



Towards the 2020 World Population and Housing Censuses Programmes: What can we tell from the lessons learned in the 2010 round?

Keiko Osaki-Tomita, Ph.D.

Chief, Demographic and Social Statistics Branch, UN Statistics Division, New York, US -
osaki@un.org

Building on the great success of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, the international statistical community launches the 2020 census round which will span from 2015 to 2024. Based upon the information gathered and analyzed by the United Nations Statistics Division, the proposed paper will review the country experiences of conducting population and housing censuses during the 2010 census round which spanned from 2005 to 2014.

The 2010 round of censuses witnessed the largest number of countries ever in the world conducted a population and housing census. Consequently, nearly 97 per cent of the world population were enumerated by national censuses during the round. It became evident that countries attempted to conduct a census in innovative ways, by introducing new methods to obtain the census data and using modern technologies. Thus, an increasing number of countries, especially those in Europe, were moving away from traditional way of conducting a census, gathering census data from registers or combining them with survey data. The period also saw that many countries introduced in field enumeration the modern tools such as hand held devices or computer tablets, which enabled them to produce the census results efficiently and free from human errors. Modern technologies were also used to improve an overall management of census operations.

Given the above trends emerged during the 2010 round of population and housing censuses, the paper will discuss what will be key features of the 2020 round of censuses, and address challenges that countries would face along with foreseeable changes. It will also introduce the new elements added to the revised *Principles and Recommendations of the Population and Housing Censuses*, the operational guidelines for planning and conducting a census that the United Nations Statistics Division produces at the beginning of the new census round. Finally, the paper will argue the value of population and housing censuses in the era of the Big Data when non-official statistics have gained an increasing popularity and supplementing the official statistics in guiding policy decisions.

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