

## **Main difference between VLSS 1992/1993, VLSS 1997/1998 and VHLSS 2001/2002**

### **1. General characteristics**

In past ten years, GSO have carried out three 3 national living standard surveys. The first Vietnam Living Standards Survey (VLSS) was carried out in 1992-93 by the State Planning Committee and the General Statistics Office, with financial contributions from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and technical assistance from the World Bank. The survey included a household survey, a community survey, and a market price survey. The household survey covered household size and composition, health, anthropometric measures of nutrition, education, housing characteristics, migration, employment, non-farm enterprises, agriculture, other income, expenditure and food consumption, ownership of consumer durables, and savings and credit. The household questionnaire was approximately 110 pages long and included about 1000 questions. The sample was selected in three stages using data from the 1989 Population Census. First, 120 villages and 30 urban precincts were selected at random, with probabilities proportional to the population. Then two rural hamlets or urban blocks were selected in each selected village/precinct. Finally, 16 households were selected in each selected hamlet/block, making a total sample of 4800 households (see SPC/GSO, 1994 for more details). The sample was designed to be representative at the level of the seven geographic regions of Vietnam. The survey was implemented between October 1992 and October 1993. Because the bulk of the data collection took place in 1993, we will refer to it as the 1993 VLSS.

The second Vietnam Living Standards Survey was conducted in 1997-98 by the General Statistics Office, with financial support from the UNDP and SIDA and technical assistance from the World Bank. Like the 1993 VLSS, the survey included a household survey, a community survey, and a market price survey,

though a survey of health centers was added. The household questionnaire covers the same topics as the 1993 VLSS, with only slight changes in the questions and format. The household sample includes most of the households from the 1993 VLSS, as well as additional households to provide better coverage of urban areas and the Central Highlands<sup>1</sup>. The sample contains 6000 households and is representative for each of ten strata, the rural areas of the seven geographic regions and three urban strata (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, other cities, and towns). The data collection began in December 1997 and was completed in December 1998. We will refer to this survey as the 1998 VLSS.

The Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey (VHLSS) was carried out in 2002 by the General Statistics Office with financial support from the Japanese Bank for International Cooperation and technical assistance from the World Bank. The VHLSS has two versions: a small questionnaire (36 pages) administered to about 60,000 households and a larger questionnaire (43 pages) administered to a smaller sample of about 15,000. The larger questionnaire has an expenditure module, allowing calculation of more reliable expenditure-based estimates of living standards. In this analysis, we use the data from the second version because we need expenditure data for comparability with the two VLSS surveys. The larger VHLSS questionnaire is similar to the VLSS questionnaire except that some modules are not included (anthropometrics, migration, and savings and credit) and most of the other modules are simplified. For example, the VHLSS does not collect crop-level information on seed, fertilizer, and other input costs, so it is not possible to calculate net income from each crop. Beside that, household questionnaire in VHLSS 2002 are simplified as compared with previous ones.

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<sup>1</sup> Because the 1993 VLSS sample was designed to be proportional to the population, the sample for the sparsely populated Central Highlands was just 128 households. Two clusters from the 1993 VLSS sample in the Red River Delta were dropped and 1290 households were added.

However, household questionnaire in VHLSS 2002 has very good advantage in which it combines main sections of two survey: Household economic survey and household living standards survey. Indicators (data need to be collected) in VHLSS 2002 is simplified and easily understandable; enumerators do not need make complicated calculation. On the other hand, indicators in VHLSS is still compatible with previous survey's

**Summarizes the different characteristics across the three household surveys.**

Name	Period of data collection	Sample size	Length of the household questionnaire	Lowest level of representativeness	Types of data collected
1993 Vietnam Living Standards Survey	1992-1993	4800	110 pages	Seven regions	Household member characteristics, education, health, employment, migration, housing, fertility, agriculture, non-farm self-employment, expenditure, assets, other income, and savings and credit.
1998 Vietnam Living Standards Survey	1997-1998	6000	110 pages	Ten strata (7 rural regions and 3 types of urban areas)	Almost identical content and structure as the 1992-93 VLSS.
2002 Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey	2002	15,000	43 pages	Urban and rural areas of eight regions	Similar to VLSS but no migration, anthropometrics, savings, or credit modules. Other modules simplified
		75,000	36 pages	61 provinces	Similar to small-sample VHLSS but no expenditure module.

## **2. Difference between Expenditure Section VHLSS 2002 and VLSS 1998**

As mentioned above, there are many differences between VLSS 1998 household questionnaire and VHLSS 2002 household questionnaire. We can see those differences by looking questionnaires. In all part of questionnaire, Expenditure Section is quite complicated and very important. In this part, we would like to introduce main differences in expenditure between household survey in VLSS 1998 and VHLSS 2002

### **2.1 Expenditure on food and drinks**

In both VLSS 1998 and VHLSS 2002, expenditure section is divided into two parts: **Expenditure on food and drinks** during holidays (mainly in Tet holiday) and daily expenditure on food and drinks. However, VLSS 1998 asked information of 18 food and drinks in Tet holiday against 24 items in VHLSS. Those differences are sourced from some items in VLSS1998 are divided into smaller and detail items

For example, in VLSS 1998, carabeef and beef are categorized into one item but in VHLSS2002 carabeef and beef are separated to two different items. VHLSS 2002 adds “ processed meat” but it is not exist in VLSS 1998 questionnaire. Similarly, VHLSS 2002 asked about expenditure on “beverages” and “bottled and canned refreshment”, and those items also is not included in VLSS1998.

Similar to daily expenditure on food and drink, VLSS 1998 asked information about 45 items against 58 items in VHLSS 2002.

### **2. Expenditure on non-food and non-drink**

In this Section, VLSS 1998 is also different from VHLSS 2002. The first difference is reference period. In VLSS 1998, question on “ value of (...) household buy or exchange in last 4 weeks”. In VHLSS 2002, reference period is “

last 12 month”, but the questions are “How many months did you buy in last 12 months” and “how much did you buy per month”. They are two ways to collect information about expenditure.

Beside that, items in expenditure on daily consumption in two survey is also different. VLSS 1998 collected information about 15 items against 21 items in VHLSS 2002.

### **3. Annual Expenditure**

For annual expenditure on non-food and non-drink, VLSS 1998 collected information about 51 items, while VHLSS 2002 collected information about 48 items. Both VLSS 1998 and VHLSS 2002 asked data on annual non food expenditure in past 12 months.

### **4. Durable Goods**

The design of questionnaire in two surveys (VLSS 1998 and VHLSS 2002) to collect information about durable goods shows two important changes. First, VHLSS 2002 collected information about many primary goods which are different from durable goods, while VLSS 1998 only collected information about expenditure on durable goods (VLSS 1998 also collected information on fixed assets, but in particular Section). Second, VHLSS 2002 added two questions more. First question is purpose of fixed assets: just for living, just for production or for both living and production; and the second question (if this goods is for both purposes) is “time production for production in last 12 months.