DHS Comparative Reports 5

Trends in Marriage and Early Childbearing in Developing Countries

MEASURE DHS+

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1) to provide decisionmakers in survey countries with information useful for informed policy choices,
2) to expand the international population and health database,
3) to advance survey methodology, and
4) to develop in participating countries the skills and resources necessary to conduct high-quality demographic and health surveys.

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Trends in Marriage and Early Childbearing in Developing Countries

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Preface

One of the most significant contributions of the MEASURE *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 Reports* series examines these data across countries in a comparative framework. The DHS *Analytical Studies* series focuses on specific topics. The principal objectives of both series are to provide information for policy formulation at the international level and to examine individual country results in an international context. Whereas *Comparative Reports* are primarily descriptive, *Analytical Studies* take a more analytical approach.

The *Comparative Reports* series covers a variable number of countries, depending on the availability of data sets. Where possible, data from previous DHS surveys are used to evaluate trends over time. Each report provides detailed tables and graphs organized by region. Survey-related issues such as questionnaire comparability, survey procedures, data quality, and methodological approaches are addressed as needed.

The topics covered in *Comparative Reports* are selected by MEASURE *DHS*+ staff in conjunction with the MEASURE *DHS*+ Scientific Advisory Committee and USAID. Some reports are updates and expansions of reports published previously.

It is anticipated that the availability of comparable information for a large number of developing countries will enhance the understanding of important issues in the fields of international population and health by analysts and policymakers.

Martin Vaessen
Project Director

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Executive Summary

Profound demographic changes are occurring in the developing world in connection with women's age at entry into marriage and parenthood. A demonstrable pattern of later age at marriage has emerged from analyses of Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) data from 59 countries in surveys conducted between 1990 and 2002. The delay of marriage is now evident in many but not all countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The trend is more advanced in Asia and North Africa; and it is continuing in Latin America, although only modestly. It is occurring in both urban and rural areas and among women with no formal education as well as educated women. In many developing countries, it is reflected by later age at birth for women having their first child. Although teenage fertility is declining in some countries, a few Latin American countries have experienced increases in teenage pregnancy and childbearing, evidently caused by increases in the proportion of sexually active adolescents. These exceptions notwithstanding, the general picture is one of changes consistent with lower fertility and associated improvements in women's status.

Other analyses confirm the decline of polygyny in sub-Saharan Africa, although its prevalence remains high in some countries. Informal unions are increasing. The trend toward later age at marriage for women in sub-Saharan Africa is not evident for men. One result of this difference is the narrowing of the age difference between spouses.

1 Introduction

The focus of this report is an international comparative analysis of age at marriage and age at first birth. In one sense, it is an update of comparative studies published in the early 1990s (Westoff, 1992; Westoff, Blanc, and Nyblade, 1994) with emphasis on trends over the past decade. In the 1994 report, the latest survey had been conducted in 1992; in this report, some surveys are as recent as 2002. There are now many repeat surveys, which has facilitated analysis of trends. The new evidence shows there have been significant changes in marital behavior over the past decade. Except for some trend analyses, this review is limited to countries where DHS surveys were conducted between 1990 and 2002. For analyses of trends, estimates from earlier DHS surveys as well as from the World Fertility Survey are included.

Although the primary focus is on trends in age at first marriage and age at first birth, the report also examines marital instability, informal unions, polygyny, and teenage reproductive behavior.

The importance of these subjects lies in their relationship with women's status, especially educational opportunities for women, as well as concerns about fertility (Adlakha, Kumar, and Ayad, 1991) and the population growth rate. For most of human history, marriage and reproduction have taken place soon after menarche and, in the absence of effective methods of fertility control, have resulted in a long period of childbearing. Over the past century, this pattern has changed dramatically in developed countries with age at marriage and age at first birth occurring later and later. In recent decades, a similar change has been occurring in developing countries as well, and there is now a clear pattern of later age at marriage in many sub-Saharan countries. This report documents these changes.

2 Marital Status

The distribution of women age 15-49 by current marital status is shown in Table 2.1. There is considerable variation in the percentage of women currently in union (either formally married or living together), particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. In sub-Saharan Africa, the range is from 42-43 percent in Namibia and South Africa to over 80 percent in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, and Niger. A dramatic statistic is the very high proportion of widowed women in Rwanda (8 percent), reflecting the recent history of violence in that country.

The proportion of women currently in union in countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa shows less variation, ranging from about 50 to 70 percent. Countries falling outside this range are Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and India, with about three-fourths of all women currently in union. The only country that comes close to the prevalence of widowhood in Rwanda is Cambodia (6 percent), probably for similar reasons.

It should be noted that marital status data in this report refer to current status only; a full marital history is not collected in DHS surveys. This has serious limitations: for example, many widows could be remarried and would thus appear in the "in union" category. Similar data shortcomings limit the analysis of marital instability. The percentage currently divorced or separated ranges from about 1 percent in Burkina Faso, Jordan, Nepal, and Pakistan to 17 percent in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua.

Table 2.1 Percent distribution of women age 15-49 by current marital status, various surveys, 1990-2002

Country	Never married	Married or living together	Widowed	Divorced or separated	Total
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA					
Benin 2001	21.7	73.4	1.7	3.1	100.0
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	16.9	80.4	1.8	1.0	100.0
Cameroon 1998	23.4	66.9	3.2	6.6	100.0
Central African Republic 1994-1995	19.5	69.4	2.0	9.1	100.0
Chad 1996-1997	13.7	78.2	3.1	5.0	100.0
Comoros 1996	39.0	53.6	1.2	6.3	100.0
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	30.4	61.3	2.0	6.2	100.0
Eritrea 2002	23.3	65.5	3.7	7.4	100.0
Ethiopia 2000	24.0	63.7	3.6	8.7	100.0
Gabon 2000	32.6	54.1	1.0	12.1	100.0
Ghana 1998	23.7	64.6	1.8	9.9	100.0
Guinea 1999	13.9	82.4	1.4	2.2	100.0
Kenya 1998	30.1	61.4	3.7	4.9	100.0
Madagascar 1997	23.4	62.8	2.2	11.6	100.0
Malawi 2000	17.0	71.5	3.5	8.0	100.0
Mali 2001	13.5	83.5	1.3	1.8	100.0
Mauritania 2000-2001	28.6	58.8	1.9	10.8	100.0
Mozambique 1997	15.1	74.4	1.2	9.3	100.0
Namibia 1992	51.3	41.6	1.4	5.5	100.0
Niger 1998	11.2	84.2	1.4	3.1	100.0
Nigeria 1999	26.0	70.1	1.6	2.2	100.0
Rwanda 2000	34.1	48.5	7.9	9.5	100.0
Senegal 1997	26.9	68.1	1.0	4.1	100.0
South Africa 1998	48.3	43.2	2.4	6.1	100.0
Sudan 1990	39.8	55.5	2.0	2.7	100.0
Tanzania 1999	23.4	65.8	3.2	7.6	100.0
Togo 1998	24.9	67.9	2.4	4.8	100.0
Uganda 2000-2001	20.1	67.4	3.4	9.2	100.0
Zambia 2001-2002	24.8	61.3	4.7	9.3	100.0
Zimbabwe 1999	27.7	61.1	4.2	7.0	100.0
NORTHERN AFRICA/ WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE					
Armenia 2000	28.8	64.1	3.3	3.8	100.0
Egypt 2000	31.9	62.8	3.4	1.8	100.0
Jordan 2002	45.6	51.7	1.5	1.2	100.0
Morocco 1995	42.4	52.2	2.0	3.4	100.0
Turkey 1998	27.7	69.0	1.7	1.5	100.0
Yemen 1997	28.3	67.4	2.0	2.4	100.0
CENTRAL ASIA					
Kazakhstan 1999	25.3	62.9	3.0	8.8	100.0
Kyrgyz Republic 1997	21.5	69.5	2.5	6.5	100.0
Turkmenistan 2000	32.4	61.7	2.2	3.6	100.0
Uzbekistan 1996	24.9	70.2	1.8	3.0	100.0
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA					
Bangladesh 1999-2000	17.3	76.2	3.6	2.9	100.0
Cambodia 2000	31.8	59.1	6.0	3.1	100.0
India 1998-1999	19.9	75.1	3.4	1.6	100.0
Indonesia 1997	25.3	69.7	2.5	2.5	100.0
Nepal 2001	17.9	78.5	2.4	1.2	100.0
Pakistan 1994-1995[1]	24.2	74.2	1.2	0.4	100.0
Philippines 1998	36.4	59.6	1.7	2.3	100.0
Vietnam 1997	33.5	62.7	1.8	2.0	100.0

Continued…

Table 2.1—*Continued*

County	Never married	Married or living together	Widowed	Divorced or separated	Total
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN					
Bolivia 1998	33.4	59.4	1.4	5.7	100.0
Brazil 1996[2]	30.6	60.1	1.6	7.7	100.0
Colombia 2000	34.0	51.2	2.1	12.7	100.0
Dominican Republic 2002	23.0	59.8	0.5	16.6	100.0
Ecuador 1999[3]	32.1	58.0	1.3	8.5	100.0
El Salvador 1998[4]	29.6	55.8		– 14.6 –	
Guatemala 1998-1999	26.2	65.8	1.5	6.5	100.0
Haiti 2000	31.4	58.7	1.8	8.3	100.0
Nicaragua 2001	25.8	56.8	0.8	16.5	100.0
Paraguay 1995-1996[5]	30.1	62.3	1.0	6.7	100.0
Peru 2000	35.8	56.1	1.4	6.6	100.0

[1] Based on Pakistan Contraceptive Prevalence Survey, 1994-1995
[2] Based on 1999 CDC survey
[3] Based on women 15-44
[4] Based on 1998 CDC survey
[5] Based on 1995-1996 CDC survey

2.1 Informal Unions

In developed countries around the world, there is an increasing tendency for couples to live together outside of formal marriage. Although most women still marry eventually, marriage may not be to the man with whom they initially cohabited. In European Union countries in 2000-01, nearly a third of men and women age 25-34 were unmarried but were either currently cohabiting or had cohabited previously (Kiernan, 2002). The pattern of cohabitation outside of marriage can also be seen in developing countries, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN, 1990) and in some sub-Saharan countries. About a third of women age 25-34 in Latin American countries in the 1990s were in a consensual union (Martin, 1997). In 1950, more than 40 percent of current unions in seven of 20 Latin American countries were categorized as informal cohabitation (Stycos, 1968).

Table 2.2 shows the proportion of unions that are informal in countries with significant levels of such unions. Multiple surveys in these countries permit observation of trends. Because informal unions are typically most common at younger ages, the table is limited to women under 40 years of age.

With few exceptions, the trend is toward greater prevalence of informal cohabitation, particularly in Latin American countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay, and Peru. For example, in the Dominican Republic, nearly two-thirds of women age 35-39 are still in an informal union. Informal unions at older ages are likely to include women who were previously divorced or separated. Other countries with high levels of informal cohabitation but for which trend data are lacking are Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, Namibia, and Nicaragua. In most of the Asian countries, the DHS samples are composed of ever-married women and do not distinguish formal and informal unions.

Table 2.2 Among women in union age 15-39, percentage who are in an informal union, by current age, various surveys, 1990-2002

Country		Age of woman 15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA						
Benin	1996	14	12	11	9	7
	2001	6	18	20	17	16
Cameroon	1991	28	24	16	11	9
	1998	29	23	17	11	8
Eritrea	1995	4	9	7	7	11
	2002	3	5	6	6	7
Ghana	1988	17	9	7	8	5
	1993	48	30	16	12	10
	1998	51	31	23	14	14
Madagascar	1992	24	19	18	14	11
	1997	31	26	24	21	23
Rwanda	1992	84	58	48	40	32
	2000	71	56	43	38	35
Tanzania	1992	8	6	6	13	7
	1996	13	12	9	11	10
	1999	11	12	11	10	12
Uganda	1988	26	22	20	20	8
	1995	17	12	12	12	11
	2000-2001	42	38	31	33	30
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA						
Philippines	1993	36	14	9	7	7
	1998	43	18	10	9	8
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN						
Bolivia	1989	49	35	21	11	12
	1994	65	43	24	15	13
	1998	74	46	26	21	15
Brazil	1986	34	20	16	14	11
	1996	50	31	26	18	18
Colombia	1986	67	48	35	34	30
	1990	74	56	40	37	28
	1995	82	62	51	47	37
	2000	89	73	58	50	40
Dominican Republic	1986	84	76	63	59	54
	1991	86	70	61	56	49
	1996	87	72	64	55	57
	2002	93	86	77	68	64
Ecuador	1987	53	40	33	31	31
	1999	56	43	34	30	29
El Salvador	1985	82	65	57	52	51
	1998	84	67	54	49	45
Guatemala	1987	58	44	38	36	39
	1995	58	43	36	30	31
	1998-1999	56	49	40	32	32
Paraguay	1990	42	34	26	20	19
	1995-1996	64	46	30	26	27
Peru	1986	72	49	37	26	20
	1992	70	54	40	28	23
	1996	81	66	51	39	31
	2000	84	73	57	46	33

2.2 Marital Stability

Given the limitations of current-marital-status data, there is likely to be some degree of inaccuracy in estimates of marital stability. For example, from the data collected, it is possible to know if a woman *not* currently in union is divorced, but it is not possible to know if a woman currently in union was previously divorced. Also, since divorce laws vary substantially, the proportion of women who are divorced is at best an imperfect measure of the stability of marriage. And finally, the measure of marital stability used here includes all women not living with their partner, that is, those who have a legal or informal separation, as well as those not living with their partner because of the dissolution of an informal union. The measure used here is the percentage of ever-married women (including women in informal unions for countries with such information) who are no longer in their first union. This measure reflects not only the proportion currently divorced or not living with their partner but also widowed women whose first union ended with the death of their partner. The measure excludes those women whose first union ended but who are remarried. In short, it reflects only the proportion of women still in their first union.

As expected, Table 2.3 shows that the proportion of intact first unions declines with the duration of the union. The highest proportions of women still in their first union after 30 years are in India, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, all of which exceed 80 percent. At the opposite extreme are the Dominican Republic and Haiti, where only one-third of women are still in their first union after 30 years. This measure of marital stability reflects the effects of mortality—most significant in sub-Saharan Africa—as well as other causes of marital dissolution.

Stability in the first five years of marriage varies from highs around 95 percent in most of the Asian countries to an average of around 82 percent in the Latin America/Caribbean countries. The data from the sub-Saharan countries indicate that an average of 85 percent of recently married women are still in their first union.

Table 2.3 Percentage of ever-married women still in their first union, by duration (years) of first union, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

Country	Duration (years) of first union							Total
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+	
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA								
Benin 2001	91.9	81.2	71.1	64.5	63.2	59.3	53.8	74.6
Burkina Faso 1999	92.9	87.2	84.0	77.7	76.4	67.5	68.0	82.3
Cameroon 1998	82.1	69.5	63.8	62.6	58.9	59.6	51.9	67.5
Central African Republic 1994	81.5	61.3	54.0	49.8	43.3	43.8	45.2	57.9
Chad 1997	91.0	80.7	74.1	69.9	63.2	56.6	52.0	74.3
Comoros 1996	79.9	65.2	54.0	51.8	46.9	32.8	38.1	56.6
Côte d'Ivoire 1998	92.4	71.4	60.1	67.4	62.2	52.2	51.1	70.6
Ethiopia 2000	77.3	63.0	56.5	49.3	49.7	46.4	37.4	56.4
Ghana 1998-1999	77.1	64.0	54.1	56.3	48.3	46.1	40.6	59.1
Guinea 1999	88.1	82.0	81.9	76.4	72.7	66.3	66.0	78.5
Kenya 1998	90.6	82.8	81.6	83.2	75.7	68.9	65.8	81.7
Madagascar 1997	74.4	62.4	56.1	47.8	50.0	43.2	38.1	57.7
Malawi 2000	81.0	69.8	63.2	53.9	52.8	49.0	38.1	64.7
Mali 2001	89.6	88.2	82.1	80.6	76.2	74.9	64.9	82.1
Mozambique 1997	81.2	62.9	59.3	47.5	52.0	45.7	42.4	60.6
Namibia 1992	79.0	70.7	65.3	64.2	61.0	65.7	47.2	69.1
Niger 1998	88.5	75.3	63.9	62.6	58.0	59.2	47.2	68.2
Nigeria 1999	90.4	87.7	84.0	81.5	76.0	77.0	64.4	83.1
Rwanda 2001	84.1	67.3	56.8	55.2	50.2	48.5	43.5	62.5
Senegal 1993	92.6	80.3	72.6	72.4	60.3	63.4	56.5	73.9
Tanzania 1999	82.4	70.3	62.2	58.0	52.2	52.3	39.6	65.1
Togo 1998	91.3	76.8	68.6	63.0	56.4	51.0	45.1	69.7
Uganda 1995	82.6	70.3	62.8	57.6	51.8	46.7	40.3	65.9
Zambia 1996	84.1	66.4	64.1	55.3	50.0	42.3	39.7	63.9
Zimbabwe 1999	87.9	71.5	71.0	68.4	68.1	64.2	51.7	74.2
NORTHERN AFRICA/ WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE								
Armenia 2000	95.0	88.1	85.6	85.4	84.9	82.5	73.4	86.5
Egypt 2000	97.7	95.0	91.3	88.6	83.1	79.2	70.4	89.1
Jordan 2002	97.2	94.7	93.0	93.2	87.8	84.8	78.7	92.4
Morocco 1995	88.7	81.3	81.6	78.2	70.0	73.1	68.6	78.9
Sudan 1990	94.9	88.2	83.9	79.7	75.5	73.2	65.8	83.2
Turkey 1998	97.8	95.7	94.6	91.9	88.5	87.5	78.8	92.7
Yemen 1997	94.4	90.4	86.7	82.6	79.9	77.0	73.3	85.3
CENTRAL ASIA								
Kazakhstan 1999	83.9	77.5	73.0	71.0	65.0	64.2	54.9	72.9
Kyrgyzstan 1997	84.8	77.2	80.7	80.5	73.7	69.4	61.7	78.6
Turkmenistan 2000	91.7	84.5	82.0	79.2	81.3	76.5	82.1	83.6
Uzbekistan 1996	94.6	91.5	89.7	86.8	86.1	77.4	82.1	89.4
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA								
Bangladesh 1999-2000	93.8	90.0	87.8	85.1	79.1	76.7	73.6	85.5
India 1998-1999	97.3	95.3	94.0	91.0	89.1	85.8	81.0	92.2
Indonesia 1997	95.0	90.7	85.5	83.0	74.3	68.3	53.2	82.1
Nepal 2001	96.4	93.2	90.5	87.1	82.8	81.2	77.5	88.9
Pakistan 1991	95.9	95.7	95.7	93.0	93.2	88.9	87.1	94.1
Philippines 1998	95.0	93.5	88.9	83.4	82.4	78.8	72.7	88.2
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN								
Bolivia 1998	88.2	86.9	83.1	82.3	75.0	69.6	58.7	81.9
Brazil 1996	84.9	80.5	75.7	73.2	69.8	65.1	52.1	75.5
Colombia 2000	79.9	69.7	63.7	58.5	56.4	50.1	44.0	64.5
Dominican Rep. 1996	73.0	57.3	51.6	46.5	41.2	38.3	33.0	53.5
Guatemala 1995	86.3	82.5	81.3	78.8	70.8	68.8	66.4	79.0
Haiti 2000	76.0	58.0	48.3	45.4	38.9	37.9	31.9	53.5
Nicaragua 1997	69.7	59.7	53.9	50.1	45.7	49.0	38.9	55.6
Paraguay 1990	90.9	84.4	85.5	83.5	78.7	79.9	68.3	84.5
Peru 2000	89.0	82.6	80.7	76.4	73.8	73.3	66.9	79.9

2.3 Multiple Marriages

Another crude measure of marital stability is the proportion of ever-married women who have married more than once. It is a composite statistic that reflects both dissolution of the first union either through divorce or death but also captures the likelihood of remarriage. The percentage of ever-married women married more than once is shown in Table 2.4 by rural-urban residence and education.

Between 2 and 38 percent of ever-married women have married more than once. The lowest values (less than 3 percent) are for Armenia, India, and Pakistan. The highest values are for Central African Republic, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, and Haiti, all exceeding 30 percent. The mean is 21 percent for the 25 sub-Saharan countries included in this tabulation. In the Latin America/Caribbean countries, the average is 19 percent, while in the remaining Asian and Northern African countries it is much lower, an average of 7 percent.

The prevalence of multiple marriages in urban and rural areas is mixed. In the sub-Saharan countries, there is no distinct pattern, with slightly more countries showing a higher prevalence in rural areas. But many of the differences are slight. In the four central Asian countries, the residents of cities are more likely to have remarried, but the reverse is true in southern and southeastern Asia. In the Latin America/Caribbean countries, urban women show a higher prevalence of remarriage, but the differences are small and not consistent.

In all except a few countries in sub-Saharan Africa, there is an almost unbroken decline in multiple marriages with increasing education. In some countries, the differences are quite striking. For example, in Indonesia, 24 percent of ever-married women with no education are in non-first unions, compared with only 4 percent of women with more than primary education. In Colombia, the corresponding estimates are 36 and 14 percent, and in the Dominican Republic, they are 47 and 20 percent, respectively. While this negative association of education with multiple marriage is the dominant pattern in sub-Saharan Africa, there are also many exceptions. In 7 of the 25 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the lowest rates of multiple marriage are not among the most educated women. Higher rates found among less educated women may result from a lower frequency of polygynous unions in this group.

Table 2.4 Among ever-married women age 15-49, percentage married more than once, by urban-rural residence and level of education, various surveys, 1986-2001

Country	Residence		Level of education			Total
	Urban	Rural	No education	Primary	Secondary or higher	
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA						
Benin 2001	18.9	21.1	20.1	22.4	17.3	20.3
Burkina Faso 1999	12.5	15.2	15.5	9.6	8.0	14.9
Cameroon 1998	18.6	22.1	25.7	18.6	18.3	21.0
Central Africa Republic 1994	33.5	31.6	30.1	35.7	34.0	32.4
Chad 1997	24.9	17.2	18.5	20.5	21.1	18.9
Comoros 1996	38.5	36.0	40.1	28.7	29.9	36.6
Côte d'Ivoire 1998	17.0	21.0	18.6	23.9	14.2	19.6
Ethiopia 2000	36.0	35.1	37.5	27.6	17.7	35.3
Ghana 1998-1999	27.5	30.6	25.0	36.8	30.1	29.6
Guinea 1999	18.1	17.4	17.3	19.2	19.3	17.6
Kenya 1998	7.8	6.4	10.6	7.6	2.6	6.7
Madagascar 1997	23.8	32.1	43.6	30.0	16.3	30.0
Malawi 2000	17.6	27.4	33.8	24.0	10.1	26.0
Mali 2001	17.6	14.4	14.5	19.1	18.8	15.2
Mozambique 1997	28.0	30.5	31.7	29.2	15.8	30.0
Namibia 1992	19.8	19.2	24.6	21.3	12.9	19.4
Niger 1998	27.6	28.8	29.2	26.3	17.8	28.6
Nigeria 1999	11.1	11.5	14.2	11.2	5.7	11.4
Rwanda 2001	12.4	15.9	18.1	14.2	11.4	15.4
Sudan 1990	9.3	10.4	12.9	7.4	3.3	10.0
Tanzania 1999	22.6	23.3	30.1	20.4	10.7	23.1
Togo 1998	25.4	23.3	22.6	27.5	21.7	24.0
Uganda 1995	23.2	23.4	26.8	23.0	14.1	23.4
Zambia 1996	16.9	25.1	28.2	23.2	13.2	11.7
Zimbabwe 1999	11.5	14.1	21.4	16.3	8.3	13.2
NORTHERN AFRICA/ WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE						
Armenia 2000	2.8	2.1	*	*	2.4	2.5
Egypt 2000	4.0	4.1	5.7	4.8	1.9	4.0
Morocco 1995	10.3	13.9	14.9	8.6	3.7	12.3
Turkey 1998	2.9	3.5	4.0	3.1	2.1	3.0
Yemen 1997	9.2	9.4	10.5	5.1	3.7	9.4
CENTRAL ASIA						
Kazakhstan 1999	14.2	10.1	*	*	12.3	12.4
Kyrgzstan 1997	17.1	9.1	*	*	11.7	11.7
Turkmenistan 2000	11.5	2.6	3.7	10.1	7.0	7.0
Uzbekistan 1996	8.0	3.1	*	*	4.9	5.0
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA						
Bangladesh 2000	4.6	7.3	10.3	5.5	2.0	6.8
India 1999	1.2	1.9	2.4	1.8	0.5	1.7
Indonesia 1997	9.7	13.7	24.1	14.1	4.1	12.6
Nepal 2001	3.7	7.4	8.7	4.1	1.1	7.0
Pakistan 1991	2.0	2.5	2.5	1.1	1.9	2.3
Philippines 1998	5.9	6.1	11.8	8.1	4.7	6.0
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN						
Bolivia 1998	8.7	7.7	10.4	9.0	7.4	8.4
Brazil 1996	13.6	11.5	21.6	14.9	10.9	13.2
Colombia 2000	18.1	16.8	35.8	21.2	14.1	17.8
Dominican Republic 1996	32.6	32.9	47.2	38.9	20.3	32.7
Guatemala 1999	11.1	8.8	11.4	10.5	5.3	9.8
Haiti 2000	38.1	38.6	46.9	36.0	26.0	38.4
Nicaragua 1997	31.3	24.9	33.1	30.8	24.6	28.9
Paraguay 1990	8.7	7.6	10.2	9.9	4.0	8.2
Peru 2000	9.4	9.1	12.3	11.1	7.7	9.9

Note: An asterisk indicates that there are fewer than 25 unweighted cases in this subgroup and the figure has been suppressed.

3 Polygyny

Unions where more than one wife is involved are most common in sub-Saharan Africa, and the data presented in this description are confined to that part of the world. Table 3.1 shows the percentage of currently married women who are in a polygynous union, the difference from 100 percent being the prevalence of monogamy. Again, the absence of a full marital history and the reliance on current status information means that we do not know how many women may have been in a different type of union in the past.

Table 3.1 Percent of currently married women age 15-49 in a polygynous union, by current age, sub-Saharan Africa, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

	Age of woman							
Country	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	Total
Benin 2001	29.1	32.8	41.7	48.7	58.0	54.9	59.6	45.8
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	38.9	43.4	48.6	58.2	64.6	68.9	68.8	54.7
Cameroon 1998	23.3	25.4	29.5	33.6	39.1	47.0	47.5	33.1
Central African Republic 1994-1995	21.3	23.1	27.1	32.8	35.8	36.4	27.4	28.5
Chad 1996-1997	20.8	31.4	39.3	47.5	48.4	49.6	49.3	39.2
Comoros 1996	9.3	13.9	21.0	22.4	34.0	35.7	35.7	25.3
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	23.5	27.0	27.5	36.1	43.8	46.5	53.6	35.0
Eritrea 2002	3.9	6.1	8.8	11.1	12.6	11.5	10.7	9.3
Ethiopia 2000	4.5	8.0	10.1	18.6	17.4	21.3	17.3	13.6
Gabon 2000	15.8	17.5	18.0	22.1	27.2	27.2	32.9	22.0
Ghana 1998	10.0	13.2	15.8	26.4	30.5	27.5	33.3	22.7
Guinea 1999	30.5	37.4	51.1	56.6	64.8	69.7	70.2	53.7
Kenya 1998	10.1	9.2	15.0	16.7	18.9	24.8	25.5	16.3
Madagascar 1997	4.9	4.2	4.2	3.8	4.3	3.6	2.5	4.0
Malawi 2000	7.5	11.3	18.1	22.2	21.7	21.5	24.3	17.2
Mali 2001	22.3	28.1	39.3	48.8	53.6	58.6	56.3	42.6
Mauritania 2000-2001	4.8	7.4	7.3	13.5	14.9	17.1	18.7	11.6
Mozambique 1997	21.2	27.9	27.4	27.7	36.4	33.5	27.3	28.5
Namibia 1992	18.2	21.2	27.7	25.0	29.3	27.3	21.0	25.4
Niger 1998	21.2	29.2	36.7	42.1	47.0	53.0	49.8	37.8
Nigeria 1999	30.2	26.5	30.6	37.5	40.7	46.3	44.9	35.7
Rwanda 2000	6.7	8.0	9.1	12.0	15.3	17.5	20.0	12.3
Senegal 1997	27.3	35.0	42.5	50.1	57.8	64.5	68.8	48.6
South Africa 1998	*	9.5	10.6	14.9	11.3	14.1	12.4	12.5
Sudan 1990	11.7	13.6	17.8	23.7	24.4	26.3	26.5	20.4
Tanzania 1996	21.8	20.1	27.3	30.6	35.3	35.4	38.0	28.8
Togo 1998	23.0	28.6	37.8	44.2	51.9	55.9	58.6	42.8
Uganda 2000-2001	20.9	25.5	31.9	39.6	39.3	38.0	40.2	32.7
Zambia 2001-2002	8.3	9.3	16.3	18.1	23.0	24.4	21.4	16.2
Zimbabwe 1999	14.3	14.8	15.2	15.9	14.7	19.2	15.9	15.5

Note: The asterisk indicates that there are fewer than 25 unweighted cases in this subgroup and the figure has been suppressed.

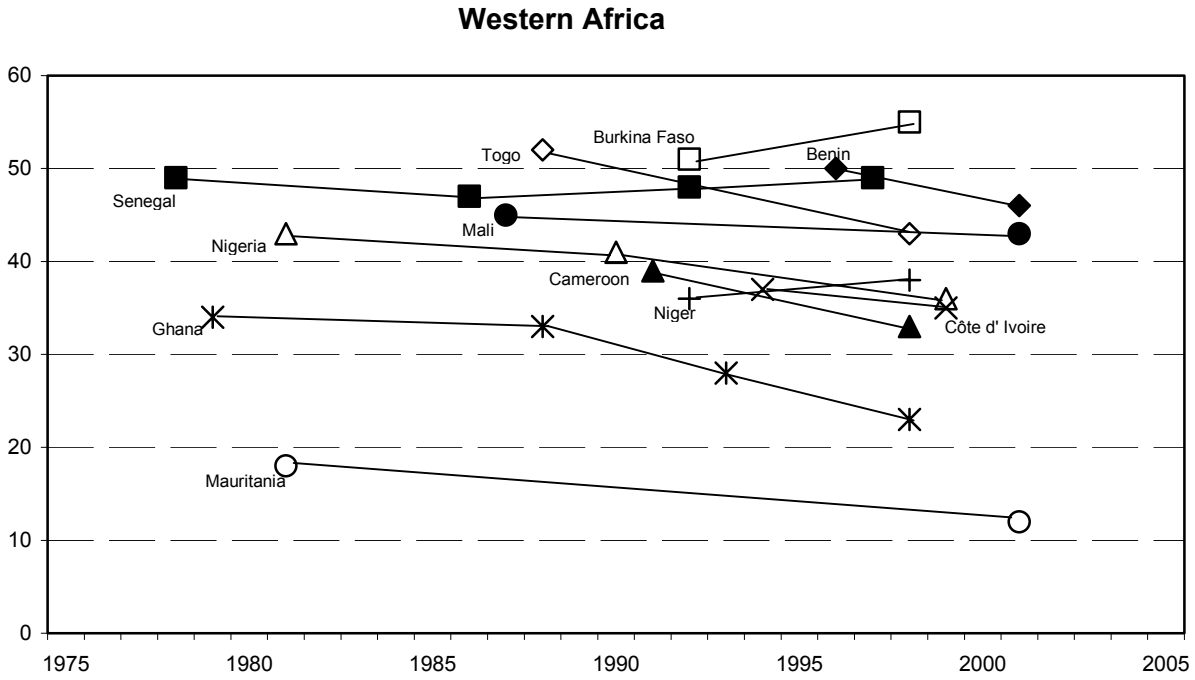
The extent of polygyny is highly variable in sub-Saharan Africa, ranging from a high around 54 percent among women currently in union in Burkina Faso and Guinea to a low of 4 percent in Madagascar. The age pattern typically features increasing proportions of polygynous unions with advancing age, peaking in the 40s. With few exceptions, polygyny is more common in rural than in urban areas, and its prevalence declines with increasing education (Table 3.2).

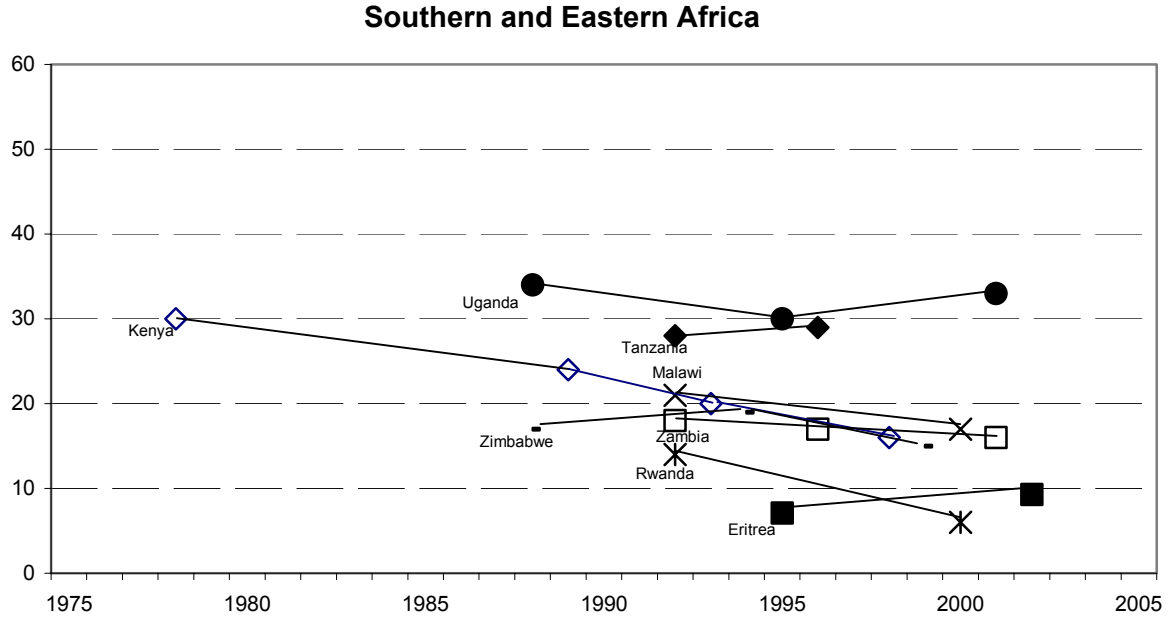
Table 3.2 Percent of currently married women age 15-49 in a polygynous union, by urban-rural residence and level of education, sub-Saharan Africa, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

Country	Residence		Level of education		
	Urban	Rural	No education	Primary	Secondary or higher
Benin 2001	37.4	50.2	50.0	38.7	26.3
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	29.8	58.3	57.5	33.5	13.9
Cameroon 1998	26.3	36.0	47.5	30.1	16.7
Central African Republic 1994-1995	26.2	29.9	30.3	27.9	21.3
Chad 1996-1997	36.8	39.9	40.0	36.5	32.7
Comoros 1996	20.0	27.0	29.9	14.3	17.3
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	25.3	40.1	41.2	26.8	13.0
Eritrea 2002	9.3	9.3	10.5	9.0	5.6
Ethiopia 2000	6.9	14.5	14.6	10.1	5.1
Gabon 2000	20.4	27.0	29.7	22.7	20.3
Ghana 1998	15.7	25.8	31.6	22.9	15.8
Guinea 1999	46.6	56.3	55.5	46.6	38.4
Kenya 1998	11.0	17.8	29.7	15.7	10.7
Madagascar 1997	3.1	4.3	6.6	3.3	3.0
Malawi 2000	8.7	18.6	20.9	16.3	8.8
Mali 2001	33.6	45.5	44.1	38.7	25.9
Mauritania 2000-2001	11.1	12.0	18.9	7.3	7.0
Mozambique 1997	18.5	30.9	32.3	25.5	17.6
Namibia 1992	20.9	28.3	30.8	25.9	20.9
Niger 1998	39.4	37.5	38.3	34.6	28.9
Nigeria 1999	30.9	37.7	46.1	30.3	18.5
Rwanda 2000	9.2	12.9	18.4	10.6	5.9
Senegal 1997	43.8	51.1	52.7	37.5	27.5
South Africa 1998	9.6	16.8	26.3	15.8	9.5
Sudan 1990	16.3	22.8	26.5	14.5	7.7
Tanzania 1996	20.6	31.0	38.9	24.1	15.3
Togo 1998	33.9	46.6	49.1	34.3	33.4
Uganda 2000-2001	36.4	32.1	34.8	32.0	31.5
Zambia 2001-2002	6.2	21.6	23.4	17.3	9.0
Zimbabwe 1999	7.6	20.0	30.2	18.4	10.0

In at least half of the 18 sub-Saharan countries with more than one survey there is evidence of a decline in polygyny (Figure 3.1). Ghana and Kenya show the largest declines in this type of union.

Figure 3.1 Trends in the percentage of currently married women in polygynous unions, western Africa and southern and eastern Africa, various surveys





4 Adolescent Pregnancy and Fertility

Age at first marriage and age at first birth have long been a focus of attention because of the implications for health and educational opportunities of young women as well as concerns regarding fertility and population growth. In developing countries generally, young age at marriage and age at first birth have been the norm. The evidence presented in this report indicates that this pattern is undergoing change. One approach to the subject is to look at the prevalence of pregnancy and motherhood in the teenage segment of the population. Table 4.1 shows the percentage of women age 15-19 who are mothers or currently pregnant.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion of teenagers who are mothers or currently pregnant is generally high (20-40 percent), although the range extends from 7 percent in Rwanda to 43 percent in Niger. In the other regions, rates are substantially lower with the exception of Bangladesh (35 percent). In Latin America and the Caribbean, rates for the 15-19 age group are more homogeneous, ranging from 13 to 25 percent. Where many countries in sub-Saharan Africa as well as Bangladesh differ from the other countries is the level of pregnancy and childbirth among the very young. Because the individual and demographic "costs" of motherhood are higher for the very young teenagers, Table 4.1 shows estimates for single years of age from 15 to 19. In sub-Saharan Africa, there are seven countries with at least 10 percent of 15 year-olds pregnant or already mothers; at age 16, there are 16 countries in this category including seven with levels exceeding 20 percent. This is in contrast with the lower levels in Northern Africa, Western and Central Asia, and Southern and Southeastern Asia (with the exception of Bangladesh). The rates for the youngest teenagers in Latin America and the Caribbean are intermediate between those in sub-Saharan Africa and the other countries.

Table 4.1 Percentage of women age 15-19 who are mothers or currently pregnant, by single years of age, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

	Age of woman					
Country	15	16	17	18	19	Total
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA						
Benin 2001	5.9	8.2	19.1	33.4	40.1	21.5
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	2.5	6.4	20.1	47.8	58.7	25.4
Cameroon 1998	6.0	21.2	34.1	41.1	53.8	31.2
Central African Republic 1994-1995	9.8	17.4	35.5	53.7	67.6	36.1
Chad 1996-1997	9.1	21.2	40.4	57.5	68.1	38.5
Comoros 1996	3.7	3.6	9.0	12.3	20.6	9.1
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	9.6	29.4	29.6	41.0	49.2	31.0
Eritrea 2002	2.1	2.8	7.9	24.8	36.3	14.0
Ethiopia 2000	1.2	6.5	15.5	27.4	39.7	16.3
Gabon 2000	10.1	19.1	41.0	43.8	52.2	32.7
Ghana 1998	1.6	5.8	13.9	21.1	31.7	14.1
Guinea 1999	9.5	23.4	38.9	54.7	62.3	37.2
Kenya 1998	3.3	6.0	19.6	30.1	44.9	20.9
Madagascar 1997	8.4	16.8	34.1	56.4	58.5	35.7
Malawi 2000	4.2	13.2	29.5	48.5	66.4	33.0
Mali 2001	11.2	22.2	37.9	61.1	68.7	40.4
Mauritania 2000-2001	5.2	13.4	10.9	21.3	30.4	15.8
Mozambique 1997	7.5	19.6	43.5	63.0	66.7	40.0
Namibia 1992	1.3	6.3	18.7	36.0	45.4	21.5
Niger 1998	12.2	30.3	47.1	62.6	70.7	43.1
Nigeria 1999	10.8	9.4	26.4	30.5	34.3	21.9
Rwanda 2000	0.2	1.3	4.5	10.1	21.0	6.8
Senegal 1997	4.7	9.4	22.9	33.7	39.7	22.3
South Africa 1998	2.4	7.9	14.2	24.6	35.1	16.4
Sudan 1990	1.6	4.4	9.2	17.9	23.9	10.9
Tanzania 1996	1.3	11.2	17.1	39.2	60.6	26.1
Togo 1998	2.4	8.2	17.2	29.8	41.3	19.4
Uganda 2000-2001	3.3	12.9	23.2	54.0	61.2	31.4
Zambia 2001-2002	4.5	15.0	33.8	44.2	56.9	31.6
Zimbabwe 1999	4.9	5.6	18.4	32.0	45.6	20.5

Continued…

Table 4.1—*Continued*

Country	Age of woman 15	16	17	18	19	Total
NORTHERN AFRICA/ WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE						
Armenia 2000	0.1	1.4	2.3	8.1	20.0	6.0
Egypt 2000	0.6	2.7	7.3	12.3	20.4	8.5
Jordan 2002	0.0	1.8	3.8	6.2	10.6	4.3
Morocco 1995	1.0	2.4	4.3	8.1	14.5	6.4
Turkey 1998	1.8	1.9	8.8	16.0	23.1	10.2
Yemen 1997	1.6	5.1	12.2	27.8	38.4	15.5
CENTRAL ASIA						
Kazakhstan 1999	0.0	1.3	3.1	10.1	21.2	6.7
Kyrgyz Republic 1997	0.0	0.4	6.7	14.7	28.2	9.4
Turkmenistan 2000	0.0	0.2	3.3	5.5	11.7	4.3
Uzbekistan 1996	0.0	0.0	3.2	15.4	31.3	9.5
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA						
Bangladesh 1999-2000	15.9	26.0	36.5	45.0	57.3	34.7
Cambodia 2000	0.7	1.7	5.6	13.2	22.0	8.2
India 1998-1999	5.5	10.5	19.0	29.1	41.0	20.6
Indonesia 1997	2.2	3.7	10.7	18.9	29.7	12.2
Nepal 2001	1.5	9.3	17.5	34.0	40.5	21.4
Pakistan 1990-1991	5.5	6.1	13.0	18.9	30.6	15.7
Philippines 1998	0.5	1.6	5.0	10.5	21.3	7.2
Vietnam 1997	– 1.0 –		2.1	8.4	19.3	5.7
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN						
Bolivia 1998	3.7	4.8	13.9	21.7	29.7	13.7
Brazil 1996	4.4	10.6	20.5	25.3	34.8	18.0
Colombia 2000	3.2	11.0	20.3	26.7	32.9	19.1
Dominican Republic 2002	7.1	13.4	23.8	32.1	40.6	23.3
Guatemala 1998-1999	6.1	10.6	22.3	29.6	44.3	21.6
Haiti 2000	2.3	7.9	19.1	26.8	31.2	18.0
Nicaragua 2001	7.9	10.5	25.4	35.2	45.5	24.7
Paraguay 1990	3.5	5.8	15.1	27.1	34.3	16.8
Peru 2000	2.5	6.7	11.8	21.4	25.3	13.0

With only few exceptions, teenage fertility is higher in rural than in urban areas (Table 4.2). The reasons for this include later age at marriage and higher levels of education in cities.

There is a strong negative association of teenage fertility with education (Table 4.2). The association does not to imply that less education causes higher fertility but rather that teenage mothers are concentrated among the least educated segment of the population. There are serious and probably intractable issues of endogeny in this association, with causal effects in both directions. Although it is true that less educated young women are more likely to become pregnant, it is also true that girls with babies and girls who become pregnant while attending school are more likely to leave school than other girls. But these issues should not obscure the fact that the least educated teenagers will be raising these children.

Table 4.2 Percentage of women age 15–19 who are mothers or currently pregnant, by residence and level of education, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

Country	Residence		Level of education		
	Urban	Rural	No education	Primary	Secondary or higher
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA					
Benin 2001	11.9	30.0	32.6	15.0	4.9
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	14.4	28.4	28.5	18.6	9.9
Cameroon 1998	20.2	38.1	47.4	35.5	20.3
Central African Republic 1994-1995	34.7	37.4	39.7	33.8	33.7
Chad 1996-1997	38.7	38.4	40.4	37.9	16.0
Comoros 1996	9.4	9.0	13.9	8.8	2.3
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	18.9	41.0	38.9	30.6	8.6
Eritrea 2002	7.6	19.3	25.3	13.5	6.5
Ethiopia 2000	9.1	18.3	20.8	8.9	9.5
Gabon 2000	31.2	40.4	35.4	37.8	29.7
Ghana 1998	8.5	17.4	22.1	23.5	9.8
Guinea 1999	25.4	45.5	45.5	24.1	10.1
Kenya 1998	17.5	21.8	41.4	23.7	9.2
Madagascar 1997	22.1	41.3	53.5	37.0	17.7
Malawi 2000	27.1	34.2	56.1	33.2	19.7
Mali 2001	27.9	49.3	46.8	31.9	15.9
Mozambique 1997	30.6	43.6	50.1	37.9	11.4
Namibia 1992	24.1	20.4	49.6	20.5	20.3
Niger 1998	24.3	48.5	48.8	29.4	9.7
Nigeria 1999	12.1	26.1	57.7	20.6	4.9
Rwanda 2000	6.9	6.8	11.8	6.4	3.8
Senegal 1997	12.7	30.5	29.3	16.3	7.6
Sudan 1990	7.2	13.5	21.3	13.2	3.7
Tanzania 1996	23.5	26.9	39.6	24.4	9.4
Togo 1998	11.7	25.4	37.7	16.1	4.0
Uganda 2000-2001	22.5	33.6	59.0	33.1	16.7
Zambia 2001-2002	27.1	34.9	45.6	35.7	21.3
Zimbabwe 1999	16.1	22.8	36.8	30.8	15.5
NORTHERN AFRICA/WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE					
Armenia 2000	4.0	8.9	*	*	6.0
Egypt 2000	5.3	10.9	17.2	17.5	4.8
Jordan 2002	4.8	2.2	14.0	12.1	4.3
Morocco 1995	3.3	9.1	8.6	8.2	2.5
Turkey 1998	9.4	11.4	22.1	15.0	3.3
Yemen 1997	13.4	16.3	19.0	14.4	9.7
CENTRAL ASIA					
Kazakhstan 1999	7.0	6.4	*	*	6.7
Kyrgyz Republic 1997	5.3	11.2	*	*	9.4
Turkmenistan 2000	3.8	4.6	*	*	4.3
Uzbekistan 1996	9.4	9.6	*	*	9.5
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA					
Bangladesh 1999-2000	25.5	37.0	55.7	44.5	20.9
Cambodia 2000	7.2	8.5	13.3	7.5	5.9
India 1998-1999	11.9	23.8	63.0	61.0	53.0
Indonesia 1997	5.6	15.8	23.3	21.5	5.4
Nepal 2001	12.6	22.5	31.5	19.6	12.4
Pakistan 1990-1991	9.9	18.7	65.1	55.2	55.3
Philippines 1998	4.7	10.8	*	15.9	5.5
Vietnam 1997	1.6	6.6	10.9	9.3	4.0
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN					
Bolivia 1998	11.1	21.8	51.5	28.9	8.8
Brazil 1996	16.6	24.2	54.4	28.3	14.1
Colombia 2000	16.9	26.2	*	33.7	15.0
Dominican Republic 2002	21.0	28.1	64.3	34.0	13.0
Guatemala 1998-1999	16.0	25.7	40.5	25.6	9.2
Haiti 2000	13.3	22.8	44.6	18.8	10.7
Mexico 1987	16.0	23.0	50.1	26.1	11.4
Nicaragua 2001	21.3	30.2	46.3	32.4	16.2
Paraguay 1990	12.8	20.8	33.8	24.2	6.2
Peru 2000	9.2	21.7	36.9	26.4	9.2

Note: An asterisk indicates that there are fewer than 25 unweighted cases in the subgroup and the figure has been suppressed.

4.1 Trends in Adolescent Fertility

Countries that have conducted more than one survey provide the basis for examining trends in adolescent pregnancy and fertility. In some countries, however, the interval between surveys is short and long-term changes may be obscured.

The picture regarding trends in adolescent pregnancy and fertility is mixed (Figure 4.1). In West Africa, some countries show modest declines in teenage fertility. Declines are evident in Benin and Côte d'Ivoire among older teenagers and among both older and younger girls in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo. Only in Niger is there indication of an increase among 15-17 year-olds and no change among older teenagers.

In southern and eastern Africa, there are more exceptions to the decline of teenage fertility. There is no apparent change in Tanzania, and there appears to be increases in Madagascar and perhaps among older teenagers in Zimbabwe. There are downward trends among older teenagers in Kenya, Rwanda, and Zambia and sharp declines in both age groups in Eritrea.

Among the five southern and southeastern Asian countries, there may be a decline in teenage pregnancy underway in India but clearly not in Bangladesh. The levels are much lower in Indonesia and the Philippines, but there is no evidence of any downward trend. There is some suggestion of decline in Nepal over a recent five-year period.

In Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco, teenage fertility is quite low, and the most recent surveys show the lowest level. There is little or no change in Turkey or in Yemen. In Kazakhstan, there appears to be a significant decline in fertility among 18-19 year-olds.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, there have been increases in teenage fertility in Brazil, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic. In Colombia, where four surveys were conducted between 1986 and 2000, there has been an increase in pregnancy and childbirth among teens. Haiti may be similar. In Peru, which has also had four surveys between 1986 and 2000, there is no apparent trend in either direction. Why teenage fertility has been increasing in some of these countries is puzzling in view of increasing education and the availability of contraception. A possible explanation is that sexual intercourse is occurring at younger ages in countries where teenage pregnancy is increasing. The percentage of Brazilian teenagers who report never having had sex decreased from 80 to 67 between 1986 and 1996. In Colombia between 1986 and 2000, the decline was from 80 to 60 percent, while in the Dominican Republic the proportion of teenagers who reported never having had sex dropped from 76 to 64 percent between 1986 and 2002.

The sharp decline in the proportion of teenagers who have never had sex in Brazil, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic is not evident in the other countries for which trend data were collected (Figure 4.2). In most of the other countries, there has been either little change in the proportion of teenagers who have never had sex or increases, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, and Nigeria. Increases in the age at sexual initiation may have positive implications for reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. In general, however, the proportion of teenagers who have never had sex is lower in sub-Saharan Africa than in the other regions.

Figure 4.1 Trends in adolescent pregnancy or fertility: the percentage of women age 15-17 and 18-19 who are mothers or currently pregnant

WESTERN AFRICA

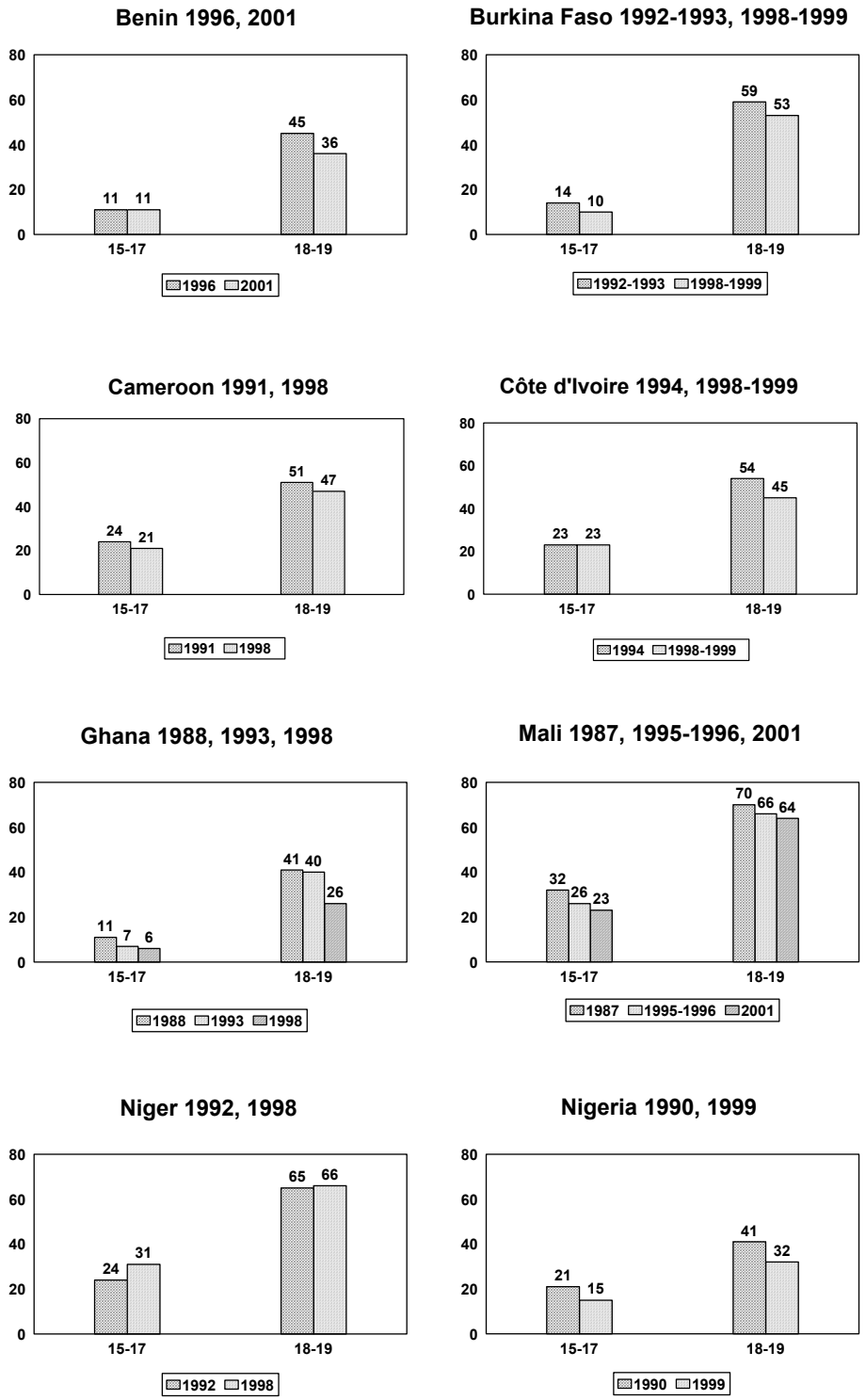
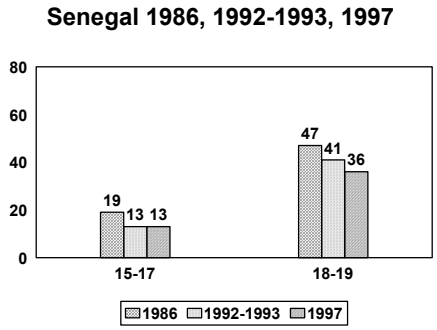
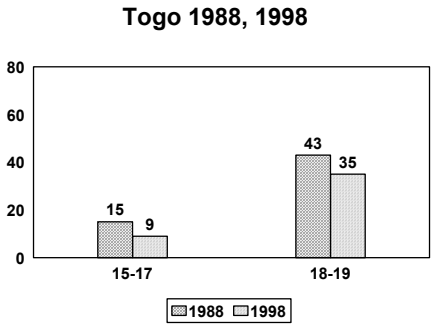
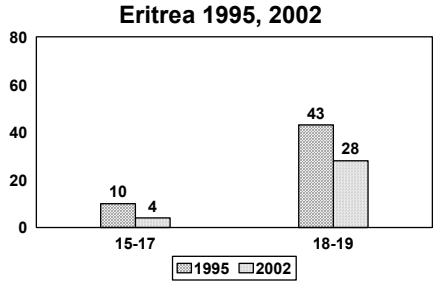


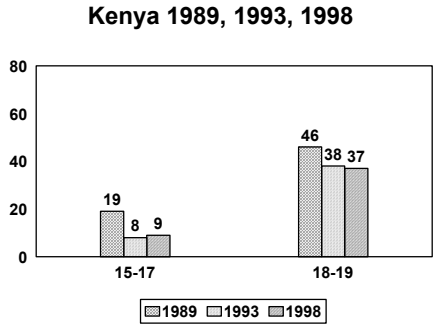
Figure 4.1—Continued

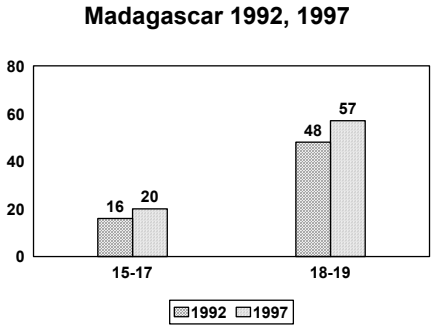


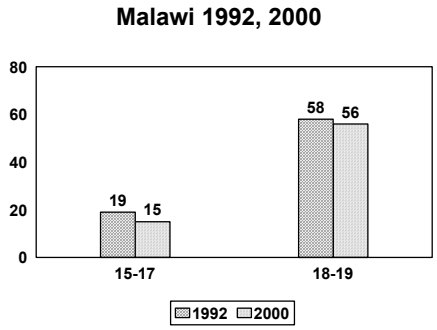


SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AFRICA









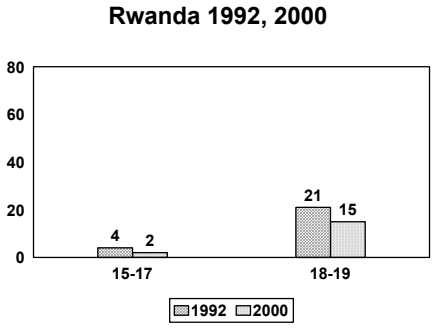
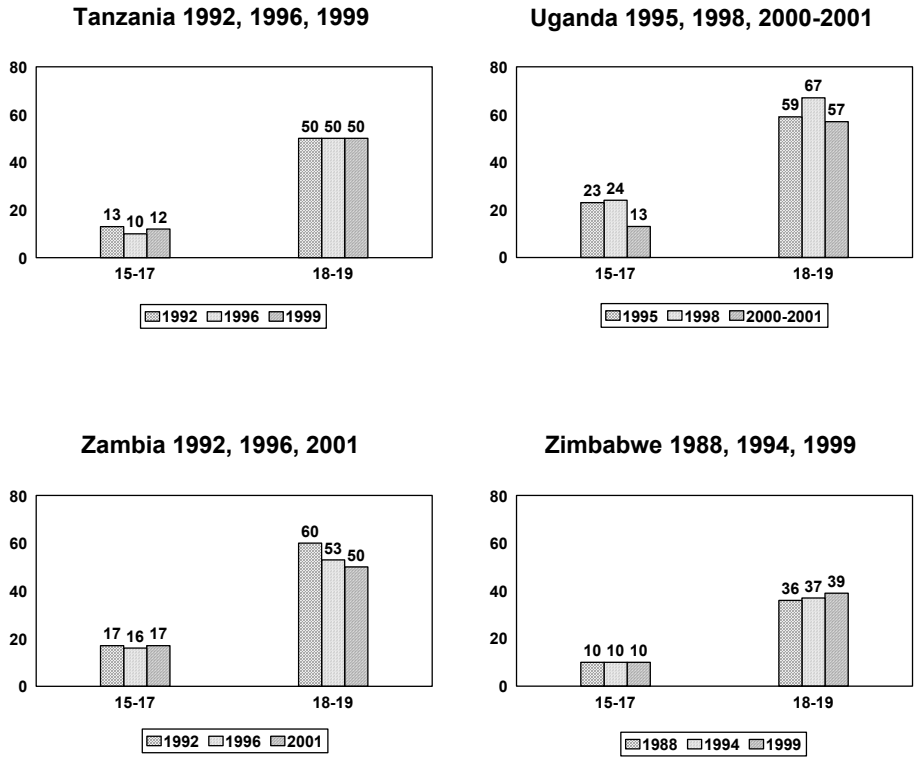


Figure 4.1—Continued



NORTHERN AFRICA/WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE

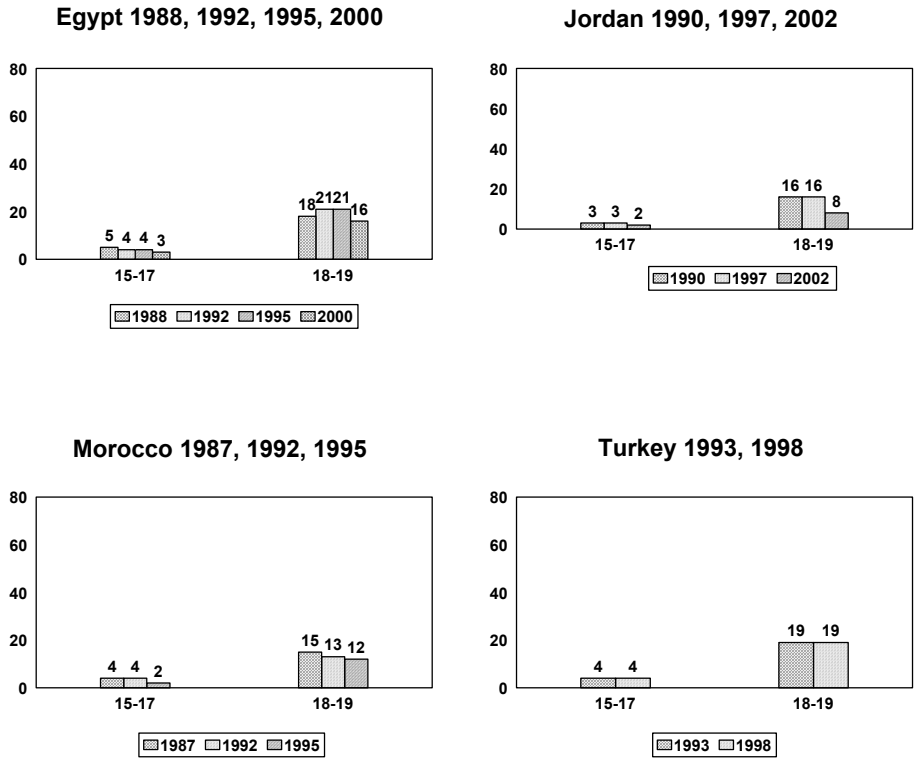
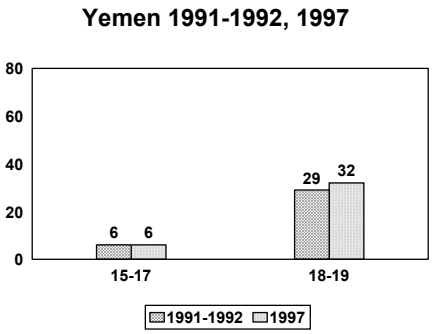
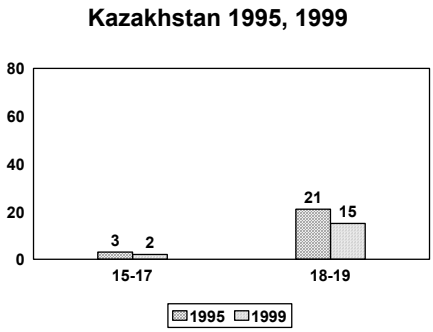
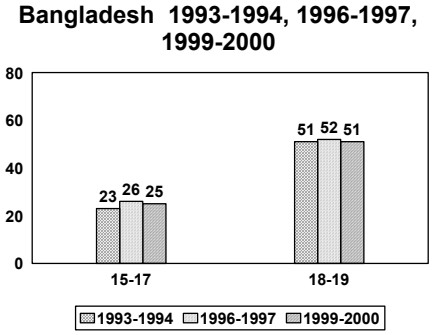


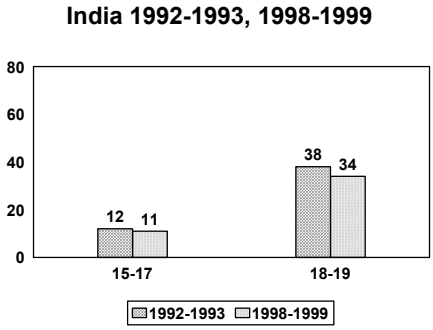
Figure 4.1—Continued

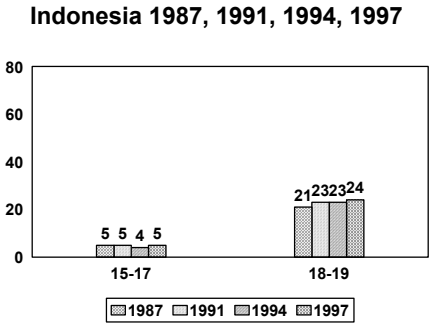


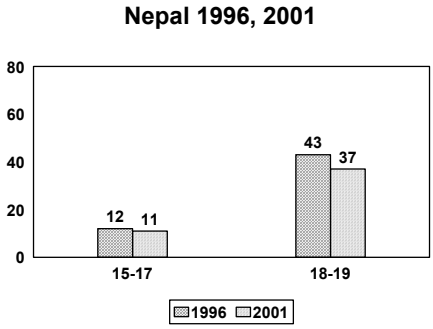


SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA









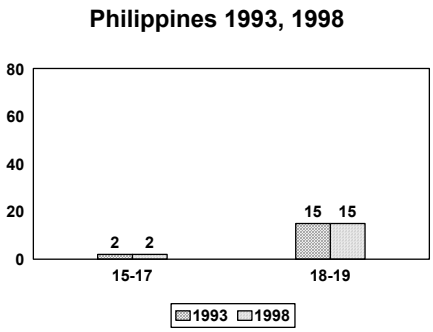
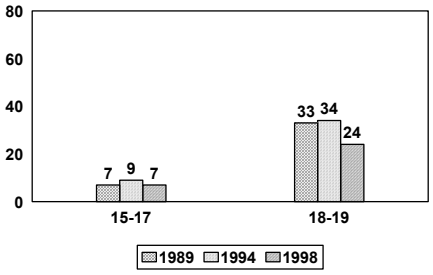


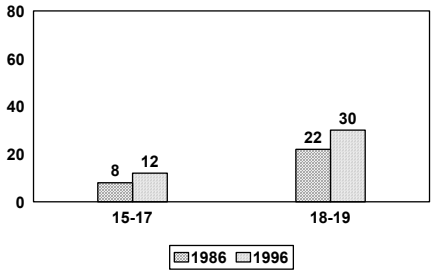
Figure 4.1—Continued

LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN

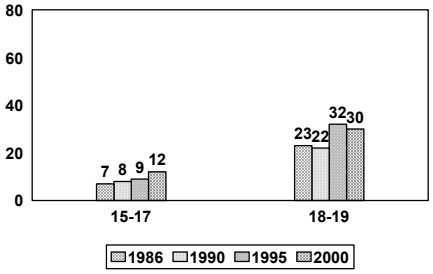
Bolivia 1989, 1994, 1998



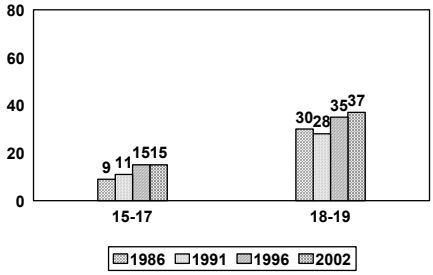
Brazil 1986, 1996



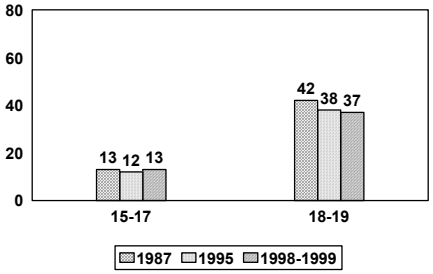
Colombia 1986, 1990, 1995, 2000



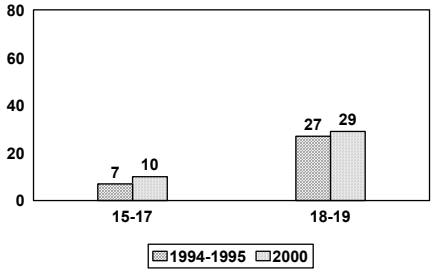
Dominican Republic 1986, 1991, 1996, 2002



Guatemala 1987, 1995, 1998-1999



Haiti 1994-1995, 2000



Peru 1986, 1992, 1996, 2000

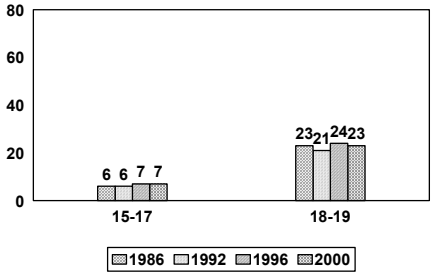


Figure 4.2 Trends in the percentage of women age 15-19 who have never had sex, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

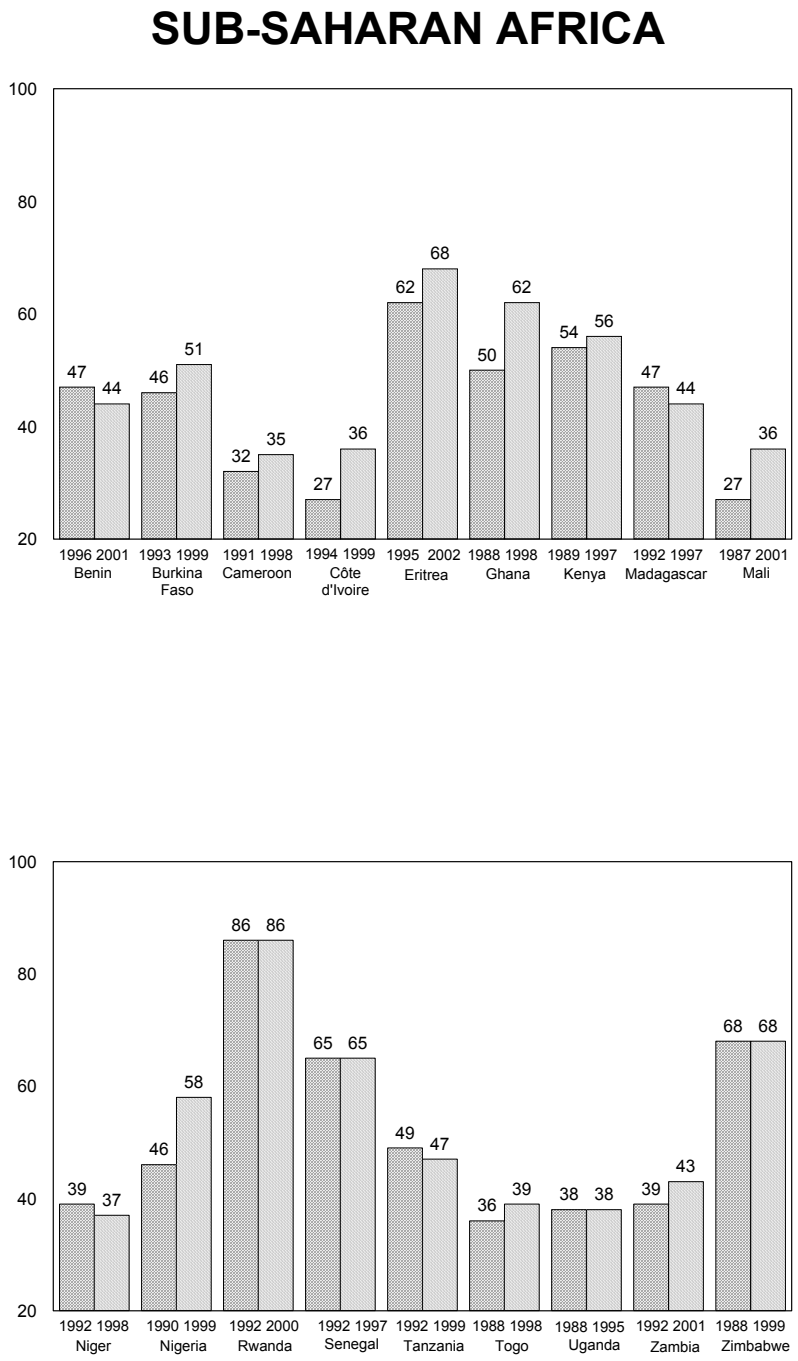
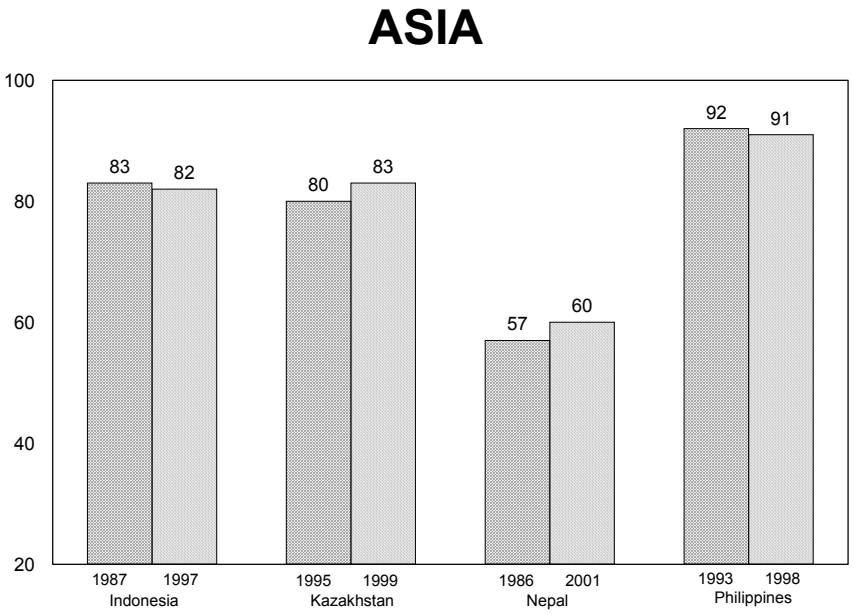
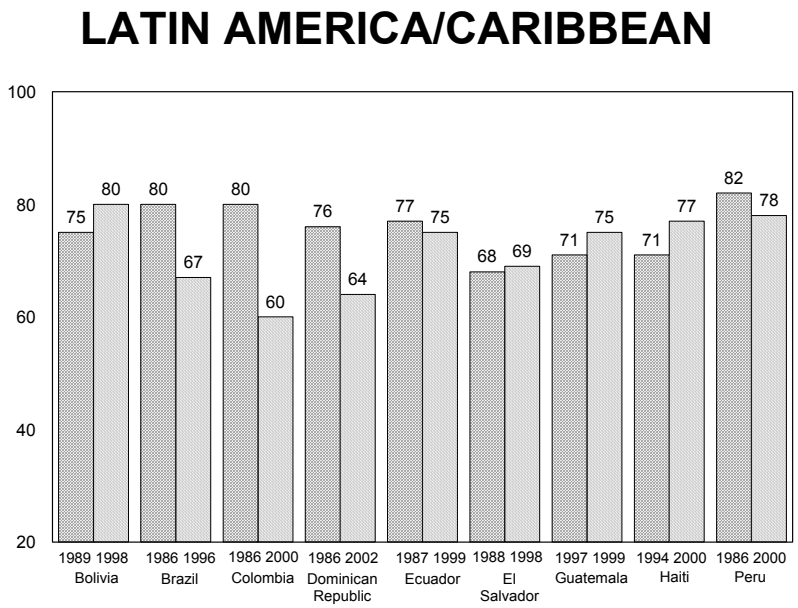


Figure 4.2—Continued





5 Age at Marriage

There are several indicators of age at first union. The two used most frequently in the DHS surveys are median age at first union and the percent married by certain ages (18, 20, 22). In this analysis, we use the percentage married before age 20 (or phrased differently, the percent of women married as teenagers) and the median age at marriage.

The percentage of women married before age 20 is shown in Table 5.1 by women's age at the time of the survey. The statistic of greatest current interest is that for the youngest age group, women 20-24. The proportion married before age 20 in this age group is highest in some of the least developed countries: Chad and Niger, at 86 and 85 percent, respectively, are the highest. Other countries where at least 75 percent of women in this cohort were married before age 20 are Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, and Uganda. Countries with the lowest proportion of women married as teenagers are Namibia and South Africa, at 20 and 14 percent, respectively.

Table 5.1 Percentage of women who married before age 20, by current age, various surveys, 1990-2002

	Age of woman				
Country	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA					
Benin 2001	58.5	59.2	63.0	62.3	63.2
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	84.1	81.7	84.4	84.1	87.5
Cameroon 1998	61.2	66.6	71.9	70.6	76.7
Central African Republic 1994-1995	73.5	74.9	75.4	65.4	80.6
Chad 1996-1997	86.3	85.8	84.9	85.7	86.9
Comoros 1996	39.8	47.4	61.8	66.8	69.0
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	49.5	52.4	64.4	64.4	66.1
Eritrea 2002	63.3	62.6	66.7	58.6	61.4
Ethiopia 2000	64.7	71.2	85.2	84.6	91.4
Gabon 2000	48.9	47.1	49.6	56.1	57.9
Ghana 1998	56.4	53.8	62.3	57.9	65.0
Guinea 1999	78.8	81.8	81.1	78.7	82.3
Kenya 1998	46.1	48.2	55.7	63.3	66.1
Madagascar 1997	61.5	59.4	57.9	64.9	63.6
Malawi 2000	72.9	76.0	75.8	74.4	77.0
Mali 2001	80.9	79.4	80.2	78.9	80.4
Mauritania 2000-2001	49.7	55.9	67.5	71.2	73.9
Mozambique 1997	77.8	74.0	72.5	80.7	76.3
Namibia 1992	20.0	20.2	24.7	26.3	28.2
Niger 1998	85.1	90.2	91.4	95.9	95.5
Nigeria 1999	52.7	58.0	64.9	66.6	70.3
Rwanda 2000	41.6	37.6	40.0	44.5	45.0
Senegal 1997	50.6	58.1	70.0	74.1	76.6
South Africa 1998	14.2	20.2	26.9	29.5	30.3
Sudan 1990	36.6	47.2	59.7	72.9	77.9
Tanzania 1999	61.8	62.5	68.2	66.7	78.9
Togo 1998	48.4	63.3	62.8	58.6	61.0
Uganda 2000-2001	74.9	71.3	74.4	72.0	76.2
Zambia 2001-2002	63.3	66.1	69.1	74.0	80.2
Zimbabwe 1999	52.9	52.5	54.1	65.3	62.3
NORTHERN AFRICA/WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE					
Armenia 2000	37.2	53.1	48.8	43.6	38.9
Egypt 2000	35.9	42.5	50.8	57.2	59.5
Jordan 2002	21.5	30.5	31.4	35.5	43.7
Morocco 1995	29.2	33.2	42.8	53.6	60.3
Turkey 1998	42.8	45.6	47.5	60.6	66.2
Yemen 1997	63.6	75.6	80.8	86.5	83.9
CENTRAL ASIA					
Kazakhstan 1999	39.9	39.8	31.9	31.0	29.3
Kyrgyz Republic 1997	58.4	45.0	40.2	38.3	46.7
Turkmenistan 2000	26.2	26.4	22.3	23.5	38.8
Uzbekistan 1996	55.7	51.0	42.7	51.4	56.2

Continued…

Table 5.1—*Continued*

Country	Age of woman 20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA					
Bangladesh 1999-2000	75.4	84.7	90.2	92.2	95.1
Cambodia 2000	41.1	51.1	46.6	53.4	45.0
India 1998-1999	66.4	74.1	78.3	79.9	81.8
Indonesia 1997	47.0	50.9	60.1	67.5	67.2
Nepal 2001	74.5	80.5	82.3	82.9	84.2
Pakistan 1990-1991	48.9	58.4	63.1	60.5	60.9
Philippines 1998	27.5	30.2	34.2	34.2	36.8
Vietnam 1997	35.9	37.7	34.8	34.9	34.6
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN					
Bolivia 1998	38.5	43.5	41.8	44.5	42.9
Brazil 1996	38.8	41.6	40.8	41.7	39.3
Colombia 2000	37.1	39.3	35.5	39.9	39.7
Dominican Republic 2002	56.4	58.3	59.0	56.3	61.4
Ecuador 1999[1]	40.5	43.8	43.2	48.1	49.4
El Salvador 1998[2]	46.4	51.9	52.5	58.0	59.3
Guatemala 1998-1999	55.5	57.0	56.7	56.0	60.1
Haiti 2000	43.0	46.3	43.2	50.4	49.8
Nicaragua 2001	60.1	66.4	65.1	65.3	70.4
Paraguay 1995-1996[3]	45.7	43.3	40.3	37.2	38.9
Peru 2000	33.6	37.2	38.0	41.8	39.2

[1] Based on CDC 1999 survey
[2] Based on CDC 1998 survey
[3] Based on CDC 1995-1996 survey

Comparison of the proportion married before age 20 across age groups is one method of examining trends in age at marriage. Most of the countries in Table 5.1 show evidence of a trend toward later marriage, indicated by higher proportions of women in the older age groups. This trend is reviewed more comprehensively in the next section.

The association of urban-rural residence and education with age at first marriage is shown in Table 5.2, using median age at marriage for women age 25-49. In all but a few countries, the median age at marriage in urban areas exceeds that in rural areas by an average of about 1.5 years. The direct association of level of education with age at marriage is consistent, and frequently shows differences of 5-6 years in median age at marriage between women with no schooling and those with secondary or higher education. Similar residential and educational differentials in age at marriage were documented previously during the World Fertility Survey (McCarthy, 1982).

Table 5.2 Median age at first marriage for women 25–49, by urban-rural residence and level of education, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

Country	Residence		Level of education			Total
	Urban	Rural	No education	Primary	Secondary or higher	
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA						
Benin 2001	20.0	18.2	18.1	19.6	23.6	18.8
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	18.6	17.6	17.6	18.0	23.2	17.6
Cameroon 1998	18.4	16.8	15.3	17.7	20.6	17.4
Central African Republic 1994-1995	16.9	17.6	17.4	17.0	17.7	17.3
Chad 1996-1997	16.0	15.8	15.7	16.5	17.9	15.8
Comoros 1996	19.5	18.3	17.8	18.8	23.4	18.5
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	19.8	18.2	17.9	19.3	22.5	18.7
Eritrea 2002	19.3	17.5	17.4	18.3	22.8	18.3
Ethiopia 2000	16.9	15.9	15.8	17.3	21.2	16.0
Gabon 2000	20.0	18.2	18.0	18.1	21.0	19.7
Ghana 1998	19.7	18.8	18.5	18.8	19.7	19.1
Guinea 1999	17.4	16.0	16.1	17.1	20.1	16.4
Kenya 1998	21.0	18.8	16.6	18.5	21.9	19.2
Madagascar 1997	20.2	18.0	16.3	18.0	21.5	18.5
Malawi 2000	18.4	17.7	17.5	17.7	21.2	17.8
Mali 2001	17.5	16.2	16.1	17.1	21.8	16.5
Mauritania 2000-2001	17.5	16.8	15.9	18.5	21.6	17.1
Mozambique 1997	18.1	16.8	16.5	17.5	22.7	17.1
Namibia 1992	a	24.0	22.6	24.7	a	24.8
Niger 1998	15.8	15.0	15.0	15.9	20.5	15.1
Nigeria 1999	19.4	17.3	15.6	18.3	22.1	17.9
Rwanda 2000	21.5	20.5	20.0	20.7	22.7	20.7
Senegal 1997	19.6	16.3	16.5	19.6	23.6	17.4
South Africa 1998	24.8	22.9	21.4	23.1	25.0	24.2
Sudan 1990	19.1	17.1	16.2	18.3	a	17.8
Tanzania 1999	18.8	18.0	16.7	18.4	23.2	18.1
Togo 1998	20.0	18.5	18.4	18.8	22.2	18.8
Uganda 2000-2001	18.7	17.6	17.1	17.5	20.7	17.8
Zambia 2001-2002	18.3	17.6	16.8	17.4	20.2	17.8
Zimbabwe 1999	20.0	18.8	17.8	18.5	20.8	19.3
NORTHERN AFRICA/ WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE						
Armenia 2000	21.1	19.7	*	*	20.5	20.5
Egypt 2000	21.2	18.1	17.3	18.4	22.7	19.5
Jordan 2002	21.9	21.3	19.2	19.0	20.4	21.8
Morocco 1995	21.9	19.0	18.8	21.0	26.8	20.2
Turkey 1998	19.8	18.9	17.6	19.1	22.3	19.5
Yemen 1997	16.3	15.9	15.8	16.8	21.9	16.0
CENTRAL ASIA						
Kazakhstan 1999	21.3	21.1	*	*	21.2	21.2
Kyrgyz Republic 1997	20.9	20.2	*	*	20.4	20.4
Turkmenistan 2000	21.2	21.6	21.1	19.6	21.5	21.5
Uzbekistan 1996	20.8	19.6	*	*	20.1	20.1
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA						
Bangladesh 1999-2000	15.8	14.4	14.0	14.6	17.2	14.7
Cambodia 2000	20.6	19.9	19.7	19.8	21.4	20.0
India 1998-1999	18.5	16.5	15.8	16.8	19.5	16.9
Indonesia 1997	20.4	17.9	16.9	17.6	22.0	18.6
Nepal 2001	17.6	16.6	16.4	17.2	18.9	16.7
Pakistan 1990-1991	19.1	18.4	18.0	18.4	20.1	18.6
Philippines 1998	23.0	21.0	18.7	19.8	23.3	22.1
Vietnam 1997	23.5	20.8	20.5	20.0	21.8	21.3

Continued…

Table 5.2—*Continued*

Country	Residence		Level of education			Total
	Urban	Rural	No education	Primary	Secondary or higher	
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN						
Bolivia 1998	21.2	20.3	20.2	19.7	22.1	20.9
Brazil 1996	21.3	20.2	18.8	19.7	22.2	21.1
Colombia 2000	21.8	20.4	18.6	19.8	22.9	21.5
Dominican Republic 2002	19.3	18.5	16.2	17.6	21.5	19.0
Guatemala 1998-1999	20.3	18.4	17.8	19.0	21.9	19.3
Haiti 2000	21.9	19.8	19.3	20.1	24.8	20.5
Nicaragua 2001	18.7	17.3	16.4	17.4	20.3	18.2
Paraguay 1990	21.8	19.8	19.4	20.0	23.3	20.9
Peru 2000	22.5	19.6	18.8	19.2	23.5	21.4

Note: An aserisk indicates that there are fewer than 25 unweighted cases in this subgroup and the figure has been suppressed.
[a] Omitted because less than half of the women in the subgroup have been married.

5.1 Trends in Age at Marriage

Trends over time in age at first marriage are analyzed here in terms of approximate birth cohorts. The trends can be inferred for periods of around 20 years from single surveys and for considerably longer periods of time from multiple surveys. In addition to the DHS surveys, the World Fertility Survey data have been used for those countries that also participated in the DHS program. For some countries, trends can be measured back to birth cohorts of the 1930s. The qualifying term "approximate" means that the five-year cohort specification for classifying women in different countries can be imprecise by as much as a calendar year or two in order to group them into a standard format ranging from 1935-39 to 1975-79. In cases where surveys were conducted close enough in time to produce overlapping cohorts, the estimates of the proportion married before age 20 for the same cohort are averaged across surveys. For some countries with multiple surveys, there are as many as four estimates for the same cohort. These data are shown in Appendix A.

Trends in the proportion of women married before age 20 are shown in Figures 5.1-5.5 by region. Because so many DHS countries are in sub-Saharan Africa, the first three graphs focus on that region. The country codes are listed in Appendix B. The first graph includes the countries in western Africa that show evidence of increasing age at marriage (i.e., a declining proportion married before age 20), followed by a similar presentation for the countries of southern and eastern Africa, and then the sub-Saharan countries that show no evidence of a trend in age at marriage. The remaining three graphs show trends in the other regions.

Age at marriage has increased in 21 of the 30 countries surveyed in sub-Saharan Africa. Only a short time ago, there was skepticism about whether any changes in age at marriage were occurring in that part of the world. Now the evidence is overwhelming that a major transition is underway in sub-Saharan Africa. The changes in western Africa are modest but convincing (Figure 5.1.1). At the beginning of the observation period (birth cohorts of the 1930s and 1940s), the countries are clustered in the range of 70 to 90 percent of women married as teenagers. By the end of the period (birth cohorts of the 1970s) the range had dropped to between 50 and 70 percent.

A pattern of decline is also evident in southern and eastern Africa (Figure 5.1.2) (Harwood-Lejeune, 2000). In these countries, however, there is more diversity in the proportion of women who were married before age 20, and there are sharper declines in teenage marriage. Unlike countries in western Africa, quite a few of the countries in southern and eastern Africa now show less than 50 percent of women marrying before age 20.

Figure 5.1.1 Countries in sub-Saharan Africa that show increases in age at marriage (declines in the percentage of women first married before age 20), by approximate birth cohorts: Western Africa

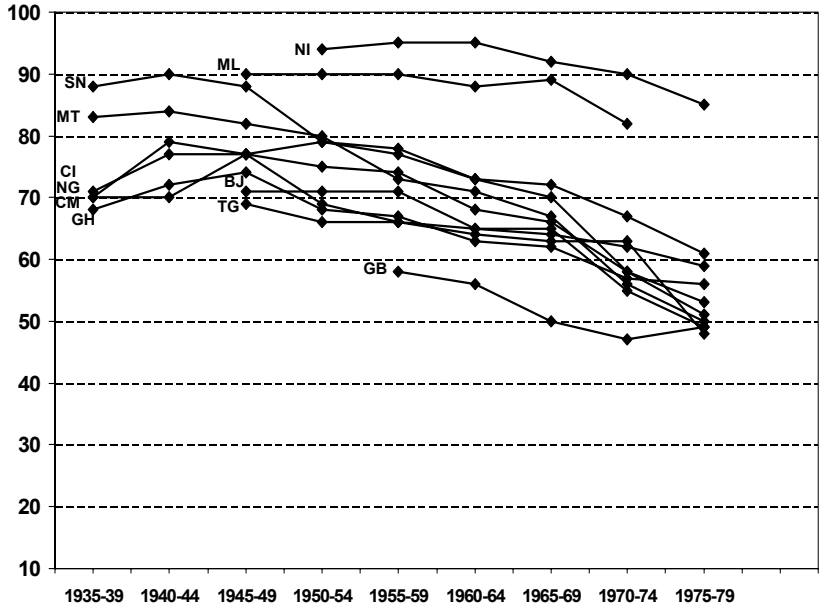
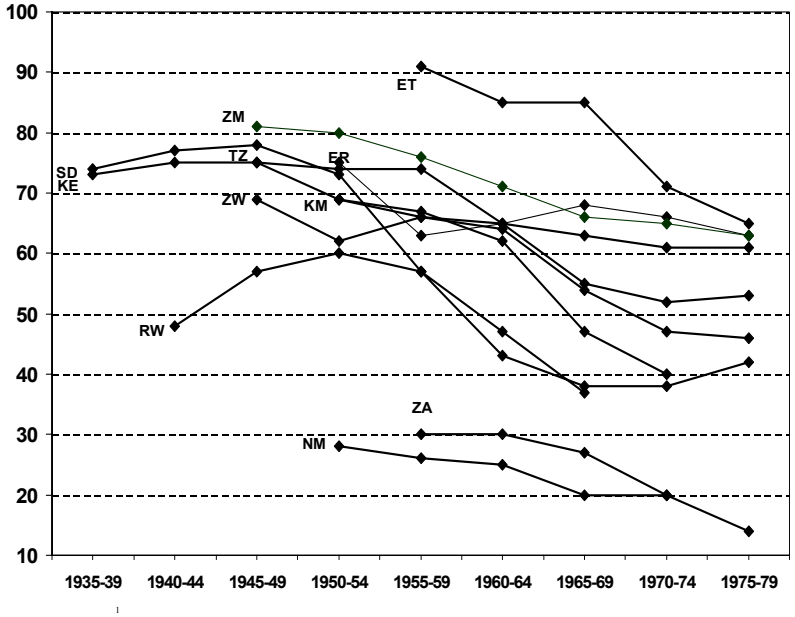


Figure 5.1.2 Countries in sub-Saharan Africa that show increases in age at marriage (declines in the percentage of women first married before age 20), by approximate birth cohorts: Southern and eastern Africa



Note: For country codes, see Appendix B

Figure 5.2 Countries in sub-Saharan Africa that show no increases in age at marriage (no declines in percentage of women first married before age 20), by approximate birth cohort

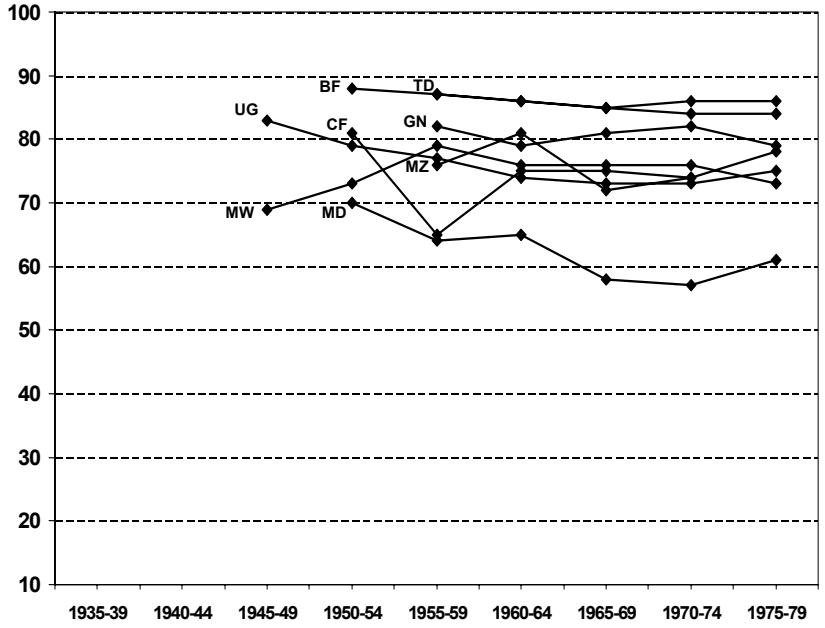
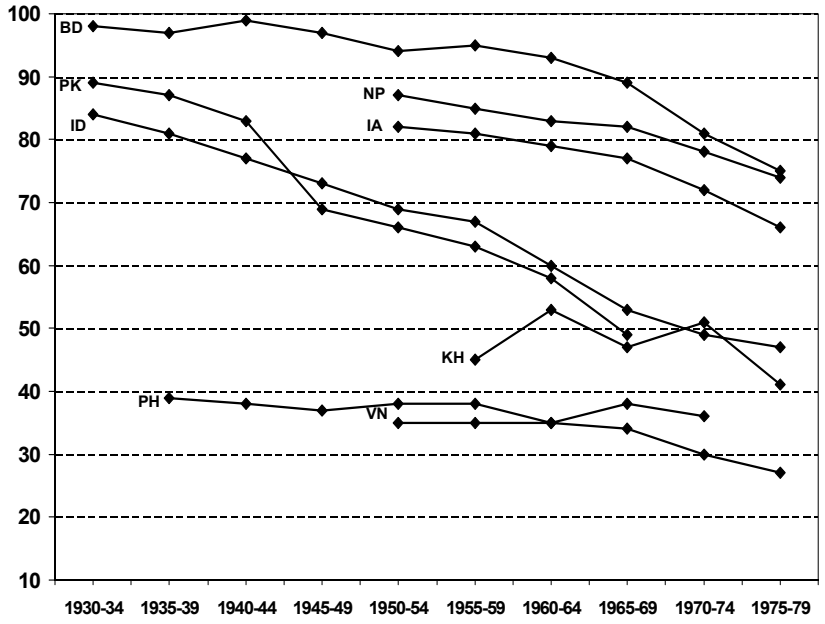


Figure 5.3 Trends in the percentage of women first married before age 20, by approximate birth cohorts: Southern and southeastern Asia



Note: For country codes, see Appendix B

Figure 5.4 Trends in the percentage of women first married before age 20, by approximate birth cohorts: Northern Africa, central Asia, western Asia, and Europe

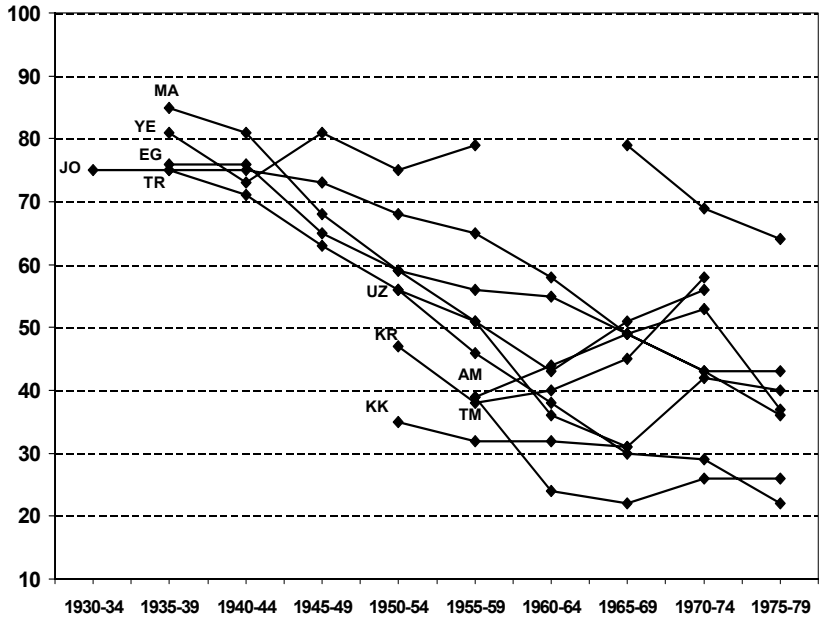
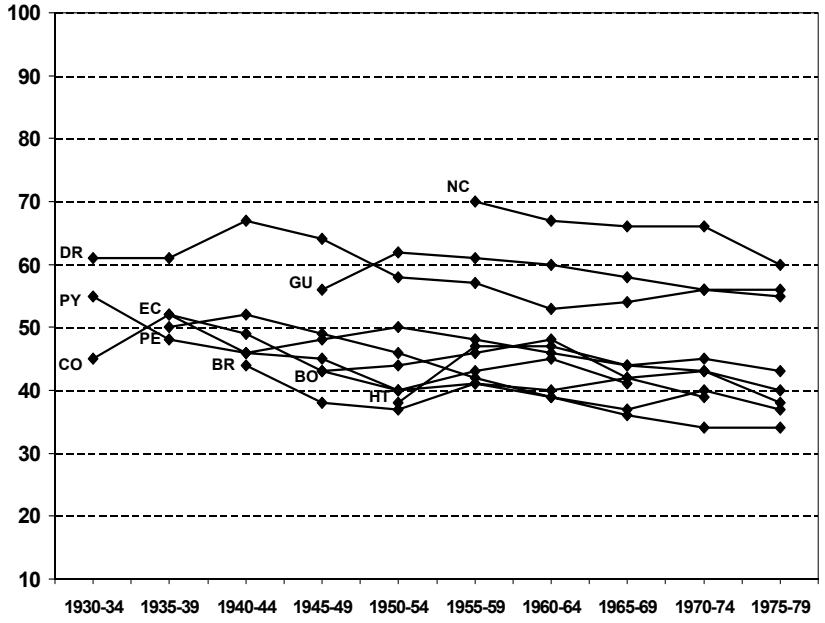


Figure 5.5 Trends in the percentage of women first married before age 20, by approximate birth cohorts: Latin America and Caribbean



Note: For country codes, see Appendix B

In the remaining sub-Saharan countries the trend is mostly flat, with about 70 to 90 percent of women married before age 20 (Figure 5.2). They include some of the least developed countries in Africa: Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, and Uganda. It is likely that increases in age at marriage will begin to appear in these countries in the near future.

The proportion of women married before age 20 in southern and southeastern Asia is declining uniformly, although levels vary widely (Figure 5.3). The magnitude of decline for the most recent cohorts ranges from about 30 to 70 percent. Nonetheless, all the cohorts show increases in age at marriage. Indonesia, with estimates from five surveys, shows a striking monotonic decline in the proportion married before age 20, from 84 percent for the 1930-34 cohort to 47 percent for the 1975-79 cohort. Pakistan shows a similar steep decline in early marriages, but there are no recent data for that country.

In other parts of Asia and in North Africa, there are several exceptions to the otherwise dominant pattern of declining proportions of teenagers getting married (Figure 5.4). In Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan, there has been a recent reversal of the downward trend. In Armenia, the earlier trend was toward younger marriages, but there has been a recent reversal. The other countries in this region all show declines in early marriage. Increasing age at marriage has long been observed in Morocco. In Jordan, only 22 percent of women in the most recent cohort have married by age 20, down from 75 percent 40 years earlier.

The picture in Latin America and the Caribbean is a modest slope toward later marriage with little variation across the region (Figure 5.5). The increase in age at marriage probably started earlier in this part of the world (UN, 1990). The cohorts of the 1930s mostly show a concentration at 50 percent married before age 20 with movement toward 40 percent among the most recent cohorts. Although the trend toward later marriage can be seen in Nicaragua, the proportion marrying early is much higher in that country, with 60 percent of young women marrying by age 20.

5.2 Trends in Age at Marriage by Residence and Education

Increases in age at marriage are likely to be influenced by increases in both urban residence and level of education. It is therefore of interest to examine these trends separately in urban and rural areas, and also among women with no formal schooling. Figure 5.6 shows the trends in median age at marriage for women age 25-29 by urban-rural residence and no education. A younger age group would be desirable to detect the most recent trends, but in many countries the median age for women 20-24 had not yet been reached, a situation in urban areas in Morocco for women even for women age 25-29.

In virtually all of the countries, there have been increases in the average age at marriage in both urban and rural areas. There seems to be some tendency for the increases in urban areas to be greater than in rural areas, but there are numerous exceptions; the more important observation is that women in both sectors of the population are marrying later.

In 27 of the 34 countries examined here there have been recent increases in age at marriage among women with no education, although some of these increases have been small and within the range of sampling error. This suggests that there are more pervasive social changes underway that influence age at marriage beyond formal schooling. One of these influences is exposure to mass media, especially television. The correlation between regular exposure to television and the proportion of women married before age 20 (for women 20-24 across 49 countries) is moderately strong (-.53), but urban residence and education are also clearly involved. An earlier study of the impact of mass media on reproductive behavior showed significant associations with age at marriage in some sub-Saharan countries, an association that persisted with numerous covariates controlled (Westoff and Bankole, 1997).

Figure 5.6 Trends in median age at first marriage for women age 25-29, by urban-rural residence and for women with no education

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

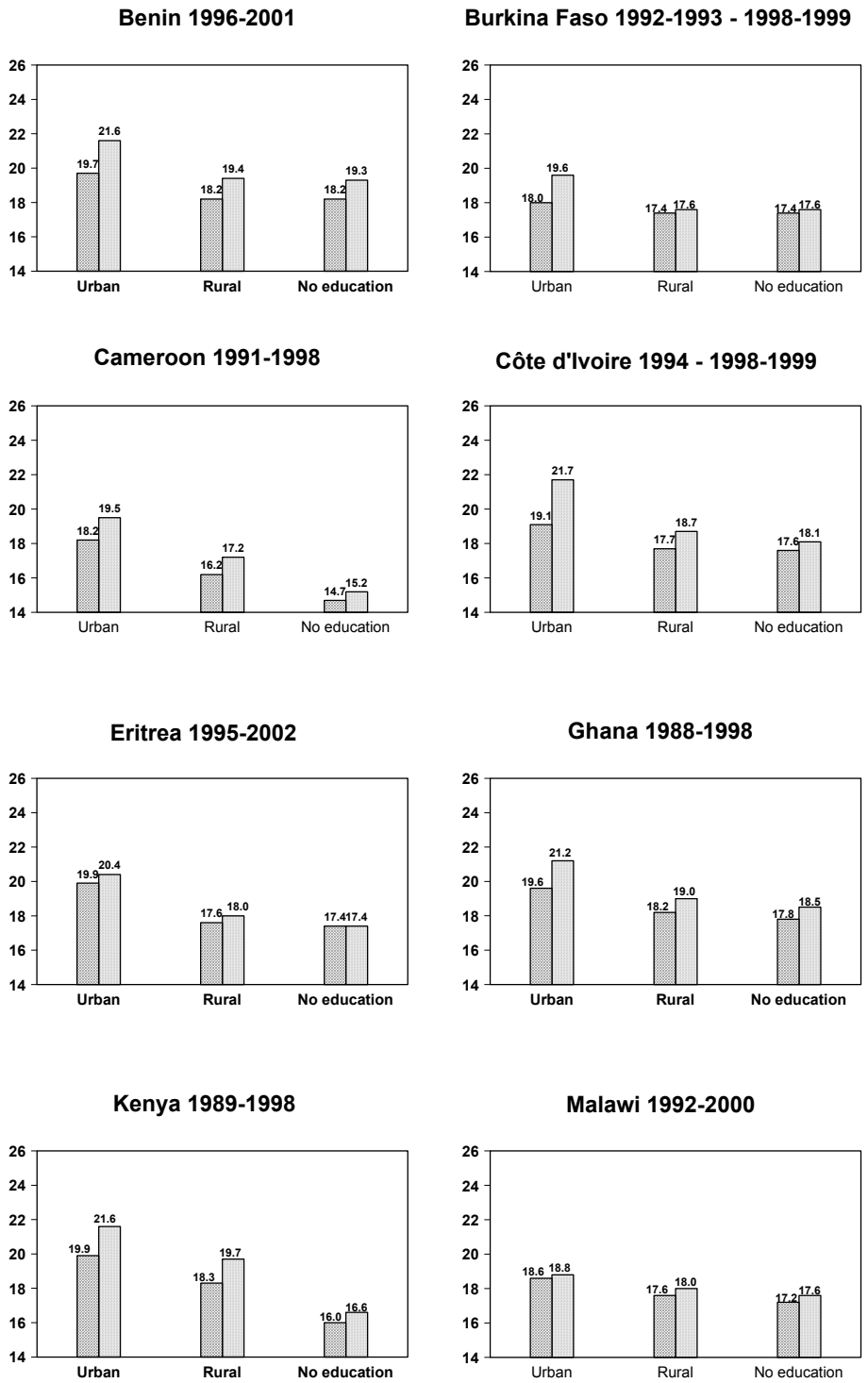


Figure 5.6—Continued

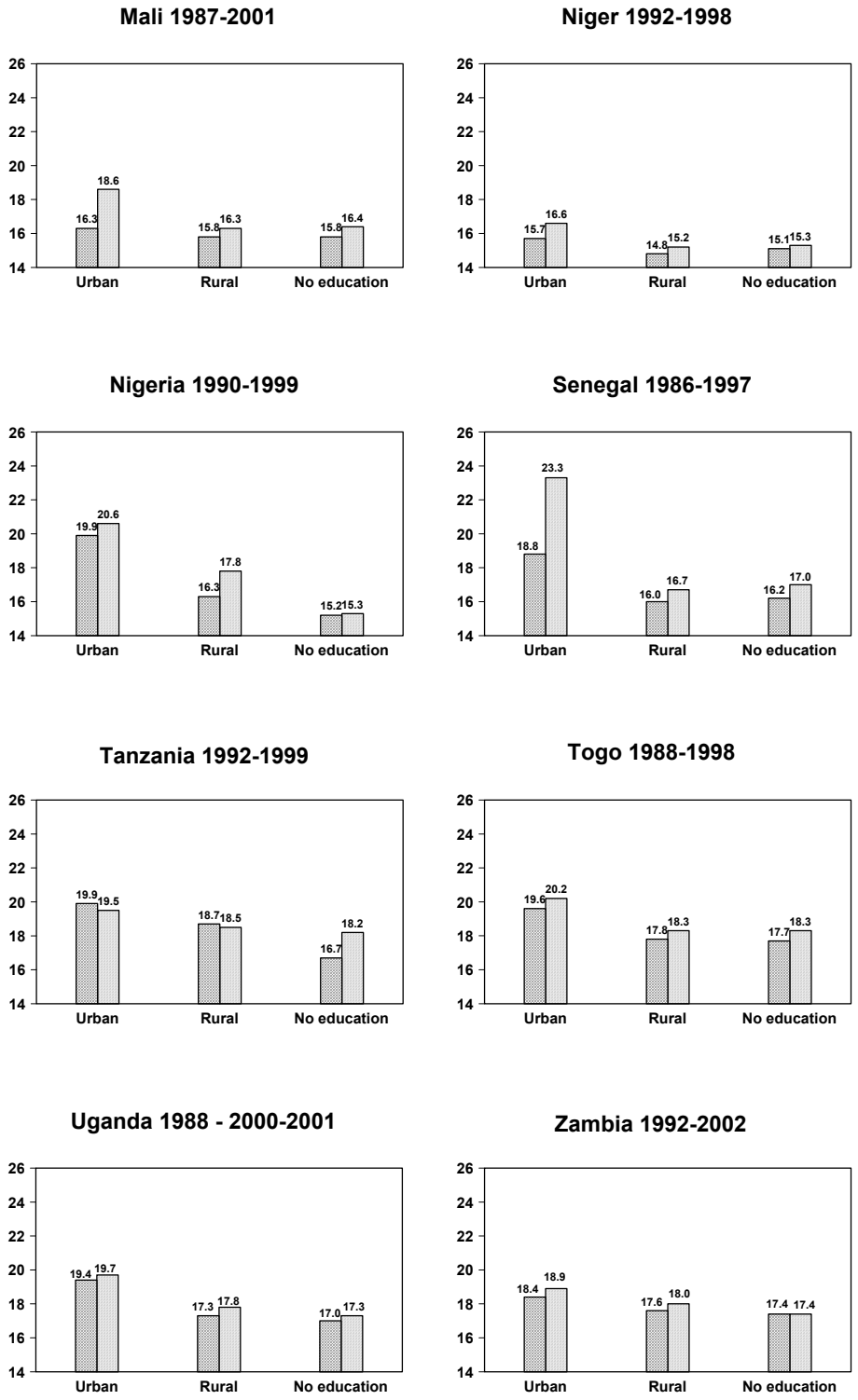
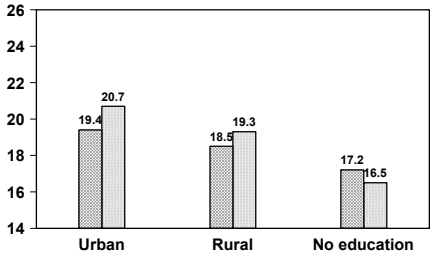


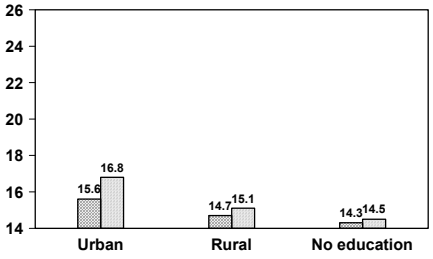
Figure 5.6—Continued

Zimbabwe 1988-1999

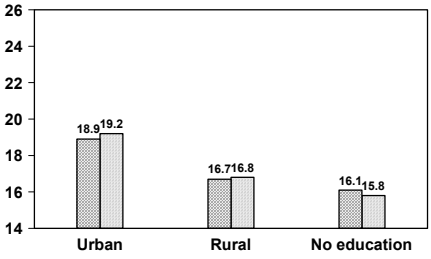


SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

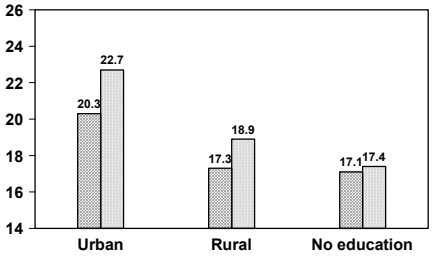
Bangladesh 1993-1994 - 1999-2000



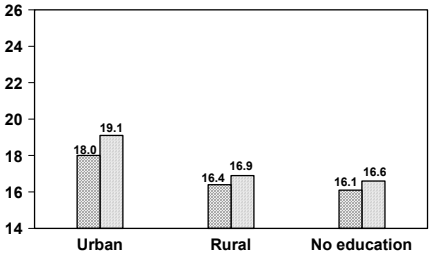
India 1992-1993 - 1998-1999



Indonesia 1987-1997



Nepal 1996-2001



Philippines 1993-1998

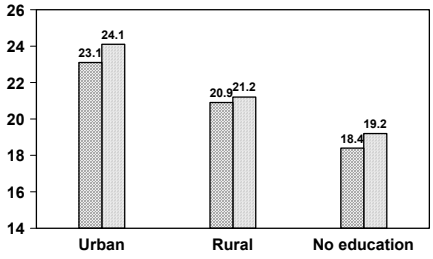
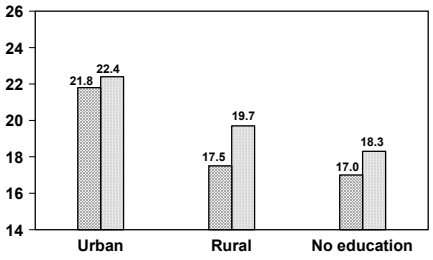


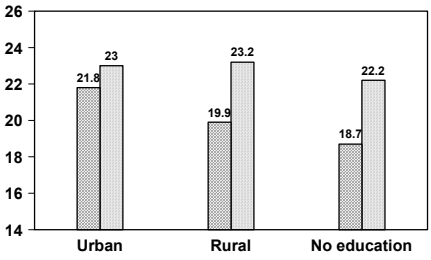
Figure 5.6—Continued

NORTHERN AFRICA/WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE

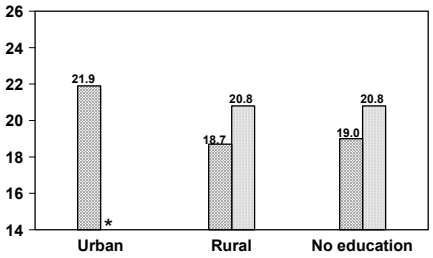
Egypt 1988-1995



Jordan 1990-2002

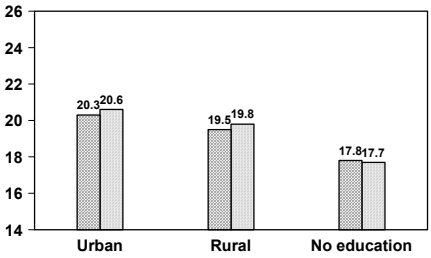


Morocco 1987-1995

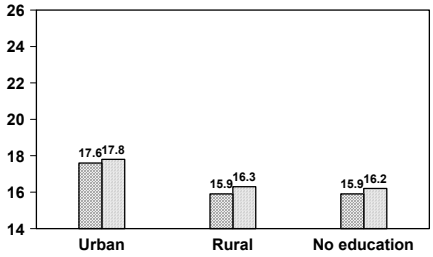


* Median age not yet reached

Turkey 1993-1998

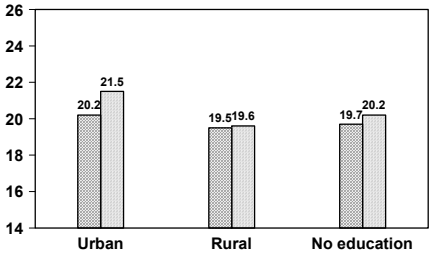


Yemen 1991-1992 - 1997



LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN

Bolivia 1989-1998



Brazil 1986-1996

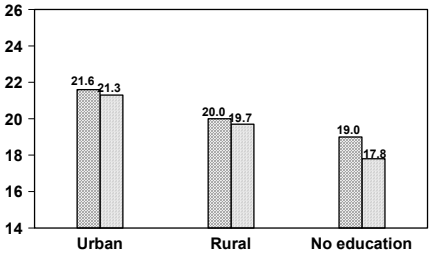
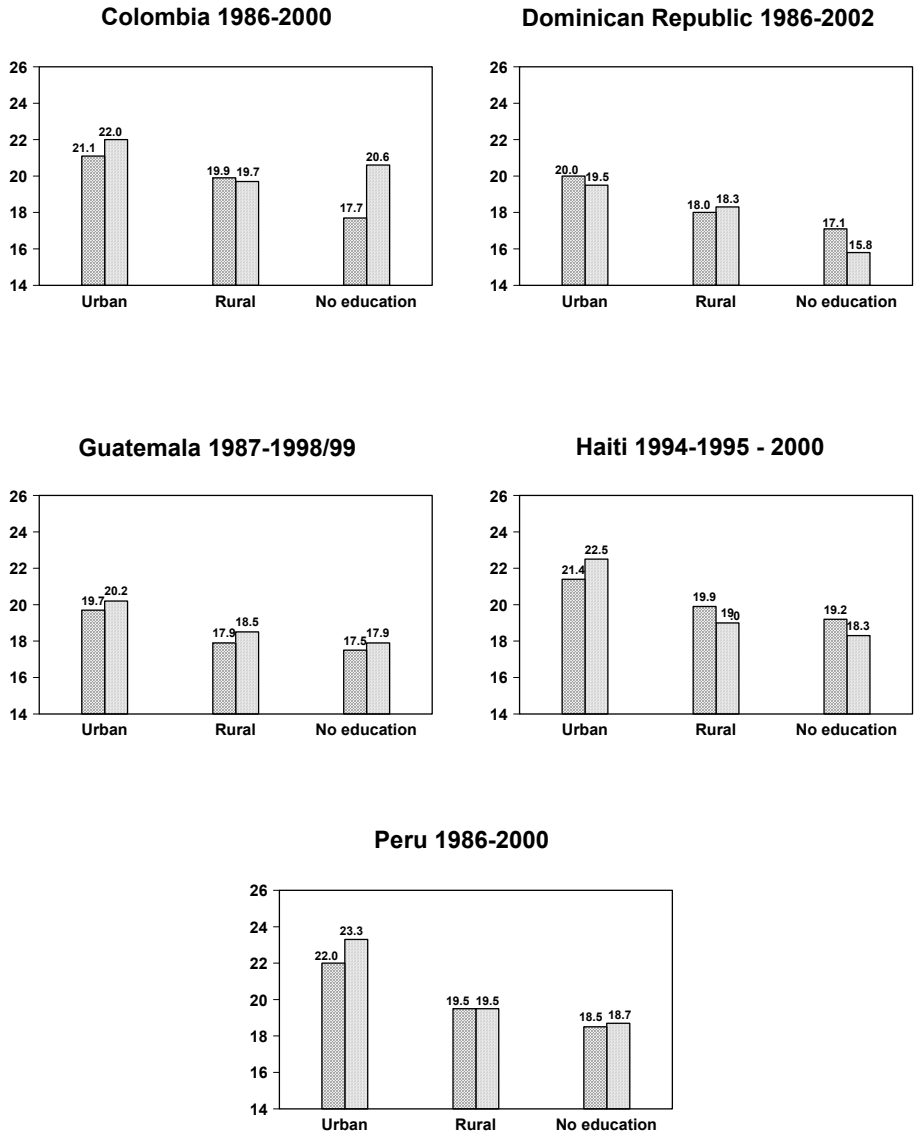


Figure 5.6—Continued



6 Men's Age at Marriage

The traditional picture of men marrying at later ages than women is clearly evident in the results of DHS surveys. The source of information used to estimate the magnitude of this difference and its international variability is the interview data collected from male surveys in 33 countries, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, and comparisons with the survey data from women in the same countries. Although these surveys frequently included the husbands of women also interviewed in the DHS surveys, they are designed primarily to yield nationally representative samples of men in general.

Table 6.1 shows the median age at first marriage for men by age at the time of the interview (age 30-34 is the youngest age category in which the median age at marriage had been reached in all of the countries). The oldest median age at marriage for men 30-34 is 30.0 years in Senegal, and the youngest is 22.3 years in Uganda. Most of these countries show the average age at marriage for men in the 23-26 year age range. That range also encompasses the values for the nine countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa.

Table 6.1 Median age at first marriage for men 25-59, by current age, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

Country	Current age						
	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA							
Benin 1996	25.0	23.6	24.6	23.6	25.4	25.0	25.3
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	a	25.2	24.4	25.4	25.7	24.3	26.0
Cameroon 1998	a	25.1	25.3	24.7	24.6	26.0	25.3
Central African Republic 1994-1995	23.3	23.2	24.2	22.9	26.5	24.9	27.2
Chad 1996-1997	22.7	22.5	22.4	23.0	22.8	22.3	23.8
Comoros 1996	a	25.6	26.6	26.0	27.4	30.0	30.2
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	a	26.3	25.3	24.6	27.6	22.8	25.5
Eritrea 1995	24.7	23.6	25.3	26.0	24.3	25.0	24.8
Ethiopia 2000	23.2	24.3	22.9	23.7	21.8	24.0	23.8
Gabon 2000	24.7	24.2	24.9	22.9	24.8	23.7	25.9
Guinea 1999	a	26.1	25.5	26.8	26.8	26.2	26.1
Kenya 1998	a	25.0	24.2	24.2	24.8	24.1	na
Malawi 2000	22.7	22.9	22.9	22.3	22.7	23.3	na
Mali 1995-1996	24.5	25.6	26.0	25.8	25.8	25.7	25.6
Mozambique 1997	21.2	22.4	21.0	22.3	22.9	26.0	23.1
Niger 1998	22.5	22.8	21.4	21.2	22.5	21.9	22.1
Nigeria 1999	a	25.6	25.7	24.8	26.3	25.8	26.9
Rwanda 1992	23.1	23.8	22.6	23.1	22.5	23.5	25.1
Senegal 1997	a	30.0	28.5	26.2	26.5	26.5	27.3
Tanzania 1996	24.4	24.4	25.3	24.5	24.6	24.0	27.6
Togo 1998	a	24.6	24.5	24.5	25.4	25.7	25.5
Uganda 2000-2001	21.9	22.3	22.7	22.6	21.9	22.8	na
Zambia 2001-2002	23.2	23.0	23.5	22.5	23.6	23.5	23.9
Zimbabwe 1999	24.3	24.3	25.4	24.1	24.7	24.6	na
NORTHERN AFRICA/ WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE							
Armenia 2000	24.9	24.7	25.2	24.1	24.4	24.7	na
Turkey 1998	23.5	24.0	24.0	22.9	22.9	24.1	24.4
CENTRAL ASIA							
Kazakhstan 1999	23.7	23.7	23.1	23.5	22.9	23.2	24.5
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA							
Pakistan 1990-1991	21.8	23.0	23.6	24.8	24.3	23.0	24.7
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN							
Brazil 1996	24.3	23.7	24.0	24.0	24.3	24.9	24.3
Dominican Republic 2002	22.3	22.7	23.3	23.5	23.4	24.4	25.4
Haiti 2000	a	26.0	26.4	24.5	25.6	25.2	25.2
Nicaragua 1997-1998	21.2	22.2	21.7	22.5	22.0	23.3	24.6
Peru 1996	a	24.2	25.3	25.0	23.4	25.4	25.2

na = Not applicable
[a] Omitted because less than half of the men in the subgroup have been married

Examining the trends in men's age at marriage by comparing the medians for the oldest men with those for the youngest does not show any clear pattern. Unlike the increasing age at marriage trend for women in many countries, there does not seem to be such a change underway for men, at least not in this sample of countries.

Without exception, in sub-Saharan Africa men age 30-34 marry later in urban areas than in rural areas (Table 6.2). In other regions there are some exceptions: in Kazakhstan, men in rural areas marry slightly later than their urban counerparts (23.7 years versus 23.0 years); and in Brazil and Nicaragua there is almost no difference in median age at marriage between men in urban areas and men in rural areas.

Table 6.2 Median age at first marriage for men 30-34, by urban-rural residence and level of education, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2001

Country	Residence		Level of education		
	Urban	Rural	No education	Primary	Secondary or higher
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA					
Benin 2001	25.6	23.3	22.1	24.8	25.5
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	27.6	24.8	24.9	24.6	*
Cameroon 1998	27.8	23.6	22.3	24.6	26.1
Central African Republic 1994-1995	24.9	22.2	23.4	21.8	24.1
Chad 1996-1997	*	22.3	22.3	23.3	23.7
Comoros 1996	27.0	25.4	25.0	26.0	26.2
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	27.3	25.8	25.8	25.2	27.3
Eritrea 1995	26.2	22.8	23.2	21.7	26.0
Ethiopia 2000	26.3	23.7	23.4	23.8	25.7
Gabon 2000	24.4	22.0	24.9	21.9	24.1
Guinea 1999	29.7	23.6	24.3	27.9	29.1
Kenya 1998	25.6	24.6	24.3	23.7	25.7
Malawi 2000	25.1	22.3	22.4	22.0	25.8
Mali 2001	29.8	*	24.8	24.0	29.8
Mauritania 2000-2001	28.4	25.7	23.9	26.4	28.1
Mozambique 1997	24.4	21.5	22.9	21.0	26.1
Niger 1998	26.5	22.2	22.0	22.9	28.2
Nigeria 1999	28.0	25.1	24.7	25.5	25.9
Rwanda 1992	27.0	23.6	23.3	24.2	25.3
Tanzania 1999	24.9	23.2	22.6	23.5	28.1
Togo 1998	26.9	23.3	23.7	24.4	25.9
Uganda 2000-2001	24.7	22.1	20.9	22.2	23.3
Zambia 1996	24.4	22.7	22.8	22.6	23.8
Zimbabwe 1999	24.8	23.8	21.0	22.7	24.6
NORTHERN AFRICA/ WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE					
Armenia 2000	25.6	24.0	*	*	24.7
Turkey 1998	24.4	22.6	22.8	23.7	24.2
CENTRAL ASIA					
Kazakhstan 1999	23.0	23.7	*	23.6	23.9
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA					
Bangladesh 1996-1997	26.3	22.6	22.4	22.9	24.8
Nepal 2001	22.0	19.8	19.9	19.3	21.5
Pakistan 1990-1991	24.0	22.6	22.5	21.3	25.2
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN					
Bolivia 1998	23.4	23.0	19.5	22.1	23.8
Brazil 1996	23.7	23.6	23.3	22.3	24.5
Dominican Republic 1999	24.9	24.3	21.8	22.8	26.4
Haiti 2000	27.7	25.2	23.4	25.8	26.8
Nicaragua 1997-1998	22.3	22.1	21.6	22.2	22.4
Peru 1996	25.0	22.1	22.4	21.7	25.3

Note: An asterisk indicates that there are fewer than 25 unweighted cases in the subgroup and the figure has been suppressed.

As with women, the direct correlation between age at marriage and education is also evident for men, but there are many more exceptions to the general pattern than for the urban-rural association.

6.1 Spouse Differences in Age at Marriage

Because women's age at marriage is increasing at the same time that men's age at marriage remains relatively unchanged, one would expect the age difference between spouses to decrease. This phenomenon can be examined by simply comparing the age cohort trend lines for women and men in general or by studying trends in age differences between spouses. We have already seen that intercohort age at marriage has increased for women while remaining largely unchanged for men. For a selection of countries that collected information on the male partner's age, we looked directly at the age difference between current spouses. The measure is confined to currently and once-married women, which probably produces some selective biases toward a convergence of spouses' ages, but the evidence indicates a strong trend toward convergence of husbands' and wives' ages. Such a trend was observed earlier in an analysis of 28 countries that had participated in the World Fertility Survey (Casterline, Williams, and McDonald, 1986). To assess the trend over time, these differences are shown in Table 6.3 by duration of union, although the higher durations are problematic because they are less likely to be confined to once-married men. The average difference in the ages of spouses shows a decline in three out of four of the sub-Saharan countries surveyed. For example, in the 2001 survey in Benin, couples married 30 or more years had an age difference of 10.7 years while couples in their first five years of marriage show an average age difference of 7.5 years. In many of these countries, the decline in the average age difference between spouses is about three years over the generation. Sub-Saharan countries in which no trends are discernible include Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and Rwanda. If the focus is confined to women whose duration of marriage extends only to 10-14 years, a trend toward convergence is evident for about half of the sub-Saharan countries.

The average age differences for the shortest marriage duration categories vary considerably across sub-Saharan Africa, ranging from 5 and 13 years. The differences are much smaller in countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa except in Bangladesh where the average is still 9 years. There is also a substantial difference in ages (6.8 years) between spouses in Egypt. In the Latin American/Caribbean countries, the difference in ages ranges from 3 to 6 years.

There is evidence of increasing similarity of age at marriage among spouses in only a few countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa: India, Nepal, the Philippines, and Turkmenistan. In the Latin American/Caribbean countries, such a trend can be seen in the Dominican Republic and Peru, and possibly in Colombia and Guatemala.

The social significance of a trend toward greater similarity of age at marriage and thus throughout the union is not clear. Closer age between spouses may promote more gender equality (Abadian, 1996). On the other hand, older husbands may be better providers. Since the primary demographic reason for the increasing convergence of spousal age at marriage is the increase in age at marriage among women, the major expectation would seem to be the advantages accruing to women from postponing childbearing.

Table 6.3 Mean age difference between spouses by number of years since marriage (currently married couples with wife married only once, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2001

	Duration (years) of union						
Country	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA							
Benin 2001	7.5	8.5	9.4	8.5	10.5	11.5	10.7
Burkina Faso 1999	11.3	10.0	10.9	11.4	12.2	11.4	10.1
Cameroon 1998	9.6	10.0	10.2	10.8	10.7	13.0	11.8
Central African Republic 1994	7.0	6.9	7.2	6.7	7.7	7.5	6.8
Chad 1997	9.8	10.3	10.8	11.3	11.1	11.7	12.4
Comoros 1996	9.2	10.6	10.9	10.5	11.2	11.2	12.3
Ethiopia 2000	7.7	7.9	8.8	8.4	8.9	9.4	10.9
Ghana 1998-1999	6.7	7.6	8.0	8.4	9.2	9.7	9.5
Guinea 1999	13.3	14.1	14.1	13.9	14.6	13.7	13.8
Kenya 1998	6.7	6.9	6.6	7.5	7.4	8.0	9.2
Madagascar 1997	5.2	5.6	5.4	5.7	5.6	6.4	5.8
Malawi 2000	5.1	5.3	5.8	6.0	6.6	6.2	5.6
Mali 2001	11.5	11.4	11.8	11.8	12.3	12.1	12.5
Mozambique 1997	6.6	8.1	6.8	7.4	9.9	8.4	8.3
Niger 1998	10.2	10.5	9.6	10.0	10.4	10.0	9.6
Nigeria 1999	10.0	10.6	11.2	12.1	12.1	12.8	12.5
Rwanda 2001	5.7	5.4	5.8	5.0	4.7	4.4	5.7
Tanzania 1996	8.4	8.0	8.4	8.6	9.1	9.0	9.9
Togo 1998	7.8	7.7	8.8	9.1	10.0	10.5	10.2
Zambia 1996	6.1	6.5	6.8	7.1	8.3	8.5	8.9
Zimbabwe 1999	6.8	6.8	8.0	7.7	8.8	9.1	10.6
NORTHERN AFRICA/WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE							
Armenia 2000	4.9	5.0	4.2	3.4	3.5	4.5	6.7
Egypt 2000	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	7.1	7.4	8.4
Turkey 1998	4.2	4.3	4.2	3.9	4.5	4.6	6.0
CENTRAL ASIA							
Kazakhstan 1999	3.5	2.5	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.9	5.2
Kyrgyzstan 1997	3.8	3.0	3.1	2.6	3.0	4.9	6.6
Turkmenistan 2000	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.9	3.2	4.5
Uzbekistan 1996	3.3	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.7	4.5	4.9
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA							
Bangladesh 1999-2000	9.1	9.3	8.9	9.0	9.0	9.8	11.2
India 1998-1999	5.7	5.9	6.0	6.0	6.3	6.7	7.0
Nepal 2001	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.9	5.1	5.9
Philippines 1998	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.3	3.6	5.4
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN							
Bolivia 1998	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.5	3.4	3.9	5.0
Brazil 1996	4.6	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.9	4.8	6.3
Colombia 2000	4.5	4.3	4.3	5.0	5.5	6.3	8.0
Dominican Rep. 1996	5.6	5.5	5.8	6.4	6.7	7.1	8.0
Guatemala 1999	3.4	3.5	4.3	3.6	4.4	5.2	5.9
Haiti 2000	6.1	6.0	6.0	5.3	5.3	6.3	6.9
Nicaragua 1997	4.8	4.7	5.0	4.5	5.1	5.8	6.1
Peru 2000	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.1	4.6	5.2	6.6

7 Age at First Birth

There is a strong correlation between age at first marriage for women and age at first birth. Thus, it can be expected that the same countries are likely to be in the same categories with respect to levels and trends in age at first birth as age at first marriage. The reason for treating the subject separately here is that the focus is more on the implications of reproductive behavior for population growth. There is also the possibility that the dating of age at first birth, although not without its shortcomings (Casterline, 1980), is more reliable than the dating of age at first union. For age at first birth, as with age at first marriage, we relied on two measures: the proportion of women who had their first birth before age 20 and the median age of women at the time of their first birth. The same "approximate" cohort procedures were used with age at first birth as with age at first marriage (see estimated statistics shown in Appendix A).

The proportion of women who had a first birth before age 20 is shown by current age in Table 7.1. The most current statistics on age at first birth are for women age 20-24. In sub-Saharan Africa, the lowest level in this age group is found in the Sudan (26 percent), estimated from the 1990 survey. This is a country that experienced a dramatic decline in early marriage and childbearing as can be seen by comparing early and later cohorts. The highest values in sub-Saharan Africa, around 70 percent, are found in Chad, Niger and Uganda. These correspond to a median age at first birth in the 20-24 age group of about 18.4. Levels of early childbearing are much lower in the countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of some of the least developed countries—Bangladesh, Nepal, and Nicaragua. Aside from Nicaragua, the proportion of women age 20-24 in Latin America and the Caribbean who had their first birth before age 20 is between 30 and 45 percent.

Table 7.1 Percentage of women age 20-44 who had their first birth before age 20, by current age, various surveys, 1990-2002

Country	Age of woman				
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA					
Benin 2001	45.0	48.4	52.7	53.3	53.6
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	62.0	62.4	61.6	56.2	60.1
Cameroon 1998	54.3	61.7	65.9	58.6	58.3
Central African Republic 1994-1995	61.3	57.0	56.2	51.8	58.7
Chad 1996-1997	71.0	68.5	64.1	65.6	63.7
Comoros 1996	28.5	33.7	43.4	43.5	49.8
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	55.7	56.4	57.9	61.6	62.4
Eritrea 2002	42.4	44.3	42.7	32.1	32.4
Ethiopia 2000	43.6	48.9	65.9	57.8	69.2
Gabon 2000	58.4	64.5	64.3	64.7	69.7
Ghana 1998	40.6	40.8	49.6	46.2	50.7
Guinea 1999	66.2	64.6	65.3	54.6	61.8
Kenya 1998	46.3	53.6	56.5	58.1	63.4
Madagascar 1997	56.6	51.7	50.7	60.1	57.8
Malawi 2000	61.7	60.9	65.2	62.4	62.6
Mali 2001	67.4	66.7	65.6	58.8	57.2
Mauritania 2000-2001	34.7	41.2	48.2	48.2	49.2
Mozambique 1997	65.4	62.9	58.1	55.9	58.0
Namibia 1992	41.6	38.9	44.5	39.6	37.9
Niger 1998	70.2	73.2	75.7	73.9	69.6
Nigeria 1999	42.8	46.5	48.8	50.8	54.5
Rwanda 2000	30.9	27.2	26.1	27.8	26.1
Senegal 1997	43.1	46.3	55.0	55.8	53.6
South Africa 1998	40.1	40.4	48.0	42.4	39.5
Sudan 1990	26.2	36.3	44.8	53.6	60.5
Tanzania 1999	56.2	56.2	62.5	59.3	72.7
Togo 1998	38.3	49.5	51.4	48.1	48.3
Uganda 2000-2001	70.0	64.7	68.9	63.8	65.9
Zambia 2001-2002	60.9	62.5	65.0	69.1	70.9
Zimbabwe 1999	47.6	47.0	46.5	61.2	52.2
NORTHERN AFRICA/WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE					
Armenia 2000	25.5	33.5	30.6	23.9	22.1
Egypt 2000	24.0	27.8	35.4	38.7	38.6
Jordan 2002	12.7	20.4	20.9	24.0	31.9
Morocco 1995	16.7	20.2	27.2	30.4	36.1
Yemen 1997	45.1	57.8	57.7	56.6	51.1
CENTRAL ASIA					
Kazakhstan 1999	22.1	24.4	19.7	17.2	18.0
Kyrgyz Republic 1997	36.6	23.3	21.3	19.6	24.0
Turkmenistan 2000	14.5	12.8	10.0	10.1	18.9
Uzbekistan 1996	25.3	27.4	22.9	26.1	28.7
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA					
Bangladesh 1999-2000	61.3	66.4	71.8	69.8	76.1
Cambodia 2000	28.7	32.5	26.6	32.7	21.7
India 1998-1999	47.1	54.4	57.3	56.5	58.0
Indonesia 1997	31.4	35.4	43.6	47.5	44.7
Nepal 2001	51.2	54.1	51.5	50.1	50.1
Pakistan 1990-1991	30.5	42.1	41.7	38.2	37.4
Philippines 1998	20.5	20.1	24.3	22.6	26.4
Vietnam 1997	18.9	19.8	18.9	15.8	13.6
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN					
Bolivia 1998	36.1	40.3	36.8	38.5	32.0
Brazil 1996	32.0	34.5	31.3	29.7	28.8
Colombia 2000	35.5	36.4	29.5	32.2	33.3
Dominican Republic 2002	43.7	45.3	42.6	39.5	45.4
Ecuador 19991	36.8	35.9	36.8	38.6	40.4
El Salvador 19982	42.6	44.7	43.9	49.1	47.9
Guatemala 1998-1999	44.9	47.3	47.2	48.1	50.6
Haiti 2000	31.3	37.4	34.3	36.7	36.7
Nicaragua 2001	47.9	53.7	54.7	53.9	56.2
Paraguay 1995-19963	40.7	39.5	40.6	33.0	36.7
Peru 2000	30.1	32.4	33.3	36.6	35.0

[1] Based on 1999 CDC survey
[2] Based on 1998 CDC survey
[3] Based on 1995-96 CDC survey

For the large majority of countries, the median age at first birth is higher in urban than in rural areas (Table 7.2). With few exceptions, age at first birth increases with level of education. In other recent analyses of eight sub-Saharan countries (Gupta and Mahy, 2002; Mahy and Gupta, 2002), education beyond the primary level appears to exert the most important influence on age at first birth. The mechanisms through which education affects fertility are complex and not known with any precision (Basu, 2002).

Table 7.2. Median age at first birth for women 25-49 by urban-rural residence and level of education, Demographic and Health Surveys, 1990-2002

	Residence		Level of education			
Country	Urban	Rural	No education	Primary	Secondary or higher	Total
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA						
Benin 2001	20.7	19.4	19.3	20.4	24.1	19.9
Burkina Faso 1998-1999	19.8	19.2	19.2	19.0	23.3	19.3
Cameroon 1998	19.4	18.9	18.7	18.7	19.9	19.0
Central African Republic 1994-1995	18.7	19.9	19.8	18.7	19.1	19.4
Chad 1996-1997	18.5	18.3	18.3	18.5	19.7	18.3
Comoros 1996	22.2	20.7	20.3	21.0	*	21.0
Côte d'Ivoire 1998-1999	19.3	18.8	18.9	18.7	20.6	19.0
Eritrea 2002	22.0	21.0	21.1	20.9	24.6	21.4
Ethiopia 2000	20.0	18.9	18.8	19.8	22.9	19.0
Gabon 2000	18.7	17.8	19.7	17.9	18.8	18.5
Ghana 1998	21.0	20.0	19.7	20.0	21.0	20.3
Guinea 1999	19.4	18.5	18.5	19.0	21.0	18.8
Kenya 1998	20.7	19.1	18.2	18.7	21.6	19.4
Madagascar 1997	20.8	19.1	18.5	18.8	21.8	19.5
Malawi 2000	19.4	19.0	18.9	18.9	21.6	19.1
Mali 2001	19.4	18.7	18.6	18.9	22.2	18.9
Mauritania 2000-2001	20.6	20.7	19.8	21.2	24.2	20.7
Mozambique 1997	19.0	19.2	19.0	19.1	21.8	19.2
Namibia 1992	20.8	21.3	20.3	20.4	22.7	21.0
Nigeria 1999	21.0	19.7	18.7	19.8	23.2	20.1
Rwanda 2000	22.3	22.0	21.5	22.0	23.5	22.0
Senegal 1997	21.0	19.0	19.2	20.7	23.6	19.8
South Africa 1998	21.3	20.1	19.8	19.7	21.5	20.8
Sudan 1990	21.5	20.0	19.2	20.4	*	20.5
Tanzania 1999	19.5	18.9	18.1	19.1	23.4	19.0
Togo 1998	20.8	19.7	19.8	19.8	22.0	20.1
Uganda 2000-2001	19.3	18.7	18.4	18.5	20.4	18.7
Zambia 2001-2002	19.0	18.6	18.2	18.4	20.0	18.7
Zimbabwe 1999	20.5	19.6	18.8	19.2	21.1	19.9
NORTHERN AFRICA/WESTERN ASIA/EUROPE						
Armenia 2000	22.4	21.0	*	*	21.8	21.8
Egypt 2000	23.1	20.4	19.8	20.6	24.3	21.6
Jordan 2002	23.6	23.0	20.8	21.4	21.9	23.5
Morocco 1995	24.8	21.5	21.4	23.4	*	22.7
Turkey 1998	21.7	20.7	19.6	20.8	24.4	21.3
Yemen 1997	19.3	19.5	19.3	19.1	23.8	19.5
CENTRAL ASIA						
Kazakhstan 1999	22.5	22.2	*	*	22.4	22.4
Kyrgyz Republic 1997	22.2	21.5	*	*	21.7	21.7
Turkmenistan 2000	22.7	23.0	22.7	21.4	22.9	22.9
Uzbekistan 1996	22.2	21.2	*	*	21.6	21.6
SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA						
Bangladesh 1999-2000	18.6	17.6	17.3	17.5	19.7	17.8
Cambodia 2000	22.6	21.7	21.6	21.7	23.3	21.9
India 1998-1999	20.6	19.0	18.4	19.0	21.4	19.4
Indonesia 1997	22.3	20.2	19.6	19.8	23.6	20.8
Nepal 2001	20.2	19.9	19.8	19.8	21.0	19.9
Pakistan 1990-1991	21.3	21.3	20.7	20.7	22.1	21.3
Philippines 1998	24.3	22.2	20.5	21.1	24.5	23.3
Vietnam 1997	*	22.7	22.4	21.9	23.5	23.1

Continued…

Table 7.2—*Continued*

Country	Residence		Level of education			Total
	Urban	Rural	No education	Primary	Secondary or higher	
LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN						
Bolivia 1998	21.8	20.8	21.0	20.3	22.7	21.5
Brazil 1996	22.6	21.4	20.0	20.9	23.9	22.4
Colombia 2000	22.5	20.7	19.4	20.3	23.7	22.1
Dominican Republic 2002	21.1	20.2	18.5	19.2	24.6	20.8
Guatemala 1998-1999	21.0	19.7	19.1	20.0	22.8	20.3
Haiti 2000	23.3	21.0	20.6	21.4	*	21.9
Nicaragua 2001	20.2	18.7	18.0	18.8	21.4	19.6
Paraguay 1990	22.8	20.5	19.7	20.8	24.4	21.7
Peru 2000	22.8	20.3	19.6	19.9	23.8	21.9

Note: An asterisk indicates that there are fewer than 25 unweighted cases in the subgroup and the figure has been suppressed.

7.1 Trends in Age at First Birth

Following the trend toward later marriage, the proportion of women having their first birth before age 20 is likewise declining, at least since the experience of the birth cohorts of the 1940s. Among the 30 sub-Saharan countries in this review, 17 show recent trends in this direction (Figures 7.1.1 and 7.1.2); 13 show no trend; and in a few instances (Rwanda, Madagascar, and Eritrea), more women are having their first birth before age 20 than in the past (Figure 7.2).

Almost all of the countries surveyed in southern and southeastern Asia show a trend toward later childbearing (Figure 7.3). Vietnam and Cambodia show no change, but they had already reached low levels of early childbearing, and Nepal does not show any trend. Some of the changes in the other countries in this region are substantial: in Indonesia, for example, the proportion giving birth before age 20 has declined from nearly 60 percent for the 1930-34 cohort to 30 percent for the most recent cohort (1975-79). Bangladesh has the highest proportion of women giving birth before age 20, but beginning with the 1945-49 cohort (women who were age 15-19 in the 1960s), there has been a steady decline in this indicator from nearly 90 percent to 60 percent for the 1975-79 cohort (women who were teenagers in the 1990s).

Again, with few exceptions (notably Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic), trends in age at first birth in northern Africa, central Asia, western Asia, and Europe are toward later childbearing, with less than 30 percent of women giving birth in their teens in most countries (Figure 7.4). The most recent cohort in Jordan now shows only 13 percent with a first birth before age 20, in contrast to around 50 percent as recently as the cohorts of the 1940s.

In Latin America and the Caribbean age at first birth follows a pattern similar to that of age at first union and, with few exceptions, there has been little change over nearly half a century of cohorts (Figure 7.5). Levels of both age at first birth and age at marriage are similar and concentrated in the 30-40 percent range.

Figure 7.1.1 Countries in sub-Saharan Africa that show increases in age at first birth (declines in the percentage of women who had their first birth before age 20), by approximate birth cohorts: Western Africa

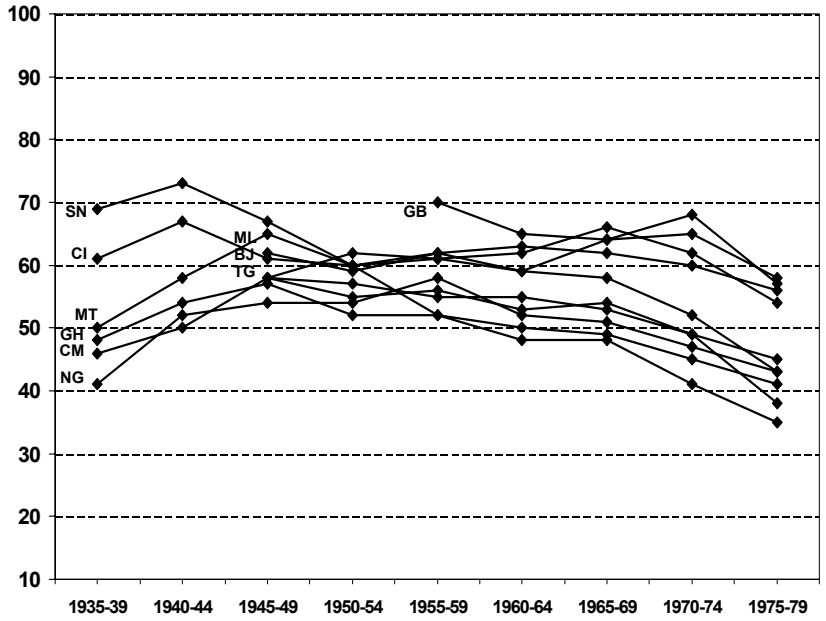


Figure 7.1.2 Countries in sub-Saharan Africa that show increases in age at first birth (declines in the percentage of women who had their first birth before age 20), by approximate birth cohorts: Southern and eastern Africa

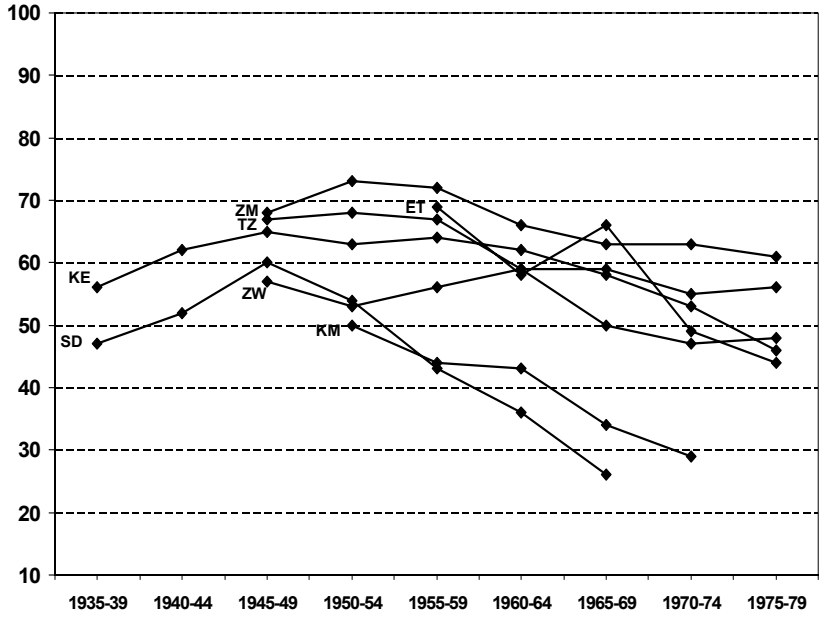


Figure 7.2 Countries in sub-Saharan Africa that show either no trend or increases in the percentage of women who had their first birth before age 20, by approximate birth cohorts

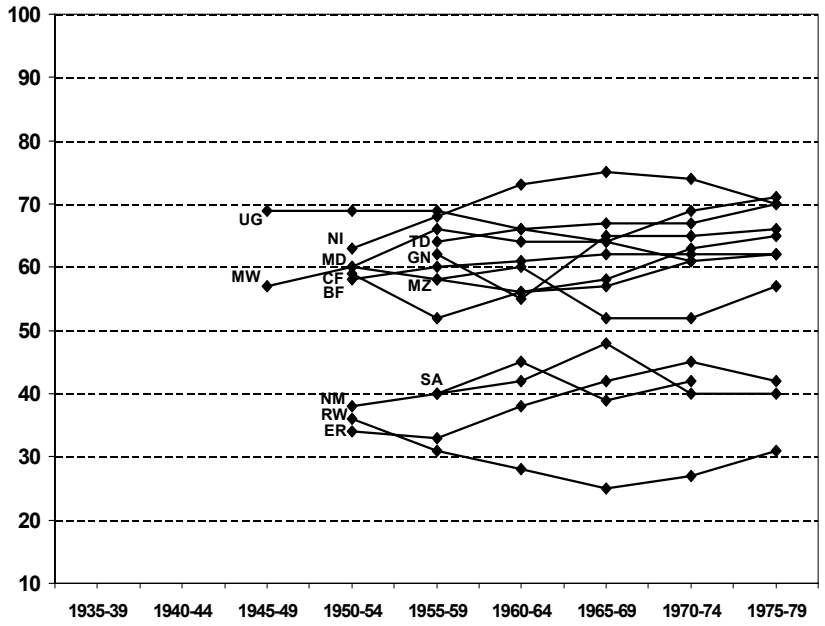


Figure 7.3 Trends in the percentage of women who had their first birth before age 20, by approximate birth cohorts: Southern and southeastern Asia

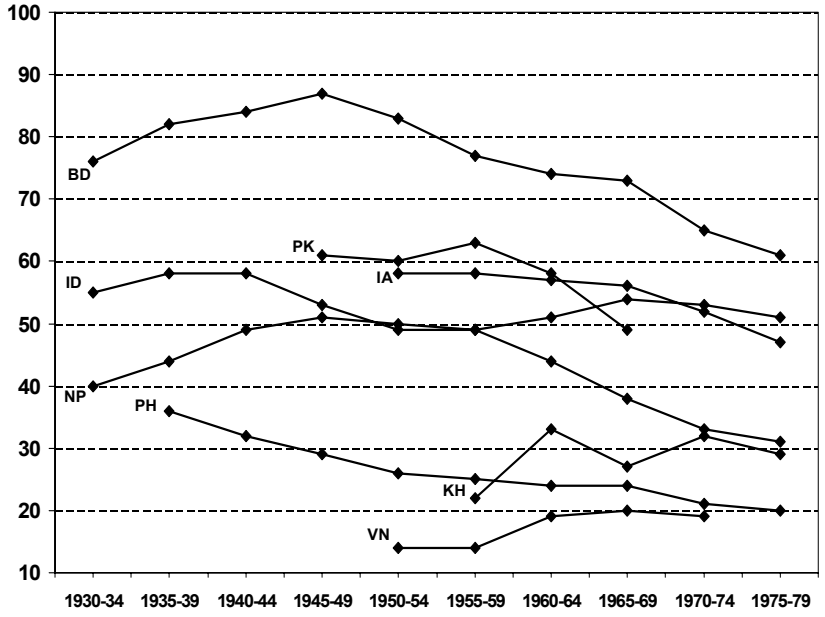


Figure 7.4 Trends in the percentage of women who had their first birth before age 20, by approximate birth cohorts: Northern Africa, central Asia, western Asia, and Europe

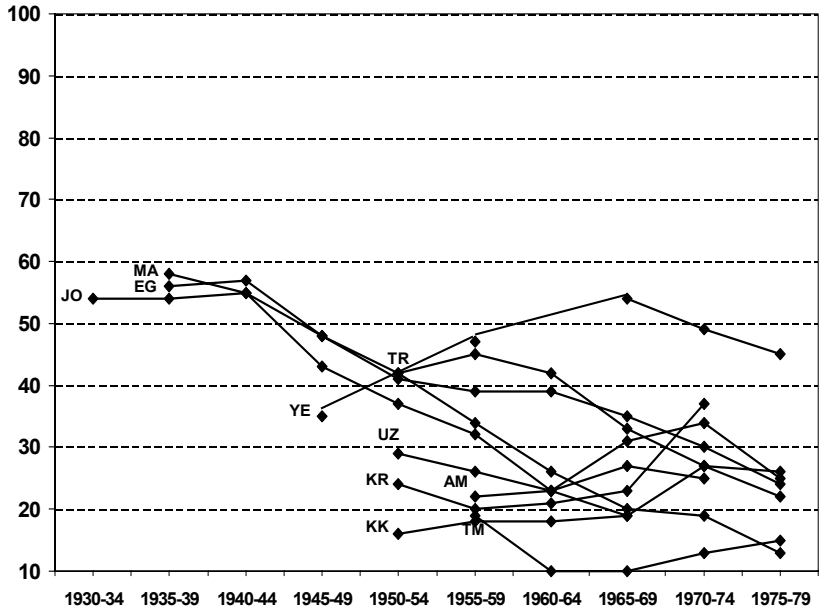
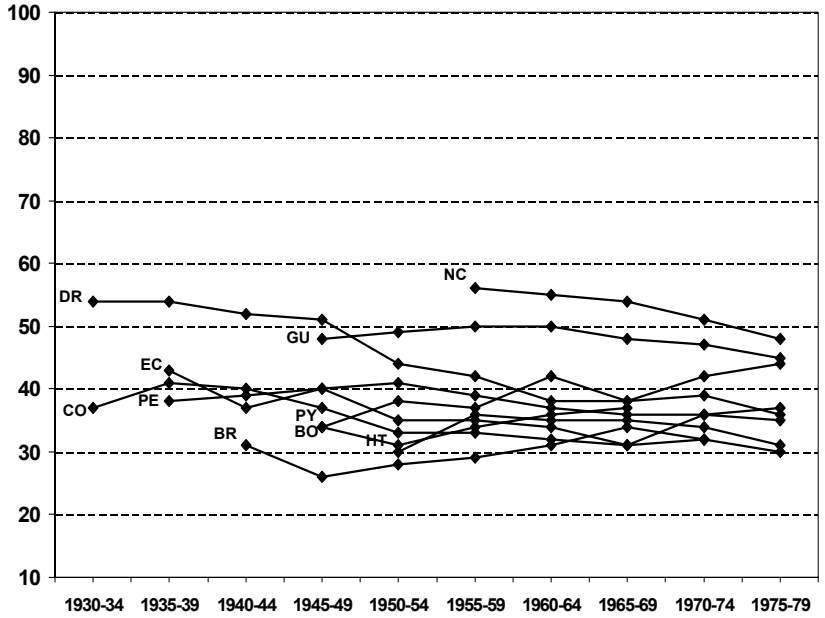


Figure 7.5 Trends in the percentage of women who had their first birth before age 20, by approximate birth cohorts: Latin America and Caribbean



8 Summary and Conclusions

The last two decades of the twentieth century have witnessed dramatic demographic changes all over the world. In the developed world, there has been a rapid acceleration of the fertility transition with historic low levels of childbearing accompanied by postponement of marriage and increases in informal cohabitation and out-of-wedlock childbearing. In the developing world the changes have been equally dramatic but highly variable within and between world regions. This report documents these changes primarily in the area of nuptiality and early childbearing. The report covers 59 countries, half of which are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Even the simple descriptive measure current marital status varies widely among countries, ranging from 40 percent to over 80 percent among women age 15-49 who are currently in union. Informal unions are increasingly prevalent, as evidenced by comparisons in countries with multiple surveys.

The stability of unions is measured crudely here by the proportion of ever-married women still in their first union and by the proportion of women married more than once. By both measures, marital stability is lowest in sub-Saharan Africa and highest in the Asian and North African countries.

Polygyny remains prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa, with about one-third of currently married women in a union with at least one co-wife. However, evidence from countries with multiple surveys suggests that the prevalence of polygyny is diminishing. It remains more common in rural areas and among the least educated women.

Teenage pregnancy and fertility, especially among the youngest teenagers, is highest in sub-Saharan Africa and in Bangladesh (where women marry very early). It is strongly associated with lower levels of education and is higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Trends in teenage pregnancy and childbearing are mixed and, in a few Latin American countries, there are indications of recent increases in teen pregnancy and childbearing because of declines in age at first sex.

Age at first marriage is increasing in most of the sub-Saharan countries examined here. This is a very recent phenomenon in that part of the world and is partly responsible for the beginnings of the fertility transition there. The average age at marriage is increasing in southern and southeastern Asia as well as in Northern Africa. In central Asia, however, there have been some reversals, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, the trend toward later marriage has been modest. In general, the trend toward later marriage has occurred in both rural and urban areas and, in many countries, even among women with no formal schooling. Exposure to mass media, particularly television, plays a role in the trend toward later marriage, and has contributed to increases in age at marriage among women with no education.

The trend toward later marriage has been restricted to women; there is little evidence of accompanying increases in men's age at marriage. One result of this phenomenon is that there has been substantial narrowing of the age difference between spouses.

The increase in women's age at marriage is reflected in the increase in age at first birth. Slightly more than half of the sub-Saharan countries reviewed show an increase in the age at first birth. In the other regions, the increases are both uniform and substantial; although in the Latin America and Caribbean countries little change is evident.

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Appendix A. Percentage of women who married before age 20 (M) and percentage who had their first birth before age 20 (B), by birth cohort

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Birth cohort (approximate)	Benin		Burkina Faso		Cameroon		Central African Republic		Chad		Comoros	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1935-39					70	46						
1940-44					70	50						
1945-49	71	58			77	58						
1950-54	71	57	88	58	79	62	81	59			69	50
1955-59	71	55	87	60	77	61	65	52	87	64	67	44
1960-64	65	55	86	61	73	62	75	56	86	66	62	43
1965-69	64	53	85	62	72	66	75	57	85	64	47	34
1970-74	62	49	84	62	67	62	74	61	86	69	40	29
1975-79	59	45	84	62	61	54			86	71		

Birth cohort (approximate)	Côte d'Ivoire		Eritrea		Ethiopia		Gabon		Ghana		Guinea	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1935-39	71	61							68	48		
1940-44	77	67							72	54		
1945-49	77	61							74	57		
1950-54	69	60	75	34					68	52		
1955-59	66	62	63	33	91	69	58	70	67	52	82	62
1960-64	65	63	65	38	85	58	56	65	63	50	79	55
1965-69	65	62	68	42	85	66	50	64	62	49	81	65
1970-74	55	60	66	45	71	49	47	65	57	45	82	65
1975-79	49	56	63	42	65	44	49	58	56	41	79	66

Birth cohort (approximate)	Kenya		Madagascar		Malawi		Mali		Mauritania		Mozambique	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1935-39	73	56							83	50		
1940-44	75	62							84	58		
1945-49	75	65			69	57	90	62	82	65		
1950-54	69	63	70	60	73	60	90	59	80	60		
1955-59	66	64	64	58	79	66	90	62	73	52	76	58
1960-64	64	62	65	60	76	64	86	59	71	48	81	56
1965-69	54	58	58	52	76	64	86	64	67	48	72	58
1970-74	47	53	57	52	76	61	82	68	56	41	74	63
1975-79	46	46	61	57	73	62	81	57	50	35	78	65

Birth cohort (approximate)	Namibia		Niger		Nigeria		Rwanda		Senegal		South Africa	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1935-39					70	41			88	69		
1940-44					79	52	48		90	73		
1945-49					77	54	57		88	67		
1950-54	28	38	94	63	75	54	60	36	79	60		
1955-59	26	40	95	68	74	58	57	31	78	61	30	40
1960-64	25	45	95	73	68	52	43	28	73	59	30	42
1965-69	20	39	92	75	66	51	38	25	70	58	27	48
1970-74	20	42	90	74	58	47	38	27	58	52	20	40
1975-79			85	70	53	43	42	31	51	43	14	40

Birth cohort (approximate)	Sudan		Tanzania		Togo		Uganda		Zambia		Zimbabwe	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1935-39	74	47										
1940-44	77	52										
1945-49	78	60	75	67	69	58	83	69	81	68	69	57
1950-54	73	54	74	68	66	55	79	69	80	73	62	53
1955-59	57	43	74	67	66	56	77	69	76	72	66	56
1960-64	47	36	65	59	64	53	74	66	71	66	65	59
1965-69	37	26	63	59	63	54	73	67	66	63	55	50
1970-74			61	55	63	49	73	67	65	63	52	47
1975-79			61	56	48	38	75	70	63	61	53	48

SOUTHERN/SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

Birth cohort (approximate	Bangladesh		Cambodia		India		Indonesia	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1930-34	98	76					84	55
1935-39	97	82					81	58
1940-44	99	84					77	58
1945-49	97	87					73	53
1950-54	94	83			82	58	69	49
1955-59	95	77	45	22	81	58	67	49
1960-64	93	74	53	33	79	57	60	44
1965-69	89	73	47	27	77	56	53	38
1970-74	81	65	51	32	72	52	49	33
1975-79	75	61	41	29	66	47	47	31

Birth cohort (approximate	Nepal		Philippines		Pakistan		Vietnam	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1930-34		40			89			
1935-39		44	39	36	87			
1940-44		49	38	32	83			
1945-49		51	37	29	69	61		
1950-54	87	50	38	26	66	60	35	14
1955-59	85	49	38	25	63	63	35	14
1960-64	83	51	35	24	58	58	35	19
1965-69	82	54	34	24	49	49	38	20
1970-74	78	53	30	21			36	19
1975-79	74	51	27	20				

NORTHERN AFRICA, CENTRAL ASIA, WESTERN ASIA, EUROPE

Birth cohort (approximate)	Armenia		Egypt		Jordan		Kazakhstan		Kyrgyz Republic	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1930-34					75	54				
1935-39			76	56	75	54				
1940-44			76	57	71	55				
1945-49			65	48	63	48				
1950-54			59	41	56	42	35	16	47	24
1955-59	39	22	56	39	46	34	32	18	38	20
1960-64	44	23	55	39	38	26	32	18	40	21
1965-69	49	31	49	35	30	20	31	19	45	23
1970-74	53	34	43	30	29	19	42	27	58	37
1975-79	37	25	36	24	22	13	40	22		

Birth cohort (approximate)	Morocco		Turkey		Turkmenistan		Uzbekistan		Yemen	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1930-34										
1935-39	85	58	75						81	
1940-44	81	55	75						73	
1945-49	68	43	73						81	35
1950-54	59	39	68	42			56	29	75	
1955-59	52	32	65	45	39	19	51	26	79	47
1960-64	40	25	58	42	24	10	43	23		
1965-69	32	20	49	33	22	10	51	27	79	54
1970-74	29	17	43	27	26	13	56	25	69	49
1975-79			43	26	26	15			64	45

LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN

Birth cohort (approximate)	Bolivia		Brazil		Colombia		Dominican Republic		Ecuador	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1930-34					45	37	61	54		
1935-39					52	41	61	54	52	43
1940-44			44	31	49	40	67	52	46	37
1945-49	43	34	38	26	43	37	64	51	48	40
1950-54	44	38	37	28	40	33	58	44	50	41
1955-59	46	37	41	29	41	33	57	42	48	39
1960-64	48	42	40	31	39	32	53	38	46	37
1965-69	42	38	42	34	37	31	54	38	44	36
1970-74	43	39	39	32	40	36	56	42	43	36
1975-79	38	36			37	35	56	44	40	37

Birth cohort (approximate)	Guatemala		Haiti		Nicaragua		Paraguay		Peru	
	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
1930-34							55			
1935-39							48		50	38
1940-44							46		52	39
1945-49	56	48					45	34	49	40
1950-54	62	49	38	30			40	31	46	35
1955-59	61	50	47	36	70	56	43	34	42	35
1960-64	60	50	47	35	67	55	45	36	39	34
1965-69	58	48	44	35	66	54	41	37	36	31
1970-74	56	47	45	34	66	51			34	32
1975-79	55	45	43	31	60	48			34	30

Appendix B. Country codes

Country Code	Sub-Saharan Africa
BJ	Benin
BF	Burkina Faso
CM	Cameroon
CF	Central Africa Republic
TD	Chad
KM	Comoros
CI	Cote'd Ivoire
ER	Eritrea
ET	Ethiopia
GB	Gabon
GH	Ghana
GN	Guinea
KE	Kenya
MD	Madagascar
MW	Malawi
ML	Mali
MT	Mauritania
MZ	Mozambique
NM	Namibia
NI	Niger
NG	Nigeria
RW	Rwanda
SN	Senegal
ZA	South Africa
SD	Sudan
TZ	Tanzania
TG	Togo
UG	Uganda
ZM	Zambia
ZW	Zimbabwe

Country Code	Southern/Southeastern Asia
BD	Bangladesh
KH	Cambodia
IA	India
ID	Indonesia
NP	Nepal
PK	Pakistan
PH	Philippines
VN	Vietnam

	Central Asia, Northern Africa, Western Asia and Europe
AM	Armenia
EG	Egypt
JO	Jordan
KK	Kazakhstan
KR	Kyrgyz Republic
MA	Morocco
TM	Turkmenistan
TR	Turkey
UZ	Uzbekistan
YE	Yemen

	Latin America/Caribbean
BO	Bolivia
BR	Brazil
CO	Colombia
DR	Dominican Republic
EC	Ecuador
GU	Guatemala
HT	Haiti
NC	Nicaragua
PY	Paraguay
PE	Peru

Appendix B. Country codes

Country Code	Sub-Saharan Africa
BJ	Benin
BF	Burkina Faso
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TD	Chad
KM	Comoros
CI	Cote'd Ivoire
ER	Eritrea
ET	Ethiopia
GB	Gabon
GH	Ghana
GN	Guinea
KE	Kenya
MD	Madagascar
MW	Malawi
ML	Mali
MT	Mauritania
MZ	Mozambique
NM	Namibia
NI	Niger
NG	Nigeria
RW	Rwanda
SN	Senegal
ZA	South Africa
SD	Sudan
TZ	Tanzania
TG	Togo
UG	Uganda
ZM	Zambia
ZW	Zimbabwe

Country Code	Southern/Southeastern Asia
BD	Bangladesh
KH	Cambodia
IA	India
ID	Indonesia
NP	Nepal
PK	Pakistan
PH	Philippines
VN	Vietnam

	Central Asia, Northern Africa, Western Asia and Europe
AM	Armenia
EG	Egypt
JO	Jordan
KK	Kazakhstan
KR	Kyrgyz Republic
MA	Morocco
TM	Turkmenistan
TR	Turkey
UZ	Uzbekistan
YE	Yemen

	Latin America/Caribbean
BO	Bolivia
BR	Brazil
CO	Colombia
DR	Dominican Republic
EC	Ecuador
GU	Guatemala
HT	Haiti
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