

What is the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)?

The National Family Health Survey is a survey carried out on a massive scale across the country to collect information on many parameters which would ultimately help the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) to frame policies and programs to help in the upliftment of the vulnerable groups in India. The first round of the National Family Health Survey was conducted in 1992-92. Subsequently, four other rounds have taken place, the latest being NFHS 5 that started in 2018-19, however, is stalled currently amid the COVID-19 associated lockdown at various states. Read on to get details of the National Family Health Survey, relevant for the IAS Exam.

What is NFHS 5?

National Family Health Survey 5 is the recent round of the survey carried out by MoH&FW to bring out reliable data on emerging health and family welfare issues. The coordinating and implementing agencies that are helping the ministry to bring out this NFHS round are:

- International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai
- A group of survey organisations and Population Research Centres

ICF International is providing technical assistance for the NFHS 5 while the United States Agency for International Development is providing financial assistance.

The NFHS-5 has captured the data during 2019-20 and around Seven lakh households are being covered to collect the data. 67 indicators are being used to cover the NFHS 5 data. The list of important indicators is mentioned below:

- Population and household profile
- Marriage and fertility
- Family planning
- Contraception
- Maternal and child health
- Delivery care
- Vaccinations
- Treatment of childhood diseases
- Nutrition and feeding practices
- Anaemia
- Diabetes
- Hypertension and
- Cancer examination

Fact Findings of NFHS 5

The NFHS-5 report is comparable to the NFHS-4 report from 2015-16, but it includes additional data on previously unrecorded for topics such as preschool education, handicap, access to a toilet facility, mortality registration, menstrual bathing routines, and abortion procedures and reasons.

Below is a quick rundown of a few of the report's most important findings.

- The total sex ratio at birth for kids born within last five years increased from 919 (2015-16) to 929 (2017-18). (2019-2021)
- Households that have at least one person covered by a healthcare insurance or finance plan increased from 28.7% to 41%.
- The percentage of 20 - 24 year old girls who got married under the age of 18 has decreased from 26.8% to 23.3 percent.
- The adolescent fertility rate (women aged 15 to 19) likewise dropped from 51 percent to 43 percent. Rural India had nearly twice as many people (49) as urban India (27).
- The NMR (neonatal mortality rate) has dropped to 24.9 per thousand live births.
- The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has dropped to 35.2 per thousand live births.
- Contraceptive use has increased, with 66.7 percent of currently married women aged 15 to 49 opting for contraception. 53.5
- The usage of contemporary contraceptives such as condoms, capsules, IUDs, and injectables has increased from 47 percent to 56.5 % of married women.

National Family Health Survey Rounds

Totally five rounds of survey have been conducted to date. The below information gives details on the round and the year it was conducted.

1. First Round of NFHS conducted in 1992-93
2. Second Round of NFHS conducted in 1998-99
3. Third Round of NFHS conducted in 2005-06
4. Fourth Round of NFHS conducted in 2015-16
5. Fifth Round of NFHS conducted in 2018-19

National Family Health Survey Objectives

The Objective of conducting the NFHS is to collect information of the following

1. Fertility
2. Maternal and Child Health
3. Reproductive Health
4. Nutrition
5. Anaemia
6. Infant and Child Mortality
7. Family Planning

National Family Health Survey 5 – Key Findings

- **Child Marriages:** There has been an increase in child marriages in Manipur (16.3% from 13.7% in 2015-16), Tripura (40.1% from 33.1% in 2015-16), and Assam (31.8% from 30.8 % in 2015-16). Read about Child Marriage Restrain Act 1929 on the linked page. Also, states such as Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Manipur, and Nagaland have shown an increase in pregnancy of teenagers.
- **Sex ratio at birth (SRB)** is below 900 in Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, While majority of the states are in normal sex ratio of 952 or above. Aspirants can go through the details of Sex Ratio on the linked page.
- **Infant & Child Mortalities; Neonatal Mortality Rate, Infant mortality Rate, and Under 5 Mortality Rate** – Infant and child mortality rates across most Indian states have declined. Read in detail about the Infant Mortality on the linked page.

- Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Goa and Assam were the best performers as they witnessed a steep reduction in neonatal mortality rate (NMR), infant mortality rate (IMR) and under-five mortality rate (U5MR).

Also read about the Neonatal and Maternal Tetanus on the given link.

- Tripura, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Meghalaya and Manipur Recorded a spike in all three categories of child mortality.
- Bihar registered the highest prevalence of NMR (34), IMR (47), and U5MR (56) across 22 surveyed states and Union territories while Kerala reported the lowest death rates.
- The child mortality rate of Maharashtra remained unchanged in the last five years.
- Spousal Violence has witnessed an increase in five states, namely Sikkim, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Assam and Karnataka where Karnataka witnessed the largest increase in spousal violence, from 20.6% in NFHS 4 to 44.4% in NFHS-5.

Read in details about the following for comprehensive preparation-

1. Triple Talaq Bill
 2. Violence Against Women
- Child nutrition indicators show a mixed pattern across states. While the situation improved in many States and Union Territories, there has been minor deterioration in others.
 - Malnutrition has worsened. Stunting has risen in 11 out of 18 states. Wasting was going up in 14 states.
 - Stunting: 13 out of 22 states and UTs surveyed, recorded a rise in the percentage of stunting in children.
 - Wasted: 12 out of 22 states and UTs surveyed, recorded a rise in the percentage of children under five years who are wasted in comparison to NFHS-4.
 - Overweight: 20 states and UTs have recorded a rise in the percentage of children under 5 years who are overweight.
 - Diarrhoea: Children with diarrhoea in the two weeks preceding the survey also jumped to 7.2% from 6.6%.

Quick Facts on National Family Health Survey (NFHS) for UPSC

Who Published NFHS?

MOHFW has appointed International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai as the Nodal agency. IIPS has collaborated with the following international agencies for the successful conduct of the survey.

1. ORC, Macro, Maryland, USA
2. East-West Centre, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Note: in NFHS 4 and NFHS 5, along with USAID and ICF; DFID, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, UNICEF, UNFPA, and the MacArthur Foundation, as well as the Indian Government also supported the surveys in a major way.

Which Agencies Provided the Funding for NFHS?

Many international agencies and the Central Government Ministry have provided the necessary funds to carry out the survey.

1. United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
2. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
3. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
4. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
5. MOHFW, Government of India

Also, the data that is published by the Ministry is also used by the WHO, World Bank & UNICEF.

What is NFHS-4?

It is the Fourth Round of National Family Health Survey conducted under the aegis of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW). The following are some of the major highlights of the program.

1. District level estimates on many indicators were provided for the first time.
2. 14 Field agencies were involved in the collection of data
3. Gathered information from approximately 6 lakh households.
4. Survey took information from approximately 7 lakh women and 1 lakh men.

Candidates can make use of Indian Society Questions for UPSC Mains GS 1 for answer writing practice.

