

# 2006-07 Namibia Demographic and Health Survey

## Policy Brief



## Fertility and Family Planning

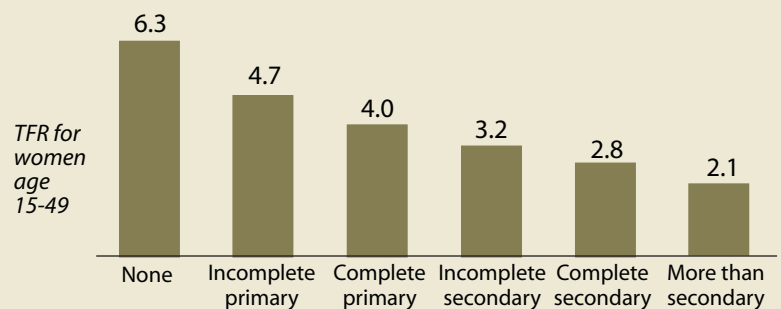
### Fertility Has Significantly Decreased

Namibian women are having fewer children. Fertility has declined markedly in the past 15 years. Currently, women in Namibia have an average of 3.6 children, down from 4.2 in 2000 and 5.4 in 1992. Among sub-Saharan African countries which participated in DHS programme, only South Africa and Lesotho have lower fertility.

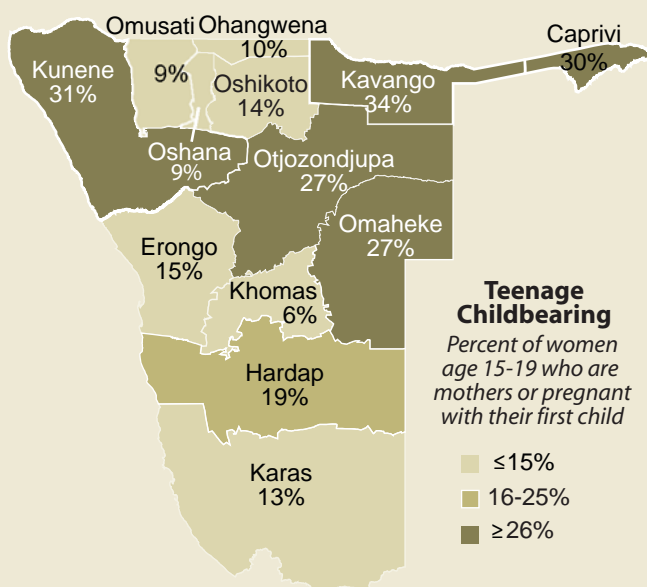
### Fertility Varies Widely

While fertility has declined overall, there are significant variations among regions and among different groups in the populations. Rural women have more children than urban women. The total fertility rate for rural women is 4.3 children compared to only 2.8 children for urban women. Poorer and less educated women also have more children than wealthier and more educated women. For example, women with no formal education have 6.3 children, on average, whereas women with some secondary education have 2.1 children, a three-fold difference.

### Fertility by Education



Regional fertility ranges from a low of 2.6 children per women Khomas and 2.8 children per woman in Erongo to a high of 4.9 children in Kavango and 5.1 children in Omaheke.



### Childbearing Starts Early

Early childbearing often leads to higher fertility. In Namibia one in six women age 15-19 has already started childbearing—13 percent are already mothers, and another 3 percent are pregnant with their first child. Early childbearing varies markedly by region. Almost one-third of young women age 15-19 are pregnant or already given birth in Caprivi (30 percent), Kunene (31 percent), and Kavango (34 percent). In contrast, only 6 percent of young women in Khomas have begun childbearing.



### Use of Family Planning Has Doubled in Fifteen Years

From 1992 to 2006-07, use of family planning by all women rose from 23.3 percent to 46.6 percent. Use of modern contraceptive methods more than doubled, from 21 percent in 1992 to close to 46 percent in 2006-07. Nearly five in ten women currently use a modern method of family planning, and over six in ten nonusers intend to use it in the future.

### Male Condom Used More Often

Among sexually active women, use of the male condom has increased from 10 percent in 2000 to 23 percent in 2006-07, most likely to protect against HIV infection as well as pregnancy. Use of injectables increased slightly from 22 percent to 24 percent in the same time period. The pill, the third most common form of modern contraception, remained at the same level of 9 percent. Seven percent of women are sterilized.

### Modern Method Use Varies Widely

Not only have Namibian women increased their use of contraceptives, they are using them earlier in their reproductive lives and when they have had fewer children. The proportion of women who started using family planning before they had any children has increased from 25 percent in 2000 to 32 percent in 2006-07. Method use varies widely around the country. Only 37 percent of women with no education use modern methods compared with 76 percent of women with more than secondary education. Similarly the poorest women are far less likely to use a modern method than the wealthiest women (43 and 78 percent, respectively). Among the regions, modern contraceptive use ranges from a low of 47 percent in Kavango to a high of 79 percent in Erongo. Rural women are less likely to adopt modern methods than urban women.

### Government-funded Facilities Provide Most Contraceptives

Three in four users get contraceptives from public sources, such as government hospitals, health centers, and clinics. Private hospitals provide methods to one in ten users. While pills and injectables are most often obtained from public sources, two-thirds of women using IUDs obtained them from private medical facilities. More than half of condoms are obtained from public facilities, and 36 percent from private sources, mostly shops.

**Trends in Use of Family Planning**

