

UNSC 53rd Session Side Event
Measuring the Impact of COVID-19 on Mortality: how can surveys and censuses help?

Monday, 7 February 2022 | 9:00-10:30 am EST

Organized by: Statistics Division and Population Division, UN-DESA

Concept Note

Population censuses and household surveys have been the main sources of data for estimating mortality among both children and adults in countries with incomplete or unreliable systems for civil registration and vital statistics. While there is a long history of directly and indirectly estimating adult mortality level based on relevant questions included in censuses and surveys (e.g., household deaths, survival of parents and survival of sisters), such methods might not be suitable for measuring the impact of COVID-19 on population mortality levels.

Under the Technical Advisory Group on COVID-19 Mortality Assessment established jointly by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), a working group was created to provide recommendations to national statistical offices on innovative methods in collecting time-sensitive and reliable data through censuses and surveys for use in measuring the excess mortality associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Recommendations of the Working Group will help to fill data gaps in adult mortality estimation in the context of COVID-19 and to build a more agile and resilient statistical system in preparation for future crises (pandemics, natural disasters, etc.).

Members of the Working Group come from national statistical offices, academia and international organizations. As an initial step towards elaborating a set of recommendations, the Group prepared a stocktaking paper on existing practices in using censuses and surveys for measuring adult mortality and on recent initiatives in various countries that aimed to increase the availability of data on adult mortality. The executive summary of the stocktaking paper will be presented as a background document to the Statistical Commission at its fifty-third session.

This side event will provide a platform to (a) review the challenges countries are facing in producing data suitable for estimating adult mortality in the context of COVID-19; (b) present work done under Working Group 2, mainly about the stocktaking exercise; and (c) discuss next steps required, including gathering comments from countries on the background document and planning an expert group meeting to formulate and propose recommendations on innovative approaches for measuring adult mortality using data from censuses and surveys.

Chair/moderator: Ms. Francesca Perucci, Assistant Director, UN Statistics Division

Speakers:

- Mr. Stephane Helleringer, Chair, TAG-Working Group 2 and Professor at New York University
- Mr. Md. Alamgir Hossen, Deputy Director and SDG Focal Point, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics; Mr. Shams El Arifeen and Ms. Aniq Tasnim Hossain, International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh
- Mr. Richard Phiri, Principal Statistician, National Statistical Office, Malawi
- Mr. Dennis Feehan, Assistant Professor, University of California, Berkeley
- Ms. Helena Cruz Castanheira, Population Division, UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Q&A

Closing and next steps: Mr. John Wilmoth, Director, UN Population Division and Mr. Steve MacFeely, Director of Data and Analytics, World Health Organization

Register [here](#) to join the event!