

Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey, 2005

(March 2006) The latest Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) of the Republic of Rwanda was conducted in 2005. This 2005 survey shows that the national policy to reduce population growth, while not yet seeing a reduction in fertility rates, has resulted in the increased use of family planning. In addition, the widespread awareness of HIV suggests that the country is having some success in addressing that significant threat to public health.

Here are some preliminary results from the 2005 Rwanda DHS:

Population

Rwanda's population stands at nearly 9 million and is currently growing at about 2.5 percent per year, a rate that would double a population in about 28 years.

Total Fertility Rate

One measure of primary interest in the DHS is the total fertility rate (TFR), or the average number of children a woman would bear given the rate of childbearing of a particular year.

Although the government of Rwanda officially adopted a population policy to reduce fertility in 1996, the recently released DHS indicates that there has not been any progress in the reduction in the TFR as of yet. In the 2005 DHS, Rwanda's TFR stood at 6.1 children per woman, slightly higher than in the previous survey (TFR of 5.8 in 2000), and about the same as the DHS conducted in the early 1990s.

Family Planning and Reproductive Health

Among women of childbearing age (15-49) married or in union, total contraceptive use stood at 17.4 percent in 2005 and at 10.3 percent for modern methods such as the pill or sterilization. The most commonly used modern method was injection, with 4.7 percent of the women using it. Traditional methods such as periodic abstinence or withdrawal were used by 7.1 percent of women. Use of modern contraception in Rwanda has doubled over the past five years.

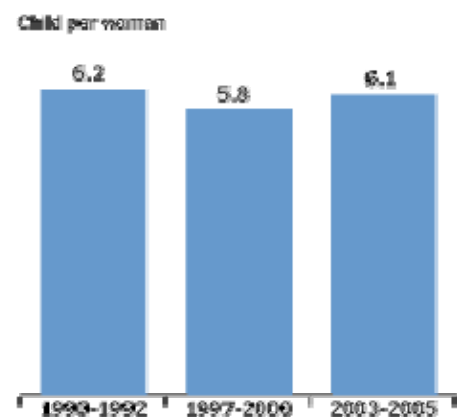
Overall, 42.2 percent of the women indicated that they did not wish to have an additional birth, and a majority of those with four or more did not wish to do so. Fully 94.4 percent of women who had had a birth in the five-year period before the survey had received some prenatal care from health personnel such as a doctor, nurse, midwife, or auxiliary midwife.

Newborn Health

DHS surveys also provide estimates of the level and trend in infant mortality (deaths to infants below age 1 per 1,000 births). In Rwanda, the infant mortality rate for the five-year period before the 2005 survey was estimated at 86 deaths per 1,000 infants below age 1. It was 118 per 1,000 10-14 years before the survey.

About three-fourths of infants ages 12-23 months had received all recommended vaccinations, a relatively high level, but this proportion was about the same as in the previous DHS conducted in 2000.

**Total Fertility Rate, Rwanda
1990-1992 to 2003-2005**



Source: *Demographic and Health Surveys*.

HIV/AIDS

Knowledge of HIV/AIDS is universal in Rwanda: 99.9 percent of both men and women report having heard of the disease and 90 percent or more are aware of at least one way of preventing the disease. Far lower percentages of women and men, however, had used a condom during the most recent sex with a noncohabiting partner: 20.4 percent of women and 34.6 of men.

Testing for HIV/AIDS indicated that 3.0 percent of those ages 15-49 were HIV-positive, 3.6 percent of women and 2.3 percent of men. This is somewhat lower than prevalence rates in Rwanda previously estimated by UNAIDS, which had placed the level at 5.1 percent for 2003.

Recent DHS surveys have provided valuable measurements of HIV infection on a nationally representative basis while, prior to such surveys, estimates were based upon testing conducted at sentinel sites at clinics and hospitals, and these sites could not provide a truly nationally representative basis for estimates.