International Migration Data Integration in South Africa

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State of Data Integration in South Africa

• Despite the strategic theme of “Improving Lives through Data Ecosystems” migration data remains very much un-integrated
• Migration data is collected in Census using all the recommended questions
• Household Surveys are based on a nationally representative sample for the household survey program wherein migration modules are inserted from time to time
• Administrative Data around migration are highly fragmented
• NPR only covers citizens and permanent residents
Problems with Integration

• Administrative data does not have anonymised personal identification
• Data sharing is very cumbersome and subjected to MoU which are time consuming and often dysfunctional
• Data owners do not acknowledge that data can be used for statistical purposes and prefer to rely on data from NSO
• Household surveys and Census do not include personal identifiers for it to be integrated with other sources
• Macro integration for comparison across sources does take place but often data is not comparable. Eg. Census vs IEC
• Integration does take place within NSO by cooperation between divisions related to migration
• Private sector data sharing is not existent due to intellectual property concerns
Available Data

• Census module (2011)
• Household Surveys (2012/2017)
• Documented migrants (Permits – up to 2015)
• “Tourism and Migration” series (Human movement records – Monthly)
• Mid-Year Population Estimates Migration Matrix
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<th>In-migrants</th>
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MYPE and possible integration

• Uses migration rates from preceding Census and applies to population of a given year
• If administrative sources of good quality were available this could assist in adjusting these rates
• Electoral data is available but these have limitation in terms of who it covers
• Education data is able to tell the place of birth of the student
• Municipal data can indicate consumers of services but it covers only formal housing
• Available data sources do not integrate with each other
What is needed

• Data sharing – current practice of entering into agreements with separate departments is cumbersome, covered in red tape and ineffective

• Related to data sharing is the question of confidentiality which all claim to protect particularly now with POPI Act in force

• Administrative will – like political will but a need to understand that admin data collection is not only for internal purposes but for statistical reporting too

• Personal identifier for linking purposes – SA ID number is only for citizens and permanent residents but what about other persons?
Looking forward

• Get basics right with macro integration before we can even consider linking individuals in a micro integration manner appropriately. Ensure that migrant disaggregation is built into all relevant administrative data sources and that such sources are not just designed around internal migration

• Provide or ensure the provision of legal identity particularly for mixed migrants in a vulnerable situation

• Address irregular migrants who don’t qualify for SA ID but would be hesitant to register on a personal identifier for integration with department providing services to them

• Ensure that migration is integrated into other themes in population statistics of an NSO
THANK YOU