

# The 2014 Population and Housing Census of Myanmar

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers



**Ministry of Immigration and Population**  
**with technical support from UNFPA**

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## Preamble

*In any census, people often ask questions or need more information to be clear of the process. Based on consultations during the Pilot Census and meetings with various groups, these questions have been compiled alongside the answers to them.*

### 1. What is a population census?

*A population census is a snapshot of a country at a particular moment in time. The picture we are taking will tell us how many people live in the country, their gender, age, living conditions, access to basic services, etc. This information is important for all of us. Myanmar's next census will be held in March/April 2014. The Census Night is the 29th of March 2014.*

### 2. Who organizes a census?

*In Myanmar the census is planned and conducted by the Department of Population within the Ministry of Immigration and Population. The Department of Population is part of a Government ministry empowered under the Census Law to conduct the census and produce timely, accurate and accessible information.*

### 3. Why do we need to have a census?

*The information collected will give planners, both inside and outside of government, an accurate picture of how many people are living in the country or at every administrative level and their living conditions as well as access to basic services. This will tell planners what resources people need such as education, healthcare, housing and transport. This is why it is important for everyone within Myanmar on the 29th of March 2014 to participate.*

### 4. When was the last census conducted in Myanmar?

*The last time a census was conducted in this country was in 1983. The Census 2014 is being done after 30 years and will be very important for the needs and future of Myanmar.*

### 5. How often should a census be conducted?

*Most countries conduct their censuses every ten years in line with international standards. So in Myanmar, we have to start conforming to the international standards by conducting a census every ten years.*



## 6. Why do I have to participate in Census 2014?

Census data is used for planning purposes. If you do not participate, the data collected will not be a true reflection of the Myanmar population. The Myanmar government, development partners, research institutes as well as the private sector need accurate information for effective planning and policy making. It is only by being part of the census that your needs can be catered for in the planning of the country.

## 7. Do I have to participate in the census?

Yes. A census intends to collect data from everyone, unlike a survey that only collects data from selected respondents. A census is therefore the only source for community level data on issues such as migration patterns, education, persons with disabilities, employment and unemployment, fertility, mortality and service delivery, all of which are critical for planning. We therefore encourage all persons in Myanmar to cooperate with our enumerators who in most cases will be teachers; and to give them complete and accurate data.

NB: The Census Law (approved by Parliament) protects the information you provide. The same Law requires that all persons in the country on the Census Night answer all questions put to them by census enumerators. The Law guarantees confidentiality of your information. The data collected in the census is used for statistical purposes only and no-one can access data on an individual level.

## 8. How do I know that the person at my door is from the Census Office?

Our enumerators will each have the following items:-

- i. Identification Card
- ii. A Census Uniform with the Census Logo
- iii. They will have census questionnaires with them
- iv. An A3-size map of the area, and
- v. They will be accompanied by your community leader in most cases

Most of the census enumerators will be teachers working in your community and people who come from your neighborhood. Before starting the census work your community leader will introduce them to you.

## 9. Who will be counted in the Census?

Everyone who is present in Myanmar territory on the night of 29th of March, 2014 will be counted, regardless of citizenship, ethnicity, age, status, etc... The Census will count both people in conventional households, and people staying in institutions such as hospitals, hotels, orphanages, military barracks, monasteries, etc... People in IDP camps will be counted. Also homeless persons will be counted in the census.



## 10. How will you make sure I am counted?

The census enumerators have completed a mapping phase where they prepared the census maps below every Ward and Village Tract in Myanmar. The maps will be used to ensure that every part of the country is covered. Also, three days before the census enumeration starts, all households within each census area will be listed and cross referenced during enumeration to verify that all households within each area have been counted. If your household is not counted by the 10th April, you should contact your community/village leader or call the phone number of your Township Census Officer whose number will be given to the public, they will arrange for a enumerator to visit your dwelling to administer the questionnaire. A census sticker will be put on your door after enumeration to show that your household has been covered in the census.

## 11. How do I know that the information I give during the census will not be used for taxation or to intimidate me by the authorities?

The Census Law (approved by Parliament) guarantees the confidentiality of your individual information. Every census officer will swear to uphold the confidentiality of collected data. Employees of Department of Population will be legally bound, by signing the Oath of Confidentiality, never to disclose individual information gathered in the course of their duties, to anyone not authorized by Department of Population. The oath continues to apply even after employment has ceased. According to the Census Law no un-authorized person or organization (including government departments) can have access to individual information that is gathered in the census, and no other government organization can look at any individual information collected during the census. Data will be published only after being aggregated for report purposes and the respondent's personal details have been excluded. The Law provides for a fine and/or imprisonment for enumerators or other employees of the department who are found guilty of contravening the Law.

## 12. Why do you need my full name?

The reason the Department of Population requires names of all household members and putting the census stickers on the doors is for quality-check procedures. To ensure that all people are covered in the census and that information is asked and recorded to the right person. When a questionnaire is completed for your household, your personal information (such as name) will be contained in the questionnaire and the structure listing form. Once the quality assurance has been done, only the data will be entered in the computer. The name will not be captured into the computer. During final processing, data for all the households are converted into statistical tables for publication that do not include names of persons. Consequently, published information can never be traced back to a specific household, or a particular individual.

## 13. In which languages are the questionnaires available?

The questionnaires are available in Myanmar language, with a few copies in English to capture mostly foreigners. The enumerators will be able to speak in your local language. The instructions manual will also contain some critical information in your own language so that there is consistency in explaining some of the terms used in the questions.

#### **14. How long does it take to fill-in the questionnaire?**

*It will take approximately 25 minutes to complete the questionnaire, but may slightly vary depending on the number of people who were in your household on the night of 29th March.*

#### **15. Can I complete the questionnaire on my own?**

*No, the enumerators have been specially trained to assist with the speedy completion of the questionnaire. It is advisable that trained enumerators complete the questionnaire.*

#### **16. Can I return the questionnaire containing my household information to the Census office myself?**

*No, the questionnaire has to be submitted by the enumerators. They have to account for all the questionnaires allocated to them.*

#### **17. Should I let the person into my house?**

*Due to the length of time that it takes to complete a questionnaire, we are requesting that all people welcome the census enumerators into their homes. They will administer the questionnaire and verify the information before leaving. If you are not comfortable doing this, you can answer the questions while seated outside the house. Whenever possible give the enumerator some place to sit and write-on.*

#### **18. Can I complete the questionnaire online?**

*No, questionnaires have to be linked geographically to a particular area. Due to this, physical questionnaires have to be administered to households.*

#### **19. Can I print the questionnaire from a website and complete it myself?**

*Questionnaires are barcoded for scanning and tracking purposes. They cannot be made available for download, as downloaded questionnaires cannot be bar-coded. Questionnaires are linked to a specific area by means of the barcode, ensuring that the information generated from this project is accurate.*







## **20. What if I live in an old age home, or I am in a hotel or some institution on Census night?**

Myanmar will use two different census questionnaires. The Main Questionnaire is for households and the Institution Questionnaire is for people who are in a non-conventional household set-up such as hospitals, prisons, army barracks, hotels, monasteries etc. So, you will be enumerated accordingly.

## **21. Suppose I am living in an IDP camp, will I be included in the census?**

Yes- Every person present within the borders of Myanmar on the Census Night will be included in the census, including those in IDP camps. Arrangements will be made with the management of every IDP camp to ensure total coverage.

## **22. On the night of the 29th March I will be out of the country. Will I get counted?**

Yes, the census collects information of household members who are out of the country on the census night. This is whether the person went out of the country with or without the knowledge of the government. Nobody will penalize you for reporting such people; it will lead to accurate and complete information about our country.

## **23. If I have visitors on the night of the 29th March, should they be counted as part of my household?**

Anyone who slept in your household on the night of the 29th March should be counted as part of that household. The Census will only record persons present on Census Night not on the Household Registration List.

## **24. How can you be sure that the person who slept here on the 29th March, who is not part of this household, is not counted where they usually live?**

Our enumerators are trained to ask the questions in a way that will make sure that only those persons who were present in the household on the Census Night, get counted. If they were not in the household on that night, they will not be counted. They will be counted wherever they spent the Census Night.

## **25. I am a foreigner in Myanmar, will I be counted in the census?**

*Yes, all persons who are present within the borders of Myanmar will be included in the census whether national or foreigner, living in household or institution or IDP camp.*

## **26. When will the results of Census 2014 be available to the public?**

*The preliminary results will be published by end of July 2014 while final results will be available from March 2015.*

## **27. Why will the results take so long to be published?**

*We are visiting approximately 12 million households to collect data from each one. It takes a long time to capture all that data and process. It is then verified, analysed and used to produce products that make the information easily accessible and understandable.*

## **28. Will illegal immigrants be counted?**

*Yes, our task is to count everybody who is within the borders of Myanmar on the Census Night (29th March), not to find out their legal status. The Census is not concerned with legal or illegal immigrants.*

## **29. I am not comfortable with the enumerator allocated; can I have someone else do the enumeration?**

*If you do not wish to complete the questionnaire with the enumerator, please ask this person to contact the census supervisor, who will complete the questionnaire with you.*

## **30. I have a live-in domestic worker, will she be counted with my household?**

*It will depend, if he/she lives and shares food in your household then he/she will be considered as part of your household so be counted as part of your household. However, if she/he lives in a separate dwelling and prepares his/her own food then that is categorized as a separate household and hence he/she should be counted in that separate household.*

## **31. Why are questions asked on sex and not gender?**

*Sex is the biological distinction between males and females, and is therefore the more scientific definition. Gender is the social distinction between males and females.*

## **32. Why do you ask questions on ethnicity?**

*This information is used to track the population dynamics of each ethnic group. It is also important to know the ethnic composition of Myanmar, to acknowledge its diversity and ensure that the needs relevant to each ethnic group can be addressed. Myanmar Census Office asks this question for statistical purposes only. The ethnicity question allows for anybody to self identify themselves. There are 135 sub-ethnic groups that are coded, plus an option for OTHERS with the space available for anybody to identify themselves with any group or name they wish to be recorded with.*

### 33. Why do you ask questions about what items I have in my house?

*This information identifies the standard of living of households, and is used to generate economic and social indicators such as the Living Standards Measures (LSMs).*

### 34. Why do you ask a question on disability?

*The information on disability is important to understand what is the degree and the type of disability that people have, so that the needed health and infrastructure support can be made available.*

### 35. How will people in institutions (prisons, hospitals, etc.) be counted?

*Institutions such as prisons, hospitals, hotels, etc. will be enumerated using people who work in such institutions. The person responsible will be requested to supply the enumerator with the information of what is required. In some cases like hotels, the census may use the register of all persons who were present in that institution on the Census Night. This information will then be recorded on a Institution Questionnaire.*

### 36. What questions will be asked?

*The census questionnaire asks questions on demographics (sex, age, marital status, religion, ethnicity etc.), migration (where you live, have you moved), general health & functioning, education, employment, fertility, access to services and mortality.*

### 37. What if I am travelling or out at a social place on Census Night? Where will I be counted?

*If you return to your place of residence on 30th March, and did not sleep over at another dwelling (e.g. hotel, someone else's residence), you will be counted at your place of residence. (For example, someone travelling from Mandalay to Yangon on 29th March, who left Mandalay mid-afternoon on the 29th, travelled directly to Yangon without sleeping over at a venue on the way, and arrived in Yangon on the 30th March, will be counted as though they were at their residence on census night.)*

### 38. I heard that census only starts on the 30th March. I have already been visited by someone claiming to be from the census. Was that person legitimate?

*Before enumeration begins, the Census Office prepares what is called a "Structure Listing"*

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