

Introduction

Myanmar has a long tradition of censuses and surveys related to population and housing. The first population census was carried out in 1872 for Lower Myanmar which was the British administration, followed by another one in 1881. The rest of the country was annexed by the British in 1886 and a census was carried out for the first time for the whole country in 1891.

After independence in 1948, the attempt was made to take a census in three stages. The first stage was carried out in 1953 covered 252 towns and the second stage covered 3159 village tracts in 1954. The third stage designed to cover the rest of the country could not be carried out due to unsettled conditions of the country. The first nation-wide census after independence was taken in 1973 and the second in 1983. The third, the 1990 round of censuses, due in 1993 was postponed as the country was preoccupied with the National convention held for reaching a consensus needed for drafting the New constitution of Myanmar.

Trend

The size of population was 28.9 million in 1973 and had grown to 35.3 million in 1983. It was estimated at 40.7 million in 1990.

Population Growth

The average annual intercensal growth rate of population before the second world war (1901-1941) was about 1.14 percent. It was 2.3 percent between 1941 and 1973 and 2.02 percent between

1973 and 1983. The growth rate during the period (1983-90) was estimated at about 1.9 percent.

The urban population increased from 6.4 million in 1973 to 8.6 million in 1983. The proportion urban was 23.6 percent in 1973 and 24.1 percent in 1983. The annual rate of increase of urban population during the decade was 2.47 percent as against the total population growth rate of 2.02. The growth rate during the period (2007-2008) was estimated at about 1.75 percent.

Gender Composition

The gender composition is measured by means of the sex ratio. It is defined as the number of males per hundred females. In both 1973 and 1983 censuses, the gender composition of the population shows an excess of females over males. The sex ratio for 1973 was 98.9 males per hundred females and 98.6 in 1983.

Composition

The age structure of the country reflects a young population. However, the proportion of population below 15 years of age has been declining continuously the two decades from 41.5 percent in 1973 to 38.6 percent in 1983 and 35.0 percent in 1990 as shown in Table.

Table Selected Summary Measures, 1973, 1983, 1991

No.	Summary Measures	1973 Census	1983 Census	1991 PCFS
1.	Household Size	4.97	5.19	5.22
2.	Board Age Group (percent)			
	Less than 15	41.5	38.6	35.0
	15-59	52.5	55.0	57.8
	60+	6.0	6.4	7.2
3.	Median Age (years)			
	Male	18.9	19.9	21.6
	Female	19.3	20.6	23.1
4.	Dependency Ratio	0.90	0.82	0.73
5.	Child Women Ratio(percent)	65.0	54.0	43.0
6.	Sex Ratio	98.9	98.6	95.0
7.	Singulate Mean age at marriage			
	Male	23.8	24.5	26.3
	Female	21.2	22.4	24.5
8.	Marital Status			
	Male			
	Never married	42.6	45.0	46.8
	Married	52.2	50.6	48.9
	Widowed	4.1	3.4	3.3
	Divorced	1.1	1.0	1.0
	Female			
	Never married	37.4	40.0	42.7
	Married	50.8	49.1	45.8
	Widowed	10.0	9.2	9.5
	Divorced	1.8	1.7	2.0

Sources: Myanmar National Report on Population (1994)

The total dependency ratio (number of young and old dependents for every person in the working age group of 15-59) was 0.09 in 1973. It had fallen from 0.90 in 1973 to 0.82 in 1983 and then to 0.73 in 1990. The proportion of working age (15-59) population has increased continuously from 52.5 percent in 1973 to 55.0 percent in 1983 and then to 57.8 percent in 1990.

The 1983 Census

The 1983 census enumerated 34.1 million persons. A post enumeration check indicated that the census missed 0.9 percent of the population in the enumerated areas, or about 300,000 persons.

The population was 24.8 percent urban in 1983 only a fraction of a percent higher than in 1973. Preparatory work such as preparation of area lists and census maps began as early as late 1980. In this census two different questionnaires, long and short were designed so that additional information on education, labour force and fertility be collected on a 20 percent sample basis. The idea behind the preparation of two different questionnaires was to save time, cost and labour and at the same time to collect wider information on social, economic and demographic characteristics. The enumeration of the census took place from 1 to 5 April 1983 on the de-jure basis. Moving population, namely the homeless and the boat dwellers, were enumerated on the last day of enumeration. Enumeration teams were sent to hill tracts and remote areas. Where communication was difficult prior to the census date. In cases where

continuous travelling was necessary, extension of the enumeration period beyond the scheduled date was allowed.

The Immigration and Manpower Department of the Ministry of Home and Religious Affairs was charged with the responsibility of taking the census.

With the help of the Lanzin Youth Central organizing committee enumerators were largely drawn from the Lanzin Youth members, high school and university student, school teachers, some university students and other government employees were recruited as supervisors. Armed Services and People's Police Force personnel also helped in the enumeration field work.

Each enumerator was assigned to cover a census block (enumeration area) consisting of 250 to 400 persons and a supervisor was appointed for every five enumerators on the average. About 170,000 enumerators and 34,000 supervisors were employed in the 1983 census. They all were given intensive training including practical work. A small honorarium was paid to them.

A Post Enumeration Check (PEC) was conducted exactly one year after the census enumeration that is from 1 to 5 April 1984 to evaluate the completeness of the census coverage and the accuracy of its results.

Taking advantage of this second round of independent enumeration some questions relating to housing, fertility and mortality were added to the PEC questionnaire.

The questionnaire were designed in a pre-coded form to facilitate manual processing and data entry. The short form covered 7 questions as listed below.

- (1) Name
- (2) Relationship to head of household
- (3) Sex
- (4) Age
- (5) Marital Status
- (6) Race and
- (7) Religion

Besides these 7 questions, the long form covered 11 additional questions on socio-economic and fertility characteristics. The additional questions in the long form are listed below:

- (1) School attendance
- (2) Highest standard passed
- (3) Literacy
- (4) Occupation
- (5) Industry
- (6) Employment status
- (7) Reason for not working

- (8) Working during last 12 months
- (9) Children ever born alive
- (10) Children still living and
- (11) Date of birth of last child

Analysis

Coverage

The Union of Myanmar covers 261227.848 square miles (676577.5 square kilometer) and consists of 7 States and 7 Divisions. Under 14 States and Divisions there are 314 townships. Again under 314 townships there are 288 towns, 2190 wards and 13756 village tracts. In carrying out the field enumeration in 1983, all the 2190 wards of 288 towns representing total urban area were fully covered. Out of the total of 13756 village tracts, 12814 were completely covered, 112 were partially covered and 830 were uncovered for security reasons. Total enumerates population represents 96.6 percent of total population.

Population Censuses in Myanmar

Myanmar has long tradition of carrying out decennial censuses. The last two nation wide censuses were taken in 1973 and 1983. A census was due in 1993, but it was postponed and could not be conducted up to date. In the absence of population censuses,

population projection is being used for forecasting population for certain specific years to properly implement social and economic plans.

Acoording to the statistics of 11-7-2008, the population of Myanmar is 57.5 million.

