



## Questions and Answers from IPUMS DHS Webinar July 27, 2021

What proportion of DHS surveys are available on IPUMS DHS? If not all surveys are on IPUMS-DHS, is there an expected date when you plan to achieve full representation?

IPUMS DHS today includes 170 standard, continuous, and interim DHS samples, which is nearly complete coverage of all publicly available surveys from Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. As the DHS Program releases new samples from these regions, we incorporate them into our release schedule. If our funding is extended for another five years, we are proposing to incorporate surveys from all DHS regions.

IPUMS DHS does not currently include other, more narrowly focused types of DHS surveys, that is, MIS, AIS, or SPA.

How long does it take to get newly released DHS samples into IPUMS DHS?

We incorporate these as quickly as we can. Their release dates depend on a number of factors, including what other materials are processing at the time the DHS program makes them publicly available. Please keep checking back at the website for the most recent sample releases.

Are IPUMS DHS data variables, like improved water or improved sanitation, created from original DHS data?

Yes, IPUMS DHS takes the original DHS variables and harmonizes them across all DHS samples so that they have a common variable name, label, and codes. In the IPUMS harmonization process, all the detail from all the original variables is retained.

Because of this harmonization process, the variable names and codes in IPUMS DHS are different from the variable names and codes in the original DHS data. As we pointed out in the webinar, you can display the original DHS data variable names if you prefer. You can also search for variables using the original DHS names.

Are there any variables for which the IPUMS DHS harmonized variables differ substantially from the original DHS variable coding?

No detail is ever lost, but the codes—especially for complex variables, like type of facility visited for antenatal care—can be quite different. Codes for the many yes/no questions in the original DHS are typically also simple in IPUMS DHS.

Are there any harmonized variables that have coding that you think is difficult or prone to misinterpretation (like chborn in IPUMS USA)?

Generally, IPUMS DHS makes interpretation *easier* by putting the important documentation right alongside the variable on the website. You always want to check the COMPARABILITY, UNIVERSE, and SURVEY TEXT tabs, as mentioned in the Webinar. Those will help you avoid misinterpretations.

That said, if the underlying DHS variable is difficult to understand or prone to misinterpretation, the same might be true for the variable in IPUMS DHS. In that case, it's a good idea to review the DHS Program User Forum to see how others are using that variable.

I was wondering how to access subnational data, i.e, data for districts within a country?

Regions are available in the drop-down menu, under INTEGRATED GEOGRAPHY and SINGLE SAMPLE GEOGRAPHY.

The integrated geography variables provide common footprints for subnational regions over time. If you are using multiple samples from the same country, the integrated geography is your best choice.

If you are only using one sample or one sample from multiple countries, then the single sample geography variables will work best. Those variables are the same as the DHS variable V024.

If you want to get the GPS data for sample points, you need to get those data from The DHS Program and link them to your data file from IPUMS DHS.

How do I get data that excludes all missing values?

IPUMS DHS currently includes all values to provide users with the greatest degree of flexibility. This means, however, that missing values must be identified through your statistical software package. You can determine missing values by looking at the CODES tab at the IPUMS DHS website or by tabulating the variables you plan to use in your analysis.

We are currently working on a version of the data in which the missing values will be automatically identified. That will be coming soon!