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Subject: DHS STATcompiler vs DHS household data  
Posted by [nbotev](#) on Thu, 12 Nov 2020 17:10:19 GMT  
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I am working with UN Population Division's World Marriage Data 2019 (<https://population.un.org/MarriageData/Index.html#/home>). Part of the marital status data come from DHS. In this case, the dataset has separate entries for "DHS STATcompiler" and "DHS household data". The differences between the two sources are small, but still the UN Population Division staff have opted to include both in the dataset. Where do the differences come from, and which of the two sources would you recommend to use?  
Thank you in advance for your help with that issue.

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Subject: Re: DHS STATcompiler vs DHS household data  
Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Thu, 12 Nov 2020 21:43:29 GMT  
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Following is a response from DHS Research & Data Analysis Director, Tom Pullum:

The household survey includes a roster in which every member of the household is listed and then some questions are asked about each person. One of these is marital status. The responses are given by the household respondent, who is usually with the household head or the spouse of the household head, but may be someone else so long as they are age 15 or above. For example, it could be a grandparent or a grown child.

Then the women and men who are eligible and are interviewed are asked directly about their marital status. That's the main source of the difference--whether the information comes from the household respondent, or directly from the adult woman or man. You will see a similar difference in the distribution of educational level. There are sometimes differences in reported age.

There are occasionally differences even when the household respondent and the individual woman are the same person, perhaps because there is somewhat greater clarification of categories by the interviewer during the individual interview. Also sometimes I think there is genuine ambiguity in what is the "true" marital status, especially in a context where "marriage" may not involve a formal process.

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Subject: Re: DHS STATcompiler vs DHS household data  
Posted by [nbotev](#) on Fri, 13 Nov 2020 12:34:42 GMT  
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Thank you so much, this is very helpful.

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