In-depth analysis of migration questions in population censuses

Parallel Session E.3: Leveraging Population Censuses and Inter-Census Population Surveys as Sources of Data for International Migration Statistics: Emerging Lessons from the 2020 Census Round

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The census as a source of migration statistics

- International migration characteristics as “core” census topics in the UN Principles and Recommendations
- Additional migration questions (e.g. reasons for migration)

However:

- Sub-optimal dissemination of census data
- Limited census data outputs featuring migration statistics
Inclusion of migration questions* in population censuses, 2015-2022

(*) Country of birth, nationality, duration of stay. Based on 78 census questionnaires
Census data outputs may include thematic reports focusing on migration (internal and international)

Typically produced by the National Statistical Office in partnership with Govt sectors and/or Academia

Standardized definitions (e.g. lifetime vs recent migration)

Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of migrants (sex, age, education, economic activity)

Comparison between migrant and non-migrant populations

Subnational data - maps, statistical annexes

May include an evaluation of data quality
Examples of census thematic reports on migration

- Kenya (2019)
- Madagascar (2018)
- Guatemala (2018)
- Malawi (2018)
- Eswatini (2017)
- Palestine (2017)
- Sierra Leone (2015)
- Myanmar (2014)
- Tunisia (2014)
Example 1 - Highly granular disaggregated data

Immigrants by locality (613), Palestine 2017 Census

(a) Number

(b) Percentage of population
Example 2 - Characteristics of international migrants

Age at which former household members left Myanmar by current country of residence, 2014 Census

- Thailand
- Malaysia
- Singapore
- India
Example 3 - Migration & development nexus

Percentage of households reporting unsatisfied basic need for housing quality, by relationship with international migration, Guatemala 2018 Census

- HHs with no emigrants and not receiving remittances
- HHs with emigrants and receiving remittances
- HHs with emigrants
- HHs receiving remittances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urban areas</th>
<th>Rural areas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HHs with no emigrants and not receiving remittances</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHs with emigrants and receiving remittances</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>HHs with emigrants</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HHs receiving remittances</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
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% of Households
Example 4 - Refugee statistics

Refugee population by nationality, Kenya 2019 Census
Conclusions

- A wealth of migration statistics can be produced through targeted analysis of the census
- Yet dissemination of migration statistics from the census remains suboptimal
- Limited use of the census in conjunction with administrative migration data for cross-validation