

The Commodity Chain of the Household: From Survey Design to Policy Planning

Do household definitions matter?

'The household is central to the development process. Not only is the household a production unit but it is also a consumption, social and demographic unit'

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THE ISSUE

What are the consequences of household definition for?

- Data commissioners
- Data collectors
- Data analysts
- Data users
- Policy makers
- Planning / implementing targeted interventions
- Survey respondents

SURVEYS RECENTLY

More variables being added in 'household section': to measure wealth / poverty / access to facilities which influence health

- MDGs
- Poverty reduction
- Asset indicators

More use made of publicly available data

Recognition of importance of society's basic unit as influence upon members' well-being

METHODS

1. Document review (1950-present) Sub-Saharan Africa
2. Key informant in-depth interviews (International)
3. Ground truthing fieldwork (Case studies) : Cognitive & Ethnographic interviews
4. Modelling differences: Female headed households, Household dependency ratios, Asset indices, Household size

RESULTS

Data designers & collectors have: clear ideas about why need something called 'household'
clear aims

clear understanding of household definition

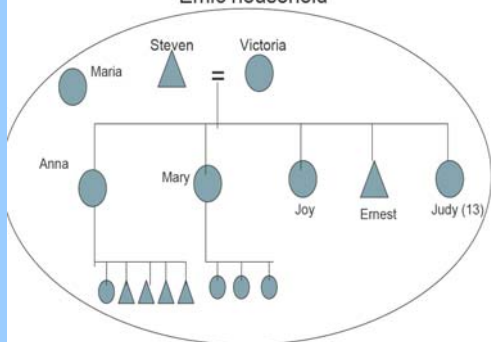
BUT what about analysts / users far removed from collection?

MIGHT: look at definition and assume this is the unit of production, consumption, socialisation central to the development process

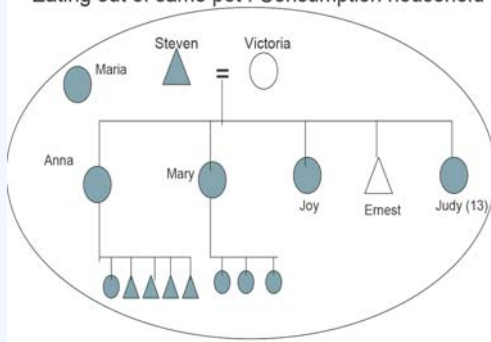
MIGHT: not even look at definition because they assume they know what a household is

Ground truthing fieldwork: Tanzania

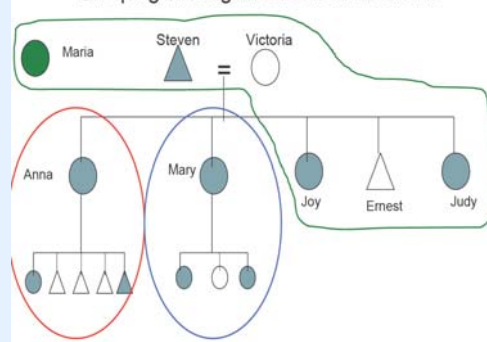
Emic household



Eating out of same pot : Consumption household



Sleeping last night: census households



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