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Subject: Religion

Posted by [dasre\\_a](#) on Thu, 03 Apr 2014 14:06:26 GMT

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In some parts of the world, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, coexistence and mobility between different religions are common and well documented by anthropologists and sociologists. This is the reason why the current question of the religious affiliation at the time of the survey seems to be insufficient.

Adding a couple of questions on religion would help to improve the measure of the possible influence of religion on individual behaviors (gender, marriage, fertility, contraception, HIV, schooling), by adding better information about the religious individual profile.

We propose to keep the question on current religion and add one (or if possible several) questions to precise the exclusivity/strength or mix of religious references.

Questions suggestion:

A first question on the experience of other religions

Question 1: Did you ever follow another religion during your life?

Coding: Yes=1      No=2      8=Refuse

If possible:

A question on previous religious affiliations

Question 2: If yes, enumerate every religion that you followed even for a short time

Coding: Each country decides on the relevant categories and the level of detail

A question on religion during childhood to take into account the socialization environment

Question 3: when you were a child, in what religion were you predominantly raised?

Coding: Each country decides on the relevant categories and the level of detail

A question on the attachment to traditional beliefs (animism)

Question 4: Do you believe in traditional religion, for instance in the influence of spirit and ancestors?

Coding: Yes=1      No=2      8=Refuse

The two last questions are inspired by the Pew forum on religion & public life survey. Their results are very illustrative: a majority of people reported beliefs in traditional religion ceremony while they also declared themselves as Christian or Muslims. Our own research based on a biographic survey in Mali also shows that in a generation, 80% of people followed Christian as well as traditional religion over their life span.

This data should be collected preferentially in the sub-Saharan area.

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