

# Overview of the Reproductive Health Survey

## Background

The National Family Planning Board (NFPB) has, over the past few decades, conducted a series of surveys which have explored issues such as fertility rates, contraceptive prevalence, Reproductive Health and Family Planning and thus kept health care providers, policy makers and the society at large informed about the ever changing Jamaican situation.

These periodic enquiries began with the Jamaica Fertility Survey during the period 1975-1976 and continued with the 1983, 1989, and 1993 Contraceptive Prevalence Surveys. In more recent times, the NFPB has created the Reproductive Health Survey which covers a broader spectrum of issues. These surveys were conducted for the years 1997, 2002 and most recently, the year 2008.

## Collaborations

In order to conduct the research to produce these reports, many collaborative efforts were forged over the years between the NFPB and organisations both nationally and overseas. Agencies which the Board has worked with in the past include, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Division of Reproductive Health, the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Population Reference Bureau, the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN).

## Areas Covered

Several topics have been explored through the development and improvement of these surveys over the years. As with any periodic investigation, new issues which need special attention have continuously been indentified, and have thus been added to subsequent publications. This explains the differences in the areas covered in some chapters when comparing varying survey years.

Topics which have been developed and reported on over the years are as follows:

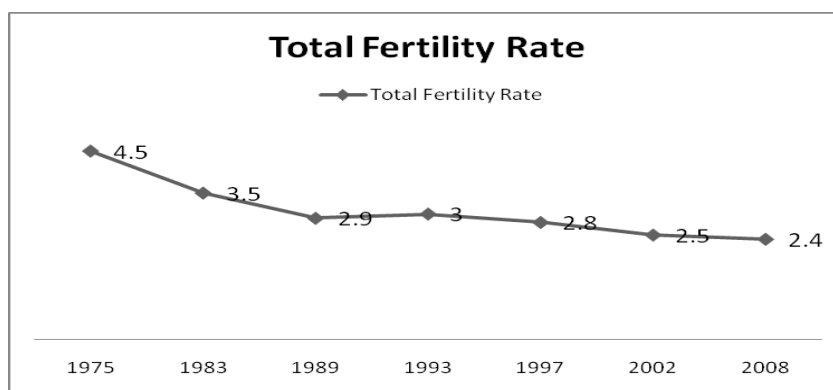
- Nuptiality;
- Fertility;
- Infant and Child Mortality;
- Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices in Contraception;

- Child bearing and Rearing;
- Reproductive Health;
- Contraceptive use;
- Contraceptive Knowledge;
- Young Adult Behaviour and Practices;
- Maternal Health and Childcare;
- Health Behaviours;
- Sexually Transmitted Infections;
- HIV/AIDS; and
- Physical and Sexual Abuse

In the past, and also recently, data from the RHS have been used by researchers for population planning and family planning projections; lecturers and students in the areas of Demography and Reproductive Health for the preparation of reports, and have also been beneficial to health care providers, policy makers, guidance counsellors and others who work in the areas of Family Planning and Reproductive Health. The data have been used in helping to identify issues of concern, providing the data needed for trend analyses in these areas, and subsequently, guiding the delivery of Reproductive Health services.

### Fertility Rates

When comparing survey years, it was observed that the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in 2002 was 2.5, compared with the TFR of 2.4 for the year 2008 .Overall, patterns show that the TFR for Jamaica is trending downwards which is evident in the graph below.



***Age Specific Fertility Rates by Maternal age and by Area of Residence (2008) Compared With the 2002 RHS for the age Groups 15-19 and 20-24***

As it relates to the Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR) for the age group 15-19, this has decreased for the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA) from 86 in 2002 to 50 in 2008. In the age group 20-24, in the KMA, the ASFR has decreased from 126 in 2002 to 82 in 2008.

**Unintended Pregnancies**

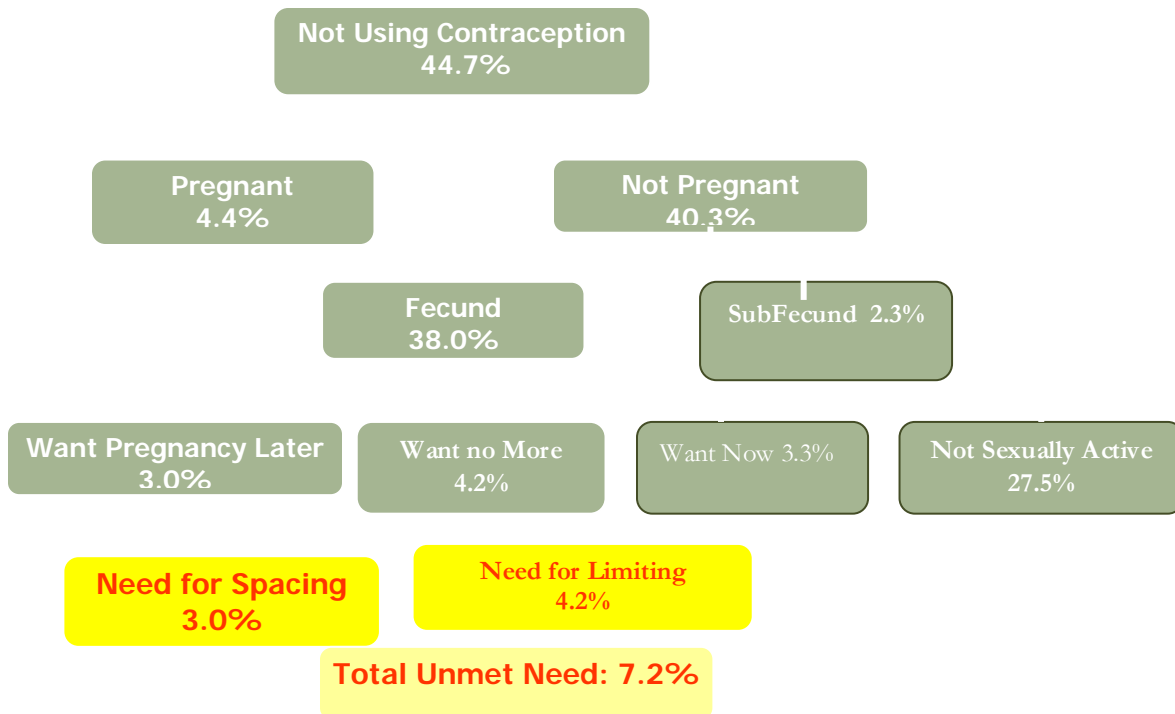
***Planning Status of Recent Pregnancies by Selected Characteristics Among Women Aged 15-49 Years, Reproductive Health Survey: 2002 and 2008***

When comparing both years of the RHS (2002 and 2008) it is evident that the percentages of pregnancies that were planned have increased (37.5% in 2002 and 50.1% in 2008) and the percentage of pregnancies that were mistimed has decreased (41.6% in 2002, 31.1% in 2008).

**Unmet Need**

The Chart Below illustrates the Unmet Need for Family Planning by Future Fertility Preferences Among Women Aged 15–44 Years according to the 2008 Reproductive Health Survey.

**Chart 1: Unmet Need**



***Percentage of Women Aged 15-49 Years With an Unmet Need for Family Planning Services,  
Reproductive Health Survey: 2002 and 2008***

The percentage of individuals who reported an unmet need for family planning decreased from 8.5 in the year 2002 to 7.9 in 2008. The majority of the individuals reporting an unmet need for family planning services as in the age group 40-44 for the year 2002, and the age group 45-49 for the year 2008.

**Contraceptive Prevalence**

***Percentage of Women in Union Aged 15-49 who are Currently Using any Contraceptive  
Method***

The percentage of women in union currently using a method has also increased from 69.1% in 2002 to 72.5% in 2008.