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DHS-8 Questionnaires: *Revision Process and New Content*

Summary: The Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) Program is pleased to present our revised core Household, Woman's, Man's, and Biomarker questionnaires for DHS-8. We held an open comment period to receive input from the public, carefully considered each submission, and made numerous changes in response to better meet existing and emerging data needs in global health. We are especially excited to announce the shift from a birth history to a full pregnancy history and the addition of minimum dietary diversity for women. We added new questions in every health area, revised existing questions to better measure current indicators, and deleted a few questions that were no longer programmatically relevant. We have also expanded into new areas, including alcohol consumption and breast and cervical cancer screening. Stay tuned for changes to DHS optional modules and a list of new modules.

Review Process

We solicited feedback on the DHS core questionnaires and modules through a portal on The DHS User Forum from January 21-March 15, 2019. To be considered for inclusion, all requests had to be submitted through this portal. New in this round of DHS, we provided a template for submissions. This template requested information on the purpose of the data request and how the information would be used, in addition to indicator definitions and draft questions.

For the core Household, Woman's, and Man's Questionnaires, we received over 1,000 pages of material, and requests for more than 950 new questions! The DHS Program thoroughly reviewed every post that was submitted through the portal. Topic-based internal working groups reviewed all of the posts under their topic and, for each, made a recommendation on whether or not to accept the request or to accept with some proposed changes. The recommendations from all of the topic working groups then received a second round of review, along with

the original posts, by an internal questionnaire review committee. The DHS Program then submitted draft revised questionnaires to USAID for review. After further discussion and changes, USAID approved the DHS-8 core questionnaires for release.

New Questionnaires

Given the truly impressive volume of requests, we were forced to prioritize requests to avoid over-burdening the survey instruments, which has a negative impact on both data quality and survey cost. We simply could not accept everything. In addition, not every question is a good candidate for the kind of surveys we conduct. For example, some questions are better suited to facility-based data collection or qualitative approaches. We try not to ask questions that require medical knowledge the respondent may not have, or

DHS8 Questionnaires: <https://dhsprogram.com/What-We-Do/Survey-Types/DHS-Questionnaires.cfm>

details that are likely forgotten after a few weeks or months. We must also keep in mind that the sample size requirements for some indicators may exceed our usual sample sizes, especially at subnational levels.

The DHS-8 questionnaires include over 100 new questions in the Woman's Questionnaire, more than 30 new questions in the Man's Questionnaire, and 14 new questions in the Household Questionnaire. With these additions, roughly 25% of the questions in the Woman's Questionnaire are new in DHS-8.

We have also made changes in the structure and format of our paper questionnaires to better reflect the way our computer-assisted data capture programs operate. Users familiar with our questionnaires will notice changes like the elimination of multi-column sections with a different bed net, child, or partner in each column. Data on multiple children, etc. will now be captured by looping through the series of questions once for each one.

BY THE NUMBERS



1,063

pages of material submitted and reviewed



954

new questions requested

110 COUNTRIES

accessed the questionnaire review portal



25%

of questions in the Woman's Questionnaire are new



3

new optional modules to meet data needs



183

new questions added



122

questions deleted

New in DHS-8!

Family planning and reproductive health

- Full pregnancy history!!!!
- Use of DMPA-SC/“Sayana Press”
- Questions to better capture use of coitus-dependent methods of family planning and emergency contraception
- Counseling on method switching
- Age at menarche
- Breast and cervical cancer screening



Gender

- Expanded questions on contraceptive decision making
- Marriage registration
- Duration of current union
- Who fetches water for the household



HIV

- Self-reported HIV status and use of antiretroviral medication
- Number of lifetime HIV tests
- Time since diagnosis for people living with HIV
- Experience of stigma by people living with HIV



Malaria

- Reasons for not using mosquito nets
- Mother’s report of malaria diagnosis for children



Maternal, newborn and child health

- Stillbirths added to the antenatal and delivery questions
- Respectful maternity care
- Expanded questions on content of antenatal care
- Content of postnatal care for women



Nutrition

- Minimum dietary diversity for women
- Source for iron-containing supplements taken during pregnancy
- Expanded questions on sugary drinks and unhealthy foods for children and women
- Coverage of nutritional counseling during pregnancy
- Coverage of breastfeeding counseling during antenatal care
- Coverage of nutrition counseling for infants
- Coverage of growth monitoring for children



Vaccination

- Introducing photographs of vaccination cards
- Usual source of vaccination



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

- Menstrual hygiene
- Questions on emptying of septic tanks



Other topics

- Expanded questions on migration
- Self-reported health status
- Distance to closest health facility
- Alcohol use
- Expanded questions on cook stoves
- Expanded questions on household energy sources for cooking, lighting, space heating

New optional modules

- Child Well-being and Household Structure
- Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccination
- Mental health



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The Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) Program assists countries worldwide in the collection and use of data to monitor and evaluate population, health, and nutrition programs.

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