

# The 2014 Population and Housing Census of Myanmar

A Nation-wide Census!  
Let us all Participate



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



# Foreward

On behalf of the Ministry of Immigration and Population, and the Union Government, I share with everyone the information regarding the forthcoming census. Our country, Myanmar, is undertaking a nation-wide census in March/April 2014 and I request all people in every part of our country to participate. It is our responsibility to make everyone understand what the census really is, its objectives and benefits to them individually, their communities and to our country.



It is for the above purpose that a handbook on “What you need to know about the 2014 Myanmar Census” has been prepared. To give accurate and concise facts to people at all levels:- national and community leaders, journalists, civil society, the general public among others. I sincerely thank our partner UNFPA for supporting us to put together this handbook. In addition, I acknowledge the technical support of the UN Country Team in Myanmar.

As a Government, we are committed to undertake a credible census that will be beneficial to our great nation and all our people. I would therefore call upon everyone in key positions to read this handbook and use its contents while publicizing the census. We will continue to share more information with the people. This is a nation-wide census and we will do our country proud by participating in it and providing correct information during data collection in April 2014. Let us build a new Myanmar together, first by having accurate information upon which to enhance evidence based decision-making.

H.E. U Khin Yi,  
Minister of Immigration and Population,  
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◀ Daw Thwe Thwe Oo worked filling the questionnaire during the Population and Household Pilot Census in March and April 2013.  
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### Cover photos:

Myanmar country wide

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# 1. INTRODUCTION



**The last census in Myanmar was conducted in 1983, almost 30 years ago.**

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar will conduct its nation-wide Population and Housing Census between the 30th March and the 10th April 2014. The last census in Myanmar was conducted in 1983, almost 30 years ago. The country is in dire need of accurate statistical information for it to progressively move forward. The United Nations recommend that member countries conduct a census every ten years to measure development and population growth. Some 200 countries have done so since 2005 as part of the current UN World Census Programme.

The 2014 Census in Myanmar will be a valuable contribution to that programme and will provide social, economic and demographic characteristics of people and households at various levels for the purpose of ongoing reforms, development planning and good governance. The Government, civil society, development partners and other data-users need accurate, relevant and timely information in order to develop appropriate policies and programmes for the improvement of living standards of all people in the country.

The success of a census is measured by the accuracy of the data collected. To get accurate census data, the information collected from respondents during the data collection should be complete and truthful. But complete and truthful responses can only be obtained if the public is both aware and supportive of the census process. To make the general public supportive of the census, every person needs to be properly informed about both the benefits of a census and the vital role they play in its success. It is, therefore, extremely important that key facts and information about the census is highlighted briefly in a clear and concise manner. This handbook tries to do so and is aimed at providing information to the leaders, media, and the general public alike on key issues of the census. Should additional information be required, get in touch with the census office at any administrative unit closest to you.

## 2. WHAT IS A POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS?



A population and housing census is the whole process of collecting, compiling, evaluating, analyzing and disseminating socio-economic and demographic information about the entire population of a country. To put it simply, a census is counting all the people living in a country at a particular time. During a census, interviewers (also called enumerators) collect information about the size, distribution, composition and other socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the population and households.

A census is usually conducted periodically (typically every ten years) to provide information about the changes that have taken place in the population (its growth and characteristics) and other socio-economic developments since the last census. This information is used to assess the current welfare needs of the population as well as to estimate, and plan for, its future needs. The data collected assists the government, development partners, civil society organizations, and the private sector in the planning and implementation of policies and in the construction of the infrastructure deemed necessary. For example, if the government knows both the current number of school-aged children and the number of children who will need education five years from now; it will then estimate how many schools to build by location and how many teachers to train. If the census information is not accurate then schools and teachers may be allocated to the areas that are not in need. The same applies to the provision of medicine and housing amenities such as clean water, electricity, etc.

The 2014 Census in Myanmar is particularly important for these purposes. Also, because there has not been a census in the country since 1983, much of current data is out-dated and unreliable for research, survey and policy making.

*Some of the senior level management of the census team who will be carrying out the census. ©UNFPA*

*(Opposite page top left image) Enumerator interviewing the household owner during the Population and Household Pilot Census in Myanmar in 2013. ©UNFPA Myanmar/Pyay Kyaw Myint*



**Census Night will be 29th March 2014, so be counted.**

### 3. WHO WILL BE COUNTED?

a. Every person present on Census Night (the night between the 29th and 30th March 2014) within Myanmar's borders will be counted. This will include people in regular households, institutions, and out-door sleepers. This will also include both Myanmar citizens and foreigners.

b. An attempt will be made to get information of Myanmar people living or working in foreign countries. Kindly, note that this information will only be used for statistical purposes and not to retaliate against anybody. The data from the completed questionnaires will be aggregated to give a country-wide picture on the living conditions of people in Myanmar from national to village tract. Data will not be individualized, nor will any questionnaire be singled out for analysis. All questionnaires are confidential and nothing that a respondent reports will be held against him or her. Respondents will not face any repercussions. The general public is therefore urged to provide accurate information.

To ensure that all persons present on the Census Night will be counted, people will be enumerated under these broad categories:-

a. **Regular Households:** A regular household consists of a person or a group of persons who live together in the same housing unit and share living arrangements (such as sharing food from same cooking pot).

b. **Institution or collective households:** An institution or collective household is a set of buildings used to house a larger number of people who are not necessarily related by blood or marriage. Examples of such households are hotels, monasteries, homes for old people, prisons, army barracks, etc.

c. **Special Population Groups:** These include homeless persons, nomads, persons in transit at air/sea ports, border crossing points.

d. **People who may be in temporary shelters** during the Census Night will be counted. They will be counted according to how they live and this will fall under any of the three categories mentioned above.

Adequate arrangements will be made for the enumeration of all the households and special population groups.

*Enumerator interviewing the household owner during the Population and Household Pilot Census in Myanmar in 2013.  
Photo ©UNFPA Myanmar/Pyay Kyaw Myint*



**All persons present on the 29th March 2014 in Myanmar will be counted, regardless of citizenship or where they will be.**



## 4. WHERE WILL PEOPLE BE COUNTED?



### Each person will be counted where he/she is on the Census Night (29th March 2014)

In the 2014 Myanmar Census, people will be counted where they are at a particular point in time. This particular time will be the Census Night - the night between the 29th and the 30th March 2014.

If, for example, Daw Yin Yin happens to be sleeping in the house of her friend Daw Nandar Sein during the Census Night then Daw Yin Yin will be counted as part of the household of Daw Nandar Sein. In fact, when the census enumerator comes to Daw Nandar Sein's house, the interviewer will need to know about the people who were in her house on the Census Night. So Daw Yin Yin will not be counted as being

present in her own household, but will be counted as present in Daw Nandar Sein's house. There are other questions that will be used to know where she usually lives.



*Ko The, community leader at Mandalay, helps children from his community with their homework.  
©UNFPA Myanmar/Pyay Kyaw Myint*

Note that all the people who are in the country on the Census Night will be counted. It is important to remember that babies born after the Census Night should not be counted but that people who died after the Census Night (and who were alive at the time of the Census Night) should be counted.

## 5. WHEN AND HOW LONG WILL ENUMERATION TAKE?

The data collection will take place over a period of 12 days. It will start on the night of the 29th March and end on the 10th April, 2014.

If by the last day of census data collection (10th April 2014) no interviewer has counted your household and there is no census sticker, such households are advised to report to the Ward or Village Tract Census Office and arrangements will be made to enumerate them. It is everybody's individual right and responsibility to make sure their households are enumerated.



Enumerator interviewing the household owner during the Population and Household Pilot Census in Myanmar in 2013. ©UNFPA Myanmar/Pyay Kyaw Myint

## 6. HOW WILL ENUMERATION BE DONE?

An interviewer in most cases a teacher will visit each house within his/her census area during the census period. The enumerator will interview the heads of households or, in some cases if necessary, another responsible household member present. The interview will take approximately 25 minutes depending on the number of members in the household. Usually the head of household or a responsible adult will be interviewed on behalf of the whole household, but there may be cases where an interviewer may want to verify some information with other individual household members. For this reason, it is important that all members of the household are at home when the enumerator comes to visit. Before the census, the interviewer will inform every household when she/he is scheduled to go to their household; this is within the 12 days of the census.

Only persons who spend the Census Night in the household will be counted in that household. Other household members who are not at home during the Census Night will be counted at the place where they are on Census Night if this is in Myanmar.



The census will not check if your name is on the Household Registration List. The Household Registration List will not be requested for and there will be no need to show it to the interviewer or any census officer.

Questionnaire used during the Population and Household Pilot Census in 2013.  
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Pyay Kyaw Myint

Remote areas of the country will be included in the nation-wide census.  
©UNFPA Myanmar/  
Benny Manser



# 7. THE CENSUS LAW



## 7.1 Confidentiality

Information collected from respondents during the census enumeration is strictly confidential and cannot lawfully be used for purposes other than statistical analysis. This means, for example, that information provided by the households cannot and will not be used for taxation or personal registration status or any other purposes by the immigration authorities, the police or any other authority. Census officials have to swear an oath of secrecy before commencing their duties and any breach of confidentiality is punishable by the Law. The names of every person enumerated will be recorded on the census questionnaires. These names will be used only to make sure that no household member is left out or counted more than once. The names will in some instances be used to verify that people have been correctly enumerated. For example, a supervisor may want to counter check if the interviewer has visited the household and correctly enumerated everybody. Also, if you report a visitor who was present in your household on the Census Night but not captured in Household Registration Form, no legal action will be taken against the household. It is the right thing to do!

As a respondent, the Census Law enacted in July 2013 protects you and should a census official violate your rights then legal action will be taken regardless of her/his position. Kindly report such cases to the census committee closest to you or the Police who will investigate and initiate legal action.

## 7.2 Participating in the Census is a civic duty

Myanmar is working towards recognizing and respecting the rights of all her people. Participating in the census, being counted, and being able to give correct information on living conditions is everyone's civic duty and their right. This is one sure way in which each person in the country can participate in its improvement.

It is the right of every person present in Myanmar on the Census Night to be counted. If for whatever reason the interviewer deliberately refuses to enumerate your household or anyone present then report such incidence to his/he supervisor or village leader, if they don't take action you can take legal action. It is an obligation of everyone to be enumerated and give truthful information in the census. All questions in the census which are applicable to a person should be responded to.

It is, however, important to note that the following acts are illegal during the census exercise:-

- a. To refuse to be counted
- b. To (willfully) be counted more than once
- c. To give false information to the interviewers (enumerators)
- d. To obstruct the enumerator or any other census official from performing their duties
- e. To impersonate a census official



## 8. WHAT INFORMATION WILL THE CENSUS PROVIDE?



Some of the information that will come from the 2014 Myanmar Census are:-

- a. The number of persons living in Myanmar by administrative unit (population size)
- b. The age composition of the population
- c. The literacy rate (the proportion of the population who can read and write)
- d. The level of employment/unemployment and the different types of occupation of the population
- e. The number of persons with a disability
- f. The number of persons by ethnicity and religion
- g. The types of housing units and their condition
- h. The proportion of households with access to clean water, electricity and other social amenities
- i. Fertility and mortality rates
- j. The volume of internal and international migration

The census will make it possible for the Government, development partners and civil society organizations to develop and implement development policies in critical areas such as:

### 8.1 Education

Data from the census will assist to measure the levels of literacy, school attainment and to plan for education by providing information on:

- a. The number of people who can read and write (literacy rate)
- b. The level of education reached by those who have been to school
- c. The number of school-age children presently not at school

This information is extremely useful for identifying areas that are lagging behind in the education sector and which therefore require extra efforts, for example, to boost literacy programmes run by both the government and non-governmental organizations. It is also useful for analyzing gender differences in educational attainment and completion rates.



## 8.2 Health

Although there are no direct questions about health in the census, the responses will provide useful information that will make it possible for government at all levels to plan for the health of the population. If, for instance, the census reveals high mortality rate in a certain area compared to other areas, this would be an indicator of the need to undertake further analysis, research and planning so as to improve health services in that area. Similarly, in areas with higher fertility rates may require increased availability and access to reproductive health services, including maternal, neonatal and child care. Such areas may also require supplies of different family planning methods, maternity kits as well as improved pre- and post-natal care facilities.

## 8.3 Employment

Knowledge of the size of the labour force aids the design of effective labour policies. Census data enables the government and statisticians to do this.

Data from the 2014 Myanmar Census will provide levels of employment, unemployment and underemployment whereby assist in designing programmes for job creation by providing the following information:

- a. The number of employed persons including what type of work they do.**
- b. The number and distribution (by age, administrative unit, etc.) of unemployed or under-employed persons.**
- c. The number of persons who are currently attending schools or other educational institutions and who will require employment once they finish their studies.**

## 8.4 Empowerment of women

In many societies, women are often marginalized and denied access to educational, social and political opportunities and fulfillment. The information from the census will provide information on women such as:

- a. The total number of women and their distribution across the country.**
- b. Their level of education, employment and access to other social amenities.**
- c. The number of women who are heads of households.**

## 8.5 Housing

For the country to develop effective housing policies and to improve the availability of houses and amenities, it is necessary to assess the current housing conditions and amenities such as:

- a. Housing stock and condition:** The types of housing units where people reside and type of materials used in building these houses.
- b. Electricity:** The number of households with access to electricity and other sources of energy.
- c. Water supply:** The proportion of households or people with access to safe drinking water and how many still require provision of clean water.
- d. Sanitation:** Existing sanitary conditions and the need for future improvement.

## 8.6 Other uses of census data

Data collected from the census can also be used for the following purposes:

- a. Design and assessment of development programmes.**
- b. Production, marketing and investment:** The private sector needs census data to plan its production, marketing and investment decisions in the country.

# 9. CENSUS PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

The data collection part of the census (the enumeration) is preceded by a long chain of preparatory activities which pave the way for the successful implementation of a census. Some of the major activities that are being, or have already been carried out before the 2014 Census are:

## 9.1 Enumeration Area Demarcation (mapping)

This stage entails mapping the whole country along existing administrative boundaries and dividing the Wards and Village Tracts into small land areas called Census Enumeration Areas. One enumeration area can be conveniently covered by one interviewer during the census period (of 12 days). The enumeration areas prevent the omissions or overlaps of land areas by census interviewers.

## 9.2. Pilot census

To ensure that logistics are workable and that the Census questions are both understood and accepted by the respondents, a pilot census was conducted (between the 30th March and the 10th April 2013) in 14 Village Tracts and 6 Wards spread across the country. The results provided useful information for the final planning of the actual census.

## 9.3. Soliciting the support of leaders and the general public (Advocacy/Publicity)

In order to carry out a credible and reliable population census, leaders at all levels as



well as the general public need to be part of raising awareness and understanding of the census process, as well as know how they can support the census. This support is encouraged through a well-planned advocacy and public awareness campaign which aims to:

- a. alert policy makers, leaders and the general public about the importance and features of the census
- b. build understanding of the importance of everyone's participation in the census to enable data to give a clear and accurate picture of people in Myanmar.
- c. emphasize different roles that community leaders, volunteers and representatives of associations/organizations can play in facilitating the success of the census
- d. solicit the cooperation and participation of the general public
- e. ensure inclusiveness in the process, especially a diverse and broad representation in the census committees that are being set up at different administrative levels (union, state/division, district, township, ward/village tract)





# 10. YOUR ROLE AS A LEADER OR AN INDIVIDUAL



Everybody has an important role to play in order to conduct a successful 2014 Myanmar Census. The role of leaders is especially important. Such people include Members of Parliament, Political Leaders, Religious Leaders, Ethnic Leaders, State/Regional Leaders, District Leaders, Township Leaders, Ward/Village Tract Leaders, Community Leaders, NGOs, Women Representatives, Youth Leaders, etc.

The entire country will benefit from an accurate census. For this reason, both census officials and all leaders should contribute to the success of the census by carrying out the following specific roles:

- a. Know the correct facts and information about the census so as to convey them to the general public.**
- b. Create general awareness of the census among the population, communities, families and friends. Everyone's participation is what counts in a census.**
- c. Make people understand the census information and help them to overcome any kind of misconceptions or myths about the census process.**
- d. Answer all census-related questions asked by either journalists, members of the general public or any other person who may ask. You will find the answers to most questions in this handbook or in the publication "frequently asked questions and answers."**
- e. Serve as good example/role model for the accuracy, reliability and acceptability of the census process.**

Whenever you receive a question that you cannot answer, please contact the Census Officer at the State/Region, District or Township level or the Census Office in Naypyitaw for clarification. A delayed but correct answer is always better than guessing and giving the wrong answer. Incorrect information has a tendency to spread, thus making process of correcting it much more difficult.



**The entire country will benefit from an accurate census.**

*The census team have produced 170,000 maps to outline all the enumeration areas needed to conduct the census in 2014.*

*©UNFPA Myanmar/Pyay Kyaw Myint*

## 11. THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA



▲ Khaing Khaing Soe and her team will process all the census data. ©UNFPA Myanmar/Pyaw Kyaw Myint

**The Census Offices will work very closely with the media.**

Journalists, Information and Public Relations Officers and other media representatives are “Friends of the 2014 Myanmar Census”. The role of media representatives and other communication channels are vital in order to provide the general public with correct and relevant information about everything related to the different stages of the census process.

The Census Offices will work very closely with the media and create effective working relation with journalists. The census officers and key census personnel should:

- a. Inform local, national and international media about key census activities**
- b. Invite media to cover such activities**
- c. Be available for interviews and provide accurate and timely information**

## 12. QUESTIONS INCLUDED IN THE 2014 MYANMAR CENSUS



During the census, the interviewers will ask some questions which the respondents may think are irrelevant and/or unnecessary. There is, however, a good reason for the inclusion of every single question in the census, and therefore accurate answers to all the questions are important.

Here follows a brief attempt to list most of the questions to be asked and the reasons why these questions are included in the census questionnaire.



### **a. Name**

The names of individuals are not used during the census data analysis or linked to any of the statistics, however, names are captured to make sure that, in the process of enumeration, no member of the household is omitted or enumerated twice. The name also serves the purpose of verification of persons enumerated should the need arise, for example if a supervisor is making quality control checks.

### **b. Sex**

This determines the proportion of males and females in the population. It is very important, for example, to see how women's circumstances compare with those of men in various aspects of development or life. It is also important to be able to analyze gender difference within each category. A census enables statistically valid research to be done after the results are out.

### **c. Age**

The age structure determines the needs of the population by age group and the potential for population growth. Having information about the country's age structure is necessary for policy formulation regarding the entire population and the requirements of age-specific groups. For example: by knowing the number of children aged 5 years old or below, the government can estimate how many schools, classrooms and teachers that will be needed within the next few years.

### **d. Relationship to Head of Household**

Relationship of every household member to the household head is important as it is used, for example, to determine family size and composition. It is always useful to establish how family structures and definitions are evolving and how they compare across the country.

### **e. Marital status**

Marital status is significant because it has a strong relationship with the level of fertility. Generally speaking, the level of fertility declines with delayed marriage. Studies in most countries show that married women have higher fertility rates compared to women who never get married. The age of a woman when she has her first child also has a significant influence on fertility. If a woman has her first child at the age of 30, she is likely to have fewer children than if she had her first child at the age of 20.

### **f. Religion**

Religion plays a major role in determining the moral code, behavior and cultural traditions of members of any society. Many people feel that they can better express their own identity through stating their religion. Religious beliefs can have far-reaching implications as far as demographic indicators, cultural issues and beliefs are concerned.

### **g. Ethnicity**

Ethnicity of an individual can define culture and behavior of a person and can play differing roles in how some people are shaped and influenced in society. To be able to understand why in some areas the demographic indicators are higher or lower than another area, one has to understand the norms of the people based on ethnicity. Information on ethnicity can also be used in research to further understand how different groups of people are evolving, especially where marriages, migration, education, work and other factors bring different ethnicities into close proximity and may lead to changing perceptions and self-identifications, understandings and new definitions of groupings.

## **h. Disability**

Information collected from this question will provide statistics on the number, the distribution (by age, geographic location, etc.,) and the needs of persons with disabilities. These numbers are useful for planning and implementing public policies and services for disabled people.

## **i. Migration questions**

(Township of birth, usual and previous residence, as well as reason for movement) The answers to these questions will provide information about the extent and type of internal migration, particularly between rural and urban parts of the country. This is particularly important in Myanmar today for planning for future population growth as well as service and infrastructure needs in local areas.

## **j. Education questions**

The information collected from these questions will be useful for assessing the literacy rate and the educational needs of the population as a whole, in different administrative units, and in different age groups. The census will be used to assess and later to remedy the differences if any in educational status between men and women and between the populations in different ethnic groups and areas of the country.

## **k. Economic activity status**

The census will try to measure the size and composition of the labour force as well as the rates of employment and unemployment. Questions on main economic activity in the period one year before the census will enable patterns of annual employment to be measured. The responses to the questions on occupation and industry will reveal the major economic activities of the population, analyzed by sex, age, level of education, etc., hence

giving the government an idea about the role of different sectors of the economy.

## **l. Housing and amenities questions**

The answers to housing questions will show the proportion of the population living in conventional housing and also reflects the quality of housing. The questions will generate data on the housing facilities and amenities (covering source of lighting and water, and type of cooking fuel and waste disposal) that are available to the people of Myanmar and the socio-economic conditions of the households. This information will assist the government in estimating the social and economic needs of the population and in identifying areas where housing conditions are poor and in need of improvement.

## **m. Deaths in the household during the last 12 months**

This information will give estimates about the adult mortality rate and, in particular, the mortality of women resulting from pregnancy and childbirth. This information is key to improving the health facilities across the country.

## **n. Myanmar people living outside the country**

Information will be collected on the number and characteristics of people who were previously living in households in Myanmar but who have since moved to other countries or are working in other countries. This information will be used to estimate the potential numbers of Myanmar citizens who may be returning in the future to what is now a more open country. It will also be useful in being able to research scientifically the reasons why people leave the country, as well as estimate needs for services upon their return.

## 13. PUBLICATION OF RESULTS



The processing, analysis and dissemination of the 2014 Census will be undertaken using scanners, computers and skilled manpower. The results of the census are planned to be released in three phases:

- **Preliminary Results in August 2014**
- **Main Results in first quarter of 2015**
- **Analytical Reports from November, 2015 onwards**

The results will be released to the Government, civil society organizations, development partners, other stakeholders and the public. Information on the results of the census is to be used by and for everybody.

## 14. CONCLUSION

A census is a complex and massive exercise. While the Government, development partners and the census officers are doing their best to ensure that the exercise goes on smoothly, the actual success of the census depends wholly on the people themselves. If everybody understands the reasons for and benefits of carrying out the census, they are more motivated to participate fully and co-operate in providing accurate information.

As implementer of the census, the Ministry of Immigration and Population requests that everybody in every part of Myanmar, take part and facilitate the work of the enumerators during the census period. Let us make the 2014 Myanmar Census an occasion when we do the best we can for our country and for our future generations. A successful census will provide the country with robust and accurate statistical data that are vital for moving this great country forward to lasting and inclusive socio-economic development.



▲ Khin Thida Myint, supervisor of 5 enumerators during the pilot census  
©UNFPA Myanmar/Pyay Kyaw Myint



# 15. THE 2014 MYANMAR CENSUS IN NUMBERS



- **The budget for the census is approximately USD 60million.**  
The Government is committing USD15million and UNFPA USD 5million for technical assistance and capacity building. Donor countries such as Australia, Finland, Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Switzerland have pledged a total of USD 41million. Others, including Canada, EU, Japan and Italy, are also considering support.
- **Estimated total number of Census staff in the field: 140,000**  
This estimate includes approximately 100,000 enumerators, 20,000 supervisors or team leaders and 5,000 trainers at national and regional levels.
- So far, the Census process has involved **professionals from over 15 countries.**
- The Census mapping section will produce approximately **170,000 different Census maps.**
- **Myanmar has been divided into about 100,000 Enumeration Areas (EAs).** These are the areas to be covered by each interviewer during the census period. Detailed maps of all the EAs will be available during enumeration.
- The 2014 **Census questionnaire contains around 41 questions** and is available in Myanmar and English languages. Enumerators, however, will conduct the interview and ask questions in your local language.
- The correct population number of Myanmar will be revealed by the 2014 census.
- The Myanmar population is made up of approximately **11 million households.**



**A NATION-WIDE CENSUS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT  
EVERYONE IN THE COUNTRY IS PART OF IT.**



To find out more information visit:

[www.dop.gov.mm](http://www.dop.gov.mm)

<http://myanmar.unfpa.org/census>

