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Subject: Re: Variable Definition

Posted by [kingx025](#) on Sun, 22 Apr 2018 18:01:43 GMT

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Tom Pullum has explained the issue of "not applicable" cases very clearly; we use the term "universe" in IPUMS-DHS to express who is included in the coverage for a variable. For example, never-married women are not in the universe for questions about age at first marriage, and children who did not have recent diarrhea are not in the universe for a follow up question about whether they had blood in their stools during diarrhea.

If you want to check the universe (who was included in a question for a particular sample), try checking the variable-specific documentation on the IPUMS-DHS website. Use the Search tool on the Select data page, and then click on the name of a variable when it comes up. There will be documentation on various aspects of the variable, but one of the most useful is on the "universe" tab, which specifies for each sample who was covered by this variable. Not all of the DHS variables are included in IPUMS-DHS yet, but many thousands of them can be checked for their universes in a particular sample.

Miriam King

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