

UW Global Health Data Toolkit Working Group

CRF Variable Naming Conventions

A. Purpose

Standardized practices for variable naming will improve the efficiency of managing large data projects. Additionally, common variable names across KRP studies will allow for analyses from multiple projects.

B. Scope

These procedures apply to all variables originating from CRFs established and validated by the CRF Working Group.

C. Variable coding and names guidelines

- o General rules
 - Only lowercase letters
 - Descriptive variable names
 - Example: Outcome of birth => birthoutcome
 - Up to 26 characters long
 - For REDCap compatibility
 - Group name and variable name do not exceed 32 characters if using ODK and odkmeta
 - odkmeta generates new concatenated variable name (e.g. *groupnamevarname*)
- o CRF prefixes
 - Prefix (instead of suffix) should indicate the CRF from which variable's questionnaire item originates
 - All variables should contain a prefix
 - Prefixes should contain a 2 character CRF name followed by underscore
 - Example: Family planning CRF => fp_
 - Prefixes will be stripped for analysis
 - No numbers as first or last character
- o Common variable roots
 - For CRF items that end in "other" and/or "specific", coding should be harmonious across variables
 - Other => "oth" then other specific => "othsp"
 - Example: If a respondent reports a drug regimen not listed among the standard CRF options for the variable "drugreg" => "drugregoth" (to indicate they have an unlisted drug regimen) => "drugregothsp" (to indicate in text the drug regimen)
 - Diad naming
 - Partners (or mother-baby pairs) should be coded to indicate if the value is attributed to the primary respondent or their study counterpart
 - o Example: "partner"- prefix for partner info to be linked in Stata and "inf"- for infant data
 - o Other questions asked about the partner (ie is your partner circumcised?) labeled differently from partner data that is ascertained from the partner and merged into primary participants record