
Subject: Migration

Posted by [alex](#) on Fri, 04 Apr 2014 02:33:38 GMT

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1. What is the information needed?

Migration.

2. What questions will elicit this information?

Have you moved from your place of birth? NO. If yes, when did you move? month, year.

Is your current residence different from the place you moved first? No. If yes, when did you move? month, year.

3. How will the resulting information be used?

Migration is given very little emphasis while being an important demographic variable. In the DHS the questionnaire includes information only on place of birth and current residence leaving out the date of migration. Including date of move completes the questions on migration which are so important in themselves and as predictors of outcomes such as child health, HIV-infections, and employment among others.

4. What is the priority of suggested additions compared with what is already in the questionnaires?

Very important. Lindstrom DP and White M in their chapter on international migration in the book "Handbook of Population" mention weaknesses of the DHS in collecting migration data. The questions suggested here might help in strengthening the questionnaire.

5. If suggesting more than one addition, what is the priority among the suggested additions?

Not applicable.

6. Should the additional data be collected in all countries, or only in selected types of countries (e.g., countries with a particular type of program, countries with prevalence of a particular infection >5% or 10%)?

All countries.

Alex Reda

Subject: Re: Migration

1. What is the information needed?

Measures of internal migration: the intensity of movement within countries.

2. What questions will elicit this information?

Migration questions can be asked in a range of ways and it is important that they provide accurate, reliable data. Questions included in Phases 1-5 of the DHS asked about duration of residence in the current locality and place of previous residence, but these were dropped in phase 6. Data on previous residence without a fixed time interval are difficult to analyse, and a preferable approach is to capture information on (a) whether the respondent has changed residence over the previous one or five years, if so (b) place of previous residence (city, town or rural area) and (c) place of birth (city, town or rural area). Bell et al (2014) Internal Migration Data Around the World: an Assessment of Contemporary Practice, Population, Space and Place, DOI 10:1002/psp.1848 provides a more detailed assessment of contemporary data collection practice and reviews the utility of alternative measures. While the above questions capture the minimum dimensions of mobility, a case can also be made for the DHS to adopt a much stronger focus capturing individual and family migration histories, in the same way as widely adopted for fertility histories.

3. How will the resulting information be used?

Internal migration is a key demographic process shaping settlement patterns, a driver of human development and closely linked to transitions in the life course. Data on the incidence and spatial patterning of internal migration represent key indicators of demographic change, capture essential links to transitions in the life course and are essential predictors for a range of health and welfare conditions.

4. What is the priority of suggested additions compared with what is already in the questionnaires?

Arguably, information on internal migration has been eliminated from the DHS at the very time its significance is becoming more widely recognised. There are now a number of international initiatives focused on enhancing the reliability and availability of internal migration data, including the IUSSP Scientific Panel on Migration and Urbanisation in Developing countries, and the IMAGE project (Internal Migration Around the GlobE). The DHS represents one of the few multi-national survey instruments which might be harnessed to generate essential, reliable data on internal migration, particularly in developing countries where such data are sparse and fragmented.

5. If suggesting more than one addition, what is the priority among the suggested additions?

A small suite of questions are needed to capture essential information.

6. Should the additional data be collected in all countries, or only in selected types of countries (e.g., countries with a particular type of program, countries with prevalence of a particular infection >5% or 10%)?

While internal migration intensities vary widely in magnitude between countries, the process is of importance globally and the topic should be applied to all country surveys.

Subject: Re: Migration

Posted by [DBalk](#) on Tue, 08 Apr 2014 21:40:15 GMT

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It is paramount that the DHS surveys bring back the questions on migration. Martin Bell makes useful suggestions for a number of improved questions that could be included. At a minimum, the questions that were asked until the most recent survey round should be brought back. In addition, one additional piece of information should be asked: place of origin. This question should be asked in terms of major administrative units (such as provinces). Many census (see IPUMS collection) ask such questions with a much more limited questionnaire. The question on migration from village, town or city should not be removed. While imperfect, this question has been a real eye-opener. Together with information on migration origin, it can be very powerful.

Additional, migration questions ideally belong in the household questionnaire rather than in the individual women's or men's surveys. Having the full household schedule of migration will be extremely valuable for understanding differential migration within households.

Migration is increasing important in the demography of the developing world. This is not the time to be without any questions on migration. The more the merrier, but these are in my opinion, the bare minimum.

Subject: Re: Migration

Posted by [MarkRMont](#) on Fri, 11 Apr 2014 20:58:20 GMT

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This past year, Deborah Balk and I (with other colleagues) carried out a large demographic analysis of internal migration in poor countries, which formed the evidence base for a new report on adolescent girls titled *Girls on the Move: Adolescent Girls and Migration in the Developing World* (New York: Population Council, 2013). Using all DHS surveys that included the core migration questions, as well as dozens of census micro-samples from IPUMS with similar information, we found that in many countries significant percentages of urban adolescent girls are recent migrants, who have arrived in their new urban homes in the 5 years before the survey. The percentage of urban girls aged 15-19 who are migrants ranged as high as 60 percent in some DHS surveys, and in quite a number of countries we found that 1 in 5 or more of all urban girls of this age are newly-arrived migrants.

Why mention this particular piece of research? It demonstrates that for adolescent girls, one of the most important population groups that the DHS program monitors, urban migration is a very common experience. For girls as well as older migrants, a move to a new city is likely to come with a period of disruption and dislocation as the new arrival strives to adjust to unfamiliar and disorienting circumstances. Some young girls manage to adjust successfully to city life, but as we know, far too many others fail to cope and fall victim to a range of risks.

I cannot imagine that in an urbanizing world, as adolescent girls and others seek to take advantage of new urban opportunities while evading the many risks of city life, the DHS program would choose to let migrants and their circumstances simply go unrecorded. Surely that is

unimaginable---and yet in the past round of the DHS surveys, that is exactly what happened: the key migration questions were dropped from the core questionnaire.

Our experience in analyzing migration from the DHS and IPUMS demonstrated the value of the simple question "how long have you lived here?" and (for movers) the follow-up question "in what type of place did you live before? Was it a large city, a small city or town, or a rural village?" Population censuses also ask the first of these questions, typically in the form "where did you live 5 years ago?", and in coding the answer most censuses collect the name of the geographic region from which the migrant came (a first-level administrative region, such as a province, and often more detail). Unlike the DHS, population censuses rarely inquire into whether the previous residence was urban or rural. Unlike population censuses, the DHS did not inquire into the *geographic location* of the previous residence. Why not, then, combine the best of both approaches?

If the DHS were to re-instate the migration questions it had asked for decades before Round 6, and supplement those time-tested questions with another well-tested (by censuses) question on the geographic location of the former place of residence, that alone would make for a small but powerfully informative package of questions that would add considerable value, helping us to better understand the urban risks and opportunities facing adolescent girls as well as other important groups of young adults.

The geography of migration---addressed by the census question on the location of previous residence---will be of increasing interest as extreme-weather events, disasters of natural or other origin, and the early manifestations of climate change begin to reshape and redirect migration streams across a range of poor countries. No doubt there will be profound alterations in rural-to-rural migration as well as rural-to-urban moves in the coming years. The DHS program should be congratulated for what it has already done to add geographical specificity to its measure of current residence (via sampling cluster coordinates), and it would be great to see the program now take steps to improve the measurement of the geographic aspects of migration for the future.