

## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

### SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

The total population of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2001 was 106,253 with a urban rural ratio of 60:40<sup>1</sup>. Women represented 49% to male 51% of the population<sup>2</sup>. In the year 2005 there were 26,966 women in the child- bearing age group (15 - 49), approximately 27% of the population<sup>3</sup>.

The average annual rate of growth is below 1% since 1975 - 1980<sup>4</sup>. In 2005, life expectancy at birth was 74.4 for women and 68.8 years for men<sup>5</sup>.

Recent demographic indicators show the following trends in the Sexual and Reproductive Health status of the population.

#### Indicators – Sexual and Reproductive Health – St. Vincent and the Grenadines

	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
1.	Total Fertility Rate	2.2	2.2	2.10	2.09	2.17	-
2.	Contraceptive Prevalence	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Maternal Mortality Rate	57.05	172.61	0	0	57.80	114.48
4.	Antenatal Coverage (ANC)	-	-	99%	99%	99%	99%
5.	Births attended by skilled Health Personnel	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
6.	BEOC	-	3	3	2	2	2
7.	CEOC	-	1	1	1	1	1
8.	Pernatal Mortality Rate	20.3	21.84	27.16	18.9	30.62	23.20
9.	Prevalence of Low Birth Rate	-	6.4	5.24	7.0	7.9	6.75
10.	Prevalence of Positive Sociology in pregnant women (15-24 years)	-	1.69	2.26	2.95	2.33	1.25
11.	Prevalence of anaemia in Women	-	-	-	-	-	-
12.	Percentage of Obstetric and Gynaecological admissions owing to abortion	7.15	7.14	-	7.79	6.17	6.63
13.	Reported prevalence of women with genital mutilation	-	-	-	-	-	-
14.	Prevalence of infertility in women	-	-	-	-	-	-
15.	Reported incidence of urethritis in men	-	-	-	-	-	-
16.	Prevalence of HIV infection in pregnant women (Aged 15-24)	0.5	0.7	2.0	0.9	1.3	1.4
17.	Teenage Pregnancy Rate	22%	20%	21%	17%	16%	16.4%
18.	Knowledge of HIV – related preventive practice	-	-	-	*	-	-

- no data available

1. Department of Statistics – Census Report 2001

2. Department of Statistics – Census report 2001

3. Department of Statistics (2008)

4. Gender, Health and Development St. Vincent and the Grenadines PAHO

5. PAHO – Health situation in the Americas Basic Indicators 2005 Washington DC

**\* Knowledge of HIV related Preventive Practice in St. Vincent and the Grenadines**  
**(2005)**

*According to the 2005 Behavioural Surveillance Report for St. Vincent and the Grenadines the following results were reported in relation to HIV related preventive practice in the general population.*

- Percentage of respondents who know of abstinence as a prevention strategy:- 92.5%.
- Percentage of respondents who knew of faithfulness to one uninfected partner as an HIV prevention strategy:- 94%.
- Percentage of respondents who knew of consistent condom use as HIV prevention strategy:- 79.5%
- Percentage of respondents who correctly identified the “ABC” (Abstinence, Be Faithful, Condom use) of HIV Prevention:- 73.5%
- Percentage of respondents who knew that medication can reduce risk of mother to child transmission.54%.

## 1. Fertility Rate

The fertility rate is measured by the number of births a woman would have by the end of her reproductive life, if she experienced the currently prevailing age- specific fertility rates from age 15 to 49 years.

The fertility rate for St. Vincent and the Grenadines had not been computed since 2003 and was then 2.2. **footnote 6**

The department of Statistics was asked to compute rates for 2004 – 2006.

Total Fertility Rate (TFR) = (Sum of ASFR x 5) / 1000

ASFR= Births of women aged X / no. of women aged x at mid-year .

	Yr 2003	Yr 2004	Yr 2005	Yr 2006	Yr 2007
Births of women aged 15 – 19		356	352	328	
20-24		501	499	519	
25-29		443	438	387	
30-34		267	294	326	
35-39		190	148	169	
40-44		46	45	65	
45-49		1	3	2	
	Yr 2003	Yr 2004	Yr 2005	Yr 2006	Yr 2007
Mid-yr pop- of Women aged 15-19	5542	5538	5496	5371	
20-24	4662	4658	4623	4518	
25-29	4092	4089	4058	3966	
30-34	3574	3571	3544	3464	
35-39	3833	3830	3501	3715	
40-44	3211	3209	3184	3112	
45-49	2279	2277	2260	2209	

**TABLE 1**

Aged-Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR) 15-49 Years Per 1000 Population St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2004 - 2006				
	Yr 2003	Yr 2004	Yr 2005	Yr 2006
15-19		64.3	64.0	61.1
20-24		107.5	107.9	114.9
25-29		108.3	107.9	97.6
30-34		74.8	83.0	94.1
35-39		49.6	38.9	45.5
40-44		14.3	14.1	20.9
45-49		0.4	1.3	0.9
<b>Sum of ASFR</b>		<b>419.3</b>	<b>417.3</b>	<b>434.9</b>

Total Fertility Rate:    yr 2003    yr 2004    yr 2005    yr 2006  
                                         2.2            2.10            2.09            2.17

Source: Department of Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Planning.2008

## 2. Contraceptive Prevalence

There has been no recent study measuring contraceptive prevalence in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In 1983 a comparative study of contraceptive prevalence was conducted in Antigua, Dominica, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Then, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines the percentage of women in the population was 33.2, of these 55.5 percent were exposed to contraceptives with 62.5% of those exposed being potential and or current users.

The Ministry of Health and the Environment through the National Family Planning programme records data on methods distributed and active acceptors. The figures for active acceptors within the national Family Planning programme fluctuated between six thousand(6,000) and ten thousand eight hundred and eighty eight (10,888) between 2004 and 2007.

The Planned Parenthood Association, a non- governmental organization also distributes contraceptives. The numbers of contraceptives distributed by these two programmes are depicted in the following table.

**TABLE 2      Number of Contraceptive Methods distributed. SVG 2005-2007**

Contraceptive Methods	2005	2006	2007
Pills	<b>19,013</b>	<b>18,832</b>	<b>25,684</b>
Injections	<b>7,860</b>	<b>7006</b>	<b>6,388</b>
Male Condoms	<b>262,100</b>	<b>436,606</b>	<b>257,376</b>
Female Condoms	<b>-</b>	<b>10,327</b>	<b>8,424</b>

Source: National Family Planning Programme  
Planned Parenthood Association

There is need for a contraceptive prevalence study in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The national HIV and AIDS programme has commissioned ..... In the meantime the National Family Planning Programme should be responsible and accountable for collecting and analysing all data on contraceptive availability and distribution within the state based on agreed upon and established indicators.

### 3. Maternal Mortality Ratio

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has had tremendous success with the Maternal and Child Health programme. The main causes of maternal deaths acute emergencies, such as

**Table 3**

<b>Maternal Death Rate with Actual Maternal Deaths and Total Live Births in St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2002 – 2007.</b>			
<b>Years</b>	<b>Maternal Deaths</b>	<b>Total Live Births</b>	<b>Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 LB</b>
2007	2	1747	114.48
2006	1	1730	57.80
2005	0	1657	0
2004	0	1654	0
2003	3	1738	172.61
2002	1	1753	57.05

Source: Registers- Maternity Unit, MCMH

Statistics – Reports of Perinatal Conferences 2003 – 2008

Department of Statistics Central Planning Division, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

### 4. Antenatal Care Coverage (ANC)

Antenatal care coverage is one of four mutually supportive indicators measuring maternal health service coverage. The indicator ask only that the pregnant woman be seen once by a skilled health care professional for reasons relating to pregnancy.

**TABLE 4**

<b>Antenatal care coverage St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2004 – 2007</b>			
<b>Years</b>	<b>Pregnant Women Seen by Skilled HP</b>	<b>Total Live Births</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
2007	1729	1747	99
2006	1710	1730	99
2005	1633	1657	99
2004	1632	1654	99

Source: Registers, Maternity Unit, Milton Cato Memorial Hospital

Registers, Community Nursing Services

Reports, Perinatal Conferences 2004-2007

## 5. Births Attended by Skilled Health Personnel

Most Births in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are conducted at the Main referral hospital-Milton Cato Memorial. The number of domiciliary deliveries has decreased over the past. Specific health Centres have been equipped as Birthing Centres for those persons wishing to deliver within their districts.

Table 5

<b>Births Attended by Skilled Health Personnel St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2002 - 2007</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Births Attended</b>	<b>Total Live Births</b>	<b>Proportion of Births Attended by Skilled Health Personnel</b>
<b>2007</b>	1729	1747	99%
<b>2006</b>	1703	1730	99%
<b>2005</b>	1634	1657	99%
<b>2004</b>	1630	1654	99%
<b>2003</b>	1720	1738	99%
<b>2002</b>	1740	1753	99%

Sources: Registers: Milton Cato Memorial Hospital, District Hospitals,  
Reports : Perinatal Conferences- 2003 - 2008

## 6. Basic Essential Obstetric Care

There are only two (2) institutions offering Basic Essential Obstetrics Care as indicated the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital, the state's main referral Hospital, with a bed capacity of 211, of which forty (40) beds are on the Obstetrical Unit. The other, a small private hospital – Maryfield Hospital, with only 12 beds.

## 7. Availability of Comprehensive Essential Obstetric Care (CEOC)

The same two (2) facilities that offer basic essential obstetric care also offer comprehensive essential care.

## 8. Perinatal Mortality Rate (PMR)

The Perinatal Mortality rate measures the number of viable infants that are lost during the period, birth to twenty- eight days.

**Table 6- Perinatal Mortality Rates- SVG –2002-2007**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Maternal or Perinatal Deaths</b>	<b>Total Births</b>	<b>PMR</b>
2007	41	1767	23.20*
2006	55	1796	30.62
2005	-	1779	18.9*
2004	49	1804	27.16
2003	42	1923	21.84
2002	36	1776	20.3

Source : Department of statistics, Central Planning Division

\* Represents data from MCMH only.

There is need to tighten the data reporting system with respect to this indicator. The staff of the Obstetrical Unit, Milton Cato Memorial Hospital calculate the perinatal rate based on data from within the health system. The Department of Statistics calculate based on figures from the Registry.

## 9. Prevalence of Low Birth Weight Infants

Low birth weight refers to infants who weigh less than 2500grams. Policy dictates that all infants below the stipulated weight are transferred to the Critical care Unit at the MCMH.

**TABLE 7**

<b>Prevalence of Low Birth Weight To Total Live Birth St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2003 – 2007</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Low Birth Weight</b>	<b>Total Live Births</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
2007	118	1747	6.75
2006	137	1730	7.9
2005	116	1657	7.0
2004	87	1659	5.24
2003	113	1753	6.40

Source: Milton Cato Memorial Hospital – Obstetrical Registers .

10. Prevalence of Positive Syphilis Serology in Pregnancy Women

**Table 8**

<b>Prevalence of Positive Syphilis Serology in Pregnant Women Aged 15 – 24 years in St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2003 – 2007</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Antenatal Screened -TPHA</b>	<b>Total with Positive TPHA</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
<b>2007</b>	718	9	1.25
<b>2006</b>	772	18	2.33
<b>2005</b>	679	20	2.95
<b>2004</b>	839	19	2.26
<b>2003</b>	827	14	1.69

Source; National Laboratory.

This data is not usually aggregated although available in the records of the national laboratory. The data reflects only these persons tested at the National Laboratory.

11. Prevalence of Anaemia in Women

**Table 9**

<b>Prevalence of Anaemia in Women 15 - 44 St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2005 - 2007</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Women 15-44 Screened</b>	<b>No. Women with Hb&lt;10.0g/dl)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>2007</b>	6611	1236	18.69
<b>2006</b>	7945	922	11.60
<b>2005</b>	6762	909	13.44



The data constitute number of tests, which may be used as a proxy for number of women, as some persons might have had multiple tests. Collecting the data retrospectively meant that all the biases of doing a retrospective survey came into play e.g. in cases where there was no sex given, the female sounding names were all assumed to be female. There were instances where age/Date of Birth (DOB) were given as adult or nothing at all. These were omitted as the age of such persons could not always be assumed to be in the range being collected. Also, cases were not separated into true anaemia, as persons who might have had an acute bleed/haemorrhage for any reason, or had any other underlying conditions, were included once the Hb was <10g/dl.

Another factor, which could bias the national picture would be the omission of persons tested in the private sector.

## 12. Percentage of Obstetric and Gynaecological Admissions owing to Abortion.

The laws of St.Vincent and the Grenadines prohibits planned abortions.

**TABLE 10**

<b>Percentage Obstetric and Gynaecological Admissions owing to Abortions - St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2002 - 2007</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Abortion Related</b>	<b>Total Admissions</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>2007</b>	206	2882	7.15
<b>2006</b>	209	2815	7.42
<b>2005</b>	135	-	-
<b>2004</b>	140	2820	4.79
<b>2003</b>	171	2773	6.17
<b>2002</b>	178	2683	6.63

**Source:** Milton Cato Memorial Hospital- Maternity Unit.

These figures do not include those admitted to the Private Hospital.

### 13. Reported Prevalence of Women with Genital Mutilation.

Discussion with relevant persons indicated that data were not collected on the above variables and no incidence has been observed or reported.

### 14. Prevalence of Infertility in Women

There is no emphasis on the problem of infertility, hence data are not collected.

### 15. Reported Incidence of Urethritis in Men

### 16. Prevalence of HIV Infection in Pregnant Women

The Sentinel sites for data collection on this variable are the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital Laboratory.

Data collected from one private laboratory were included in the 2007 figures.

**Table 11**

<b>Prevalence of HIV Infection in Pregnant Women Aged 15 – 24 years - St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2002 - 2007</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Persons Tested</b>	<b>Total Persons Positive</b>	<b>Prevalence Ratio</b>
<b>2007</b>	957	13	1.35
<b>2006</b>	977	11	1.3
<b>2005</b>	694	6	0.9
<b>2004</b>	881	18	2.0
<b>2003</b>	840	6	0.7
<b>2002</b>	864	4	0.5

**Source:** 2002 – 2005 Infection Control Unit Milton Cato Memorial Hospital.  
2006 – 2007 National Aids Programme Report.

### 17. Teenage Pregnancy as a Percentage (%) of the Total Pregnancies

Year	Total Pregnancies	Teen Pregnancies	Teen Pregnancies as a % of Total Pregnancies.
1996	2153	453	21
1997	2150	480	22.3
1998	1926	440	23
1999	2134	442	21
2000	2065	452	22
2001	2146	407	19
2002	2003	440	22
2003	1968	390	20
2004	1752	364	21
2005	2318	369	17
2006	2245	360	16
2007	2376	391	16.4

### 18. Knowledge of HIV related Preventive Practice in St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2005

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- Percentage of respondents who know of abstinence as a prevention strategy:- 92.5%.
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The Behavioural Surveillance Survey will be repeated in 2009.