

Maximizing the Global Value of Population, Health, and Geographic Microdata



Organization: Academia

Data Type: Official statistics, Survey data, Geospatial data, Census, Data for SDG monitoring, Cross cutting

Region: Global

Timeline: Ongoing.

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Sponsoring Organization:

IPUMS at the University of Minnesota

Supporting Organization(s):

Objective:

IPUMS commits to expanding the accessibility, comparability, usability, and long-term value of population, health, census, survey, and geographic data worldwide. IPUMS continues to partner with national statistical offices and other data producers and partners to preserve and harmonize data and documentation, facilitate responsible access, and develop tools that make it easier to discover, compare, and analyze data across countries and over time. Our objective is to maximize the connection between data production and data use so that existing data investments generate greater value for research, policy, planning, SDG monitoring, and public understanding, while respecting confidentiality, data-provider requirements, and national data systems.

Description:

Population, health, census, survey, and geographic data are essential for understanding social and demographic change and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. Yet valuable data collected by national statistical offices and other data producers are often difficult to discover, compare, and use across countries and over time because of differences in formats, classifications, documentation, and access systems. Historical data are also at risk of becoming inaccessible, lost, or under-used. These barriers limit the value that existing data can provide to researchers, policymakers, national statistical offices, civil society organizations, and other data users. IPUMS reduces barriers to scholarly and policy research use by preserving data and documentation, harmonizing information across time and place, integrating complementary forms of data, and providing accessible tools and documentation that enable responsible comparative use of high-value census and survey microdata and geospatial data. The work of IPUMS saves researchers countless hours of data discovery, retrieval, and preparation. Data users can download the microdata suitable to their research project for analysis free of charge.

This is an ongoing institutional commitment from the global-facing IPUMS data projects: IPUMS International, IPUMS DHS, IPUMS MICS, IPUMS Multinational Time Use, and IPUMS IHGIS. IPUMS will continue to preserve and harmonize census, survey, health, time use, and geographic data and documentation; expand temporal and geographic coverage where possible; develop integrated metadata and user-friendly data user and dissemination tools; and support responsible access and comparative use. We remain committed to strengthening engagement with national statistical offices and other data producers, improve resources that help partners understand how their data are being used, and promote applications of harmonized data in research, policy, and SDG-related analysis. Through these activities, IPUMS seeks to increase the discoverability, interoperability, usability, and longevity of important global data resources and broaden their value to researchers, policymakers, data producers, NGOs, educators, and other users worldwide.

IPUMS monitors this commitment through its established project reporting and evaluation processes. Indicators of progress include expansion of data coverage; addition and harmonization of census, survey, and geographic data and variables; improvements to documentation, metadata, and dissemination tools; growth and geographic diversity of the user community; research and policy outputs using IPUMS data; and continued or expanded engagement with national statistical offices and other data-producing partners. IPUMS will also improve efforts to provide data producers with information about how their data are being used and by whom (user location, institution, discipline, etc.). Progress can be reviewed annually and shared through IPUMS reporting, partner communications, and, where appropriate, future UN World Data Forum or Commit to Data reporting.

