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Subject: IPUMS-DHS Tip #3: Use POPWT to estimate the number of people with a characteristic

Posted by [kingx025](#) on Fri, 22 Jun 2018 19:00:25 GMT

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Most DHS users know that they need to use weights with DHS data to get reliable estimates of the proportion of people with a given characteristic. The weights included in the DHS samples adjust for factors such as oversampling small regions and weight up to the total number of people sampled by the survey.

Sometimes you'd like to know the total number (or count) of people in a country who have a given characteristic. Knowing the absolute number of people with some characteristic helps policymakers budget and plan for the future. To calculate the number of household members with a given characteristic, you can use the IPUMS-DHS variable POPWT, an expansion factor. For example, POPWT could be used as to find the number of people in Tanzania in 2015 that slept under an insecticide-treated bednet the night before the survey.

POPWT, the IPUMS-DHS expansion factor for household members, is calculated using the DHS household weight (HV005) and population figures from the United Nations Population Division. POPWT gives estimates subject to the same margin of error as the original household weight. POPWT is currently available for only household members (variables from the PR files) but will soon be available for women of childbearing age (the IR files) as well.

For more information about the construction of POPWT, see the User Note about the expansion factor:

[https://www.idhsdata.org/idhs/population\\_weights.shtml](https://www.idhsdata.org/idhs/population_weights.shtml)

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