

Fertility rate dips in Pakistan, contraceptive awareness rises

The fertility rate among women in Pakistan has dipped significantly from 5.6 percent in 1990-91 to 4.1 in 2004-06, a phenomenon attributed to rising but uneven use of contraceptives and its growing awareness.

But this trend is more in Punjab than in other provinces.

Women bear much of the brunt of controlling childbirth, either through sterilization or by phasing out conception, reveals Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2006-07, Daily Times reported Saturday.

According to the report, half of married women use contraceptive methods and few women know about the use of condoms by males. Female sterilisation is on the rise and 84 percent children are breastfed in the first year of birth, it adds.

The \$2.75 million study of 95,000 households was done by the National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS), the research arm of the Population Welfare ministry, funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), to collect reliable estimates on maternal and child health, fertility and care for pregnant women and family planning usage.

The last such survey was done in 1990-91.

(© IANS / India eNews)