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Generational differences in multipartnered childbearing

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What is multipartnered childbearing?

- **Changes in family structures (cohabitation, childbearing outside married, divorce, repartnering) potentially leads to an increase of having children with different partners, i.e. multipartnered fertility**
- **Multipartnered childbearing can occur as a result of death of partner, relationship breakdown and having children outside of relationships**
- **Why are we interested in it? Multipartnered fertility has implications for both adults and children**

What do we know about multipartnered fertility?

- **Not much is known about multipartnered fertility, most current research comes out of the US (particularly from the Fragile Families Project)**
- **This is partly because of data constraints**
 - **Census and birth registrations are not suitable for providing the necessary information**
 - **Need to use survey data that collects relationship histories and birth histories**



The data

- **Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) panel survey**
- **Wave 6 collected in 2006**
- **Total sample: 12,905 respondents aged 15+**

- **Sample used: 7,617 respondents aged 38+**
- **3,748 men (49 %) and 3,869 women (51 %)**
- **4 birth cohorts compared**
 - 1905-1929
 - 1930-1944
 - 1945-1959
 - 1960-1969



What are we measuring in this paper on multipartnered fertility?

- **Generational analysis of the number of relationships in which people have children**
- **Sequence analysis of the dominant sequences of relationships and childbearing and how those sequences differ by generation**

The data

Percentage distribution CEB (females), by cohort (weighted)

Children	1905-19	1930-19	1945-19	1960-19	Total
0	9	7	11	14	11
1	14	8	11	15	12
2	29	29	40	39	36
3	20	28	25	20	24
4	18	16	9	9	11
5+	11	13	4	3	6
N	414	838	1,546	1,071	3,869
Mean	2.68	2.88	2.24	2.05	2.37

Percentage distribution of no. of marriages (females), by cohort
(weighted)

Marriage	1905-19	1930-19	1945-19	1960-19	Total
0	3	2	8	15	8
1	86	80	78	74	78
2	10	17	13	10	13
3+	1	2	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100
N	414	838	1,546	1,071	3,869

■ Problems with the data

- Very limited information on cohabitation relationships
- Missing information on marriage dates:
 - Respondent recall error
 - Questionnaire issues
- No exact date of birth for non-coresident children aged over 24 (only age)

■ Assumptions we make

- If year of key events (e.g marriage or child birth) are known but month is missing, month randomly assigned.
- End of marriage is taken to be date of separation rather than divorce.
- Separation spells not counted if they lasted 1 year or less.

Data Issue – Example 1

J6 (Some people live together as a couple without marrying). Have you ever lived with someone (else) as a couple for more than 3 months, but did not marry them?

Yes 1
No 2 → K1

J7 How many such relationships have you lived in?

Exclude any current relationship reported in J4 above.

Record number; must be at least 1

J8 Thinking about (this / the first such) relationship, in what month and year did you start living together?

If month not known, enter 99 and obtain year.

Record month and year:

J9 And how long did you live together as a couple?

Count only time spent living together. Exclude any periods of temporary separation, and also exclude the time at the beginning of the relationship before they moved in together.

Full years Full months

HILDA Wave 1. Person Questionnaire. Section J

- Unable to include cohabitation information.
- Retrospective information only collected for *first* cohabiting relationship.

Data Issue – Example 2

J2		<i>Present or most recent marriage</i>	<i>First marriage if married more than once</i>	<i>Second marriage if married more than twice</i>	<i>Third marriage if married more than 3 times</i>	<i>Fourth marriage if married more than 4 times</i>
a	In what month and year were you married?	Month	AMRPMTH			
	<i>Only need month for present or most recent marriage.</i>	Year	AMRPYR	AMR1YR	AMR2YR	AMR3YR

No information on month that previous marriage(s) started

HILDA Wave 1, Person Questionnaire. Section J (Relationships). page 53

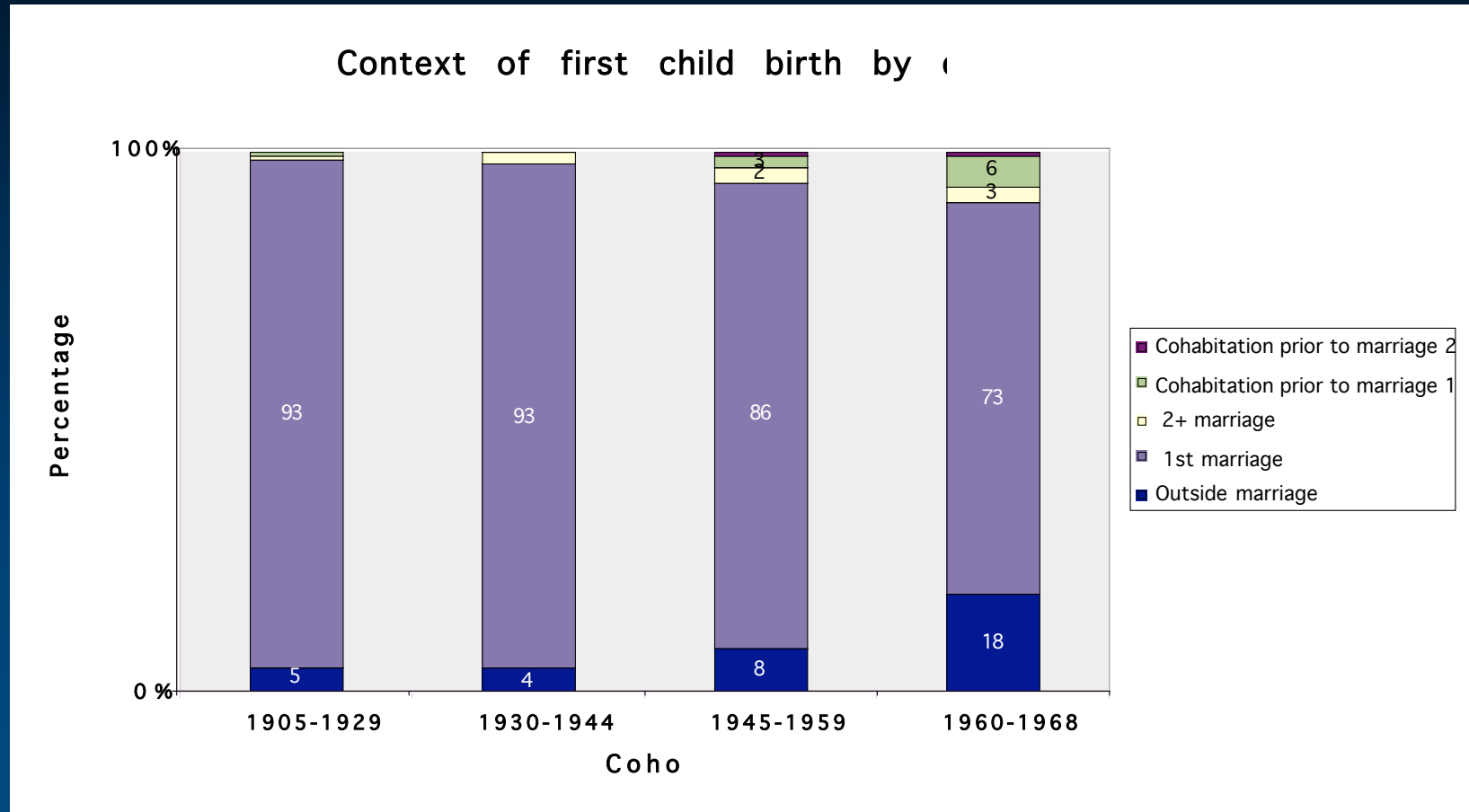
If respondent is still in their first marriage, go to J3

d	[FOR PREVIOUS MARRIAGES] How did the marriage end?	Still married	AMRPEND	AMR1END	AMR2END	AMR3END	AMR4END
		Separated	2				
		Divorced	3	3	3	3	3
		Widowed	4	4	4	4	4
e	[IF WIDOWED] In what year did this occur?	Year	AMRPWIDW	AMR1WIDW	AMR2WIDW	AMR3WIDW	AMR4WIDW
f	[IF SEPARATED / DIVORCED] In what year did you finally separate?	Year	AMRPSEP	AMR1SEP	AMR2SEP	AMR3SEP	AMR4SEP
g	[IF DIVORCED] In what year was your divorce finalised?	Year	AMRPDIV	AMR1DIV	AMR2DIV	AMR3DIV	AMR4DIV

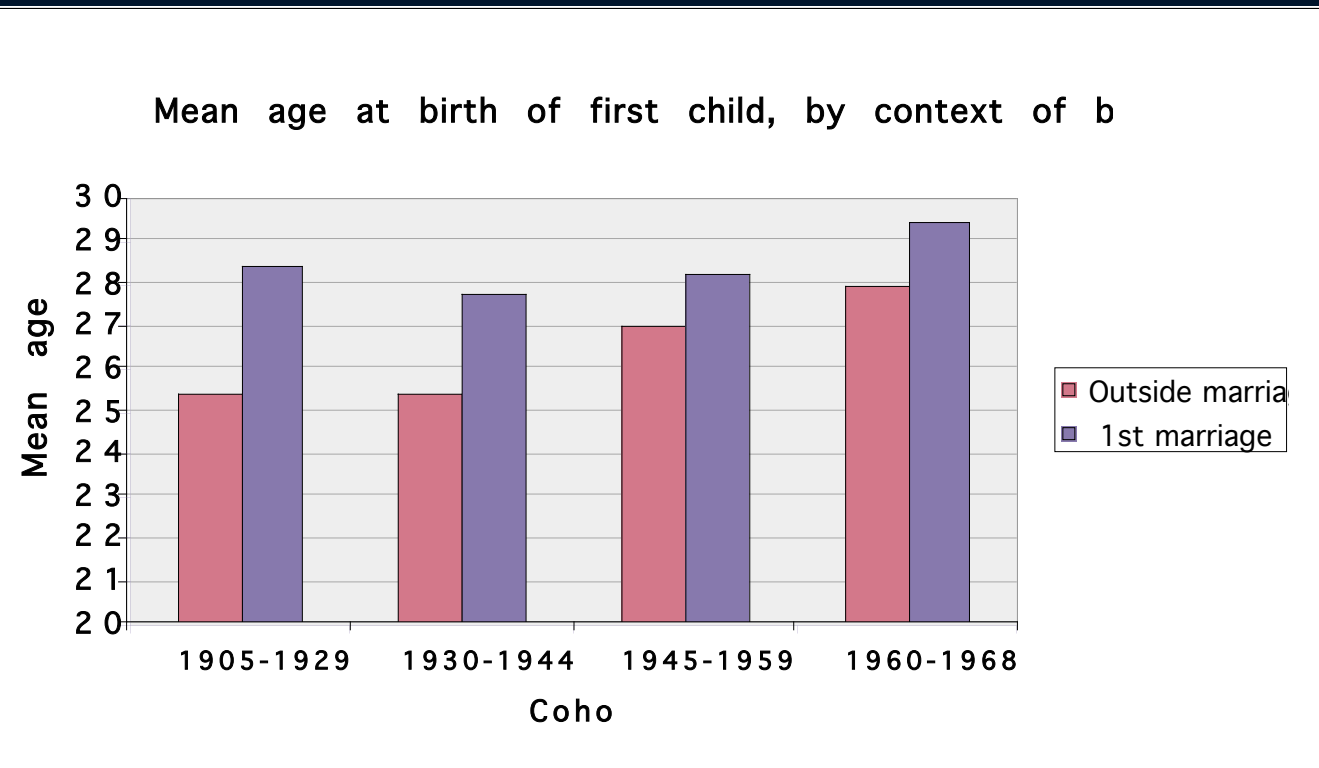
No information on month that marriage(s) ended

HILDA Wave 1, Person Questionnaire. Section J (Partnering). Page 53

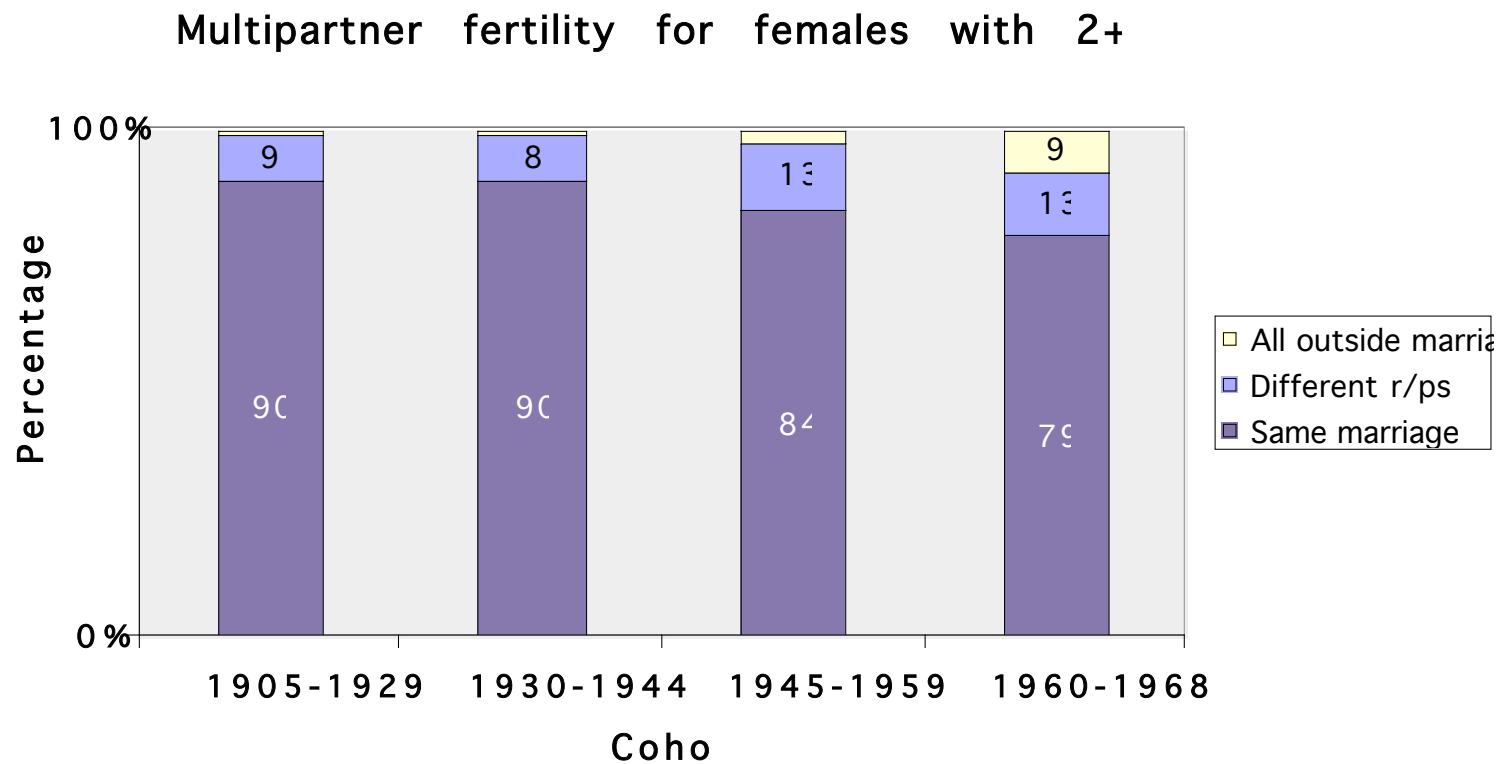
Results: The changing context of childbearing



Results: The changing timing of childbearing



Results: Generational change in multipartnered fertility





Results: Generational change in the sequencing of partnering and fertility (1)

Top sequences experienced by c.50 per cent of the population up to age 37 (unweighted)

FEMALES				
1905-1929			N	%
1	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		100	23.7
2	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		72	17.1
3	Single Married Mar + 1 child		55	13.0
			227	53.8
1930-1944			N	%
1	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		201	22.7
2	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		174	19.7
3	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 + 4 children		80	9.0
			455	51.4
1945-1959			N	%
1	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		313	20.4
2	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		195	12.7
3	Single		99	6.4
4	Single Cohabiting Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		72	4.7
5	Single Married Mar + 1 child		67	4.4
6	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 + 4 children		57	3.7
			803	52.2
1960-1968			N	%
1	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		160	13.3
2	Single		120	10.0
3	Single Cohabiting Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		116	9.6
4	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		90	7.5
5	Single Cohabiting Married Mar + 1 child		42	3.5
6	Single Cohabiting Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		39	3.2
7	Single + 1 child + 2 children		37	3.1
			604	50.1



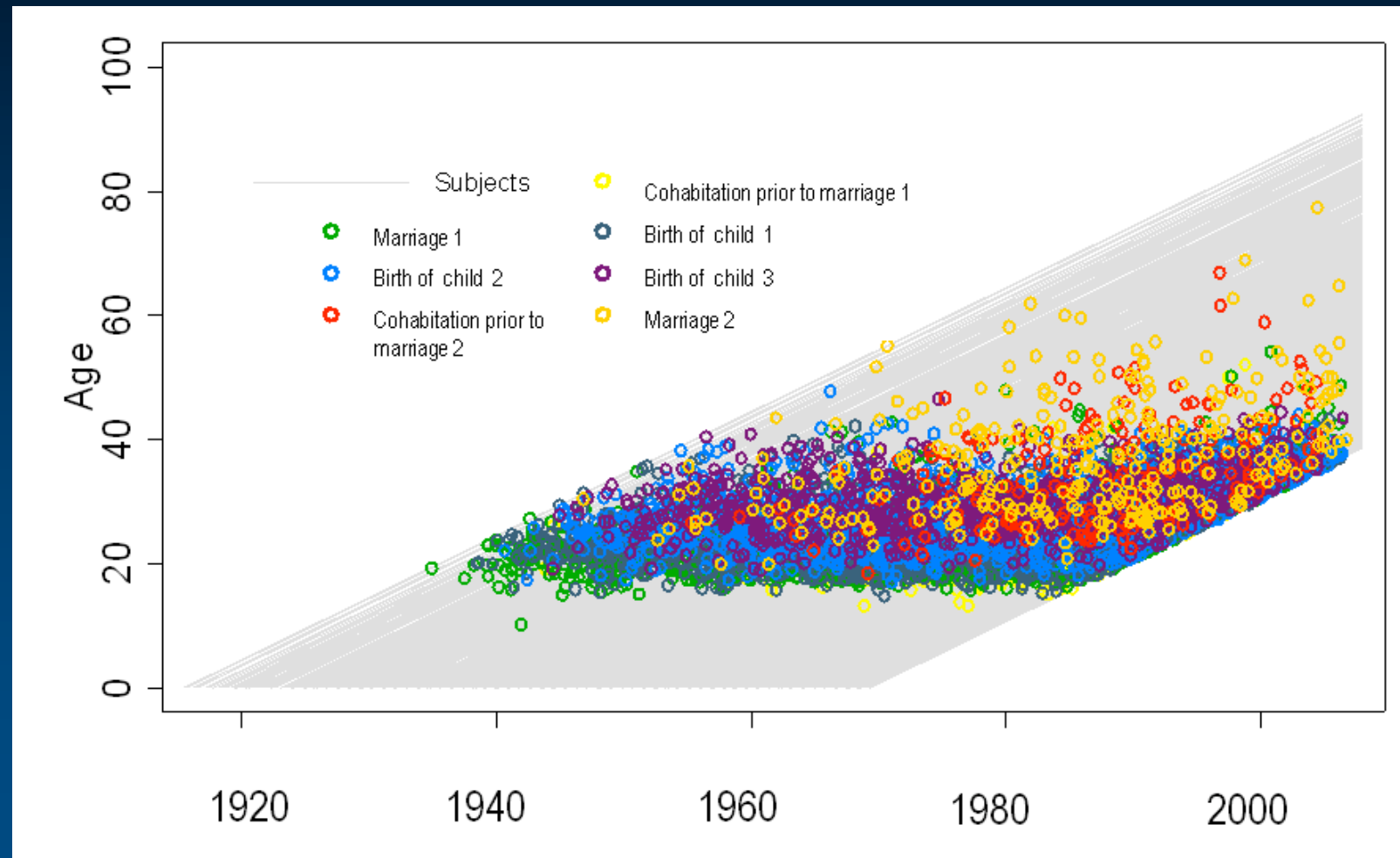
Results: Generational change in the sequencing of partnering and fertility (2)

Top sequences experienced by c.50 per cent of the population up to age 37 (unweighted)

MALES				
1905-1929			N	%
1	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		66	22.2
2	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		57	19.2
3	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 + 4 children		33	11.1
			156	52.5
1930-1944			N	%
1	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		195	24.0
2	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		159	19.6
3	Single		65	8.0
			419	51.6
1945-1959			N	%
1	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		274	19.4
2	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		164	11.6
3	Single		157	11.1
4	Single Married Mar + 1 child		78	5.5
5	Single Cohabiting Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		72	5.1
			745	52.7
1960-1968			N	%
1	Single		193	18.4
2	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		125	11.9
3	Single Cohabiting Married Mar + 1 child + 2 children		96	9.1
4	Single Married Mar + 1 child + 2 + 3 children		61	5.8
5	Single Cohabiting Married		42	4.0
6	Single Married Mar + 1 child		40	3.8
			557	53.0

Increasing complexity of fertility and relationship experiences

Plot of key life fertility and partnering events, including the birth of the first three children and two marriages (females)





Understanding the extent of multipartnered childbearing in Australia

- **Review of main findings**
- **Issues of data limitation, the inability to fully assess the extent of childbearing in cohabiting relationships**
- **What needs to be collected in order to fully understand patterns of relationships and childbearing**

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