Are We Reaching the Worst-Off?

How the Myanmar Census Can Help Answer this Question

INSTRUCTIONS SHEET

January 2017

Background

Many programs and projects in Myanmar are designed with the goal to benefit the worst-off. Are they able to live up to this commendable goal? Unfortunately, few are able to answer that question. The 2014 Myanmar Census offers an exceptional opportunity for implementers of programs and projects across all sectors to easily and at low cost assess the extent to which their intervention is reaching the worst-off. For a general description of the approach and its rationale, refer to the document "*Are We Reaching The Worst-Off: How the Myanmar Census Can Help Answer this Question*", posted on the Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population (MoLIP) website.

An Excel file, named "*Are we reaching the worst-off - Calculations.xlsm*" that takes care of all the calculations was developed to assist anyone interested in applying the described approach. You can download the file from MoLIP's website. The file includes a few macros, which explains why it was saved with the extension "xlsm". When opening the file, a message will pop up that warns you that the workbook contains macros. You can safely select the option "Enable Macros".

This brief document provides instructions for the application of the approach in general, and the use of the Excel file in particular. You may also want to consult the step-by-step guide developed by Ergo and Winestock Luna (2014)[1], which includes a detailed case study. Note, however, that some of the steps described in that guide are automatically taken care of in the Excel file.

Which question are you trying to answer?

The approach can be adopted to answer different types of questions, including the following:

- What is the socio-economic profile of users of a particular service, or of the beneficiaries of a particular program or project?
- Does the socio-economic profile of the users of a service or the beneficiaries of a program or project differ from that of non-users / non-beneficiaries?
- Does the socio-economic profile of the users of a particular service vary with the service delivery mechanism?

The case study described in Ergo and Winestock Luna (2014) is a good example of the third type of question. In that study, the socio-economic profiles of two different groups of users of a service are compared: users who receive the service in the community and users who seek the service at a health facility.

[1] Ergo, A., Winestock Luna, J. (2014). *Assessing the Socioeconomic Profile of the Beneficiaries of an Intervention: A Step-by-Step Guide*. Washington, DC: USAID/MCHIP and USAID/MCSP. This document is available online at: http://www.mchip.net/sites/default/files/Assess_socio-economicprofile.pdf

Survey approach and sample size

The optimal survey approach will vary depending on the type of question you aim to answer and the type of group(s) for which you want to assess the socio-economic profile(s). If you are only interested in individuals using a particular service, your best strategy may be to conduct exit interviews at the site(s) offering the service of interest. The interviews could either be conducted at all the sites or in a randomly selected sample of sites, depending on the number of sites offering the service (or supported by the intervention). Likewise, depending on the volume of clients visiting these sites, the interview could either be administered to all clients seen within a given period of time or to a randomly selected sample of clients. As a general rule of thumb, you should aim for a sample of at least 300 randomly selected clients. If your study involves multiple sites, keep in mind that the socioeconomic profile of the clients may vary across sites. Whether this needs to be taken into consideration or not will depend on the question you seek to answer. If comparisons across sites are of interest, the required sample size will need to be increased accordingly.

If you want to compare the socio-economic profile of users and non-users of a service, or of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of a program or project, you may opt for interviews conducted at the household level. Sometimes a survey with a different primary objective has already been programmed within the community where most service users or beneficiaries come from. The survey may for instance be part of a broader project evaluation. In such case, you will automatically end up with a sample consisting of both users and non-users of the service (or beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the intervention). Already programmed surveys offer a great opportunity to piggyback by adding the relevant questions to the existing questionnaire. Rather than having to estimate the sample size, what is more likely to be needed in such situation is ensuring that the sample selected for the purpose of the original survey is adequate for the purpose of assessing the socioeconomic profile of the relevant group or groups.

Data collection

The questionnaire developed for your survey of beneficiaries or service users needs to include the same questions (and the same predefined responses) as those used to construct the asset index in the 2014 Census. These are Census questions 33 to 39. The Census questionnaire containing those questions is available online at the following link: http://www.dop.gov.mm/moip/index.php?route=product/product&path=119_65&product_id=138. Responses should be coded in the same way as in the Census. For the question relating to the main source of lighting in the household (i.e., Census question 34), for example, pre-defined response "Electricity" should be coded as "1", "Kerosene" as "2", "Candle" as "3", etc.

The questionnaire developed for your survey should also ask whether the respondent's household lives in an urban or in a rural area, where urban and rural are defined in the same way as in the Census. The response "Urban" should be coded as "1" and "Rural" as "2". If your sample will include both users/beneficiaries and non-users/non-beneficiaries, an additional question will need to be added to the questionnaire to determine whether the respondent can be considered a user/beneficiary or not.

Data entry

All the responses from the survey of users or beneficiaries can be entered in Excel. The format to be used for the data entry should match that of the worksheet "Responses" in the Excel file named "*Are we reaching the worst-off - Calculations.xlsm*". Each row should contain the information obtained from one respondent. The file has been created to accommodate up to 1,000 respondents. Column A indicates the respondent's number. Each of the columns from B to X

corresponds to a question. Column B specifies whether a respondent lives in an urban or a rural area. The 22 subsequent columns correspond to the relevant Census questions. The headings in the worksheet "Responses" are self-explanatory.

We recommend that you enter the data in a separate file and that you copy and paste it into the worksheet "Responses" only after you have validated the data entry. This is to avoid making accidental changes to the formulas in the Excel file "*Are we reaching the worst-off - Calculations.xlsm*".[2]

Once data entry has been completed and validated and all the information has been transferred to the worksheet "Responses", you can go to the worksheet "Menu" and indicate whether all respondents are from the same State or Region and, if so, select the relevant State or Region from the drop-down list. In Cell B6, you can then specify whether the analysis should also be conducted using the population from that State or Region as reference.

Note that the current version of the Excel file will only allow you to generate the socio-economic profile of one group. If you are interested in comparing the socio-economic profiles of two groups (e.g. users versus non-users of a service, or beneficiaries versus non-beneficiaries of an intervention), you will need to create a separate Excel file for each group. Future versions of the Excel file may accommodate for comparisons between two groups.

Findings

The socio-economic profile is automatically generated and displayed in the worksheet "Findings". If all respondents to the survey are from one type of area (i.e., if they are either all from urban areas or all from rural areas), the socio-economic position of respondents is automatically also compared to that of the urban or rural population.

[2] Formulas may accidentally be changed in other worksheets of the Excel file if, for example, cells in the worksheet "Responses" are moved around during data entry.