data are collected through interviews with the women or by abstracting information from their medical records. In countries where abortion is highly restricted by law, most studies of this type include only women who are hospitalized for treatment of abortion complications and therefore do not represent all women who obtain abortions—for example, women who have complications but fail to obtain hospital treatment, and those who obtain a safe, or uncomplicated, abortion. In addition, the hospitals or clinics included in some of these studies may be different from the average facility.

Despite the limitations of subnational studies, they provide useful information for countries that would otherwise be unrepresented. We include data from such studies if the sample size is more than 100 and if the data are for women having abortions in a recent time period. Studies that present only lifetime abortion measures are not included.

Findings

**Age at Abortion**

- **Percentage distribution.** In the great majority of the 56 countries for which we have data, the highest proportions of abortions occur among women aged 20–24 and 25–29 (Table 1). Typically, the proportion is smaller among women aged 30–34, but...