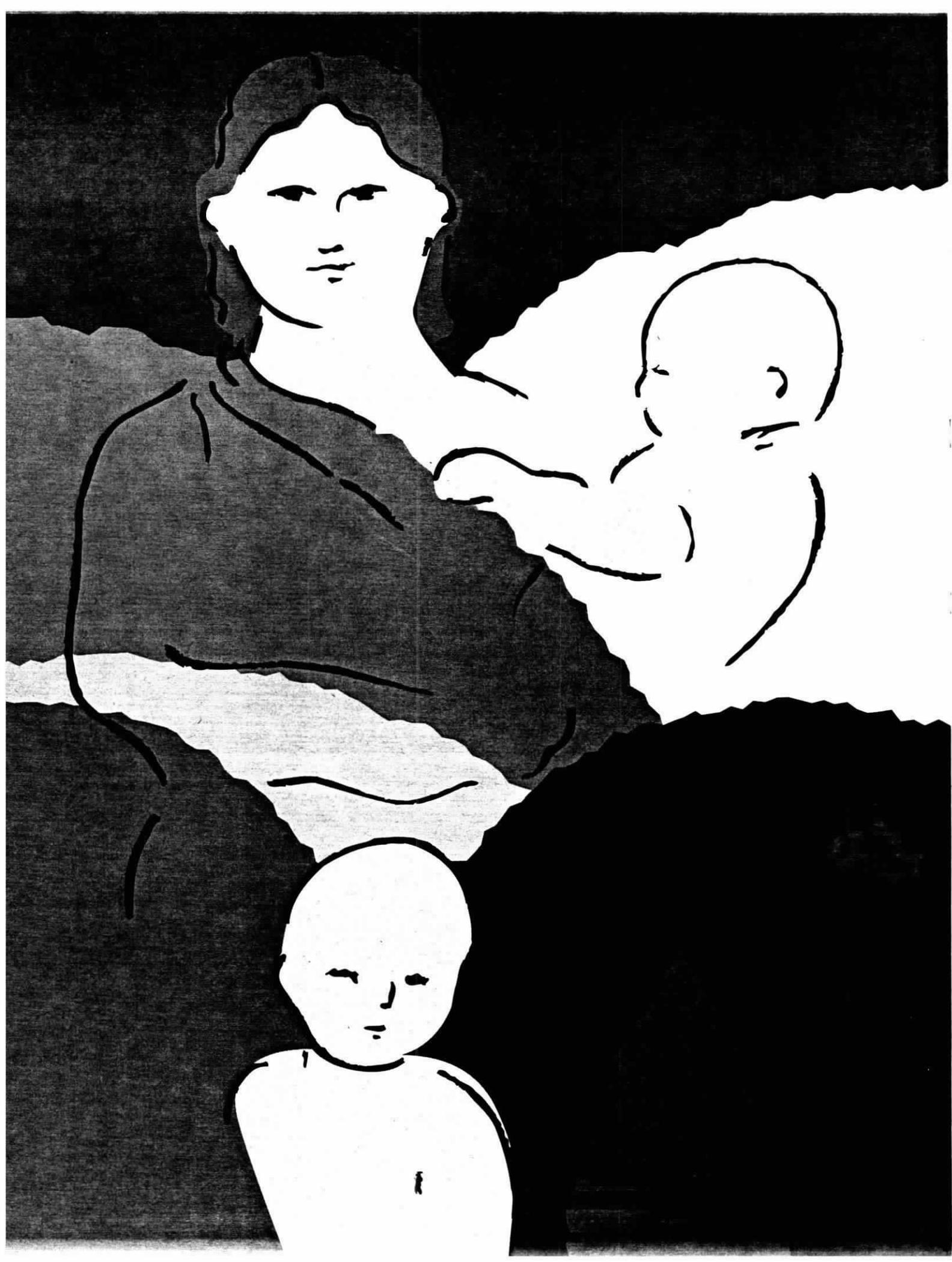


CHILDBEARING EXPERIENCES



WHEN WOMEN BECOME MOTHERS Many women who enter marriage as teen brides soon become teen mothers.

In 17 of the 21 countries surveyed in sub-Saharan Africa, at least half of women had their first child before 20 years of age.

As is the case in much of the world, early childbearing often restricts a woman's opportunities. Women who postpone motherhood until after the teen years are more likely to have fewer children and stay in school longer.

Women in other regions tend to become mothers somewhat later than their counterparts in sub-Saharan Africa. *In 19 of 20 countries surveyed in the other regions, the median age at first birth among women is at least 20.*

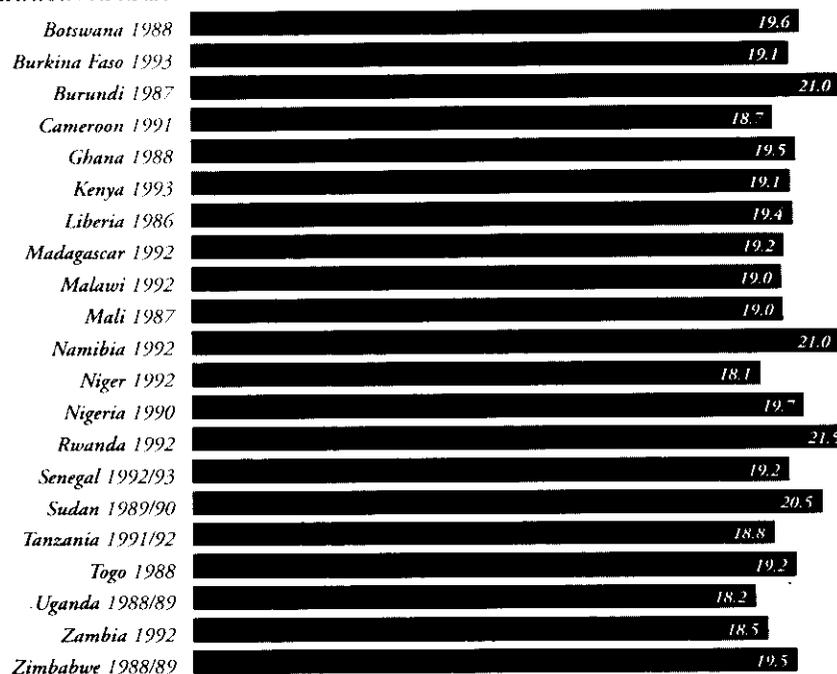
The majority of these women have their first child when they are in their early twenties. In Sri Lanka, half of women are 24 or older when they have their first child. The exception is Guatemala, where the median age at first birth is 19.9 years.



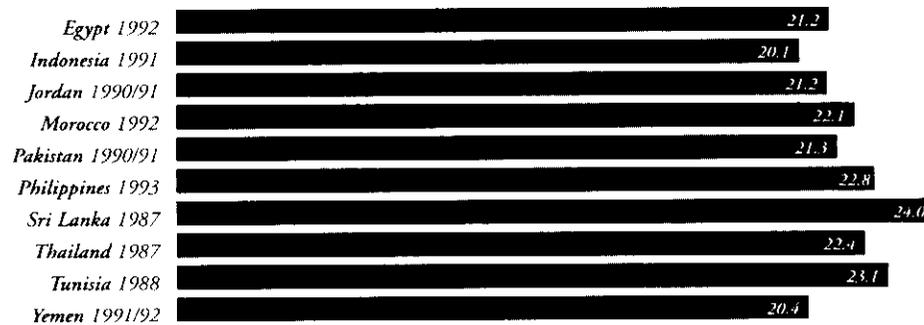
AGE AT FIRST BIRTH

Median age at first birth among women 25 to 49

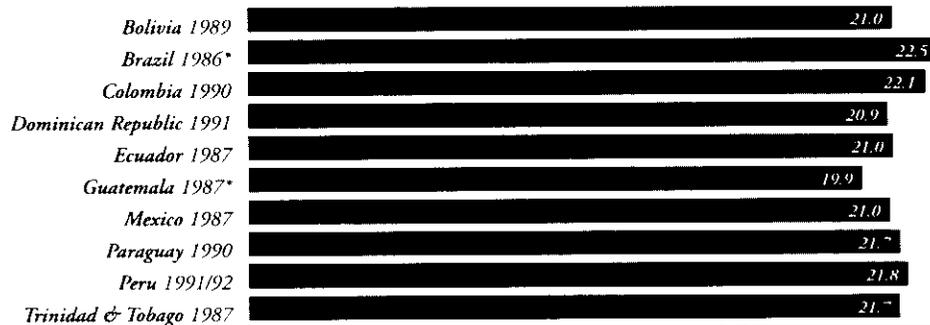
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



ASIA/NEAR EAST



LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN



0 12.5 25

*Women 25 to 44

FAMILY SIZE When women become mothers early in life, they also tend to have more children.

Overall, women in sub-Saharan Africa have more children than anywhere else in the world. In 15 of the 21 countries surveyed in the region, women have an average of six or more children. Women in Mali, Niger, and Uganda have more than seven children on average. The fertility rates are strikingly lower in Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe, where women have an average of about five children.

Although the highest fertility rate is found in Yemen, where women have an average of close to eight children, family size elsewhere in Asia and the Near East is much smaller.

The average woman in Sri Lanka or Thailand, for instance, might have two or three children. Women in Latin America and the Caribbean also have smaller families. Most women in these countries might have three or four children, except in Bolivia and Guatemala, where women have five or more children.

Even though fertility has declined in many countries, most women are still having larger families than those in more developed regions, where the fertility rate is estimated at 1.7 children per woman.*

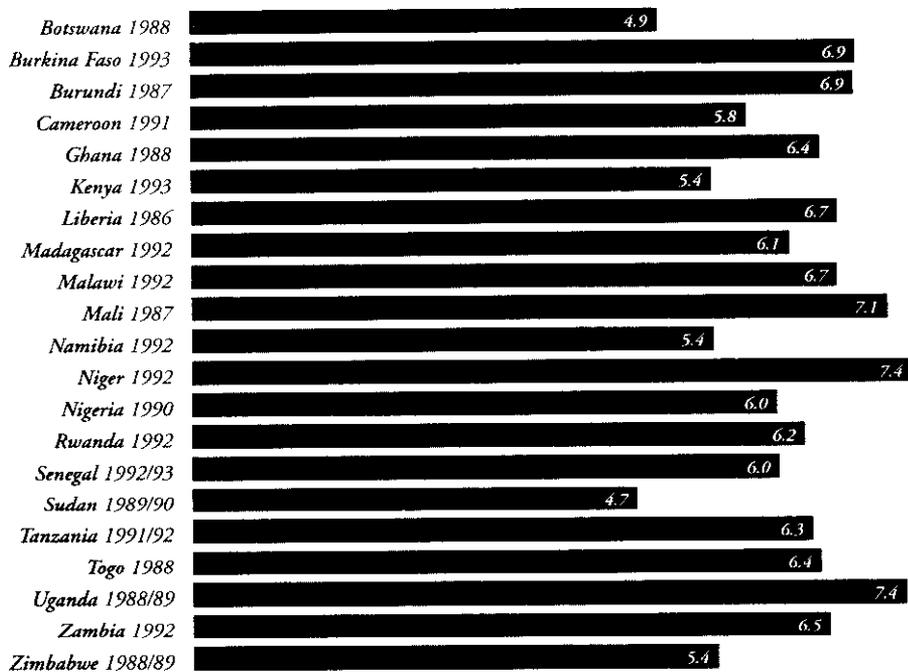


*World Population Data Sheet, Population Reference Bureau. Washington, D.C., April, 1994.

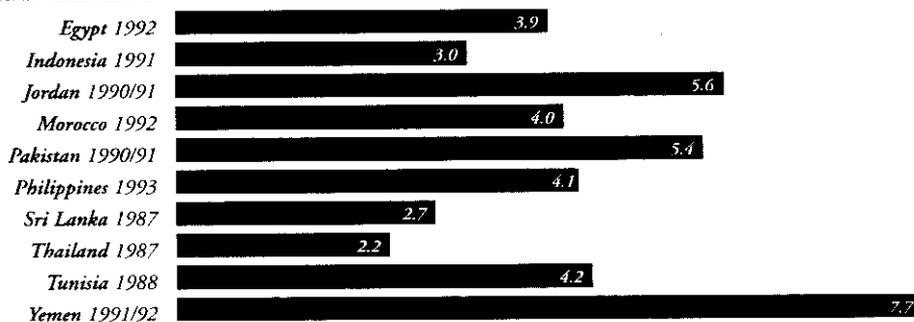
TOTAL FERTILITY RATE*

Average number of births per woman 15 to 49**

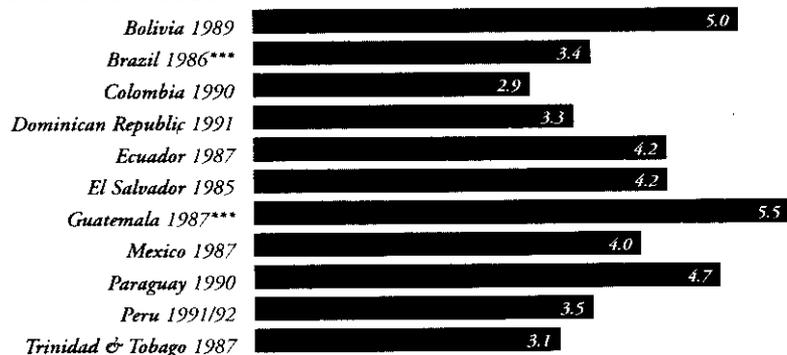
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



ASIA/NEAR EAST



LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN



*The total fertility rate is the number of children a woman would bear in her lifetime if current age-specific fertility rates remain constant.

**Refers to three years preceding the survey except for Niger and Pakistan, where rates refer to six years preceding the survey.

***Women 15 to 44

DURATION OF CHILDBEARING PERIOD *For many women, motherhood is the defining feature of adult life: Typically, a woman in the countries surveyed might spend anywhere from 11 to 20 years in childbearing.*

In the sub-Saharan countries, women nearing the end of their childbearing period had an average span of 16 to 20 years between their first and last child. These women might have had a first child at around 19 years of age and their last child at 38 or 39.

Women in other regions, however, typically spend less of their adult lives in childbearing. In Asia, the Near East, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the average time women spend in childbearing ranges from 11 to 17 years.

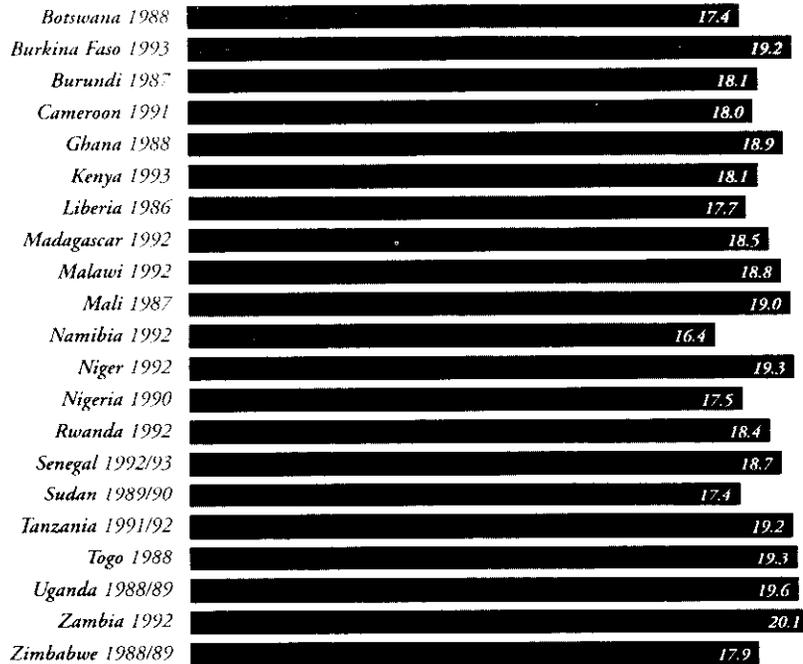




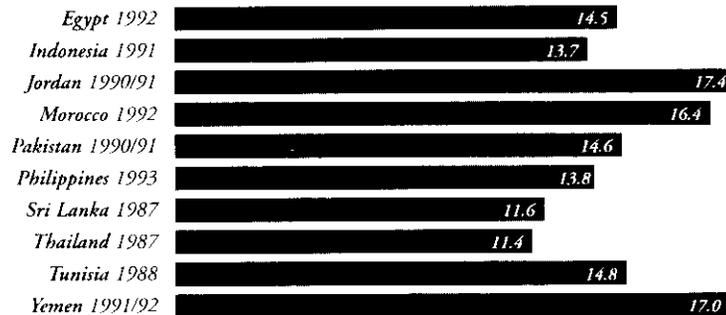
DURATION OF CHILDBEARING PERIOD

Average number of years between first and last births among ever-married women 40 to 49

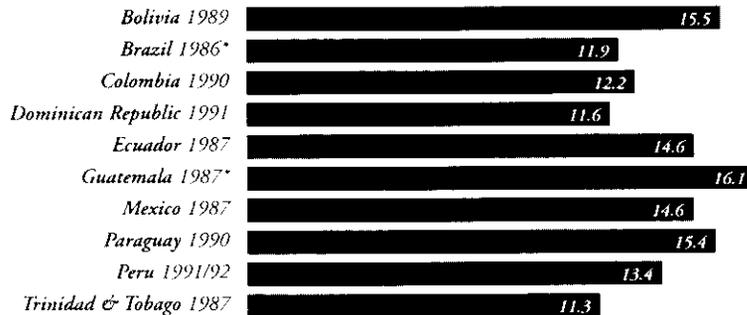
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



ASIA/NEAR EAST



LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN



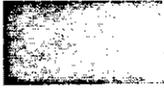
0 12.5 25

*Ever-married women 40 to 44

TIME WOMEN SPEND WITH YOUNG CHILDREN *Women spend many years caring for young children who require close attention.* In sub-Saharan African countries, women spend between 15 and 23 years of their lives with at least one child under age six.

In the other regions, where fertility rates are typically lower, women spend between 10 and 21 years of their lives caring for young children. The shortest period was found in Thailand, where women spend 10.5 years caring for small children.

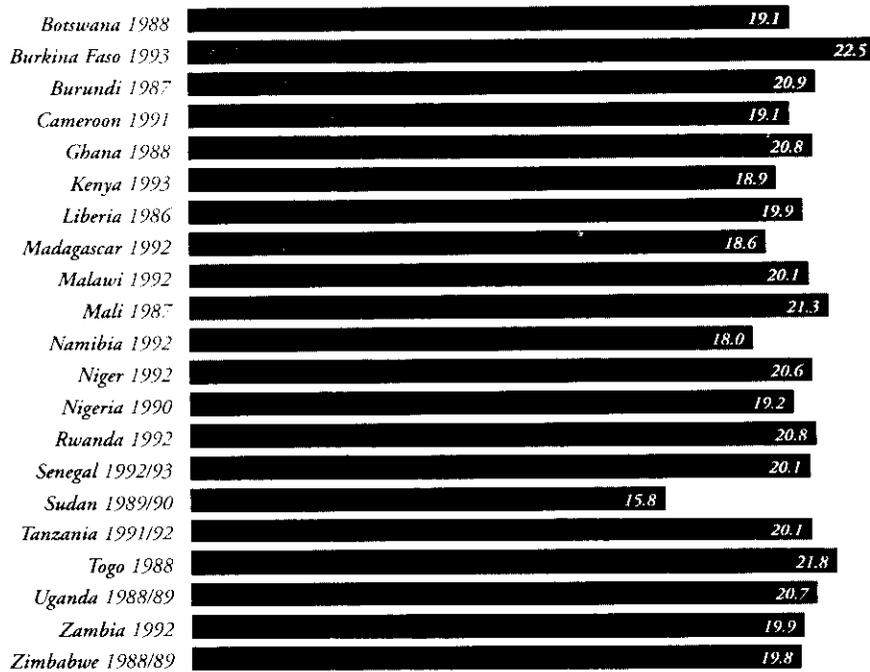




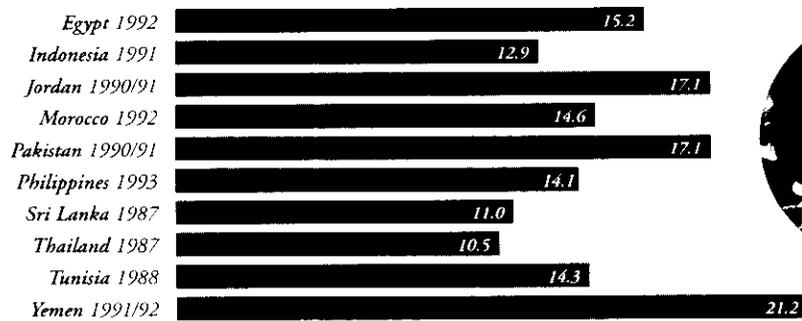
TIME WOMEN SPEND WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Number of years women 15 to 49 spend with a child under age 6*

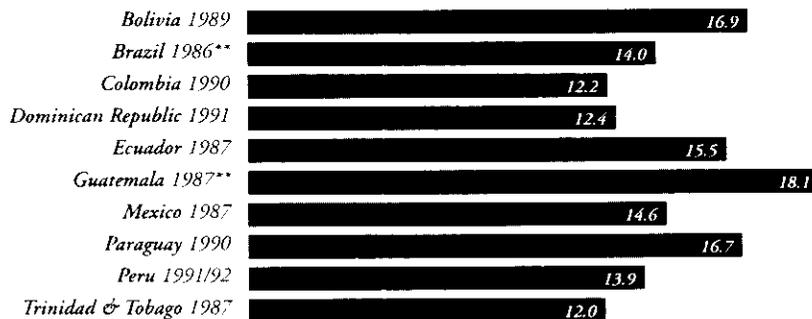
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



ASIA/NEAR EAST



LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN



0 12.5 25

*Average number of years between ages 15 to 49 a woman would spend with at least one child under age six if current age-specific proportions of women with a child under six remain constant.

**Women 15 to 44

CHILDBEARING TRENDS In many countries, women are spending fewer years having children. Factors such as later age at marriage and increased use of contraception contribute to lower fertility and less time in childbearing.

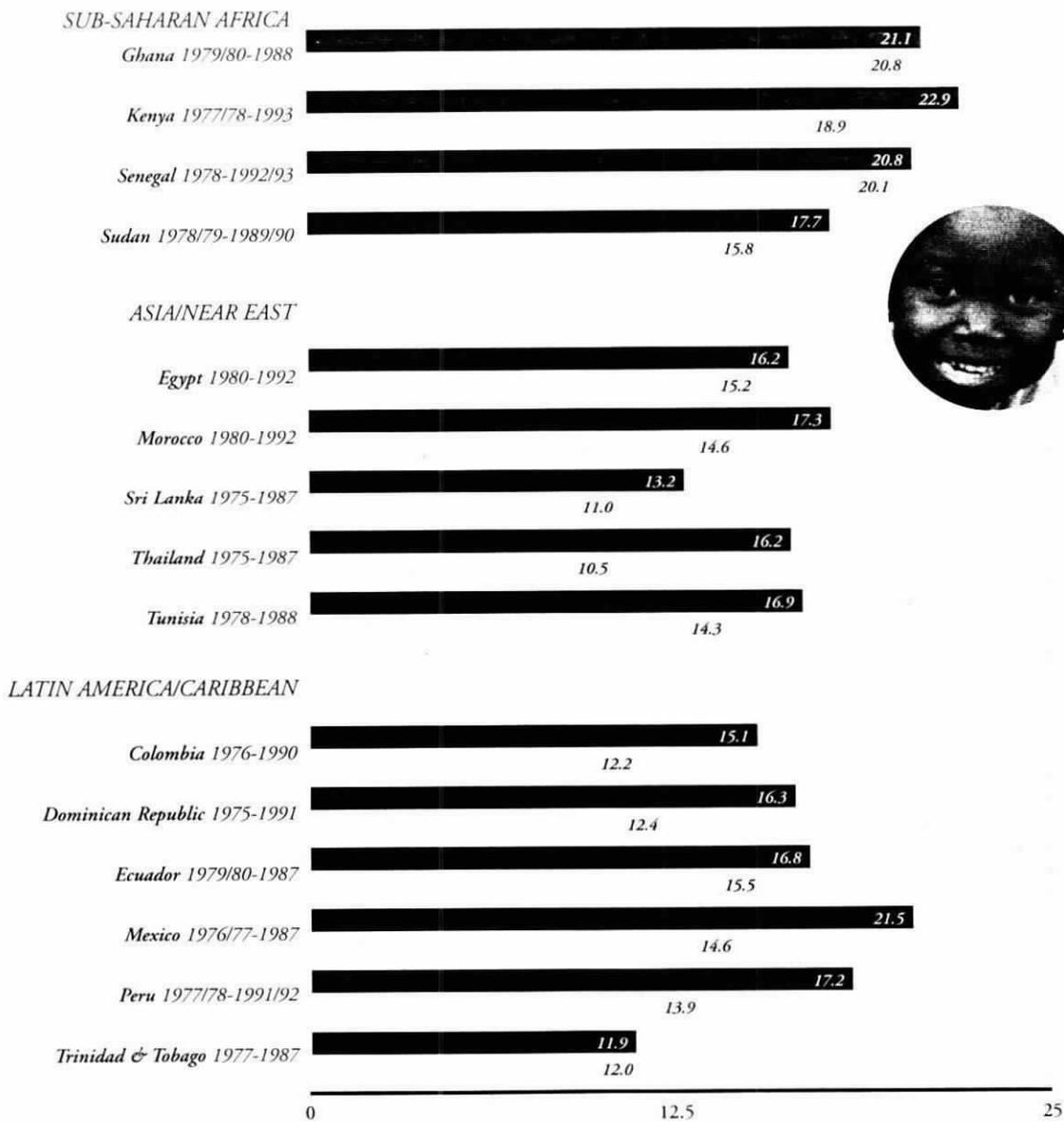
Comparisons with previous surveys indicate that the total years women spend with small children has decreased by more than two years in nine out of 15 countries surveyed. The declines are more substantial in some countries. In Mexico, for instance, the time women spend caring for at least one child under age six fell by almost one-third, from 21.5 years in 1976 to 14.6 years in 1987.



TRENDS IN TIME WOMEN SPEND WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Number of years women 15 to 49 spend with a child under age 6*

WFS=World Fertility Survey ■ DHS=Demographic and Health Survey



*Average number of years a woman between the ages of 15 and 49 would spend with at least one child under six if current age-specific proportions of women with a child under six remain constant.

WOMEN AT RISK IN CHILDBEARING For women in the childbearing years, pregnancy-related complications can pose some of the greatest hazards to health and well-being. Even with the technology to make motherhood safer, pregnancy-related complications continue to result in serious illness and premature death among women and their children.

High-risk births are those for which the mother:

- is under 18 years of age at the time of the birth (“too young”);
- is over 34 years of age at the time of the birth (“too old”);
- has had a previous live birth within the past 24 months (“too soon”); or
- has already had three or more live births (“too many”).

These characteristics can affect the survival chances of both child and mother. Mortality rates are often higher among those children whose mothers have one or more of the above risk factors. Additionally, the mother faces a greater chance of dying if she is “too young,” “too old,” or has had “too many” children at the time of birth.

In 35 out of 42 countries surveyed, 60 percent or more currently married women fall into at least one of these high-risk categories.

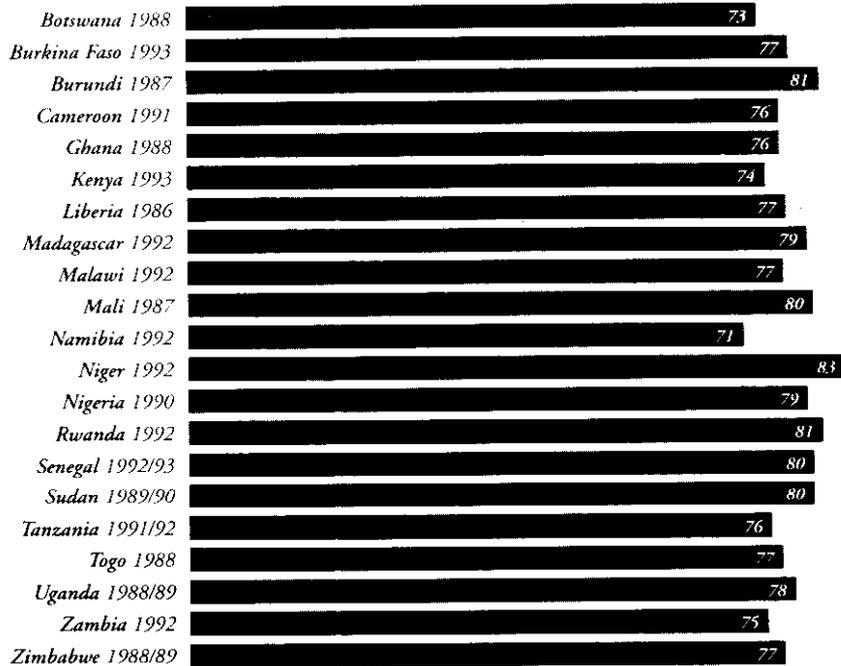




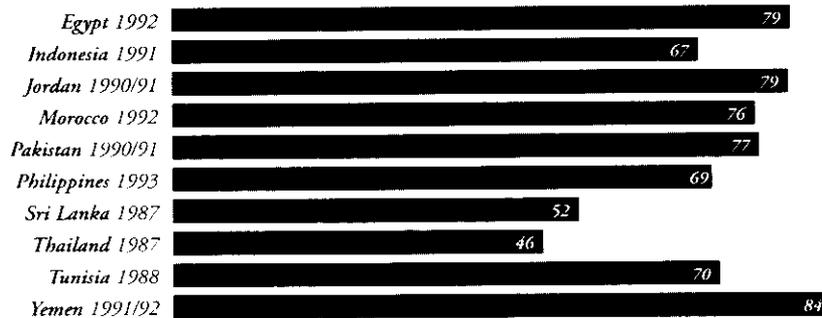
WOMEN AT RISK

Percentage of currently married women 15 to 49 in at least one high-risk birth category

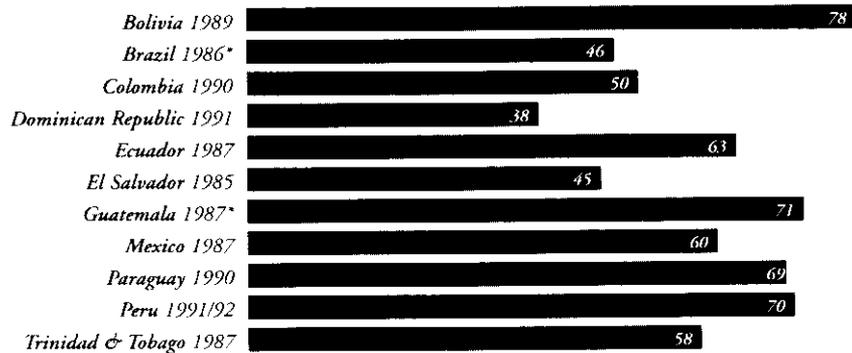
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



ASIA/NEAR EAST



LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN



0 25 50 75 100

*Currently married women 15 to 44

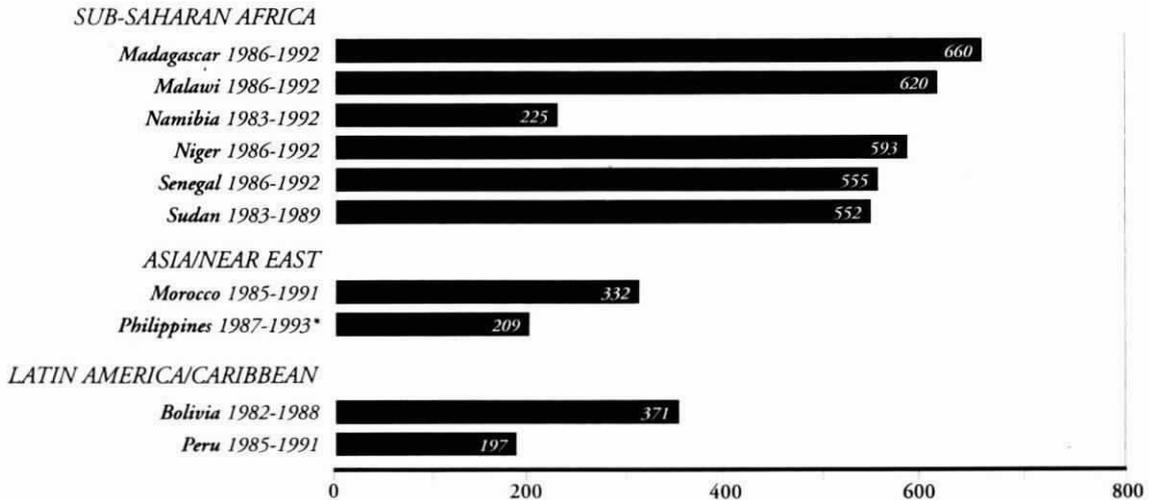
MATERNAL MORTALITY *Some women cannot take for granted that they will survive a pregnancy.*
 Little, however, is actually known about how many women die and what goes wrong in their pregnancies.

In five out of the six sub-Saharan Africa countries surveyed, more than 500 women died per 100,000 births.

Maternal mortality ratios were lower in Bolivia, Morocco, Namibia, Peru, and the Philippines, ranging from 197 to 371 deaths per 100,000 births. In contrast, the risk of pregnancy-related death for women in developed countries is estimated at less than 30 per 100,000 births.*



MATERNAL MORTALITY
 Maternal deaths per 100,000 live births



*Ratio adjusted for ever pregnant

*Lettenmaier, C., Liskin, L., Church, C., and Harris, J. *Mothers' Lives Matter: Maternal Health in the Community*. Population Reports, Series L, Number 7, p. 2. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, Population Information Program, September, 1988.

THE PHILIPPINES NATIONAL SAFE MOTHERHOOD SURVEY

The Philippines National Safe Motherhood Survey investigated women's reproductive health status. Survey findings revealed that more than one out of 10 women experienced at least one major complication during a recent birth. About one-half of the births to women with serious complications took place at a medical facility, where women are more likely to receive potentially life-saving professional care. In contrast, 28 percent of normal deliveries occurred in a health facility.

Most women in the Philippines give birth at home, typically assisted by a traditional birth attendant or a trained nurse/midwife. If a woman giving birth at home experiences complications during delivery, it is critical that she be referred to a health facility. Half of the women who experienced complications, however, were not referred to a health facility by the person providing delivery assistance.

1993 NATIONAL SAFE MOTHERHOOD SURVEY RESULTS

Findings are based on women's reports of pregnancies that took place in the three-year period prior to the survey.

- Women who reported symptoms of at least one major obstetric complication (hemorrhage, obstructed labor, infection or eclampsia) *12 percent*
- Proportion of births to women with complications that occurred in health facilities *51 percent*
- Proportion of births to women without complications that occurred in health facilities *28 percent*
- Percent of women in labor more than 12 hours who were referred to a hospital or clinic *48 percent*
- Percent of women with excessive bleeding during delivery who were referred to a hospital or clinic *55 percent*

HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

Childbearing might take its heaviest toll on those women with the least access to maternity care services.

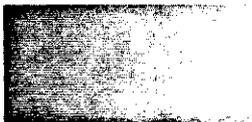
Prenatal care, which ranges from nutrition education to monitoring for potential complications, increases the likelihood of a healthy pregnancy and baby. Doctors generally recommend that women start prenatal care at three months of pregnancy and make a total of about 12 visits.

In 10 out of 41 countries surveyed, women received prenatal care for at least 90 percent of their recent births. In seven other countries, however, fewer than half of births were covered by prenatal care. Women were more likely to receive prenatal care from nurses or midwives than from doctors.

Professional assistance at childbirth is also important, especially since a number of pregnancy-related complications cannot be predicted in advance.

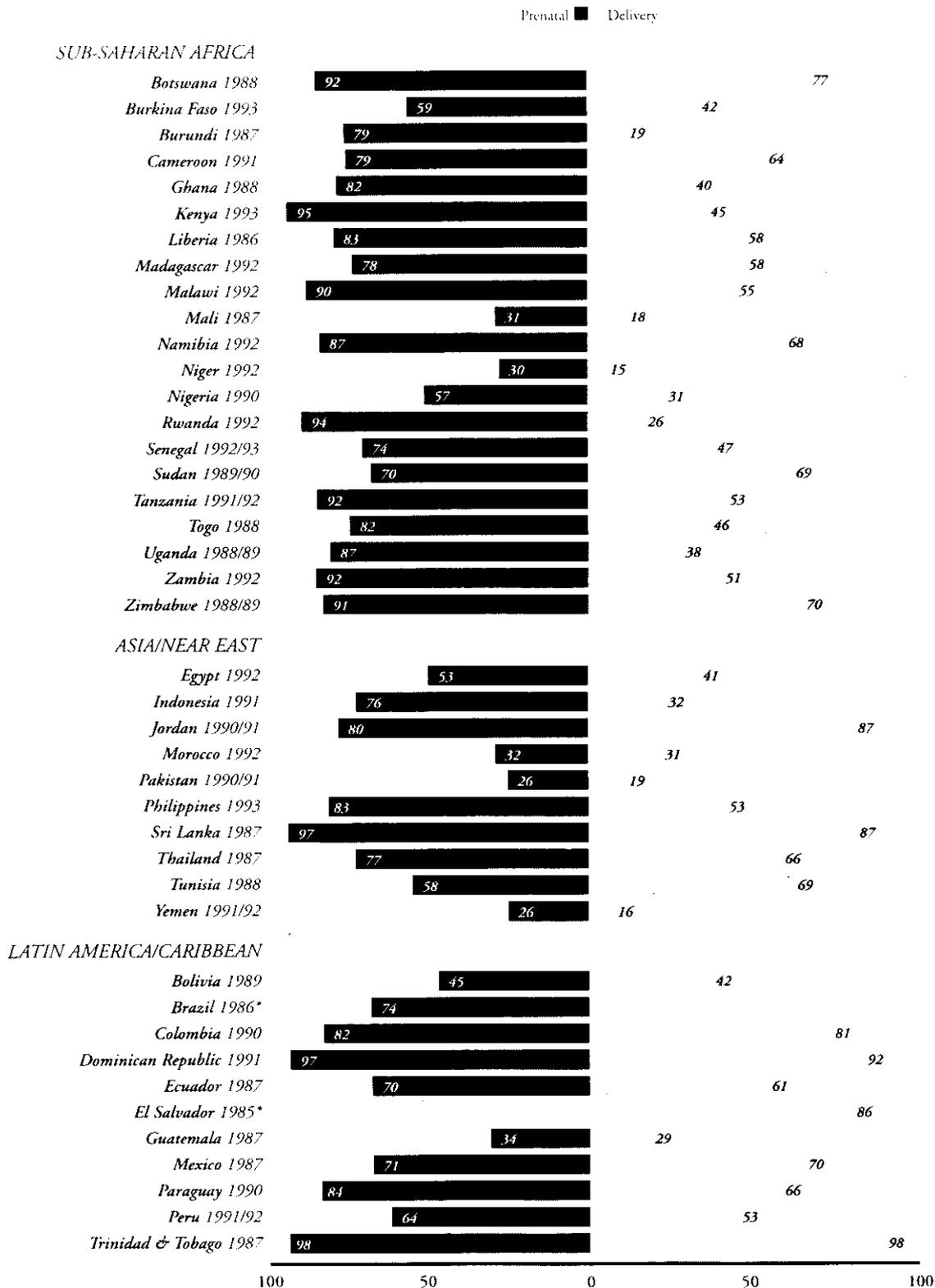
Many women, however, deliver children without the assistance of a trained professional such as a doctor, nurse, or midwife. *In 18 countries, women received professional medical assistance for fewer than half of deliveries.* Women in only two countries, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago, received delivery care for more than 90 percent of their recent births.





HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

Percentage of births during five years preceding survey receiving medical care



*Data not collected in survey