

Several questions dealing with fertility preferences were included in the 1999 TRCHS questionnaire. All women who were not pregnant or were unsure of their status at the time of the survey were asked whether they would like to have a (another) child and, if so, how long they would prefer to wait before the next child. Pregnant women were asked whether they would like to have another child after the one they were expecting and, if so, when. Women were also asked the number of children they would like to have if they could start afresh.

It is assumed that individuals will strive to achieve their preferred family size if family planning services are available, accessible, and affordable. However, this is not always the case when there are pressures from other people, particularly from spouses whose fertility preferences may be different from those of the respondent.

## 6.1 REPRODUCTIVE PREFERENCES

Table 6.1 presents data concerning future reproductive preferences among women according to the number of living children. Although 60 percent of all women say that they want more children, 31 percent say they want to wait for two or more years before having their next child. These women can be considered as potential contraceptive users for the purpose of spacing (Figure 6.1).

Twenty-four percent of women say they want another child soon, while 5 percent want another child but are undecided on the timing of the next birth. Eleven percent are unsure of whether they want another child. One in four women either wants no more children or has already been sterilised. Four percent of women consider themselves to be infecund.

**Table 6.1 Fertility preferences by number of living children**

Percent distribution of all women by desire for more children, according to number of living children, Tanzania 1999

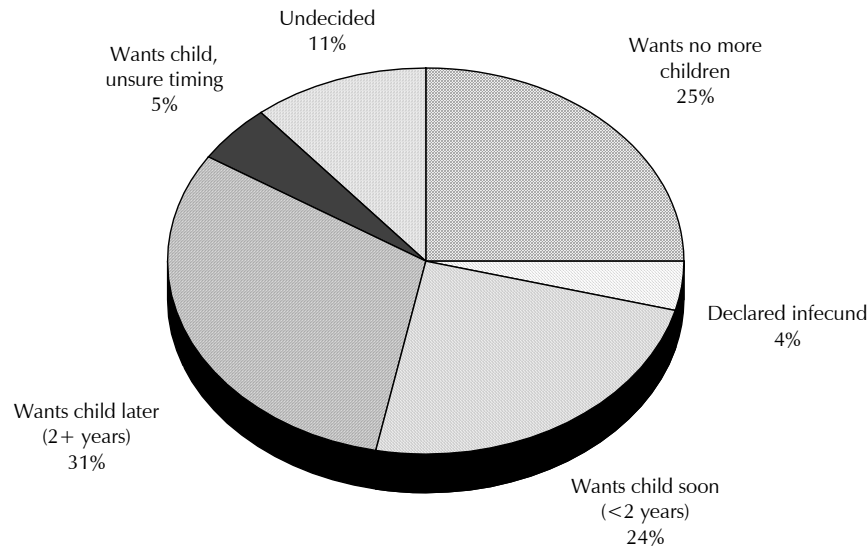
Desire for children	Number of living children <sup>1</sup>							Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	
Have another soon <sup>2</sup>	29.2	34.8	27.1	20.0	14.0	14.3	7.6	23.6
Have another later <sup>3</sup>	12.6	51.3	48.4	45.0	26.5	20.6	14.3	31.1
Have another, undecided when	16.8	2.6	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.1	0.2	5.1
Undecided	32.3	1.8	3.7	4.1	6.6	4.6	3.0	10.8
Want no more	5.3	5.9	16.2	23.1	47.0	54.4	60.6	23.7
Sterilised	0.0	1.2	1.1	2.5	1.6	1.3	4.9	1.5
Declared infecund	2.6	2.3	2.7	4.2	3.4	4.7	9.5	3.9
Missing	1.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of women	1,015	749	616	453	385	295	515	4,029

<sup>1</sup> Includes current pregnancy

<sup>2</sup> Want next birth within two years

<sup>3</sup> Want to delay next birth for two or more years

**Figure 6.1 Fertility Preferences of Women Age 15-49**



Note: "Want no more" includes sterilised women.

TRCHS 1999

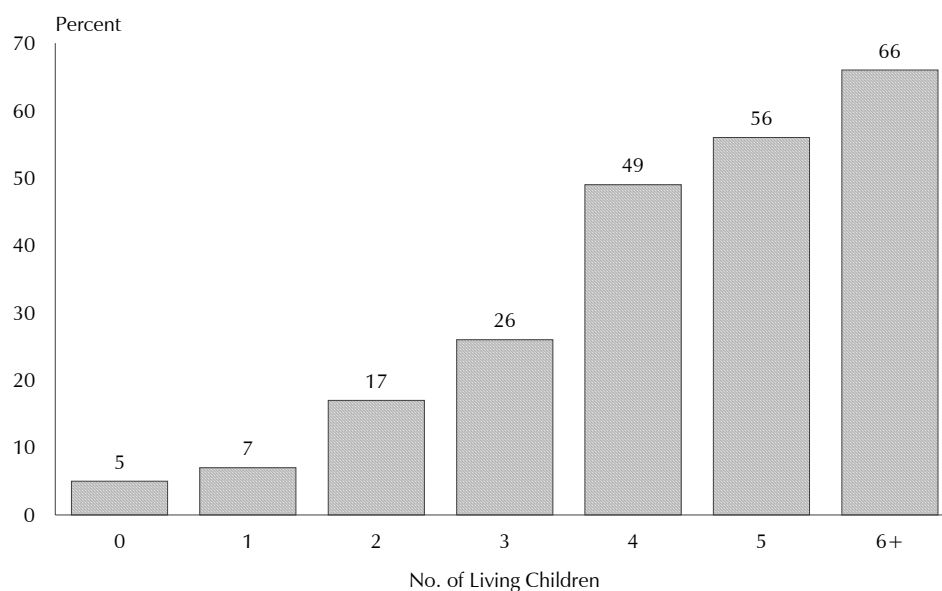
As expected, the proportion of women who want no more children or are already sterilised increases with increasing number of living children, from 5 percent of childless women to 66 percent of those with six or more children (Figure 6.2). Conversely, the desire to have a child soon declines as the number of living children rises. For instance, 35 percent of women with one child want to have another child soon, compared with only 8 percent among those with six or more children. The proportion of women who want another child later increases from 13 percent for childless women to 51 percent for those with one child. Thereafter, the desire to space children decreases as the number of living children increases.

The percent distribution of women by reproductive preferences according to age is shown in Table 6.2. The desire to have another child soon is lower among the youngest and oldest women and relatively constant in between. The proportion of women who want no more children or are sterilised increases with increasing age, from 7 percent among women age 15-19 to 59 percent among those age 40-44 years. The proportion of women who declare themselves infecund increases from less than two percent among women age 15-34 years to 26 percent among those age 45-49.

The desire to stop childbearing differs according to women's circumstances. Table 6.3 shows the percentage of women who want no more children, according to the number of living children they already have and selected background characteristics.

The desire to have no more children is greater among urban than among rural women, regardless of the number of children they already have. Similarly, the proportion of women who want no more children is substantially higher in the Mainland than in Zanzibar. For example, among women with 5 children, 57 percent of those in the Mainland want no more children,

**Figure 6.2 Desire to Stop Childbearing among Women Age 15-49, by Number of Living Children**



TRCHS 1999

**Table 6.2 Fertility preferences by age**

Percent distribution of all women by desire for more children, according to age, Tanzania 1999

Desire for children	Age of woman							Total
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	
Have another soon <sup>1</sup>	16.7	23.4	30.9	24.6	31.5	23.3	13.8	23.6
Have another later <sup>2</sup>	27.3	54.5	42.5	30.8	13.6	5.5	4.5	31.1
Have another, undecided when	15.7	4.5	1.2	1.9	0.8	0.5	0.5	5.1
Undecided	31.2	6.8	5.8	4.3	4.3	2.2	2.1	10.8
Want no more	6.9	10.1	18.0	34.3	44.3	52.8	47.2	23.7
Sterilised	0.0	0.1	1.0	1.7	2.0	5.9	6.0	1.5
Declared infecund	1.9	0.4	0.4	1.0	3.5	9.8	26.0	3.9
Missing	0.3	0.3	0.2	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of women	909	811	749	490	456	299	315	4,029

<sup>1</sup> Want next birth within two years

<sup>2</sup> Want to delay next birth for two or more years

compared with only 22 percent of women in Zanzibar. Overall, there is an inverse relationship between the proportion of women who want no more children and women's level of education. However, the relationship becomes less clear when the number of children is taken into account.

Table 6.3 Desire to stop childbearing by background characteristics

Percentage of all women who want no more children, by number of living children and selected background characteristics, Tanzania 1999

Background characteristic	Number of living children <sup>1</sup>							All women
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	
<b>Residence</b>								
Urban	4.0	8.8	17.5	43.2	64.8	68.7	74.1	23.8
Rural	5.8	6.0	17.1	17.9	43.0	53.5	64.3	25.8
<b>Mainland/Zanzibar</b>								
Mainland	5.4	7.1	17.3	25.7	49.3	56.7	66.1	25.4
Urban	4.1	8.8	17.8	43.8	66.1	(71.0)	75.2	24.0
Rural	6.0	6.0	17.2	17.9	43.6	54.3	65.0	26.0
Zanzibar	1.1	4.6	11.8	18.1	18.1	21.8	49.0	17.5
Pemba	1.3	(3.9)	(13.8)	(20.4)	(7.3)	(12.9)	42.7	16.6
Unguja	1.0	5.0	10.9	16.4	25.0	(29.0)	57.1	18.3
<b>Education</b>								
No education	5.3	6.8	15.1	20.0	47.2	49.8	61.8	31.5
Primary incomplete	7.9	9.4	12.7	21.5	54.6	56.8	70.4	25.6
Primary complete	2.9	5.0	18.8	29.0	49.0	59.1	69.4	22.0
Secondary+	7.9	18.5	23.5	(38.1)	(30.4)	(74.3)	(63.5)	20.8
Total women	5.3	7.0	17.2	25.6	48.5	55.7	65.4	25.2

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 cases.

<sup>1</sup> Includes current pregnancy

## 6.2 NEED FOR FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES

Women who indicate that they either want no more children or want to wait for two or more years before having another child but are not using contraception are considered to have an unmet need for family planning. Pregnant women are considered to have unmet need for spacing or limiting if their pregnancy was mistimed or unwanted, respectively. Amenorrhoeic women are also considered to have unmet need if their last birth was mistimed or unwanted. Women with unmet need and those who are currently using contraception (met need) constitute the total demand for family planning.

Table 6.4 shows the percent distribution of women with unmet need, with met need, and the total demand for family planning by selected background characteristics. Data are presented for all women, regardless of marital status, though summary lines are also presented for currently married and unmarried women.

The total demand for family planning among all women is 40 percent, and 56 percent of the demand is satisfied. The demand for spacing purposes is higher (25 percent) than the demand for limiting purposes (14 percent). Overall, 17 percent of women have an unmet need for family planning, of which 12 percent is for spacing and 6 percent is for limiting births. As expected, unmet need for family planning is much higher among currently married women (22 percent) and much lower among unmarried women (8 percent) than among all women (17 percent).

**Table 6.4 Need for family planning**

Percentage of all women with unmet need for family planning, and with met need for family planning, and the total demand for family planning, by selected background characteristics, Tanzania 1999

Background characteristic	Unmet need for family planning <sup>1</sup>			Met need for family planning (currently using) <sup>2</sup>			Total demand for family planning			Percentage of demand satisfied	Number of women
	For spacing	For limiting	Total	For spacing	For limiting	Total	For spacing	For limiting	Total		
<b>Age</b>											
15-19	9.4	1.3	10.7	7.2	0.5	7.7	16.6	1.8	18.4	42.0	909
20-24	17.4	1.9	19.3	26.3	3.1	29.4	43.7	5.0	48.7	60.4	811
25-29	17.0	4.4	21.4	19.3	6.7	26.0	36.3	11.1	47.4	54.9	749
30-34	12.0	8.4	20.4	16.2	11.4	27.5	28.2	19.7	47.9	57.5	490
35-39	5.4	13.8	19.2	11.0	16.5	27.5	16.4	30.3	46.7	58.8	456
40-44	3.2	8.9	12.1	2.4	26.3	28.7	5.6	35.2	40.8	70.4	299
45-49	4.7	13.4	18.1	0.7	14.7	15.4	5.4	28.1	33.5	46.0	315
<b>Residence</b>											
Urban	9.5	4.2	13.7	22.3	10.7	33.0	31.8	14.9	46.7	70.6	1,122
Rural	12.2	6.4	18.6	10.7	7.4	18.2	23.0	13.8	36.8	49.4	2,907
<b>Mainland/Zanzibar</b>											
Mainland	11.3	5.8	17.1	14.0	8.5	22.5	25.4	14.3	39.7	56.8	3,929
Urban	9.4	4.2	13.6	22.5	10.9	33.4	31.9	15.1	47.0	71.0	1,088
Rural	12.1	6.4	18.5	10.8	7.6	18.3	22.9	14.0	36.8	49.8	2,841
Zanzibar	16.6	4.3	20.9	10.6	3.0	13.6	27.2	7.3	34.6	39.4	100
Pemba	19.3	3.9	23.2	4.3	2.6	6.8	23.6	6.5	30.1	22.8	44
Unguja	14.5	4.7	19.2	15.6	3.3	18.9	30.1	8.0	38.1	49.6	56
<b>Education</b>											
No education	10.3	8.1	18.4	6.9	7.1	14.0	17.2	15.2	32.4	43.2	1,093
Primary incomplete	6.9	5.9	12.8	9.7	8.1	17.8	16.6	14.0	30.7	58.2	854
Primary complete	14.5	4.9	19.3	18.2	8.6	26.8	32.7	13.5	46.2	58.1	1,866
Secondary+	9.4	1.2	10.6	29.8	12.9	42.8	39.2	14.1	53.3	80.2	215
All women	11.5	5.8	17.2	14.0	8.3	22.3	25.4	14.1	39.5	56.4	4,029
Currently married women	13.8	8.0	21.8	15.1	10.3	25.4	28.9	18.3	47.2	53.7	2,653
Unmarried women	7.0	1.4	8.4	11.8	4.6	16.4	18.8	6.0	24.8	66.1	1,376

<sup>1</sup> Unmet need for *spacing* includes pregnant women whose pregnancy was mistimed, amenorrhoeic women whose last birth was mistimed, and women who are neither pregnant nor amenorrhoeic and who are not using any method of family planning but say they want to wait two or more years for their next birth. Also included in unmet need for spacing are women who are unsure whether they want another child or who want another child but are unsure when to have the birth. Unmet need for *limiting* refers to pregnant women whose pregnancy was unwanted, amenorrhoeic women whose last child was unwanted, and women who are neither pregnant nor amenorrhoeic and who are not using any method of family planning but want no more children. Excluded from the unmet need category are menopausal or infecund women and unmarried women who have not had sexual intercourse in the four weeks prior to the interview.

<sup>2</sup> Using for *spacing* is defined as women who are using some method of family planning and say they want to have another child or are undecided whether to have another. Using for *limiting* is defined as women who are using and who want no more children.

Note that the specific methods used are not taken into account here.

Unmet need for family planning is lowest among women age 15-19 years, probably due to lower levels of sexual activity and greater desires to have children. Unmet need for family planning is greater among rural than among urban women. Unmet need—especially for spacing children—is higher among Zanzibari women than women in the Mainland.

The relationship between unmet need and women's level of education is unclear. However, there is a positive relationship between total demand for family planning and level of education. The total demand for family planning increases from 32 percent for women with no education to 53 percent for those with secondary education or higher. Similarly, the percentage of demand satisfied increases with increasing level of education from 43 percent among those with no formal education to 80 percent among those with secondary education or higher.

There has been a decline in the level of unmet need over time, from 30 percent among currently married women in 1991-92, to 24 percent in 1996, to 22 percent in 1999.

### 6.3 IDEAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN

In the 1999 TRCHS, women and men were asked what they consider to be the ideal family size. This information was obtained by asking the respondents two questions. Respondents who had no children were asked, "If you could choose exactly the number of children to have in your whole life, how many would that be?" For respondents who had children, the question was, "If you could go back to the time when you did not have any children and could choose exactly the number of children to have in your whole life, how many would that be?" The distribution of respondents by ideal number of children is presented in Table 6.5. It should be noted that respondents were not forced to give an exact number of children and 3 percent of women and 4 percent of men gave non-numeric responses to the question on ideal family size (e.g., "as many as God wishes", "any number is okay").

The data show a general desire for large families in Tanzania. More than half of women and men report that five or more children are ideal and another one-quarter cite four children as ideal. Only 6 percent of women and 5 percent of men say that two children are ideal, which is the level of fertility required for long-term population growth stabilisation.

There is a positive correlation between the actual and ideal number of children for both men and women. For instance, the mean ideal number of children increases from 4.5 among childless women to 7.3 among women with 6 or more living children. The corresponding increase for men is from 4.6 children among men with no children to 9.0 among those with 6 or more. This relationship is most likely due to the reluctance of respondents who have more children to admit that they might have wanted fewer. Also, those who wanted more children are more likely to have them. However, it is also likely that there has been a gradual decline in family size preferences over time.

This latter explanation is borne out by a comparison of data from previous surveys (Figure 6.3). The mean ideal family size among women has declined from 6.1 in 1991-92 to 5.5 in 1996 and to 5.3 in 1999. Among men, the decline has been from 6.5 in 1991-92 to 5.9 in 1996 to 5.6 in 1999. In all surveys, the mean ideal number of children among men is consistently higher than among women.

Table 6.6 shows the mean ideal number of children by age of woman and selected background characteristics. The mean ideal number of children increases with increasing age, from 4.6 children among women age 15-19 years to 7.3 children among those age 45-49 years. The trend is similar for men.

On average, rural women want one more child than urban women (5.6 versus 4.3). This preference for more children among rural women is true for all age groups. Similarly, the mean ideal number of children among men is higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

Table 6.5 Ideal number of children

Percent distribution of all respondents by ideal number of children and mean ideal number of children for all respondents and currently married respondents, according to number of living children, Tanzania 1999

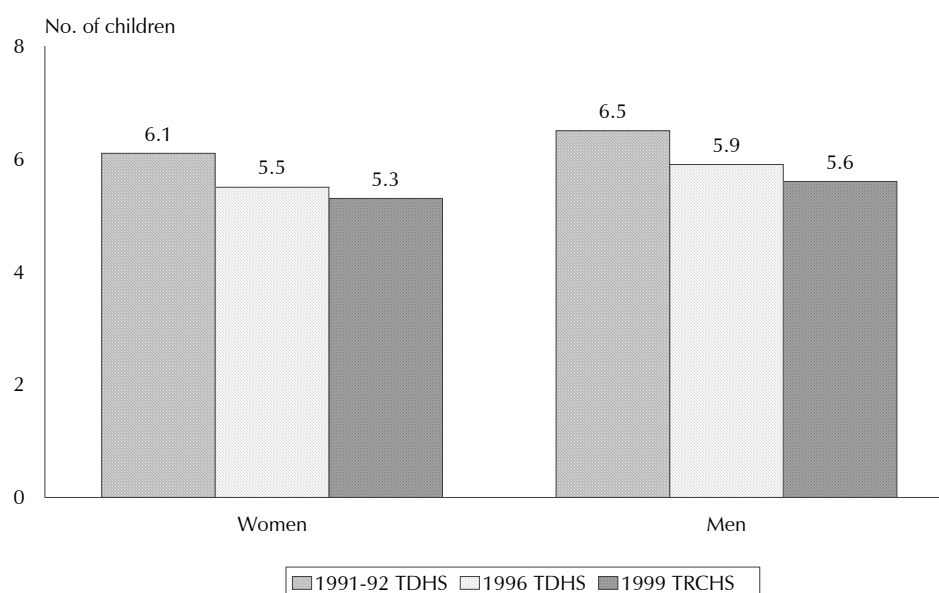
	Number of living children <sup>1</sup>							
Ideal number of children	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	Total
WOMEN								
0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.7	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.4
2	11.6	9.1	3.6	1.6	2.4	4.0	1.2	6.0
3	18.6	20.4	11.3	6.9	3.0	1.9	2.4	11.7
4	27.3	30.9	37.0	32.0	27.3	14.6	13.7	27.3
5	16.1	18.1	19.6	20.0	18.1	22.6	12.5	17.7
6+	20.7	19.3	27.1	38.0	45.6	54.2	67.1	34.1
Non-numeric response	4.9	1.6	1.4	1.5	2.8	2.7	3.2	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of women	1,015	749	616	453	385	295	515	4,029
Mean <sup>2</sup> ideal number for:								
All women	4.5	4.5	4.9	5.4	5.8	6.2	7.3	5.3
Number of women	965	737	608	446	375	287	499	3,916
Currently married women	5.4	4.8	4.9	5.5	5.8	6.3	7.3	5.7
Number of women	203	491	498	378	321	265	435	2,592
MEN								
0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
1	0.6	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3
2	9.0	5.4	3.2	2.0	2.8	0.0	1.3	5.3
3	20.7	21.6	16.2	8.0	4.1	5.4	2.3	14.4
4	26.7	30.4	35.4	29.8	28.2	11.4	14.8	25.6
5	15.7	18.3	16.9	22.9	15.4	22.4	5.1	15.4
6+	22.6	22.0	25.2	35.6	45.2	59.1	71.1	35.2
Non-numeric response	4.5	1.8	3.1	1.9	4.2	1.7	5.2	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of men	1,482	395	369	314	213	194	574	3,542
Mean <sup>2</sup> ideal number for:								
All men	4.6	4.7	4.9	5.4	5.8	6.7	9.0	5.6
Number of men	1,415	388	358	308	204	191	544	3,409
Currently married men	4.8	4.8	5.0	5.3	5.8	6.7	9.0	6.3
Number of men	172	307	323	288	194	184	529	1,998

<sup>1</sup> Includes current pregnancy

<sup>2</sup> Means are calculated excluding the respondents who gave non-numeric responses.

The mean ideal number of children among women and men in Zanzibar (6.8 children for women and 8.1 children for men) is higher than for respondents in the Mainland (5.2 children for women and 5.5 children for men). The high ideal number of children in Zanzibar can be attributed almost entirely to the large families desired by women and men in Pemba. For instance, the mean ideal number of children desired by women in Pemba is 8.1, compared with 5.8 in Unguja. Similarly, the mean ideal number of children desired by men in Pemba is 10.8 children, compared with 6.3 in

**Figure 6.3 Trends in Mean Ideal Family Size  
Among Women and Men, 1991-1999**



#### Unguja.

**Table 6.6 Mean ideal number of children**

Mean ideal number of children for all women and all men by age and selected background characteristics, Tanzania 1999

Background characteristic	Age of woman							Total women 15-49	Total men 15-59
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49		
<b>Residence</b>									
Urban	3.8	3.7	4.1	4.6	4.7	5.4	6.3	4.3	4.3
Rural	4.9	4.9	5.4	5.9	6.2	6.8	7.6	5.6	6.1
<b>Mainland/Zanzibar</b>									
Mainland	4.6	4.4	5.0	5.5	5.7	6.5	7.3	5.2	5.5
Urban	3.8	3.6	4.1	4.6	4.6	5.4	6.3	4.3	4.3
Rural	4.9	4.8	5.4	5.8	6.1	6.8	7.6	5.6	6.0
Zanzibar	6.1	6.2	6.4	7.3	8.0	7.5	7.7	6.8	8.1
Pemba	7.4	7.4	7.4	8.9	8.8	(9.1)	*	8.1	10.8
Unguja	4.9	5.5	5.8	5.9	7.3	(6.3)	(6.6)	5.8	6.3
<b>Education</b>									
No education	5.8	6.1	5.8	6.5	6.4	7.1	8.0	6.6	8.0
Primary incomplete	4.5	4.8	5.4	5.5	6.5	6.7	6.4	5.3	6.0
Primary complete	4.2	4.0	4.8	5.3	5.0	5.4	(5.5)	4.6	4.9
Secondary+	3.8	3.7	4.4	4.2	4.6	(3.7)	4.4	4.0	4.2
Total women	4.6	4.5	5.0	5.5	5.8	6.5	7.3	5.3	NA
Total men	4.8	4.3	5.1	5.1	6.1	6.7	7.6	NA	5.6

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 cases; an asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 cases and has been suppressed.

NA = Not applicable

Respective of age, the mean ideal number of children desired by women and men with some



secondary education is considerably lower than that desired by women and men with no formal education.

## 6.4 FERTILITY PLANNING

In the 1999 TRCHS, for each child born in the preceding five years and any current pregnancy, women were asked whether the pregnancy was planned (wanted then), wanted but at a later time (mistimed), or unwanted (wanted no more children). The answers to these questions help to show the degree to which couples are able to control fertility. The validity of the answers depends on the extent to which the respondents were able to accurately recall their pregnancies in the last five years and their wishes with respect to each pregnancy, and how honest they were in reporting their wishes. This measure has a limitation in that mistimed or unwanted pregnancies may turn out to be wanted children after birth. As such, the results presented here are likely to be underestimates of the proportion of births that were unwanted at the time of conception.

Table 6.7 shows the percent distribution of births (including current pregnancy) in the five years preceding the survey by fertility planning status, according to birth order and mother's age at birth. The data show that 78 percent of births in the past five years were wanted at the time of conception, while 11 percent were wanted later and 11 percent were not wanted at the time they were conceived. The percentage of births that were mistimed or unwanted increases from 15 percent of first births to 28 percent of fourth or higher order births. The proportion of unwanted births is much higher among women age 30-49 years than among younger women.

**Table 6.7 Fertility planning status**

Percent distribution of births (including current pregnancies) in the five years preceding the survey by fertility planning status, according to birth order and mother's age at birth, Tanzania 1999

Birth order and mother's age at birth	Planning status of pregnancy				Total	Number of births <sup>1</sup>
	Wanted then	Wanted later	Not wanted	Missing		
<b>Birth order</b>						
1	85.1	4.0	10.6	0.3	100.0	845
2	80.1	13.2	6.7	0.0	100.0	681
3	78.0	13.8	7.9	0.4	100.0	553
4+	72.2	13.7	14.1	0.0	100.0	1,581
<b>Age at birth</b>						
<19	80.9	7.3	11.7	0.1	100.0	624
20-24	81.5	10.2	8.0	0.4	100.0	1,182
25-29	75.9	17.7	6.3	0.0	100.0	806
30-34	73.2	13.2	13.5	0.1	100.0	586
35-39	73.0	8.6	18.4	0.0	100.0	291
40-49	67.3	3.3	29.4	0.0	100.0	172
Total	77.5	11.4	11.0	0.2	100.0	3,660

<sup>1</sup> Includes current pregnancies

The potential demographic impact of avoiding unwanted births can be estimated by

calculating the “total wanted fertility rate.” The total wanted fertility rate is calculated in the same manner as the total fertility rate, but unwanted births are excluded from the numerator. In this context, unwanted births are defined as births that exceed the number considered ideal by the respondent. Therefore, wanted fertility represents the level of fertility that would have prevailed during the three years preceding the survey if all unwanted births were prevented. A comparison between actual rates and wanted rates indicates the potential demographic impact of the elimination of unwanted births.

Table 6.8 presents the wanted and actual fertility rates according to selected background characteristics. Overall, the total wanted fertility rate is 14 percent lower than the actual fertility. Thus, if all unwanted births were to be eliminated, the total fertility rate of Tanzania would be 4.8 children per woman. The difference between the wanted and actual fertility rate is 1 child in rural areas and 0.3 in urban areas.

Although the gap between wanted fertility and actual fertility is higher in the Mainland than in Zanzibar (0.8 versus 0.5), the wanted fertility rate in Zanzibar is higher than that of the Mainland (5.1 versus 4.8). With respect to education, the gap between wanted and actual fertility is smaller among women who have completed primary school than among those with no education. This differential implies that women with an education are better able to realise their desired fertility.

Table 6.8 Wanted fertility rates

Total wanted fertility rates and total fertility rates for the three years preceding the survey, by selected background characteristics, Tanzania 1999

Background characteristic	Total wanted fertility rate	Total fertility rate
<b>Residence</b>		
Urban	2.9	3.2
Rural	5.5	6.5
<b>Mainland/Zanzibar</b>		
Mainland	4.8	5.6
Urban	2.9	3.1
Rural	5.5	6.5
Zanzibar	5.1	5.6
<b>Education</b>		
No education	5.6	6.5
Primary incomplete	4.4	5.1
Primary complete+	4.3	4.9
Total	4.8	5.6

Note: Rates are based on births to women 15-49 in the period 1-36 months preceding the survey. The total fertility rates are the same as those presented in Table 3.2.