



Evolution of Abu Dhabi data sources – progressing towards a register-based Census

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The Statistics Centre of Abu Dhabi (SCAD) provides statistics for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi within the United Arab Emirates. In 2011, SCAD undertook a Census using mixed methods including a tablet-based questionnaire for household interviews; administrative lists for large worker camps; paper forms for individuals in hotels, hospitals and dormitories; special collection strategies for VIPs, their families and staff; and other approaches for persons living on remote islands and in barracks.

Recent advancements in administrative data sources, such as the availability of unique personal identifiers and universal health insurance records, now make it possible for future Censuses to be register-based. Moving to a register-based approach will reduce the cost and time used in the collection of data compared to traditional methods whilst also improving the periodicity for key statistics.

Some of the challenges being addressed include:

- Ensuring data is up to date - given the rapid growth of expatriate employees and their families;
- Establishing whether people are Usual Residents of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi – accommodating the fluid movement of employees from other emirates, some with dual residence;
- Identifying accurately the location of residence for small area statistics - given absence of a comprehensive administrative source for residential location;
- Accurately reflecting family and household structures including extended families with unrelated household staff;
- Data quality including accuracy, missing data, data redundancy.

To achieve an accurate and complete Census by 2020, it will be important to ensure that administrative data sources are developed to provide the key Census variables for all Usual Residents and at small geographical areas, as identified in the United Nations (UN) principles.

To achieve our goals, we are working closely with a number of Abu Dhabi government agencies to assess the coverage and accuracy of data in their administrative systems. For example, we are reviewing all the applications and questionnaires used by the agencies to be sure that they have the same definitions and classifications, and are in line with UN principles.



We are working on the collection of data records from many subject groups, like labour force, health and education. We have more than one agency for each group, so many validation rules will be required to match records across different data sets, and remove duplicates. We take each variable from multiple agencies, conduct a comparison across agencies using validation rules. The missing data for the same variable will not be in all agencies and duplications will be removed by using the ID number.

The presentation describes the progress to date and will include the technical procedures applied in addition to the challenges and lessons learned.

Keywords: SCAD; Population Register; Social Monitor; Administrative Data.