and/or having a birth by age 20 are lower in urban than rural areas (see Table 6.2). In Burundi, the proportions having a first birth and marrying by age 20 are both somewhat higher in urban than rural areas. In some countries, the urban-rural differential is quite large. For example, in Egypt, 43 percent of urban women married by age 20 compared to 73 percent of rural women. In a few countries, such as Botswana and Jordan, the urban-rural differential is negligible.

In most countries, there is a clear negative relationship between education and the proportion marrying and having a birth by their 20th birthday (see Table 6.3), although in several countries—Bolivia, Botswana, Cameroon, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Uganda, and Zambia—the proportion with a birth among those with primary education is the same as or higher than among those with no education. In general, the difference in

Table 6.2 Age at first marriage/first birth by urban-rural residence

Percentage of women age 20-49 married by exact age 20 and the percentage of women age 20-49 giving birth by exact age 20, by urban-rural residence, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Percent married by exact age 20	Percent giving birth by exact age 20	Number of women age 20-49
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>			
Botswana			
Urban	26.1	54.2	1025
Rural	28.4	56.8	2405
Burundi			
Urban	57.6	47.4	124
Rural	53.2	34.0	3115
Cameroon			
Urban	71.2	60.1	1235
Rural	83.6	67.9	1717
Ghana			
Urban	63.0	46.5	1193
Rural	72.1	58.1	2446
Kenya			
Urban	51.9	51.5	960
Rural	67.4	66.9	4693
Liberia			
Urban	61.0	60.9	1702
Rural	74.6	55.9	2399
Madagascar			
Urban	43.6	39.4	957
Rural	66.2	60.6	3883
Mali			
Urban	88.1	59.6	680
Rural	92.3	61.8	1997
Namibia			
Urban	18.0	41.7	1696
Rural	26.5	38.2	2466
Niger			
Urban	82.7	64.5	863
Rural	95.2	71.8	4261
Nigeria			
Urban	54.2	43.7	1726
Rural	75.8	55.7	5444
Rwanda			
Urban	32.5	23.6	313
Rural	46.9	30.0	4774
Senegal			
Urban	64.1	49.3	1375
Rural	87.1	67.3	2065
Sudan			
Urban	46.1	34.9	3095
Rural	61.5	45.1	4238
Tanzania			
Urban	59.2	59.3	1699
Rural	69.3	61.2	5356
Togo			
Urban	53.0	45.5	887
Rural	74.7	63.5	1749
Uganda			
Urban	58.3	59.2	386
Rural	79.1	69.9	3187
Zambia			
Urban	67.6	64.1	2560
Rural	78.6	70.1	2516
Zimbabwe			
Urban	54.4	50.3	1084
Rural	66.9	56.9	2096

early childbearing is most pronounced between women with more than primary education and those with less than primary education.

Table 6.2—Continued

Country	Percent married by exact age 20	Percent giving birth by exact age 20	Number of women age 20-49
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>			
Egypt			
Urban	42.7	29.7	5217
Rural	72.9	52.5	4699
Jordan			
Urban	45.3	33.1	6078
Rural	49.9	34.6	2043
Morocco			
Urban	38.8	23.8	3592
Rural	56.3	34.8	3519
Tunisia			
Urban	29.4	17.0	3456
Rural	41.9	24.6	2212
<b>ASIA</b>			
Indonesia			
Urban	50.1	35.5	8220
Rural	72.6	51.7	16457
Sri Lanka			
Urban	23.6	15.0	1371
Rural	34.2	22.5	6279
Pakistan			
Urban	51.7	34.6	2377
Rural	60.2	38.6	4854
Thailand			
Urban	27.6	16.3	1840
Rural	48.5	30.3	6329
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>			
Bolivia			
Urban	43.8	36.0	3671
Rural	48.9	44.0	2570
Brazil <sup>1</sup>			
Urban	36.3	27.0	3495
Rural	47.4	34.2	1092
Colombia			
Urban	36.7	27.9	4023
Rural	45.9	38.9	2686
Dominican Republic			
Urban	48.4	35.3	3846
Rural	67.9	53.4	1763
Ecuador			
Urban	44.1	34.4	2170
Rural	53.8	46.2	1502
Guatemala <sup>1</sup>			
Urban	49.7	40.4	1482
Rural	69.0	57.9	2496
Mexico			
Urban	43.9	34.9	1858
Rural	65.2	53.4	5240
Paraguay			
Urban	36.2	27.5	2641
Rural	50.7	44.8	1923
Peru			
Urban	32.9	27.7	9549
Rural	58.5	51.2	2857
Trinidad & Tobago			
Urban	52.9	32.3	2647
Rural	56.2	50.0	1255

<sup>1</sup>Women 20-44

Table 6.3 Age at first marriage/first birth by education

Percentage of women age 20-49 married by exact age 20 and the percentage of women age 20-49 giving birth by exact age 20, by education level, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Percent married by exact age 20	Percent giving birth by exact age 20	Number of women age 20-49
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>			
Botswana			
No Education	34.6	60.3	993
Primary	30.1	61.3	1656
Higher	13.8	39.3	781
Burundi			
No Education	54.9	35.7	2650
Primary	49.5	31.8	512
Higher	25.8	15.0	77
Cameroon			
No Education	92.7	69.5	1335
Primary	80.6	70.2	956
Higher	46.3	46.8	661
Ghana			
No Education	75.9	59.9	1621
Primary	68.3	54.6	1744
Higher	33.9	19.3	274
Kenya			
No Education	77.7	69.0	1727
Primary	68.6	70.9	2782
Higher	35.6	40.7	1136
Liberia			
No Education	74.1	54.1	2866
Primary	71.6	72.8	496
Higher	47.5	63.1	740
Madagascar			
No Education	76.1	64.5	1026
Primary	69.0	64.6	2562
Higher	35.2	32.8	1251
Mali			
No Education	92.0	61.7	2337
Primary	89.9	62.5	304
Higher	56.6	17.6	36
Namibia			
No Education	38.2	49.2	739
Primary	25.8	46.6	1821
Higher	12.9	27.2	1602
Niger			
No Education	94.9	71.7	4692
Primary	85.9	68.2	309
Higher	40.3	33.8	123
Nigeria			
No Education	82.2	59.2	4475
Primary	65.3	53.4	1576
Higher	31.7	26.6	1119
Rwanda			
No Education	55.9	35.8	2184
Primary	41.9	26.8	2527
Higher	15.8	12.9	376
Senegal			
No Education	86.1	65.2	2741
Primary	54.6	46.1	427
Higher	32.4	30.1	272

Table 6.3—Continued

Country	Percent married by exact age 20	Percent giving birth by exact age 20	Number of women age 20-49
<b>Sudan</b>			
No Education	72.3	54.3	3666
Primary	56.3	42.6	1872
Higher	18.6	11.6	1770
<b>Tanzania</b>			
No Education	79.9	67.0	2790
Primary	61.3	59.5	3958
Higher	22.2	20.9	305
<b>Togo</b>			
No Education	75.4	61.5	1684
Primary	62.3	58.0	645
Higher	33.9	34.5	307
<b>Uganda</b>			
No Education	82.9	70.2	1548
Primary	78.4	72.0	1696
Higher	40.7	45.4	329
<b>Zambia</b>			
No Education	81.7	67.8	950
Primary	81.5	75.1	2921
Higher	45.6	47.1	1205
<b>Zimbabwe</b>			
No Education	73.0	62.8	540
Primary	70.9	61.7	1862
Higher	35.6	32.1	778
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>			
<b>Egypt</b>			
No Education	76.8	56.1	4570
Primary	58.6	41.9	3208
Higher	12.6	5.2	2128
<b>Jordan</b>			
No Education	64.3	43.9	1626
Primary	65.3	51.6	1580
Higher	34.7	24.4	4883
<b>Morocco</b>			
No Education	58.2	36.3	4875
Primary	36.5	22.5	1075
Higher	13.0	5.8	1161
<b>Tunisia</b>			
No Education	45.1	26.6	2900
Primary	28.2	16.2	1843
Higher	13.0	6.8	901
<b>ASIA</b>			
<b>Indonesia</b>			
No Education	78.5	55.6	4525
Primary	76.2	55.4	13946
Higher	30.6	19.4	6149
<b>Pakistan</b>			
No Education	62.8	40.8	5434
Primary	54.4	36.9	679
Higher	33.6	20.9	1103
<b>Thailand</b>			
No Education	63.1	41.4	704
Primary	48.9	30.6	6007
Higher	13.5	6.3	1454

Table 6.3—Continued

Country	Percent married by exact age 20	Percent giving birth by exact age 20	Number of women age 20-49
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>			
<b>Bolivia</b>			
No Education	50.1	44.1	1310
Primary	52.4	45.9	2671
Higher	35.7	28.8	2261
<b>Brazil<sup>1</sup></b>			
No Education	56.3	43.7	399
Primary	46.3	34.9	3017
Higher	13.6	7.6	1163
<b>Colombia</b>			
No Education	60.5	55.7	330
Primary	51.8	43.9	2879
Higher	29.1	20.5	3497
<b>Dominican Republic</b>			
No Education	81.2	66.2	397
Primary	72.8	57.6	2825
Higher	28.4	17.1	2388
<b>Ecuador</b>			
No Education	61.6	52.7	336
Primary	57.8	48.2	1812
Higher	33.5	25.5	1524
<b>Guatemala<sup>1</sup></b>			
No Education	72.0	60.4	1713
Primary	61.9	52.2	1762
Higher	26.6	17.7	503
<b>Mexico</b>			
No education	74.1	63.0	921
Primary	57.7	46.7	3783
Higher	26.9	19.9	2392
<b>Paraguay</b>			
No Education	54.8	54.4	135
Primary	50.9	43.3	2856
Higher	25.7	17.7	1572
<b>Peru</b>			
No education	62.8	54.8	936
Primary	60.9	53.6	3786
Higher	24.9	20.4	7683
<b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>			
No Education	60.0	53.3	30
Primary	63.8	45.2	1636
Higher	42.7	22.0	1456

Note: It was not possible to calculate the figures for Sri Lanka because no information was collected on the education of never-married women.

<sup>1</sup>Women 20-44

### 6.3 MEDIAN AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE AND AGE AT FIRST BIRTH

Tables 6.4 and 6.5 present the median age at first marriage and first birth by five-year age groups and a total for ages 25 to 49. Figures 6.1 and 6.2 show the medians for the cohort of women age 25 to 29 at the time of the survey. These medians are based on retrospective reports by women of their age at first marriage and represent the exact age at which half of a cohort has married or had a birth. For both the median age at first marriage and first birth, the figures for the 40 to 44 and 45 to 49 age groups should be viewed with some care. In many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, the median ages for these two age groups are higher than those for younger cohorts. This does not necessarily indicate a trend toward lower age at first marriage and first birth, but more probably indicates a bias caused by recall error. Older women appear to displace the exact timing of these events to older ages. For this reason, as well as the possibility that other types of reporting errors occur, caution is warranted in the interpretation of differences across age cohorts as time trends.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the median age at marriage for women 25 to 49 ranges from a low of 15.1 years in Niger to a high of 24.8 years in Namibia. Clearly, marriage patterns in these countries are extraordinarily diverse and deserve further study that is beyond the scope of this report. Of the 19 countries in this region, the median age at marriage is 15 to 16 years in 5 countries, 17 to 18 years in 10 countries, and 19 years or higher in 4 countries. The pattern across cohorts indicates that there is a movement toward higher median age at marriage among younger women in numerous countries, especially Cameroon, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, and Zimbabwe also show some evidence among younger cohorts of a tendency to marry later.

For the Near East/North Africa, a consistent trend toward higher median age at marriage among younger cohorts is visible, especially in Morocco and Tunisia. The spread in median age at marriage is also narrower than in sub-Saharan Africa, with a low of 18.5 years in Egypt and a high of 21.1 years in Tunisia. The range in Asia is slightly larger, varying from 17.7 years in Indo-

nesia to 22.4 years in Sri Lanka. Indonesia and Sri Lanka, and to a lesser extent Thailand, demonstrate a clear tendency for younger women to marry later than older women.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the median age at first marriage falls in the relatively narrow band of 18.6 years (Guatemala) to 21 years (Brazil and Peru). The Dominican Republic and Peru demonstrate a consistent trend toward later age at marriage; there is also some evidence that this has occurred in recent cohorts in Colombia and Mexico. In the remaining countries, the pattern across cohorts is either constant or erratic.

In general, median age at first birth follows closely the range and pattern of median age at first marriage. Typically, the median age at first birth for women 25 to 49 for a particular country falls within 1 to 2 years after the median age at first marriage (see Figures 6.1 and 6.2).

In sub-Saharan Africa, most countries exhibit roughly a one-year gap between the median age at first marriage and median age at first birth for women age 25 to 49. Kenya is an exception, with about a five-month interval between the two figures. Four countries (Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal) have relatively long intervals (2 to 3 years) between the two events. These four countries also have the lowest median ages at first marriage (under age 17). Consequently, even though first marriage occurs at a relatively early age, entry into parenthood occurs at approximately the same age as in countries with higher median ages at first marriage. While the median age at marriage for women 25 to 49 ranges from about 15 to 20 years (excluding Botswana and Namibia), the median age at first birth for this same group ranges from 18 to 21 years.

In the Near East/North Africa, the interval between median age at first marriage and first birth for women 25 to 49 falls between 1 and 2 years, while in Asia the same interval is slightly above 2 years. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the difference between the two figures is on average 1 year with two exceptions: Peru at roughly 6 months and Trinidad and Tobago at a little over 2 years.



**Table 6.4 Median age at first marriage**

Median age at first marriage by 5-year age groups, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Age Group						
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	25-49
<b><u>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</u></b>							
Botswana	a	24.9	23.8	22.6	23.5	25.1	23.9
Burundi	a	19.5	19.5	19.6	19.4	19.7	19.5
Cameroon	17.3	16.9	16.6	16.6	16.3	16.0	16.5
Ghana	18.7	18.5	18.1	18.1	17.6	17.8	18.1
Kenya	19.8	18.6	18.0	17.8	17.4	18.5	18.1
Liberia	18.2	17.9	17.2	17.2	16.0	16.6	17.2
Madagascar	19.5	18.9	18.1	18.0	18.0	17.1	18.2
Mali	15.9	15.9	15.6	15.6	15.6	15.8	15.7
Namibia	a	a	24.9	24.0	24.3	23.3	24.8
Niger	15.1	15.1	15.1	15.2	15.1	15.1	15.1
Nigeria	17.8	17.2	16.3	17.3	16.8	17.3	16.9
Rwanda	a	20.9	20.2	20.0	19.4	18.7	20.0
Senegal	17.2	16.7	16.5	16.2	16.1	15.9	16.4
Sudan	a	20.5	18.1	16.4	15.8	16.3	17.8
Tanzania	19.0	19.0	17.7	17.5	17.2	17.2	17.9
Togo	18.6	18.4	17.7	18.5	18.0	18.7	18.3
Uganda	17.8	17.5	17.0	16.8	16.6	16.7	17.0
Zambia	18.6	18.0	17.2	17.2	17.0	16.6	17.4
Zimbabwe	19.7	18.8	18.5	19.0	18.1	18.6	18.6
<b><u>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</u></b>							
Egypt	a	19.5	19.0	18.2	17.8	17.4	18.5
Jordan	a	21.2	19.7	18.8	18.9	18.9	19.6
Morocco	a	22.3	20.0	19.4	18.6	17.6	19.7
Tunisia	a	22.9	21.3	20.6	19.4	19.9	21.1
<b><u>ASIA</u></b>							
Indonesia	19.8	18.6	17.8	17.4	16.8	16.9	17.7
Pakistan	a	18.9	18.2	18.6	18.5	18.8	18.6
Sri Lanka	a	23.2	22.7	23.1	21.4	20.0	22.4
Thailand	a	21.0	20.7	20.4	20.2	19.5	20.5
<b><u>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</u></b>							
Bolivia	a	20.0	20.1	20.6	20.7	20.3	20.3
Brazil	a	21.1	21.5	21.2	20.7	U	21.2 <sup>b</sup>
Colombia	a	22.5	22.0	22.6	22.0	21.2	22.1
Dominican Republic	a	19.8	19.4	18.8	18.4	17.7	19.0
Ecuador	a	19.8	20.2	20.2	19.9	20.5	20.1
Guatemala	18.9	18.5	18.5	18.6	19.1	U	18.6 <sup>b</sup>
Mexico	a	20.2	19.4	20.5	19.7	19.1	19.9
Paraguay	a	20.8	20.8	21.7	20.6	21.0	20.9
Peru	a	21.8	21.2	21.0	20.6	20.7	21.1
Trinidad & Tobago	19.7	19.8	19.7	19.7	19.8	18.8	19.6

U=Unknown, information not available for women age 45-49 in Brazil and Guatemala.

<sup>a</sup>Medians were not calculated for these cohorts because less than 50 percent of women in the age group x to x+4 have been married by age x.

<sup>b</sup>Women 25-44

Table 6.5 Median age at first birth

Median age at first birth by 5-year age groups, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1986-1992

Country	Age Group						
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	25-49
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>							
Botswana	19.7	19.2	19.3	19.6	20.0	20.9	19.6
Burundi	a	20.9	21.1	21.1	21.2	21.1	21.0
Cameroon	18.4	18.6	18.6	18.8	18.5	19.4	18.7
Ghana	19.9	20.0	19.2	19.5	18.8	19.3	19.5
Kenya	19.3	18.6	18.3	18.6	18.5	19.7	18.6
Liberia	18.5	19.0	19.4	19.8	18.6	21.0	19.4
Madagascar	19.7	19.6	18.9	19.0	19.2	18.8	19.2
Mali	18.4	19.0	18.6	19.1	18.7	20.3	19.0
Namibia	a	21.2	20.5	20.7	21.1	22.0	21.0
Niger	17.7	17.8	17.9	18.4	18.4	18.5	18.1
Nigeria	19.7	19.6	19.1	20.1	20.1	20.1	19.7
Rwanda	a	22.0	21.7	21.5	21.2	20.5	21.5
Senegal	19.0	19.0	19.0	18.7	18.7	19.2	18.9
Sudan	a	22.8	20.8	19.5	18.9	19.8	20.5
Tanzania	19.5	19.5	18.5	18.4	18.5	18.8	18.8
Togo	19.5	19.2	18.8	19.5	19.2	20.0	19.2
Uganda	18.6	18.3	18.0	18.0	18.3	18.6	18.2
Zambia	19.1	18.8	18.2	18.2	18.6	18.3	18.5
Zimbabwe	a	19.5	19.4	19.8	19.2	19.7	19.5
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>							
Egypt	a	21.7	21.6	20.5	20.0	20.0	20.8
Jordan	a	23.0	21.2	20.4	20.5	20.6	21.2
Morocco	a	24.9	22.2	21.7	21.0	20.4	22.1
Tunisia	a	24.5	23.2	22.5	21.5	22.4	23.1
<b>ASIA</b>							
Indonesia	a	20.4	20.0	19.9	19.8	20.1	20.1
Pakistan	a	21.0	20.9	21.4	21.7	22.6	21.3
Sri Lanka	a	24.7	24.2	24.9	23.1	21.9	24.0
Thailand	a	23.0	22.7	22.3	22.2	21.6	22.4
<b>LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN</b>							
Bolivia	a	20.6	20.8	21.4	21.5	21.6	21.0
Brazil	a	22.4	22.8	22.4	22.2	U	22.5 <sup>b</sup>
Colombia	a	21.5	20.8	21.5	20.9	20.0	21.0
Dominican Republic	a	21.7	21.3	20.4	19.9	19.7	20.9
Ecuador	a	20.7	21.0	21.2	21.1	21.6	21.0
Guatemala	a	19.7	19.7	20.1	20.2	U	19.9 <sup>b</sup>
Mexico	a	21.1	20.6	21.5	21.0	20.7	21.0
Paraguay	a	21.6	21.7	22.3	21.7	21.5	21.7
Peru	a	22.2	21.7	21.6	21.5	21.7	21.8
Trinidad & Tobago	a	22.2	21.9	21.6	21.1	20.5	21.7

U=Unknown, information not available for women age 45-49 in Brazil and Guatemala.

<sup>a</sup>Medians were not calculated for these cohorts because less than 50 percent of women in the age group x to x+4 have been married by age x.<sup>b</sup>Women 25-44

Figure 6.1 Median age at first marriage and first birth for women age 25-29, DHS surveys in sub-Saharan Africa, 1986-1992

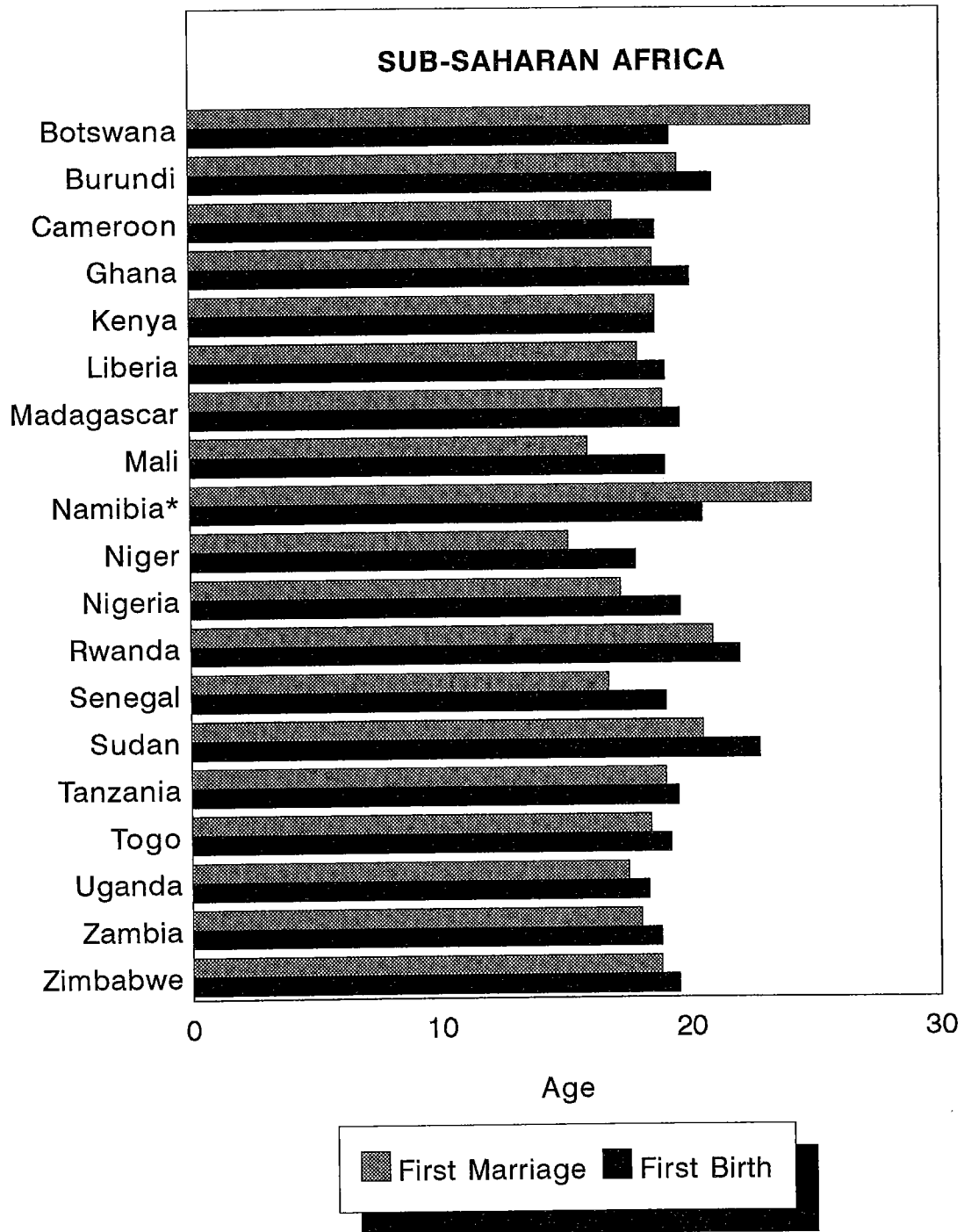
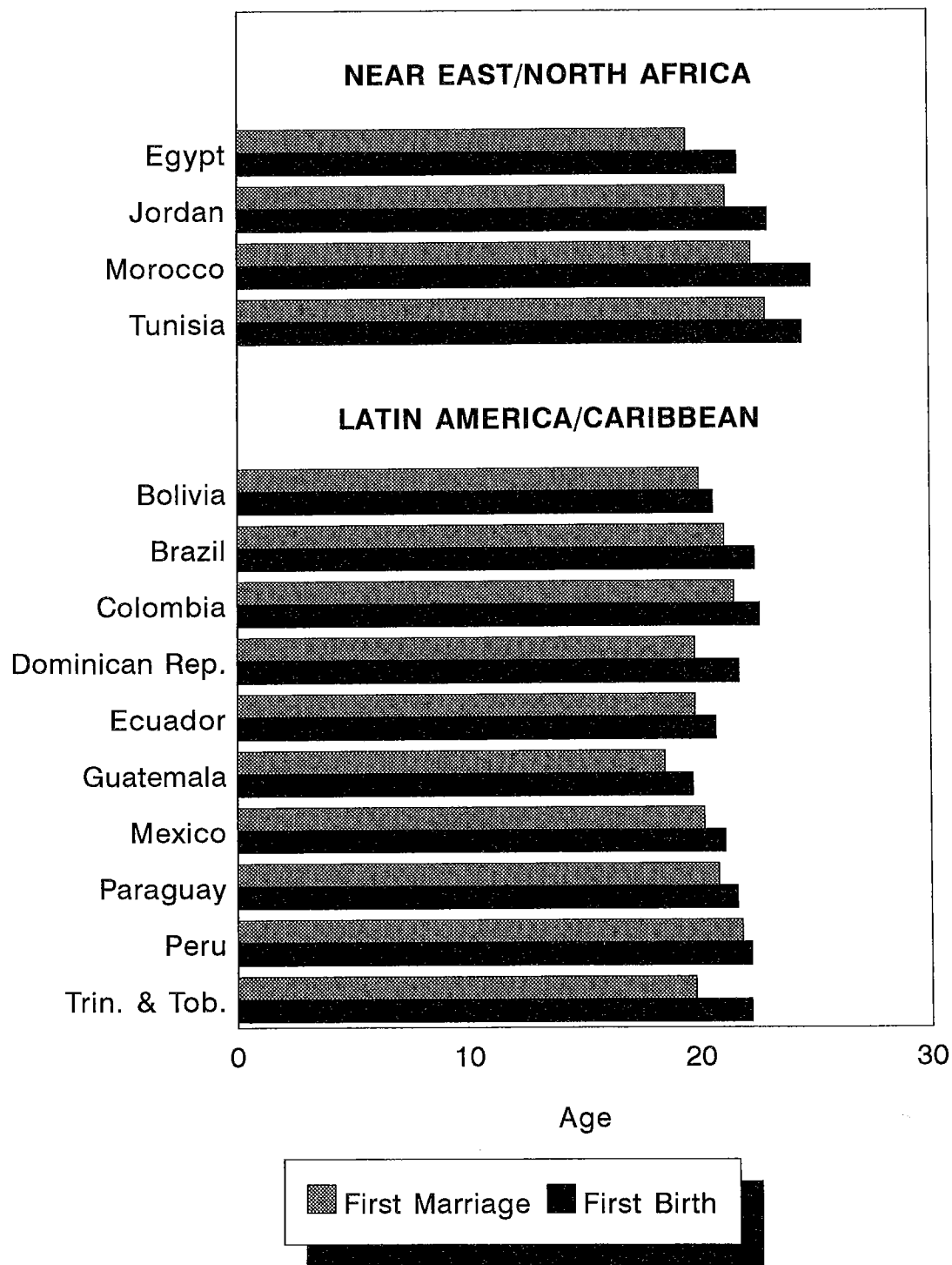


Figure 6.2 Median age at first marriage and first birth for women age 25-29, DHS surveys in Near East/North Africa and Latin America/Caribbean, 1986-1992



## 7 Conclusions

Comparative analysis of marriage and first-birth patterns for 37 developing countries has demonstrated remarkable variation both within and between the world regions. Nevertheless, in most of the countries included here, the average woman is married by her early 20s and has a first birth shortly thereafter. The majority of women remain in one marriage throughout their lives although in a few countries—the Dominican Republic, Ghana, and Liberia—one in three women has been married more than once. Rural women and those with less education tend to get married at a younger age and have a first birth sooner than urban and more educated women. In sub-Saharan Africa, particularly West Africa, substantial proportions of women are in polygynous marriages. Marriage is not a prerequisite for childbearing in many places. In 7 of the 37 countries included here, 20 percent or more of never-married women have given birth.

In many countries, there is evidence of a tendency for younger women to marry later and have their first birth later than older women. These trends are well established in North Africa, where some countries have experienced dramatic recent increases in age at union and at first birth (Westoff, 1992). In sub-Saharan Africa, there is some evidence of a trend in all of the countries included here, except Burundi, Mali, and Niger. Substantial

increases in age at marriage and in age at first birth are evident in three of the four Asian countries—Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. In Latin America, the picture is more mixed, with such trends apparent in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago; no such trend is visible in Brazil or Guatemala. In Bolivia, Ecuador, and Mexico, there is only the suggestion of a recently emerging trend in this direction.

The analysis presented here has also shown, perhaps most clearly in the case of Botswana and Namibia, that standardized questions about marriage, such as those used in the DHS surveys, are not always adequate for capturing the range of sexual unions in a population. Over the course of the DHS program, the model questionnaires have increasingly focused on collecting information on patterns of sexual behavior and the age at initiation of sexual relations. While these questions have their own problems, they enable the analyst to draw a more complete picture of union patterns in a particular setting and may be more useful for answering particular research questions than information on marriage or cohabitation.

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# Appendix

## Summary of DHS-I and DHS-II Surveys, 1985-1993

Region and Country	Date of Fieldwork	Implementing Organization	Respondents	Sample Size	Male/Husband Survey	Supplemental Studies, Modules, and Additional Questions
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>						
<b>DHS-I</b>						
Botswana	Aug-Dec 1988	Central Statistics Office	AW 15-49	4,368		AIDS, PC, adolescent fertility
Burundi	Apr-Jul 1987	Département de la Population, Ministère de l'Intérieur	AW 15-49	3,970	542 Husbands	CA, SAI, adult mortality
Ghana	Feb-May 1988	Ghana Statistical Service	AW 15-49	4,488	943 Husbands	CA, SM, WE
Kenya	Dec-May 1988/89	National Council for Population and Development	AW 15-49	7,150	1,133 Husbands	
Liberia	Feb-Jul 1986	Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs	AW 15-49	5,239		TBH, employment status
Mali	Mar-Aug 1987	Institut du Sahel, USED/CERPOD	AW 15-49	3,200	970 Men 20-55	CA, VC, childhood physical handicaps
Ondo State, Nigeria	Sep-Jan 1986/87	Ministry of Health, Ondo State	AW 15-49	4,213		CA, TBH
Senegal	Apr-Jul 1986	Direction de la Statistique, Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances	AW 15-49	4,415		CA, CD
Sudan	Nov-May 1989/90	Department of Statistics, Ministry of Economic and National Planning	EMW 15-49	5,860		M, MM, female circumcision, family planning services
Togo	Jun-Nov 1988	Unité de Recherche Démographique, Université du Bénin	AW 15-49	3,360		CA, SAI, marriage history
Uganda	Sep-Feb 1988/89	Ministry of Health	AW 15-49	4,730		CA, SAI
Zimbabwe	Sep-Jan 1988/89	Central Statistical Office	AW 15-49	4,201		AIDS, CA, PC, SAI, WE
<b>DHS-II</b>						
Burkina Faso	Dec-Mar 1992/93	Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie	AW 15-49	6,000	1,845 Men 18+	AIDS, CA, MA, SAI
Cameroon	Apr-Sep 1991	Direction Nationale du Deuxième Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat	AW 15-49	3,871	814 Husbands	CA, CD, SAI
Madagascar	May-Nov 1992	Centre National de Recherches sur l'Environnement	AW 15-49	6,260		CA, MM, SAI
Malawi	Sep-Nov 1992	National Statistical Office	AW 15-49	4,850	1,151 Men 20-54	AIDS, CA, MA, MM, SAI
Namibia	Jul-Nov 1992	Ministry of Health and Social Services, Central Statistical Office	AW 15-49	5,421		CA, CD, MA, MM
Niger	Mar-Jun 1992	Direction de la Statistique et des Comptes Nationaux	AW 15-49	6,503	1,570 Husbands	CA, MA, MM, SAI
Nigeria	Apr-Oct 1990	Federal Office of Statistics	AW 15-49	8,781		CA, SAI
Rwanda	Jun-Oct 1992	Office National de la Population	AW 15-49	6,551	598 Husbands	CA, SAI
Senegal	Nov-Aug 1992/93	Direction de la Prévision et de la Statistique	AW 15-49	6,310	1,436 Men 20+	AIDS, CA, MA, MM, SAI
Tanzania	Oct-Mar 1991/92	Bureau of Statistics, Planning Commission	AW 15-49	9,238	2,114 Men 15-60	AIDS, CA, MA, SAI
Zambia	Jan-May 1992	University of Zambia	AW 15-49	7,060		AIDS, CA, MA
<b>NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>						
<b>DHS-I</b>						
Egypt	Oct-Jan 1988/89	National Population Council	EMW 15-49	8,911		CA, CD, MM, PC, SAI, WE, women's status
Morocco	May-Jul 1987	Ministère de la Santé Publique	EMW 15-49	5,982		CA, CD, S
Tunisia	Jun-Oct 1988	Office National de la Famille et de la Population	EMW 15-49	4,184		CA, CD, S, SAI
<b>DHS-II</b>						
Egypt	Nov-Dec 1992	National Population Council	EMW 15-49	9,864	2,406 Husbands	CA, MA, PC, SM
Jordan	Oct-Dec 1990	Department of Statistics, Ministry of Health	EMW 15-49	6,462		CA, SAI
Morocco	Jan-Apr 1992	Ministère de la Santé Publique	AW 15-49	9,256	1,336 Men 20-70	CA, MA, MM, SAI
Yemen	Nov-Jan 1991/92	Central Statistical Organization	EMW 15-49	5,687		CA, CD, SAI



Region and Country	Date of Fieldwork	Implementing Organization	Respondents	Sample Size	Male/Husband Survey	Supplemental Studies, Modules, and Additional Questions
<b>ASIA</b>						
<b>DHS-I</b>						
Indonesia	Sep-Dec 1987	Central Bureau of Statistics, National Family Planning Coordinating Board	EMW 15-49	11,844		PC, SM
Nepal (In-depth)	Feb-Apr 1987	New Era	CMW 15-49	1,623		KAP-gap survey
Sri Lanka	Jan-Mar 1987	Department. of Census and Statistics, Ministry of Plan Implementation	EMW 15-49	5,865		CA, NFP
Thailand	Mar-Jun 1987	Institute of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University	EMW 15-49	6,775		CA, S, SAI
<b>DHS-II</b>						
Indonesia	May-Jul 1991	Central Bureau of Statistics, National Family Planning Coordinating Board, Ministry of Health	EMW 15-49	22,909		PC, SM
Pakistan	Dec-May 1990/91	National Institute of Population Studies	EMW 15-49	6,611	1,354 Husbands	CA
<b>LATIN AMERICA &amp; CARIBBEAN</b>						
<b>DHS-I</b>						
Bolivia	Mar-Jun 1989	Instituto Nacional de Estadística	AW 15-49	7,923		CA, CD, MM, PC, S, WE
Bolivia (In-depth)	Mar-Jun 1989	Instituto Nacional de Estadística	AW 15-49	7,923		Health
Brazil	May-Aug 1986	Sociedade Civil Bem-Estar Familiar no Brasil	AW 15-44	5,892		CA, PC, SM, abortion, young adult use of contraception
Colombia	Oct-Dec 1986	Corporación Centro Regional de Población, Ministerio de Salud	AW 15-49	5,329		CA, PC, SAI, SM
Dominican Republic	Sep-Dec 1986	Consejo Nacional de Población y Familia	AW 15-49	7,649		NFP, S, SAI, SM family planning communication
Dominican Rep. (Experimental)	Sep-Dec 1986	Consejo Nacional de Población y Familia	AW 15-49	3,885		
Ecuador	Jan-Mar 1987	Centro de Estudios de Población y Paternidad Responsable	AW 15-49	4,713		CD, SAI, employment
El Salvador	May-Jun 1985	Asociación Demográfica Salvadoreña	AW 15-49	5,207		S, TBH
Guatemala	Oct-Dec 1987	Instituto de Nutrición de Centro América y Panamá	AW 15-44	5,160		S, SAI
Mexico	Feb-May 1987	Dirección General de Planificación Familiar Secretaría de Salud	AW 15-49	9,310		NFP, S, employment
Peru	Sep-Dec 1986	Instituto Nacional de Estadística	AW 15-49	4,999		NFP, employment, cost of family planning
Peru (Experimental)	Sep-Dec 1986	Instituto Nacional de Estadística	AW 15-49	2,534		
Trinidad and Tobago	May-Aug 1987	Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago	AW 15-49	3,806		CA, NFP, breastfeeding
<b>DHS-II</b>						
Brazil (NE)	Sep-Dec 1991	Sociedade Civil Bem-Estar Familiar no Brasil	AW 15-49	6,222	1,266 Husbands	AIDS, PC
Colombia	May-Aug 1990	PROFAMILIA	AW 15-49	8,644		AIDS
Dominican Republic	Jul-Nov 1991	Instituto de Estudios de Población y Desarrollo (PROFAMILIA), Oficina Nacional de Planificación	AW 15-49	7,320		CA, MA, S, SAI
Paraguay	May-Aug 1990	Centro Paraguayo de Estudios de Población	AW 15-49	5,827		CA, SAI
Peru	Oct-Mar 1991/92	Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática	AW 15-49	15,882		CA, MA, MM, SAI

AW all women  
CMW currently married women  
EMW ever-married women

AIDS acquired immune deficiency syndrome  
CA child anthropometry  
CD causes of death (verbal reports of symptoms)  
M migration  
MA maternal anthropometry  
MM maternal mortality

NFP natural family planning  
PC pill compliance  
S sterilization  
SAI service availability information  
SM social marketing  
TBH truncated birth history  
VC value of children