



Aruba uses new methodology to identify type of household and family

The United Nations recommends that countries include questions in their population census to determine the type of household and family. Most countries limit their questions on household and family composition to 'relationship to head of household'. Given the sometimes complex forms in which people live together in households, this question does not suffice to determine the type of household.

Since the Population Census of 1991, the Central Bureau of Statistics of Aruba has implemented a methodology to identify the various types of families and households as defined by the United Nations. Even though this methodology has proven successful in both the 1991 and 2000 Census rounds and in other surveys, it had some disadvantages. Firstly, it turned out that the numbering of the households, families and persons within the households was a real challenge for some enumerators. It was time consuming, both during the control and editing process to correct errors. Also, the numbering of households, families and persons during fieldwork took quite a bit of valuable time from the enumerators. The enumerators had to identify each unit separately before even starting with the interviews.

During the preparations for the 2010 Census a new methodology was developed at the CBS, to determine type of household and family. With an estimated population of 108,000 in 2010, the biggest challenge for the upcoming census is to get an adequate number of enumerators. Because of the influx of so many unskilled migrants, the group of eligible interviewers to be hired has not increased proportionally to the population size since the previous census. The first step taken in order to achieve the goal to hire enough enumerators was to simplify the Census questionnaire. This was done by introducing a short form and a long form. The short form was designed in such a way that it could be handled more easily by enumerators with a somewhat lower education in a somewhat shorter amount of time. Data collection with the short form will be done on paper. Triple E netbooks will be used in census areas where long forms will be used. The data entry program for the netbooks includes automatic skips and editing checks, data entry which will lead to valuable gain in time and improve overall data quality. This editing program is currently being tested with the Monthly Tourism Expenditure Survey.

Another simplification of the enumeration process includes the adaptation of the questions on household composition and family type. The challenge behind this idea is to still being able to tabulate the basic and core recommendations of the 'Principles and Recommendations for Population Censuses' (P&R) regarding household composition and family type. The P&R discerns 11 different types of households, grouped in four categories: (a) one-person household; (b) nuclear household, (c) extended household, (d)

composite household, (e) other/unknown. Four types of family are distinguished: (a) married couple without children; (b) married couple with one or more unmarried children; (c) father with one or more unmarried children; (d) mother with one or more unmarried children.

For the purpose of defining the family type and household composition a 'Household Roster' is introduced in the census, containing a set of easy questions such as: age, sex, and marital status of each person. In case a person indicates he/she is married or is living together, his/her partner is determined. The enumerators are required to fill in the partner's person number. A question is also asked whether the person's mother and father live in the household. In the case one or both are present, the enumerator indicates who the mother and/or the father are. Here, the enumerator is required to fill in the mother's and father's person number. Enumerators who use the netbooks will simply get a list of all the names of household members on their screen to choose from, to determine the partner and parents in the household. Finally, it is asked if the person is related to all the members of the household. This question is important to be able to make a distinction between extended and composite households. A CSPRO 4.0 program was written to edit this information and to determine the type of household and family. Initial tests showed the validity of this methodology.