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Subject: Re: Weighting and pooling multicountry datasets

Posted by [Janet-DHS](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2022 12:45:15 GMT

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Following is response from DHS Research & Data Analysis Director, Tom Pullum:

There have many postings on how to weight pooled surveys. There are basically two options. The first is to re-scale the weight for each country so that the total weight for country X is proportional to the population of country X at the time of the survey. You can get the estimated population size from the UN Population Division website, World Population Prospects 2019. The second option is to rescale so that the total weight is the same for each country (or survey). That is, if you pool 10 countries, you re-scale so that each survey has 1/10 of the total weight. Specific steps for both options have been given on the forum.

The first option has the problem that typically one large country, such as India or Nigeria, will completely dominate the results.

At DHS we often leave the weights alone and pool surveys into a single file just to simplify the data processing. We give results separately for each survey, but do not give results for all the surveys combined. Pooled surveys, from different countries and different years, do not describe a well-defined population. It's very hard to interpret a mean or percentage or coefficient from a mix of different surveys.

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