AIMS

Learning from Clients:
Assessment Tools for Microfinance Practitioners

Draft Manual

January 2000

Submitted to:
Monique Cohen, Ph.D.
Office of Microenterprise Development
Global Bureau, USAID

Submitted by:
The SEEP Network
Washington, D.C.

The AIMS Impact Tools Help Desk and Information Exchange

impacttools@msi-inc.com

This manual is a work in progress. We are both (1) available to assist you with any questions you may have about using the tools and (2) interested in your feedback and experience about applying the tools to your programs. To facilitate this exchange, we have created a help desk that you can contact by sending an e-mail to **impacttools@msi-inc.com**. As you use the tools, your feedback will help us improve the manual over time. We welcome all comments and recommendations.

What would be useful to practitioners is to learn how you adapt the tools to meet your organizational needs. Because this manual provides step-by-step guidance, we would like to learn about the myriad variations that will undoubtedly evolve from the use of these tools. The way you adapt the tools for use will help guide us in making future revisions to the manual.

We look forward to working with you and other practitioners in this exciting arena.

Learning from Clients:

Assessment Tools for Microfinance Practitioners

Draft Manual

The SEEP Network

Contributors:
Candace Nelson, Managing Editor
Friend of SEEP

Barbara MkNelly
Freedom from Hunger

Carter Garber
Friend of SEEP

Elaine Edgcomb
The Aspen Institute

Nancy Horn
Friend of SEEP

Gary Gaile
University of Colorado

Karen Lippold
Management Systems International

The Small Enterprise Education and Promotion Network
Washington, D.C.

Learning from Clients
Assessment Tools for Microfinance Practitioners
Manual

Contents

Foreword

This tools manual, *Learning from Clients: Assessment Tools for Microfinance Practitioners,* has been a long time coming. We think it is worth the wait. As is obvious by its sheer size, this manual contains a wealth of material to guide those seeking to apply the impact assessment tools it describes. But the uniqueness and real strength of the tools lie in the vision—shared by donors, evaluation researchers, and practitioners—that guided their development. A sometimes disparate group, represented by USAID, the AIMS (Assessing the Impact of Microenterprise Services) Project team, and the Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network, came together to agree that the field needed a mid-range approach to impact assessment that is cost-effective, useful, and credible. The tools and their use, described in great detail in this manual, are the outcome of that inspirational collaboration.

At its inception in 1995, USAID's AIMS Project was a minority voice defending the value of impact assessment in microfinance. Improving institutional performance, gaining access to capital markets, and achieving scale are some of the themes that eclipsed impact assessment at that time. Five years later, we are pleased to report a marked shift in attention to and interest in understanding the actual impact that microfinance programs are having on clients. The AIMS Project has been actively cultivating this renewed focus on clients through evaluation-related research that spans a wide range of approaches—from "high tech," large-scale, longitudinal studies in three continents to the practitioner-friendly tools described in this manual.

These tools represent a breakthrough of sorts. Formerly, the discourse on impact assessment in microfinance was primarily between the donors and policymakers and the researchers. The former funded them; the latter did them. The practitioners' role was largely passive. Most impact assessments were marked by a dichotomy: large scale, rigorous, and costly or low cost, methodologically weak, and of questionable validity. Seeking to fill a gap in the territory of middle ground, the AIMS Project has brought practitioners to the table to articulate their needs and has encouraged researchers to adapt their methods to go "down market."

Today, impact assessment is no longer peripheral to the field of microenterprise development. The audience is the industry broadly defined—practitioners, donors, policymakers, and researchers. Dual goals are driving the growing interest in the new world of impact assessment in microfinance—traditional accountability to donors and other stakeholders on the one hand, and improved program management (including services and products) on the other. As recipients of grant funds, microfinance institutions (MFIs) often are required to prove that their programs are contributing to the donors' strategic objectives and that the funds have been "well spent." At the same time, practitioners' interest in ensuring that their products and services are responsive to clients' needs indicates a management purpose for impact assessments. The AIMS tools meet both of these objectives.

It is important to take note of the lengthy and in-depth process of consultation and field testing, reflection, and improvement that has led to the product contained in this manual. The process was led by a core team of SEEP Network private voluntary organization (PVO) practitioners. It was supplemented by the guidance of AIMS researchers and USAID, and it engaged nongovernmental organization (NGO) microfinance implementers in six sites around the world—as testers, trainees, and early users. Out of this pooling of diverse experience, skills, and sheer hard work has emerged a document that offers several critical advances in the practice of mid-range impact assessment:

- Detailed guidance—written by and for practitioners—for planning and implementing impact assessments and for analyzing all data generated;
- A coherent set of quantitative and qualitative tools that address the most common hypotheses that undergird microfinance programs;
- Clear explanations of indicators and measures used, along with supplementary discussions of additional sets of potential interest to individual users, and
- Methods that provide information on impact and client satisfaction and that result in specific feedback for program improvement.

In short, the manual offers practical, detailed, step-by-step guidance to interested and committed organizations willing to invest staff time and a moderate amount of financial resources to gain a deeper understanding of their programs. What it does not purport to be is easy. But for readers willing to invest their intelligence and energies, the manual can offer significant rewards. One early collaborator, the *Organizacion de Desarrollo Empresarial Femenino* (ODEF), for example, was able to document that its existing clients had significantly larger sales volumes, profits, and savings than those just entering the program, a result that increases with time spent in the program. Having also identified divergence between staff assumptions about program efficacy and those of clients, the organization introduced new loan products (emergency loans and fixed asset loans), along with more attractive policies and procedures (reduction in fees, more flexible terms and conditions) aimed at increasing client loyalty to the program.

In closing, we acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of the many talented individuals who have been involved in this effort, particularly those from the SEEP Network's Evaluation Working Group who designed the tools package and implementation protocols. We also acknowledge those from the microfinance institutions in Honduras, Mali, Bolivia, Peru, the Philippines, and Eastern Europe who have used them and advised on their improvement; those individuals include Helen Todd (CASHPOR), Iris Lanao (FINCA in Peru), Miguel Navarro (ODEF in Honduras), Carmen Velasco (ProMujer in Bolivia), and Madame Ballo (Kafo Jiginiew in Mali), as well as their staff who spent long hours in the field with us. Carolyn Barnes of Management Systems International (MSI) has served as a faithful reader and advisor to the manual's writing team. Her expertise and objective insights have improved the quality of this product. Finally, our sincere thanks go to USAID missions in Peru and ENE for their financial and logistical support of our efforts to apply these tools. Creating this manual has truly been a global endeavor, combining some of the best talent working on impact issues in the microenterprise field today.

We encourage future users to add their experiences to this endeavor, and because we expect the manual to serve as a template to be adapted by others, we welcome new versions of the tools, as well as recommendations for improvement. We expect that learning about impact assessment in the microfinance field will accelerate as others build upon the work offered here; and with it will come greater insight about the outcomes of microenterprise development as practiced today, as well as how to improve it. Together, let us use this fine work to stimulate further initiatives in impact assessment, and let us use the results to deliver improved services to our customers—the poor, who deserve only the best.

Elaine Edgcomb
The Aspen Institute (former Executive Director of the SEEP Network)

Monique Cohen
USAID

Chapter 1

Introduction

- Why assess impact?

- Why do market research?

- Determining impact

- The challenge of practitioner-led impact assessment

- The SEEP approach

- The tools

- Using the tools

Introduction

Learning from Clients: Assessment Tools for Microfinance Practitioners is a manual on evaluation. Its core is a set of five assessment tools that practitioners can use to gather information about their programs—information that is useful for impact assessment and market research. Accompanying the tools are step-by-step instructions for using them, starting with initial preparations and ending with data analysis. The manual was developed by the SEEP Network as part of the PVO (private voluntary organization) and NGO (nongovernmental organization) component of the larger AIMS (Assessing the Impact of Microenterprise Services) project funded by USAID.[1] It was developed by and for practitioners and, as such, responds to the particular needs and challenges they face in determining how their programs and services are affecting clients.

Why Assess Impact?

One of the first challenges is to answer the basic question: Why do impact evaluation? In the context of the rapid growth and evolution of the microfinance industry, this question is not a simple one, and its answer has not always been obvious. Some leaders in microfinance, including donors, have argued that specific efforts to measure impact are *not* necessary because microfinance programs are self-evaluating. This line of thinking contends that the success of any program is best measured by its continued growth and its ability to keep clients, and by the clients' ability to repay their loans. If clients keep coming back, they value the program; and if the program continues to serve clients efficiently and profitably, it obviously is doing a good job.

Yet, accepting program performance and growth as proxies for impact probably tells us more about the lender than it does the borrower. Similarly, the current industry search for "best practices" is oriented toward institutional performance rather than the best possible outcomes for poor families. Those interested in poverty alleviation and development need to know what difference their programs are making and for whom. To ensure progress toward their overall goal, practitioners need answers to the following four questions:

- Who are the program's clients?

---

[1] The Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network is an association of more than forty U.S. and Canadian NGOs that work with hundreds of local organizations throughout the South on microenterprise development. SEEP engages in research, documentation, and training activities aimed at improving member practice. Since its inception, SEEP has focused on monitoring and evaluation issues as a critical part of its program; its Evaluation Working Group provides the intellectual energy for SEEP's work under AIMS. Other partners to the AIMS Project are Management Systems International, Harvard Institute for International Development, and the University of Missouri.

- Are clients benefiting from participation in the program?

- When does impact occur?

- Where does impact occur? For the individual? In the enterprise? In the family/household? In the community?
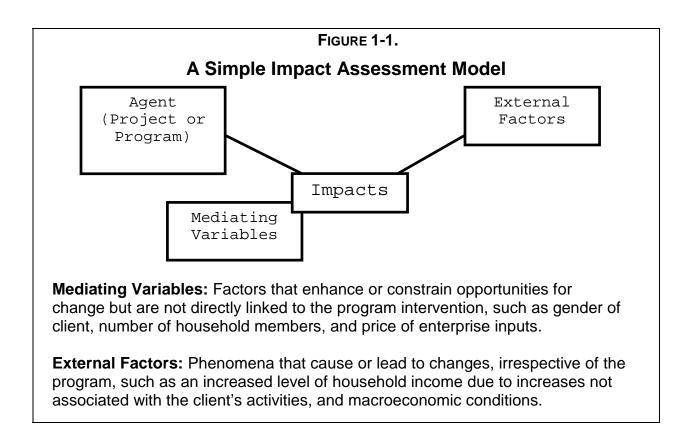
Why Do Market Research?

Adding spice to an old debate, an emerging interest in understanding clients and their needs has been stimulated by a commercial concern for the bottom line. Today, microfinance institutions (MFIs) are businesses that, in several countries, are competing with others for the same clients. Although programs have long realized the financial benefits of holding onto existing clients, they no longer can take for granted their ability to do so. As a result, MFIs are interested in market research that will help them better understand what their clients need and how to best serve them—to keep existing clients and attract new ones. By looking at client satisfaction and outcomes with a strong understanding of client characteristics, the SEEP approach responds to this emerging interest by building on an NGO tradition of participatory development and practitioners' ability to listen and learn from clients. These elements of market research have the dual goals of proving program effects and improving program services.

Determining Impact

Having answered the question, "Why impact assessment?" it is critical to clarify the meaning of "impact." For our purposes, this concept consists of two interwoven threads: One obviously is the changes that occur in clients' lives, their enterprises, their families/households, and their communities. But these changes alone cannot be posited as impact. The second thread is the extent to which the identified changes are related to clients' participation in the microfinance program. Establishing impact essentially is making a credible case that the program led to the observed or stated changes, meaning that the changes are *more likely* to occur *with* program participation than without program participation. It does not imply that the changes always occur from program participation. Rather, it increases the probability that the changes will occur (Rossi, 1989).

The type of change we are looking for can occur for multiple reasons, many of which are *not* related to program interventions. Figure 1-1, A Simple Impact Assessment Model, shows how these factors can influence program impact.

FIGURE 1-1.

A Simple Impact Assessment Model

Mediating Variables: Factors that enhance or constrain opportunities for change but are not directly linked to the program intervention, such as gender of client, number of household members, and price of enterprise inputs.

External Factors: Phenomena that cause or lead to changes, irrespective of the program, such as an increased level of household income due to increases not associated with the client's activities, and macroeconomic conditions.

The Challenge of Practitioner-led Impact Assessment

The simple model in figure 1-1 clearly highlights the challenges of carrying out an evaluation that credibly links change to the program. Accomplishing this goal requires meeting established standards of evaluation practice, which in the past, have proved problematic for practitioners.

First, impact assessments are expensive and require a significant investment of staff time. They also require skills that are not always available within the organization. As a result, evaluations often do not stand up to any rigorous review by outsiders. Sample sizes have been too small or not well selected, survey questions have been poorly worded, simple steps to ensure objectivity have not been used, and analyses often do not incorporate statistical measures. When planning an impact evaluation, it is tempting to seek to learn as much as possible, but the resulting lack of focus often makes the information collected less useful.

Responding to all of these challenges in a way that would meet the high standards of academic research is beyond the reach of most practitioners. Their challenge is to find an acceptable balance between the quality (credible, objective, valid, and thorough) of an impact assessment and its cost (measured by time, financial resources, and expertise). This task is the one that the SEEP Network took on in designing the tools in this manual. In presenting them here, the SEEP team has tried to convey the basic standard of evaluation practice to adequately guide the readers and users of the tools.

The SEEP Approach

Three concepts underlie the SEEP approach and the process behind the approach.

Concepts Underlying the Approach

At the time the SEEP Network began this work in 1996, it took an approach with three underlying concepts: (1) the impact assessment must be relevant, (2) the evaluation must be "do-able," and (3) the approach must address the evaluation's challenges.

1. The Impact Assessment Must Be Relevant

The first concept demands that the impact assessment must be relevant to what practitioners want and need to know. SEEP believes that two basic questions define the desired relevance:

- What is the effect, or impact, of program services on their clients?
- How can the program be improved?

In short, practitioners want to *prove* the value of their intervention, and they want to *improve* the performance of their programs.[2] This definition of relevance has led SEEP to combine strong elements of classic impact assessment with a market research component.

2. The Evaluation Must Be "Do-able"

The second guiding concept focuses on the "do-ability" of the evaluation. SEEP is committed to an overall approach that offers simple and cost-effective strategies for busy and cost-conscious practitioners. To meet this goal, the SEEP team looked for ways to create a process that practitioners can manage in terms of time and other resources, yet that yields relevant results. Ever mindful of this goal, a key decision was to use a cross-sectional design for the survey—a one-time comparison between clients and a comparison group that is simpler, cheaper, and faster than the more rigorous longitudinal study. The team made many such decisions that respond to the overall goal of balancing feasibility of implementation with credibility of results.

---

[2] It is impossible to definitively *prove* impact. Rather, the goal is to present a credible case showing that the changes are associated with program participation. When used in this manual, the word *prove* is a code word for that linkage.

3. The Approach Must Address the Evaluation's Challenges

The third concept is that the approach must address the principal challenges to practitioner-led evaluation: focus, skills, objectivity, and attribution. SEEP has addressed each of these challenges, balancing quality and costs, as outlined below.

Focus: To ensure a focus on the most important issues of impact assessment, SEEP convened a diverse group of its member agencies to select a set of hypotheses that reflects their priorities. The tools are designed to test only these hypotheses.

Skills: Before carrying out the evaluation, staff undergo intensive training and are closely supervised during the event.

Objectivity: Four factors in the approach ensure objectivity: (1) external facilitators train and closely supervise the evaluation team, (2) program staff carry out the evaluation but do not interview those clients with whom they work directly, (3) random sampling is used to select sites and clients for the evaluation, and (4) all data is double-checked both in the field and again before analysis.

Attribution: The approach allows users to develop credible associations between what they have done and the results they perceive, rather than to attempt to prove causality. A comparison group of incoming clients *who have not received program services* lends greater credibility to the results.

Some will contend that these steps are not sufficient to guarantee objectivity, ensure quality data collection, or link inputs with results. But based on what practitioners need from an evaluation and how they use its results, AIMS/SEEP accept some basic differences between a "scientific" assessment and one that is feasible for practitioners to implement and learn from (summarized in Figure 1-2, Scientific vs. Practitioner Assessment).

FIGURE 1-2.
Scientific vs. Practitioner Assessment

Scientific Assessment	Practitioner Assessment
Attribution	Credible association
Rigor	Consistent, coherent
Controls	Comparison
Complex	Simple

The Process Behind the Approach

The first step in designing an evaluation approach by and for practitioners was to convene members of the SEEP Network to determine the practitioners' needs and priorities for evaluation tools. This evaluation working group debated the purposes of a practitioner-led assessment, its focus, and its necessary characteristics. Working with AIMS researchers and the conceptual model of the family/household economic portfolio (see chapter 2), members achieved consensus on hypotheses and related indicators that would serve as the basis for the tools design. Many of the conceptual underpinnings outlined above result from their experience and contributions.

A smaller design team, composed of staff from Opportunity International, Freedom from Hunger, and the SEEP Network, developed drafts of both quantitative and qualitative tools, which were vetted through SEEP's evaluation working group. The design team eventually selected a set of five tools: Impact Survey, Client Exit Survey, Loan Use Strategies Over Time, Client Satisfaction interview, and Client Empowerment interview.

Finally, the tools were tested in two sites: with the ODEF (*Organizacion de Desarrollo Empresarial Femenino*) in Honduras in September 1997 and with Kafo Jiginiew in Mali in March 1998. Reports from these two field tests are available from the AIMS project.[3] The tools underwent significant revisions based on these two experiences.

The Tools

The SEEP team settled on the following set of five tools—three qualitative and two quantitative—all of which are included in this manual (see chapters 4 through 8).

Tool #1: Impact Survey

The principle quantitative tool in the set, the Impact Survey, comprises thirty-seven questions that test all the SEEP hypotheses. It is administered to a sample group of clients and a comparison group.[4] To simplify the task of selecting the latter group, the team made an innovative decision to use a random sample of incoming clients—those who have chosen to join the program but who have received no services to date. The assumption is that those choosing to join the program are similar to existing clients in terms of demographic characteristics, motivation, and business experience, and thus offer an appropriate and easily identified comparison group.

---

[3] *Practitioner-Led Impact Assessment: A Test in Honduras* and *Practitioner-Led Impact Assessment: A Test in Mali* are available from the AIMS home page (http:\\www.mip.org) or by contacting USAID's Development Information Services Clearinghouse at 703-351-4039.
[4] A report entitled *Guidelines for Microfinance Impact Assessments* (Barnes & Sebstad, 2000) discusses the pros and cons of not including clients who have left the program.

Tool #2: Client Exit Survey

This short survey, a quantitative tool, is administered to clients who recently have left the program. Its purpose is to identify when and why clients left the program and what they think its impact, as well as its strengths and weaknesses, has been. This survey identifies client satisfaction with the program. As such, it is a valuable management tool that can be applied regularly as part of the institutional monitoring system or that can be used as a component of a periodic evaluation.

Tool #3: Loan Use Strategies Over Time

This qualitative tool is an in-depth individual interview focusing on how the client has used his or her loans and business profits over time. Its multiple purposes include determining how loan use and allocation decisions change over time, as well as documenting changes in the individual borrower, enterprise, family/household, and community that are associated with participation in the program.

Tool #4: Client Empowerment

This qualitative tool focuses on women clients and uses an in-depth interview to determine if and how women have been empowered by their participation in the program. Clients are asked a series of questions about themselves, their enterprise, their family/household, and their community at different points in time (past and present). The tool includes a methodological option to use self-portraits as a way to initiate this discussion.

Tool #5: Client Satisfaction

This qualitative tool is a focus group discussion that explores clients' opinions—what they like and dislike—of specific features of the program, as well as their recommendations for improvement.

Using the Tools

Overall, this set of five tools offers many possibilities to the user. Although each tool complements the others, and although all tools have been tested as a set, they can be used individually or in any combination. As they get presented and distributed to the global community of practitioners (as of June 1999, tools trainings and applications have taken place in Honduras, Mali, Peru, Bolivia, Poland, and the Philippines), many variations on how to use them, and in which combinations, have surfaced. Some institutions are starting from scratch and are looking for a whole approach to impact assessment; others already have a sophisticated monitoring and evaluation system in place and are interested only in one specific tool. This

manual supports such a modular approach to the tools; each tool has its own chapter, which contains the tool itself and a complete step-by-step guide to its application.

That said, we strongly advise against an "off-the-shelf" application of any tool. The first rule with all of them is "adapt the tool." As written, the tools, especially the Impact Survey, serve as solid, tested models; but they are not ready-made for all situations. Each tool will need to be adapted to the specific circumstances in which it will be applied. These adaptations will vary from slight changes in wording of the questions or their pre-coded answers to significant alterations in the methods proposed for administering the tools. As long as these adaptations retain the sound practices and standards for evaluation that are incorporated in the original, they are welcome and will contribute to the growing body of practical experience on impact evaluation.

While exploring the tools in this manual and considering their relevance to the evaluation needs of your program, stay focused on what it is you want to know. This manual is your starting point. We also encourage users to keep their "eyes on the prize"—that is, design your assessment; then choose the tools and adapt them to meet your needs *and* to ensure that the job gets done. Even though these tools reflect many decisions in favor of simplicity and feasibility, it is still easy to get carried away by the desire to know more and gather more data than one can use.

To provide an understanding about the starting point for the tools design team, the next chapter outlines both the conceptual framework and the specific hypotheses that guided the SEEP team. Chapter 3 provides an introduction to quantitative and qualitative methods, including guidance for interviewers that applies to all the tools. Chapters 4 through 8 each are dedicated to a distinct tool. Chapter 9 provides information about scheduling a tools application, while the appendixes provide guidance on topics such as reporting on the findings and using applicable computer software.

Chapter 2

The AIMS Impact Assessment Process

- The conceptual framework

- The AIMS hypotheses

- Managerial uses of impact assessment

Chapter 2
The AIMS Impact Assessment Process

Good impact evaluations are grounded in a conceptual framework that provides a kind of road map to the paths of impact. The SEEP Network benefited from the conceptual framework elaborated by researchers to assess how microenterprise programs contribute to enterprise stability and growth, family/household security, individual well-being, and the economic development of communities (Sebstad et al., 1995). The concepts articulated in this framework suggest numerous propositions or hypotheses about the types of impact and changes that microenterprise interventions make possible.

In addition to these impact hypotheses, SEEP integrated a focus on client satisfaction in response to its mandate to develop a practitioner-led assessment approach. Because *how* a program is implemented can affect its ultimate impacts, practitioners need to learn from their clients whether the program is "working" for them and how it might be improved. The goal is to combine client impact and client satisfaction information to account for and ultimately improve program impact.

This chapter explains the conceptual framework underpinning SEEP's choice of hypotheses; it also distinguishes impact and client satisfaction to help users fully understand the two fundamental elements of this approach and finally, highlights its managerial implications.

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used by AIMS places the family/household at the center of its analysis.[5] Because the microenterprise is firmly embedded in the family/household, especially among poorer families, searching for impacts requires a lens on the full range of family/household economic activities. How the microenterprise fits into overall economic strategies depends on the following factors:

1. *The composition of the family/household,* which will vary in different locations and cultures. Family/household composition and relationships affect how microenterprises are managed, as well as how their benefits are allocated. It is therefore important to understand the nature of family/households within the program's communities as a foundation to determining where and how impacts might show up.

2. *Decision-making within the family/household* about investments and the selection of productive activities. Some decisions are made jointly by husband and wife (or other

---

[5]This summary of the conceptual framework used by AIMS is excerpted from Sebstad, Jennefer, Catherine Neill, Carolyn Barnes, and Gregory Chen, *Assessing the Impacts of Microenterprise Interventions: A Framework for Analysis* (1995), available on the AIMS Project Web site, www.mip.org.

combination of adults managing the family/household); others are made separately. Situations such as how resources flow into the family/household, who controls them, and whose efforts are invested in managing those resources are affected by gender, age, and status, and they may generate cooperation or conflict affecting, in turn, the outcomes and who benefits from them.

3. *How the family/household is linked externally to larger social networks* through which it gives and receives resources.

The intimate connection of the microenterprise with the family/household makes it difficult to analyze it or understand it as a separate and distinct entity. The framework posits that impact occurs in different arenas connected to the family/household:

1. At the *family/household level*, microenterprises contribute to net increases in family/household income, asset accumulation, and labor productivity. Income invested in assets such as savings and education increases family/household economic security by making it possible to meet basic needs when the flow of income is interrupted.

2. At the *enterprise level*, impact is represented by changes in income, employment, assets, and volume of production.

3. At the *individual level*, change is measured by the clients' capacity to make decisions and investments that improve business performance and personal income, which in turn, strengthen the family/household economic portfolio and often translate into personal empowerment.

4. At the *community level*, microenterprises can provide new employment opportunities, stimulate backward and forward linkages to other community enterprises, and attract new income from outside the community. To the degree that the poor benefit from such increased economic activity, microenterprise interventions can have additional equity impacts.

These relationships clarify paths of impact by which microenterprise interventions can contribute to the goals of poverty alleviation and economic growth:

1. *Family/households* improve their economic security;

2. *Enterprises* gain viability, stability, and growth;

3. *Individuals* increase their control over resource allocations and improve their well-being; and

4. *Communities* develop economically through enterprise activity that provides goods and services, attracts income, and creates jobs.

To assess change within these pathways or relationships, the framework defines "domains of impact" at each level, which are portrayed in Figure 2-1, AIMS Conceptual Framework: Levels and Domains of Impact.

Within each domain, markers of change—indicators—must be identified to measure impact. For example, at the level of the enterprise, financial change can be measured by changes in income or business assets. These markers of change can function alone as an indicator of impact, or they can be assessed in combination to capture (1) movement of family/households toward (or away from) greater economic security, (2) the progression of enterprises between stages of development, (3) changes in individual well-being, and (4) changes in community development.

Figure 2-1.

AIMS CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:
LEVELS AND DOMAINS OF IMPACT

Community Level
Domains of Development (4)
- Employment and Income
- Forward and Backward
  Linkages

Household Level
Domains of Household Security (3)
- Income   - Assets
- Expenditures

Enterprise Level
Domains of Development (5)
- Resource Base
- Production Process
- Management
- Markets
- Financial Performance

Individual Level
Domains of Well-being (3)
- Control of Resources
- Leverage in
  Decision-making
- Community Participation

- Social Networks
- Civic Participation

The AIMS Hypotheses

<center>

FIGURE 2-2.
What is a Hypothesis?

</center>

> *"In terms of project design, [a hypothesis] refers to a presumed correlation between outputs (causes) and effect, and between effect and impact. For example, a common hypothesis is that the provision of sources of clean water will lead to reduced incidence of water-borne diseases. If a hypothesis can not be accepted (e.g. by citing research literature or evaluations of projects where this hypothesis was proven under essentially similar conditions) it may need to be tested as a part of a project's evaluation design."*
>
> Barton, Tom. (1997). *Guidelines to Monitoring and Evaluation: How are we doing?*

This conceptual framework suggests a long list of hypotheses about the impact of microenterprises on family/households, individuals, and communities. Using this list as a starting point, the SEEP Evaluation Working Group debated, defined, and selected a set of hypotheses that members believe are the most relevant for a broad range of practitioners.[6] These core hypotheses are outlined in Figure 2-3, The AIMS Impact Hypotheses. Together, the tools use practical, meaningful, and valid indicators to measure change vis-à-vis each of these core impact hypotheses.[7]

<center>

FIGURE 2-3.
The AIMS Impact Hypotheses

</center>

Participation in Microenterprise Services Leads to	
At the family/household level:	Increased income; Increased assets; and Increased welfare (in such aspects as food security, housing, and health).
At the individual level:	Increased control of resources on the part of women clients; No negative impacts on children's labor; Increases in paid labor—and in the productivity of labor—for women, without negative consequences; and Increased self-esteem on the part of women clients.
At the enterprise level:	Increased net worth; Increased net cash flow; and Increased differentiation between the microenterprise and family/household.
At the community level:	Increases in paid employment by client family/households.

---

[6] The results of this meeting are discussed in "PVO/NGO Tools for Household and Business Impact Assessment: Report of a Planning Meeting," by Elaine Edgcomb; MSI, Washington, D.C. Available on www.mip.org.

[7] The hypotheses presented here are only one set of possible hypotheses that evaluators might want to test. They represent consensus among practitioners when SEEP began to design these tools.

Any organization contemplating an evaluation must decide which impact domains and hypotheses are most relevant to its program. Those proposed here are a good starting point, reflecting the consensus of a diverse group of practitioners. They need to be tailored (refined, reduced, or expanded), however, to reflect each program's focus, clientele, and services. It is also important to remember that the greater the number of hypotheses one chooses to test, the more extensive the evaluation effort will need to be.

If choosing different hypotheses than those presented in this chapter and that have informed the design of the SEEP/AIMS tools, select and/or adapt the tools to be used. Because each qualitative tool focuses on a subset of the hypotheses, consider choosing only the most relevant tool for your hypotheses. The Impact Survey, which tests most of the hypotheses, will need to be adapted to reflect changes that are made to them. Chapter 3 offers guidelines for adapting the survey presented in this manual.

Figure 2-4, What Are Your Program's Impact Pathways? and Figure 2-5, Markers of Change, describe two participatory exercises that can help clarify a program's own impact pathways.

FIGURE 2-4.
What Are Your Program's Impact Pathways?

Exercise A:
This is a drawing exercise to depict the linkages between program inputs (such as financial services, social intermediation, and market assistance) and the organization's stated mission.

Step 1:
Solicit from the group the mission of the program or organization. Record this statement on a board or large paper. (Optional: Take a moment to compare the similarity of the mission articulated by the group to the mission statement expressed in printed literature.)

Step 2:
Divide into groups of three to four people. Provide each group with large sheets of paper and markers.

Step 3:
Explain that participants should use the following symbols: program services or "inputs" within circles, "effects" within triangles, and program "impacts" within squares. Explain that "effects" are changes that lead to additional "impacts." For example, an "effect" of the program might be that clients' management skills improve. This "effect" leads to another "effect" of "increased enterprise income," which brings about the ultimate impact goal of "improved quality of life for clients."

Step 4:
Allow each group approximately 20 minutes to create their impact pathways and to copy their finished product on large flip chart paper.

Step 5:
Have each group share their depiction with the other groups.

Step 6:
Summarize the exercise by highlighting which program inputs were seen as being linked to which "effects" and "impacts." Which "effects" and "impacts" were mentioned most often? Which were mentioned less often? Do the program "impacts" reflect the mission of the organization and/or program?

FIGURE 2-5.
Markers of Change

Exercise B:
This is a participatory exercise that rapidly solicits the group's observations about program impacts. It can also highlight consensus about what impacts are seen most often.

Step 1:
Distribute markers and approximately eight large-size (3" x 5") stick-on notes to everyone present.

Step 2:
Create headings on a chalkboard or wall that read "Family/household Level," "Enterprise Level," "Individual Level," and "Community Level."

Step 3:
Starting with the "Family/household Level," ask everyone to consider what two changes they see clients of the program experiencing at the level of the family/household.

Step 4:
Allow a few minutes and then ask people to come to the front of the room with one of the changes they have identified and post it under the heading.

Step 5:
Read through the answers and group common types of changes. Remove repeat responses. Ask people to add the second change they identified if they do not see it already listed. Repeat for each level. Summarize the major changes observed at each level.

Managerial Uses of Impact Assessment

In addition to identifying change and linking it to program participation, the SEEP approach assesses client satisfaction with the program in order to improve it. Although all the tools serve these two goals, Figure 2-6, Impact Assessment and Client Satisfaction, distinguishes the two categories of information. The combination of program impact with elements of market research is useful to program managers who want to maintain program performance (measured by quality, growth, and income) by maximizing its effectiveness.

Figure 2-6.
Impact Assessment and Client Satisfaction

Impact Assessment Tells Us	Client Satisfaction Tells Us
• How client enterprises have evolved (scale, skills, income, assets); • Whether changes are evident in family/household welfare (housing, education, assets, diet); and • Whether identified changes can be linked to participation in the program.	• Client perceptions of how loan products and services suit their needs; and • How a program's products and services can better serve a client's needs.
• How length of program participation is associated with impact.	• Which clients leave the program; • When clients typically leave the program; • Why clients leave; and • If and why clients would return.
• How loan size (and terms) are associated with impact.	• Clients' perception of loan product features.

While this set of tools integrates assessment with market research on clients' reactions to the program in order to improve it, every finding does not necessarily indicate a needed change in the program. On the impact side, some results, particularly negative or neutral ones, may be influenced by the economic environment (for example, limited markets) that program services cannot address. On the client satisfaction side, clients will commonly express dissatisfaction with aspects of the credit methodology that may be in place explicitly to reduce the lender's risk and therefore cannot or should not be changed. When findings from both sources of inquiry converge and reinforce each other, however, change is clearly indicated. Figure 2-7 describes such a situation with the Mali test results.

For both partners—ODEF (*Organizacion de Desarrollo Empresarial Femenino*) in Honduras and Kafo Jiginiew in Mali—who tested the tools, managers' participation in the assessment process and their almost-immediate access to its findings motivated them to consider several changes in the program. Direct changes—in program procedures and training content—were called for by both impact results and client feedback. Indirect changes—in staffing, staff training, and new product research initiatives—are linked to these two sources of information, as well as to management's observations as they spent more time in the field. Figure 2-8, Potential Managerial Decisions Motivated by Evaluation Findings, summarizes some of the changes indicated by evaluation results from both test sites.

> **FIGURE 2-7.**
> **Example**
> **Loan Size in Mali**
>
> When evaluation findings indicated that enterprise returns were as much as six times higher in towns than in small villages for clients having participated in the program the same amount of time, management was propelled to consider different loan policies for urban and rural credit associations. For town-based clients, larger loan sizes, both in the first and subsequent loans, may help them expand faster, taking advantage of the commercial opportunity in the area. In addition to responding to clients' demands, this change would produce higher program revenues from towns that could partially subsidize outreach to more remote villages where loan sizes need to be lower.

FIGURE **2-8.**

Potential Managerial Decisions Motivated by Evaluation Findings

Honduras	
Direct Changes	**Indirect Changes**
1. **ODEF considered revising training methods and materials for village banks in response to impact results that revealed few differences between clients and non-clients on enterprise management practices. In focus groups, clients also complained about the training.** 2. ODEF could increase the frequency of promoters' visits to bank meetings in response to widespread complaints in focus groups about insufficient attention from staff. 3. Loan policies could be revised in response to clients' demand. 4. More flexible meeting schedules were introduced.	1. **Management introduced a thorough retraining for staff to correct their inconsistencies in applying program policies, which they learned about only as a result of intensive exposure to clients during data collection.** 2. **Management shifted staff via promotions and demotions to achieve better fit of tasks and individual skills.**
Mali	
Direct Changes	**Indirect Changes**
1. As loan sizes increase, clients divert a portion to other family members or spend it on personal consumption. Concerned with the risk that this pattern poses to the program, management is considering how to use the program's education component and end-of-loan-cycle loan use feasibility assessments to discuss the potential risks of this practice, as well as investment strategies that might have more promising returns. 2. Given that health crises caused over 30% of ex-clients to leave the program, Kafo Jiginiew management is exploring setting up an emergency fund.	As a credit union, Kafo Jiginiew needs to explore ways to actively promote savings among communal bank members.

The actions management took in response to the evaluation findings highlight the practicality of this approach. It enables managers to quickly get information that is directly relevant to decisions they face about program policies and operations. Their active involvement in the evaluation process proved equally important in both AIMS tools tests. Assigned to new geographic and programmatic areas for data collection, both managers and staff experienced aspects of the program they did not know well from their daily work and thus gained new understanding and insights that influenced their thinking.

Chapter 3

Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

- Quantitative? Qualitative? What is the difference?

- Quantitative methods and the quasi experimental approach

- The standardized survey

- Qualitative research

Chapter 3
Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

As outlined in the previous chapter, the AIMS/SEEP approach to impact assessment by and for practitioners combines quantitative and qualitative techniques. The Impact Survey and Client Exit Survey are categorized as quantitative tools because they collect standardized information by asking exactly the same questions to clients and organizing their answers into quantifiable response categories. The individual Loan Use Strategies Over Time and Client Empowerment interviews and the Client Satisfaction focus group discussions are qualitative instruments that gather more detailed information through a more flexible, in-depth dialogue with clients. AIMS believes that these two categories of tools are complementary, each providing different types of information that enable evaluators to gain a more complete, richer picture of impact than would be possible with only one.

This chapter's overview to quantitative and qualitative approaches presents the differences between the two techniques and provides general guidelines for their application. The interviewers' roles and responsibilities for both quantitative and qualitative techniques outlined here apply to all the corresponding tools presented in this manual.

Quantitative? Qualitative? What Is the Difference?

This section explores the differences between quantitative and qualitative methods. One point of view is presented in Figure 3-1, Quantitative versus Qualitative Indicators.

FIGURE 3-1.
Quantitative versus Qualitative Indicators

"*More tends to be made of the distinction between qualitative and quantitative data than is warranted. Not everything that is important can be counted, and much that can be counted is not worth knowing. …. The quantitative-versus-qualitative debate is not an either/or question…. Within the context of USAID's performance-based management systems, the choice of more quantitative or qualitative indicators involves trade-offs among practicality and cost, objectivity and comparability, and the directness or validity of the measure.*"

Excerpt from *Performance Monitoring and Evaluation TIPS, Guidelines for Indicator and Data Quality*, No. 12, (1998). USAID Center for Development and Information and Evaluation.

The quantitative approach, with proper sampling, allows for the measurement of many subjects' reactions to a set of questions. Because each question has a limited set of answers, the results can be compared and analyzed statistically; they also can be generalized to a larger population within known limits of error (Warwick and Lininger, 1975; Patton, 1986). Qualitative methods provide the context against which to more fully understand those results. They capture what people have

to say in their own words and describe their experiences in depth. Qualitative data provides the texture of real life in its many variations; it gives insight into the reasoning and feelings that motivate people to take action. In short, quantitative methods are standardized, systematically obtaining succinct responses from as many clients as possible. A qualitative approach provides greater richness and more detailed information about a smaller number of people (Patton, 1986). Which approach is more appropriate for any given evaluation exercise will depend on its specific objectives. Given the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two approaches and the varied purposes they serve, good-quality impact assessments increasingly employ both methods.

Figure 3-2, Differences Between Qualitative and Quantitative Inquiry, outlines some of the differences between qualitative and quantitative inquiry with examples from the tests of the AIMS/SEEP tools. *(Note: Although the small sample sizes cited in this table were sufficient for the purposes of a test, an actual application of the tools to evaluate a program would require larger sample sizes. See chapter 4, part E, for guidance on sampling.)*

Quantitative Methods and the Quasi Experimental Approach

In the early decades of evaluation and social science research, a quantitative, quasi experimental design predominated, and many practitioners still associate good evaluation practice with this method. Drawing its basic statistical and experimentation techniques from agricultural research, this approach determines a program's effectiveness through rigorous comparison of a "treatment" group (those receiving program services) and a "control" group (those not receiving services).[8] (Patton, 1986). The sample or standard survey is its most common data collection instrument. Experimental design does offer options that differ in the degree of rigor required in the selection and composition of these groups, but its "scientific" features include the following:

- It is "deductive" in that specific research hypotheses and main variables are specified in advance of data collection;

- Respondents (both treatment and control groups) are selected according to random sampling methods that enable results to be generalized to the wider population targeted by the evaluation (for example, all program clients);

- Results are quantified and analyzed using tests of statistical significance that permit comparison of treatment and control groups, ideally with pre- and-post-test measures.

These features provide the findings with a high degree of credibility for many decision makers. The weakness of the approach is the difficulty of establishing controlled conditions in the real world and its insensitivity to complexities and subtleties in human interaction (Stecher and Davis, 1987).

---

[8] Plant crops are pre-tested and then given different treatments. Post-test quantitative comparisons of growth or yield indicate the relative efficiency of the different treatments.

FIGURE 3-2.
Differences Between Qualitative and Quantitative Inquiry

Qualitative	Examples from the tools tests	Quantitative	Examples from the tools tests
Lower number of respondents	Honduras and Mali, approximately 12 clients per individual tool and 6 focus groups	**Higher number of respondents**	In Honduras and Mali between 72 and 96 respondents were included in the Impact Survey.
Open-ended questions and probing yield detailed information that illuminates nuances and highlights diversity	Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool demonstrates the diversity and complexity of how clients vary their loan activities over time	**Specific questions obtain predetermined responses to standardized questions**	Impact survey results reported the percent of clients who believed their enterprise income had increased in the last year and whether significantly more clients than non-clients reported increases
Data collection techniques vary	Focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews	**Relies on surveys as the main method of data collection**	Impact Survey and Client Exit Survey
Control group not required	In Honduras and Mali, only participants' views obtained	**Control or comparison groups required to determine program impact**	Comparison groups were composed of incoming clients who had not yet received program services
More focused geographically (limited use of vehicles)	Specific locations identified for special characteristics; for example, urban vs. rural, vendors vs. manufacturers	**More dispersed geographically (more use of vehicles)**	In Mali, three categories of communities (towns, large villages, small villages) with three categories of clients (one-year, two-year, and incoming)
More varied techniques in data analysis	Simple content analysis is applied with the Loan Use Strategies Over Time and Client Empowerment tools, with a focus on grouping similar responses	**Relies on standardized data analysis.**	Use of Epi Info software to report descriptive statistics (prevalence and means) and to test for statistically significant differences between sample groups

Qualitative	Examples from the tools tests	Quantitative	Examples from the tools tests
More suitable when time and resources are limited	Interviews took one to two hours to conduct, but fewer were done	**Relies on more extensive interviewing**	Impact Survey takes 45-60 minutes with each client and done with large number; Client Exit Survey takes 25 minutes
Empowering and participatory	Asks for participants' reflection on their experience	**Not empowering**	Areas of inquiry are predetermined
Sampling depends on what needs to be learned	Clients selected by key variables; for example, gender, time in program, type of loan obtained	**Sampling focus is on probability and "representativeness"**	Considerable effort to randomly select clients within stratified samples to ensure "representativeness" of results and comparability of sample groups
Provides information on the application of the program in a specific context to a specific population	In Honduras, the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool highlighted differences between individual and village bank clients	**More likely provides information on the broad application of the program**	In Mali, stratified samples clarified differences between rural and urban areas, but responses also pooled for general comparison to non-client group
Explores causality	Generates hypotheses	**Suggests causality**	Tests hypotheses

(Patton, 1990; Gosling and Edwards, 1995; Carvalho and White, 1997)

Of the two AIMS tools categorized as "quantitative," the Impact Survey is more influenced by this tradition and approach. Within the basic framework of the quasi experimental approach, SEEP has chosen the most practical options. To provide valid evidence of program impact, the survey addresses selected hypotheses and measures predetermined outcome variables. Survey results are quantified and comparisons made between randomly selected clients (the treatment) and a comparison group of incoming clients using statistical tests. While the Client Exit Survey also quantifies responses, its purpose is to systematically document the experience of ex-clients rather than test specific impact hypotheses.

The validity (accuracy) and objectivity of any quantitative-oriented evaluation will be highly dependent on the following five issues:

- Whether its hypotheses, design, and findings are based on an in-depth understanding of the clients (or subject of evaluation, the treatment), the impact processes, and the possible effects of external factors;

- Whether the sampling methodology is randomized and therefore likely to provide representative results;

- The quality of the data collection instrument (the survey);

- The quality of the data collection process, including interviewer technique and supervision; and

- The quality of the analysis (including data coding, cleaning, inputting, and analysis).

Can practitioners, skilled in the daily routines of providing financial services to microentrepreneurs, possibly satisfy these criteria? Issue #1 underscores how important it is that the survey instrument be tailored to the specific program, the context of the program, and the impact questions. Here, practitioners' in-depth knowledge of their programs is a real comparative advantage. A challenge, on the other hand, is the common lack of formal research skills among program staff. Many of these skills are introduced in this manual. Guidelines for sampling are offered for each tool in subsequent chapters. In our experience, practitioners can follow these guidelines to construct a valid sample if they take the time. Issues #3 and 4—instrument quality and interviewer technique—require training and practice. Applicable to both the impact and Client Exit Survey, these issues are addressed next.

The Standardized Survey

The Impact Survey included in this set of tools constitutes a system for collecting information to describe, compare, or explain knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. The advantage of the survey is the structure that its standardized questions provide for classifying information. (Warwick and Lininger, 1975). Typically, a combination of closed (limited and set responses) and open-ended (responses not predetermined or limited) questions are used to strike a balance between rigid standardization and the richness of individual experience. This survey has been carefully designed and revised several times so that practitioners will not have to start from scratch. That

said, each user will have to adapt the instrument—add or delete indicators and rewrite survey questions accordingly—to meet specific institutional needs.

Selecting Good Indicators

Indicators are criteria or measures against which program changes can be assessed. Indicators are defined as specific (explicit) and "objectively verifiable measures of changes or results brought about by an activity" (United Nations, 1984). Several types of indicators exist. "Input" indicators, for example, typically relate to program services such as the number of loans made. But the great majority of indicators included in the survey are "impact" indicators, which establish criteria to measure program impact or client response.

Indicators might be direct or indirect. Indirect impact indicators often are called "proxy" indicators—selected because the direct indicator is too difficult to measure (costly, time-consuming, and so forth). For example, a proxy indicator for "increased household income" found in the Impact Survey is "percentage of clients reporting increased income over the last 12 months." This proxy indicator was used because quantifying total household income would require more time, resources, and accuracy than seemed feasible for most practitioners.

Collection of certain output or process indicators is important for clarifying the link between program services and the desired impact. For example, the Impact Survey includes information gleaned from program records about the amount of a client's current loan, their savings, and their duration in the program. Comparing relative impacts within the client group based on these program-oriented indicators can help demonstrate whether larger loans or longer program duration is associated with a greater degree of positive impact.

The selection of indicators is based on experience, industry standards, available information, and to a degree, common sense. Ideally, indicators will have the following characteristics (Barton, 1997; United Nations, 1984). They should be

- **valid**—measure what they are intended to measure and capture effects due to the program intervention rather than external factors;

- **reliable**—verifiable and objective so that if measured at different times or places or with different people, the conclusions would be the same;

- **relevant**—directly linked to the objectives of the program intervention;

- **technically feasible**—capable of being assessed and measured;

- **usable**—the indicator should be understandable and ideally provide useful information to assess program performance and for decision-making;

- **sensitive**—capable of demonstrating changes and capturing change in the outcome of interest (national per capita income is unlikely to be sensitive to the effects of a single intervention);

- **timely**—possible to collect relatively quickly;

- **cost-effective**—the information provided by the indicator is worth the cost to collect, process, and analyze; and

- **ethical**—collection and use of the indicator is acceptable to those providing the information.

Few indicators incorporate all these desired characteristics. Still, it is useful to consider the ideal features when choosing either individual indicators or a set of indicators to assess. As with the number of hypotheses, the larger the total number of indicators that practitioners elect to measure, the more costly and elaborate the required evaluation tools and effort.

Writing a Good Questionnaire

Chapter 4 includes the Impact Survey tool itself and a series of subchapters (labeled as "parts") that provide a list of the indicators used in the survey and what each is intended to measure. If choosing to add indicators, however, construct questions that "operationalize" the new indicators on the survey instrument. The questions below, as well as the list in Figure 3-3, Qualities of Clear Survey Questions, are guidelines to follow if choosing to adapt the questions on the survey. Assess each change against these criteria to ensure that they will provide the most complete and accurate information possible.

- ***Are the words simple, direct, and familiar to all respondents?***
  Do not use technical jargon or region-specific terms. Use terms that people of all education levels will understand. For example, someone may not be able to say what their "marital status" is, but they know if they are married, single, divorced, separated, or widowed.

- ***Is the question as clear and specific as possible?***
  Avoid questions that are too general, too complex, or ambiguous. For example, the question, *"What type of community is this?"* does not focus respondents on any specific aspect of the community. Also do not use questions with indefinite words such as *"often"* or *"usually."*

- ***Are any items "double-barreled"?***
  It can be tempting to save time and space by combining two questions or two issues, but this short-cut will hinder analysis and interpretation of results since the response will not be clear. For example, the question, *"Do you plan to stop doing this enterprise and start another enterprise in the coming year?"* should be broken into two separate questions.

- ***Are the questions leading or loaded?***
  A leading question encourages the respondent to give a certain type of answer. A loaded question uses emotionally charged words or stereotypes. For example, a leading question would be, *"Don't you agree?"* and a loaded question would be, *"What usurious interest rate do you think the program should charge?"*

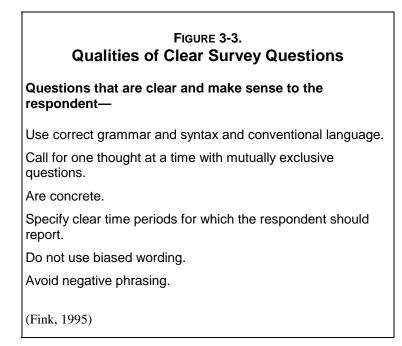- ***Is the question applicable to all respondents?***
  Asking a respondent who is single the age of her husband is annoying and potentially

misleading since she may feel obliged to give some answer. Instructions to skip or "filter" questions need to be included if a question is not applicable to all respondents.

- ***Can the question be shortened without losing meaning?***
  As a final test, read the questions and delete any extra, unnecessary words to make them as short as possible. (Warwick and Lininger, 1975)

Translating the study objectives into specific questions is typically a process of trial and error that involves a lot of discussion and pre-testing of questions. (Warwick and Lininger, 1975) Much of this effort focuses on crafting questions, selecting the total number of questions, determining the sequence of questions, and finally, putting it all together in an overall survey instrument that will maintain the interest and motivation of the respondent.

FIGURE 3-3.
Qualities of Clear Survey Questions

Questions that are clear and make sense to the respondent—

Use correct grammar and syntax and conventional language.

Call for one thought at a time with mutually exclusive questions.

Are concrete.

Specify clear time periods for which the respondent should report.

Do not use biased wording.

Avoid negative phrasing.

(Fink, 1995)

Translating the Questionnaire into Local Languages

In many cases, the survey tool must be translated into a local language. This process can be more complicated than it sounds. Those who understand the tool must work with speakers of the local language and consider each question as translated to make sure that its intent has been maintained. For this reason, a recommended translation process is to (1) give the materials to one individual or group to translate into the local language and (2) give the translated tool to a different individual or group to translate back into the original language. At this point, it is possible to identify confusion or disagreement on the meaning of the many terms in this manual that may not be commonly known among diverse clients (for example, investment, loan proceeds, profits, estimate, and impact). Finally, (3) conduct a "practice" session, asking these questions as translated to determine, again, if any misunderstandings exist because of language differences.

In some countries, the local language will have an oral, rather than written, tradition. Even if it is written, team members may not be comfortable reading it. Thus it is important for them to read the questions in the local language until they are completely comfortable asking them.

Testing the Instrument

Field testing the survey instrument with a small number of clients is both good training and necessary preparation for the actual data collection. Some of the reasons to conduct a pre-test include the following:

- Identifying language or wording problems in the questionnaire that might cause confusion and making revisions before conducting the "real" interviews;
- Finding out how long the interview takes in order to schedule a large number of them; and
- Gaining confidence to conduct the interview.

After testing the instrument, ask the following questions to evaluate the instrument's "performance."

- Were the questions clear, easily understood, and specific? Did respondents frequently ask for clarification of any questions? Were any questions redundant?

- Were the response choices appropriate and comprehensive? Did respondents offer a number of "other" responses to any list of choices?

- How much effort was required to answer? Was the respondent able and willing to answer all the questions? Did the respondent lose interest in a question or a set of questions?

- Did the researchers have trouble with any of the questions?

- Did the nature or format of any of the questions bias the clients' responses?

- Were the questions in the right order? Were the transitions between questions smooth?

- How much time did the interview take? How much time did each section take?

- Was there variance in the answers to the questions? Were there rare events?

Key Parts of the Interview

A survey interview is a purposeful conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (the interviewer) and another answers them (the respondent). It is a directed conversation, the purpose of which is to gather information by means of administering the same set of questions in a consistent way to all selected respondents. The key parts of the interview are (1) introducing the interview, (2) asking interview questions (the core interview), (3) ending the interview, and (4) conducting the post-interview. A guide to each of these parts is provided below. (Frey and Oishi, 1995)

Introducing the Interview

- Introduce yourself by full name and identify the sponsor of the survey.

- Explain the purpose of the survey, what kind of information is being sought, and how it will be used.

- Verify that the right person has been reached.

- Stress the confidentiality of the interview, the voluntary nature of the client's participation, the approximate length of the interview, and the fact that the client will have the opportunity to ask questions.

- Ask permission to proceed with the questions.

Asking Interview Questions

- Ask each question exactly as written.

- Listen actively to determine what is relevant.

- Record the answers in the boxes and other spaces provided for each question.

- Probe to increase the validity, clarity, and completeness of the response.

- Avoid any unnecessary or overly enthusiastic reinforcement, such as, *"Oh, that's very good!!"*

- Never suggest an answer.

Ending the Interview

- Thank the respondent. Tell him or her again how important the information is that he or she has provided; that it will help the program to understand better its clients and how to serve them.

- Answer any questions or concerns the respondent may have about the interview or the content of the survey.

Conducting the Post-interview

Proofread the completed questionnaire to find and correct errors, clarify handwriting, and add clarifying notes.

Interviewer's Roles and Responsibilities

Survey interviewing is akin to a fine-tuned theatrical play, from its scheduling and costumes to the actual performance. The timing of an interview is very important; it should take place at a time of day that is most likely to be convenient to the respondent.

Your appearance can also help ensure positive and open communication. Consider how respondents might react to how you look; strive to dress in a simple, inconspicuous, and neat manner (Warwick and Lininger, 1975)

But most important is the art of interviewing itself. It is true that the interviewer must ask the questions exactly as written, and in the order presented. That seems pretty clear and straightforward, so why call it an art? While following the rigid rules of asking the questions exactly as they are written, it is also important to keep the interview on a conversational level. The interviewer's job is to maintain a comfortable rapport and to motivate the respondent to answer accurately and completely. To understand better why survey interviewing is an art, conduct the two exercises described in Figure 3-4, Participatory Training Exercise: The Good Interviewer, and Figure 3-5, Participatory Exercise for an Interviewer Training: What an Interviewer Should Not Do; then study the following two checklists (figures 3-6 and 3-7) that together make up the DOs and DON'Ts of good interviewing.

FIGURE 3-4.
Participatory Training Exercise:
The Good Interviewer

Step 1: Distribute markers and 8 large-size (3"x5") stick-on notes to everyone.

Step 2: Create a heading on a blackboard or wall that reads, "Characteristics of a Good Interviewer."

Step 3: Explain that the interviewer plays a critical role for establishing the tone of the interview and ensuring that the respondent provides as complete and accurate information as possible. Ask everyone to write down two characteristics of a good interviewer.

Step4: Ask people to come to the front of the room and post one of their positive characteristics.

Step5: Read through the answers and group the characteristics. Remove repeats. Ask people to add the second characteristic if they do not see it already posted. Repeat for each level. Summarize the characteristics in terms of how they relate to communicating the questions, motivating respondents to cooperate, and probing for complete answers. Complete recording of the responses.

FIGURE 3-5.
Participatory Exercise for an Interviewer Training:
What an Interviewer Should Not Do

Step 1: Distribute markers and approximately 8 large-size (3" x 5") stick-on notes to everyone present.

Step 2: Create a heading on a blackboard or wall that reads, "What an Interviewer Should Not Do."

Step 3: Explain that the interviewer plays a critical role for establishing the tone of the interview and ensure that the respondent provides as complete and accurate information as possible. Ask people to identify two things an interviewer should not do.

Step 4: Allow a few minutes and then ask people to come to the front of the room and post one of the examples they had identified.

Step 5: Read through the answers and group the undesirable behaviors. Remove repeat responses. Ask people to add the second characteristic they identified if they do not see it already listed. Repeat for each level. Summarize the behaviors in terms of how they would undermine a positive interview that collects complete and accurate information.

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

FIGURE 3-6.
Checklist of Interviewing "DOs"

Interviewers should ALWAYS

√   Speak clearly and use correct grammar in the language of the interview;

√   Read fluently;

√   Record verbatim answers in that language;

√   Recall responses long enough to record them accurately;

√   Perform several tasks simultaneously: read questions, record answers, follow instructions;

√   Judge nonverbal and verbal cues of respondent to know when to administer reinforcement and clarification; and

√   Exercise self-discipline and regulate verbal and nonverbal behavior in order not to improperly influence responses. Be neutral.

Interviewers are also expected to

√   Initiate and maintain a conversation with a stranger;

√   Respond professionally to unexpected questions and situations;

√   Remain neutral by keeping individual opinions out of the interview process;

√   Motivate reluctant respondents to participate in the interview;

√   Deliver the questionnaire in a flowing, conversational manner that reflects self-assurance and ease with the task of interviewing;

√   Probe incomplete responses in an unbiased manner for more useful results; and

√   Clarify contradictory responses.

(Frey and Oishi, 1995)

</div>

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

FIGURE 3-7.
Checklist of Interviewing "DON'Ts"

Interviewers NEVER

√   Get involved in long explanations of the study, such as trying to explain sampling in detail;

√   Deviate from the study introduction, sequence of questions, or question wording;

√   Try to justify or defend what they are doing;

√   Interview someone they know;

√   Falsify interviews;

√   Improvise;

√   Suggest an answer or agree or disagree with an answer;

√   Try to ask questions from memory;

√   Rush the respondent;

√   Patronize respondents;

√   Dominate the interview;

√   Let another person answer for the intended respondent;

√   Turn in a questionnaire without checking it over to be sure every question has been asked and its answer recorded; and

√   Change the wording or sequence of the questions.

(Frey and Oishi, 1995)

</div>

Asking Probing Questions

During an interview, clients will occasionally provide incomplete answers to the questions asked. When this happens, "probe" or ask additional questions to tease out more information. Probing is one of the interviewer's most critical responsibilities. If the respondent is quiet, do not simply assume that she has little to say. And do not be in a rush to complete the interview. Take the time needed to get complete answers. The tricky part is that it is easy to make mistakes when probing for more information by anticipating what the respondent is going to say or asking leading questions.

Probing is equally, if not more important in qualitative interviews. The same principles apply. Figure 3-8, Good Probing Techniques, and Figure 3-9, Improper Probing, highlight good and improper probing techniques respectively.

FIGURE 3-8.
Good Probing Techniques

Show Interest
An expression of interest and understanding such as "uh-huh," "I see," and "yes," conveys the message that their response has been heard and more is expected.

Pause
Silence can tell a respondent that you are waiting to hear more.

Repeat the Question
This can help a respondent who has misunderstood, misinterpreted, or strayed from the question to get back on track.

Repeat the Reply
This can stimulate the respondent to say more or to recognize the inaccuracy.

Ask a Neutral Question
For clarification:
    "What do you mean exactly?"
    "Could you please explain that?"
For specificity:
    "Could you be more specific about that?"
    "Tell me about that. What, who, how, why?"
For relevance:
    "I see. Well, let me ask you again." [REPEAT QUESTION AS WRITTEN]
    "Would you tell me how you mean that?"
For completeness:
    "What else?"
    "Can you think of an example?"

(Frey and Oishi, 1995)

FIGURE 3-9.

Improper Probing

Question:
"How many hours did you work on your bread-making business in the last 24-hour period?"

Answer:
"Oh, I worked all day."

Improper Probe:
"So you mean about 12 hours?"

Better Probe:
*"Could you be more specific? About how many **hours** would you say you worked in the last 24-hour period?"*

(Frey and Oishi, 1995)

Clearly, interviewing involves a lot more than reading questions from a questionnaire and writing down the answers. It is truly an art. These techniques, examples, and checklists should not scare anyone; with proper training and practice, practitioners can develop these skills. If you interact with clients on a regular basis, you already have many of them.

Qualitative Research

Associated with statistical analysis of responses from a large number of clients, quantitative research is considered by some to be the "scientific" approach to evaluation. Others contend that qualitative research, rich in its exploration of experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge, tells us more about what is really going on. Three of the tools in the AIMS/SEEP set are qualitative. Each focuses on a specific impact. The Loan Use Strategy Over Time tool tells how the client used a loan to pursue economic or other goals. The Client Empowerment tool seeks to understand the changes in clients' self-esteem as a result of participation in the program. The Client Satisfaction tool identifies what clients like and dislike about the program in order to improve it. Each expands and enriches information also collected by the Impact Survey.

Qualitative instruments can take many forms, but those included in this manual are semi-standardized, open-ended interview guides to be used with individuals or groups. These guides contain a written list of questions that need to be covered with all clients in a particular order to reduce the likely variation among interviewers. Conducting these in-depth interviews requires many of the same skills and abilities of survey interviewing. There are, however, three critical differences:

- The in-depth interviewer must be able to probe more deeply, adding open-ended questions as appropriate to follow the line of the interview as it evolves with the respondent.

- In focus group interviews, the interviewer must be able to facilitate a small group process, ensuring that all participants have an opportunity to provide their thoughts and comments.

- The interviewer must be able to take copious notes, using the respondent's own words as much as possible. Tape recording an interview is advised to help capture everything that is said.

Four methods, all of which are incorporated in at least one of the tools, are presented in this section: (1) individual interviews, (2) focus group interviews, (3) PRA techniques, and (4) observation.

Individual Interviews

A qualitative interview with an individual is based on a semi-structured interview guide or set of questions that explore a specific topic. These questions are "categorical" questions; each one targets a different category of information related to the topic. As the interviewer, ask all clients about each category of information. But with each question, explore the answers, seeking greater detail with more questions. These subsequent questions are also called "probing" questions.

Categorical and follow-up, probing questions should elicit lengthy, detailed responses. Following are several types of probing questions:

- For more information or clarity: Lead-in questions such as, *"Tell me about..."* or *"Could you explain...,"* or *"What....,"* encourage the respondent to tell more about some aspect of his or her first answer.

- For in-depth exploration: Also ask questions that are related to the first "categorical" question, but probe for more detail about a specific aspect of that question. For example, if the categorical question is, *"What made you decide to start your used clothing business?"* and the answer is, *"My brother convinced me it would be a good business,"* explore the role that the brother plays in her enterprise activity. *"Does your brother know about buying and selling used clothes? Did he help you to get started? Is your brother involved in the business? Does he help make other decisions? Which ones, for example? Do the two of you work together on any other businesses?"*

The Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool includes the categorical question, *"How did you use this loan?"* The interviewer can then probe with questions such as, *"How did you use the loan in the family/household? In the business?"* These questions help determine how loan use strategies change with each loan, and over time. In general, probing questions that yield a simple *"yes"* or *"no"* should be followed up with a *"please explain..."* type of question. (See examples of the use of probing questions in figures 3-10 and 3-11.)

It is not easy to determine probing questions in advance, because they build on clients' responses to categorical questions. Because these questions obviously cannot be predetermined, be prepared to think on your feet and ask relevant followup questions on the spot. It is sometimes possible to identify potential questions in advance, based on the interviewer's knowledge of the respondent, the business climate, the loan program, the respondent's village, and the like. Specific lines of probing questions are explored for each of the tools in later chapters.

> **FIGURE 3-10.**
> **Example**
>
> In the Honduras and Mali tools tests, loan use strategies were probed for each enterprise an entrepreneur operated. Probing questions helped clients remember whether they purchased business inputs, increased family/household assets, paid off debts, and so forth.

FIGURE 3-11.
More Improper Probing

Question:
How did you use your first loan?

Answer:
Oh, I think I bought more stock and paid my daughter's school fees.

Improper Probe:
So you mean about half on the business and half on your family or household?

Better Probe:
Could you be more specific? About how much did you invest in your business? About how much did you pay in school fees?

The improper probe puts words in the client's mouth. It is better to politely request a more specific answer without making any assumptions.

Probing is an important feature of both quantitative and qualitative interviewing. The same principles apply to good probing in both situations. Do not ask leading questions; do not anticipate what the respondent is going to say; remain neutral when probing. But quantitative interviewing and qualitative interviewing are also different. Figure 3-12, Differences in Qualitative and Quantitative Probing, highlights the distinctions with the use of probing between these two approaches.

FIGURE 3-12.
Differences in Qualitative and Quantitative Probing

Quantitative Probing	Example	Qualitative Probing	Example
To complete an answer clearly by choosing a response code for greater precision.	"You've said "x"; would you say that is the same as….. (read the list of established answer choices)? "By 'around,' do you mean it is closer to answer 'x' or answer 'y'?"	To motivate people to talk; and To get more information to elicit examples and stories that illustrate a point.	"Please tell me more about…." "Can you give me an example of…?"

Conducting Individual Interviews: Step by Step

While many of the preparatory steps are the same for quantitative and qualitative interviewing, the latter requires the ability to conduct a controlled conversation during which the interviewer motivates the client to provide much rich detail while remaining neutral. Guidelines for conducting informal individual interviews are provided below (adapted from Gosling and Edwards, 1995; USAID/CDIE, 1996) and include four steps: (1) conducting the interview, (2) checking for reliability, (3) ending the interview, and (4) reviewing and writing after the interview.

Step 1: Conduct the interview

- *Establish rapport.* Begin with traditional greetings. Introduce yourself and identify the sponsor of the research. Verify that the right person has been reached. Explain why the interview is being conducted and what the purpose of the study is. Explain any important conditions of the interview, including how long it will take. Describe any benefits to participating. Ask permission to proceed.

- *Sequence questions.* Identify a good, opening, lead-in comment or question that will (1) put the interviewee at ease, (2) open the door to the intended line of questioning, and (3) demonstrate your desire to understand what the client has to say.

- *Ask categorical questions first.* Then ask the probing questions based on the client's responses. Ask the client to clarify responses that are confusing or that contradict earlier ones; obtain clear, complete responses. Carefully lead up to sensitive questions (especially about income and family relationships).

- *Phrase questions carefully to avoid influencing the answer.* Avoid leading questions and value judgments. (For example: *"Do you think the program's high interest rates should be changed?" "Don't you need a lot of patience to be a member of a group with*

so many problems?" "Oh, I am so happy to hear you like the training; it must have helped you improve your business!") Avoid interjecting your own opinions and NEVER suggest an answer.

- ***Maintain professional curiosity and interested demeanor.*** As the interview unfolds, demonstrate your interest in what is being said by providing any verbal or nonverbal cues that are culturally relevant. Allow the participant all the time needed to give as full a response as possible. Be careful to not show any negative reaction to what you are hearing; maintain a neutral attitude. Avoid any unnecessary or overly enthusiastic reinforcement, such as, *"Wonderful!"* or, *"That is the saddest thing I ever heard!"*

- ***Observe client behavior.*** Be aware of how a client reacts or responds to a question, as well as any other behaviors that may add contextual information to a response.

- ***Minimize translation difficulties.*** Use simple language; avoid jargon. Make sure the client understands the words you are using, especially those such as "household" that may not have a clear equivalent in the local language.

- ***Take complete and accurate notes.*** Write down verbatim—to the extent possible—what participants actually say (using quotation marks); where possible, separate the minutia from actual data. (This point is not necessary if you use a tape recorder for the interview. In this case, use a tape that does not need to be changed during the interview, because this activity detracts from the process.)

Step 2:   Check for reliability

- ***Be aware of contradictory responses***. Determine if the client has given different answers to similar questions.

- ***Return to inaccurate questions.*** Review questions that were not answered accurately to obtain a more detailed response.

Step 3:   End the interview

- ***Thank the client*** for his or her time.
- ***Tell the client how important the information is*** that she or he has provided.
- ***Give the client a brief summary*** of how the information will be used in the program.
- ***Ask the client if he or she has questions***, and answer them honestly.

Step 4:   Review and write after the interview

- ***Review your notes*** and make any additions, corrections, and editing necessary for clarity.
- ***Write down any observations about the client*** that could explain responses to a given question.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus groups are small groups of people (usually between six and twelve) who are invited to discuss a predetermined topic for a specific amount of time (Gosling and Edwards, 1995; Butler, 1991). Typically the participants have knowledge and/or experience with the topic.

To facilitate a focus group, two people are required—a facilitator and a recorder. The facilitator leads the discussion, ensuring that it moves forward, stays focused on the topic, and involves everyone. The facilitator performs the following tasks:

- Poses a limited number of direct questions;

- Keeps the discussion focused;

- Encourages responses from all clients (and discourage dominance by anyone or by a subgroup of clients);

- Affirms all participants, regardless of their point of view; and

- Determines consensus if that is a desired outcome of the discussion.

The recorder records the discussion in one of the following ways:

- Writes complete and accurate notes in a sequential manner;

- Writes information on a pre-drawn grid; or

- Writes information on separate pages labeled with specific categories of information.

Participants in focus groups should include people (clients) who have knowledge and experience relevant to the topic of discussion. (See the example in figure 3-13.) If choosing individual clients to form a focus group, consider selecting those who are not afraid to speak up in a group and respect others' right to participate. Programs using group lending methods, however, may find it more practical to use existing borrower groups as their focus groups. In such cases, select the groups to reflect the characteristics to have represented in your sample (such as rural vs. urban; gender, age). The number of groups selected to interview will depend in part on the diversity sought.

FIGURE 3-13.
Example

In the AIMS/SEEP set of tools, the Client Satisfaction tool uses focus groups. In both tools tests, existing village banks were the focus groups, including all members, regardless of demographic characteristics. Based on their experience, clients were able to respond authoritatively to questions about what they liked and disliked with the lending methodology.

Focus Group Discussion: A Progression

Focus group questions logically fall into the following five categories (Krueger, 1997):

- *Opening.* Get acquainted and help participants feel comfortable with the process. Introduce yourself and the purpose of the discussion. Have clients introduce themselves if they do not already know each other. Then pose a brief question that can be answered quickly and that will open the discussion. For example, if clients are members of the same solidarity group, ask how long they have been together. If clients are unknown to each other, ask each how long he or she has participated in the program.

- *Warm-up.* Introduce a series of questions that model the type of questions to be asked during the focus group. For example, in the Client Satisfaction tool included in this manual, clients will be asked to discuss what they like and dislike about the program. To acquaint them with this concept, introduce a familiar topic from their daily lives that they can discuss in this way.

- *Transition.* Move from the warm-up to the "real" questions by explaining that this is the process we will use in talking about the loan program.

- *Key questions.* Key questions focus the discussion on the topic that drives the study; in this case, client satisfaction—what clients specifically like and dislike about the program. Everyone should participate. If gaining consensus on particular issues is important, establish a voting procedure in which all clients feel comfortable about their individual responses (see the discussion of this tool in chapter 7 for an explanation of the nominal group process).

- *Ending.* At this time, summarize what has been said. The ending question might provide the opportunity for each client to restate his or her position about one or more issues that have been discussed. Such a question might be: *"Suppose the executive director of the organization gave you one minute to tell him what you would like to have changed about the program, what would you say?"* It is also the time for participants to ask you, the interviewer, any questions. Finally, close the interview and thank the participants for their contributions.

Participatory Rapid Assessment

Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA) techniques (1) empower participants with control over the research process, (2) open communication, and (3) make evaluation research more interactive. (Narayan 1996). To use these techniques successfully, a workshop setting is used rather than the individual interview. Workshop activities engage clients in the exploration of their ideas using drawing, stories, and theater, encouraging them to go deeper into their experiences and to challenge themselves to identify significant changes that have occurred in their lives as a result of

program participation. The researcher must go where the client wants to go and enter the world of the client's experience to "see" the program as the client sees it.

While PRA techniques are not a significant feature in this set of tools, the Client Empowerment tool does include an option for using PRA in its application.

Observation

Observation is a key ingredient of all qualitative research. A researcher will interview or facilitate *and* observe, simultaneously. The purpose of observation is to try and confirm or elaborate on responses a client has provided in the interview.

Keen observation is an important tool for identifying apparent contradictions—those instances when what the client says in response to a question stands in marked contrast to his or her behavior or demeanor, to what you have heard informally about this client, or to his or her surroundings. Look for these indications and nonverbal cues that something is not quite right about the client's response. Let your observations inspire your probing.

Sampling Frames for Qualitative Research

Qualitative evaluation research does not have the same sampling requirements as quantitative or survey-based research. The purposes of sampling in each type of inquiry are very different. Because surveys are designed to generate data that can be generalized to a broader population, sampling must be random and large enough to adequately represent the population. In contrast, qualitative studies most often generate detailed data applicable to the specific program being evaluated. In this case, sampling is generally purposive; that is, clients are chosen *because* they have specific characteristics and can provide information on the specific goal of the research. The type of information the researcher is looking for will determine the type of individuals chosen. Following any one of several sampling strategies, the researcher can select clients who represent the following (Patton, 1990):

- Extreme or deviant cases (outstanding successes or notable failures);

- Obvious cases that clearly demonstrate the phenomenon you want to assess;

- Maximum variation (rural/urban);

- Typical cases or ones that exemplify an average outcome of program participation;

- Typical high- and low-performing clients;

- Critical cases to make a specific point very dramatically;

- Client-recommended clients (snowball or chain) to identify who knows the most about a particular phenomenon;

- Criterion to understand a particular point of importance; or

- Confirming and disproving cases to document why an individual or group either follows or does not follow a particular pattern.

Several examples illustrate this sampling strategies:

- For type 1, a sample of clients who are in arrears for 30 days might be chosen to determine why clients have difficulty repaying.

- For type 3, a sample of urban manufacturers might be sampled to identify their program likes and dislikes and compared with a group of urban traders to determine if there is a difference in satisfaction.

- For type 8, in attempting to understand the specific impact of each loan in a sequence of loans, the sample might include a limited number of individuals in different cycles (for example, first through fourth) in order to understand how loan use evolves and how program benefits change over time.

In qualitative research, the size of the sample is relative or appropriate to the purpose of the research. Often it is determined by striking a balance among competing factors such as time, cost, usefulness, and validity. Sample size will vary depending on what the researcher wants to know and the purpose of the inquiry, as well as what is at stake, what information will be useful and credible, and what the researcher can accomplish with available time and resources. (Patton, 1990) In cases of very small samples, selecting "information-rich" clients to interview is critical (Patton, 1990).

In summary, sampling frames for qualitative inquiry are more directed and purposeful than those in quantitative inquiries because the data gathered are to illustrate a particular issue in depth. To learn more about the issue, clients who fall into specific categories and who are good sources for information should be purposefully chosen for interview and observation.

Conclusion

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are valid and acceptable if, in their application, researchers follow the principles discussed in this chapter. In the set of tools in this manual, AIMS has combined the two types of inquiry, purposely creating overlap in their areas of inquiry, which enables the qualitative and quantitative data to complement and strengthen the other. The Impact Survey enables statistical comparisons of clients and a control group; the Loan Use Strategies Over Time and Client Empowerment tools will provide substance and context to those results. The quantitative Client Exit Survey and the Client Satisfaction focus group should prove useful to management looking to improve program services. Microenterprise institutions, particularly those that expand outreach, open branch offices among different ethnic groups, and otherwise diversify their clientele, will draw from both types of inquiry as they seek to understand their markets, determine how to adapt their products and delivery systems, and anticipate how clients will interact with the program.

Chapter 4

**Tool #1:
Impact Survey**

- Impact Survey

Chapter 4
Tool #1:
Impact Survey

Welcome to the biggest chapter in this manual, *Learning from Clients: Assessment Tools for Microfinance Practitioners*. In addition to presenting Tool#1, Impact Survey, this chapter includes an additional six parts (parts A through F). These parts introduce the rationale for the survey indicators; provide step-by-step guidance for the survey's application, including sampling and interviewer training; and walk users through data analysis. The following parts contribute to the overall understanding of the Impact Survey:

Part A, Survey Objectives and Design: Introduces the objectives and presents the design of the survey.

Part B, Survey Indicators and Hypotheses: Outlines the indicators and corresponding hypotheses included in the Impact Survey.

Part C, Optional Indicators and Questions: Includes optional indicators and questions for the survey.

Part D, Interviewer Training: Serves as a guide to training survey interviewers; includes a five-day schedule and suggested training activities; stresses that the quality of the survey results depends primarily on how well and how thoroughly the interviewers are trained.

Part E, Guidelines for Sampling: Presents sampling and data collection guidelines for the Impact Survey and includes methods for randomly sampling groups and individual clients. (The enclosed diskette contains a copy of the survey; an Epi Info data entry file; and guidelines for a question-by-question analysis using Epi Info, the analysis software.)

Part F, Guidelines for Data Coding and Analysis: Includes guidelines for data coding and analysis with specific instructions for using Epi Info.

Tool #1:
Impact Survey

Type of tool:
> Quantitative

Overview:
> The Impact Survey is administered to three groups selected at random: a group of short-term clients (about one year's time in the program), a group of longer-term clients (two years or more in the program), and a group of new clients who have joined the program but have not yet received any services. The survey is administered in the same way to all respondents; their answers are expressed largely in terms of numbers corresponding to pre-coded responses.

Hypotheses tested by this tool:
> At the household level:
> - Increased income
> - Increased assets
> - Increased welfare (in such aspects as food security, housing, and health)
>
> At the individual level:
> - Increased control of resources on the part of women clients
> - No negative impacts on children's labor
> - Increases in paid labor–and in the productivity of labor for women, without negative consequences
> - Increased self-esteem on the part of women clients
>
> At the enterprise level:
> - Increased net worth
> - Increased net cash flow
> - Increased differentiation between the microenterprise and household
>
> At the community level:
> - Increases in paid employment by client families/households

Purpose:
> The purpose of the Impact Survey is to test multiple hypotheses that correspond to various types of impact using a tool that is practical, cost effective, credible, and valid.

Amount of time required to administer the tool:
> About 60 minutes (1 hour)

Source:
> Barbara MkNelly of Freedom from Hunger originally wrote this survey tool with input from the SEEP/AIMS team and revisions based on field tests.

Impact Survey—SEEP/AIMS Project

Client identification number: _____   Community: _____

Name of interviewer: _____   Date of interview: _____

[__] 1. Client of about 1 year   [__] 2. Client of more than 2 yrs   [__] 3. Non-client or in training

---

Client information only*: (Complete from program records, when possible, or by asking client.)*

Name of group: _____   Group's current loan cycle: [_____]

Date joined program: _____ (day/mo/yr)   Total months in program: [_____]

No. of program loans client has taken: [_____]   Is client behind in repayments? (*circle*): Y N

Current savings amount with program: [_____]   Is savings more than required amt.? (*circle*): Y N

Amount of 1st program loan: [_____]   Amount of current loan: [_____]

Cumulative value of all loans taken: [_____]

(Introduce yourself; explain the purpose of the survey and the voluntary nature of the interview.)

Individual Level: Basic Information

1a. Have you ever been a member of the (*insert organization name*) _____ program?
    1 = Yes   0 = No
    (If yes, go to #1b.)   *(If no, go to #2.)*   ❏

1b. If yes, how long were you a member? (*Check that information matches expected client status.*)
    1 = About 1 year   2 = About 2 years   ❏

2. Gender of client
    1 = Male   2 = Female   ❏

3. How old are you?
    Specify number of years   99 = Don't know   ❏

4. Currently, are you …? (*Read answers. Enter only one.*)
    1 = Married/free union   3 = Widowed
    2 = Separated/divorced   4 = Single/never married   ❏

5. How many years of school have you completed?
    Specify number of years   99 = Don't know   ❏

6. If someone sent you a letter, could you read it?
    1 = Yes   0 = No   99 = Don't know   ❏

Household Level: Basic Information

7. How many persons in your household—those who live together and share the same food at least once in a day—are…

Number of persons:

Adults—18 years of age or older ☐

Children—17 years of age or younger ☐

8a. How many persons in your household are working—engaged in work that earns income or products?
Number economically active ☐

8b. How many persons in your household have a job that earns them a regular income?
Number of salaried workers ☐

9. Who is the head of your household— the person who is the principal decision-maker?

| 1 = Self | 2 = Male relative (husband, father, brother, uncle, grandfather, father-in-law, brother-in-law) | 3 = Female relative (mother, sister, aunt, grandmother, mother-in-law) | ☐ |

Education of Children *(Adjust ages used to define "school-aged" to each site)*

10a. How many children in your household are school-aged (5-17 years of age)?
Total number of school-aged children ☐

10b. How many of these children currently attend school?
Total number in school ☐

10c. How many of these children have never attended school?
Total number never in school ☐

10d. What is the highest grade level that any of your children has completed?
Highest grade in terms of number of years in school ☐

11. How does the amount your household spent on school and school expenses for this current school year compare to what you spent last school year. Did the amount… (*Read answers and enter response.*)

| 1 = | 2 = | 3 = | 99 = | 98 = | ☐ |
| Decrease | Stay the same | Increase | Don't know | Not applicable | |

Loan Use and Individual Income

12a. *(Clients only)* Did you invest any of the last loan you took from the (*insert organization name*) _____ program into an income-generating activity?

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐
(Go to #12b.)	*(Go to #12c.)*	*(Go to #12c.)*	

12b. *(Clients only)* How did you invest the last loan you took from the (*insert organization name*) _____ program? (*Do not read. Multiple answers possible.*)

1 =	2 =	3 =	4 =	98 =	☐
Commerce/ trade/retail (includes petty trade)	Manufacturing (includes food processing, textile production, crafts, leather work)	Service (includes hairdressing, restaurants, food stalls, cleaning services)	Agriculture (includes food or other crop production, animal raising)	Not applicable; did not invest the loan in an income-generating enterprise	

12c. *(Clients only)* Did you use any portion of your last loan to…? (*Read each statement. Fill in appropriate box.*)

1. Buy food for your household

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐

2. Buy clothes or other household items

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐

3. Give or loan the money to your spouse or someone else

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐

4. Keep money on hand in case of an emergency or to repay the loan

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐

13. Over the last 12 months, has your household's overall income...? (*Read answers and enter response.*)

1 =	2 =	3 =	4 =	5 =	99 =	☐
Decreased greatly	Decreased	Stayed the same	Increased	Increased greatly	Don't know	

14a. Over the last 12 months, has the income you have been able to earn...? (*Read answers and enter response.*)

1 =	2 =	3 =	4 =	5 =	99 =	☐
Decreased greatly	Decreased	Stayed the same	Increased	Increased greatly	Don't know	
(Go to #14b.)	*(Go to #14b.)*	*(Go to #15a.)*	*(Go to #14c.)*	*(Go to #14c.)*	*(Go to #15a.)*	

14b. *(If decreased at all)* Why did your income decrease? (*Do not read. Multiple answers possible. Then go to #15.*)

1 =	2 =	3 =	4 =	5 =	6 =	99 =	☐
I or house-hold member has been sick	Poor sales	Unable to get inputs	Agricul-tural pro-duction was poor	Lost job	Other (specify) ＿＿＿＿ ＿＿＿＿ ＿＿	Don't know	

14c. *(If increased at all)* Why did your income increase? (*Do not read. Multiple answers possible.*)

1 =	2 =	3 =	4 =	5 =	6 =	99 =	☐
Expand-ed exist-ing enter-prise	Under-took new enter-prise	Able to buy inputs at cheaper price	Sold in new markets	Got a job	Other (specify) ＿＿＿＿ ＿＿＿＿ ＿＿	Don't know	

Enterprise Level: Income, Labor, and Profit

15a. In the last 4 weeks, did you work for anyone else for pay?

    1 = Yes   0 = No   99 = Don't know   ☐

15b. In the last 4 weeks, did you engage in your own enterprise or income-generating activity other than farming? *(include seasonal or piece work)*

    1 = Yes   0 = No   99 = Don't know   ☐

    (Go to #16a.)   *(Go to #20.)*   *(Go to #20.)*

16a. *(If yes to #15b.)* In the last 4 weeks, which of these enterprise activities earned you the most income?
  Activity #1: ＿＿＿

16b. Is this enterprise activity…? (*Read answers and enter only one.*)

1 = Primarily your own enterprise	2 = Primarily a household enterprise	3 = A business partnership with others not in your household	☐

16c. What is your product cycle for this enterprise—how long does it take from the time you purchase inputs to the time you sell most of the product? For example, if you sell cooked food in the market once a week and buy your ingredients on a weekly basis, you earn a weekly profit. If you fatten animals for sale you probably earn a profit every six months when they are sold. (*Read the possible responses.*)

1 = Weekly	2 = Every 2 weeks	3 = Monthly	4 = Other (specify) ＿＿＿＿＿＿	☐

16d. What and how much were your costs for your last product cycle? (*Probe for all enterprise expenses, including inputs, transportation, hired labor, taxes, rent, water, light, and so forth. List expenses and costs in appropriate time periods.*)

Expense	Cost per week	Cost per 2 weeks	Cost per month	Expense for other time period; specify period

16e. Sales: For the same product cycle, what were your total sales (cash and credit)? (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

Weekly sales	Sales per 2 weeks	Monthly sales	Sales for other time period; specify

16f. Profit: For the same product cycle, after covering your enterprise costs—but before you spent your earnings on your family—what was your profit? (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

Weekly profit	Profit per 2 weeks	Monthly profit	Profit for other time period; specify

17a. In the last 4 weeks, which enterprise activities earned you the second greatest amount of income? (***NOTE:** If there is no secondary activity, proceed to question 18.*)
   Activity #2: _____

17b. Is this enterprise activity…? (*Read answers and enter only one.*)

1 = Primarily your own enterprise   2 = Primarily a household enterprise   3 = A business partnership with others not in your household   ☐

17c. What is your product cycle for this income-generating activity—how long does it take from the time you purchase inputs to the time you sell most of the product? (*Read the possible responses.*)

1 = Weekly   2 = Every 2 weeks   3 = Monthly   4 = Other (specify)   ☐
_____

17d. What and how much were your costs for your last product cycle? (*Probe for all enterprise expenses, including inputs, transportation, hired labor, taxes, rent, water, light, and so forth. List expenses and costs in appropriate time periods.*)

Expense	Cost per week	Cost per 2 weeks	Cost per month	Expense for other time period; specify period

17e. Sales: For the same product cycle, what were your total sales (cash and credit)? (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

Weekly sales	Sales per 2 weeks	Monthly sales	Sales for other time period; specify

17f. Profit: For the same product cycle, after covering your enterprise costs—but before you spent your earnings on your family—what was your profit? (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

Weekly profit	Profit per 2 weeks	Monthly profit	Profit for other time period; specify

18. *(If client answered #16)* (**INTERVIEWER:** *Rate the client's ability to estimate his or her profit, costs, and earnings. RECORD YOUR OBSERVATIONS AS AN INTERVIEWER. SO NOT ASK!*)

1 = Great deal of difficulty   2 = Some difficulty   3 = No difficulty   ☐

19. *(If answered #16)* In the last 4 weeks, how many children helped you with either of these enterprise activities?

	Number of children	Number of children who missed school or never enrolled in school so that they could help you with this work
Under 10 years of age		
11 to 17 years of age		

20. During the last 12 months, in what **three** principal ways did you use the profit from your enterprise activity? Tell me the one you used the most money for first. (*Do not read answers.*)

1 = Buy food	5 = Buy items for the house	9 = Other (specify)	☐
2 = Buy clothing		99 = Don't know	
3 = Pay school expenses	6 = Reinvest in my enterprise	98 = Not applicable; has no enterprise activity	
4 = Pay health-related costs	7 = Save		
	8 = Animal raising		

Enterprise Level: Income, Labor, and Profit

21. During the last 12 months, did you make any of the following changes to your enterprise activity? (*Read list of possible changes. Mark the appropriate box with an X.*)	1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know
a. Expanded size of enterprise			
b. Added now products			
c. Hired more workers			
d. Improved quality or desirability of product/add value			
e. Reduced costs by buying inputs in greater volume or at wholesale prices			
f. Reduced costs with cheaper source of credit			
g. Developed a new enterprise			
h. Sold in new markets/locations			
22. During the last 12 months, did you purchase or invest in any of the following assets for your enterprise activity? (*Read list of possible changes. Mark the appropriate box with an X.*)	1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know
a. Purchased small tools/accessories such as cooking utensils, hoes, plow, baskets, basins, barrels			
b. Purchased major tools such as stoves, equipment, machinery			
c. Purchased own means of transportation such as a bicycle, pushcart			
d. Invested in a storage structure such as a granary, stock room			
e. Made a minor investment in your marketing site by purchasing a chair, table, shed, or the like			
f. Invested in structures for your marketing site (kiosk, shop)			

Individual Level: Savings and Enterprise Skills

23. Do you currently have any personal cash savings that you keep in case of emergencies or because you plan to make a major purchase or investment?

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐
(Go to #24)	*(Go to #25)*	*(Go to #25)*	

24. During the last 12 months, has your personal cash savings...? (*Read answers and enter response.*)

1 =	2 =	3 =	4 =	5 =	99 =	☐
Decreased greatly	Decreased	Stayed the same	Increased	Increased greatly	Don't know	

25. When you are deciding to undertake a enterprise, what factors do you consider? (*Do not read answers. Multiple answers possible. Probe by asking, "And anything else?"*)

1 = Work I am familiar with/It is the season/Others are doing it

3 = How much working capital is needed/ Whether I have enough money

5 = Other (specify)

99 = Don't know

☐

2 = Whether the product or service is in demand or whether it seems profitable

4 = Whether I can do it and still take care of my family and other responsibilities

26a. In managing your enterprise activity,… *(Read.)* *(For clients, read across the row by item.)*	(*Mark the appropriate answer with an X*)			**26b.** (***Clients only***) Is this a practice you have adopted since you joined the program?	
	1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = DK	1 = Yes	0 = No
a. Do you keep your enterprise money separate from the money you have for personal and household expenses?					
b. Do you calculate your profit based on records of your costs and earnings?					
c. Do you know which product(s) bring you the most profit?					
d. Do you pay yourself a wage for your work in your enterprise?					
e. Do you have a fixed location with protection from the sun and rain for selling your products, such as a store, stall, or kiosk?					
f. Do you have a fixed location for producing or storing your products that is different from the location where your family lives?					

Household Level: Assets

27. Now I have some questions about items that your household might own. *(An appropriate list of assets must be created for each site.)* I will read a list of items and I would like you to indicate if you or anyone in your household owns any of these items.

Item *(Read across by row a.-d. item by item.)*	a. Does anyone in the household own this item? *(Read and check box if "yes.")*	b. How many are in good condition (work well)?	c. Was this item (or more of this item) acquired during the last 2 years? *(Mark with an X.)*		d. (**Clients only**) Were you a member of the program when this item (or more of this item) was acquired?	
			1 = Yes	0 = No	1 = Yes	0 = No
Consumer Assets of Relative Modest Value—On average worth less than $100						
Radio or tape player						
Chairs/benches/tables						
Consumer Assets of Mid-range Value—On average worth more than $100 but less than $1000						
Bicycle						
Frame bed w/mattress						
Stove/refrigerator						
Television						
Consumer Assets of High-range Value—On average worth more than $1000						
Motorcycle						
Car/pick-up truck						
Tractor						

Household Level Welfare: Housing Improvements

28. During the last two years, were any repairs, improvements or additions made to your home that cost more than $50?

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	▢
(Go to #29)	*(Go to #30)*	*(Go to #30)*	

29. *(If "yes" to #28)* Which of the following have you done in the last two years?

Housing Repairs, Improvements, or Additions *(For clients, read across the row by item.)*	a. (*Read and check if "yes."*)	b. (**Clients only**) Were you a member of the program when this was done? (*Mark with an X.*)	
		1 = Yes	0 = No
a. House repairs or improvements (for example, fixed or improved existing roof, floor, or walls)			
b. House expansion (for example, built new room, shed, attic, or fence)			
c. Improved water or sanitation system (for example, new well, drainage/sewage system, or showers-latrine-wash basin)			
d. Lighting/electricity			

Household Level Welfare: Diet and Coping with Difficult Times

30. During the last 12 months, has your household's diet (*Read answers and indicate response.*)

1 = Worsened	2 = Stayed the same	3 = Improved	99 = Don't know	☐
(Go to #31a)	*(Go to #32a)*	*(Go to #31b)*	*(Go to #32a)*	

31a. *(If worsened)* How has it worsened? _____ *(Then go to #32a)*

31b. *(If improved)* How has it improved? (*Do not read answers. Multiple answers possible. Probe by asking, "And anything else?"*)

1 = Able to buy more cereal staples—maize, rice	3 = Able to buy more animal/dairy products—meat, milk, cheese, eggs	6 = Able to eat better during the hungry season	☐
2 = Able to buy more condiments, vegetables, legumes to eat with staples	4 = Able to buy more convenience foods like pasta	7 = Able to eat three meals in a day	
	5 = Able to buy more cooked foods	8 = Other (specify) _____ 99 = Don't know	

32a. During the last 12 months, was there ever a time when it was necessary for your household to eat less or eat less well either because of a lack of food or a lack of money to buy food?

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐
(Go to #32b)	*(Go to #33a)*	*(Go to #33a)*	

32b. How long did this period last?
Specify number of months   99 = Don't know   ☐

32c. What did your household do to get through this difficult situation? *(Read answers. Multiple answers possible.)*

1 = Borrowed money or food from family/friend at no cost	3 = Sold personal property	5 = Self or someone else in family got local employment	☐
2 = Borrowed money or food at cost	4 = Self or someone else in family left area to seek employment	6 = Other (specify) _____ 99 = Don't know	

33a. During the last 12 months, was there ever a time when you did not have enough money to conduct your enterprise?

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐
(Go to #32b)			

33b. How long did this period last?
Specify number of months   99 = Don't know   ☐

> ********End for non-clients—express thanks for their time—answer any questions or concerns they may have regarding the interview********

Questions for year 1 and year 2 clients only

34a. Did you face any difficulty repaying your loan to the program in the last loan cycle?

1 = Yes	0 = No	99 = Don't know	☐
(Go to #34b)	*(Go to #35)*	*(Go to #35)*	

34b. *(If yes)* What caused your repayment problems? (*Do not read answers. Probe.*)

1 = Loan activity was not profitable	3 = Used some of the loan money for food or other items for the household	5 = Other (specify) _____	☐
2 = I or others in my family had been sick		99 = Don't know	
	4 = Sold on credit and did not get paid back in time		

35. Name **three** things you like most about the (*insert organization name*) _____ program. (*Do not read answers.*)

1 = Lower interest rate than other informal sources of credit (informal lenders)	4 = Training or technical assistance	7 = Easier guarantees than loan alternatives	☐
2 = Steady source of working capital	5 = Other financial services, such as savings or insurance	8 = Other (specify) _____	☐
3 = Group solidarity and/or group dynamics	6 = Efficiency, compared to banks or other sources	99 = Don't know	☐

36. Name **three** things you like least about the (*insert organization name*) _____ program. (*Do not read answers.*)

1 = High interest rates or commission	6 = Meeting place/office not convenient	10 = Dislike behavior/ attitude of loan officer or other program personnel	☐
2 = Size of initial or subsequent loans too small	7 = Repayment policies (frequency, amount)	11 = Lack of grace period	☐
3 = Loan cycle too long or too short	8 = Guarantee policies	12 = Forced savings or insurance	☐
4 = Problematic group dynamics (with leaders or at meetings)	9 = Transaction costs for client (such as slow disbursement or have to cash checks)	13 = Other (specify) _____	
5 = Meeting frequency too often or meetings too long		14 = Nothing	
		99 = Don't know	

37. If you could change something about the (*insert organization name)* program to make it even better, what would you change? _____
_____
_____

*****End for clients—express thanks for their time—answer any questions*****

**Chapter 4
Tool #1:
Impact Survey**

**Part A
Survey Objectives and
Design**

- Objectives and development of the Impact Survey

- Cross-sectional design

Chapter 4
Part A
Survey Objectives and Design

Objectives and Development of the Impact Survey

The objective of the Impact Survey is to offer practitioners a tool for evaluating whether their microenterprise programs are achieving the types of impacts—enterprise development, economic growth, family/household economic security, and community development—described in the conceptual framework used by AIMS. As outlined in chapter 2, the Impact Survey focuses on testing those AIMS hypotheses determined to be of particular interest to the practitioner organizations participating in the Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network. Development of the Impact Survey, as with the other tools in this manual, was guided by a desire for credible and valid evaluation tools that are practitioner-oriented, practical, and cost-effective.

To develop the Impact Survey, the SEEP team

1. selected indicators with which to measure change;

2. drafted questions and approaches to collect the information needed for those indicators;

3. created a survey with logical sequence and good flow of the survey questions;

4. adapted the indicators and questions to microenterprise programs in Honduras and Mali to test the survey; and

5. refined the indicators, questions, and survey instrument based on those two tests.

Because it addresses a relatively large number of impact hypotheses, the Impact Survey is long. Many practitioner organizations may elect to use only parts of the "core" survey. Conversely, those organizations wanting to go into greater depth in certain impact areas may choose from additional optional questions presented in chapter 4, part C. Each optional question was tested but not included in the core survey because the questions were determined to require too much time in either their collection or analysis for the general applicability and/or relevance of the information they provide.

The Impact Survey *must not* be viewed or used as a completed, off-the-shelf evaluation instrument. Guided by the AIMS impact framework, the core survey included in this manual takes into account a variety of factors—including family/household and individual demographics and time in the program—that will affect a program's ultimate impact. No single instrument,

however, can be sensitive to the many factors that affect program outcomes. That these factors change from place to place make it essential for practitioners to adapt the survey.

The survey instrument will likely require two types of revisions: (1) those that make the survey questions and pre-established responses appropriate to the program's clients and their cultural and geographic context, and (2) those that make the survey responsive to the program's particular impact goals. For example, if your organization provides health education services, consider developing hypotheses, indicators, and questions that address the impact of that component.

Cross-sectional Design

The Impact Survey uses a cross-sectional design, which collects information at one point in time only. Many practitioner organizations may be more familiar with a longitudinal study design that includes baseline (pre-test) and followup (post-test) data collection rounds, which are the norm for many USAID-funded development projects.

For practitioner-friendly evaluation tools, a cross-sectional approach offers two distinct advantages:

6. It is more timely in providing impact information than is a longitudinal design, making it immediately useful to program managers; and

7. It is less expensive and resource intensive because it requires only one round of data collection.

In addition, the data collected can serve as a base line for later use.

During the initial design work on these practitioner tools, several of the participating organizations strongly advocated for a cross-sectional approach, saying that too often they have had experience with baseline studies that were never followed up. Practitioners argued that when both the institutional will and resources are in place to explore and better document program impact, the results are needed more immediately than the three to five years typically required by a longitudinal approach.

Figure 4A-1, Pros and Cons of Various Research Designs for the AIMS Practitioner's Impact Survey, summarizes the pros and cons of six design strategies considered by the tools team. In keeping with its mandate to develop relatively simple, low-cost, yet valid and credible, evaluation tools, the team selected option 2.

Option 1, clients only, was not seriously considered because, despite its popularity with practitioners who want a "quick and dirty" impact study, it is not considered valid. It depends only on client self-reports; and the lack of a comparison group makes it impossible to know whether the changes clients describe exist because of the program or if they simply represent general trends in the area.

Option 3, clients and non-clients, is perhaps the most common cross-sectional design used in evaluation research. The responses of clients are compared to those of non-clients through a "with/without" framework. Because it includes a comparison group, this approach represents an improvement relative to option 1.

The design team believes, however, that option 2, mature clients and incoming clients, is the most promising and valid of the cross-sectional approaches.[9]. With option 2, the comparison group is composed of the program's incoming clients. They represent the best comparison group since they have not been in the program long enough to exhibit impact; yet they should be similar "types" of people as those in the client sample because they also chose to join the program. In addition, it is easier to select a comparison group from existing lists of incoming clients than it is to select non-clients at random.

This choice of comparison group addresses a major methodological problem of impact evaluations—self-selection bias. Not everyone chooses to use microenterprise services. Individuals who do become program clients are likely to be inherently different from the general population. If differences are found between client and non-client samples, it is impossible to know whether they are due to the effects of the program or if they simply reflect the inherent differences between the two groups. Using incoming clients as the comparison group helps to minimize the self-selection bias since they also elected to join the program. As pointed out in figure 4A-1, however, some self-selection bias might still exist because those who chose to stay with the program for relatively long periods of time (the mature clients) may be inherently different from the general pool of clients who initially join. Some of the incoming clients will exit the program relatively soon after joining.

The timing when incoming clients choose to join the program might also influence their appropriateness as a comparison group. For example, it may be that those who join early when a program is first introduced into a community are better off and less risk adverse than those who join later. If possible, select incoming clients who joined at a comparable stage of the program's implementation as the client sample. For the Mali test, incoming clients were randomly selected from village banks just being formed in new program communities. The two-year clients were randomly selected from village banks that were two years old, and similarly, one-year clients from village banks that had been operating for one year. In this way, all three sample groups were composed of clients who joined in the first loan cycle of a new village bank.

In general, longitudinal approaches are superior to cross-sectional designs when they include collection of data in two time periods from the same respondents. Although option 4 is a longitudinal design, it does not include interviews with the same respondents, and so it is

---

[9] The absence of clients who have left the program (dropouts) means that the study results could overestimate or underestimate program impact. Researchers need to be very transparent that the results pertain only to those who have stayed in the program and should provide dropout rates so the reader can better understand the proportion that remains in the program. (See Barnes and Sebstad, *Guidelines for Microfinance Impact Assessments*, 2000.) The team concluded that covering dropouts would make sampling too difficult and would be too time consuming for the intended users of these tools.

difficult to assign differences found between new and mature clients to program participation. Options 5 and 6 are the better longitudinal designs.

Option 5, interviewing the same group of clients at two different points in time, and option 6, comparing clients to non-clients at two different points in time, are better able to measure change and attribute it to the effect of the program. They are relatively more expensive, however, and their logistics and analysis more complicated. Sample sizes must be larger to compare results from two time periods. Because the same individuals would be interviewed in both time periods, sample sizes must be large enough to account for attrition between the baseline and followup period. In some programs, client attrition can be as high as 50 percent over a two-year period, requiring that the sample size in the baseline period be twice as large as the targeted number for the followup. Still, if practitioner organizations have the institutional will, resources, and skill to carry out a multiyear longitudinal impact evaluation with comparison groups, this would be the best, most valid, and most widely accepted approach. The Impact Survey described here could certainly be applied in this manner. Given the mandate and cost-consciousness of the practitioner tools, however, the design team opted to focus on developing and testing option 2.

Pros and Cons of Various Research Designs for the AIMS Practitioner's Impact Survey

Cross-sectional Design	Interview Clients Only (for option 2 incoming clients act as comparison group)		Interview Clients and Comparison Group of Non-clients
Conduct survey only once. **Pros** Get impact information more quickly. Survey and analysis are less expensive with only one data collection round. **Cons** Aim is to understand change over time; cross-sectional study gives information about only one point in time.	**OPTION 1** "Mature" clients (n=100): those in the program long enough to exhibit impact. **Measure change by—** 1. Clients' self-reports since joining the program; 2. Comparison to targets set by program; or 3. National- or department-level data. **Pros** Most inexpensive, simple, and straightforward option because sample size is small with one group. Have prior contact and relationship with clients, so they are easy to sample and locate. Analysis is easy because self-reported change does not require comparisons of two groups. **Cons** Most common approach used by practitioners. Not considered particularly valid since self-reported change and no comparison group. (Differences found could be because of general improvement in program area or because better-off people tend to join the program.) **Estimated cost** Assume 100 interviews: approximately $4,000-$7,000.	**OPTION 2 (used for tools tests)** "Mature" clients (n=100) vs. "new or incoming" clients (n=100–people not in program long enough to expect impact). (Could include two mature client samples with different lengths of program exposure, as with Mali test.) **Measure change by—** Comparing responses of mature clients to those of new clients, assuming that groups have similar characteristics; any differences due to greater exposure to program. **Pros** Better than option 1 because of comparison group (new clients). Even though cross-sectional, get sense of time (before/after the program) by including clients with different degrees of program exposure. Easier to locate and sample the clients because have prior relationship with them. New clients are likely to be a more valid comparison group than randomly selected non-clients since they self-selected to the program. **Cons** Requires new and mature clients come from similar types of communities and have similar characteristics. Requires coordination between implementation and evaluation plan since need pool of new clients who ideally have "joined" the program but have received little to no services yet. Possible self-selection problem since not all clients stay in the program; those who stay may be systematically different. **Estimated cost** Assume 200 interviews (100 each group): more than 2x estimated costs for option 1 because more complicated logistics/analysis—$9,000-$14,000.	**OPTION 3** "Mature" clients (n=100) vs. non-clients (n=100) comparison group (randomly selected individuals from similar "types" of communities not included in program and not receiving similar program). **Measure change by—** Comparing responses of clients and comparison group. **Pros** Better than option 1 because have comparison group, and rather than depend on clients' self-reported change, can see difference "with" and "without" program. **Cons** Requires that non-client comparison group comes from similar types of communities and have similar characteristics as the clients. Not as good as option 2 because non-clients did not self-select to join the program and could be systematically different from client sample so likely to be greater self-selection. Also question of who to interview in non-client families/households? Maybe several adults in same family/household engage in enterprise activity. **Estimated cost** Assumed to be comparable to option 2: $9,000-$14,000.

Figure 4A-1 (continued)

Longitudinal Design	Interview Clients Only (for option 5 incoming clients act as comparison group)		Interview Clients and Comparison Group of Non-clients
Conduct same survey at least two times: T1, baseline; T2, followup.

Trend: different people in T1 and T2.

Panel: same people in T1 and T2

Pros
Opportunity to look at change over time, which is what want to evaluate.

Cons
Requires several years before have impact results. More expensive and more complicated to analyze. Need larger samples to compare results from two surveys. | **OPTION 4**
Trend: different people interviewed in T1 and T2.

T1: conduct baseline interview with "new" clients or in new program communities (n=150).

T2: go back to same communities or groups and interview different "mature" clients. Compare change over time between two groups (n=150).

Pros
Get sense of trend over time for clients.

Cons
No comparison group to know if general improvement or deterioration in the program area that might explain differences between T1 and T2. Common for baseline to be done in program community, but when program offered not everyone will join; so self-selection bias between T1 and T2 if do not interview "new" borrowers. Need bigger samples to compare results of two surveys.

Estimated cost
Assume 300 interviews: $12,000-$21,000. | **OPTION 5**
Panel: same people interviewed in T1 and T2.

Like option 4, but interview same clients in both time periods.

T1: do baseline interview with "new" clients or in new program communities (N=300).

T2: go back to same communities and re-interview same clients after they have been in the program a longer time. Compare change over time between two time periods (N=150).

Pros
Better able to attribute change to program since same people.

Cons
More expensive and complicated. Need large T1 samples because some people will leave the area or drop out of the program. For example, if 50% attrition over 2 years, need T1 sample of 300 people to ensure sample of 150 for T2. Logistics difficult to locate the same people to re-interview.

Estimated cost
Assume 450 interviews: $20,200-$31,500. | **OPTION 6**
Panel: same people interviewed in T1 and T2.

T1: compare "new" clients vs. non-client comparison group (see option 3).

T2: re-interview same clients who are now "mature" clients vs. same non-client comparison group in T1 communities.

Measure change by—
Comparing change from T1 and T2 for clients vs. non-clients.

Pros (ideal design)
Get sense of change over time for same clients, and by having comparison group, able to "control" for possible history effect (general change in the area not due to factors external to the program).

Cons
Same cons as option 3: need similar non-program communities, greater likelihood of self-selection bias, whom to interview in comparison group families/households. Also quite expensive since need large samples in T1 for clients (as in option 4) plus need comparison group. Question about compliance of comparison group that would be interviewed 2 times but not receive benefits of program.

Estimated cost
Assume 800 interviews (T1, 300 clients and 200 non-clients; T2, 150 clients and 150 non-clients): $36,000-$56,000. |

**Chapter 4
Tool #1:
Impact Survey**

**Part B
Survey Indicators
and Hypotheses**

- Enterprise-level hypotheses and survey indicators

- Family/household-level hypotheses and survey indicators

- Individual-level hypotheses and survey indicators

- Community-level hypotheses and survey indicators

- Indicators of client satisfaction and feedback

- Mediating or independent factors

Chapter 4
Part B
Survey Indicators and Hypotheses

Chapter 4, part B, outlines the specific indicators included in the core Impact Survey, highlighting specific issues when necessary. Figure 4B-1 presents a list of all indicators used in the survey, organized by the four levels specified in the conceptual framework used by AIMS—enterprise, family/household, individual, and community. Following this list is a description of each indicator, including the relevant impact domain and hypothesis it addresses, its corresponding survey question number, and a description of the rationale for (and/or issues related to) using this indicator based on the experience of the two tools tests in Honduras and Mali.

FIGURE 4B-1.
Summary of Indicators Included in the Core Impact Survey

Impact Indicators at the Level of the Enterprise

Income Flow from the Enterprise During the Last 4 Weeks

- Monthly enterprise costs (#1 plus #2) in last four weeks
- Monthly enterprise revenue (#1 plus #2) in last four weeks
- Monthly estimated enterprise profit (#1 plus #2) in last four weeks
- Monthly estimated net revenue (revenue—costs of #1 and #2) in last four weeks
- Percent having "no difficulty" giving estimates of recent costs, revenue, and profit from enterprise
- Percent who were unable to conduct a business in the last twelve months because of lack of money
- Average length of the period unable to conduct a business because of lack of money in the last twelve months

Changes in the Enterprise During the Last 12 Months

- Percent who expanded their enterprise
- Percent who added new products to their businesses
- Percent who hired more workers
- Percent who improved the quality or desirability of their products/give value
- Percent who reduced enterprise costs by buying inputs in greater volume or at wholesale
- Percent who reduced enterprise costs with cheaper credit

- Percent who developed a new enterprise
- Percent who sold in new markets/locations
- MEAN NUMBER OF CHANGES

Proxy Indicators of Increased Enterprise Net Worth During the Last 12 Months

- Percent who purchased small tools/accessories
- Percent who purchased major tools such as stoves/equipment/machinery
- Percent who purchased own means of transportation such as bicycles, pushcarts
- Percent who invested in a storage structure
- Percent who made a minor investment in their marketing site (such as a chair, table, shed)
- Percent who invested in structures for their marketing site (kiosk, shop)
- MEAN NUMBER OF CHANGES

Business Skills/Management of the Enterprise Distinct from Household

- Percent who consider "profitability" or "demand" when deciding how to invest
- Percent who keep their business money separate from money for personal or family/household expenses and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who calculate profits based on records of costs and earnings and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who know which products bring them the most profit and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who pay themselves a wage for their work in their businesses and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who have a fixed location with protection from sun/rain for selling their products and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who have a fixed location for producing or storing their products different from the location where family lives and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program

Impact Indicators at the Level of the Family/Household

How Profit Is Used—Link to Household Welfare (Descriptive)

- Percent who used profit from their businesses to buy food, to buy clothing, to pay school expenses, to pay health-related costs, to buy items for the house, other household income
- Percent whose overall household income has increased over the last twelve months

Household Assets (Must Adapt to Local Setting)

- Percent having key household assets, such as radio/tape player, chairs/table/benches, bed frame/mattress, stove, refrigerator, TV, bicycle, or motorcycle, car, tractor)
- Percent acquiring additional household assets in the last two years (using the same list as above)
- Percent who acquired household assets (same list) since joining the program
- Mean score of household assets currently owned

- Mean score of household assets acquired in last two years

Education

- Percent whose household school expenses for the current year have increased
- Percent of school-aged children who are currently in school
- Percent of school-aged children who never went to school
- Highest grade in school completed by any children in the household

Housing Improvements

- Percent who made repairs, improvements, or additions to their home in the last two years
- Percent who made specific changes in the last two years: (1) fixed or improved existing roof, floor, or walls; (2) expanded the house (built new room, shed, attic, or fence); (3) improved water or sanitation system (new well, drainage/sewage system, showers. or latrine); or (4) percent who got electricity or major improvement in lighting

Diet and Food Security

- Percent whose household diet in the last twelve months improved
- How the diet has improved (descriptive)
- Percent whose household experienced a "hungry" season in the last twelve months
- Average length of the hungry season

Impact Indicators at the Level of the Individual

Personal Income/Savings

- Percent whose personal income increased over the last twelve months
- Percent whose personal income decreased over the last twelve months
- Percent who had personal cash savings (for example, money kept in case of emergencies or if planning to make a major purchase or investment)
- Percent whose personal cash savings increased

No Negative Impact on Children

- Number of young children (10 years and under) and older children (11 to 17 years) assisting with enterprise in last four weeks
- Number of young children (10 years and under) and older children (11 to 17 years) missing school at least once in last four weeks to assist with enterprise

Enterprise-Level Hypotheses and Survey Indicators

Impact Domain   **Financial Performance**

Hypothesis   Participation in microenterprise services increases enterprise net cash flow.

Survey Questions #16-#18 and #33

Indicators

- Monthly enterprise costs in last four weeks—up to two activities
- Monthly enterprise revenue in last four weeks—up to two activities
- Monthly estimated enterprise profit in last four weeks—up to two activities
- Monthly estimated net revenue (revenue—costs) in last four weeks
- Percent having "no difficulty" giving estimates of recent costs, revenue, and profit from enterprise
- Percent who were unable to conduct an enterprise in the last twelve months because of lack of money
- Average length of the period unable to conduct an enterprise because of lack of money in the last twelve months

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of the first four indicators (enterprise costs, revenue, estimated profit, and net revenue) is to attempt to quantify the economic returns to the respondent's chief microenterprise activities. "Estimated profit" and "net revenue" are distinct in that the first refers to a respondent's own estimation of the enterprise profit, whereas the latter is generated through a computer calculation of the respondent's reported revenue minus reported costs.

Because it is so difficult to collect information on financial returns, a number of steps were taken to improve the accuracy of the estimates: (1) the reporting period—the last four weeks—is relatively short and recent, which should improve client recall; (2) the line of questioning allows amounts to be reported for one-week, two-week, or monthly periods, depending on which is most appropriate for the product or service of that enterprise; (3) information is collected for up to two distinct enterprise activities since it is common for poor households to pursue diversified sources of income; and (4) the interviewer is asked to rate the respondent's ability to provide this financial information. This rating is useful for assessing the quality (validity and reliability) of the information. For those programs that try to improve clients' ability to assess returns to their enterprise, this rating can also serve as a proxy impact indicator.

Even when it is more accurate, the information still has two inherent limitations. Because enterprise returns can be highly variable, profits in a given month may not adequately represent overall return or profitability. Also the income from one enterprise represents only part of an individual's or a family/household's overall livelihood strategy; focusing only on its quantification ignores other possible opportunity costs. For example, enterprise returns may

increase because of reduced labor and other resource allocation to alternative productive activities.

The income flow section is perhaps the most complicated part the survey. This series of questions requires considerable time during the interviewer training and the interview process. (See Chapter 4, Part D, Interviewer Training, for guidelines and examples to improve data collection for these challenging indicators.) The potential of a seasonal bias is also an important consideration for indicators that focus on a relatively short reporting period. You will want to find out if the time period being asked about (for example, last four weeks or product cycle) had an average, high, or low yield. If followup interviews are planned, they need to be conducted at the same time of year—ideally the same month—to ensure comparability.

The purpose of the last two indicators in the list—percent unable to conduct their enterprise and duration of this period—is to capture the income-smoothing effect microenterprise services can have, especially for relatively poorer entrepreneurs who are more vulnerable to shocks and likely to have fewer alternative sources of credit.

Proxy Indicators for Financial Performance and Enterprise Development
Indicators Below Refer to Survey Question #21
In last 12 months…
- Percent who expanded their enterprise
- Percent who added new products to their enterprise
- Percent who hired more workers
- Percent who improved the quality or desirability of their products/gave value
- Percent who reduced enterprise costs by buying inputs in greater volume or at wholesale
- Percent who reduced enterprise costs with cheaper credit
- Percent who developed a new enterprise
- Percent who sold in new markets/locations

Purpose and Issues
Given the difficulty in collecting accurate information on enterprise returns, qualitative changes in the nature of the enterprise can be useful proxy indicators for enterprise profit and development. If the respondent has been able to expand his or her enterprise, hire additional workers, add new products, and so forth, he or she is likely to be enjoying increased enterprise profit.

Impact Domain Enterprise Resource Base
Hypothesis   Participation in microenterprise services increases enterprise net worth.
Survey Question   #22
Indicators
In last 12 months…
- Percent who purchased small tools/accessories
- Percent who purchased major tools/equipment/machinery

- Percent who purchased own means of transportation such as bicycles, pushcarts, motorcycle
- Percent who invested in a storage structure
- Percent who made a minor investment in their marketing site (such as a chair, table, shed)
- Percent who invested in structures for their marketing site (kiosk, shop)

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of these indicators is to determine whether respondents have invested in assets that will build the resource base of the business. Rather than a more complicated attempt to value the net worth of the enterprise (current and/or fixed asset), this line of questioning aims to identify key enterprise assets that reflect a progression in enterprise development. It will need to be adapted to the specific context of each program. If the program is focused on particular clientele, staff is likely to be aware of threshold assets or investments that indicate improvement and increased net worth, such as specific types of marketing structures, tools, and accessories.

Impact Domain Enterprise Management and Enterprise Development

Hypothesis   Participation in microenterprise services increases differentiation between the microenterprise and household.

Survey Questions #25 and #26a-b

Indicators

- Percent who consider "profitability" or "demand" when deciding how to invest
- Percent who keep their enterprise money separate from money for personal or household expenses and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who calculate profits based on records of costs and earnings and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who know which products bring them the most profit and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who pay themselves a wage for their work in their enterprise and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who have a fixed location with protection from sun/rain for selling their products and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program
- Percent who have a fixed location for producing or storing their products different from the location where family lives and percent of clients who adopted this practice since joining the program

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of these indicators is to assess the respondent's enterprise management skill and management practices. The first indicator (percent considering "profitability" or "demand") captures the response to the open-ended question, "When you are deciding to undertake an enterprise, what factors do you consider?" Typically, a new, inexperienced entrepreneur focuses more on "supply" than on "demand" considerations. For example, the entrepreneur selects his or her enterprise activity primarily on the basis of personal familiarity with the work, rather than on whether the product or service is in demand or likely to yield profitable returns. A central tenet of

most microenterprise programs is that the client knows best how to use a loan. Still, many also aim to enhance their clients' entrepreneurial behavior and management skills through training and conducting loan feasibility analyses. The indicators in this section are meant to capture the types of "ideal" management practices that programs promote.

These indictors require particular adaptation to individual programs' impact goals and target clientele. For example, the indicator under #26a: "Do you pay yourself a wage for your work in..." is only appropriate for those programs that encourage clients to pay themselves a wage in an effort to make the returns they are earning more tangible. Capturing a range of enterprise types, the selected management indicators reflect progression from the initial stages of microenterprise viability to more mature, growth-oriented businesses. But each program should measure those management practices they are most interested in promoting among their clientele.

Family/Household-Level Hypotheses and Survey Indicators

Impact Domain Household Income
Hypothesis   Participation in microenterprise services leads to increases in household income.
Survey Question #13
Indicators
- Percent whose overall household income has increased over the last twelve months
- Percent whose overall household income has decreased over the last twelve months

Purpose and Issues
The conceptual framework used by AIMS makes an excellent case for a broader household perspective; that many clients operate their businesses as part of a family/household unit means that changes in one will likely affect changes in the other. When tested in Honduras and Mali, however, these indicators were relatively insensitive to program impact. In Mali, where very large families/households are the norm, these indicators were not sensitive to change experienced by a single member. Nevertheless, these questions are included on the survey for programs particularly concerned about income at this level, perhaps where households are relatively small and/or family enterprises are the norm. Questions pursuing why household income increased or decreased can be added to the survey if desired (see Chapter 4, Part C, Optional Indicators and Survey Questions).

Impact Domain Household Assets

Hypothesis   Participation in microenterprise services leads to increases in household assets.

Survey Question   #27

Indicators

- Percent having any household assets (radio/tape player, chair, wardrobe, bed frame/mattress, storage container, bicycle, or motorcycle, stove, car, small animals, large animals
- Percent acquiring additional household assets in last two years (radio/tape player, chair, wardrobe, bed frame/mattress, storage container, bicycle, motorcycle, stove, car, small animals, large animals)
- Percent who acquired households assets since joining the microenterprise program
- Mean score of household assets currently owned
- Mean score of household assets acquired in last two years

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of this line of questioning is two-fold. First, interviewers identify a list of consumer and productive assets that reflect relative wealth and socioeconomic status in the program area. Then they ask respondents whether anyone in their household owns this asset so that a consumer index can be developed that reflects the household's relative socioeconomic status. Second, interviewers ask respondents if this item (or any more of this item) was acquired in the last two years to determine relative direction of change in the household's asset inventory. To help improve the link between asset acquisition and the effect of the program, interviewers ask clients if this asset was acquired in the last year. For simplicity sake, the asset index focuses on only whether or not the asset is owned and the number of assets rather than their economic value. To improve the comparative power of the indicator, assets are grouped according to relative value based on their typical cost; for example, assets of modest value are greater than $100; assets of mid-range value are more than $100 but less than $1,000; and assets of high-range value are greater than $1,000.

For this indicator to be meaningful and function well, it must be revised for each program area and its own particular markers of increasing wealth. For example, owning a pushcart or a large clay pot are highly sought-after assets that indicate a progression of relative wealth in south-eastern Mali, but these same assets are not likely to be appropriate to other parts of the world. Interviews with key informants can help identify which assets distinguish a household as being relatively better off or which ones people typically acquire as they accumulate more wealth. When preparing an asset list appropriate to the program setting, it is advisable to limit the total number of assets included because this information can take a lot of time to collect and analyze.

Impact Domain Expenditures

Hypothesis Participation in microenterprise services leads to increased welfare (in such aspects as food security, housing, and health)

Survey Question   #20

Indicator (descriptive link between loan use and welfare)

Percent who used profit from their enterprise to buy food, to buy clothing, to pay school expenses, to pay health-related costs, and to buy items for the house

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of this indicator is to help clarify the link between access to microenterprise services and improvement in household welfare. How clients spend the profits from their microenterprise will likely be most affected by increased returns. Respondents are asked to identify the three principal ways they use enterprise profit. This approach helps to identify the predominant links to various types of welfare improvements, such as food, clothing, and education.

Education

Survey Questions #10-11

Indicators

- Percent whose school expenditures for the current school year have increased relative to last year
- Percent of school-aged children who are currently in school
- Percent of school-aged children who never went to school
- Highest grade in school completed by any children in the household

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of these indicators is to capture changes in school expenditures, school enrollment, and educational attainment. Efforts to quantify school spending were unsuccessful, especially in Mali where a large percentage of respondents were unable to give specific amounts. For this reason, the core survey includes only a retrospective and general question about education-related spending. Both tools tests also collected school enrollment information for every school-age child in the household (see the optional question in chapter 4, part C), but this data proved too complex to analyze for this type of evaluation exercise. The summary indicators "percent of school-aged children currently in school" and "percent who never went to school," however, are more easily captured through fewer, more summative questions (see survey questions #10-11).

Housing

Survey Questions #28-29

Indicators

- Percent who made repairs, improvements, or additions to their home in the last two years
- Percent who made specific changes in the last two years: (1) fixed existing roof, floor, or walls; (2) improved or replaced existing roof, floor, or walls; (3) expanded the house

(built new room, shed, attic, or fence); (4) improved water or sanitation system (new well, drainage/sewage system, showers, or latrine); (5) percent who got a kerosene lamp

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of these indicators is to capture improvement in housing. Efforts to quantify spending in this area were unsuccessful, especially in Mali, where a large percentage of respondents were unable to give specific amounts. Again, it is especially important to tailor the housing changes and improvements to the particular program context. For example, in Honduras, electricity is one of the specific housing-related investments. While appropriate for the more economically developed area of the ODEF (Organizacion de Desarrollo Empresearial Femenino) program, it is not applicable in rural Mali. Following the tools test in Mali, a minimum amount spent on housing was added to the question since virtually all households made housing improvements each year, given the relatively temporary nature of the common building materials, such as grass or straw roofs and mud walls.

Diet and Food Security
Survey Questions   #30-32
Indicators

- Percent whose household diet in the last twelve months improved
- How the diet has improved (descriptive)
- Percent whose household experienced a "hungry" season in the last twelve months
- Average length of "hungry" season

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of the first two indicators is simply to capture the direction of change in the quality of the family/household diets. The followup indicator is descriptive in nature and collects information about how the diet has improved or worsened. The purpose of the third and fourth indicators is to capture the household's relative food security. The concept of a "hungry" season, when the harvest from the previous year is either finished or running low, is common in rural areas of the developing world. Also common are higher food prices during this period of relative scarcity. These indicators assess whether a household experienced a period of more acute food insecurity when it was necessary to eat less or eat less well, and if so, how long this period lasted. Even in the same communities, some households will be buffered from the effects of such a period, while others experience it for many months in the year.

That these indicators, especially those focused on food insecurity, are not very specific is a drawback. The concepts of "improvement" or "eat less well" are general and subjective and may differ from respondent to respondent.

Individual-Level Hypotheses and Survey Indicators

Impact Domain Control over Resources

Hypothesis   Participation in microenterprise services leads to increased control of resources on the part of women clients.

Survey Questions #14, #23, and #24

Indicators

- Percent whose personal income increased over the last twelve months and why
- Percent whose personal income decreased over the last twelve months and why
- Percent who had personal cash savings
- Percent whose personal cash savings increased

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of these indicators is to determine if clients' individual economic resources are improved through access to microenterprise services. Compared to indicators that focus on only enterprise income, the advantage of these indicators is that they require the respondent to consider income from all their productive activities. This perspective is more likely to incorporate possible opportunity costs because of decreased attention to those activities not supported by loans. A focus on the individual's overall returns is likely to be more sensitive to program impact than questions about general household income, particularly in areas where large households with many economically active adults are common.

A clear definition of the concept of savings is needed for indicators related to this impact area. This need is especially true for programs that include a savings (either mandatory or voluntary) component. The question needs to specify if the respondent should report on savings held outside, as well as on deposit with, the program. Also the design team opted to focus on personal cash savings since non-liquid "savings," such as animals or other assets, is the focus of other questions. The indicator focuses on "personal," rather than "household," savings because savings amounts might be guarded information that is not even shared with other members of the household.

Impact Domain Community Participation

Hypothesis   Participation in microenterprise services leads to no negative impacts on child labor.

Survey Question #19

Indicators

- Number of young children (10 years and under) and older children (11 to 17 years) assisting with enterprise in last four weeks
- Number of young children (10 years and under) and older children (11 to 17 years) missing school at least once in last four weeks to assist with enterprise

Purpose and Issues

The purpose of these indicators is to explore whether microenterprise services have the unintended effect of drawing children from school so that they can help with the loan-assisted activity. This indicator refers to any children, not only the client's own children, since the negative effect could extend outside the immediate family. One difficulty with this impact area is that it is relatively more difficult to know if children were never enrolled in school so that they could work for the enterprise.

Community-Level Hypotheses and Survey Indicators

These indicators capture impact on employment and income-earning opportunities in the community. This information is straightforward to collect and analyze. Questions pertaining to these indicators, however, are relevant only for those programs targeting clientele whose economic position enables them to hire labor. Because few clients of either the Mali or Honduras programs hired labor, this indicator was not a key impact for these programs. Additional insight into employment impacts is included in question #21, which explores changes made to the enterprise over the last twelve-month period as proxy indicators for enterprise development and financial return.

Indicators of Client Satisfaction and Feedback

Impact Domain Client Preferences
Survey Question   #35
Indicators
- Percent of clients reporting they liked "X" feature of the program best
- Various features of the program and the percent of clients reporting that they liked those features best

Impact Domain Client Dislikes
Survey Question   #36
Indicators
- Percent of clients reporting they liked "X" feature of the program least
- Various features of the program and the percent of clients reporting that they liked those features least

Impact Domain Client Recommendations
Survey Question   #37
Indicators
   Recommendations to improve the program, particularly those reported most frequently

Questions pertaining to clients' likes, dislikes, and programmatic recommendations are included in the Impact Survey, even though they do not pertain to any specific AIMS hypotheses. One of

the advantages of a sample survey is that it can provide a representative sense of clients' experiences and opinions. Program managers might be surprised to learn what their clients like "best" and "least" about the microenterprise program, as well as their recommendations for its improvement. Client satisfaction is closely linked to impact, since whether and how a program serves its clients' needs will very often affect the degree and nature of its impacts.

Mediating or Independent Factors
Demographic, Programmatic, and Community Indicators

Indicators refer to survey questions #2-9.

Indicators of Client Demographics and Socioeconomic Status

- Gender
- Age
- Marital status
- Years of formal education
- Percent functionally literate (able to read a letter)
- Percent female-headed households
- Household size
- Dependency ratio (number of adult workers/number of minors)
- Percent of households with a salaried worker
- Ownership of list of productive and consumer assets meant to reflect relative wealth in the area

Much of the first part of the Impact Survey focuses on information pertaining to the respondents' characteristics. Information such as a respondent's age, education level, and socioeconomic status includes critical mediating factors for program impact. It is also essential to collect this type of information so that the comparability of survey sample groups can be assessed. This is particularly important for impact surveys with a cross-sectional design. If the sample groups are systematically different in their demographic or socioeconomic characteristics, this fact—rather than the impact of the program—might explain differences found in outcome indicators. Typically, the first step in data analysis is to compare the client and non-client characteristics of the samples. If significant differences are found, this information needs to be factored into any subsequent analysis and comparison of impact areas.

Indicators of Microenterprise Services

Indicators refer to survey information collected from program records (see top portion of the Impact Survey).

- Length of time participating in the microenterprise program

- Amount of current loan
- Increase in borrowing since joining the program (current loan—initial loan)
- Amount of current savings deposited with program
- Cumulative value of loans received
- Percent saving above required amount
- Percent reporting that they faced repayment problems with last loan and why

Another factor closely associated with program impact is the nature and amount of microenterprise services a client receives. Page one of the Impact Survey includes information about loan size and a client's duration in the program, which typically can be collected from program records. Analysis that disaggregates impact by this type of programmatic information can be very useful. Questions such as the following help establish the link between the program and differences in the outcome variables under study.

- Are larger loans correlated with larger enterprise profits or a greater likelihood of repayment difficulties?
- Are longer-term clients more likely to exhibit a greater degree and range of program impacts?

Of course, questions must be tailored to the specific program's services and the availability of client-specific information.

Community Characteristics

Community characteristics are another important mediating factor (see figure 4B-2). For example, a community's relative remoteness or commercial development may influence many of the outcome indicators proposed above. Typically this information is included in the sampling strategy. Additional detail, however, might also be collected for each study community and incorporated into the analysis. Since this is community-level rather than individual-level information, its collection need not be incorporated into each impact survey. Instead, information pertaining to key community characteristics can simply be obtained from selected key informants while the impact surveys are underway.

FIGURE 4B-2
Example

In the Mali test site, information was collected on a variety of proxy indicators of commercial development for each study community, including (1) estimated population; (2) proximity to major roads; (3) proximity to major daily markets; (4) access to public transportation; (5) whether a school was in the community, and if so, the highest grade; and (6) whether a health center and trained health service provider were in the community.

Chapter 4
Tool #1:
Impact Survey

Part C
Optional Indicators
and Survey
Questions

- Optional indicators and questions responding to specific program interests

- Optional indicators and questions requiring more complex analysis

- Questions unrelated to specific AIMS hypotheses

Chapter 4
Part C
Optional Indicators and Survey Questions

The survey instrument tested in Mali and Honduras was longer than the tool presented at the beginning of this chapter. Several questions were deleted from the survey after the two tests for two broad reasons. Either

- Questions were not sensitive enough to capture any significant differences between the client and comparison groups in Mali and Honduras; or

- Their data collection, coding, and/or analysis proved too complicated for a practitioner-led evaluation.

Given the inevitable exceptions to both of these reasons, however, the questions that were tested, but subsequently deleted, are presented here as options for organizations to consider including in response to their specific programmatic priorities. In the first category of optional questions, it is possible that the questions will prove more effective in different settings and be important enough to an organization to merit inclusion; similarly, organizations can address the complexity of the questions in the second category if priorities justify allocating the time and expertise they require.

For each optional item in this section, you will find the hypothesis, the indicator, the actual survey question and the test experience that explains why the question was deleted from the core survey. This information is provided to help evaluators learn from the experience and errors of the SEEP/AIMS teams.

Optional Indicators and Questions Responding to Specific Program Interests

The questions in this section may not be sensitive enough to capture impact, but they may respond to special programmatic interests.

Hypothesis: Participation in microenterprise services leads to increased welfare at the household level in such areas as food security, housing, health and education.

Education of Children

Indicators:
Age, gender, attendance, and grade completed for all children in household

Question:
Now I would like to ask about the children in the household that are of school age (5-17 years). Please tell me:

Child's first name	a. Child's age (in years)	b. Child's gender 1. Male 2. Female	c. Present or last grade completed. (*If never attended, put 0.*)	d. Does the child currently attend school? 1. Yes 2. No (*If no, skip e.*)	e. For the current school year, how much did your household spend on school fees and other education expenses for this child?

Test experience:
This information was collected for each school-aged child. This more disaggregated approach required considerable time, especially for data entry and analysis, and has been replaced by summary questions in the final version of the survey (see questions 9a-9d). However, for organizations particularly interested in impact on education, this approach potentially allows for analysis of school enrollment and spending by gender and age group.

Diet and Food Security

Indicators:
- Mean number of times respondents ate certain good-quality foods sensitive to income changes in last three days (meat/fish/chicken, eggs, salad, onions, beans)
- Mean amount spent by household on certain good-quality foods sensitive to income changes in last three days (meat/fish/chicken, eggs, salad, onions, beans)

Questions:

Read horizontally and probe	In the last three days, how many times did you eat the following foods?	In the last three days, how much would you estimate your household spent on these foods?
a. meat/chicken /fish	[_____] times [__] 99. Don't know	[_____] amount [__] 99. Don't know
b. eggs	[_____] times [__] 99. Don't know	[_____] amount [__] 99. Don't know
c. milk	[_____] times [__] 99. Don't know	[_____] amount [__] 99. Don't know

In the last week, was any income that you earned in your business used to purchase food?

[____] 1. Yes   [____] 0. No   [____] 99. Don't know

Test experience:

The intent of these questions is to focus on foods like meat and eggs which are often sensitive to increases in income. However, in both tools tests, these questions were relatively time-consuming in terms of interviewer training and collection. In neither case were the indicators found to be sensitive to program impact indicating either, a genuine lack of change, or, high error for this line of questioning. However, organizations that are particularly interested in dietary impacts might elect to include similar questions to focus more intensively on this area. Additional indicators for food security developed by USAID are described in Figure 4C-1.

FIGURE 4C-1.
USAID Food Security Indicators

Two promising indicators proposed for use by PL 480 Title II-funded programs are as follows:

- number of eating occasions (meals) per day
- number of different foods or food groups consumed (diet diversity)

Use the following specific questions to collect this information:

1. Yesterday, did you or anyone in your household consume

any food before a morning meal	yes	no
a morning meal	yes	no
any food between morning and midday meals	yes	no
a midday meal	yes	no
any food between midday and evening meals	yes	no
an evening meal	yes	no
any food after the evening meal	yes	no

2. Yesterday, did you or anyone in your household consume

cereals	yes	no
roots/tubers	yes	no
legumes	yes	no
milk/milk products	yes	no
eggs	yes	no
meat/offal	yes	no
fish/seafood	yes	no
oil/fat	yes	no

(Question 2 continued) Yesterday, did you or anyone in your household consume

sugar/honey	yes	no
fruits	yes	no
vegetables	yes	no
other (spices, sodas, etc.)	yes	no

Analysis of the questions consists of simply totaling the number of "yes" responses. The pre-coded response must be adapted to the local context. Practitioners might consider testing and using these two indicators of food security.

Health

Indicators:

- Percent who had someone in the family who needed medical attention in last twelve months

- Sources of money to pay medical expenses (descriptive)

- Percent who used money from their enterprise (profit) to pay for the medical expenses

- Percent who had a family member in the last twelve months who was not taken for medical attention because the household lacked the money to pay for it

Questions:

During the last twelve months, was there an occasion in which you or a member of your family needed medical attention?

[___] 1. Yes *(go to #43b)*　　　　[___] 0. No *(go to #44)*　　　　[___] 99. Don't know *(go to #44)*

Where did you get the money to pay these medical costs? (Don't read. Multiple Answers possible.)

[___]1. From my business (profit)

[___]4. Borrowed money at cost (specify source, amount, and cost)_____

_____

[___]2. From another household business or source of income.

[___]5. other (specify source, amount and cost)

[___]3. Borrowed from friends/family at no cost

[___]99. Don't know

In the last twelve months, was any ill or injured member of the household not taken for medical attention or treatment because the household lacked the money to pay for it?

[___] 1. Yes　　　　　　[___] 0. No　　　　　　[___] 99. Don't know

Test experience:

The purpose of these indicators was to assess whether microenterprise services provided clients with an increased ability to deal with medical crises and health costs. In both tools tests, this line of questioning demonstrated little to no difference between the client and non-client groups. It is difficult to know if this was due to a genuine lack of impact or if the indicators are not sensitive to change in this area. For this reason, the questions are included as optional for those programs particularly interested in exploring health impacts, but they are not part of the core Impact Survey.

Hypothesis: Participation in microenterprise services leads to increases in paid labor—and in the productivity of labor—for women, without negative consequences.

Hired Labor

Indicators:

- Percent of respondents who had hired labor in the last four weeks to conduct their enterprise(s)

- Mean number of full-time laborers assisting with the enterprise in the last four weeks

- Mean number of part-time laborers assisting with the enterprise in the last four weeks

- Mean number of occasional laborers assisting with the enterprise in the last four weeks

Question:
Not counting yourself, in the last four weeks how many persons did you pay to help you with this work? (Read.)

Full-time (standard work week)	Part-time (employed for fewer hours than full time)	Occasional (irregular—by task)

Test Experience:
The test survey included this question for any and all income-generating activities respondents might have engaged in during the last four weeks. The team decided that increases in hired labor were not a major impact anticipated for poverty-lending programs that intentionally target relatively poorer households with the specific goal of poverty alleviation. The core Impact Survey still includes a question to capture trends in hired labor (see question #21) but additional efforts to quantify increases in hired labor are not warranted. While this information is straightforward to collect and analyze, the question is only relevant for those programs targeting clientele whose economic position enables them to hire labor.

Hypothesis: Participation in microenterprise services leads to increased household income.

Indicators: Reasons why household income decreased or increased

Questions:
(If decreased) Why did your household's overall income decrease? (Do not read. Multiple answers possible.)

[___]1. Poor agricultural season   [___]3. Illness or death in the family   [___] 99. Don't know

[___]2. Family member lost employment   [___]4. Other (specify)_____

(If increased) Why did your household's overall income increase? (Do not read. Multiple answers possible.)

[___]1. Good agricultural season   [___]3. Loans from Credit with   [___] 99. Don't know
                                                        Education program
[___]2. Family member got   [___]4. Other (specify)_____
employment

Test Experience:

While the core Impact Survey includes a question about relative change in their household income, the team found that, in both sites, the factors that respondents identified as influencing change in household income were most often external to the microenterprise program and pertained to agricultural returns, change in employment status or sickness and/or death in the family. They were also left off the core survey to keep it from getting too long, but anyone interested in pursuing the reasons for change in household income can re-insert these as #13a and b.

Hypothesis: Participation in microenterprise services leads to increased assets.

Use of Savings

Indicators:

Percent who used their savings to buy food and clothing, to pay for health-related costs, to make improvements or additions to their houses, to pay for education, to pay for animals, and to pay for weddings or other ceremonies.

Question:

During the last twelve months, how have you used your savings? (Don't read. Mark with a "1" for the way the interviewee has spent the most on, then a "2" for the second way, and a "3" for the third way.)

[___]1. Reinvested in my enterprise   [___]7. For weddings or other ceremonies

[___]2. Bought basic items for myself and my family   [___]8. Reduced debt
like food and clothing
[___]3. For medicine or other health related costs   [___]9. Have not used savings

[___]4. Made improvements or additions to my   [___]10. For cart or machine
house   (specify)_____
[___]5. For education costs   [___]11.other (specify)_____

[___]6. For animals   [___]99. Don't know

Test experience:

The teams found that the "use of profit" and "use of savings" questions provided very similar answers, making the inclusion of both unnecessary. The core Impact Survey still includes questions to capture the trend changes in respondents personal savings.

Hypothesis: Participation in microenterprise services leads to increased control over resources on the part of women clients.

Control over Resources

Indicators:
- Relative say in household decision-making about (a) whether to take a loan, (b) how to use the loan, (c) what to buy for enterprise, (d) how to sell product, how to use profits, and (e) what work they do in a normal day
- Percent reporting not fully dependent on husband to want to buy for basic needs like food and clothing

Questions:
(For married women only) For the business which gives you the greatest earnings, who in your household decides…? (For each item, read the six possible answers in the columns. Mark the answer with an "X".)

Check box Horizontally Who decides…?	1. Husband only	2. Mostly Husband	3. Husband and you equally	4. Mostly you	5. Only You	6. Other (specify)	98. Not applicable
A. To take out a loan?							
B. How to use loans you have taken?							
C. What you buy for your business?							
D. How your product is sold?							
E. How to use profits from your business?							
F. What work you do during a normal day?							

When you want or need to buy things like food or clothing for yourself or your family, which of the following answers best describes your situation? (Read answers.)

[___]1. You have your own money so can usually buy what you need

[___]2. You occasionally have to get the money from your husband or someone else in the household

[___]3. You always have to get the money from your husband or someone else in the household

[___]99. Don't know

Test experience:
The series of questions about who makes decisions in the household pertaining to taking a loan, investing a loan etc. were dropped because the team felt that quantitative methods could not adequately capture impact of this type. Yet, examining decision-making is of particular interest to practitioners who intentionally or only serve women. A more in-depth, open-ended approach for exploring this impact hypothesis is part of the qualitative tool that focuses on women's empowerment.

Optional Indicators and Questions Requiring More Complex Analysis

Questions in this section have proved to be too complex.

Sources of Household Income

Question:
I am interested to learn about the activities that you and other members of your household undertook to earn a living during the last twelve months. (Read each activity.)

	During the last 12 months…			
Activity	A. What activities did your household engage in? (Check)	B. Were any of these activities new to your household? (Check)	C. Which activity(ies) earn <u>you</u> cash income? (Check)	D. (for participants only) which activity(ies) did you invest some or all of your last program loan?
A. Farming				
B. Animal husbandry				
C. Self-employed enterprise (specify) #1 _____ #2 _____ #3 _____ #4 _____				
D. Salaried worker or wage employment on regular basis				
F. Casual labor or irregular wage employment				
G. Other (specify)				

Test experience:
The first tools test included a question meant to capture the diversity of household income sources. However, the detailed information this question generated required complicated data management and analysis techniques beyond the scope of this practitioner tool. This line of question would be more appropriate for a qualitative in-depth individual interview.

Questions Unrelated to Specific AIMS Hypotheses

Solidarity

Questions:
a. In the last twelve months were you a member of a group or association? Yes No

b. (If said yes to a) Can you tell me the ways in which being in a group helped you?

[___]1. Provided support when I needed help [___]4. Allowed me to develop my leadership skills

[___]2. Given me business ideas and contacts [___]5. Gave me training and new information

[___]3. Offered me new friendships [___]6. Other *(specify)*:_____

Test experience:
Microenterprise programs that use a group lending approach might be interested in capturing impact in this area by adding these two questions. Note also that the Exit Survey includes two questions that capture the social benefits that group lending can foster.

Alternative Credit Sources

Indicators:
Percent borrowing from source other than the microenterprise program in last twelve months to conduct their enterprise (from where?)

Questions:
a. During the last twelve months, have you borrowed money to conduct your enterprise from a source other than the (<u>insert organization name</u>) program?

[___] 1. Yes [___] 0. No [___] 99. Don't know

b. If yes, from what source did you borrow? (Read. Multiple answers possible)

[___]1. Commercial bank/Credit Union [___]5. Tontine

[___]2. Family/friend/money lender without cost [___]6. Program other than *(insert organization name)* (specify)_____

[___]3. Family/friend/money lender at cost [___]99. Don't know

[___]4. Wholesaler or supplier

Test experience:
These two questions about alternative borrowing do not address any specific AIMS hypothesis. They were included in the test survey because practitioners often are interested in knowing whether their clients are also borrowing from other sources. Yet, only a few respondents reported alternative borrowing. Programs operating in a more competitive lending environment, however, might be interested in collecting this type of information as part of an impact assessment as credit from alternative, even informal sources, can have similar impacts as those of the program's own financial services.

**Chapter 4
Tool #1:
Impact Survey**

**Part D
Interviewer
Training**

- Preparing for training

- Training schedule

Chapter 4
Part D
Interviewer Training

Those involved in organizing a survey typically recognize the importance of constructing a well-organized questionnaire with straightforward questions that are appropriate to both the evaluation's objectives and its setting. If carried out well, considerable time will be spent refining the survey, pre-testing its questions and simplifying its layout. But creating the survey instrument is only the first step for this approach. ***Interviewer training is one of the most critical determinants of the validity and quality of the survey results***. As much as the survey itself, the interviewer is an instrument who filters both the respondents' understanding of the question and their response. Because the Impact Survey is designed for practitioners to conduct themselves, it is assumed that program staff will not already be trained interviewers. In addition, although every effort has been made to construct a simple and straightforward questionnaire, certain concepts (such as the household, profit, and revenue) and lines of questioning require considerable review and practice.

Preparing for Training

The following three main steps need to be completed before the interviewers can be trained:

1. Revise the survey to reflect institutional priorities for impact assessment;
2. Translate the revised survey into local languages
3. Prepare training space and materials

Step 1:   Revise and Adapt the Survey

Those managing or organizing the Impact Survey exercise need to adapt the generic AIMS survey to their specific program. Before interviewer training, program staff (as well as interviewers) may participate in exercises to clarify the impact study questions and indicators and revise the survey questions accordingly. An initial process of revising the survey should include testing certain basic concepts with clients, such as "profit," "savings," and "costs." For example, with "profit," staff will want to know how people commonly think about this concept: When estimating their profit do they subtract only direct business costs, or do they also subtract out family expenses or other indirect costs? Chapter 4, Part B, Survey Indicators and Hypotheses, highlights those specific questions in particular that need to be tailored to each program setting, such as the household asset list.

Step 2: Translate the Survey into the Language Spoken by Respondents

Translation to local languages spoken by clients is critically important for some program sites. (See the example in Figure 4D-1.) Those questions and pre-coded responses that are to be read to respondents should be written in the language in which they will be spoken. Too often, standardized surveys are not transcribed into local languages. Specific wording of questions is left up to each individual interviewer. This approach is likely to result in considerable error as the consistency of questions cannot be assured. To open the process to such inconsistency fundamentally undermines the purpose of using a survey methodology.

Translating the survey into local languages can be challenging when they are not commonly written; standards for spelling and word meaning may not be uniform. An excellent source of translation expertise is the local radio station, which often broadcasts news and information programs in the predominant local languages. Individuals associated with these programs are well aware of the nuances of various word choices and their most common meanings. It might be possible to contract with them to translate those parts of the Impact Survey that will be read aloud.

> **FIGURE 4D-1.**
> ## Example
>
> In Mali, two versions of the Impact Survey were finalized during the interviewer training with Kafo Jiginiew—a French version and a French/Bambara version—because the staff was fluent in French but the clients' predominant language was Bambara. So, in the second version, those parts of the survey that were to be read aloud were written in Bambara, while the parts that were not read aloud (instructions, certain pre-coded responses, information from program records) remained in French.

The suggested approach for translation is as follows:

- Indicate on the survey those parts that will be spoken aloud and that need to be translated into a local language. Have a translator (preferably a professional one) transcribe those parts into the local language, staying as close to the original wording and meaning as possible. If a particular concept does not translate into the local language, it will be necessary to note this and change the original language version so that it correctly reflects the local language version.

- Have another individual, (preferably another professional translator) re-translate the local-language version of the survey back to the original language.

- Compare this re-translated version with the original language of the survey. Together with the two translators, discuss and resolve any differences that might require revisions to either the local-or original-language versions.

Using a local-language version of the survey does require additional time for training interviewers who will need to compare the two versions and practice reading survey questions in the local language. "Time-saving" efforts to either reduce the time spent on translation or interviewer training, however, are potentially very costly as they ultimately threaten the quality and usefulness of the entire survey effort.

Step 3: Prepare Training Venue and Materials

Finally, to physically conduct the interviewer training, you will need the following:

- An appropriate venue such as a conference or classroom that is sufficiently isolated from the daily activities of the organization to allow for uninterrupted sessions;

- A flip chart and markers or a white/black board;

- A clip board, calculator, scratch paper, pen, pencil and eraser for each interviewer; and

- Copies of the survey instrument with the version date clearly indicated;

Training Schedule

The time needed for interviewer training is estimated at five days. Figure 4D-2, Interviewer Training Schedule, outlines the focus of each day. The remainder of this section outlines suggested, daily training activities.

FIGURE 4D-2. Interviewer Training Schedule				
Day 1	**Day 2**	**Day 3**	**Day 4**	**Day 5**
Introduction and interviewers' roles and responsibilities	Reviewing the questionnaire and key concepts	Practice exercises and revise survey	Practice Exercises and revise survey	Pre-testing the survey; reflecting on pre-test experience; making final changes

Day 1
Introduction and Interviewers' Roles and Responsibilities

Goal: To provide an overview to the survey, including why it is being done, who is doing it, and how it will be done.

Objectives: By the end of the session, participants will be able to

- Summarize the purpose behind the survey;

- Discuss impact assumptions;

- Summarize their role as interviewers; and

- Model key principles of good interviewing.

Materials: Flip chart and markers

Methods: Role play and discussion

Time: One day

On the first day you should orient interviewers to the survey, its purpose, the assumptions underlying it and logistics, including the sample size, tentative schedule, etc. Interviewers will get an introduction to their role and the principles of good interviewing. The following exercises offer ideas for how to accomplish the goals of this orientation. What you choose to emphasize and how participatory you want to be will depend on the size and composition of your interview team.

Exercise #1. Why Assess Impact?

> *Step 1:* *Agree/disagree*

Write the following statement on a flip chart (or wall board) and ask participants whether they agree and disagree with it. Discuss their reasons.

> *"Program performance, measured by portfolio quality and financial self-sufficiency, together with strong client demand for loans are good substitutes (proxies) for impact evaluation"*

Review the discussion to identify the reasons to conduct an impact evaluation. They include: to determine if the program is serving its target clientele and meeting its goals; to understand when impact occurs; to identify unintended consequences; to improve services.

Step 2:   *Present the purpose of the impact evaluation*

Emphasize the dual nature of the impact assessment: to assess impact and to improve programs. Explain that is almost impossible to PROVE impact. Instead, the goal is to build a credible case that the identified changes are associated with program participation, that they are more likely to occur with program participation than without it (see chapters 1 and 2 for relevant discussion).

Exercise #2. What Do We Want To Assess?

Step 1:   *Prepare*

Distribute markers and approximately eight (8) large size (3" x 5") stick-on notes to everyone present. Create headings on a blackboard or wall that read "Household Level," "Enterprise Level," "Individual Level," and "Community Level."

Step 2:   *Identify changes*

Starting with the "Household Level," ask everyone to consider what two changes they see among program clients at the level of the household and write one change per stick-on note. Ask people to come to the front of the room with one of the changes they have identified and post it under the "Household" heading.

Read through the answers and group common types of changes. Remove repeat responses. Ask people to add the second change they identified at the household level if they don't see it already listed.

Repeat for each level. Summarize the major changes observed at each level.

Step 3:   *Compare participant assumptions of change with evaluation hypotheses*

Explain that the changes participants have observed or believe to have occurred are similar to the "hypotheses", or assumptions about program impact that need to be put to the test. Define "hypothesis". Display a list of the hypotheses that guide the impact assessment your organization is undertaking. Compare to the list of changes that participants have generated. Discuss the differences. Have participants identified some important hypotheses that are not on the list? Should they be added? If yes, work with participants to formulate questions that address the additional hypotheses.

Exercise #3. Who Should Carry Out an Impact Assessment?

(This exercise assumes that the interviewers in training are also staff members of the organization carrying out the impact assessment)

Step 1:   *Identify possible "evaluators"*

Ask participants to identify the options for evaluators (for example, outside consultants, university students, program staff, clients themselves).

Step 2:   *Brainstorm pros/cons of each type of evaluator*

Each type of evaluator offers a distinct set of advantages and disadvantages. For example, outside experts come with the needed expertise, but they are probably not familiar with the clients and are more expensive. University students may cost less, but may not be mature enough or willing to adapt to difficult circumstances of the program area.

Now, point to the list of evaluator types and ask the obvious: Who are the evaluators in our case? What are the advantages and disadvantages we have to deal with? Emphasize the strengths that staff bring to the team (for example, familiarity with area, culture, clients, businesses, markets, etc; lower cost; knowledge area makes evaluation logistics much easier to manage). Note that objectivity, a potential weakness of having staff evaluate their own programs, is one of the most critical qualities of a good evaluation.

Step 3:   *Identify "bias"*

Ask participants to help you define the word "bias." Brainstorm situations, outside of the program, in which participants would not normally be objective (e.g., problems at school between their child and a teacher; at sporting events; family conflicts; decisions that affect the community, etc.). Alternatively, ask participants to form pairs and ask each pair to generate a list of three possible biases.

Note: This discussion can be strengthened with additional activities, time permitting. Participants could role play some of these situations; you could develop some stories describing situations where lack of objectivity influences the outcome for participants to analyze and discuss.

Now, turn your attention back to the program. Brainstorm sources of bias that staff bring to this evaluation. If participants need prompting, you can ask questions such as:

- Are you worried that the results might be negative? What would happen?

- Would negative results reflect badly on you, the staff? How?

- Do you feel that you already know how clients are benefiting? Are some things just very obvious to you?

Ask everyone to take the person on their left as a partner and discuss how, specifically, the staff evaluation team can counteract their potential biases when conducting the evaluation. List these. Explain the steps that will be taken to ensure the evaluation's objectivity (see chapter 1, page 3 *[eliminate page # references]*). Stress that their own desire to really understand program

impact—to discover the truth—will be a key factor. Point out that the value of the survey as a learning exercise is likely to be greatest when expected impacts are *not* found or unanticipated ones are identified.

Exercise #4: What Is Our Role in the Impact Assessment?

Note: Because good interviewer technique is applicable to both the impact and client exit surveys, the roles and responsibilities of a good interviewer are discussed in detail in chapter 3, the overview to quantitative and qualitative methods.

> ### Step 1:   Introduce

In this exercise you focus on the qualities of a good interviewer. Make introductory comments that capture the following:

You have identified your potential for being biased, and we know how we are going to avoid that. But objectivity is not the only thing a good interviewer has to be aware of. The way you act with clients you are interviewing is also very important. You are the person who sets the tone, encourages the client to be honest and forthcoming, and makes them feel safe. How you conduct the interview, including your manner and your appearance, can very much influence the survey results and validity.

Ask: What qualities would make a good interviewer? How does she or he behave? How does she or he look?

Brainstorm, listing responses as they are offered. When participants have exhausted the possibilities, review the brainstormed list and group the items by language, appearance, behavior.

> ### Step 2:   Demonstrate what an interviewer should NOT do

Distribute markers and approximately eight large-size (3" x 5") stick-it notes to everyone present and create a heading on a blackboard or wall that reads "What an Interviewer Should NOT Do." Instruct each person to identify two things an interviewer should not do and write down one per stick-it note.

Ask people to come to the front of the room and post one of the examples they had identified.

Read through the answers and group similar behaviors. Remove repeat responses. Ask people to add the second characteristic they identified if they don't see it already listed. Complete the list with any items from the list in Figure 4D-3, Never, that participants have not identified.

Review each behavior to identify how it would undermine your effort to collect complete and accurate information.

FIGURE 4D-3.
NEVER…

- Get involved in long explanations of the study such as trying to explain sampling

- Deviate from the study introduction, sequence of questions, or question wording.

- Try to justify or defend what you are doing.

- Suggest an answer or agree or disagree with an answer.

- Try to ask questions from memory.

- Rush the respondent.

- Patronize respondents.

- Dominate the interview.

- Let another person answer for the intended respondent.

- Interview someone you know.

- Falsify interviews.

- Improvise.

Step 3:   Role play

Divide participants into teams of two. Assign each team several items from the list generated above. Give each pair the same section of the survey questionnaire. Instruct each team to role play the interview incorporating the negative behaviors assigned to them.

Ask each team to present their interview for the whole group. At the end of the interview, the "audience" has to identify what the interviewer did wrong.

Step 4:   Conclude

Review and summarize the topics of the day. Present the following principles of interviewing as the skills that interviewers will practice and learn during the rest of the week.

- Be very familiar with the survey questions and their flow so that they can project a confident, self-assured and interested manner;

- Read the questions exactly as written;

- Probe when multiple answers are possible or initial responses are unclear; and

- Record responses completely by properly using the pre-coded answers or adding additional ones when necessary.

Day 2
Reviewing the Questionnaire and Key Concepts

Goal: To gain a complete understanding of the Impact Survey

Objectives: At the end of the day, participants will be able to

- Understand the purpose of each question;
- Understand the definitions for all concepts it includes;
- Follow the flow of questions; and
- Frame each question by the appropriate cultural and business context.

Materials: Copies of the survey
Flip chart and markers

Method: Question-by-question review and discussion. There are thirteen sections in the survey. For each one, introduce the purpose of the questions organized in that section (stated in italics in the walk-through of the survey below).

Then, for each section, proceed question by question, asking each interviewer to take turns reading the questions aloud. When a question requires discussion and development of examples, there are specific instructions to do so. Take the time to follow these instructions as well as clarify confusion about the meaning or intent of any question.

Survey Review: Question by Question

Survey identification. Above the survey title is a bold line. This part of the survey is meant to be completed last by the survey supervisor or data entry personnel. Once the survey is completed, the person who reviews it for completeness and clearness should record their name. The individual who loads the survey results into the data file should in turn assign the survey a discrete identification number and also record their name.

Preliminary information. Just after the survey title is where the interviewers will begin recording information. They should record their name, the date of the interview and the community. To respect the confidentiality of the interviewee, you *may* choose *not* write his/her name on the survey form, only the number s/he has been assigned. In this case, to help interviewers identify the right people in the field, a slip of paper with the client's name should be attached to the survey form, to be removed once the surveys return to the office for data entry. It is essential, however, to keep a master list of names and numbers especially if follow-up interviews with the same persons are planned for the future. This information might also be needed to obtain program information about the client from administrative records.

Assuming that the Impact Survey will include several discrete sample groups, the preliminary information should also include the category or sample in which this interviewee is believed to fall. It is essential that the interviewer check the accuracy of this information with the respondent themselves in case a mistake has been made (see question #1b.)

Client information (program profile). *The objective of this section is to collect information about the respondent's program experience (duration in the program, loan size, etc.) that might be related to their degree of impact. What type of client-level information is available and of interest will depend on the characteristics of specific programs. The generic survey includes questions about the borrower group and amount of savings, since these were important features in the two test sites that used a village banking methodology. It will be important to make a plan for how and when this program information will be collected.*

Interviewers should record the responses on the lines indicated.

Individual level: basic information (questions #1a-6). *The objective of this section is to collect basic demographic information about the respondent that might mediate the impact of the program. The Impact Survey design assumes that the sample groups are essentially the same with the principal difference being their exposure to the program. These questions will enable comparisons of the sample groups to be made to see if this assumption is true.*

Record the pre-coded responses in the boxes to the right of each question. The number of boxes depends on whether only a single-, double- or multiple-digit response code is possible. Questions that allow for multiple answers have more than one set of boxes for recording all responses.

Q.1. The first question in the section is a check to ensure that the respondent represents the desired sample group. For example, if you are supposed to be interviewing a non-client and yet the respondent says that she used to be a member of the program, you will have to stop the interview.

Q.3 & Q.5. Respondents are asked to specify their age and their years in school rather than indicate which category applies to them in a pre-coded list. For example, clients' average age is a more powerful and flexible variable for analysis than the percentage of respondents between 18 and 35 years. In some program areas, many people do not know their specific age. Preparing a chronology of events well known to people in the area can help respondents give more accurate age estimates. For example, someone may not know their age, but they know they were born the year before independence.

Q.4. The concept of marriage/free union might require discussion and clarification. Rates of female-headed households might be grossly over-estimated if only an officially recognized marriage is applied here. The objective is to know how many women currently have a partner; whether a partner is a legally recognized spouse is less important, so non-official or free-union marriages should also be included. In some areas, it would be meaningful to also include separate categories for polygamous and monogamous unions.

Question #4 is also the first one that requires you to read the set of possible responses to the respondent. Read the responses only when indicated in the instructions following the question. Becoming familiar with the specific instructions for each question will require practice to achieve smooth flow of the interview (see next section).

Q.6. The concept of reading a letter is meant to capture functional literacy. The letter could be written in any language, but it should require a reading ability beyond simply recognizing one's own name.

Household level: basic information (questions #7-9). *The objective of this section is very similar to the preceding one. These questions include several concepts that are likely to require discussion and specific examples.*

Q.7. Records the number of adults and children in the household. (Write the response within the appropriate columns of the table below the question). The household is a potentially very complicated concept to define and identify. The definition of household applied here refers to those people who live together (common residence) and share the same food at least once in a day (share common resources). The objective is to define those individuals whose economic security is closely interdependent rather than the larger network of extended family. Applying both a residential and communal food criteria is likely to identify this smaller and more closely intertwined group. However, definition of the essential economic and social unit might differ by program area and even differ depending on who within the household is the respondent.

Discussion. Discuss specific examples of living or eating arrangements and who should be defined as part of the household. For example, talk about how to treat a case where a nephew has been living with the family and sharing common meals for the last year (part of the household) versus a relative who stayed with the family for only the last two weeks (not part of the household).

Question #7 also includes an age cut-off delineating who is an adult and who is a child. The age cut-off was based on the information needed to apply the commonly used concept of dependency ratio (children under 18 years/economically active adults).

Discussion. Find the common definition of "adult" and "child" in your area.

Q.8a. Refers to "economically active persons," defined as those engaged in work that earns income or products. Economically active would include family enterprises, agricultural production and wage work, but not domestic labor.

Discussion. Discuss examples specific to the local setting

Q.8b. Refers to "salaried workers," which is defined as a job that earns a regular income.

Discussion. Generate and discuss examples specific to the local setting.

Q.9. Refers to "the head of the household," which is defined as the person who is the principal decision-maker. The question requires that the interviewer listen to the response and then mark whether the answer indicates the head of household is the respondent themselves, a male relative or female relative. It is not necessary to indicate the specific nature of the relationship between the respondent and head of household, only the gender of that person.

Discussion. Discuss specific case examples illustrating different household heads.

Education of children (questions #10-11). *These questions focus on the schooling status of children in the household.*

Q.10a. Although school age often is considered to be between five and seventeen years of age, a specific definition of "school age" must be adapted to the program site.

If the survey happens to take place during a break between two school years, it might be necessary to alter question #10a to read, *"How many children in your household were school-aged during this last school year?"* and question #10b to read, "*How many of these children attended school in the last school year*?"

Q.10d. Record school grade in terms of the number of years in school it represents.

Action. Develop a summary table with each grade level and the number of years in school this represents for easy reference.

Q.11. Read the responses as instructed. It is not necessary to read the responses "don't know" and "not applicable." Those responses should only be entered when the respondent says

- She doesn't know the answer (99); or
- The household includes no school-aged children (98—not applicable)

For respondents who report that none of the school-aged children attended school either during the current or last school year, the correct response is that the amount spent "stayed the same."

Loan use and individual income (questions #12-13). *The objective of the questions in this section are to explore how current clients use their program loans and general trends in respondents' own income.*

Q.12a-c. Read the question to current clients only, since these questions pertain to how program loans have been used. Skip these questions when interviewing non-clients or incoming clients who have not received a loan yet.

Q.12a. Do NOT read the responses.

Q.12b. Do NOT read the responses. Listen to the client's answer and categorize it in the appropriate coded classification. Since multiple answers are possible, up to three sets of boxes

for response codes are provided for this question. So that the information is complete, it is important to probe by asking neutral statements like, "Anything else?" until the respondent says, "That is all."

Q.12c. Read the "use" statements to complete the question, "Did you use any portion of your last loan to…?" For this series of questions, only one response is possible. If any of the response boxes are left empty it is assumed the interviewer did not read the question.

Q.13. Read to all respondents—current clients and non-clients or incoming clients. Explain that the respondent is being asked to reflect upon change "over the last twelve months." For clarification or additional emphasis, you might also say, *"Last year at this very same time until now."*

Q.14a. This question asks about personal income, as opposed in household income. Ask it in the same way as question #13, but pay attention and practice the "go to" instructions for each answer.

Q.14b. This is the first question in the survey that includes a response for "other." If the respondent gives an answer distinctly different from the pre-coded responses, code this as "6" (other) and record the specific answer in the available space. Because multiple responses are possible, it is important to probe by asking neutral statements like, "Anything else?" until the respondent says, "That is all."

Practice. How to apply the specific answers respondents give to the pre-coded categories and how to record the main idea of any "other" responses.

Q.14c. Very similar in approach to question #14b.

Enterprise level: income, labor, and profit (questions #14-19). *The objective of this section is to focus on financial returns to respondent's income-generating activities over a relatively short recall period—the previous four weeks or last month.*

Q.15a. Refers to wage-earning activities.

Q.15b. Focuses the respondent's attention on microenterprise activities. The question asks about "enterprise **or** income-generating activities" because the translation for "enterprise" in many languages might imply a more formal business than is characteristic of microenterprise activities. The combination of both terms helps respondents to consider informal activities, although subsequent follow-up questions do use the term "enterprise." The specific definition of the types of income-generating activities a respondent should include depends on the program. For example, your team will have to decide whether to include farm production as income generating activities.

Q.16a. Asks respondents to identify the enterprise that earns them the most money. It is assumed that clients will have diversified livelihood strategies and are likely to engage in more than one

enterprise at the same time. However, for simplicity, the focus is on financial returns to the two most important (in terms of their economic contribution) enterprise activities. (Questions #16 and #17 ask for the same information from each of these two enterprises.) Interviewers should record the specific enterprise activity in the available space and leave the boxes to the right empty. Specific codes will need to be assigned later either by survey supervisors or data-entry operators.

Q.16b & Q.17b. This is an important question because of diverse ownership patterns such as partnerships. Read the three options and record whichever the respondent indicates in the boxes to the right.

Q.16c & Q.17c. Ask respondents to consider their product (or business) cycle—the period of time within which they typically earn a profit. The objective of this question is to provide a flexible approach within which respondents can report financial flows according to the time periods most appropriate to their enterprise. The information collected in this section will be used to estimate monthly costs, revenue and sales. The information on which to base these estimates, however, might most easily be reported in terms of weekly, biweekly, monthly, or another time period.

Note: If the concept of "product cycle" proves too difficult for your clients or interviewers to understand, this question can be dropped. The following questions d-e-f would then simply refer to costs, revenue and profit "in the last month" or "in the last four weeks". Respondents can then report amounts according to time periods that are appropriate to their enterprise.

Q.16d & Q.17d. Require that the concept of "costs" be defined and discussed. Through multiple pre-tests of this series of questions, respondents seemed more forthcoming, and often more knowledgeable, about their enterprise costs than their revenue or profit. This sequencing of questions can also help clarify the product or business cycle. The question focuses on direct enterprise costs *excluding* unpaid labor or expenses for basic needs.

Respondents can report amounts in whatever period is most appropriate—such as per week, per two weeks, or per month. Often production costs will correspond to different periods. However, reporting amounts per day should, if possible, be converted to either a weekly or monthly period to facilitate uniform monthly estimates. If amounts *are* reported in days, you must also record the number of days this occurred over the last four-week period so that monthly estimates can be made. Record the reported expense amounts in the appropriate time-period column. Survey supervisors or data-entry operators will perform the necessary calculations to derive an overall monthly costs estimate and record this amount in the boxes to the right.

Enterprise activities will have predictable types of expenses. For example, if a respondent is reporting on costs and returns to a restaurant, there are predictable types of expenses that you should probe for if the respondent does not initially mention them, such as firewood or other cooking fuel, produce, dry goods, hired labor, and depending on the context, electricity and taxes.

Discussion. Discuss examples of expenses for common businesses of program clients.

Q.16e & Q.17e. Define and discuss the concept of revenue. Revenue refers to returns from sales and should include both amounts paid in cash and amounts owed for sales made on a credit basis. Estimates of revenue can be very straightforward for certain enterprise activities that are characterized by infrequent but major sales (such as to wholesalers), but much more difficult to estimate for activities conducted daily, especially when enterprise and domestic funds are mixed.

Q.16f & Q.17f. Define and discuss the concept of profit. Informal entrepreneurs will often net out the household's daily expenses for basic needs before they give an estimate of enterprise profit. For example, in Mali, there were distinct French and Bambara terms for two "types" of profits. The French term "benefice" referred to sales revenue less direct business expenses such as raw materials, labor, transportation and fuel. However, "profit" referred to sales revenue less direct business expenses and indirect expenses like foods for oneself and for the family as well as loan principal and interest repayment. In this case, the term "benefice" was used since it better captured the intended concept of enterprise returns or profit better than the French term "profit," which was more similar to the concept of "savings." Certainly, word selection would very much affect the amounts reported.

Discuss and practice. Define concepts, discuss examples, and practice this section (questions #16 and #17) of the survey. Unlike the other parts of the survey, the section on enterprise financial returns functions more as a worksheet whereby interviewers collect the necessary information to make monthly estimates. While other parts of the survey contain more straightforward questions that can and should be read as written, this line of question requires more probing and interactive involvement of the interviewer to collect as complete and accurate information as possible. It will be necessary to prepare case examples for this financial-flow information based on common loan-assisted enterprises. These types of examples are included in the practice exercises.

Q.18. Do NOT ask the client this question. Instead, you should rate the respondents' ability to estimate their costs, sales and profit. During mock practices of the interview, it is important to determine as a group what a respondent's rating should be so that this subjective assessment can be to the degree possible made more uniform across different interviewers.

Q.19. Determine and record the number of children who helped with either enterprise activity. It is important to ask this question for both enterprises together, since often the same children will assist with both. These questions refer to children in general and not just the respondent's own children.

Q.20. Ask the respondent to report the three principal ways enterprise profit was used (in other words, the three largest investments or expenditures of profits). "Principal" refers to greatest amount of the profit. Record responses in the order in which they are ranked. If a respondent only has one or two principal ways, leave the remaining boxes empty. If the respondent doesn't know (99), then 99 should be recorded in the box labeled 1st and if the respondent has no profit (98), then 98 should be recorded in this 1st box.

Enterprise level: improvements and assets (questions #21-22).

Q.21. You are asking about changes that have been made in the last twelve months. Again, you might need to clarify that this refers to last year at this time until now. For each item on the list of changes, mark an "X" in the column that shows the respondent's answer.

Q.22. Similar in approach to question #21.

Individual level: savings and enterprise skills (questions #23-26).

Q.23. Refers to personal cash savings. Depending on the program, you may have to clarify that this question refers to savings both held by the program *and* with other sources. Depending on a respondent's, answer there are specific instructions for which follow-up questions to ask.

Practice. These "go to" instructions so that you are able to go directly to the right follow-up questions without breaking the flow of the interview.

Q.24. Is intended only for those respondents who report they had personal cash savings in question #23. It is a retrospective question that refers to the last twelve months.

Q.25. This question may not be immediately clear to respondents, especially if they did not go through a conscious decision-making process when determining what enterprise activity to undertake. If the respondent is unclear, clearly restate the question, slowly emphasizing the terms "factors" and "consider." The respondent should not get into elaborate explanations of the meaning of the question or give examples of types of factors, however, since this would likely bias the response. Silent probes such as a pause can be important to give respondents time to think. Also, as with other questions that allow for multiple responses after the initial response(s), it is important to probe by asking neutral statements like, "Anything else?" until the respondent says, "That is all."

Q.26. As with similar questions, complete the question with the listed statements and mark the appropriate column with an "X." *Only current clients* should be asked the follow-up question #26b. Each time a client gives "yes" to a statement in #26a, go directly to #26b. Note: Be sure to review and adapt this question to make sure it is appropriate for the program clients.

Household level: assets (question #27). The objective of the next section is to get an inventory of a specified list of assets that capture a progression of wealth. The section begins with a brief introductory statement to signal that a new topic area will be addressed next. It is important to clearly state that the questions refer to whether the respondent themselves or anyone in their household owns these items. You may have to remind the respondent of the definition of the household and that it is the same as those people they identified for question #7. Again, the flow of the questions works best to read across the questions (a-d) item by item. Only current clients are posed the question #27d. Correctly and completely filling this section of the survey typically requires practice as it is somewhat complicated.

Household-level welfare: housing improvements (questions #28-29). *The objective of this section is to capture whether significant housing investments were made over the last two years.*

Q.28. This is the first reference to a two-year reporting period, so it is important that you stress the phrase "during the last two years" and if necessary clarify that this refers to two years ago at this time until now. Depending on the response to #28, you are instructed to "jump" to appropriate follow-up questions.

Q.29. As with other questions organized with a table or box format, you must record responses in the appropriate column rather than in boxes along the right-hand side of the page. As you read through the list of repairs, improvements or additions, it may be necessary to refer again to the two-year reporting period. Only current clients are asked question #29b and again, for each "Yes" answer given by a current client, go directly to #29b.

Household-level welfare: diet and coping with difficult times (questions #30-33).

Q.30. Refer to the "last twelve months" and read the pre-coded responses (with the exception of 99, "Don't know") aloud. Depending on the response, the specific follow-up question is noted.

Q.31a & Q.31b. As with other questions that allow for multiple responses after the initial answer, it is important to probe by asking neutral statements like, "Anything else" until the respondent says, "That is all."

Q.32a. Captures whether the household experienced a period over the last twelve months of relatively acute food insecurity. Depending on the response, the specific follow-up question is noted.

Q.32b. Record responses in terms of "number of months". However, depending on the setting or socioeconomic level of the program's clientele, "number of weeks" might be more appropriate.

Q.32c. As with other questions that allow for multiple responses after the initial answer, it is important to probe by asking neutral statements like, "Anything else?" until the respondent says, "That is all."

Q.33a. Refers to the "last 12 months" and depending on the response, the specific follow-up question is noted.

Q.33b. Record responses in terms of "number of weeks," but depending on the setting or socioeconomic level of the program's clientele, "number of months" or "number of days" might be more appropriate.

Note: For non-clients or those just joining the program, question #33 is the last one in the interview.

Discuss and Practice. A closing, where the interviewer thanks the respondent and answers any questions the interviewer might have regarding the interview. It is good to discuss what type of questions the interviewer might be equipped to answer and which ones they should refer to another more appropriate or knowledgeable source.

Client satisfaction (questions #34-37). *The objective of these questions is to get a sense of the current clients' experience and opinions of the program as well as their suggestions for improvements. The formats and approaches used for these questions are not different from ones already discussed earlier in the survey.*

Days 3-4
Practice Exercises

The next phase of interviewer training involves three steps: (1) practice, (2) **practice,** and (3) PRACTICE. The following series of practice exercises will give interviewers more exposure to general principles of good interviewing technique; drills with tricky sections on the survey and experience conducting the entire interview.

Goal: To develop interviewer confidence and competence to administer the Impact Survey.

Objectives: At the end of the practice sessions participants will be able to

- Use the particular wording of each question;

- Identify DOs and Don'ts of survey interviewing;

- Make smooth transitions from one question to the next the survey;

- Complete the financial analysis sections of the survey; and

- Administer the entire survey.

Materials: Multiple copies of the survey for each participant
Flip chart and markers

Methods: Role plays, work in pairs, group discussion

Time: One to two days

Exercise #1. Review the Principles of Good Interviewing

Step 1: *Role play*

You (the evaluation trainer) will conduct a section of the interview with a volunteer. During the interview, your role is to conduct yourself as a very poor interviewer. Make several intentional mistakes such as asking leading questions, inserting your own opinion, or changing the wording of several questions.

Step 2: *Discuss*

After the role play, ask participants to provide feedback on your performance as interviewer. (You might ask them to give you a "grade" similar to that which a student would receive for class performance, list the grades and then ask those who gave the highest and lowest scores to begin the discussion.) What errors did they notice?

Step 3:   *Role play (participants)*

Now ask for volunteers to repeat the same interview (same questions from the Impact Survey) and discuss their comportment as interviewers. Ask first for positive comments on their performance, then proceed to identify areas for improvement.

Step 4:   *Conclude by reviewing principles of good interview technique*

The next two exercises address two tricky aspects of the survey that require more than a simple recording of answers: I1) the questions that require the interviewer to allocate client's answers to pre-coded categories; and (2) the questions that include "Go-to" instructions that require the interviewer to skip to a specific question depending on the client's answer to the last one.

Exercise #2. Coding Answers

Step 1:   *Demonstrate coding*

Ask someone to read Question #13b "Why did your income decrease? Invite any participant to call out an answer. For each answer, you (the trainer) decide how to code the answer. Repeat 4 or 5 times or until most answer categories have been covered. Ask participants if they agree with your decisions. Discuss any disagreements.

Repeat for question #13c.

Step 2:   *Practice coding*

Ask for a volunteer to come forward to repeat the same process. As each answer is called out, the participant-volunteer has to decide how to code the answer. If the answers given by participants are very obvious, offer some challenging answers of your own. Make sure s/he gets some answers that would clearly be "other". Discuss any disagreements with the decisions that the volunteer made.

Step 3:   *Practice coding in dyads*

Divide participants into pairs, and ask each pair to decide who will be the interviewer and who will be the respondent. Instruct pairs to start with question #13a and proceed to question #13b or #13c, depending on answer. Next, they should ask and code answers to questions #19, #24, #30a, and #31a. Instruct each pair to switch roles so that everyone practices asking and coding these questions.

Step 4:   *Review experience in plenary*

Exercise #3. "Go To" Questions

>### *Step 1:   Demonstrate*

Demonstrate how to maneuver through questions #22 through #28 with a volunteer participant playing the role of client. Make a mistake or two on purpose to see if the observers catch it.

>### *Step 2:   Practice in pairs*

Ask participants to work with their partner to practice the same series, questions #22 through #28. After everyone has had a chance to work practice these questions, ask for a volunteer to demonstrate.

>### *Step 3:   Review in plenary*

Discuss any issues or trouble spots that arise.

Exercise #4. The Financial Returns Section

The section of the survey that focuses on financial returns to the enterprise is one of the most difficult. Because it functions like a worksheet for which interviewers collect the necessary information to make monthly estimates, this series of questions requires more probing and interactive involvement in order for the interviewer to collect as complete and accurate information as possible. It requires considerable practice. Use the case examples provided here or make up your own to facilitate practice with this section. Each case includes an "answer sheet"(that is, questions #16a through #16f completed correctly). Answer sheets appear at the end of the training section as a handout.

>### **Step 1: Work through one example together**

>### **Step 2: Give the remaining examples to each pair of participants to work through together**

>### **Step 3: Review in plenary and discuss any issues or confusion**

Note 1: Product cycles
This line of questioning is oriented to the concept of a "product cycle." The objective in doing this is to help clients to report income flows for periods of time that are appropriate to their specific enterprise. For example, someone who makes coconut oil might typically buy the coconuts, process them and sell them every two weeks. However, another person buys fish each week, smokes it and sells it at the weekly market. In the first case, the product cycle would be two weeks and in the second only one week. For some enterprises, however, the concept of "product cycle" does not work well. For example, people who have a small store tend to sell items on a daily basis and restock in time periods depending on the perishability or turnover for the product. In this case, the "product cycle" for their various products might vary. If the concept of product cycle ultimately proves to be too difficult for respondents or interviewers, another

approach would be to ask about costs, revenue, and profit "over the last month" or "in the last four weeks." Respondents should be allowed to report amounts in flexible time periods—weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly amounts—depending on their particular circumstance. Again, those coding the survey will need to convert all entries into uniform monthly amounts.

Note 2: Which amount to record?
Interviewers should record amounts clients report in the appropriate boxes; survey supervisors or data entry operators will calculate the monthly amounts of costs, sales, and profit that are recorded in the boxes to the right. Point out, however, how the amounts in the code boxes reflect monthly amounts.

Note 3: Reported profits vs. calculated profits
It is very likely that what clients report as their net revenue (monthly revenue-monthly cost) will not be the same as the monthly profit calculated on the basis of respondents separate estimates of their revenues and expenses. These amounts, however, should be relatively close (see attached examples #3 and #4). As interviewers pose these questions and record the amounts respondents report, they should be looking for consistency between responses. For example, if a respondent itemizes costs that are well above $100 and then reports revenues for that same period of only $30, the interviewer should probe to find out if the respondent felt they had lost money; perhaps she has confused the concepts of "revenue" and "profit." The interviewer could just read back what he had been told by saying something like, "From what you have told me, if your costs were about $100 during the week and your revenue was $30, it seems you lost quite a bit of money that week—about $70. Is that right?"

In another example, a respondent might itemize costs of approximately $100 per week, estimate her revenue at $150 per week, and then estimate profits at $200 per week. In this case, the estimated profit is four times the net revenue (weekly revenue - weekly costs). The interviewer should read back the reported amounts and ask how he should understand the very large difference between net revenue and estimated profit. The interviewer is not expected to take the time to calculate the monthly amounts for costs, revenue, net revenue, and estimated profit during the interview as this would be too time consuming. Still, it is possible to roughly compare the consistency between the answers and probe for clarification at the time of the interview. This should help reduce the error in this section of the questionnaire due to misunderstandings and incomplete information.

Look at examples #3 and #4 in the handout for this calculation exercise. In Example #3, Sell Smoked Fish, the net revenue would be $70 ($340 in monthly revenues - $270 in monthly expenses). The respondent estimates her profit at $30 per two weeks, however, making estimated monthly profits $60. This amount is quite close to $70 and would not indicate a need for further verification through additional probing.

In Example #4, Store, the respondent estimates her weekly profit to be $50 or $200 per month compared to the net revenue of $160. Again, these values are relatively close and would not indicate a need for further probing.

Case Examples for Exercise #4: The Financial Returns

Example #1, Make and Sell Maize Porridge (see attached example)
This case example is relatively straightforward. The respondent makes and sells porridge. This is primarily her own activity. She sells the porridge on the market day once a week. Some of her costs are weekly (maize and milling) while others are monthly (firewood, salt, taxes and transport). She has little difficulty quantifying her costs. Because she sells the porridge on a weekly basis, she is able to estimate her weekly sales. All of this amount was received as cash payment since she rarely sells on a credit basis. She estimates her weekly profit to be $15 once she has covered her direct enterprise costs.

Example #2, Seamstress (see attached example)
The respondent is a seamstress who manages her own small shop. It is difficult for her to report a "product cycle" since she operates an ongoing service enterprise. However, she typically figures her profits and some of her costs on a weekly basis. Each week she pays her three apprentice assistants $8 each for a total of $24. Her monthly costs are thread, buttons, zippers, electricity, rent and taxes. Her customers pre-purchase and provide the material that she and her assistants sew. She estimates her average weekly sales in the last four weeks to be approximately $75. She estimates her average weekly profit to be $20.

Example #3, Sell Smoked Fish (see attached example)
This respondent's own enterprise activity is to sell smoked fish. She only smokes the fish twice in a month or every two weeks, so this is her product cycle. Her costs are primarily incurred on a biweekly basis and include fish, hired labor, transport to market and taxes. Her monthly costs are firewood and she only needs to purchase a large sack of salt once a year. She is able to report her sales and estimated profit for each two weeks since she typically sells to the same wholesaler.

Example #4, Store (see attached example)
Attempts to quantify financial return for stores that sell a myriad of items is particularly challenging. Typically, various types of inventory are purchased at different intervals and estimating average sales and profits can be especially difficult since so many small transactions occur. In this example, beverages represents one of the most costly and frequently purchased items sold by this store. The complication of itemizing all the various products is so daunting that typically a total estimate for the mixture of inventory purchased over a relatively long period such as a month will provide a rough approximation of costs. Those managing a store will typically sell on a virtually daily basis. However, respondents should be encouraged to estimate their average sales and profits in less frequent periods such as weeks to facilitate the calculations of uniform monthly amounts.

Exercise #5. Practicing in Pairs

Once you have mastered some of the trickier parts of the survey, participants should be ready to "put it all together" and practice entire sections of it. In this exercise, participants practice in pairs.

> #### Step 1:   Practice Interviewing

Divide the survey into parts that will require approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Instruct the interview pairs to alternate who is the interviewer and who is the respondent with each playing both roles for each section.

During the practice interviews, the survey supervisors should circulate through the room and listen in on the different interviewer pairs. Note examples of specific questions or types of responses that seem to be particularly challenging and examples where the interviewer did a particularly good job.

> #### Step 2:   Review in plenary

When the pairs have both had a chance to practice approximately four pages of the questionnaire, reconvene the group. Ask them about their experience and specifically which questions or responses gave them particular problems. Facilitate a group discussion of how these challenges might be overcome. Ask for specific examples of when the mock respondent felt the interviewer did a particularly good job.

> #### Step 3:   Role play the entire interview

Select two volunteers to conduct the entire interview in front of the group for feedback and suggestions.

Example 1

16a. (If yes to #15b) In the last four weeks, which of your enterprise activities earned
you the most income?

0	6

Activity #1: Make and Sell Maize Porridge

16b. Is this enterprise activity…? (Read answers and circle only one.)
1. Primarily your own activity   2. A business partnership with others

16c. What is your product cycle for this enterprise activity—how long does it take from the time
you purchase inputs to the time you sell most of the product? For example, if you sell
cooked food in the market once a week and buy your ingredients on a weekly basis, you earn
a weekly profit. If you fatten animals for sale, you probably earn a profit every six months
when they are sold. (*Read the possible responses. Circle only one.*)

1. Weekly   3. Monthly
2. Every two weeks   4. Other (specify) _____

0	1

16d. What and how much were your costs for your last product cycle? (Probe for
all business expenses including inputs, transportation, hired labor, taxes, rent,
water, light, etc. List expenses and cost in appropriate time period.)

1	9	0

Expense	Cost per week	Cost per 2 weeks	Cost per month	Expense for other time period; specify period
Maize	$36.00			
Milling	$4.00			
Firewood			$15.00	
Salt			$2.00	
Taxes			$5.00	
Transport			$8.00	

16e. Sales: For the same product cycle, what were your total sales [cash and credit]?
(*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

2	48	8

Weekly sales	Sales per 2 weeks	Monthly sales	Sales for other time period; specify
$62.00			

16f. Profit: For the same product cycle, after covering your enterprise costs—
but before you spent your earnings on your family—what was your profit?
(*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

60	

Weekly profit	Profit per 2 weeks	Monthly profit	Profit for other time period; specify
$15.00			

Example 2

16a. (If yes to #15b) In the last 4 weeks, which of your enterprise activities earned you the most income?

| 0 | 8 |

Activity #1: <u>Seamstress</u>

16b. Is this enterprise activity …? (*Read answers and circle only one.*)
    1. Primarily your own activity   2. A business partnership with others

| 0 | 1 |

16c. What is your product cycle for this enterprise activity—how long does it take from the time you purchase inputs to the time you sell most of the product? For example, if you sell cooked food in the market once a week and buy your ingredients on a weekly basis, you earn a weekly profit. If you fatten animals for sale, you probably earn a profit every six months when they are sold. (*Read the possible responses. Circle only one.*)

    1. Weekly   3. Monthly
    2. Every two weeks   4. Other (specify) _____

| 0 | 1 |

16d. What and how much were your costs for your last product cycle? (*Probe for all business expenses including inputs, transportation, hired labor, taxes, rent, water, light, etc. List expenses and cost in appropriate time period.*)

| 2 | 20 | |

Expense	Cost per week	Cost per 2 weeks	Cost per month	Expense for other time period; specify period
Thread			$5.00	
Buttons/Zippers			$14.00	
Assistants (3)	$24.00			
Electricity			$15.00	
Rent			$75.00	
Tax			$15.00	

16e. Sales: For the same product cycle, what were your total sales [cash and credit]? (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

| 3 | 00 | 8 |

Weekly sales	Sales per 2 weeks	Monthly sales	Sales for other time period; specify
$75.00			

16f. Profit: For the same product cycle, after covering your enterprise costs—but before you spent your earnings on your family—what was your profit ? (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

| | 80 | |

Weekly profit	Profit per 2 weeks	Monthly profit	Profit for other time period; specify
$20.00			

Example 3

16a. (If yes to #15b) In the last 4 weeks, which of your enterprise activities earned you the most income?

0	3

Activity #1: Sell Smoked Fish

16b. Is this enterprise activity …? (*Read answers and circle only one.*)
    1. Primarily your own activity   2. A business partnership with others

0	1

16c. What is your product cycle for this enterprise activity—how long does it take from the time you purchase inputs to the time you sell most of the product? For example, if you sell cooked food in the market once a week and buy your ingredients on a weekly basis, you earn a weekly profit. If you fatten animals for sale, you probably earn a profit every six months when they are sold. (*Read the possible responses. Circle only one.*)

1 Weekly   3. Monthly
2. Every two weeks   4. Other (specify) _____

0	2

16d. What and how much were your costs for your last product cycle? (*Probe for all business expenses including inputs, transportation, hired labor, taxes, rent, water, light, etc. List expenses and cost in appropriate time period.*)

2	7	0

Expense	Cost per Week	Cost per 2 weeks	Cost per month	Expense for other time period; specify period
Fish		$95.00		
Firewood			$30.00	
Hired Labor		$10.00		
Transport To Market		$8.00		
Salt				$48 PER ANNUM
Taxes		$5.00		

16e. Sales: For the same product cycle, what were your total sales [cash and credit]?
    (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

3	40	8

Weekly sales	Sales per 2 weeks	Monthly sales	Sales for other time period; specify
	$170.00		

16f. Profit: For the same product cycle, after covering your enterprise costs— but before you spent your earnings on your family—what was your profit ?
    (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

60

Weekly profit	Profit per 2 weeks	Monthly profit	Profit for other time period; specify
	$30.00		

Example 4

16a.(If yes to #15b) In the last 4 weeks, which of your enterprise activities
earned you the most income?

1	1

Activity #1: Store

16b. Is this enterprise activity …? (*Read answers and circle only one.*)
1. Primarily your own activity   2. A business partnership with others

0	1

16c. What is your product cycle for this enterprise activity—how long does it take from the time you purchase inputs to the time you sell most of the product? For example, if you sell cooked food in   the market once a week and buy your ingredients on a weekly basis, you earn a weekly profit. If   you fatten animals for sale, you probably earn a profit every six months when they are sold. (*Read   the possible responses. Circle only on.*)

1. Weekly   3. Monthly
2. Every two weeks   4. Other (specify) __Daily__

0	4

16d. What and how much were your costs for your last product cycle? (*Probe for all business expenses including inputs, transportation, hired labor, taxes, rent, water, light, etc. List expenses and cost in appropriate time period.*)

3	40	

Expense	Cost per week	Cost per 2 weeks	Cost per month	Expense for other time period; specify period
Beverages	$48.00			
Other Inventory (soap, cigarettes, matches, bread, etc.)			$120.00	
Taxes			$10.00	
Electricity			$18.00	

16e. Sales: For the same product cycle, what were your total sales [cash and credit]? (*Enter amount in the appropriate time period box.*)

5	00	8

Weekly Sales	Sales per 2 Weeks	Monthly Sales	Sales for other time period, specify:
$125.00			

16f. Profit: For the same product cycle, after covering your enterprise costs—
but before you spent your earnings on your family—what was your profit?
(Enter amount in the appropriate time-period box.)

2	00	

Weekly Profit	Profit per 2 Weeks	Monthly Profit	Profit for other time period, specify:
$50.00			

Day 5
Pre-testing the Survey

A very important aspect of the interviewer training is the opportunity to pre-test the survey in the type of setting and with people similar to those who will be included in the actual survey. It is recommended to test the Impact Survey in a program community with existing clients. In fact, in addition to providing an important opportunity for testing the instrument, the pre-test enables you to practice the sampling methodology that you plan to use for randomly selecting individuals.

Make arrangements ahead of time (for example, at the beginning of the training week or before) so that clients are informed that the interview team is coming.

Upon arriving, introduce yourselves and explain the objectives of the assessment, as you will do for the actual survey. You should also explain, however, that this is the interviewers first genuine opportunity to conduct the survey so respondents' patience is appreciated.

Each interviewer should have the opportunity to conduct the whole interview with at least one individual. After completing the interviews, the interviewer and survey supervisor should review them for completeness (as will be done for the actual surveys). The supervisor should note the interviewers' errors in filling out the survey form, mark them, and use them as the basis for discussing the pre-test experience and, if necessary, further training.

After processing the experience, make final changes to the survey instrument. Particular questions to consider during this session are included in Figure 4D-4.

FIGURE 4D-4.

Questions To Ask When Pilot Testing Survey Instruments

√   Is it clear how to ask questions and present options for response?

√   Do we know how to get in-depth information, when appropriate, by probing respondents' brief answers?

√   Is it clear how to record information?

√   Are we able to keep the interview to the agreed-upon time limit?

√   Do the respondents understand the questions?

√   Do they understand how to answer the questions?

√   Do they agree that privacy has been protected? Respected?

√   Which questions or sequence of questions posed the biggest challenge for interviewers and why?

√   Did any of the interviewers encounter an experience they found particularly helpful or instructive that they would like to share with the rest of the group?

Chapter 4
Tool #1:
Impact Survey

Part E
Guidelines for Survey Sampling

- Why sample?

- Sample size

- Taking a simple random sample

- More complicated samples

- Comparison groups

- Survey sampling on the run—keeping bias out

Chapter 4
Part E
SURVEY SAMPLING

Why Sample?

The main reason for survey sampling is to ensure that those interviewed fairly represent the population of clients and thereby eliminate bias from a survey. A survey sample, then, should have the qualities of being as much like the population from which it was drawn as possible.

Many poor studies can be traced directly to poor survey sampling. Statements like "you left these people out" or "you favored these people" are common criticisms of evaluations. These criticisms are directly linked to who was included or excluded in the study, which then may be considered to be biased. The most common way to achieve adequate representation and fairness is to use *random* sampling. A random sample is one in which any member of a group (called a *population* in statistics) has an equally likely chance of being picked for the sample as any other group member. Achieving randomness can be very easy or quite complex, depending on a variety of circumstances.

Poor randomization is rarely the cause of poor studies. More often, poor group definition, interviewer error, or inadequate records cause bias problems. The following examples illustrate this point:

- If a researcher wanted to survey a sample of clients from a specific microenterprise lending institution, he or she might suggest taking a random sample from that institution's client list. But if said client list is not up-to-date, it might lack new clients. Or if program officers have excluded certain problematic groups from the client list, it does not accurately represent the whole client population served by the program. Such a sample would thus be biased. To avoid these biases, the researcher should insist upon receiving a complete and current list.

- "Tarmac bias," common in many studies, occurs when an interviewer, instructed to survey a specific individual who lives far from the road, surveys an individual who lives near the road instead.

Other common sources of bias include age, gender, and income. It is important for the research designer to think carefully about sources of bias in taking a sample, and then think of clever ways to avoid them.

Sample Size

How big a survey sample should be drawn? A statistician will tend to offer a *maximalist* answer—take *as big* a sample as possible. His or her central concern is to maintain quality control and insure that the assumptions of specific techniques are met. A field researcher, on the other hand, often approaches this question from a *minimalist* point of view—and recommends taking *as small* a survey sample as possible while still providing credible results. In reality, the survey sample size is most often determined by classic constraints C time and budget. The budget constraint reflects not just the cost of the field team and interviewer salaries, but also the related costs of transport, photocopying the survey forms, data entry, data verification and data cleaning. Time also is a factor—the time an organization can afford to take away from the business of making and monitoring loans and the time required to manage and facilitate the work of interviewers in the field. Rural survey samples are generally more expensive per survey than urban survey samples.

Practically, then, the survey sample size needs to be estimated early in the research planning and design process. Researchers frequently ask, "How big a survey sample do I need?" before they prepare the budget. This is a reasonable question. To answer that question, the basic trade-off needs to be made explicit. A larger survey sample is usually better. A larger sample is usually more expensive. The trade-off is between the evaluation's credibility and its cost.

Magic Numbers: Multiples of 30

Thirty is a "magic number." It is generally accepted as the minimum size for a simple sample. In many sampling tasks, multiples of thirty will provide a rough estimate of the sample size needed. It is important to remember that the magic number of thirty per category is the number needed as an end result—after such things as invalid surveys, refusals, and not-at-homes are taken into account. The final realized sample is the sample that is actually *used*, not the one that is initially attempted. In all cases interviewers start from the desired size of the final realized sample and increase it by making reasonable estimates of non-usable items. In the cross-sectional method recommended in this manual, the percentage of non-usable samples should be small and can be monitored during the survey process to ensure numerical targets are met. In longitudinal studies, the task is more complicated (see the discussion later in this section).

Now consider the research design categories. In the research design recommended in this manual (please refer to chapter 4, part A), three categories of clients are proposed: (1) long-established clients; (2) relatively new clients; and (3) incoming clients (who serve as the comparison group and are a proxy for non-clients). Thus it will be necessary to have a final realized sample of 30 for each group (total of 90) and to double that for a total of 180 for a single disaggregation or subcategory that applies to all three client groups, such as male/female. To analyze two subcategories (for example, rural/urban as well as male/female among all three groups), 360 is the desired minimum number (see figures 4E-1 and 4E-2 for examples). It is rare to divide the sample into more than two subcategories in one specific analysis, since it is possible to always "run" different pairs of disaggregations to identify trends, relationships, and differences, and they

need not run simultaneously. Remember, these tables show the final realized sample and must be adjusted upwards for expected invalid surveys, non-answers, and the like.

	FIGURE 4E-1. Illustration		
	of final realized minimal sample sizes for three cross-sectional study categories, disaggregated by one subcategory		
	Established Clients	**One-Year Clients**	**Incoming Clients**
Male	30	30	30
Female	30	30	30
Note: *Total final realized sample = 180. All numbers should be increased based on estimated percentages of invalidity.*			

	FIGURE 4E-2. Illustration					
	of final realized minimal sample sizes for three cross-sectional study categories, disaggregated by one subcategory (for example, category 1 is gender, and category 2 is rural/urban status					
	Established Clients		**One-Year Clients**		**Incoming Clients**	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Rural	30	30	30	30	30	30
Urban	30	30	30	30	30	30
Note: *Total final realized sample = 360. All numbers should be increased based on estimated percentages of invalidity.*						

The minimum survey sample size "explodes" as the research design calls for simultaneous analysis of more variables. Again, rarely is it desirable to analyze more than three categories (variables) *simultaneously,* instead analyze various combinations sequentially. Not all variables are dichotomous and researchers will frequently wish to look at variables like assets or variables measured along some scale. Without going into detail, A30" can still be seen as a "magic number" for analyzing most of these variables.

For most cross-sectional impact assessments using the three categories of clients suggested in this research design, sample sizes of either 180 or 360 would seem reasonable, although they should be adjusted up a bit to account for non-answers, missing data, and not applicable-type responses. It is reasonable to adjust the sample size upwards about 10 percent, yielding a sample

size of 200 for simple assessments and a sample size of 400 for more complex analytical cases such as that shown in figure 4E-2. Interestingly, these sample sizes will also likely produce requisite numbers for achieving statistical significance in many cases, although this is usually not the goal of mid-range studies (but it can be a bonus).

Taking a Simple Random Sample

The mechanics of taking a simple random sample (we will add complexity later) are relatively straightforward and not too hard to master if appropriate information is available. If dealing with group lending situations, it will be necessary to first select groups to be sampled, and in the simplest case, to have the following:

1. A complete list of all clients (or of clients from a selected group);
2. A random-number table; and
3. An agreed-upon sample size (see above).

Step 1:   Number a copy of the complete client list starting with the first client listed as 1, and increasing by one integer for each case (2,3,4,5,....etc.). Keep track of the total (the last client number).

Step 2:   Select a random-number table available in many statistics and mathematical tables books. (An excerpt from a random-number table is reproduced for instructional purposes in figure 4E-3.)

Step 3:   Make a note of the total number of cases to be considered. Also make a note of how many digits are in that number. (For example, for a client population of 722, one would note down 722 and that it consists of three digits).

Step 4:   Decide on the sample size.

Step 5:   Use the random-number table to select a sample. It does not matter in this table where you start or whether you go across the rows or up or down the columns. Using this table incorrectly is almost impossible unless you specifically choose to.

Step 6:   Keep a tally or occasionally count the sample and stop when you reach the sample size. You will likely want to take an additional sample to use as alternates.

<div align="center">

FIGURE 4E-3.
Excerpted Random-Number Table

</div>

32 50 92 46 24 69 48 93 77 87 47 17 29 36 55 95 76 09 00 24 38 09 93 01 49
81 34 70 46 99 27 95 04 69 59 71 30 74 42 36 54 15 04 34 41 43 06 09 24 42
45 11 49 20 50 86 16 75 80 55 33 98 93 66 76 58 61 05 09 82 23 23 21 65 14
13 56 08 38 43 12 11 01 21 41 13 87 08 47 98 97 30 78 89 23 55 39 22 46 99
64 61 65 94 30 17 51 54 45 85 41 22 96 26 64 44 66 18 71 83 08 21 74 18 91

Returning to the example noted in step 3 above, any number between 001 and 772 is eligible for inclusion in the sample (based on a total client population of 722). Starting at the upper left corner of figure 4E-3, you will use a column that is three digits across. The first number is 325. That means that the first case sampled will be that numbered 325 on the client list. The next number in the selected columns is 813, but that lies outside out range limit of 001 to 772, so it will not be included. The next number is 451 and case 451 will be the second client in the sample. The next two clients will be 135 and 646. You are now at the bottom of the column. So you move up to the next full column and continue (starting with a split column often leads to confusion). Our next number is 924, which is outside our range and thus not included. The next number is 704 and is included as the fifth case. As you go through this procedure, highlight or tick off those included on the copy of the client list. If you run into a duplicate entry, ignore it and go on to the next number.

Practice Exercise: Try to take the full sample of thirty. Based on this hypothetical exercise and figure 4E-3, you should have selected the following thirty cases:

325	492	431	515	713	084
451	083	301	695	339	559
135	659	489	214	138	365
646	246	167	458	412	644
704	508	110	471	293	150

More Complicated Samples

Cluster Survey Sampling

Cluster survey sampling is a tried-and-true method for dealing with geographically dispersed populations when time is limited. In cluster survey sampling, you simply group the clients into clusters and then sample random individuals from only *some* randomly chosen clusters. Grouping or "clustering" clients by time spent in the program (for example, one year and two years) as proposed in this research design is a good example of cluster sampling, and is very easy to incorporate provided good records are available. Geographical cluster sampling is more

complicated. Any cluster survey sampling is both time and cost efficient, but does increase the chances that "non-representativeness" (bias) will occur, since typically only several clusters are sampled. One unusual cluster can inadvertently skew or bias a sample. The trick to cluster survey sampling is to identify geographical groupings. This is easy when sampling from a government census, but more difficult if sampling from a financial institution's client list.

So there is bad news and good news. The bad news is that financial institutions often do not keep their information in geographical clusters. However, geography is important to financial institutions as they must know how to find their clients. Furthermore, most groups in group lending situations represent natural geographical clusters. The critical links to a good sample using geographic cluster sampling tend to be the loan officers who know the whereabouts of their clients.

How To Conduct a Clustered Survey Sample

The first step for conducting a clustered survey sample is to define clusters. The following three examples from evaluations carried out in Uganda illustrate the process:

- One group simply had a large map on the wall, with pins stuck in it for each group it loaned to—clustering made easy.
- In rural areas, when no such information was available, the research team went to government offices to secure two sets of topographic maps of the region. Loan officers were called in and they painstakingly located their groups on the map.
- In a third case, loan officers simply sat around a table and sketched out a map on a blank sheet of paper. This proved to be a time- and cost-effective method.

How Many Clusters To Choose and How To Survey Sample

This is a strategic calculation based on the number of interviewers, available transport to the clusters, the target number of surveys within a cluster, and number of surveys per day expected per interviewer. An example will illustrate these considerations. On a recent impact study in Uganda, two sites were surveyed with the goal of surveying 100 clients and 50 non-clients in each site. After loan officers clustered clients using blank-sheet mapping, the team randomly selected a geographically limited set of clusters. Most clusters were used. Basing their sample on the size of the clusters, the team proportionately sampled using a factor of five. Estimating that interviewers could interview an average of five clients and two to three non-clients per day, a number of interviewer days was assigned to each cluster. Interviewers were then assigned to specific clusters on specific days.

For example, for a total client population of 600, interviewers would select a survey sample of several clusters comprising 200 clients and sample 100 clients from them. Thus, if a cluster were composed of 10 clients total (a minimum size set), they would sample 5 clients with 2 alternates. If the cluster had a total of 20 clients, they would sample 10 clients and 4 alternates using two

interviewers, and so on. Within each cluster, they would number the clients and use a random-number table to select the interviewees.

Group-Lending Sampling

Although they seem complicated, most sampling methods follow the logic and procedures described under "Taking a Simple Random Sample." The most common situation in microenterprise lending that complicates samples is group lending. Yet, in fact, this is very simple to handle. First sample the groups, then sample the individuals. In both cases, use the simple random sampling as described above. If the situation warrants it, use some of the more complicated sampling described below.

The following steps outline how group-lending sampling is a simple extension of individual sampling strategies.

Group Sampling: Step-by-Step

Step 1:   "Map" the location of groups using the best maps available (check the Land Office or Geological Survey or Maps Office in the capital city). Loan officers *do know where* the groups are located.

Step 2:   Consider the combination of total desired sampling size, number of groups, locations of groups.

Step 3:   Calculate how long the survey takes to administer. Determine the number of groups to survey, keeping in mind that more groups increase both the credibility and the cost. Calculate the travel time to the groups. Calculate the costs involved including overnight stays if necessary.

Step 4:   Randomly sample among the groups.

Step 5:   Identify the groups chosen and recheck cost estimates based on the actuality of sampling. Adjust, if necessary, by eliminating the *last* sampled clusters, not the farthest or costliest.

Step 6:   Use individual sampling on the lists of the groups identified by the clusters.

Limited Survey Samples

You may want to limit clients selected for survey sampling from a client list in order to meet specific needs. For instance, if your financial institution lends to a wide range of clients, you may wish to limit the sample to those whose initial loans were below a specified amount, or who were part of a specific program. Or you may want to only include clients who have paid at least one loan or who have been in the program at least one year based on the assumption that impacts are not likely felt among new borrowers.

A decision of this type requires finding a balance between *targeting* and *bias*. In limiting by amount one can more easily argue that one is simply targeting a group for analysis. *Bias* could be charged in sampling only repeat or long term clients in that you would exclude clients who have dropped from the program but who entered into the program at the same time as the clients you are sampling. It may be argued that those who dropped out were more likely to be less successful than those who stayed, and thus the sample is biased towards successful clients. Yet the original argument about *targeting* clients who have had the time needed to feel impacts is also true. In this case, there is a trade-off between targeting and bias.

Other common limitations are geography and availability. In mid-range studies you can seldom go too far afield and cover a complete geographic area, nor can you return again and again to a client who is not available. What *is* important is for the researcher to be transparent and honest about the research design and constraints encountered.

Taking a limited random survey sample is simple. Start with the complete client list and strike out all clients who do not meet the limitation criteria. Then proceed with Step 1 above in the "Taking a Simple Random Sample" section.

Stratified Survey Samples

Stratified survey sampling enables you to focus on specific groups (for example, women or rural people), ensuring that they will be represented in the sample. Although random survey sampling, done correctly, will give the researcher roughly proportional samples of all groups, disproportional stratified sampling will guarantee that a certain group is adequately represented.

For example, microenterprise programs often choose to focus on their specific impact on women clients. But what if the financial institution being analyzed has a client base that is only 20 percent women? A simple random sample will result in roughly an 80-20 male/female split in the survey sample. But if you truly want to focus on women you might want a 50-50 split in the survey sample. How can this be achieved? What will it cost in terms of representativeness in the overall survey sample?

The answer is simple, if a bit more costly. It can be achieved by first survey sampling proportionally. If the target sample size is 150 clients, that means that 120 men (80 percent) and 30 women (20 percent). This would constitute the initial survey sample—call it "the representative survey sample." An additional survey sample of 90 women would yield 120 men and 120 women that could then be used for making target group comparisons.

How do you conduct a stratified survey sample? Again, this involves a slight complication of the simple random sample. Instead of sampling from one big client list, you split the client list into "strata" (in our example, one male list, one female list—in the field this can be simply done by numbering in two different columns on the master client list) and take the survey sample from each "strata" using the steps detailed above.

Customizing Your Survey Sample

When designing your survey sampling "frame" you should think through your research design *and* your analysis plan. Considering both will help you to decide whether you wish to limit, stratify and/or cluster your sample. Remember that random survey sampling will give you roughly proportional representation, so you only need to stratify if you want to inspect some variable in great detail and you only need to cluster if your resources /geography trade-offs do not allow you to survey sample from the entire client base. Stratifying and clustering can reduce your costs, and if done without bias, can greatly facilitate survey sampling.

Longitudinal Samples

In the language of sampling, "longitudinal" refers to time rather than space. As discussed in part A of this chapter on the survey design, longitudinal studies that compare clients at two different points in time are a better way to measure change and attribute it to the program. Constructing longitudinal samples, however, can be quite complicated because of the many changes that occur for clients over time.

If you do choose to carry out a longitudinal study with a comparison group, you will not be able to use incoming clients as proposed for the cross-sectional design because they will be established program clients by the time of the second survey. For a longitudinal study the comparison group for the first survey should be a reasonably matched non-client group. The second survey requires sampling from four distinct groups (clients, dropouts, new clients, and non-clients), which involves a level of complexity that is beyond what the tools in this manual require. (See annex one at the conclusion of part E for more detail on longitudinal sampling.)

Comparison Groups

Choosing the appropriate comparison group is not a sampling question, but rather a research design question and is discussed in chapter 4, part A. In most cases, a comparison group does not approach the statistical rigor of a control group (in which something deliberately does not happen) and it is about half the size of the client group.

This research design proposes using incoming clients as the comparison group as an alternative to randomly selected non-clients. The latter strategy is difficult to pursue because of the following factors:

1. There is no list to sample from;
2. You want the comparison group to be as similar to clients as possible; and
3. Non-clients often turn out to be clients who were not sampled.

Survey sampling a non-client comparison group in an urban environment is quite complex because of the diversity of economic activity. Survey sampling in a rural environment may be more straightforward. This sampling uses a complex technique that is very reliable and

justifiable—systematic stratified unaligned random sampling—and not too hard to implement, especially if clusters are added. Annex two at the end of this part provides step-by-step sampling instructions for non-clients in both urban and rural environments.

Sampling non-clients in an urban environment requires an effort to achieve a comparison group sample that "matches" the client sample along certain characteristics. To avoid this complication, this manual suggests using new/potential clients as a comparison survey sample. Sampling incoming/new clients as a comparison group is done in the same manner as sampling established clients. All that is needed is a complete list of eligible people

Another alternative is to use a randomly selected "matched" sample of non-clients. This is especially appropriate in longitudinal studies. In many urban situations, similar businesses cluster in the same area. A business in the periodic market is likely to roughly match another nearby business in the same market in terms of size and other characteristics. A shop along a commercial street is likely to roughly "match" in terms of size and scope of business a nearby shop, even though one sells stationery and the other clothes. Again, a truism in sampling is that as numbers get large, aggregated differences between 'matched pairs' become negated.

Survey Sampling on the Run—Keeping Bias Out

In the field, the best-planned survey sampling designs are often confounded by reality. You can adjust most designs in the field and still keep bias out. The following anecdote from a research supervisor in Uganda illustrates the point:

> Recently, I had an interviewer come to me who needed a few more clients to survey sample. I ask how many were on the list and he said A52". I replied, "Sample 46, 9 and 25". These numbers were not chosen from a random-number table, but *they were* selected without bias. I had no idea who those clients were or anything about them since I had not seen the list, therefore picking numbers from my head had little chance of bias and sure beat running back to my room to get a random-number table.

Bias can enter when you say, "take the nearest one" or "take anyone you want" (interviewers will almost always select their own gender). Using "opportunity samples" also tends to be bias-prone. An "opportunity sample" is non-random and means you sample people based on their availability; for example, the first ten people you meet. Avoid opportunity survey samples if possible.

Survey sampling in the field requires flexibility. Adjustments often must be made in situations such as when non-clients turn out to be clients, clients selected for the sample cannot be found, the sample sizes need to be adjusted, time is running out, or surveys turn out to be unusable. Always make a list of alternatives that are about 25 percent of the total sample size, and you should be able to weather most sampling storms. When this does not help, just think if you are biasing anything by making an "on-the-run" adjustment. You can all be random if you need to be.

Part E
Annex One
More on Longitudinal Sampling

The second phase of a longitudinal study that began with two groups, client and non-clients, will include four groups: clients who are still clients, clients who dropped out, non-clients who are still non-clients and non-clients who are "add ins" (now clients). In practice, adjusting the sample size in a longitudinal study will depend on an accurate estimate of the dropout rate. Reported dropout rates for two years range around 50 percent which can render credible longitudinal studies much more expensive than cross-sectional studies. If you expect a 50 percent drop out rate in a two-year longitudinal study, you need to double the client sample to achieve the same final sample size of clients you have in a cross-sectional study. You would further have to add another 20 percent to this total to account for attrition. Figure 4E-4 shows the desired final realized sampling size at Time Two of the longitudinal study using a two level disaggregation (allowing us to analyze two additional categories simultaneously).

<table>
<tr><td colspan="9" align="center">FIGURE 4E-4.
Desired Final Realized Sampling Size
at the end of a longitudinal study with 50% drop-outs and 20% attrition
(First Row headings are Time One/Time Two statuses)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Client/Client</td><td colspan="2">Client/Non-Client</td><td colspan="2">Non-Client/Client</td><td colspan="2">Non-Client/Non-Client</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Male</td><td>Female</td><td>Male</td><td>Female</td><td>Male</td><td>Female</td><td>Male</td><td>Female</td></tr>
<tr><td>Rural</td><td>30</td><td>30</td><td>(30)</td><td>(30)</td><td>--</td><td>--</td><td>30</td><td>30</td></tr>
<tr><td>Urban</td><td>30</td><td>30</td><td>(30)</td><td>(30)</td><td>--</td><td>--</td><td>30</td><td>30</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 4E-4 is based on the assumption of a 50 percent dropout rate over two years. If the dropout rate is less than this, you might wish to exclude the client/non-client category, since it could become an expensive addition to include it. However, if the dropout rate is near 50 percent, you, by default, can use our Time One lists and get a new category of dropouts that is interesting to analyze on its own merits in Time Two. Typically, the "add-ins" proportion of non-clients who become clients is often too small to analyze other than in a "trendy" way—you may see trends, but they are not large enough to say much about with credibility. Based on Figure 4E-4, Figure 4E-5 shows an initial sampling frame in Time One that includes expected attrition and dropout rates and hypothetically posits a 20 percent add-in rate of non-clients

	Clients		Non-clients	
FIGURE 4E-5. **Time One Sampling Sizes** based on desired sampling sizes at Time Two (Table 2)				
	Clients		**Non-clients**	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Rural	72	72	44	44
Urban	72	72	44	44
Note: Based on a 50% dropout rate, a 20% attrition rate, and a 20% add-in rate over two years.				

How is Figure 4E-5 calculated from Figure 4E-4? The male rural clients offer the following example:

1. Multiply the desired client/client male rural number in the table (30 in Table 2) by the dropout percent. Add this number to the desired male rural client/client number (30 + 30 = 60).

2. Take this new number and multiply it by the attrition rate (20 percent). Add this number (12) to the base number from step 1 (60 + 12 = 72). This is the number in the appropriate cell in Table 3.

3. Repeat for other groups. Non-clients will use an estimated add-in percent.

As can be seen from figure 4E-3, trying to achieve a longitudinal sample of 30 in client/client and non-client/non-client categories with disaggregations by gender and rural/urban results in a total initial sample size of 464 (72+72+72+72+44+44+44+44 = 464). Adjust up a bit for non-answers, refusals, invalid questionnaires, and so on, and the *rule of thumb* is that for a longitudinal study calculate Table 3 from table 2 and add about 10-20 percent. In the hypothetical example given above, a sample of 300 would give reasonable results that could be analyzed along one category in addition to client/non-client status with reasonable credibility. Adding an additional category that could be analyzed simultaneously would double this size to around 600.

Part E
Annex Two
Sampling Non-client Comparison Groups in Urban and Rural Environments

How to Survey Sample a Non-client Comparison Group in an Urban Environment

Alternative 1: The Random Linear Method

4. Select specific central locations from where clients have been survey sampled (for example, a street, an open air market).

5. Select an appropriate sample size for that location. If the survey sampling ratio is two clients to one non-client, and 20 clients were sampled, you will need to sample 10 non-clients.

6. Estimate how many businesses are in a randomly selected line (here is where flipping a coin or spinning a pen on the ground comes in handy); for example, along a street or across the market.

7. Take a random sample of numbers based on that estimate. If there are 22 businesses estimated, the numeric details of a random sample of 10, using a random-number table, might be: 19,02,07,22,17,20,05,12,01,16.

8. Rearrange these in order and instruct the interviewer to survey sample the 1st, 2nd, 5th, 7th, 12th, 16th, 17th, 19th, 20th, and 22nd businesses along that line (or street). Instruct the interviewer that the business must be "roughly" the same size in terms of space as the client business surveyed(though not necessarily the same business). If the business is closed, is of a significantly different size, or the person refuses to be surveyed, go to the next on the sample. There may also be reasons to "screen" at this stage for other loan program participation, gender, etc. to meet sampling goals.

9. If this is the last person go back to the start, avoiding people already sampled (the same holds is the estimate is short).

Alternative 2: Random Walk Client-Match Method

10. Select non-clients based on a randomized geographical relationship to survey sampled clients.

11. Determine the desired ratio of clients to non-clients, for example 2:1.

12. Instruct the interviewer to take a non-client sample after some clients survey samples, based on the client/non-client ratio. If the ratio is 1:1, every client should be matched with

a non-client. If the ratio is 2:1 client/non-client than a non-client should be sampled after every second client is sampled.

13. A random walk method can be applied in these cases. A random direction is picked based on the flip of a coin or the spin of a pen. Say the direction turns out to be left and the sampling ratio is 2 clients to 1 non-client. Select a random-number from 3 to 9 (this avoids nearest-neighbors which can be a bias). Say the number is 4. Instruct the interviewer that after every second client interviewed, they should turn to the left upon leaving the premises, go four businesses down and interview that client. If the business is closed or they are refused they should go to the next business. If they run out of businesses they should loop back to the start of the line or street and continue.

Unless a screening question is asked in the beginning (which may bias the survey), it is likely the randomly selected non-clients may turn out be clients in roughly direct proportion to the amount of penetration of the financial institution on the potential client base. This requires the sample sizes to be fine-tuned in the later stages of taking the sample to adjust for this phenomenon (interviewers will have to survey a greater ratio of non-clients as the survey progresses, unless this is predicted ahead of time).

How to Survey Sample a Non-Client Comparison Group in a Rural Environment

Rural environments make survey sampling easier since 'business' is less differentiated and more comparable, but they also make survey sampling harder because households are more widely spaced. Generally, any rural household that is not a near neighbor (and thus more likely to be family-related) to a client is eligible for sampling.

A major problem in survey sampling in rural environments is 'tarmac bias'. Survey sampling along a road excludes households tucked away in the countryside farther from the road. To properly survey sample in a rural environment is thus costlier in terms of interviewer time and transport. This should be considered when sample size decisions are made relative to budgets.

Two alternative survey sampling strategies follow. The first is less expensive, but more prone to bias. The second requires access to topographic maps, which may not always be available.

Alternative 1: Random Walk Sampling of Non-clients from Client Homes

14. Select a random-number from 3 to 9 from the random-number table.

15. Select a direction at random. This can be done from a random-number table with 1=north, 2=east, 3=south, and 4=west (this assumes directions are easily known by landmarks or the sun in the area of survey). More simply the interviewers can be told to spin their pens or pencils on their clipboards and head off down the path or road nearest the direction of the point of the pen or pencil.

16. From the last client interview instruct the interviewer to head off down the road or path nearest the direction chosen and survey the household that is the 3rd, 5th, or whatever random number was selected in step 1. This procedure works best if motorcycle or bicycle transportation is available.

Alternative 2: Map-Based Clustered Stratified Systematic Unaligned Random Sample
(sounds harder than it is)

17. Procure topographic maps at the 1:50,000 or 1:25,000 scale. These are usually available from the local planning or lands office or from map agencies/surveys in the capital. Procure an extra set to give to the financial institution as an aid to their work.

18. Meet with loan officials and delimit with a colored highlighter areas where the lending institution has rural customers.

19. Create a set of 'geographical clusters' on the map based on the areas highlighted in step b. These clusters are best identified visually. Mark the center of these clusters with consecutive numbers on the maps.

20. Based on time and geographical considerations, randomly select a given number of geographical clusters for survey sampling using a random-number table.

21. On the topographic maps, draw a 4-inch by 4-inch grid centered on the center of each cluster. The grid should have sixteen 1-inch by 1-inch squares.

22. Select four random numbers between 0 and 9 and mark them in the order selected across the top of each of the four squares in the top row. Select four more random numbers and mark them in the order selected along the side of the leftmost column.

23. These numbers become x,y-coordinates within each grid square and define a point. The numbers across the top are x-coordinates and the numbers along the left side are y-coordinates. Each of the sixteen grid-cells should be conceived of having a 10x10 grid inside it. The x,y-coordinates define a point within that grid.

These points are then marked on the topographic map and interviewers are told to survey the household nearest the grid point. This technique requires access to and familiarity with topographic maps and grid-techniques—thus it is not for everyone. It also requires training interviewers to make sure they have basic map-reading skills—again a restriction on its use. Despite these restrictions, it has been used successfully in Uganda. It is eminently defendable against the toughest survey sampling critics.

**Chapter 4
Tool #1:
Impact Survey**

**Part F
Guidelines for
Data Coding and
Analysis**

- Coding data

- Entering data

- Analyzing data

Chapter 4
Part F
Guidelines for Data Coding and Analysis

Coding Data

The strength of the standardized survey is that responses can be categorized and quantified. The prevalence or amount of a particular phenomenon can be quantified and compared across various sample groups. When statistical tests are performed, it is possible to determine whether apparent differences between client and non-client groups are meaningful or statistically significant.

Categorizing responses so that they can be analyzed quantitatively requires that they first be translated into numeric codes. Every distinct response—or category of responses—must be assigned its own unique code number. And, every response must be coded or information will be lost. Coding is a particularly important step for any survey—such as the Impact Survey—that is going to be analyzed with a statistical software program. All of the survey data must be translated into numeric codes and entered into a data file. (See appendix B for an example of an Epi.qes file that defines variables and fields for the Impact Survey.)

Many of the likely responses have already been included in the survey instrument and assigned codes. (See Chapter 4, Tool #1, Impact Survey.) For most questions in the impact survey, boxes have been created along the right-hand margin in which interviewers can record the appropriate response codes. In some cases, responses should be recorded within a table. Respondents are likely to give new answers that were not included in the original survey instrument for some questions. This is why an "other specify" option is included for the open-ended questions (for example see #14b and 14c). These "other" responses will need to be assigned a distinct and unique code number. The survey also includes a few open-ended questions (see # 37) for which no pre-coded responses have been anticipated. A code book will need to be developed that builds upon the codes included in the survey by documenting all "other" responses that are assigned new codes.

Who Should Code?

Checking and finalizing data coding is usually the responsibility of the survey supervisor(s). It is best that only a few individuals are responsible for assigning new codes so that a consistent logic and sequence of numbers is applied. Supervisors should

know well the purpose of each survey question and how "new" responses should be categorized and/or grouped. If data coding responsibilities are assigned to the data entry operators, *each survey should be completely coded before data entry begins*. Errors in data entry are best reduced when operators can focus solely on systematically entering clearly marked and legible numbers into the appropriate data field. When data entry operators attempt to code and load data for a single survey at the same time, the accuracy and speed of both the coding and data entry activities are likely to be compromised. Data entry is discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Coding the Survey

Examples from the Impact Survey are used to illustrate the different "types" of codes or coding approaches included in the Impact Survey. All codes in the survey are numeric, although there are three different "types" of numeric codes.

Numeric code
Type 1:   Date code

> **Example:**
> *Date joined program: _____ (day/mo/yr.)*
>
> The interviewer would write the responses and enter them as follows: 03/05/98 for the 3rd of May 1998.

Numeric Code
Type 2:   Interval code or "counting" number

> **Example:**
> *How old are you?*
>
>   *Specify number of years   99. (Don't know)*
>
> The interviewer would record the respondent's age in the boxes provided. It is assumed that ages will be at most two-digit numbers, so two boxes have been provided. If a respondent was unable to provide his or her age, even with considerable probing and the help of a historical benchmark calendar, the interviewer would record 99 for "don't know" in the boxes provided. With the exception of the 99 code, age is an interval or counting number that represents a quantitative amount that increases sequentially. An average or mean can be calculated from interval data.

Numeric code

Type 3:   Categorical number

Example 1:
Currently, are you …? (Read answers. Enter only one.)

    1. Married/free union   *3. Widowed*
    2. Separated/divorced   *4. Single/never married*

Each code number corresponds to a specific and discrete response rather than an amount. Frequencies or prevalence (for example 10 percent of the respondents were widows) can be calculated from categorical codes. It would be meaningless, however, to use these codes to calculate a mean or average.

Example 2:
Over the last 12 months, has the income you have been able to earn...?
(Read answers and enter response.)

------1----------------2--------------------3----------------4---------------- 5 ------------------99 ------

decreased greatly	decreased	stayed the same	increased	increased greatly	Don't know	

The responses 1 through 5 have been organized in a scale. These responses can be presented either as frequencies or percentages. For example, 15 percent of the clients reported that over the last 12 months the income they had been able to earn increased greatly. Because the 1 through 5 responses have been organized as a scale, a comparison of the mean values for different sample groups (as long as all 99 responses were excluded) would be meaningful.

Single-Response versus Multiple-Response Questions

All four of the numeric code examples listed above are questions that allow for only a single answer or response code. A respondent can have only one age or one marital status. For these types of questions, only a single code will be assigned. Other questions allow for more than one response. For example, in the following question, a respondent may have several different factors he or she considers when deciding to undertake an enterprise. For this reason, up to three code boxes have been included in the survey, although depending on the maximum number of responses given, additional code boxes might need to be added.

Example:

When you are deciding to undertake an enterprise, what factors do you consider? (Do not read the answers. Multiple answers are possible. Probe by asking, "And anything else?")

1. Work I am familiar with/It is the season/Others are doing it ☐☐

2. Whether the product or service is in demand or whether it seems profitable ☐☐

3. How much working capital is needed/whether I have enough money ☐☐

4. Whether I can do it and still take care of my family and other responsibilities ☐☐

5. Other (specify)_____ ☐☐

99. Don't know ☐☐

Fixed versus "Open" Coded Responses

The "what factors?" question above is also an example of a semi-open-coded response. The first four responses have been anticipated and pre-coded. The fifth response "other," however, is open for responses not reflected in the pre-coded list. When a respondent gives a "new" answer (one that does not correspond to the meanings in the pre-coded responses 1 through 4), the interviewer should record this "new" response in the "specify" line. Typically, it is the survey supervisor(s) who will later review these "other" responses and assign discrete and distinct code numbers that are added to the code book.

Example:
If you could change something about the (insert organization name) program to make it even better, what would you change?

_____

_____

_____

The question above is one of the few examples in the Impact Survey of a completely "open" question. No pre-coded response categories have been anticipated. Survey supervisors would typically review the specific suggestions that clients make and assign a numeric code. Responses that have similar meanings would likely be grouped together under a common numeric code to simplify and clarify the key recommendations. For example, responses such as "reduce the meeting frequency" and "meet monthly rather than weekly" would likely be assigned the same code number.

Pre-specified Codes

For consistency, certain common responses have been assigned specific code numbers throughout the survey. Quite a few questions call for a "yes" or "no" response. Throughout the survey, the following coding assignments have already been made:

- "Yes" is coded as "1";
- "No" is coded as "0";
- "Don't know" is coded as "99"; and
- "Not applicable" is coded as "98."

Coding the Enterprise Returns Information

The detailed information that interviewers collect on enterprise costs, revenue and profit is one of the more challenging sections to code. Interviewers will collect the amounts per week, per two weeks, or per month. These amounts need to be calculated and coded according to a uniform period of time (see examples for this question in Chapter 4, Part D, Interviewer Training Guidelines). It is suggested that this uniform time period be a month. So, for example, if an interviewer records a respondent's costs on a weekly basis, these costs would be summed and multiplied by four to approximate the monthly amount. Similarly, if sales were reported for a two-week period, this revenue would be multiplied by two to approximate the monthly amount.

Entering Data

After the data is coded, it can be entered into a data file for further analysis. A variety of data analysis programs can be used, but the design team tested and used Epi Info. (The features of this software are discussed in greater detail in appendix B.) The accuracy of the data entry is critically important to the validity of the survey results. Steps that can be taken to promote the accuracy of data entry include the following:

- Separate the tasks of interviewing from data entry and adequately train data entry operators including loading practice examples of a coded survey (see Figure 4F-1, Data Coding Practice Exercises);

- Provide completely and clearly coded surveys to data entry operators so that they can focus their efforts on reading and correctly loading the numeric codes;

- Programs like Epi Info allow specifications to be included in the data entry file so that for fixed-response questions only the anticipated codes can be entered. (For example, if only 1=yes, 0=no or 99=don't know are possible answers, commands can be included in the data file to only accept these numeric values. If a numeric value such as "5" is entered in error, the computer BEEPS and the data cannot be loaded.)

- Programs like Epi Info allow specifications to be included in the data entry file so that depending on the response the cursor will automatically jump to the next appropriate

question. (For example, if a respondent replies "no," he or she was not forced to discontinue doing business during the last 12 months, the cursor will automatically jump past the followup question "for how many months?" that is intended only for individuals who were forced out of business.)

FIGURE 4F-1.
Data Coding Practice Exercises

Assuming that the data entry operators are responsible only for loading the data rather than coding the survey, the most useful training exercise is to practice loading mock or actual surveys. The objectives of the training are to emphasize the utter importance of loading exactly what is coded on the survey and to familiarize the data entry operator with the mechanisms of the data entry program. Practicing how the cursor will move, learning how to best shift one's focus from the coded survey to the computer screen and establishing a methodical "rhythm" for the data entry are skills that must be practiced.

Analyzing Data

After all survey codes have been loaded into the data file, data "cleaning" and analysis can begin. This section gives examples of the two most common types of analysis that will need to be performed. First, examples of how to analyze categorical variables or codes are described—frequencies, cross tabs by survey sample groups, and Chi square tests to determine whether prevalences are statistically significant). Then, examples for how to analyze interval data are described—means, cross tabs by survey sample groups and ANOVA or t-tests to determine whether mean values are statistically significant.

Step 1: "Cleaning" the Data

The first step in analyzing any data set is to "clean" the data. "Cleaning" in this case refers to checking whether there are any obvious errors in the data that was entered and if so, correcting the information. For example, there are only seven fixed pre-coded responses to the question about the relative change in the respondent's income.

Example:
Over the last 12 months, has the income you have been able to earn...? (Read answers and enter response.)

------1----------------2-------------------3---------------4---------------5 -----------------99 ----- ------98--------
 decreased   decreased   stayed the same   increased   increased   Don't know   Not applicable
 greatly   greatly

The first step in analysis is to look at how many respondents answered this question and the range of responses that were given. In this example, the variable name was <YOURINC>. A total number of 94 individuals participated in the survey. A frequency for this variable tells how many persons gave each of the different responses to this question. The following table indicates in the

TOTAL line that all 94 individuals provided an answer to this question. If the TOTAL was only 90, then it would be clear that data was missing for four of the 94 surveys. When cleaning the data, it is important to refer back to the completed surveys and check whether the data for these four surveys really was missing or if the data- entry operators simply failed to load it. (To do this requires a followup command to identify the survey identification numbers of those cases that have missing data for the variable <YOURINC>.) In the example below, however, no cases are missing.

```
YOURINC |   Freq   Percent    Cum.
--------+----------------------------
   1    |      5     5.3%      5.3%
   2    |     14    14.9%     20.2%
   3    |     13    13.8%     34.0%
   4    |     39    41.5%     75.5%
   5    |     22    23.4%     98.9%
  98    |      1     1.1%    100.0%
--------+----------------------------
  Total |     94   100.0%
```

This table also indicates that all the specified responses (see the first column in the table under <YOURINC>) were pre-coded responses. If the table indicated that one person had said "6" (a "6" would be listed in the <YOURINC> column with a 1 in the Frequency column), this would reflect a data entry or coding error since "6" does not correspond with any of the possible responses. Again, it would be necessary to refer to the actual surveys and check whether this question was really coded as a "6" or if a data entry error was made. If a "6" were actually listed in the code box, the response would need to be changed to "missing" since it would not be clear what the actual answer had been. If after referring to the survey, it is determined that the response was actually coded as a "3" but somehow a data entry error had been made, then this correction would need to be made in the data file. (As mentioned above, some data analysis programs like Epi Info can prevent this type of data entry error by allowing the range of acceptable response codes to be specified in advance of the data entry.)

Step 2: Examples of Most Common Types of Analysis and How To Read the Results

Categorical Variables: Many questions in the Impact Survey are categorical variables such as <YOURINC>. The numeric codes for this variable represent discrete choices rather than amounts (example for illustration only).

Example:
Q.1: *How many and what percent of the respondents' incomes had "decreased greatly," "decreased," "stayed the same, "increased," or "increased greatly"*?

To answer this question, perform a *frequency*. (In Epi Info, the analysis command would be Freq YOURINC.) From the "cleaning" step, we know that in one case a respondent reported "98" for "not applicable" meaning that they could not answer this question since they had no personal

income. This individual's response has been excluded from the analysis below since "not applicable" is a response very similar to "missing." (In Epi Info, the analysis command to exclude this case would be Select YOURINC<98.)

Figure 4F-2, Epi Info Output Screen, is an example of how the results output screen would appear in Epi Info. The top of the screen indicates that the dataset that is being read is called AIMS and it has a total of 94 cases or respondents' survey results. The criteria indicates that only those cases whose responses to YOURINC was less than 90 are included in this analysis. Reading along the first column we can see the range of responses given. The Freq column lists the number of cases or individuals who gave each of these responses followed by the percent this number represents of the total. The final column Cum. reports the cumulative percentage represented by the sum of this and all previous answers.

FIGURE 4F-2.
Epi Info Output Screen

Example:

Q.2: Are there meaningful differences between non-client and client groups reporting increases in their income over the last 12 months?

Answering this question requires a two-step process. First, a new variable can be created that combines those who responded "increased" and "increased greatly." (In Epi Info, the analysis commands to do this would be as follow: Define MOREINC ##; if YOURINC=4 or YOURINC=5 then MOREINC=1 else MOREINC=0.) Second, a cross-tab table that presents the responses by survey sample group can be created. (In Epi Info, the command to do this would be Tables MOREINC PART.) In this example, the sample groups are represented by a variable called <PART> for participant status. One-year clients have a part=1, two-year clients have a part=2 and incoming clients or the non-client comparison group has a part=3.

The cross-tab table below reports the number and percent of clients within each of these three survey sample groups who reported that their incomes had increased (MOREINC=1) and the number and percent whose incomes had either stayed the same or decreased (MOREINC=0). Percentages are calculated both by row and column. From the Total column, it is possible to see how many cases or respondents were included in each sample group. Again, the individual who reported the question was not applicable to them was excluded from this analysis, so the total number of cases or respondents equals 93 rather than 94.

```
                    PART
    MOREINC     |     1     2      3  |  Total
    -----------+--------------------+------
            0  |    11     6     15  |     32
               >  34.4% 18.8% 46.9% >  34.4%
               |  34.4% 20.0% 48.4% |
            1  |    21    24     16  |     61
               >  34.4% 39.3% 26.2% >  65.6%
               |  65.6% 80.0% 51.6% |
    -----------+--------------------+------
      Total    |    32    30     31  |     93
               |  34.4% 32.3% 33.3% |

             Chi square =          5.44
     Degrees of freedom =             2
             p value = 0.06575757
```

The cross-tab table is followed by a statistical test of differences between the sample groups. For categorical data, the statistical test is typically a Chi square. For this example, however, there are three sample groups, so even if a significant difference were indicated it would not be possible to say which two groups were significantly different. For this reason, the implications of the Chi square tests are clearer in comparisons of the prevalences of just two groups. The analysis below was done excluding one of the sample groups.

The "current selection" report indicates that only those cases whose variable PART does not equal "2" (the two-year clients) are included in this analysis. The following cross-tab table only reports on the results of the one-year and incoming client samples. The table indicates that 66 percent of the one-year clients reported that their income had increased as compared to 52 percent of the incoming clients. The statistical tests indicate, however, that while more one-year clients reported an increase than incoming clients, this difference in prevalence is not statistically significant.

```
    Current selection: part<>2
                           PART
    MOREINC      |      1        3 | Total
    ----------+---------------+------
           0 |     11      15 |      26
             >   42.3%   57.7% >  41.3%
             |   34.4%   48.4% |
           1 |     21      16 |      37
             >   56.8%   43.2% >  58.7%
             |   65.6%   51.6% |
    ----------+---------------+------
       Total |     32      31 |      63
             |   50.8%   49.2% |
```

```
                        Single Table Analysis
Odds ratio                                                    0.56
Cornfield 95% confidence limits for OR            0.18 < OR <
1.75
Maximum likelihood estimate of OR (MLE)                       0.56
Exact 95% confidence limits for MLE               0.18 < OR <
1.73
Exact 95% Mid-P limits for MLE                    0.20 < OR <
1.57
Probability of MLE <=  0.56 if population OR = 1.0  0.19131930

RISK RATIO(RR)(Outcome:PART=1; Exposure:MOREINC=0        0.75
95% confidence limits for RR                      0.44 < RR <
1.27

              Ignore risk ratio if case control study

                     Chi-Squares   P-values
                     -----------   --------
        Uncorrected:     1.28      0.25873580
    Mantel-Haenszel:     1.26      0.26254975
    Yates corrected:     0.76      0.38242079
```

Interval Variables: Some of the variables in the Impact Survey are interval (variables such as <YRSINSCH> which represents the number of years of school the respondent completed. The numeric codes for this variable represent real or counting numbers.

Example:

Q 1: What is the average number of years of formal education completed by the respondents?

To answer this question, the mean value of years in school needs to be calculated. (in Epi Info, the analysis command would be epi6>Means YRSINSCH.) The print out below is an example of the means results for this variable in Epi Info. First, a frequency table for the variable is generated. From this table, we can see that 67 (72 percent) of the respondent's completed no formal education at all and only one person completed twelve years which would be the equivalent to high school. Additional results for this variable are provided below the frequency table. "N" refers to the total number of respondents that provided information for this variable. "Sum" is the total value of all the numeric codes for this variable. "Mean" is similar to the mathematical average. Variance, standard deviation and standard error are statistical calculations that indicate variability of the data. The second row reports: the "Minimum" value reported for this variable; the cut-off value for 25 percent of the cases; the "Median" or mid-point value for the variable (half of the cases are below and half are above this value); the cut-off value for 75 percent of the cases; the "Maximum" value reported; and the "Mode" or the value reported most often.

```
YRSINSCH |  Freq   Percent    Cum.
---------+-----------------------
   0     |    67    72.0%     72.0%
   3     |     3     3.2%     75.3%
   4     |     1     1.1%     76.3%
   5     |     4     4.3%     80.6%
   6     |     6     6.5%     87.1%
   7     |     2     2.2%     89.2%
   8     |     3     3.2%     92.5%
   9     |     4     4.3%     96.8%
  10     |     2     2.2%     98.9%
  12     |     1     1.1%    100.0%
---------+-----------------------
 Total   |    93   100.0%
```

Total	Sum	Mean	Variance	Std Dev	Std Err
93	175	1.882	10.736	3.277	0.340

Minimum	25%ile	Median	75%ile	Maximum	Mode
0.000	0.000	0.000	3.000	12.000	0.000

From the above results, we can know that 1.9 was the average or mean number of years in school for these 93 respondents. The most common response (the mode) was "no years in school" (0). The maximum number of years in school for this sample was twelve years.

Example:

Q 2:   Are there meaningful differences in the number of years of school completed by clients and non-clients?

Answering this question requires comparing the means of the different sample groups. (In Epi Info, the command to do this would be epi6>Means YRSINSCH PART.) Again, in this example, the variable <PART > refers to the respondents' participant or client status. One year clients have a part=1, two-year clients have a part=2 and incoming clients or the non-client comparison group has a part=3.

The means analysis below again begins with a cross tabulation (cross-tab) table that reports the frequency by client group. From reviewing this table, we can see that very similar percentages of each client group never attended school. We can also see that the individual who completed the most school (12 years) was a two-year client.

```
                                      PART
      YRSINSCH    |      1       2       3 |  Total
      -----------+------------------------+------
              0 |      24      22      21 |     67
                 >  35.8%   32.8%   31.3% >  72.0%
                 |  72.7%   73.3%   70.0% |
              3 |       0       2       1 |      3
                 >   0.0%   66.7%   33.3% >   3.2%
                 |   0.0%    6.7%    3.3% |
              4 |       0       1       0 |      1
                 >   0.0% 100.0%    0.0% >   1.1%
                 |   0.0%    3.3%    0.0% |
              5 |       1       0       3 |      4
                 >  25.0%    0.0%   75.0% >   4.3%
                 |   3.0%    0.0%   10.0% |
              6 |       3       1       2 |      6
                 >  50.0%   16.7%   33.3% >   6.5%
                 |   9.1%    3.3%    6.7% |
              7 |       1       1       0 |      2
                 >  50.0%   50.0%    0.0% >   2.2%
                 |   3.0%    3.3%    0.0% |
              8 |       0       1       2 |      3
                 >   0.0%   33.3%   66.7% >   3.2%
                 |   0.0%    3.3%    6.7% |
              9 |       3       0       1 |      4
                 >  75.0%    0.0%   25.0% >   4.3%
                 |   9.1%    0.0%    3.3% |
             10 |       1       1       0 |      2
                 >  50.0%   50.0%    0.0% >   2.2%
                 |   3.0%    3.3%    0.0% |
             12 |       0       1       0 |      1
                 >   0.0% 100.0%    0.0% >   1.1%
                 |   0.0%    3.3%    0.0% |
      -----------+------------------------+------
          Total |      33      30      30 |     93
                 |  35.5%   32.3%   32.3% |
```

PART	Obs	Total	Mean	Variance	Std Dev
1	33	67	2.030	12.155	3.486
2	30	53	1.767	11.495	3.390
3	30	55	1.833	9.109	3.018

PART	Minimum	25%ile	Median	75%ile	Maximum	Mode
1	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.000	10.000	0.000
2	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.000	12.000	0.000
3	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.000	9.000	0.000

ANOVA
(For normally distributed data only)

Variation	SS	df	MS	F statistic	p-value
Between	1.196	2	0.598	0.055	0.946941
Within	986.503	90	10.961		
Total	987.699	92			

Bartlett's test for homogeneity of variance
Bartlett's chi square = 0.668 deg freedom = 2   p-value = 0.716063

The variances are homogeneous with 95% confidence. If samples are also normally distributed, ANOVA results can be used.

Kruskal-Wallis One Way Analysis of Variance
Kruskal-Wallis H (equivalent to Chi square) =   0.055
                        Degrees of freedom =   2
                               p value =   0.972843

The above cross-tab table is followed by information about the means within (2.0) compared to 1.8 years for two-year clients and 1.8 years for incoming clients.

The means report is followed by statistical tests of the mean differences for the three sample groups. The ANOVA results can only be used for data that is "normally distributed". It is followed by the Bartlett's test for homogeneity that will indicate whether the data can be considered normally distributed. In this case, the Bartlett's test had a p-value greater than .05 indicating that the variances across the three sample groups were sufficiently similar for the samples to be considered normally distributed. In this case, the ANOVA results can be used. Referring to the ANOVA results, the p-value is very high indicating the groups are very similar. Only if the p-value was less than .05 would the mean differences across the three groups be significantly different. (If the Bartlett's test had a p-value less then .05, it would indicate that the data is not normally distributed so the p-value results from the Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric tests should be used rather than the ANOVA.)

The ANOVA results above compare the mean values of the three groups simultaneously. Even if a significant difference were found it would not be clear which group or two groups had significantly different mean years in school. In the following print out, the "current selection" line indicates that only cases whose variable <PART> did not equal to "2" were included. In this way, only the mean values of the one-year clients and incoming clients are being compared. Although the one-year clients completed a slightly higher mean number of years in school, the high p-value indicates similarity between both groups. Because the p-value is greater than .05, there is no significant difference between the years of school completed by one-year and incoming clients. (Again, the Bartlett's test indicated that the ANOVA results could be used.)

```
Current selection: part<>2
                                      YRSINSCH
PART                Obs       Total        Mean    Variance      Std
Dev
 1                   33         67        2.030      12.155
3.486
 3                   30         55        1.833       9.109
3.018
Difference                                 0.197

PART     Minimum    25%ile     Median      75%ile     Maximum
Mode
 1        0.000      0.000      0.000       5.000      10.000
0.000
 3        0.000      0.000      0.000       5.000       9.000
0.000

                                    ANOVA
                 (For normally distributed data only)
Variation          SS    df      MS   F statistic    p-value      t-
value
Between          0.610    1    0.610         0.057   0.812199
0.238622
Within         653.136   61   10.707
Total          653.746   62

          Bartlett's test for homogeneity of variance
```

```
Bartlett's chi square = 0.618   deg freedom = 1   p-value =
0.431891

        The variances are homogeneous with 95% confidence.
If samples are also normally distributed, ANOVA results can be
used.

Mann-Whitney or Wilcoxon Two-Sample Test (Kruskal-Wallis test
for two groups)

Kruskal-Wallis H (equivalent to Chi square) =       0.005
                    Degrees of freedom =               1
                             p value =      0.944911
```

Step 3:   Examples from Each Section of the Survey Showing How To Analyze Data and Present the Results

Each section of the survey focuses on a specific area or level of impact. Drawing on the experience of the tools test in Mali, this section provides examples of the types of study questions and analysis that can be performed. Examples are also included for how survey results might be presented or summarized. Given limitations of space, not all the survey questions are summarized here. Since the most common types of analysis and presentation are described here, however, the same approaches could be applied to other questions included in the Impact Survey. For each example, the impact issue the results address is listed first, followed by the survey section, specific survey questions and results.

Example 1. Client Experience with the Program

Q: What has been the client's experience with the program? How long have they been in the program? How many loans have they taken? How large are their loans? How much have their loans grown since they joined the program? Does program loan size differ by program area or type of community? How many clients have recently experienced repayment problems?

Survey Section: Client Information (program profile) portion of the survey completed from program records and question #34a.

Before the survey even begins, the interviewer is to record program information about the clients from program records. This information can be analyzed to provide descriptive information about the clients' experience with the program. Each of the averages presented in Figure 4F-3, Program Loan History for One-year and Two-year Clients, were computed by using the means command described above for interval data. The number reporting repayment difficulties was computed from a simple frequency of those responding to question #34a, "Did you face any difficulty repaying your loan to the program in the last loan cycle?" A followup question asking those clients who had a problem what caused this problem provides additional insight into this issue.

Program Loan History for One-year and Two-year Clients
(in $US)

	One-year Clients n=33	Two-year Clients n=30
Average number of months in the program	14 months	24 months
Average number of program loans (4-month loans)	3.4	5.9
Average amount of first loan	$35	$29
Average amount of current loan	$48	$85
Town (category 1)	$101	$121
Large village (category 2)	$34	$49
Small village (category 3)	$23	$109
Number of clients reporting difficulty repaying their last program loan	2	1

It is not necessary to perform statistical tests to assess whether the responses of the two client sample groups are significantly different, because this information is meant to describe program experience rather than evaluate program impact. Still, interesting trends can be seen in these descriptive results. It is clear that program loans start very small and do not grow very much within the first year. Even after two years and almost six program loans, the average loan size is still under $100. The "type" of program community in which a client lives, however, seems to have a greater influence on the size of the loan taken than how long they have been in the program. One-year clients living in a town have an average loan size that is more than four times the average taken by clients living in small villages. Few clients reported experiencing repayment problems in the last loan cycle (only 3 to 6 percent).

Example 2. Survey Sample Demographic Characteristics

Q: Are the survey sample groups similar in terms of their demographic characteristics? Are there systematic differences between the respondent groups that might influence the impact variables included in the survey? Could these systematic differences in demographic characteristic —rather than the impact of the program—explain differences in these outcome variables evident between the sample groups?

Survey Section: *Individual-Level Basic Information—questions #1-6. Household-Level Basic Information—questions 7-9.*

Figure 4F-4, Respondents' Individual Demographic Information, and Figure 4F-5, Household Demographic Information, summarize the responses to the questions pertaining to the respondent's demographic information. Questions with categorical responses such as marital status or whether the respondent could read are reported as percentages. (In Epi Info, the command to generate frequencies by survey group is epi6>tables marital part.) Questions with interval or real counting number responses such as the respondent's age or years of completed

school are reported as means. (In Epi Info, the command to generate means by survey group is epi6>means marital part.)

The numbers across the three survey sample group (one-year clients, two-year clients and incoming clients) appear to be similar. Statistical tests must be performed, however, to determine whether the responses are significantly different or not. For those questions reporting percentages, chi-square statistical tests were performed to determine whether significant differences were evident between the sample groups. For those questions reporting means, analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical tests were performed. In all cases, only two survey sample groups were compared at a time; for example, one-year vs. two-year clients, two-year vs. incoming clients, and one-year vs. incoming clients.

FIGURE 4F-4.
Respondents' Individual Demographic Information

	One-year Clients n=33	Two-year Clients n=30	Incoming Clients n=31
Percent married–monogamous	48	47	29
Percent married–polygamous	39	50	61
Percent not married	12	3	10
Mean age (in years)	33	37	31
Mean years in school	2.0	1.8	1.8
Percent never attended school	73	73	70
Percent able to read a letter	21	17	10

In the Mali tools test, the sampling strategy produced three survey groups with similar demographic characteristics. No significant differences between these three client categories were found in any of the individual-level demographic indicators (as the program only lent to women, the question about client gender was excluded.). Women across the three survey groups were quite similar. The overwhelming majority of them were married, approximately half of these in polygamous unions, and their mean age was 34 years with no significant difference among the three sample groups. On average, the women included in the Impact Survey had completed only two years of school with close to three-quarters of the women in each of the three samples attending no school at all. Although one-year and two-year clients were somewhat more likely to read than incoming clients, the differences were not statistically significant.

Figure 4F-5 summarizes information pertaining to the respondent's household. Again, statistical tests determined that no significant differences were found among the three client categories in any of the household-level demographic information. If, for example, two-year clients were found to have significantly higher numbers of salaried workers or years of completed education, these demographic differences might explain the outcome variable. These systematic differences, rather than the impact of the program, might explain higher rates among two-year clients reporting increased income or greater spending on education relative to the other sample groups.

In this case, however, because no significant differences were found in key demographic characteristics, the sample groups can be assumed to be comparable.

FIGURE 4F-5.
Household Demographic Information

	One-year Clients n=31	Two-year Clients n=30	Incoming Clients n=31
Mean number of adults (persons >18 years)	7.10	5.90	6.40
Mean number of children (persons<18 years)	6.80	7.50	6.50
Mean number in household	13.90	13.30	12.70
Percent female-headed household	6.00	3.00	7.00
Mean number of household members with salaried job	0.52	0.50	0.55
Percent of households without a salaried worker	67.00	63.00	64.00

Example 3. Loan Use

Q: How do clients use their program loans? What are the most common loan activities? Is it common for clients to use at least some part of their loans in nonproductive ways?

Survey Section: Loan Use and Individual Income—questions 12a and 12b

Figure 4F-6 lists in declining order of frequency the most common loan activities reported by clients in Mali. Of course, this list would differ by program area but a similar type of presentation can be used. These results were generated through simple frequencies of the client responses to question #12a, "How did you invest the last loan you took from the program?" Because this question allows for multiple responses, it is necessary to sum the frequencies for each coded loan activity for the first through the last response given.

FIGURE 4F-6.
Principal Enterprises in Which Current Clients Reported Investing
Their Last Program Loan

Reported Loan Activities	Percent of Current Clients (n=63)
Sell condiments (salt, garlic, soumbala, cube magi, shea butter)	37
Make and sell cooked food (restaurant, food stall or road-side table)	33
Buy and sell cereal(s)	13
Make and sell clothing	11
Make and sell beverages (primarily local beer)	8

Figure 4F-7 reports the percentage of clients who reported that they had used at least a portion of their last loan in a number of non-productive ways. These percentages were generated through simple frequencies and cross-tab tables. (In Epi Info, the command to generate frequencies by survey group is epi6>tables loanuse1 part.) Chi-square statistical tests were used to compare whether significant differences existed between the one-year and two-year clients. Two-year clients were significantly more likely to have spent some of their last loan to buy clothing or other articles for their families.

FIGURE 4F-7.
Percent of Clients Who Had Used All or Some of Their Last Loan Nonproductively

	One-year Clients n=33	Two-year Clients n=30
To buy clothes or other articles for the family	39*	67*
To save for emergencies or repayment of the loan	24	34
Gave or lent to husband or somebody else	15	21
To buy food for the family	18	7

Note: Chi square—significant difference between two-year and one-year client samples (p<.05)

Example 4. Personal Income and Enterprise Income

Q: Does participation in the program increase clients' incomes? What is the level of client profit from her enterprise and is it significantly more than non-client groups? Do enterprise returns differ by "type" of program community?

Survey Section: Individual Income (questions #14a-c.) Enterprise Income (questions #16-#17).

To evaluate impact on income, the survey includes both general retrospective questions and very specific detailed questions about enterprise returns. Examples of both types of questions are included here. For the Mali tools test, program impact was evaluated through two types of comparisons. First, the responses of current clients (one-year and two-year clients together) were compared to incoming clients. If no significant differences were found, then the responses of two-year clients only were compared to incoming clients. This approach was based on the assumption that even when program impact was not evident in statistical tests comparing current and incoming clients, the longer duration of program exposure of the two-year clients made impact more likely in that group particularly for outcomes that take longer time to express.

Figure 4F-8 is a more pictorial way of presenting selected survey results. The graph plots the percentage of respondents reporting that their income had "increased," "stayed the same" or "decreased." (Some of the response categories in question #14a have been collapsed for simplicity.) With this graph, it is clear that the majority of women in each of the three survey sample groups reported an increase in their personal income over the last 12 months. Followup

questions #14b and #14c provide greater insight into why incomes increased or decreased. Statistical tests indicated, however, that current clients (a combination of the one-year and two-year clients) were significantly more likely to have reported an increase than were incoming clients. The analysis was conducted in the following way. First, a new variable was created called MOREINC. All respondents who reported their income had either "increased greatly" or "increased" were assigned a "1" for MOREINC and those who reported that their income had either "stayed the same," "decreased" or "decreased greatly" were assigned a "0" for MOREINC. Then a chi-square test comparing the percentage of current clients (one-year and two-year) and incoming clients was performed and found to be significant.

FIGURE 4F-8.

Change in Personal Income over the Last 12 Months

Significant Difference between Current (2-year and 1-year) Clients vs. Incoming Clients reporting Increased Income $p < .05$

Figure 4F-9, Monthly Enterprise Sales and Profit, summarizes the enterprise sales and profit information for up to two different enterprises that the respondent had engaged in over the last four weeks. (This was done by creating a new variable and summing the monthly amounts for activity #1 and activity #2—see survey questions #16 and #17.) The "calculated profit" amounts were computer-generated by subtracting the reported monthly costs from the monthly reported sales revenue. The "reported profit" represents the woman's own estimate of her profit converted into uniform monthly amounts for comparison purposes.

In figure 4F-9, median rather than mean values are reported. As described earlier in Step 2, the median value is the mid-point which 50 percent of the cases fall above and 50 percent below. Median values are not as greatly affected by extreme values in the data as mean values are. Because a number of extreme values were evident in the Mali data set, the median results are presented since they provide a truer comparative sense of each sample group's enterprise returns.

FIGURE 4F-9.
Monthly Enterprise Sales and Profit
(median values in $US)

	One-year Clients n=33	Two-year Clients n=31	Incoming Clients n=31
Sales	46	50	31
Calculated Profit	10	16	11
Reported Profit	14	11	11

In figure 4F-9, two-year clients had the highest median-calculated monthly profit and incoming clients reported the lowest. The mean monthly enterprise sales and profits (both women's estimates and computer-calculated), however, were not significantly different for incoming clients as compared to current clients or for incoming clients as compared to two-year clients.

Enterprise sales and profits were very much influenced by the commercial development of the community. Women's reported sales and profits were between 2 and 24 times higher in towns as compared to small villages. (See Figure 4F-10, Monthly Enterprise Sales and Profit by Community Category.) The relative gap between enterprise profits in towns and small villages is greater than the difference in average program loan size for these two types of communities. This may reflect lower returns to loan capital in small villages where there is less commercial activity. These comparisons were made by first selecting a single sample group and then generating mean and median values by "type" of program community.

FIGURE 4F-10.
Monthly Enterprise Sales and Profit by Community Category
(median values in $US)

	Sales	Calculated	Reported
One-year Clients			
Cat. 3—small	28	8	10
Cat. 1—towns	175	53	60
Two-year Clients			
Cat. 3—small	45	8	10
Cat. 1—towns	85	47	35
Incoming Clients			
Cat. 3—small	24	6	8
Cat. 1—towns	644	75	75

Example 5. Changes at the Individual Level in Personal Savings and Entrepreneurial Skill

Q: Has participation in the program led to a progression or improvement in the enterprise activity? How has the enterprise changed? Has program participation led to enterprise expansion, diversification, improvements in product quality, and the like? Has participation allowed for greater investment in the enterprise's productive capacity?

Survey Section: Enterprise Improvement and Assets (questions #21-22)

Given the difficulty in accurately assessing impact on income, the Impact Survey includes a series of questions to assess numerous changes and improvements in the enterprise that would likely lead to increased profits and productivity. These results can be presented in detail as in Figure 4F-11, Improvement of the Microenterprise, and Figure 4F-12, Enterprise Assets, or in summary as in Figure 4F-13, Changes in Enterprise Practices.

Improvement of the Microenterprise

During the last 12 months, did you make any of the following changes so that your enterprise could earn more income or be more productive?	Percent One-year Clients n=33	Percent Two-year Clients n=30	Percent Incoming Clients n=31
Expanded size of enterprise *	67	72	36
Added new products *	39	60	23
Hired more workers **	0	17	0
Improved quality or desirability of product/added value	42	83	55
Reduced costs by buying inputs in greater volume or at wholesale prices	70	77	52
Reduced costs with cheaper source of credit *	63	80	13
Developed a new enterprise *	30	43	10

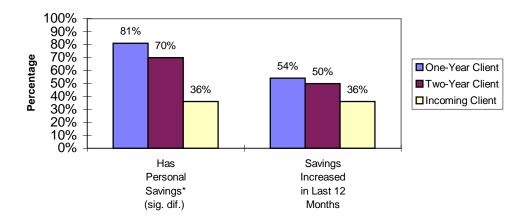*Significant difference between current clients (one-year and two-year clients) versus incoming clients (p<.05).
**Significant difference between two-year clients vs. incoming clients (p<.05).

Figure 4F-11 presents the detailed results of those responding that they had made the following specific changes to their enterprise over the last 12 months (see survey question #21). Again, this categorical information was generated through simple cross tables of frequency by survey sample group. Statistical chi-square tests were then performed, first comparing the responses of current clients (one-year and two-year clients) versus incoming clients. If no difference was evident, the responses of two-year clients alone were compared to incoming clients. An asterisk is used to note whether a significant difference was found and with which comparison. The results indicate participation in the program did lead to a number of changes in the enterprise, especially for the two-year clients.

Figure 4F-12 summarizes a similar approach for question #22 which focuses on changes in enterprise assets. Increase in enterprise assets was associated with duration of program participation. Two-year clients were significantly more likely than incoming clients to have acquired two types of enterprise assets (minor tools and minor investments in marketing sites) in the last 12 months. When the responses of the one-year clients are pooled with the two-year clients, however, there is no significant difference.

Enterprise Assets

During the last 12 months, did you purchase or invest in any of the following assets for your enterprise?	Percent One-year Clients n=33	Percent Two-year Clients n=30	Percent Incoming Clients n=31
Purchased small tools/accessories such as cooking utensils, hoes, plows, baskets, basins, barrels, canaries **	46	87	45
Purchased major tools such as stoves, equipment, machinery	16	27	13
Purchased own means of transportation such as bicycles, pushcarts	3	14	3
Invested in a storage structure such as a granary, stock room	3	20	19
Made a minor investment in their marketing site such as a chair, table, shed**	33	67	26
Invested in structures for their marketing site such as kiosk or shop	3	10	3

**Significant difference between two-year clients versus incoming clients (p<.05).

The same survey results in figures 4F-11 and 4F-12 can be presented in a more collapsed manner as shown in figure 4F-13. A new variable can be created for whether or not the respondent made any change in their enterprise activities over the last 12 months (responded affirmative to any of the specific areas mentioned in questions #21 and #22). Then, the number of specific changes can be summed and the means for each sample group compared. Figure 4F-13 shows that while the great majority of women in each survey group reported making at least one change in the last 12 months, current clients made a significantly greater mean number of positive changes than incoming clients.

Changes in Enterprise Practices

	One-year Clients n=32	Two-year Clients n=31	Incoming Clients n=30
Percent making at least one change in their enterprise in the last 12 months	94	100	93
Mean number of changes made in the last 12 months	4	6.8	3.2*

*Significant difference between current clients (one-year and two-year clients) versus incoming clients (p<.05).

Example 5. Changes at the Individual Level in Personal Savings and Entrepreneurial Skill

Q: Does participation in the program lead to an increase in personal savings? Does it lead to improvements in entrepreneurial skills that might increase economic returns such as income and savings?

Survey Section: Savings and Enterprise Skills (Impact Survey questions #23-25)

Figure 4F-14, Personal Cash Savings, summarizes the savings-related results. The percentage of women by survey sample group reporting that they had personal savings is plotted first. Current clients were significantly more likely than incoming clients to have reported having personal cash savings for emergencies or for future large purchases or investments (p<.05). The difference in the percent reporting increased personal savings, however, was not significantly different. In both cases, chi-square statistical tests were used to compare the prevalence in the three survey groups, first through a comparison between current and incoming clients and if no significant differences were found, by comparing the responses of two-year clients and incoming clients.

Personal Cash Savings

One question in the Impact Survey used to assess entrepreneurial skill was what factors they considered when deciding to undertake an enterprise activity. A common characterization of pre-entrepreneurial versus entrepreneurial behavior is that when starting a business, *supply factors* (what products or services they know how to provide or produce) are primarily considered, while the entrepreneur considers more fully *demand factors* (market demand and the likely profit or return). Figure 4F-15, Entrepreneurial Skill Factors Considered When Selecting an Activity, indicates that, while the level of one's own knowledge and skills remains important, two-year clients were significantly more likely than incoming clients to consider demand or profitability factors when deciding what income-generating activity to undertake. This effect was not significant in a comparison between incoming and current clients. Again, chi-square statistical tests of prevalence were performed.

FIGURE 4F-15.
Entrepreneurial Skill Factors Considered
When Selecting an Activity

	One-year Clients n=33	Two-year Clients n=30	Incoming Clients n=31
Work I am familiar with	73	67	71
Whether the product or service is in demand or whether it seems profitable	64	87	61**

**Significant difference between two-year clients versus incoming clients (p<.05).

Example 6. Impact on Household Assets
Q: Does participation in the program lead to increases in household socioeconomic status and security in terms of the assets they own?

Survey Section: Household-Level Assets (survey question #27)

Survey respondents were asked to report on whether they owned any of 14 different consumer goods, including appliances, furniture, animals and means of transport.[10] Overall scores based on their relative value were constructed for the consumer goods households owned and acquired over the last two years. (See Figure 4F-16, Household Ownership of Consumer Goods). Items with an estimated value of less than $50 received a score of one. Items with an estimated value between $100 and $300 received a score of seven.[11] Items worth $1,000 or more received a score of 71.

FIGURE 4F-16.
Household Ownership of Consumer Goods

	One-year Clients	Two-year Clients	Incoming Clients
Mean Score of Consumer Goods Currently Owned	102	87	83
Mean Score of Consumer Goods Acquired in Last 2 Years	18	23	21

No significant differences were found between current and incoming clients or between two-year and incoming clients for the score constructed for *assets owned*, indicating a comparable socioeconomic status of the three groups. In addition, no significant differences were found among the groups in the total score constructed for *assets acquired* in the last two years. Two-year clients, however, were significantly more likely than incoming clients to report owning a bed-frame and mattress ($p=.04$) and a macaroni (pasta) machine ($p=.04$). Program participation seemed to be more directly related to the latter item. Of the nine two-year clients owning a macaroni machine, eight had acquired it in the last two years and all since they had joined the program. Field agents explained that women value these machines (which cost approximately $40) both for their enterprises and for private use. Yet only eight of the 23 two-year clients had acquired their bed frames and mattresses since joining the program.

---

[10] The list included items valued at less than $50 (radio/tape player, chair, macaroni machine, cooking pots [*marmite*], small animals), items valued between $100 and $300 (wardrobe, mattress and bed frame, bicycle, stove, television, large animals), and items valued at approximately $1,000 or greater (moped/motorcycle and car/truck). Values were estimated based on "high" and "low" market prices for each type of asset.

[11] A score of seven was assigned because the average value for items in this group was approximately seven times the average value of the less-expensive assets. Similarly, the average value of items in the highest-value group was 71 times the average value of the least-expensive items.

Example 7. Household Economic Security

Q: Does participation in the program improve household economic security? Are clients better able to withstand economic or seasonal shocks? Does program participation help to stabilize enterprise earnings?

Survey Section: Household-Level Welfare: Diet and Coping with Difficult Times (survey questions #31-#32

Figure 4F-17, Household Level: Periods of Hardship in the Last 12 Months, summarizes the results to a series of questions meant to capture household economic security. Food insecurity is defined as a time during the last 12 months when, because of a lack of food or money to buy food, it was necessary for the household to eat less or eat less well. Chi-square statistical tests of the percentage reporting this type of "hungry season" showed a significant difference between current and incoming clients. ANOVA or t-test comparisons of the mean duration of the hungry season also demonstrated that as a group, current clients had a relatively shorter "hungry season" than incoming clients. When generating these mean values, all respondents were included and not just those who reported experiencing food insecurity. Women whose households had not experienced such a time were assigned a "0" for the length of the hungry season. It is important to include all respondents so that the true sample group means are compared. Similar analysis was done for the categorical variable "percent who were unable to conduct their business for a period due to a lack of money" and the interval variable "length of this disruption." Again, current clients were significantly less likely to have been forced out of business and as a group the occurrence of such a time was significantly shorter than for incoming clients during the last 12 months.

FIGURE 4F-17.
Household Level:
Periods of Hardship in the Last 12 Months

	One-year Clients	Two-year Clients	Incoming Clients
Percent experiencing period of acute food insecurity	12	10	29*
Length of acute food insecurity (in months)	.25	.39	1.2*
Percent unable to conduct a business because of a lack of money	21	10	45*
Length of enterprise disruption (in weeks)	.9	.5	3.2*

*Significant difference between current clients (one-year and two-year clients) versus incoming clients (p<.05).

Example 8. Client Satisfaction and Suggestions

Q: What are clients' opinions about the program services? What features are they most and least pleased with? What recommendations do they have for improving the program and why would these changes be improvements?

Survey Section: Questions for One-year and Two-year Clients only (questions #35-#37)

Figures 4F-18 through 4F-20 give examples for how to present the client satisfaction questions in the Impact Survey. This descriptive information can be summarized as similar frequencies with or without statistical comparisons between groups. Current clients were asked to name three things they liked best about the program (question #35). Their responses can be summarized in a number of ways. For example, all the responses can be summarized as they are in Figure 4F-18, Client Preferences. Or clients' "first choice" or first two choices could be summarized separately. In either case, it is likely that at least some clients will give answers that differ from the pre-coded responses. If so, these responses will need to be reviewed and either grouped with existing categories if their meaning is similar, or assigned their own discrete response category. Figure 4F-18 indicates that access to credit was the most favored program feature although the majority of clients also liked the nonformal education learning sessions facilitated at the borrower groups' weekly meetings. It is interesting to note that more two-year clients mentioned liking the group solidarity even more often than either the credit or education services.

FIGURE 4F-18.
Client Preferences

Summary of up to three aspects clients mentioned liking most about the program	Percent one-year clients n=33	Percent two-year clients n=30
Credit—steady source of working capital, lower interest rate, easier guarantee, or higher efficiency than other sources of credit	91	72
Health and nutrition or microenterprise development education	69	72
Group solidarity, group dynamics or confidence among women	59	76
Other financial services such as savings	22	21
Credit association management education sessions	3	14
Don't know	0	3

Similar analysis was done for Figure 4F-19, Client Dissatisfaction. Up to three aspects of the program current clients identified as "not liking" were summarized by client group. The majority of current clients included in the Mali impact survey said there was "nothing" that they disliked about the program. Of those who did express some dissatisfaction, most were dissatisfied with some aspect of the loan terms—interest rate, small loan size and length of the loan cycle.

FIGURE 4F-19.
Client Dissatisfaction

Summary of up to three aspects clients liked least about the program.	Percent one-year clients n=33	Percent two-year clients n=30
Nothing or don't know	70	72
High interest rates or commission	21	10
Size of initial loan or subsequent loans	12	17
Length of loan cycle	6	17
Lack of grace period	3	10
Meeting too often, too long or meeting absences requiring fee	0	14
Problematic group dynamics (with leaders or at meetings)	0	7
Repayment policies (frequency, amount)	3	0
Guarantee policies	0	3

Figure 4F-20, Client Suggestions for Improving the Program, summarizes the responses to the open-ended questions "If you could change something about the program to make it even better, what would you change?" It was necessary to review and group the variety of client responses into common categories for greater clarity. The most common suggestions for specific changes clients would like to see in the program—longer loan cycle, increased loan size and reduced interest rates—were the same aspects with which clients indicated some dissatisfaction. Reflecting their longer experience with the program and possibly their increased empowerment and articulation, two-year clients were more likely than one-year clients to offer specific recommendations.

FIGURE 4F-20.
Client Suggestions for Improving the Program

If you could change something about the program to make it even better, what would you change?	Percent one-year clients n=33	Percent two-year clients n=30
Nothing—no change, nothing to say, does not know, everything is good	64	46
Lengthen the 4-month loan cycle (to 5 months, 8 months, or 1 year).	15	27
Increase the size of the maximum loan	15	23
Reduce the interest on the loan	18	10
Shorten the 4-month loan cycle to 3 months	3	0
Miscellaneous—have mill or macaroni machine with the group (1), high monthly repayment (1), frequency of assistance (1), survey (1), new innovations (1), increase or lengthen education [sessions] (1).	0	6

Chapter 5

**Tool #2:
Client Exit
Survey**

- Client Exit Survey tool

- Why the Client Exit Survey tool was developed

- Preparing to conduct the Client Exit Survey

- Collecting data

- Coding data

- Analyzing data

- Training staff to use the Client Exit Survey tool

Chapter 5
Tool #2:
The Client Exit Survey

Type of tool:
> Quantitative

Overview:
> The Client Exit Survey seeks information about why the client left the program, as well as the clients' opinion about the program and its impact.

Hypotheses tested by this tool:
> None. This tool focuses on clients' satisfaction and their reasons for leaving the program.

Purpose:
> The purpose of the Client Exit Survey is to find out and track the following information:
> 1. When the client left the program;
>
> 2. Why the client left the program;
>
> 3. What the client thinks about the program's impact on her and her business;
>
> 4. What the client thinks about the program's strengths and weaknesses; and
>
> 5. When (or if) the client will rejoin the program and/or recommend the program to friends and family.

Amount of time required to administer the tool:
> 20 minutes

Source:
> Carter Garber compiled this tool under the auspices of the SEEP Network and the AIMS Project. The tool has been updated on the basis of field testing. It originally was adapted from Opportunity International's "Trust Bank Client Exit Interviews."

Client Exit Survey

Data quality revision:

Form reviewed by field team leader (date and initials)_____

Data entered on computer by _____(name) on _____(date)

Data entered on computer by _____(name) on _____(date)

Form reviewed by data cleaning team (date and initials)_____

Fill in before meeting with client:

Client identification number_____   Survey identification number_____

Interviewer number_____   Date of interview_____

Address_____

Type of borrower: Individual loan_____   Group loan_____   Other_____

Name of group (if any)_____

Sex (*circle):* M or F

Entry date: <___/___/___>   Exit date: <___/___/___>

Number of program loans taken _____   Size of last loan _____

Was final loan repaid by borrower? (*circle):* Y or N

If NO, amount in arrears or default?_____

Amount of savings withdrawn_____

Amount of withdrawn savings used to pay off the last loan? _____

Loan officer (who last worked with client): _____

Circumstances of departure according to program MIS (*Mark only one answer*):

[__] 1. Client voluntarily left group/program
[__] 2. Loan group failed so client left
[__] 3. Group/program expelled the client (because of inability to pay, loan default)
[__] 4. Other

Type of business financed by last loan (*Mark only one answer*):

[__] 1. Retail   [__] 5. Animal raising
[__] 2. Service   [__] 6. Fishing
[__] 3. Production/industry   [__] 7. Other *(specify)*:_____
[__] 4. Agriculture

(*Read to Clients*):

"**We would like to find out a little about why you are leaving our loan program so we can change and improve it in the future. Please think of all the main reasons you decided to leave the program. We will combine your answers with those of others to understand why clients leave our program. Your answers will not be shared with anyone else. This will take only a few minutes. Thank you for helping us.**"

1. Who primarily made the decision that you will no longer be participating in the program (or continuing as a member of this group)? (*Do not read answers. Mark only one answer*)

[__] 1. I made the decision. *(go to question # 3)*
[__] 2. Someone else in my family decided. Specify who_____
     Why?_____ *(go to question # 3)*
[__] 3. The group made the decision. *(go to question # 2)*
[__] 4. The program made the decision. *(go to question # 3)*

2. *(If marked answer 3 in previous question)* In your opinion, what factors led the group to decide to exclude your continued participation? (*Do not read answers. Multiple responses possible*)

[__] 1. Repayment problems
[__] 2. Attendance problems
[__] 3. Difficulties with other members of the group
[__] 4. Other reason *(specify)*: _____

3. What are the main reasons that you are leaving or left the program? *(See the following list of possible answers. Do not read answers. Multiple responses are possible)*

A. Problems with program policies or procedures:

[__] 1. The loan amount is too small.
[__] 2. The loan length is too short.
[__] 3. I do not like the repayment schedule.
[__] 4. The loan became too expensive (such as interest, fees).
[__] 5. The disbursement of the loans is not efficient.
[__] 6. I was unwilling to borrow because of other conditions, (such as obligatory savings, obligatory training).
[__] 7. I did not like the treatment by the staff or had personal conflicts with staff.
Who?_____
[__] 8. I found a program with better terms.
Which one?_____
Why is it better?_____
_____

B. Problems with group lending:

[__] 9. The group told me to leave.
[__] 10. The group disbanded.
[__] 11. I had personal conflicts with other members of the group.
Explain_____
_____
[__] 12. I was unhappy about group leadership.
[__] 13. I was unable or unwilling to attend all the group meetings (such as take too much time; have schedule conflicts)
[__] 14. I did not like the rules and/or the pressure established by group.

C. Client's business reasons:

[__] 15. I have enough working capital now for my business.

[__] 16. My business is seasonal; I will borrow again when I need it.
[__] 17. I am graduating to a loan program that makes larger loans.
Which one? _____
[__] 18. I am unable to repay the loans because of the weak condition of my business (for example, poor profits, low sales).
[__] 19. I decided to close the business and do something else (for example, get a job, start a new business).
Why? _____
[__] 20. I sold the business.

D. Personal reasons:

[__] 21. I cannot continue because I spent the money on a crisis (such as illness, death) or a celebration (such as marriage) in my family.

[__] 22. My spouse (or other adult income earner) left me so I do not have the ability to continue the business.
[__] 23. I am pregnant or now have another person to care for (lack of time or ability to continue the business at the same level).
[__] 24. I am moving out of the area.
[__] 25. A family member told me to stop borrowing from the program.

E. Community and economic reasons:

[__] 26. My business was ruined by a disaster (such as robbery; fire; flood; hurricane).

[__] 27. A major new competitor moved into the area and many of my customers now buy from the competition.
[__] 28. Poor economic conditions have left my customers with less money with which to buy my goods or services.

F. Other reasons:

[__] 29. Other (specify):_____
_____
[__] 99. Don't know

4. In thinking about all the reasons why you have said you left the program, which categories best describe your most important reasons? (*Read the answers.*)

[__] 1. Program reasons—Client has problems related to the program requirements or policies (does not want to borrow again under present program terms; does not like treatment by program staff; needs loan but decided to borrow from competitive source of capital).

[__] 2. Problems related to borrowing in a group (internal conflicts; does not like group pressure, frequency of meetings, or group leaders; was expelled; group failed).

[__] 3. Does not need capital now (has enough capital now; seasonal business is not active now; has graduated to larger loans from another source).

[__] 4. Business reasons—Related to economic activity for which client borrowed (was not profitable enough to continue borrowing; decided to sell or close business).

[__] 5. External reasons—Problems beyond client's control that are not related to either the loan program or business (for example, personal reasons such as illness or death in family, leaving area, pregnancy, lack of time, departure of spouse; or economic reasons such as destruction of business, new competitor, poor economic conditions affecting purchasing power of customers).

The following questions are about your use of the loan:

5a. How did you spend your last loan? (*Multiple responses possible. Mark the 3 largest categories of expenditure. Do not read answers.*)

[__] 1. Start a new business
[__] 2. Change type of business
[__] 3. Buy more inputs/stock
[__] 4. Buy equipment/tools, and the like
[__] 5. Hire more workers

[__] 6. Improve/expand business site
[__] 7. School fees
[__] 8. Medical/funeral expenses
[__] 9. Savings
[__] 10. Other *(specify)_____*
[__] 99. Don't know, or unwilling to answer

5b. Did the loans help your family? If yes, how? *(Do not read. Multiple responses possible)*

[__] 1. More and better food
[__] 2. Educate children/self
[__] 3. Improve your housing
[__] 4. Medical costs/improved health

[__] 5. Clothing
[__] 6. Furniture, utensils, goods for your house
[__] 7. Recreation; leisure activities
[__] 8. Other *(specify)_____*
[__] 99. Don't know

6. Which of the following best describes your experience in paying your last loan? *(Read the answers. Mark only one answer.)*

[__] 1. Difficult to pay
[__] 2. Within my capacity to pay
[__] 3. Easy to pay but was too small to meet the needs of my business
[__] 99. Don't know

7. During the last 12 months, did your income in the business…? *(Read answers. Mark only one answer.)*

[__] 1. Increase greatly
[__] 2. Increase some
[__] 3. Stay the same

[__] 4. Decrease some
[__] 5. Decrease greatly
[__] 99. Don't know

8. Which answer best describes the impact of the loans from this program?
(Read answers. Mark only one answer.)

[__] 1. Helped me quite a lot   [__] 4. Loan was a burden
[__] 2. Helped me a little   [__] 5. No opinion
[__] 3. Didn't help me at all   [__] 99. Don't know

9a. *(For group members only)* Do you think you benefited from being a member of the group?

[__] Yes *(go to #9b)*
[__] No *(go to #10)*

9b. *(For group members only)* Please tell me the specific ways in which being in a group helped you. *(Do not read answers. Multiple responses possible.*)

[__] 1. Helped me to make my repayments   [__] 5. Allowed me to develop my leadership skills
[__] 2. Provided advice and support when I needed   [__] 6. Gave me training and new information
help personally
[__] 3. Gave me business ideas and contacts   [__] 7. Other *(specify)*:_____
[__] 4. Offered me new friendships

(*Read to Clients*):
"We are coming to the end of the survey. The next set of questions is about your opinion of the overall program."

10. Which best describes your experience of participating in the program? *(Read answers. Mark only one answer.)*

[__] 1. Very good   [__] 4. Bad
[__] 2. Good   [__] 5. Very Bad
[__] 3. No Effect

11. Please name the two things you liked best about the program.

1. _____   2. _____
_____   _____

12. Please name the two things you liked least about the program.

1. _____   2. _____
_____   _____

13. What do you think should be done to improve the program for clients?
_____
_____
_____
_____

14a. Do you think that you might rejoin the program in the future? *(Read answers.)*

[__] 1. Yes   [__] 3. No *(go to #15)*   [__] 99. Don't know
[__] 2. Probably   [__] 4. Only if specific changes
                                    are made *(go to #14)*

14b. Note the specific changes in the program that the client desires before returning to the program.
_____
_____
_____

15. Would you encourage a relative or friend to join this program the way it is now?

[__] 1. Yes   [__] 2. No   [__] 99. Don't know

16. Any other comments?
_____
_____
_____

(*Read to Clients*):
"Thank you so much for your time. We will use your answers to help us improve our program for other borrowers. Good luck."

Observations by the loan officer about the ex-client and reasons for leaving:

17a. Does the information given above match with your understanding of the situation?

[__] 1. Yes
[__] 2. No *(go to #17b.)*

17b. *(If no)* Why not?
_____
_____
_____

17c. Was there any noticeable difference between this client and other clients in his or her group?

[__] 1. Yes *(go to #17d.)*
[__] 2. No

17d. *(If yes)* What was the difference? (poorer, richer, more outgoing, more shy, and so on)
_____
_____
_____

17e. Other comments:
_____
_____
_____

Interviewer: *If you need to shorten the survey, consider eliminating some of the following, which may be of lesser importance: questions # 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, and possibly the last few questions designed for the loan officer.*

Why the Client Exit Survey Tool Was Developed

Many evaluations gather information only on clients and a non-client control group. This tool adds a third group—the program's former clients. It is useful both for impact assessments and as a routine monitoring tool to give important feedback about the program to managers.

Often we hear the words "desertion" or "deserters" to describe clients who leave a program. Microfinance institutions (MFIs) are increasingly concerned about their "desertion rate." This choice of words implies a negative judgment about ex-clients and does not consider the wide variety of factors that influence a person's decision to withdraw from a credit program. A family emergency may have called the entrepreneur away from her business; his business may be seasonal requiring that he borrow only at certain times during the year; perhaps family medical bills are consuming business income, making a loan and its repayment temporarily too expensive; maybe the family is leaving the area. Or, just maybe, the client has gained all she can from the program and needs different services, in which case it is more appropriate to think of her as graduate than a deserter.

This tool is neutral toward those who are leaving; we use it to find out *why* clients leave without any prejudice regarding their departure.

Tracking these reasons can be helpful to program managers. (See Figure 5-1, Results of the Exit Interview in Mali.) Knowing why clients leave can help managers decide how to change the program in order to improve services and/or remain competitive in a context in which more than one MFI is operating. For example:

- If managers learn that clients are dissatisfied with specific aspects of the program, they may be able to make changes that will keep clients from leaving.

- If clients are choosing a different credit program because they are attracted by its products or policies, managers may consider adapting or adding products and services that better meet the needs of those clients.

- If health crises cause many clients to withdraw from the program, managers may want to introduce some kind of emergency fund that offers protection to clients.

Given its importance to management, the Client Exit Survey tool can be instituted as a regular monitoring device to collect the information from ex-clients on a routine basis as they leave the program. It does not have to be used only during periodic impact evaluations. Because the interview is short, it is easy to do data collection, data entry, and analysis monthly or quarterly.

In sum, the Client Exit Survey offers the following advantages:

- It is simple to use; pre-coded answers facilitate analysis;

- It is appropriate for one-time or regular use;
- It helps management identify problems that cause clients to leave; and
- It verifies staff impressions about why clients are leaving.

Preparing To Conduct the Client Exit Survey

Select the Sample

If the Client Exit Survey is used as a monitoring tool and applied on a regular basis, interviews should take place as close to the time of departure from the program as possible. If, on the other hand, using this tool is part of a periodic evaluation, it is important to select a sample of ex-clients to interview. Choose the sample from those who have left most recently; for example, after the last loan cycle.

The sample of ex-clients can be constructed following the same steps used to select the sample of clients and non-clients for the Impact Survey. Use the same categories (for example, geographical, gender, enterprise type) that characterize the program and then identify specific areas in which the ex-clients will be chosen at random. Design the client sample to represent as many categories or types of clients as seems necessary. Keep in mind, however, that each

additional breakdown of the clientele requires that a larger sample size be drawn to adequately represent all client types chosen. Thus, numerous divisions are not recommended.

After the program-wide percentages of relevant characteristics have been determined, these should be applied to the geographic zones in which the sampling is to occur. For example, if the program has 85 percent female clients, the sampling within a geographic zone should try to reflect this percentage of female ex-clients. Again, the same system that was set up to sample the clients and the control group for the Impact Survey can be used on a smaller scale for ex-clients.

It is also possible to select the same geographic zones as those used for the main Impact Survey. Prepare a list of ex-clients in those zones, and select a random sample from this list. The resulting sample may not have exactly the same characteristics as the program as a whole. For example, in a program where more men leave than women, a random sampling of ex-clients may yield a sample with a larger percentage of men than is found among all program clients. In addition, some ex-clients will not be available for an interview (such as those who have moved out of the area or those who have died), and thus the universe from which the sample is drawn may be somewhat biased by this absence of certain respondents. These biases should be taken into account when interpreting the survey results. (See Figure 5-2, With ODEF in Honduras.)

FIGURE 5-2.
With ODEF in Honduras

Because ODEF (*Organizacion de Desarrollo Empresearial Femenino*) offers two loan programs—village banks and individual loans—half of the interviewees were ex-clients of communal banks and half were ex-clients from the individual loan program. In the same communities where clients and non-clients were interviewed for the Impact Survey, a total of 23 ex-clients were randomly selected. Of those 23 interviewed, 9 were men and 14 were women. Of the 12 ex-clients of the communal banks, 5 were men and 7 were women. Of the 11 individual borrowers, 4 were men and 7 were women.

(Note: These samples sizes, used in a field test of the tools, would be too small for a full impact assessment.)

Each interviewer should be assigned more ex-clients than he or she needs to interview because he or she may need to work through a long list of potential respondents before finding enough people who are available and willing to be interviewed. With little stake in the program now, ex-clients may be less cooperative.

Test the Tool

The activities described below are necessary steps to prepare for conducting the actual exit interviews. As such, they overlap significantly with the training one would plan for evaluators. (See Figure 5-3, Time Needed for Preparation and Training.) The one activity for which there is a dedicated training design is noted here, but described fully in the training section.

FIGURE 5-3.	
Time Needed for	
Preparation and Training	
Sampling	1 hour
Using the tool	2 hours in the office
	2 hours for the pre-test
Data Input and cleaning	2 hours
Data analysis	2 hours
Survey revision	2 hours

Get to Know the Survey Tool

The Client Exit Survey interview comprises the following six sections. Study the questions in each section to determine what the questions are getting at and the general purpose of the section.

Section 1: Data to be completed on the form by the interviewer before going to visit the client.

Section 2: Questions 1-4 relate to the reasons for leaving the program.

Section 3: Questions 5-9 ask about how the client used the loan and its usefulness to him or her.

Section 4: Questions 10-13 seek to know the ex-client's satisfaction with the program and how he or she thinks it could be improved.

Section 5: Questions 14-16 ask if the client would return to the program or recommend it to others.

Section 6: Questions 17a-e are the observations of the loan promoter about the ex-client and his or her reasons for leaving.

Review the Survey Tool

After the interviewer understands the basic structure of the survey and the intent of each question, he or she should review the survey tool to make sure that its questions are appropriate for the cultural context in which the program operates. Go back and review each question and its predetermined answers carefully to make sure that both questions and answers are appropriate for the clients' contexts. Some of the questions with multiple pre-coded answers may need to be changed to fit better with the reality of clients' businesses.

Practice the Interview

(See Training Exercise #1 in "Training Exercises," the last section in this chapter.)

Field Test the Interview

Field testing the survey tool is good training and provides necessary preparation for the actual data collection. Some of the reasons for conducting a pre-test include the following:

- The need to identify language or wording problems in the survey that might cause confusion and to make revisions before conducting the "real" interviews;
- The need to know how long the interview takes in order to schedule a large number of them;
- Understanding that the ex-clients are not as hostile as expected and are willing to provide the information asked of them during the interview; and
- Gaining confidence to conduct the interview.

Arranging for the pre-test interviews requires someone in the organization to find and contact a group of ex-clients who are still in the zone and willing to be interviewed.

Check the Data and Revise the Tool

Following the field test of the interview itself, it is important to test data entry and "clean" the data to identify potential problems before a large number of interviews are carried out. The way to do this is to enter the data collected during the field test into the computer. When this has been done, the data input team and the supervisory team must work together to address the problems they find.

At this point, check for the following:

- Consistency and accuracy between the information handwritten on the survey forms and the information entered into the computer;

- The adequacy of the survey's pre-coded answers. If, during the field test, clients give answers to questions that do not fit any of the existing pre-coded answers, it may be necessary to revise the coding to accommodate these unexpected answers (see examples in figure 5-4);

- Errors in filling out the survey form; and

- Potential confusion among interviewers about the meaning of any given question.

FIGURE 5-4.
Examples

1st Example:
If almost all of the answers come up "99. Don't Know," the wording of the question is probably unclear to the ex-clients. Alternative wording should be tried or the question should be dropped.

2nd Example:
Question # 5a "How did you spend your last loan?" has pre-coded answers such as "start a new business, change type of business, buy more inputs/stock." But clients give you answers such as "buy more soda and cigarettes." The first response is for the interviewer to clarify what the client means. Does he or she mean that the loan helped buy more merchandise to expand sales, or is he or she indicating using the loans for personal consumption? Probe for clarity and code the answer appropriately on the survey form. If, after the pre-test, the interview team discovers that this type of answer is common, it will be necessary to decide if the pre-coded answers need to be changed to accommodate a response indicating personal consumption.

Test the Statistical Package

Field testing is also an opportunity for testing the statistical program the team will be using to analyze the data. Input about ten items to make sure (1) that the program is running the way the computer operators think that it should and (2) that it satisfies the evaluation supervisors who will be doing the data analysis.

Collecting Data

Interviewing ex-clients has the potential to be very sensitive since some of them may be dissatisfied with the program. Before starting the interview itself, follow these tips:

1. Do not pressure ex-clients to participate in the interview and stress that the information you collect will be confidential.

2. Make sure you get ex-clients' permission for the twenty minutes you will need to complete the interview.

3. Interview ex-clients in a private situation, either at home or at the business, where other people are not listening to the interview. If the interview takes place in a public setting, the interviewee may change his or her answers according to what he or she thinks the audience and the interviewer would like to hear.

4. Stress that this is not a visit to try to collect previous debt, or to try to change the ex-client's opinion about the program. Express positive feelings about the ex-client as both an individual and an entrepreneur, even if he or she has left the program with an unpaid debt.

5. Ask questions simply and directly.

6. Do not show any emotional reaction to respondents' answers. This can be a problem for loan officers and other program staff who feel defensive when faced with negative comments about their program. It is very important to remain neutral to ex-clients' answers.

7. Use neutral prompts. The objective when prompting or probing is to clarify the respondent's answer.

8. Thank respondents for their time and reassure them that the results will be kept confidential.

9. Before leaving the area, give your survey forms to the team leader to check for completeness. Take time to fill in any blanks, returning to the respondent if necessary.

Coding Data

The first task belongs to team leaders and supervisors who must review all survey forms for the inevitable answers that are not included in the pre-coded lists. This activity should take place as soon after the interview as possible, preferably in the field. For each handwritten answer, supervisors will have to determine if its meaning is similar enough to one of the pre-coded items to be lumped in with that item. If it is not, a new code should be established for the particular answer and the code sheet updated. It is not uncommon to update the code sheet with this type of addition.

During data coding, problems with the tool often are detected for the first time. The supervisor should note such problems in writing so that the survey can be revised to reflect this real experience and to avoid repeating the same problems in future applications of the tool. (See the example in figure 5-5.)

FIGURE 5-5.
Example

When applied in Honduras, the initial ex-client survey tool was pre-coded with mostly negative reasons for leaving the program on the assumption that clients leave dissatisfied. While inputting the data collected, however, the team learned the many positive reasons that ex-clients gave for leaving the program (for example, the client left because she had enough working capital for the time being but plans to reenter the program when she needs more). The survey was revised with a more balanced set of reasons for leaving, and this approach has worked well in subsequent applications.

Finally, when all data from the exit interview has been entered into the computer, carefully check that what is written on the survey forms matches what has been entered into the computer.

Analyzing Data

Analyzing data from the survey is perhaps the most interesting part of the exercise. That this tool is quantitative makes it possible to attach numerical values to each question. How many answered in this way? What percentage of those interviewed had that experience? Potentially complex questions can be translated into a set of numbers and percentages that are easy for most people to understand.

Three Types of Questions

The client exit interview includes the following three types of questions:

10. Questions for which the client can choose only one answer from an established, pre-coded list;

11. Questions for which clients can choose multiple answers from a pre-coded list; and

12. Questions for which the answers are open-ended.

For the first two types of questions, the Epi Info statistical package contains a QES file that will have been pre-coded with numbers for the established responses.

Single-Answer Questions

The single-answer question, in which the interviewee must choose only one answer, is the most common type of question on this survey. Question # 7 offers an example:

Example:
Q.7: During the last 12 months, did your income in the business…? (Read answers. Mark only one answer.)

[__] 1. Increase greatly   [__] 4. Decrease some
[__] 2. Increase some   [__] 5. Decrease greatly
[__] 3. Stay the same   [__] 99. Don't know

Those questions with only one choice of an answer are easier to analyze with frequency distribution to find out how many answers for each response. Cross-tabulations with other variables such as gender, economic activity, number of loans, and cause for leaving will provide more nuance and complex information on income impact for whom, for what type of business, and so on. This analysis section includes numerous suggestions for how to cross-tabulate to answer specific questions.

Multiple-Response Questions

A multiple-response question is slightly different from a single-response question because the number of answers may be greater than the number of respondents. Question #2 on the Client Exit Survey is an example of this type of question.

Example:
Q.2. In your opinion, what factors led the group to decide to exclude your continued participation? (Do not read answers. Multiple responses possible)

[__] 1. Repayment problems
[__] 2. Attendance problems
[__] 3. Difficulties with other members of the group
[__] 4. Other reason (specify): _____

The respondent may originally have had repayment problems (answer 1) that then caused him or her not to attend out of embarrassment (answer 2), which then may have brought on group pressure and discord (answer 3). On the other hand, the person might have had just problems showing up to meetings (answer 3), and the group discipline caused him or her to be excluded.

Open-ended Questions

For open-ended questions, such as #11, #12, and #13, it will be necessary to develop coding to accommodate the responses and count how many ex-clients responded in a particular manner. Questions #16 and #17e are more difficult to code because they solicit additional comments, which are difficult to aggregate.

Analysis Guidelines

Simple data analysis involves two basic procedures: frequency tabulations and cross-tabulations.

Frequency Tabulations

Frequency tabulations simply count how many responses are in each pre-coded answer category and address the question: How frequently does a particular answer occur? For example, how many months has each respondent been in the program? Or how many loans did ex-clients have from the program before they left?

Cross-tabulations

Cross-tabulations enable ream members to break out responses to one question by the categories of another question.

Example:

Q.1: Who made the decision that you will no longer participate in the program?

A frequency distribution of this question tells how many respondents fall in each of the pre-established answer categories. But what if your team wants to know if any differences exist between men and women regarding the decision to leave the program? Cross-tabulating gender and answering question #1 will help answer this question.

The first thing to determine is the characteristics of survey respondents by running frequencies on the key descriptive variables. Create a demographic and business profile of the client sample. How many are women and how many are men? What types of businesses do they have? How long were they in the program? How many loans did they take? Usually this material lends itself to a frequency analysis.

Let's look at this last question as an example. "How many loans did ex-clients take before leaving the program?" Figure 5-6, Statistical Software Package Response, shows how most statistical software packages like Epi Info would respond to the query "frequency loans in program." In this example, the computer generates a column of values (in this case the number of loans before leaving the program), a column of the number of people responding with that value, a column with the percentage of the respondents giving that answer, and finally, a column of the accumulated percentage.

FIGURE 5-6.			
Statistical Software Package Response			
No. of Loans Before Leaving	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Accumulated**
1 loan	13	56.5%	56.5%
2 loans	4	17.4%	73.9%
3 loans	4	17.4%	91.3%
4 loans	2	8.7%	100%
Totals	**23**	**100%**	

What does this frequency distribution tell you?

> *Answer: The majority of ex-clients sampled left during their first year of borrowing.*

The majority (56.5 percent) of the clients left after one loan. An additional 17.4 percent left after the second loan, and again, after the third loan. Only 8.7 percent (2 of the 23) left after four loans. No borrowers in the random sample left after 5 or more loans. On average, clients took 1.8 loans before leaving the program.

The pattern of early exits that this data shows suggests implications for management that should be included in the analysis, which might say:

> *"This program is losing clients early in their participation, after just a few loans, precisely when the transaction costs of acquiring and orienting a client are highest"*

Then, look closely at later questions in the survey to figure out how this expensive trend could be reversed.

Frequency analysis is limited to telling how many people responded in a certain way. But to learn more about who responded, cross-tabulations are needed.

Creating a table that crosses the sex of the client with the number of loans in the program enables the team find out if the gender affects when the client leaves the program.

Sex	1 loan	2 loans	3 loans	4 loans	Total
Male	7	2	0	0	9
Female	6	2	4	2	14
Totals	13	4	4	2	23

This chart indicates that all of the men left in the first two loan cycles. In contrast, 43 percent of the women interviewed stayed in the program longer than all of the male ex-clients.

This type of analysis leads to another question: Are the men leaving for different reasons than the women? To answer this question, cross-tabulate sex with why they report leaving. Using the same sample data, the results are as follows:

Sex	Voluntarily left	Borrower group collapsed	Borrower asked to leave program	Total
Male	9	0	0	9
Female	11	1	2	14
Totals	20	1	2	23

While there are some minimal differences by gender, because of women's greater participation in group lending, it can be determined that both men and women in their majority left the program voluntarily.

Suggestions for Questions and Cross-Tabulations

To help your team think about the analysis to perform on this survey data, sample questions and suggested cross-tabulations are provided below for each of the sections of the Exit Interview.

Determining Why the Clients Left

One of the principal objectives of the Client Exit Survey is to determine why clients leave the program. (See Figure 5-7, Major Reasons for Leaving the Program: Data from ODEF in Honduras.) Frequency distributions on questions #3 and #4 will begin to answer this question.

FIGURE 5-7.
Major Reasons for Leaving the Program: Data from ODEF in Honduras

(1) 17.4% left because of problems with the policies or requirements of the program.

(2) 21% left because of problems related with the economic activity of their business.

(3) 47.8% left because of external factors; reasons unrelated to the program or the business.

(4) 13% left because of problems with their lending group.

What other factors might influence the reason clients leave a program? Do gender or type of business affect the reasons for leaving? Cross-tabulating each of these variables with question #4 will help answer this.

Question #6 asks about the client's ability to repay the loan. The answers will tell whether loan repayment was a reason for leaving. But, if the majority of respondents report leaving voluntarily, as in the example above from Honduras, then loan repayment should not emerge as a problem. Other ways to analyze this question are suggested in Figure 5-8, Question #6: Analyzing a Client's Ability to Repay a Loan

FIGURE 5-8.
Question #6:
Analyzing a Client's Ability to Repay a Loan

To determine:	Cross-tabulate with:
If this information seems accurate	Information from the program about whether the client left paying with a debt or having paid everything
If loan size influenced how difficult it was to pay	Size of last loan or number of loans in the program (assuming that loan size increases over time)
If economic activity affected difficulty	Economic sector of clients
If gender affected repayment	Sex of client
If individual loans or group loans seemed to be harder to repay	Type of lending methodology of those having difficulty repaying

Impact of Loan

Several questions target the possible impact of the program during the time that the client was participating. Question #7 asks about changes in income since borrowing from the program. To find out more about who answers in which way, cross-tabulate this question with other client characteristics as indicated in Figure 5-9, Question #7: Income Changes.

FIGURE 5-9.
Question #7:
Income Changes

To determine:	Cross-tabulate with:
If those who perceived an increase in income were more from one lending methodology	Respondents of each lending methodology
If income changes are different for men and women	Sex of respondents
If income change is associated with type of business	Respondents from different business sectors

Question #8 asks clients to characterize the usefulness of the loan for their business. This question can be cross-tabulated in the same way to find out how different groups or types of clients respond to the question. Is there one type for whom the loans were very helpful? Who thought that the loans were no help? Are there any patterns here?

Opinions About the Program

Because questions #11, #12, and #13 are open-ended and have no pre-coded responses, it is prudent to list and group the answers. If any respondents leave any of these questions blank, it is necessary to adjust the total number of respondents when reporting the answer. For example, if only 15 of 23 total provide an answer, 15 becomes your new total for reporting *on that question*.

Questions #14 and #15 seek to learn whether the ex-client would return to the program and whether he or she would recommend the program to a family member or friend. Again, list the results and determine which types of individuals were responding positively to those questions by carrying out cross-tabulations such as those suggested in Figure 5-10, Questions #14 and #15, Who Would Return to the Program?

FIGURE 5-10.
Questions #14 and #15:
Who Would Return to the Program?

To determine:	Cross-tabulate with:
If those who would return were more from one lending methodology	Respondents of each lending methodology
If men answer differently than women	The sex of respondents
If longevity affects desire to return	Number (and thus size) of loans
If positive responses are clustered by business type	Respondents from different business sectors

Training Staff To Use the Client Exit Survey Tool

To plan a training event for the team that will be conducting the Client Exit Survey, review the section of this chapter titled, "Preparing to Conduct the Client Exit Survey." Many of the preparatory steps outlined in this earlier section should be done as part of the interviewers' training. This is the case with field testing, for example; every survey should be field tested, and the field testing is also training for the "real" interview. This section offers a training exercise to help practice the interview before taking it into the field.

Training Exercise #1
Practicing the Interview

In this exercise, participants role play the interview itself in groups of three. One person plays the role of interviewer, the second plays the ex-client being interviewed, and the third acts as the observer. If working with several groups of three, give each group a different "reason" for leaving the program to facilitate their role. (See the list of possible reasons in Figure 5-11, Reasons for Leaving the Program.)

FIGURE 5-11.
Reasons for Leaving the Program

Sometimes the ex-clients have trouble coming up with the reasons for leaving the program. Some reasons include the following:

1. The interest rate is too high.
2. Village bank meetings are too frequent.
3. Competition from a new, larger business in the neighborhood has put me out of business.
4. Steep increases in wholesale prices have eaten up my profit.
5. I had to spend my working capital on medical care for my sick child.
6. My business is seasonal, so I don't need a loan now.
7. I was kicked out of my communal bank.
8. I left when the communal bank broke up over internal struggles.

During the interview, the observer should take the following action:

1. Look for problems with the way questions are worded;

2. Note problems the ex-client has in answering the questions; and

3. Suggest improvements.

After completing the interview role play, the three people rotate their roles so that the interviewer becomes the observer, the ex-client becomes the interviewer, and the observer becomes the ex-client. This rotation of roles continues until all three people have had the opportunity to play all three roles.

After participants have rotated through all three roles, ask each group to discuss their experiences and compose a list of lessons learned. Bring the groups back together to share their observations and lessons with the entire group.

Chapter 6

**Tool #3:
Loan Use
Strategies
Over Time**

- Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool (interview guide and analysis grid)

- Why the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool was developed

- Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool: question by question

- Preparing for the interview: step by step

- Conducting the interview

- Analyzing the data

- Scheduling

- Training staff to use the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool

Chapter 6
Tool#3
Loan Use Strategies Over Time

Type of tool:
> Qualitative

Overview:
> The Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool is an individual interview used to find out how mature clients have used their loans and profits over time.

Hypotheses tested by this tool:
> At the household level:
> - Increased income
> - Increased assets
> - Increased welfare (in such aspects as food security, housing, and health)
>
> At the individual level:
> - Increased control over resources on the part of women clients
>
> At the enterprise level:
> - Increased net cash flow
> - Increased differentiation between the microenterprise and household

Purpose:
> The purpose of the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool is to
> - Document loan use over time;
> - Determine how loan use decisions change over time;
> - Understand the evolution of the business;
> - Illuminate client decision-making about the use of loan funds and profits;
> - Explore the relationship between the client's household and her enterprise; and
> - Identify the perceived outcomes of these allocation decisions.

Amount of time required to administer the tool:
> 60 to 90 minutes (1 to 1-1/2 hours)

Source:
> Nancy Horn of Opportunity International wrote the initial version of The Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool. Members of the SEEP/AIMS team subsequently revised it.

Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide

(Use one form for each loan and reproduce it in a format that provides ample space to write answers.)

Client ID Code:_____   Loan #: _____Loan Amount:_____
Date Received:_____   Repayment Period (loan terms):_____

1. How did you use this loan? On what was it spent?

2. Why did you spend the loan money in these ways?

3. Who decided to use the loan in these ways?

4. What changes took place in the business as a result of the expenditures you made?

5. After repaying your loan and meeting all business expenses, did you have a surplus/net profit? If so, how much do you estimate?

6. If there was a surplus/profit, what did you do with these?

7. What would you have done if you had not taken this loan?

8. Have you experienced a crisis during this loan cycle? If yes, did you use your loan to help cope with the crisis? How?

Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid

Client ID#:		Location:		
Questions	**Loan 1 / Amount:**	**Loan 2/ Amount:**	**Loan 3/ Amount:**	**Loan 4/ Amount:**
Type of Business				
1. How did you use the loan?	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.
2. Why did you use the loan this way?	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.
3 Who decided to use the loan this way?	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.
4. What changes?	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.

Questions	Loan 1	Loan 2	Loan 3	Loan 4
5. Surplus/net profit?				
6. Surplus/net profit?				
7. What would you have done if you had no loan?				
8. How did you use the loan in time of crisis?				

Why the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Tool Was Developed

The Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool will help you learn how microentrepreneurs use financial resources to carry out their economic strategies for their business and their household. Most microcredit programs intend to provide loans for business and productive purposes, and in an ideal world, microentrepreneurs use these loans to build their business and their income one step at a time. But in the real world, cash is fungible, and clients often use at least part of their loan for other reasons—business and/or personal. Maybe school fees are due just at the time the client uses the loan. Maybe a part of the loan actually gets invested in a different household enterprise, other than the one for which it was intended. Maybe another family member has the power to demand loan monies for other uses. Maybe a client keeps a portion of the loan at home for emergencies. How a client uses his or her loan will affect the outcomes or impact that it can have. Knowing how a client uses his or her loan will help determine whether a program's loan product is meeting clients' actual needs. Understanding clients' needs is key to tailoring services, managing risk, and maximizing impact. (See examples in figure 6-1.)

In addition, knowing how a client invests his or her loan will help program staff to understand how the business evolves over time. Is the business growing? Or is the client choosing to diversify his or her economic activities? If the business has declined, what are the causes? Does the client use his or her loan capital to support several businesses? Does this vary? Depending on what factors? The Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool is "dynamic" in tracking change across months and years, as opposed to describing the state of the business at one point in time, as the Impact Survey does. As such, the two tools (the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool and Impact Survey) complement each other well.

The following factors are some that influence loan use:

- The socioeconomic status of the client;

- Whether other income earners within the household contribute to the sustenance of the household;

- The number of household family members and their ages;

- The health of the household members;

- The type and seasonality of the business;

- The locus of decision-making about loan use;

- The amount of the loan; and

- The actual term of the loan.

FIGURE 6-1.
Examples

1st Example:
In Bolivia, clients reported that they borrowed less in one cycle because of a crisis in the family that required some of their money. Because these clients knew they would not be investing the loan in their businesses, they borrowed less to ensure that they could make loan repayments from their current earnings.

2nd Example:
In Mali, the seasonality of agricultural production greatly influences clients' loan history. During the long dry season, borrowing tends to increase and enterprise activities flourish. But during the rainy season, women's responsibilities in the fields often lead them to suspend their participation in the credit program.

3rd Example:
In the Honduras test, village bank clients increased profits (between 15 and 50 percent) only after the second loan. The first loan was used to pay off former debt, meet educational expenses of the household, and, in general, lay the foundation for business investment in the future.

Loan Use Strategies Over Time Tool: Question by Question

The Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool described in this section includes the following three parts:

1. A one-on-one qualitative interview (Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide);
2. A recording tool (Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid); and
3. A set of tables to help the interviewer glean information for analysis (Loan Analysis Tables).

The Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide and Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid should be used together: the first to elicit information from the client during the interview, and the second to summarize information on each client in a standardized format.

With a client who has taken many loans, it will not be possible to ask him about each one. Clients generally will not remember the details you are interested in for every loan, and it would take too much time to review all of them. One possible strategy for selecting the loans to focus on during the interview is the following: Start with the very first loan; select an interval (such as every other, or the odd-numbered loans—3rd, 5th, 7th) for the "middle" loans; and end with the two last, most recent, loans. Another option is to ask about the first two loans and the last two. With either strategy, do not try to ask about more than four loans total.

The Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide includes the following eight standard questions, plus five optional questions, each designed to open a line of questioning.

Eight standard questions:

1. How did you use the loan? In what was it invested?
2. Why did you invest the loan in these ways?
3. Who decided to use the loan in these ways?
4. What changes took place in your business as a result of the investment you made?
5. After repaying your loan and meeting business expenses, did you have a surplus, or net profit? If so, how much do you estimate?
6. If there was a surplus/net profit, what did you do with them?
7. What would you have done if you had not taken this loan?
8. Have you experienced a crisis during this loan cycle? If so, did you use your loan to help cope with this crisis? How did the crisis affect your ability to make loan repayments?

Five optional questions on savings:

1. (For rural clients, where geographically appropriate) Do your economic activities during the dry season differ from your economic activities during the rainy season? If so, how?
2. Do you having any savings? If yes, are they held in a bank savings account or other form?
3. Why are you saving?
4. When did you make the last withdrawal from your savings?
5. What did you use the money for?

The Eight Standard Questions

Each of these eight questions is a key question. Each has a specific purpose, which is explained below. But to really fulfill the purpose of each question, the interviewer must explore clients' answers further through probing and asking for more detail. Knowing the purpose of each question helps with thinking about the type of probing questions to ask during the interview and note ahead of time on the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide. The intent of each question should also help with identifying which points to record on the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid.

Q.1: How did you use the loan? On what was it spent?

When asking this question, you should identify all the different ways the loan was used, including the following:

- Investing in the primary business listed on the loan application form;
- Investing in any other business the client or another family member owns;

- Spending on family expenses;
- Savings; or
- Paying off moneylenders and the like.

If the client invested his or her loan in multiple businesses, try to find out how much he or she invested in each one and for what. Get as much detail on amounts spent as the client can remember.

NOTE: To jog the client's memory, it is important to have a copy of the client's loan history. Prepare a summary of the client's participation in the program and attach this to the interview sheets.

Q.2: Why did you use the loan in these ways?

The intent of this question is to determine how the client used the loan. For each expenditure or different use of loan money, therefore, ask the client why he or she spent the money as he or she did (for example, on increased stocks for the business, or on capital equipment.) If the client spent all or a portion of the loan on non-business items, ask why. This line of questioning should provide a clearer picture of the constraints to investing in the business and to meeting other expenses, as well as how a client decides on a specific business investment (for example, increasing stocks or adding a storage room).

Q.3: Who decided to use the loan in these ways?

This question is important for microfinance programs that serve women and seek to help women gain more control over their financial resources. Who decides about the use of a loan has a direct bearing on how the loan is spent, how any profits are used, and ultimately, its impact. If loans are given to women, but spent by their male relatives (such as husbands, fathers, or brothers), the desired impact on women may be compromised. Who actually controls the loan has risk implications for the program as well; as loan sizes increase, managers may want to adjust lending practices to know more about how the money is invested and by whom.

Q.4: What changes took place in your business as a result of the investment you made?

This question seeks information on results. Were you able to increase production? What happened to sales? Did you employ additional workers? Did you start up a new business?

Q.5: After repaying your loan and meeting all business expenses, did you have a surplus/net profit? If so, how much do you estimate?

This question seeks to link the initial investment with profits earned. It is important for the client to understand that this question is interested in her estimation of profit *after all business expenses*. Prompt the client, as necessary, to remember all of his or her various business expenses before telling about his or her profit. The other challenging aspect of this question is to find the appropriate time period for reporting profits. Most clients will find it easiest to report profits by

their own product cycle, which can vary from one day to several months, depending on the business. This requires translating the client's reported profits for his or her product cycle to the loan cycle.

Q.6: If there was surplus/net profits, what did you do with it?

With the profits reported in question 5, this question seeks to understand how clients used their profits. Did they reinvest in the business? Did they use the money to purchase or improve housing? Did they meet family expenses such as school fees or health care? Perhaps they paid off former debt or spent it on other "emergency" needs.

Q.7: What would you have done if you had not taken this loan?

This question seeks to learn if a client has any other financial resources he or she can draw on when needed. It also seeks to understand the different coping mechanisms clients use to meet business or household financial needs.

Q.8: Have you experienced a crisis during this loan cycle? If so, did you use the loan to help cope with the crisis? How? How did the crisis affect your ability to make loan repayments?

This question seeks to learn more about clients' ways of coping with crisis, how the loan is used in these situations, and how access to financial services can reduce vulnerability.

The Five Optional Questions on Savings

The opportunity to save is often more important to clients than is borrowing. Not only are savings critical to coping with unexpected events, they often influence loan use and investment decisions. As with their loan services, microfinance institutions (MFIs) need to know if their savings services—voluntary or required—really meet clients' needs. Tracking how clients use savings will help bring understanding to this. Do clients use savings primarily in cases of emergency? Or do they use them more often to meet consumption needs? How common is it for clients to withdraw savings to make loan repayments?

If the program emphasizes savings, consider asking clients a separate set of questions on savings that mirror the ones in the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool. Here, however, the questions on savings have been included as optional because they were not tested in the field as part of the tools tests. And field experience has indicated that clients often do not distinguish between "use of profits" and "use of savings." That said, if the program emphasizes savings, explore how savings—from all sources—fit into clients' financial strategies in order to know which product features best meet their needs.

Optional:
Interview Guide on Savings Use

This interview guide is based on questions used in Uganda and Peru. In Uganda, a form was filled in for each of the last three withdrawals or for each withdrawal over the last two years. In Peru, because of program procedures, the client had withdrawn only one large amount, so multiple forms were not necessary.

Client number _____   Date interviewed: _____
Interview number _____   Interviewer number: _____
Institution_____

Information from the institution's management information system:

Date client entered program:_____   Date savings began:_____
Current amount of client's savings: _____
Is this more than required amount (if savings are obligatory)? ___ Yes   ___ No

Savings withdrawal number: _____   Amount: _____   Date withdrawn:_____
Savings withdrawal number: _____   Amount: _____   Date withdrawn:_____
Savings withdrawal number: _____   Amount: _____   Date withdrawn:_____
Savings withdrawal number: _____   Amount: _____   Date withdrawn:_____

1. Why did you decide to start savings (in the program or open a savings account)? *(**Note:** Even if savings are obligatory, probe to find out what other motivations the client has for saving.)*
2. When and how much savings did you withdraw? *(**Note:** This is an attempt to check if the client's memory is the same as the information received from the institution's information system. It helps the client begin to remember the transactions for further questions.)*
3. How did you use the savings you withdrew? *(**Note:** Probe for specific uses and amounts. If it is not obvious from the initial answer, probe with, "How did it help your family or business?")*
4. Who decided these uses of your savings?
5. Why did you (or the other person) decide to use this money in this way? (rather than for other possible uses?)
6. What would you have done if you did not have these savings available?
7. Did you have the habit of savings before your participation in this program?

Preparing for the Interview: Step by Step

Select the Sample

Two strategies for selecting clients to interview are (1) a random method and (2) a representative sample carefully chosen to reflect specific program or client characteristics of special interest to management.

FIGURE 6-2.
Example

In Honduras, the ODEF (*Organizacion de Desarrollo Empresearial Femenino*) evaluation team selected a sample of 16 for the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool—9 individual loan clients and 7 village bank members.

The random method involves a random selection of clients from the program's client roster. Some program conditions, however, may indicate first dividing clients into two groups and sampling clients at random from each of these groups. For example, a program that offers different loan products may want to ensure that they interview clients using each product. Similarly, a program operating in two distinct regions may want to sample from clients in each region. In these cases, a sample of at least eight to ten clients from each sub-group is recommended to capture an adequate range of experience. (See the example in figure 6-2.)

Alternatively, the interest may be in learning about loan use from more specific subsets of clients. In this case the task is to identify the key characteristics or client types the program needs to learn about. Does the program want to compare and contrast different groups of clients? Which ones? Does it want to determine the similarities and differences in loan use strategy between urban and rural microentrepreneurs? Between resource-rich and resource-poor villages? Between manufacturers and traders? Between men and women? Between those participating in village banks and those receiving individual loans? Between clients in different types of businesses? So the first questions to answer in determining a sample are the following:

- From whom does the program wish to learn something about loan use strategies?

- How does the program want to compare and contrast this information?

FIGURE 6-3.
Example
Kafo Jiginiew's Sample

In the Mali tools test, the evaluation team selected a sample of 12 based on time in the program and business sector. Because impact takes time to emerge, the team decided to interview female clients in their fifth or sixth loan cycle; they also chose those operating one of four different types of businesses: restaurant operators (4); those who sell condiments (3); those who sell millet beer (3); and traders of non-food items such as soap, indigo dye, and brooms (2). The last 2 constituted the "town" sample, while the remaining 10 were from either a large village with a credit union and a major market or a village without economic amenities.

If choosing this second method, it is important to note that each characteristic chosen to select on adds to the sample size needed because it is important to interview enough clients to identify a trend or pattern that is representative of each sub-group. A sample of three from each client group should be sufficient to determine differences in population. Generally, the more homogeneous the clients are, the fewer you will need to interview. (See the example in figure 6-3.)

With either method, identify extra clients in the event that some of those selected to interview are not available.

Prepare for the Interview

To prepare for the interviews, undertake the following steps, listed and explained below: (1) study the clients' records, (2) get to know and assess the research tools, (3) develop probing questions, (4) translate the tool, (5) prepare interview materials, (6) field test the interview, and (7) schedule interviews and reduce clients' anxieties.

Step 1:   Study the Clients' Records

After choosing specific clients to participate in the loan use interview, review demographic and loan history information contained in clients' records. For each client, have an idea of information, such as the amount and number of loans provided, intended loan use, type of business, and repayment history. Take this information along when conducting the interview because it will be helpful, sometimes essential, in helping the client remember his or her own credit history. It will also help with developing probing questions. The more informed an interviewer is going into the interview, the more prepared he or she will be to ask the kinds of questions that yield key information.

Step 2: Get To Know and Assess the Research Tools

The research team should review the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide to determine if the questions it contains are the right questions for the evaluation's purposes. If the team wants to gather very specific information on a particular lending product or financial service, decide (1) if this information can be obtained through probing questions that explore each of the main questions in greater detail, or (2) if a new categorical question is needed. It may be necessary to modify the questions to make them more appropriate to each client's context and culture.

Step 3: Develop Probing Questions

After becoming familiar with the tool and its main categorical questions, begin thinking of probing questions to ask to obtain more specific information on loan use from the client. The "tricky" issue with qualitative research is that even though categorical questions may seem very simple, they can result in quite complicated answers. For example, an open-ended question such as, *"Tell me about how you joined the program,"* can yield as simple an answer as, *"My friend invited me to join,"* or a complicated answer about moneylenders charging too much interest, a husband abandoning the wife, or a loan officer going the extra mile to include all the eligible clients in the community. It is not possible to know in advance what will surface in the course of conversation; yet it is important to be prepared to pursue any topic that might be of interest to the organization by asking probing questions. To prepare, anticipate those directions to possibly pursue with each categorical question and think of questions in advance that will help do that. The risk is in not anticipating the right thing, being surprised by a clients' answer, having nothing prepared, and having to think "on your feet." That is the challenge and joy of qualitative interviewing. (See training exercises at the end of this chapter for a session dedicated to this skill.)

All those conducting interviews with the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool must understand why each question is being asked so that they will be able to ask the right probing questions, which involves clarity in both the language and the meaning of the question. (See Figure 6-4, Probes for Question 1.)

<div align="center">

FIGURE 6-4.
Probes for Question 1

</div>

Key Question	Sample Probing Question
1. How did you use this loan?	• Did you use any of the loan for another business, to pay off other debts, to save, or for personal /household expenses? • If used to pay off other debt, to whom did you owe money? • If used for savings, how much was put away? Where do you save? • If used for personal or household expenses, which ones? *If the client reports that he or she used the loan only for his or her business, find out what he or she invested in:* • Did you increase your stock, purchase equipment, buy raw materials, or improve your business location? • If purchased equipment, what did you buy? How much did it cost? • If purchased raw materials, which ones did you buy? Did you buy more or less than previously? • If improved business location, what did you do to your place of business?

In this preparation phase, think about the different types of questions that *might* be good to ask, rather than planning a definite line of questioning. Having some questions "in your back pocket" may make you feel more at ease when starting the interviews.

Step 4: Translate the Tool

In many cases, the tools must be translated into a local language. This process can be more complicated than it sounds. Those who understand the tool must work with speakers of the local language and consider each question as translated to make sure that its intent has been maintained. For this reason, a recommended translation process is to first give the materials to one individual or group to translate into the local language, and then to give the translated tool to a different individual or group to translate back into the original language. At this point it is possible to identify confusion or disagreement on the meaning of the many terms in this manual that may not be commonly known among diverse clients (for example, investment, loan proceeds, profits, estimate, and impact). Finally, conduct a practice session during which the same questions as translated are asked to determine, again, if any misunderstandings due to language remain.

In some countries, the local language will have an oral, rather than written, tradition. Even if it is written, team members may not be comfortable reading it. Thus it is important that they read the questions in the local language until they are completely at ease asking them.

Step 5:   Prepare Interview Materials

It is important to have a way to record the client's answers to each question during the interview. The best way to do this is to have a small notebook with pages of lined paper for each interview. In advance, write the interview questions in the notebook, leaving several blank pages after each question as space for recording the answers. If such notebooks are not available, create an interview form by writing one or two questions per page. Make enough copies of the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide and Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid for each client to be interviewed.

Step 6:   Field Test the Interview

At this point, the interviewer will have everything prepared, will know the categorical questions, will have developed probing questions, and will have practiced the interview with other team members. Despite all this preparation, it is essential to field test the tool with actual microentrepreneurs. This is the last chance to identify potential problems, points of confusion, and necessary revisions to the tool. Each interviewer should conduct at least two "test" interviews. When these are completed, the team should convene to discuss their experience and make any changes that the test indicates.

Step 7:   Schedule Interviews and Reduce the Clients' Anxieties

Schedule the interviews with the clients selected in the sample. Whenever possible, meet clients at the place where they operate their businesses. If intending to interview a marketplace vendor, for example, it will be necessary to allow for interruptions as customers visit the client's stall so as not to interrupt business. If it is not possible to meet the client at his or her place of business, ask the client's loan officer to arrange a time, date, and location for the interview with the client. If the client has to travel to the interview location, reimburse him or her transportation cost at that time. When making the appointments, tell clients that

- The interview should take no more than one hour; and

- In preparation, they should try to remember the specific ways that they used each of their loans.

Make an effort to reduce the client's anxiety about reporting this information, especially if the organization requires the loan to be used exactly as presented in a business plan. (See Figure 6-5, Reducing the Client's Anxiety.)

FIGURE 6-5.
Reducing the Client's Anxiety

Explain the interview with comments such as

- *"The organization wants to learn from you, so your honesty is most welcome"*; or
- *"We are not concerned with what you put on your loan application but in the actual way you used the loan"*; or
- *"Your name will be known only to the interviewer, and no one else will know."*

Conducting the Interview

This section provides specific guidelines for using the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool, including explanations of how to carry out the interview and how to record the client's responses.

The Beginning: Warm-up Questions

The Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool depends on clients' recall. Therefore, it is important to create an interview environment with clients that will help them remember information from different loan cycles. After preliminary introductions, ask the client some general questions about his or her participation in the program and how different loans have been used. This discussion is a "warm-up" for the specific questions that follow. (See Figure 6-6, Warm-up Questions and Answers.) Record clients' comments during this discussion because they can help with figuring out what probing questions to ask as the interview proceeds. Also use the information obtained in this opening conversation to confirm later responses to the directed questions.

FIGURE 6-6.
Warm-up Questions and Answers

Dialogue 1:
Interviewer: *Tell me about how you joined the program*
Client: The woman who sells next to me at the market knew I was having problems collecting enough money to buy more goods to sell. She told me about your organization and that you give loans to people like us. So I came to the office to find out. The people there told me about the program, and I decided to see if I could join

Dialogue 2:
Interviewer: *Tell me about the difficulties you have had in finding money to invest in your business.*
Client: No one wants to help me, only the moneylenders. They charge 400 percent interest, and even when you pay that they don't leave you alone. I needed to buy some spare parts for my bicycle so I could continue with my delivery business, but I couldn't get enough money together to buy them. My cousin knew one of the people who works for the organization, and he told me how I might be able to get some help.

Categorical and Probing Questions

When the general conversation reaches a good comfort level for both the interviewer and the client, move the conversation to the categorical questions on the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide. Proceed one question at a time, asking the categorical question first and probing questions next to clarify or expand on the client's answer.

When asking probing questions, recall the questions you thought to ask when preparing for the interview; refer to the notes you have taken during the general discussion that took place at the outset of the interview, and most importantly, listen to what the client is saying and NOT saying. Listen carefully, and think about your knowledge about him or her or about clients LIKE him or her. With knowledge of the background—such as the client's circumstances, the administration of the loan products, or the general economic context of the country—asking probing questions is usually a matter of simply continuing the conversation. (See Figure 6-7, Probing Question Dialogue.)

FIGURE 6-7.
Probing Question Dialogue

Interviewer: *Tell me about how you used your loan.*

Client: I bought some more maize to sell, and I paid a share in a grinding machine so I could start that business too. I gave my husband some money, too.

Interviewer: *About how much did you use to buy the maize? About how much did you use for the grinding machine? About how much did you give your husband?*

Client: Out of the $100, I paid $65 for the maize, about $20 for the grinding machine, and the rest I gave to my husband.

Interviewer: *Does your husband have a business also?*

Client: Yes, he actually helps me with selling the maize, so I give him some money because he helps me. Then he uses that money to buy parts of grinding machines that have fallen apart so he can fix them.

Interviewer: *So, the $20 for the grinding machine, and the $15 you gave to your husband all were used for the grinding business?*

Client: Yes.

Interviewer: *Is that why you bought a share in the grinding machine?*

Client: Yes, this way both my husband and I can earn from different sources.

Interviewer: *Do you own the grinding machine with your husband?*

Client: Yes, we own it together.

Interviewer: *So from your loan, you now have two businesses?*

Client: Yes.

From this line of probing in figure 6-7, the interviewer has learned several things: (1) the client has used the loan in two different businesses; (2) the client operates a business with her husband, in addition to her primary business of selling maize; (3) the client generates income from at least two different businesses; and (4) the client's husband has an additional business in fixing maize-grinding machines. Knowing these elements will help the organization understand how clients

allocate the loan money they have received, and the interrelationship of one business to another. Management may determine from this information that the loan application forms need to be revised to reflect the multiple allocation decision.

Recording Responses

During the interview, write down as much of the client's comments as possible in the notebook or on the created interview form. In qualitative interviewing, there is no such thing as recording too much. Record what the client says in his or her own words or expressions. The interviewer should not summarize, because in doing so, he or she may introduce his or her own interpretation and biases. If the client agrees, try using a tape recorder to capture all the information.

Analyzing the Data

The data analysis process recommended for this research entails five main steps: (1) transcribe data from questionnaires to the Loan Use Analysis Grid,[12] (2) extrapolate information from the grid and develop cross-client data tables, (3) study cross-client data tables with other team members to identify findings, (4) write the analysis in narrative form, and (5) share the analysis with others.

Step 1:   Transcribe Data from Questionnaires to the Loan Use Analysis Grid

At the end of the day, immediately after returning from interviews, take all the information gathered on the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide and transcribe it onto the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid. Use one grid per client. This is a shorthand approach that helps interviewers summarize key points about each client's use of loans over time. It is also helpful to have all of a client's information on a single sheet of paper that can be reviewed at a glance. An example of a client's narrative and Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid is included at the end of this section.

Step 2:   Extrapolate Information from the Grid and Develop Cross-Client Data Tables

From the summary created on the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid, create tables that compare clients' responses to the questions asked during the interview. After putting the data into standardized tables, beginning with a client's first loan, look for patterns and trends. One of the first tables to make summarizes the ways in which clients have used their loans, as shown in

---

[1]The recommended practice is to first write a detailed, narrative case history for each client from the field notes. In both AIMS field tests in Mali and Honduras, however, this step was not useful, given limited time and skills of the interviewers. Under the right circumstances, with researchers who have solid writing skills and sufficient time, such case histories are still recommended.

Figure 6-8, Clients' Loan Use. A second example comparing client responses to question #3, "Who decided to use the loan in these ways?" is found in Figure 6-9, Decision-making on Loan Use.

Step 3:   Study Cross-Client Data Tables with Other Team Members To Identify Findings

The interviewer is now ready to study the loan use analysis grids and the cross-client tables with the team to identify the findings that the data suggests. Post each of the interviewers' created tables on the walls, or find other ways to display them so everyone can all see the data and analyze it together.

To help flesh out and better understand what the data is suggesting, try some of the following techniques: group clients' stories to illustrate the strength or weakness of a finding; compare/contrast client responses in different categories; or group clients with similar characteristics. For example, look first at how first loans are used, then second, then third. What patterns in business expenditures can you find? Are clients re-investing any profits in their business? If so, are they expanding their business or diversifying and starting new ones? Look at the clients who report spending some portion of their loan on personal items. Do they have anything in common? Are they men or women? Are they new or mature clients? When do they tend to spend a portion of their loan on personal consumption? With the first loan? The second? By asking these types of questions (these are offered as examples; each interviewer will generate his or her own), it is possible to determine whether there is an overall pattern or trend to client loan use, or whether the pattern is relevant to just one type of client. With each comparison/contrast, identify and summarize the major changes that appear to have taken place.

FIGURE 6-8.

Clients' Loan Use

Client Name/No.	Loan 1	Loan 2	Loan 3	Loan 4	Loan 5
	Loan Amount	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**
1.	Bought condiments for existing condiment business	Condiments	In addition to condiments, bought beans to sell to other women. Bought some shoes/clothing for self and children.	Condiments, beans. Gave some to husband.	Condiments, beans. Gave some to husband and kept some money at home.
	Loan Amount	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**
2.	Expand restaurant business by adding meat and a richer sauce to menu	Food for restaurant. Added soft drinks to menu.	Food/drinks for restaurant. Also spent money on clothing for self and children	Food/drinks for restaurant. Gave some money to nephew for his business.	Food/drinks for restaurant. Gave some money to daughter to start up business
	Loan Amount	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**	**Loan Amount**
3.	Start up a business of buying and selling cereal(s)	Bought cereals and started up a second business of selling used clothing	Cereals, used clothing. Also spent some money on medications for sick child and school fees.	Cereals, used clothing. Gave some money to husband and used part of the loan to buy clothing/shoes for self/child.	Cereals, used clothing. Spent some money on buying material for upcoming marriage of daughter.

Clients' responses to question #3 are summarized in figure 6-9 and indicate the extent to which women have the power to make their own loan use decisions.

FIGURE 6-9.

Decision-making on Loan Use

Client Name/No.	Loan 1 Amount	Decision-maker	Loan 3 Amount	Decision-maker	Loan 5 Amount	Decision-maker
1	$50	Self	$150	Self	$300	Self + Brother
2	$80	Self	$240	Self + Husband	$450	Self + Husband
3	$35	Self	$105	Self	$200	Self + Father

All the information gathered during the loan use interview and recorded on the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide should be reflected in a series of cross-client tables. This is the necessary foundation for finding patterns and trends in how clients use their loans.

Step 4:   Write Your Analysis in Narrative Form

For each finding, the interviewer will draw from his or her field notes to add quotations and anecdotes that illustrate the points he or she wants to make. Describe each finding in writing as completely as possible. Examples of such narrative descriptions corresponding to the data in Figure 6-8, Clients' Loan Use, is analyzed in Figure 6-10, Finding on Clients' Loan Use.

FIGURE 6-10.
Finding on Clients' Loan Use

The in-depth interviews on loan use in Mali revealed that women typically used their initial program loans to expand an existing enterprise, but in later loan cycles they tended to diversify their enterprise activities or take on a new activity. Eleven of the twelve clients who were interviewed with this tool reported no new income-generating activities were established with their initial loan. Clients simply continued to operate the same businesses they had before or reactivated a previous business.

In addition, the three clients depicted in figure 6-8, Clients' Loan Use, also chose not to use all of their loan in an enterprise activity in the later loan cycles. All three clients used some of these later loans to purchase clothing and/or shoes for themselves and their children. More so than food purchases, buying clothing is an expenditure that is traditionally more the obligation of women than of men. Also clothing is an expression of social status, and it is potentially important to a woman's economic security.

Similarly the information on decision-making in Figure 6-9 suggests the analysis in Figure 6-11, Analysis on Decision-making.

<div style="border:1px solid black; background:#d3d3d3; padding:1em;">

FIGURE 6-11.
Analysis on Decision-making

The important pattern that emerges from the data in Figure 6-9, Decision-making on Loan Use, is that once loan amounts reach $200, a male becomes involved in the decision-making. It may be that men usually become concerned only when the woman is able to access enough capital to interest them, or that has the potential to generate enough income to merit dividing. Or the involvement of men may be explained by special circumstances of each respondent. Client #1 is divorced and may be seeking the advice of her brother for this major financial decision. Similarly, since client #2 is young and just starting out, she might be seeking the advice of her father.

</div>

To write the analysis as shown in figure 6-11, glean the specific client personal data either from field notes or from the program's management information system (MIS).

Step 5:   Share Your Analysis with Others

It is important to have at least one other person, but preferably two other people, read through the analysis. The purpose of this reading is to verify that others see the same commonalties, and to ensure that nothing is left out. (Compare Figure 6-12, Client Case History, with Figure 6-13, Loan Use Analysis Grid, to see how to translate the narrative history into an analytic grid format.)

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 20px;">

FIGURE 6-12.
Client Case History

Name: Jane
Location: Uganda

28; married; 5 persons in household; 3 children, but only one of school age and he or she is in school; 2 engaged in work; 2 business, 1 salaried worker; renter.
Businesses at time of first loan: clinic; husband had 'special hire' car.

Background: Jane is a general nurse. She opened her storefront clinic 3 years ago, having trained for 3 years as a nurse and subsequently worked in a hospital. Her husband earns a regular income as a teacher. They own a 'special hire' car, which they rent out to a driver. Unfortunately, the driver suffered an accident and the car is currently in the garage. This has led to a loss of a significant source of regular income, estimated at 20,000/- per day. It also led to a liquidity crisis, which was met by allocating loan funds to household needs—rent and school fees. The family rents its housing, which has been subdivided; the front room serves as a clinic with examining bed and a lock-up pharmacy.

Household Structure: Her 5-person household includes a house girl as well as 2 small children, one of whom is in school. This would appear to be a collaborative household in which husband and wife share financial responsibility for rent and school expenses. Her husband currently assumes responsibility for the household's food needs.

Loan Use: The first loan (150,000/-) was used to purchase drugs with the goals of meeting unmet demand. Having turned clients away for lack of specific stock, she sought to broaden her range of drugs to attract and retain a larger clientele. With a profit margin of about 25%, she was able to generate about 500/- a month. Earnings were spent on household needs as well as her medical license and clinic permit. Her second loan, 250,000/-, reflects the beginnings of a household liquidity crunch caused by the loss of income from the car. Only 40% was used to purchase drugs, the balance was used for two months rent. Jane did point out that she purchased a new and highly demanded product, injectable malaria, as part of her on-going strategy to attract new clients. Her third loan did not increase, probably a reflection of the income shortfall from the car. Meanwhile her profit has been growing slowly and she was able to deposit 10,000 in her savings account at Coop Bank.

Interaction with Other Financial Institutions: Jane opened a savings account with Coop Bank in 1996. Her balance is at 80,000 down from 100,000 to cover medical expenses associated with family illnesses over the last 4 months. She defined the account as her 'problem account,' which is intended to cover unexpected expenses including health needs and the occasional loan repayment when she has a cash shortfall.

Responding to Crises: Sickness of both her and her daughter and the car accident have been the main crises over the last year. Daughter's 2-week hospitalization meant a loss of income from the clinic. She had engaged a person to help in the clinic but the helper took all the earnings, leaving her with no income to cover loan repayments. Her husband paid off the loan.

</div>

FIGURE 6-13.

Loan Use Analysis Grid

Name: Jane			
	I	**II**	**III**
Loan amount	150,000	250,000	250,000
Date received	12/97	4/98	9/98
Term/repayment	16/weekly		
Allocation of loan funds	150,000 for purchase of drugs	100,00 drugs; 120,000—2 months rent	150,000 drugs; 60,000 rent; 20,000 school fees; 10,000 Coop Bank
Reasons for allocation	Increase range of drugs, bought more cheaply; goal was to increase number of clients; previously had to send them elsewhere when couldn't meet needs.	Usually husband pays rent but didn't have cash; he helps when she is short. New drug—injectable malaria. New drugs successful in attracting new clients.	Needed to help out since husband's car still in garage
Who decides	Client	Client and husband	Client and husband
Profits/surplus; loss	25% increase in profit; keeps books. Estimate profit at 50,000/month	Marginal increase in profit	Continued increase. Estimate profit 700,000/month
Use of profits	Rent, 60,000 for 1 month; paid shop license. Clinic, 100; medical license, 50,000;shared school fees with husband; savings in Coop Bank.	School fees, 40,000; food for household	Restock (working capital); increased forced savings in Trust Bank to get bigger loan.
Alternative if no loan	Nothing	Would have looked elsewhere.	
Crisis and response		Couple owned car, which was husband's business. Had special hire driver; had accident. Car still in garage. Loss of regular income of 20,000/day.	Daughter was sick; went to hospital; had operation—2 weeks in hospital; had help, but she took money; so closed clinic. Paid off loan with help of husband.
Savings	Coop Bank—opened before joining Trust in 1996; had 100,000; reduced to 80,000 by withdrawing for Trust-forced savings; uses as emergency for health expenses and when need to cover loan (liquidity management); finds herself drawing on savings for repayment about once a month.		
Note: *She keeps very detailed accounts and could calculate the figures*			

Scheduling

Using the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool involves tasks in the three phases explained above: (1) field preparation, (2) research, and (3) analysis of data. Guidelines for approximating the time required for each are offered below.

Field Preparation

Although the amount of time needed to prepare and train will vary by the experience and skills of the interviewers, three days are recommended for the set of activities described in this manual and are allocated as shown in Figure 6-14, Allocating Time for Field Preparation.

FIGURE 6-14.
Allocating Time
for Field Preparation

Task	Time
Selecting the sample	0.5 day
Extracting and reviewing client records	0.5 day
Training interviewer	1.0 day
Field testing tool	1.0 day

Research

It is estimated that each loan use interview takes 60 to 90 minutes. (The field test will give a better idea of how long the interviews will really take.) To determine how much time is needed to plan for these interviews, add up the number of clients in the sample plus the estimated travel time between clients. Finally, leave enough time at the end of each day for interviewers to write up their field notes from that day's interviews, estimated at one hour per interview. Taking into account the time needed for travel, the actual interview, and field notes, one interviewer can manage a maximum of three interviews per day.

Analysis of Data

Allocate three days to analyzing all the loan use data. This estimate assumes that interviewers have been able to process their field notes at the end of each day by summarizing each client's interview on a Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid. The process of analysis can be broken into the components listed in Figure 6-15, Allocating Time for Analyzing Loan Use Data.

FIGURE 6-15.
Allocating Time
for Analyzing Loan Use Data

Task	Time
Creating cross-client tables	1.0 day
Team discussion and analysis	1.0 day
Writing the results in a narrative report	1.0 day

Training Staff To Use the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Tool

This section includes training exercises to use during the preparation phase of research. Each exercise targets a specific skill that will help researchers apply the Loan Use Strategies Over Time tool. Because some researchers may already have these skills, team leaders should use their discretion in deciding how to train those who will be applying this tool. Most critical of these is Training Exercise #3 in which all skills come together and the interviewer becomes the research instrument.

<div align="center">

Training Exercise #1
Brainstorming Probing Questions

</div>

Goal: To produce probing questions in different categories

Objectives: At the end of the session, participants will be able to

- Make "backstage" information more conscious;
- Identify different categories of information; and
- Develop questions in each information category.

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Method: "Mind Mapping" by individual participants; brainstorming probing questions in different information domains in small groups or as individuals

Time: 75 minutes (1 and 1/4 hour)

Process:

Step 1:   Introduce

Introduce this exercise by saying that (1) we know a lot more about our clients than we think we know, and (2) we need to know how to integrate this information into our data collection process. In this exercise we will learn more about both of these through a number of participatory exercises.

Step 2:   Create Mind Maps

Distribute pieces of flip chart paper and markers to each individual. Explain that this exercise is designed to help them bring out different knowledge they have about clients. They might find it easier to think about a particular client when performing the following tasks.

Instruct participants to do the following:

1. Draw a circle in the center of the paper. In the center write the word "client" (or first name of a client if the participant is thinking about a specific client).

2. Draw a line from the circle. Along the line, draw another smaller circle in which one piece of information about client businesses that participants know should be written; for example, trader.

3. From this circle draw other lines and other circles that represent different pieces of information about what has been written; for example, sells used clothing, travels to different villages, needs to restock after completing one full round to each village, or buys from outlets in the city.

4. From the client again, draw another line and then a smaller circle and put the word "customers" in the circle; continue on the same as the point 3.

5. From the client again, draw another line and then a smaller circle and put the word "income" in the circle; continue on the same as the point 3.

6. Continue in this process until you have the following circles (and different offshoots from the circles) for the following categories:

   - Family
   - Cost of doing business
   - Loan use
   - Community constraints
   - National economic constraints

7. Do the same for clients' families or households.
8. Do the same for communities in which clients live.

The mind map might look something like the following:

Step 3: Review Mind Maps

Ask participants to team up with one other person and to review each other's maps. Tell them to ask different questions of each other as information is revealed to them (for example, pieces of information that could be added, different other "lines" that could be drawn out of the client center). As each point is raised in the discussion, have participants draw other lines and circles. (Allow 10 minutes.)

Step 4:   Brainstorm Probing Questions

Distribute another piece of flip chart paper to each participant. Have them review the different information "domains" (lines out from the center) that they developed in their mind maps. For each information domain identified, have participants write between five and ten different questions they could ask clients that would yield useful information about their participation in the program. Instruct participants to write the questions on the flip chart paper. (Allow 15 minutes.)

Step 5:   Integrate Information and Probing Questions

In this final part of the debriefing, ask participants reflect on what they know and how they developed the probing questions. In a full group, have participants discuss how they linked what they now know as "official" information to the types of questions they could ask. (Allow 15 minutes.)

Step 6:   Conclude

Affirm to participants that the totality of their knowledge about clients, their businesses, their families, their communities, the economic status of the country, the lending program, and the like, all contribute to their ability to become an "instrument" of qualitative research. Also affirm that when conducting the loan use interview, all of this knowledge can serve as the basis for any probing questions they might want to ask.

Training Exercise #2
Practice Interviewing with Categorical and Probing Questions

Goal: To gather relevant data in a qualitative interview.

Objectives: At the end of the session, participants will be able to develop and pose a line of probing questions in an interview situation.

Materials: Handout 1, Interview Questions; flip chart paper; markers

Method: Role play in dyads; debrief in larger group

Time: 60 minutes (1 hour)

Process:

Step 1: Introduce

Explain that good interviewing skills are developed as a function of personal/professional interest and curiosity blended with knowledge in particular topics. In this exercise, participants will practice interviewing with a set of categorical questions and developing probing questions through participation in a role play.

Step 2: Role Play an Interview

Instruct participants to form dyads. Provide Handout 1, Interview Questions (figure 6-16), to the participant playing the role of interviewer. Instruct interviewers to review these questions and to begin thinking about possible probing questions.

Explain to participants that interviewers have been given a set of categorical questions to ask the interviewee. The interviewee is instructed to respond to these questions from his or her own experience and knowledge. The interviewer's task is to develop probing questions "on-the-spot" to ask the interviewee. Again, the interviewee should respond to these questions from his or her own experience and knowledge.

When each dyad is ready, instruct them to begin the interview. (Allow 20 minutes.)

Step 3:   Debrief the Role Play

Instruct the "interviewers" to report out the probing questions developed for one categorical question. As each person reports these out, write them on a piece of flip chart paper (one piece for each categorical question) in the front of the room. After all probing questions have been written, ask participants if other probing questions were developed by other groups. Add these to the appropriate list. (Allow 20 minutes.)

Step 4:   Reduce Interview Anxiety

Have participants reflect on the process they have just completed. Ask them to report on the following:

- How did you feel when you were identifying the probing questions? Was it difficult to think of things to ask about?

- How did you feel when you asked the probing questions?

- How did these feelings change as you spent more time in the interview?

Foster a discussion about becoming comfortable in the interview process and how this occurs. Have participants identify the very specific elements of an interview that make both the interviewer and interviewee more at ease with the process. Write these down on a piece of flip chart paper in the front of the room. (Allow 20 minutes.)

Step 5:   Conclude

Close this exercise with an affirmation that the more interviews participants conduct, the more skilled and at ease with the process they become. Acknowledge the anxiety that doing research can provoke; but remind participants that the qualitative research process is conducted as a conversation with the interviewer expressing genuine interest in both the client and what the client is saying. Their experience in being "with" clients will enable them to develop probing questions easily.

Figure 6-16.
Handout 1
Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your life as a student (secondary school or university).

2. Tell me about your favorite subject when you were in school (secondary or university).

3. What kinds of activities did you like outside of school?

Training Exercise #3

Practice Listening, Asking Probing Questions, and Recording Responses

Goal: To obtain client data through conducting qualitative research interviews.

Objectives: At the end of the session, participants will be able to

- Listen to client comments;
- Develop probing questions while listening; and
- Record client comments while listening and developing probing questions.

Materials: Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide and Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid

Method: Individual work; interviews with clients; interview team debriefing

Time: 120 minutes (2 hours)

Process:

Step 1:   Introduce

Explain to participants that, as researchers, they must be able to do several activities at the same time. In this exercise, they will be called upon to listen, develop probing questions, and record client responses. Having worked on each of these skills separately, they will now put them all together using the actual Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide and the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid. This exercise will be a "rehearsal" of an actual client interview.

Step 2:   Review the Tools

Give each participant/interviewer the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Interview Guide and the Loan Use Strategies Over Time Analysis Grid. Give a few minutes to review these tools and to consider what types of probing questions they might ask. Answer any questions about the tool.

Step 3:   Role Play the Loan Use Interview

Divide participants into groups of three and ask each group to decide who will play each of the following roles: client, interviewer, and recorder.

Interviewers should listen intently to the client and develop probing questions to get more detailed information from the client. Interviewers also need to record client responses fully and

accurately. Recorders should try to record verbatim—to the extent possible—all that clients say in response to all questions posed.

Step 4: Share What Has Been Written

After the interview has been completed, have interviewers and recorders review their notes to determine if there is anything that was only partially recorded, or is not clear. Then have interviewers and recorders read their notes to clients to confirm the accuracy of their notes and/or to obtain clarity in what they have written. When interviewer, recorder, and client are satisfied that what the client has said has been recorded and understood, the interviewer should thank the client and allow the client to depart. (Allow 30 minutes.)

Step 5: Debrief

In this aspect of the debriefing, participants need to address the following issues:

1. The anxiety and confidence levels of interviewers
Did you feel nervous? How do you anticipate you will feel when conducting the "real" interviews? Were there any awkward moments?

2. The experience of probing
Did you ask a lot of probing questions? Were they helpful? Why is it important to probe? Was it hard to think of probing questions to ask.? Did you rely mostly on those you had earlier planned? Did you think of any "on-the-spot"?

3. The ability to carry out all three tasks at the same time
Was it hard to keep up? Did you miss any of what the client was saying? Do you think you will need a recorder to help you? How would a tape recorder affect the interview?

Foster a discussion on each of these points, asking participants to share how they encountered and overcame each of the challenges. Finally, discuss the actual research tool and whether interviewers and recorders feel that there are any problems in translation or in understanding the words used in the questions.

Step 6: Conclude

At the end of this exercise, the next step is for interviewers, or pairs of interviewers, to determine a specific plan for conducting the actual interviews.

Chapter 7

**Tool #4:
Client
Satisfaction**

- The Client Satisfaction tool

- Why the Client Satisfaction tool was developed

- Two methods for using the Client Satisfaction tool

- Preparing for focus groups

- Analyzing data

- Scheduling

- Training staff to use the Client Satisfaction tool

Chapter 7
Tool #4:
Client Satisfaction

Type of tool:

Qualitative

Overview:

The Client Satisfaction tool is a focus group interview tool that will help users learn the extent to which clients are satisfied with the program and what specific changes would better meet their needs.

Hypotheses tested by this tool:

None. This tool focuses on client satisfaction and provides information targeted to improving the program rather than identifying its impacts.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Client Satisfaction tool is to
- **Determine client satisfaction with program products and services; and**
- **Solicit client suggestions for improving the program.**

Amount of time required to administer the tool:

120 minutes (2 hours)

Source:

Nancy Horn of Opportunity International designed the initial version of this tool. Members of the AIMS/SEEP tools team subsequently revised it.

Client Satisfaction "Ideal" Reporting Matrix (Method 1)

(This list of program aspects is only an example. Each user should adjust the list to reflect the specific aspects of the program to be tested)

Group Name_____   Number of Participants in Focus
                                           Group_____

Type of Group_____
Location_____

Program Aspect	Current Practice	Ideal/Recommended Practice	Why?
Initial Loan Size			
Interest Rate			
Loan Term			

Program Aspect	Current Practice	Ideal/Recommended Practice	Why?
Savings Service (amount and frequencies of deposit)			
Access to Savings			
Frequency of Meetings			
Activities at Meetings (such as training presentations, discussions)			

Program Aspect	Current Practice	Ideal/Recommended Practice	Why?
Loan Officer/ Supervision			
Individual Technical Assistance			

Client Satisfaction "Likes-Dislikes" Reporting Matrix (Method 2)

Group Name and
Location_____

Number of Participants in Focus Group
Discussion_____

Program
Aspect_____
_____
(Use a form for each program aspect discussed)

Current Practice	What Clients Like About It?	What Clients Dislike About It?	Recommen-dation for Improvement?	Why?	Number Voting for Change

Summary of Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrixes

Total Number of Groups Interviewed_____
Total Number of Participants Groups_____

Program Element	What Clients Like?	# of Grps	What Clients Dislike?	Recommen-dations To Improve?	# of Grps	Why?
Loan Size						
Interest Rate						
Loan Term						

Program Element	What Clients Like?	# of Grps	What Clients Dislike?	Recommen-dations To Improve?	# of Grps	Why?
Savings (amt. & frequency of deposit)						
Access to Savings						
Frequency of Meetings						

Program Element	What Clients Like?	# of Grps	What Clients Dislike?	Recommen-dations To Improve?	# of Grps	Why?
Activities at Mtgs (training, discussions, speakers)						

Why the Client Satisfaction Tool Was Developed

Some experts are satisfied with indicators of client satisfaction that are fairly easy to measure such as frequency of leaving the program and/or sustained participation. But given the dual aim of proving and improving programs, the SEEP/AIMS team felt that managers and staff of microfinance programs would want to maximize their understanding about how their clients are reacting to the program's policies and services. Seeking the opinions of clients themselves is perhaps the best way to get this information. In so doing, this tool serves as a reality check to determine if the program is indeed meeting clients' needs. And if it is not, the tool will help identify what aspects specifically are not working as well as they could. Program managers have been surprised by what they have learned from this tool: Some have found that staff are not following stated program procedures; others have learned that the program's training has not been effective in; one program was surprised to hear clients asking for more contact with program staff.

Two Methods for Using the Client Satisfaction Tool

This tool asks clients to consider what they like and don't like about the lending program of the organization, and offers the clients an opportunity to voice their suggestions for improving it. (See the cautionary note in figure 7-1.) Two methods for implementing this tool are offered: (1) a group or individual design of an "ideal" lending program, and (2) a focus group interview that asks clients about their program likes and dislikes. Method 2 includes an optional voting process on program likes and dislikes. Each method, outlined below, involves the same preparatory steps described in the section, "Preparing for Focus Groups."

FIGURE 7-1.
Caution

Going to clients and asking their opinion about how to improve the program can raise expectations that their suggested changes will be made. In some instances, clients have complained that their suggestions are never taken seriously and such discussions are therefore a waste of time. Yet, credit methodologies, program policies and operational procedures are often based on a variety of factors that clients do not always know about or understand, such as risk management and cost control. In other words, program managers may have very good reasons for NOT adopting changes suggested by clients. If this is the case, the evaluation team should be prepared to explain that the information will be helpful to management even if it is not possible to make all changes that clients request. One group in Peru avoided raising expectations by introducing the exercise as an advisory session during which clients were asked to offer advice for a new program starting in another part of the country.

A second note of caution regards staff behavior during this focus group discussion. During field tests, staff have had a tendency to intervene and defend program policies in the face of client criticism. This interrupts the process and should not happen; to avoid it, interviewers must be coached before the interview and observed during the interview.

Method 1: The Clients' "Ideal" Lending Program

In this exercise, clients play the role of "program advisors" to the lending organization. Their task is to design a lending program that would be most suitable to clients – in other words, their "ideal" credit program. As advisors, they draw from their first hand experience with borrowing to design a loan program. Two researchers are needed to run the exercise: one facilitates the discussion; the other records what participants say on flip chart paper if possible or directly on the Client Satisfaction "Ideal" Matrix.

Step 1: Introduce

Open the session by introducing yourself and the recorder to the group. Ask each of the clients to introduce themselves. Explain that the purpose of this session is to seek the advice of participants. You, in fact, will be asking participants to serve as advisors to the organization and share knowledge that they have based on their every day experience. As advisors, their job will be to design the best lending program possible that fits the needs of as many clients as possible. Your job will be to listen and ask different questions about the program that these "advisors" design. The recorder will record the ideas and discussion.

Step 2: Warm Up

Select an activity that is familiar to clients, one they have experience planning. Ask them what the best possible version of that activity would look like. For example, you could ask them to suggest a very important holiday celebration they organize every year. To start them thinking and discussing this special event, ask the following questions:

- What are the tasks you have to do to prepare for the event?
- Which of these is the biggest job or takes the most time?
- Are there different ways to accomplish this task?
- What is your favorite way to do it? Why?
- What do you like best about this event?
- Can you describe the best (your choice) celebration you can remember?
- If you could have the (your choice) celebration be any way you wanted, how would it be?

The purpose of this warm-up exercise is to get clients thinking about the concept "ideal" as applied to something very familiar to them. The choice of planning a celebration is offered here only as one example. Choose any activity that is familiar to most clients.

Note: In attempting to implement this tool in Honduras and Mali, clients were not clear on what an "ideal" program would be. The word itself gave clients trouble. In Ghana, clients needed a little "nudging" to think about the different aspects of the program so that they could discuss whether they were appropriate or not. In Bolivia, however, this method worked very well.

Step 3: Plan the Ideal Loan Program

Now explain that the group is going to undergo a similar planning process for a loan program. Tell them that their first hand knowledge with this loan program is very valuable for designing a better one. Start the process by putting up a flip chart showing the various program features you want to cover during the exercise, such as the loan size, loan term, savings policies, and frequency of meetings. (These features will have been identified with program managers ahead of time. The list you use will depend on how your program is designed and what you most want to know.) Review all features to make sure everyone understands what they mean.

Divide the group in two. Assign half of the features to Group 1 and the remaining half of the list to Group 2. Explain to both groups that their task as a group will be to decide the best way to "design" each feature. Give the groups 30 minutes to talk among themselves and design the "ideal" for each of the features they were assigned.

Step 4: Present and Review Plans

When the group has finished this task, each group member will have to report on one feature, stating the current practice first, their "ideal" version next, and finally, explaining why the ideal is preferred to current practice. Each "reporter" will have 5 minutes to present her feature to the whole group.

Display a flip chart with four columns showing the following headings from left to right:

- Program Features;
- Current Practice;
- "Ideal" Practice;
- Explanation.

During presentations, record information on this flip chart. If a flip chart or board is not available, the recorder can write the information directly on the Client Satisfaction Matrix recording sheet.

As the presentations proceed, you may want to discuss the proposed changes with probing questions such as the following:

- For a suggested change, why would this be better than the way it is done now?

- Would these changes create hardships for some?

- Does this recommendation work better for some types of clients or businesses than for others?

Review the suggested design changes and summarize how clients would design their "ideal" program. Seek their agreement or disagreement. Clarify any misunderstandings.

Method 2: Identifying Clients' Likes and Dislikes

The second method for implementing The Client Satisfaction tool follows a more traditional group discussion format. This method focuses on identifying what clients like and dislike about each aspect or feature of the lending methodology. Participants are each given a card with one program feature written on it. In turn, each participant describes the feature as currently practiced, comments on what she likes about the feature, and makes a suggestion for how to improve it. Then the discussion of this feature is opened to comments from the whole group.

The key to a successful focus group interview is the management of a group discussion. An interviewer must be able to do the following:

- Make clients feel comfortable in voicing their opinions in a group environment;

- Get everyone to participate;

- Keep the discussion flowing; and

- Obtain the information needed in a limited time.

Step 1:   Introduce

Introduce yourself and the recorder to the group and ask participants to introduce themselves. Explain that the purpose of this session is to seek clients opinions on what they like and dislike about the program. Explain that this information will help others design better lending programs in the future. Assure everyone that their names will not be attached to the points they raise and that the discussion today will in no way affect clients' ability to participate in the program.

Step 2:   Warm Up

To get the clients accustomed to discussing what they like and dislike about the program, begin with a discussion of some other aspect of their life, something very familiar. For each topic, ask what they like and what they dislike. Brainstorm good topics for this warm up exercise with the team. Suggested topics are the following:

- Sundays;

- Soccer matches;

- Market day in their town; or

- School holidays.

Step 3:   Define the Topics for Discussion

Give each group participant a pre-made card that has on it the name and/or a symbol for one program element, such as interest rate, loan term, loan amount, repayment frequency, training, or supervision by promoters. If the group is large, more than one person may have a card with the same element on it.

NOTE: The items put on the cards and listed in the "Client Satisfaction: Reporting Matrix" should be determined by the organization in accordance with the program being evaluated. It is expected that these items will vary by program and by organization.

Show a flip chart with all these program aspects listed (along with the corresponding symbols if they are used) and review each item with the group to make sure everyone understands the meaning of the aspects to be discussed. The recorder or another client should be assigned to help those participants who have difficulty reading.

Step 4:   Describe Program Elements

Starting with the first program on the list, the interviewer should then ask the person who has this element on his or her card to describe for everyone how that element operates in the present program. Invite other participants with the same card to contribute to explaining the program element as may be necessary to complete the description of its specific features.

Step 5: Determine Likes, Dislikes, and Recommendations for Improvement

Display a flip chart with five columns labeled as follows:

- Program Feature;

- Like About Feature;

- Dislike About Feature;

- Recommended Changes; and

- Why?

You will probably need one flip chart for each program feature. (In addition to, or in substitution for the flip chart process, the recorder should be documenting the group's recommendations and comments using the Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrix. If the flip chart option is not available, the recorder must be sure to write down *everything* that is said, and provide feedback to the group by reading what s/he has written to confirm its accuracy.)

Ask the cardholder to indicate whether there are any aspects of this program feature that s/he likes, and if so, to identify what these are. The recorder should list these "likes" in the appropriate column on the flip chart for all to see. If another person has the same card, ask that person the same question.

Next, ask the cardholder how this program feature could be improved and why. Write her response on the appropriate column on the flip chart Invite those whose cards have the same feature to add their comments. Open the discussion about this feature to the rest of the group.

Ask: *Does everyone agree with this suggestion? Does anyone have a different idea?*

Continue with the same process for each card distributed and until all program features on the list have been presented and discussed.

Step 6: Summarize

After everyone has finished, summarize the conclusions for the group as you have heard them. Ask if anything was left out of the summary. Then thank participants for their time. Affirm that their opinions are important to the program and will be taken into consideration by the program managers as they consider how they can make the program more client-focused and improve its services.

OPTION: Focus Group with a Nominal Group Voting Process

The nominal group voting process in this tool is an optional step to determine how many people agree with the recommendations for change identified in the focus group discussion. (See the cautionary note in figure 7-2.) Because the information gathered during these focus group discussions can influence program adjustments, management may want to know exactly how many of each client group want the changes to take place. Whether you use the voting process explained here will depend on how important this numerical count is to program management.

FIGURE 7-2.
Caution on Nominal Group Voting

Conducting a voting process in a group context can be tricky. Because of the nature of group interaction, certain clients often emerge as "opinion leaders" and the rest, the followers, will agree with what the leaders say and vote accordingly. It is very important to convince clients that they are free to contribute to the discussion and NOT simply follow what someone else in the group does. In addition, people often hesitate to be negative.

Step 2:   Vote

After the likes, dislikes, and recommendations have been recorded, conduct a vote on each of the recommendations for change. You can do this at either of the following two junctures:

- After each recommendation has been identified; or

- After all recommendations have been identified.

If you choose the latter, you might give clients a minute to consider whether they want to add any other recommendations. Write any new ones on the flip chart list. When everyone is satisfied that the list is complete, ask participants to review it and pick those they really agree with. Two voting procedures are explained below:

After each recommendation has been identified

Pass out two cards to each participant. Cards should be coded with either numbers ("0" for disagree and "1" for "agree") or colors (for example, green for "agree" and red for "disagree"). Tell clients that if they agree with this recommendation, they should hold up the "agree" card; if they do NOT agree with the recommendation, they should hold up the card with the "disagree" card (as identified by either a color or number).

Explain the following three requirements for voting:

- For each recommendation, they can only vote one way and hold up only one card;

- When voting, no one is allowed to look at another person's cards, so all eyes must be focused up front; and

- Counting the votes is necessary for management to understand the strength of the responses.

Read aloud one program/practice recommendation and ask everyone to vote by showing the appropriate agree/disagree card.

The recorder counts the votes, and records them in the last column of the Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrix.

After all recommendations have been identified

Another way to vote is by writing all recommendations on a board or flip chart. Ask participants to come forward and mark those with which they agree. Alternatively, they can pick their top three priorities from the list and mark each accordingly with numbers (1,2, 3) to indicate their order of priority.

It is possible that all clients feel very comfortable with each other and would be able to vote independently by a show of hands. While this, less anonymous, method of voting may work in certain cultural settings, in others it is possible that an "opinion leader" may set the tone and expect others to vote in the same way.

Another alternative to voting by show of hands is to post a list of the suggested program changes and ask participants to check those with which they agree; this process is less personal; more anonymous.

Preparing for Focus Groups

Select Participants

This tool seeks information on client satisfaction with specific aspects of the program that can help management determine what changes, if any, should be made. Because the data collected can directly effect the entire lending program, it is important to talk to clients who represent the program population. There is no standard number of groups or percentage of the client population that should be interviewed. You should hold focus group discussions until no new information is gained.

As with any research tool, you must choose the client characteristics that you feel are most important in determining your sample. Is it important to have both men and women, rural and urban clients represented? Your organization may wish to compare/contrast client satisfaction in different geographic locations, with those under the supervision of different branch offices, with clients engaged in different types of businesses (for example, manufacturers vs. traders vs. service providers). After choosing these characteristics, select individual clients or groups that represent those categories.

The second challenge in designing your selection of focus groups is composing the groups themselves. You can either invite different individuals to form special groups for the purpose of this evaluation, or you can interview existing peer groups.

If applying this tool to an individual lending program, you have to invite individuals to join groups. Focus groups work best if their participants (1) have specific knowledge, (2) feel comfortable in sharing that knowledge in a small group setting, (3) can engage in a discussion on aspects of this knowledge, and (4) can demonstrate mutual respect in allowing others to speak. "Qualified" group participants should be clients who have these qualities, as well as those who are representatives of a sub-population of clients; for example, rural vs. urban, male vs. female, and group lending vs. individual lending.

For impact assessments of group lending programs existing solidarity groups or village banks can become a focus group. As with individuals, the groups you choose to include should be identified by the characteristics you want to learn about as well as by (1) geographic distribution; (2) industry distribution, if all members of a group participate in the same industry; (3) repayment status; and (4) relationship with loan officer. For instance, having chosen a group with a high arrears rate, you might learn that members dislike the infrequency of visits by the loan officer. By using probing questions during the discussion, you may find out that, feeling neglected, group members are less committed to consistent loan payments.

Prepare for the Interview

Step 1:   Get To Know the Program Methodology

You must be very knowledgeable about the different financial and non-financial services offered by the organization. As users of these services, clients may identify any aspect of the program with which they are dissatisfied and you should understand what they are talking about. If you are familiar with all aspects of the products, services and methodologies for delivering them, you can be quick to respond to clients with valuable follow-up questions during the focus group interview.

In those programs offering multiple loan products, it is possible that loan officers working with one product will be assigned to interview clients using a different product. In theses cases, staff will have to thoroughly learn the "other" product. For instance, if group lending includes methodologies such as savings, insurance, payment of fees for different group meetings, and infractions, you must be prepared to talk about these topics as they arise in the interview. Similarly, if an individual lending program requires that a client writes post-dated checks to make repayment, you must understand this system even if it is not used in the program's group lending component. You the interviewer must be prepared to explain any differences in the way the program is implemented from one group or individual to another—what they are and why they exist.

Step 2:   Get To Know Each Sub-Population of Clients To Be Interviewed

You will also find it helpful to know each sub-population selected for the interview. If for example, you are interviewing a group of rural villagers, you should find out if they have difficulties repaying their loans due to the timing of the agricultural cycle. Similarly, a group of manufacturers must purchase raw materials, manufacture their product, market it and wait for payment before they can repay their loans. The delay built into this type of business cycle might lead them to request a grace period.

Step 3:   Make Logistical Arrangements To Conduct the Focus Group Interview

If the entire membership of a village bank or solidarity group has been chosen to participate in a focus group, arrange to conduct the interview during a time when they normally meet. You should explain the goal of the activity to the group leader and mention that the meeting may take longer than their normal meetings do. The leader can then inform the group members in advance to plan for a slightly longer group meeting.

If arranging focus groups composed of either individual loan clients or individuals selected from different borrower groups, you must do the following:

- Issue invitations and clearly communicate what is expected of participants;

- Find a time that is acceptable to the majority of selected clients;

- Arrange for a meeting place and transportation to that place; and

- Consider offering an incentive for since the focus group meeting will likely require that clients take time away from their business or workplace participation (for example, lunch or the cost of transport to the meeting place; in Honduras, evaluators gave the village bank leaders money to purchase refreshments.).

Step 4: *Select the Focus Group Method You Want To Use and Prepare*

Plan out how the interview will be conducted and prepare some probing questions (to serve as a resource in case you "freeze up"). Work with the person who will accompany you to serve as recorder, making sure s/he understands what information is to be recorded and how. Finally, practice using the tool with a simulated focus group, as described in the training exercises at the end of this chapter.

Analyzing Data

The data analysis process recommended for this research entails the following four main steps, listed and explained below: (1) transcribe all data from the individual matrixes to the Summary of Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrixes, (2) study the summary matrixes and tally the results, (3) write the analysis, and (4) share the findings.

Step 1: Transcribe All Data from the Individual Matrixes to the Summary of Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrixes

Immediately after returning from the interviews at the end of the day, take all of the information gathered on the individual matrix and transcribe it onto the Summary of Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrixes. (See the example in figure 7-3.) The facilitator and the recorder should work together on this task and should be able to attribute specific likes/dislikes and recommendations to a particular group. Having every group's comments on each of the program aspects covered during the focus group sessions will be helpful in writing up the findings.

FIGURE 7-3.
Example
Summary of Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrixes

Program Element	What Like?	Number of Groups (Which Groups)	What Dislike?	Recommendations to Improve	Why?	Number of Groups
Frequency of Meetings	Liked current spacing	3 (2,4,5)	Thought meetings were too frequent	Change frequency to every 2 mos.	Allow for smaller weekly loan repayment	3 (1,3,6)
Supervision	Frequency	2 (2,5)	Visits not frequent enough	Visit more often	More support and training is needed	4 (1,3,4,6)
Loan Amounts	Amounts currently given	4 (1,2,5,6)	Amounts too small	Increase size of maximum loan	Able to use larger amounts than the ceiling amounts set for each loan cycle	2 (3,4)
Training	Frequency and topics	3 (3,4,6)	Too infrequent, topics not comprehensive enough	More diversity in training topics	Current training does not meet clients' needs	3 (1,2,5)
Interest Rates	Approved of current level	2 (1,2)	Too high	lowered	Difficulty in paying loan	4 (3,4,5,6)
Savings	Forced savings component	4 (2,4,5,6)	Amount of forced savings too high	Lower amount	Funds not accessible	2 (1,3)

Step 2:   Study the Summary of Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrixes and Tally the Results

Look at how all the groups reacted to each program feature. List all the specific "likes" and "dislikes" from all groups on the Summary of Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrixes and tally the number of groups that cited each one. The examples in figures 7-4 and 7-5 show how this information can be summarized and reported.

FIGURE 7-4.
Example
Summarizing and Reporting Likes/Dislikes

83 percent (5 of 6 groups)	Liked the	Internal rules of the program
50 percent (3 of 6 groups)	Liked the	Monthly meetings of village banks
67 percent (4 of 6 groups)	Liked the	Current method of client selection
67 percent (4 of 6 groups)	Liked the	Loan amounts being given now
50 percent (3 of 6 groups)	Liked the	Way the loans are being disbursed now
50 percent (3 of 6 groups)	Liked the	Method of payment of the loans
67 percent (4 of 6 groups)	Liked the	Obligatory savings
67 percent (4 of 6 groups)	Disliked the	Current low level of loan supervision
67 percent (4 of 6 groups)	Disliked the	Current high interest rates
50 percent (3 of 6 groups)	Disliked the	Current level and content of training

Now analyze which groups "liked" or "disliked" a program feature. What do they have in common? Do the same groups tend to like and dislike the same program features? Are their reasons for disliking a feature similar, or different? Are their recommendations similar? If a majority makes the same recommendation, what does that tell you about how clients are reacting to the program? What stories did you hear during the focus group discussion that can strengthen your finding? By grouping client stories to illustrate the strength or weakness of a finding, comparing client responses in different categories, and grouping clients with similar characteristics, you can determine whether specific likes or dislikes are held by most clients or by only one type of group. If this is the case, what characteristics of this particular group explain their unique reaction?
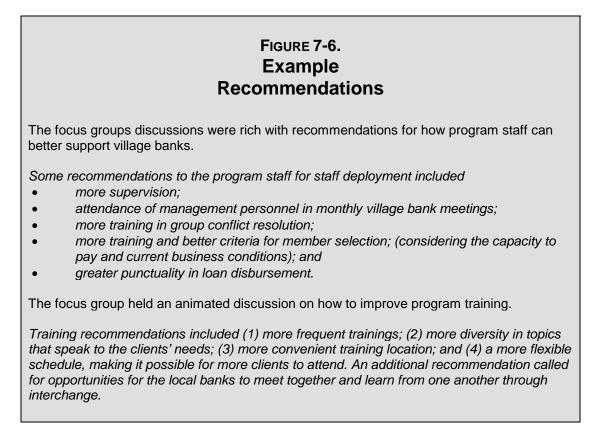
> **FIGURE 7-5.**
> **Example**
> **Client Satisfaction in Mali**
>
> *Finding: Clients appreciated Kafo's flexibility in setting meeting schedules based on clients' desires.*
>
> All six focus groups reported their satisfaction with the frequency of their credit association meetings. In response to members' requests, Kafo Jiginiew has been flexible about the frequency of meetings, which varies according to the season, recommendations of the clients and the ability of the field agents to encourage members to meet frequently.

Step 3: Write the Analysis

Write the analysis in narrative form. (See the example in figure 7-6.) As much as possible, use direct quotes and anecdotes from clients.

> **FIGURE 7-6.**
> **Example**
> **Recommendations**
>
> The focus groups discussions were rich with recommendations for how program staff can better support village banks.
>
> *Some recommendations to the program staff for staff deployment included*
> - *more supervision;*
> - *attendance of management personnel in monthly village bank meetings;*
> - *more training in group conflict resolution;*
> - *more training and better criteria for member selection; (considering the capacity to pay and current business conditions); and*
> - *greater punctuality in loan disbursement.*
>
> The focus group held an animated discussion on how to improve program training.
>
> *Training recommendations included (1) more frequent trainings; (2) more diversity in topics that speak to the clients' needs; (3) more convenient training location; and (4) a more flexible schedule, making it possible for more clients to attend. An additional recommendation called for opportunities for the local banks to meet together and learn from one another through interchange.*

Step 4:   Share the Findings

It is important to have at least one other person, but preferably two other people, read through your findings to verify that others agree with you and to ensure that nothing is left out.

Scheduling

The Client Satisfaction focus group tool involves tasks in the three phases explained above: (1) preparing, (2) researching, and (3) analyzing data. Guidelines for approximating the time required for each are offered below.

Preparing

Although the amount of time needed for preparation and training will vary by the experience and skills of the interviewers, three days are recommended for the set of activities described in this manual. Allocation of these three days is illustrated in figure 7-7.

FIGURE 7-7.
Allocating Time for Field Preparation

Task	Time
Selecting the sample	0.5 day
Extracting and reviewing client records	0.5 day
Training interviewer	1.0 day
Field testing tool	1.0 day

Researching

Each focus group discussion is estimated to take 60 to 120 minutes. (Your field test will give a better idea of how long the interviews will actually take.) To determine how much time you will need to plan for these interviews you must add up the number of focus groups you plan to conduct and add the estimated travel time to and from the groups. Finally, leave enough time at the end of each day for interviewers to write up their field notes from that day's focus groups, estimated at one hour per group. Taking into account the time needed for travel, the actual interview and processing field notes, each interview team should be able to conduct two focus groups per day. In cases of optimal conditions (everyone shows up on time) and minimal travel time between groups, three may be possible.

Analyzing Data

Although the number of focus group discussions will determine the time required for data collection and analysis, a minimum of two days should be allocated to the analysis of all the client satisfaction data. This estimate assumes that interviewers have been able to process their field notes at the end of each day by summarizing each focus group discussion on a client satisfaction reporting matrix. The process of analysis can be broken into the several components, as illustrated in figure 7-8.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">FIGURE 7-8.
Allocating Time for Analyzing Client Satisfaction Data</td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">Task</td><td align="center">Time</td></tr>
<tr><td>Summarizing reporting matrixes
Tallying and analyzing results
Writing the results in a narrative report</td><td align="center">0.5 day
0.5 day
1.0 day</td></tr>
</table>

Training Clients To Use the Client Satisfaction Tool

This section presents several training exercises that the evaluation supervisors or team leaders can use to train staff in applying the Client Satisfaction tool. Each exercise corresponds to one of the focus group methods outlined earlier; consequently, your choice of method will determine which of the following training exercises is relevant to your team.

Training Exercise #1
Designing The Ideal Lending Program

Goal: To help interviewers understand and gain experience with the methodology.

Objectives: At the end of the session interviewers will be able to

- Identify appropriate warm-up exercises to use;

- Identify good interviewer skills; and

- Identify appropriate responses to potential client behaviors.

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Method: Role play and discussion

Time: 120 minutes (2 hours)

Process:

Step 1:   Introduce the Method

Distribute reproduced copies of Method 1 as described earlier in this section. Ask everyone to read the description of the methodology. Answer any questions. Discuss any points of concern.

Step 2:   Role Play This Focus Group Method

Set up a role play in which the evaluation supervisor is the focus group facilitator and the "Interviewers-in-training" play the clients participating in the focus group. Assign the following roles to individual "clients":   1) group leader who tends to dominate the discussion; 2) a shy person who never volunteers to speak; 3) two chatty clients who tend to not pay attention and like to whisper to their neighbors about anything at all.

Role play the focus group interview following the steps described in Method 1. During the role play, the evaluation supervisor should demonstrate good facilitator skills, including appropriate responses to the disruptive and silent group members.

Step 3:   Debrief the Role Play

Discuss the experience from two points of view: First, ask participants for their observations on the focus group facilitator. What did you like about the way s/he led the meeting? Identify and discuss how the facilitator handled specific problems. Conclude this discussion by making a list of facilitator skills that would include the following:

- making clients feel very comfortable in voicing their opinions in a group environment;
- getting everyone to participate;
- keeping the discussion flowing; and
- obtaining the information needed in a limited time .

Now, proceed to a discussion of the focus group experience from the "client's" perspective. What was it like? Did you understand what the facilitator was asking? Do you think actual clients in your program will be able to do this? What barriers can you anticipate?

Step 4:   Brainstorm for the Warm-up Exercise

Ask participants to focus on the warm-up exercise. Why is this part of the methodology? (In previous tools tests, evaluators found that clients had difficulty with the concept of "ideal". This warm up exercise will hopefully help clients understand this abstract concept by applying it to a familiar event in their lives).

Discuss the warm-up exercise described in the Method 1 description. Is this a good example to use? What other ideas might work better? List the ideas on a flip chart.

Finally, brainstorm other ways to introduce and explain the concept of "ideal" to clients. One thought is to suggest several familiar items and ask clients to describe their "ideal" version of that item. For example, "What would your "ideal" **house** look like?" What are the characteristics of an "ideal" **husband** ?

Step 5:   Repeat the Role Play

Role the focus group again. This time ask for a volunteer to serve as facilitator. Give the group a few minutes to prepare the role play, including choosing how they want to do the warm-up exercise and what types of behaviors they want to exhibit as focus group participants. Debrief, providing feedback to the facilitator.

<div align="center">

Training Exercise #2
Practice Focus Group Discussions

</div>

Goal: To build familiarity with and skills in focus group facilitation.

Objectives: At the end of the session, participants will be able to

- Develop and facilitate a discussion on a specific topic;
- Manage a group discussion; and
- Facilitate a nominal group voting process.

Materials: Flip chart paper, markers, and two cards for each participant

Method: Group discussion and voting process

Time: Approximately 70 minutes

Process:

Step 1:   Introduce

Explain to participants that the purpose of this exercise to gain experience in facilitating a focus group discussion, including managing a group voting process at the end of the discussion. Explain the basic idea of focus groups, why they are used, how they work, and who participates in them.

State the following basic ground rules of focus groups:

- Everybody participates and expresses his or her own thoughts and opinions; and
- In a group vote, everybody votes according to his or her own opinions.

Finally, explain that during this exercise the group is going to participate in a focus group discussion. Select a participant to act as facilitator.

Step 2:   Brainstorm Topics for a Focus Group Discussion

The first task is to identify possible topics for a focus group discussion. These topics should be those with which the staff (or whoever is participating in the training) has experience, knowledge and opinions. Some examples could include the children's school calendar, loan officers' job

description; or an incentive system for a microfinance program. Brainstorm a list of possible topics and select one to discuss in greater detail.

Step 3:   Discuss the Topic

Invite the volunteer facilitator to take over and initiate a discussion of the topic "on the table". Examples of how to proceed with two different topics are outlined below.

Example 1: A Loan Officer's job description.

Ask participants to suggest specific tasks or responsibilities that could be assigned to a loan officer (for example, client recruitment, group orientation, loan review, group supervision, trouble-shooting, or loan records). Encourage everyone to contribute suggestions to the list. Now present a hypothetical situation in which a program manager is trying to revise the loan officer's job description in an effort to re-allocate tasks and respond to complaints that loan officers are over-burdened. In the end, the program manager will craft a job description that is limited to five items from the list. Ask participants to discuss the merits of the tasks that have been included. Which ones are the most important? Which could be allocated elsewhere?

Example 2: School Calendar:

Ask participants to imagine that they are parents of school children within the ages of 6 and 10. As parents, they are meeting with the school director to determine the calendar for the next school year. First review the existing calendar. When does school start? When are vacations scheduled? When does the school year end? Discuss what parents like and dislike about each of these. What changes in the calendar would parents like to propose? Make a list of the recommendations.

Step 4:   Vote

Distribute two cards to each participant. Instruct them to write a "1" on the first, and a "0" on the second. Explain that they will now vote on what they think should be 1) the five tasks of a loan officer; or 2) the changes to the school calendar. When each option (either job task or change to school calendar) is read out, each participant will hold up either of the cards, the "1" standing for a "Yes" vote and the "0" for a "No" vote. No one should look at another's cards; all eyes should be focused on the facilitator.

Proceed to vote on each of the items, counting the votes each time. Tally the votes and identify the "winning" items (the top five in the example of the employee benefit package; those suggested changes receiving the most votes).

Option: If your discussion topic lends itself to voting on a large number of items, you can choose to vote twice – first to establish the long list and again to narrow that list down to a manageable number. After the first vote, facilitate another discussion of the new list to elicit opinions about

which of these are the real priorities. Try to get everyone to express their opinion before proceeding with the second vote.

Step 5: Conclude

Ask if participants need to discuss any other points. If yes, listen to the discussion and determine if another vote is necessary. If no, thank participants for their contributions and allow them to leave. (Allow 20 minutes.)

Step 6: Debrief

Ask the facilitator to comment on the process and how he or she felt in the process of facilitating the discussion. What was difficult? What seemed to work well? Was there any notion of "follow the leader" in the discussion?

Next, ask the other participants how they reacted to the group process. What was difficult or uncomfortable? Were there misunderstandings? What did they notice about the facilitator? Was she nervous? Did she keep the discussion going? Did everyone get a chance to participate?

Ask participants to anticipate problems that can arise in such a group discussion among their clients. How could each of these be handled?

Training Exercise #3
Practice Determining Client Satisfaction in Focus Groups

Goal: To expose staff to Client Satisfaction tool including facilitating group discussion and a group voting process.

Objectives: At the end of the session, participants will be able to

- Identify areas of program satisfaction and dissatisfaction;
- Identify suggestions for change;
- Facilitate a group discussion; and
- Facilitate a nominal group voting process.

Materials: Handout 1, Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrix; Handout 2, Nominal Group Voting Matrix

Method: Group discussion and group voting process

Time: 60 minutes (1 hour)

Process:

Step 1:   Introduce

Explain to participants that this is a role play in which they will be the clients. One person will be the interviewer who is interested in learning about what clients like and dislike about the program in order to design a new program in another part of the country. Another person will be the recorder. Give handouts 1 and 2 to the interviewer and the recorder.

Step 2:   Conduct a Focus Group Interview

Role play the focus group interview, following the process outlined in Method 2.

Step 3:   Debrief the Role Play

Ask the facilitator to comment on the experience. What did she like? What did she NOT like? What was hard? Can she now think of questions she should have asked? What would she do differently when conducting a "real" focus group with clients?

Ask "clients" how they reacted to the discussion. Were they being honest? Was reliable data reported?

Was the recorder able to capture all the information needed on the Client Satisfaction Reporting Matrix?

Chapter 8

**Tool #5:
Client
Empowerment**

- The Client Empowerment tool

- Why the Client Empowerment tool was developed

- Two methods for implementing the Client Empowerment tool

- Preparing for the interviews: step by step

- Analyzing data

- Scheduling

- Training staff to use the Client Empowerment tool

Tool #5:
Client Empowerment

Type of tool:

Qualitative

Overview:

The Client Empowerment tool is an in-depth individual interview designed for women clients who have participated in the program for more than one year. During the interview, the client is asked to identify differences in her behavior in the past and the present.

Hypotheses tested by this tool:

Individual level:

- Increased control of resources on the part of women clients; and
- Increased self-esteem on the part of women clients.

Purpose:

The purpose of The Client Empowerment tool is to

- Determine if clients have grown more confident and gained more self-esteem while participating in the program; and
- Identify how those qualities have translated into specific changes in her behavior that demonstrate empowerment.

Amount of time required to administer this tool:

60 to 120 minutes (1 to 2 hours)

Source:

Nancy Horn of Opportunity International designed the initial version of this tool. Members of the AIMS/SEEP tools team subsequently revised it.

Menu of Categorical Questions

View this menu as a list of suggested questions to ask during the interview. Choose questions according to the information the organization wants to obtain. To identify a pattern of change, ask the selected questions twice: once for the past and again for the present. Here, the questions address a client's actions in the past. For the present, BE SURE to change the verb tenses!

Individual

- What kind of person did you used to be?
- If I had been with you before you joined the program, what would I have seen you doing?
- How did you feel about yourself before joining the program?
- What kinds of dreams/goals did you have for you life?
- What types of actions did you take/NOT take to fulfill those dreams/goals?
- When you left your home, how did you look at the world? (as a set of problems, a set of opportunities, a set of challenges she could overcome)
- As you moved around the community, what did people say about you?

Business

- Did you have a business before joining the program? If so, please explain.
- What kind of person did you used to be in your business?
- If I had been with you before joining the program, what would I have seen you doing in your business?
- How did you manage the business?
- How did you feel about yourself as a business operator/manager? About how your business was doing? Why?
- What kind of dreams/goals did you have for your business?
- What kinds of decisions did you make/NOT make about your business? What kinds of decisions did you defer to other people? Who?
- What kinds of obstacles or constraints did you see to operating this business successfully? What were they? Did you overcome them? How?
- What kind of help did you want to run your business successfully?
- What did your customers say about you?

Family/Household

- What kind of person were you in your family/household?
- If I had been with you before joining the program, what would I have seen you doing in your family/household?
- How did you feel about yourself as a member of the family/household? About how your family/household was doing?
- What kind of dreams/goals did you have for your family/household?
- What kind of problems did you have in your family/household?
- What kind of decisions did you make/NOT make about your family/household? What types of decisions did you defer to other members of the household?
- What did your family/household members say about you?

Community

- What kind of person were you in the community?
- If I had been with you before joining the program, what would I have seen you doing in the community?
- What types of relationship did you have in your community? Who were the most significant people you related to?
- How did you feel about yourself as a member of the community? About how the community was doing?
- Before joining the program, what roles did you have or activities did you participate in within the community?
- What kind of problems/constraints did you observe in your community?
- How did you try to resolve these problems/constraints?

Intent of Categorical Questions

Each question from the Menu of Categorical Questions has a particular intent. This chart explains the intent of selected questions from that menu.

Past	
Question	**Intent**
Individual	
If I had been with you before you joined the program, what would I have seen you doing?	To obtain a sense of how the client led her life—if she was joyful or sorrowful, active or passive, fully engaged or withdrawn, opportunistic or lethargic.
How did you feel about yourself before joining the program?	To understand the client's level of self-esteem and self-confidence.
What types of dreams or goals did you have for your life?	To determine IF the client had any personal dreams about her own self-improvement or desires for the future.
Business	
Did you have a business before joining the program? If so, please explain.	To determine IF the client had a business or several businesses and what types of businesses they were.
What types of dreams or goals did you have for your business?	Assuming the answer is positive, this question seeks to determine IF the client had any desires to grow her business in a certain way.
What types of decisions did you make about your business? What types of decisions were difficult for you? What types were made by other family members?	To determine whether the client had the self-confidence or freedom to make her own decisions.
How did you manage or run your business before joining the program?	To determine how entrepreneurial the client was, what her skill level was, and how much risk she felt confident to take.
Were there any obstacles that you faced in operating the business? What were they? Did you overcome them? How?	To determine what strategies a client used to overcome hardship (any obstacles to operating the business smoothly).
Family/Household	
How did you feel about yourself as a family member (in your household)?	To identify whether any subordination of females occurred in the family and determine whether a client felt respected as a contributing member of the family.
What types of dreams or goals did you have for your family or household?	To determine IF the client had any desires (such as to own a dream house, own land, send children to school or university) for members of her family.
What types of decisions did you make about your family or household? What types of decisions did you defer to others in the household?	To determine the type of family decisions the client made on her own and which ones she shared with others
Community	
What type of relationships did you have in your community? Who were the most significant people you related to?	To determine how a client related to her neighbors and other community members and who some of the most important people were in her interactions.
Before joining the program, what roles did you have or activities did you participate in within the community?	To determine how active a client was in the community and whether she participated in community events, political parties, or social groups.
What types of problems and obstacles did you observe in your community?	To determine how perceptive to community concerns a client was and whether she identified those concerns with her own.
In what ways did you try to resolve these problems and obstacles?	To determine whether a client joined a group to solve the problem, or if she took any action that would seek to improve the community.

Components of Empowerment Portrait Summary

This summary matrix is simply constructed: For each time period, the categorical questions are noted with room to write the client's responses to these questions, as well as her answers to any follow-up probing questions you ask. This example shows the parts of the matrix condensed to fit on one page. An actual working matrix will occupy several pages, with an allocation of one page per question.

Past	Present
Categorical Questions	
Individual	
Q.#	Q.#
Q.#	Q.#
Business	
Q.#	Q.#
Family/Household	
Q.#	Q.#
Q.#	Q.#
Community	
Q.#	Q.#
Q.#	Q.#

Why the Client Empowerment Tool Was Developed

Empowering the poor—to set goals, organize themselves, and make decisions about their lives and communities—is a key part of alleviating poverty. This is especially true for women who face widely recognized cultural, psychological, and economic barriers to those resources that would enable them to gain control over their lives. Microcredit is often given "credit" for empowering women. The assumption, supported by stories from all corners of the globe, is that participation in peer borrower groups and access to credit enables women to build a financial base of their own, enhance their skills, access peer support and gain social recognition. These experiences build confidence that "empowers" women to move forward in other aspects of their lives. Both the financial and social elements of microcredit methodologies are thought to contribute to this very important, but sometimes intangible concept of empowerment.

This in-depth interview helps to identify ways in which clients feel and manifest empowerment as a result of their participation in the program. Evaluators seek to understand if and how participation in a microfinance program has produced internal changes in clients' self-perception and confidence that can be measured by their external behavior. The technique concentrates on outward manifestations or concrete demonstrations of empowerment as seen in behavior changes in the individual, household, community or enterprise. The focus on behavior rather than attitudes is rooted in the hypothesis that those who have been empowered through program participation will make decisions differently and take greater risks.

Which specific behavior changes point to empowerment will depend on the context and client group. Although they will thus vary widely, some examples that demonstrate an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence include the following:

- Risk-taking behaviors (doing things the client has not done before);

- Making decisions (that were made formerly by others);

- Participating in new activities (which were not a part of the client's behavior or daily routine before);

- A shift in family relationships and responsibilities (which might signal more independence or a shift in household responsibilities);

- Changing a product line in the business (realizing a vision); or

- More control over financial resources.

When assessing empowerment, the issue of attribution is challenging. While it may be relatively easy to identify changes in behavior, how can we know whether they resulted from program participation? The short answer is that we accept how the client attributes the changes in her behavior as she describes herself in the past (before joining the program) and now (as a participant in the program). Well-formulated probing questions can help determine what else is occurring in the client's life that may also produce changes in self-perception.

Two Methods for Implementing the Client Empowerment Tool

The two methods described below are both in-depth interviews. In the first one, the client draws self-portraits (past and present) as a way to initiate the discussion about changes she has experienced over time. During the course of the discussion, the researcher gathers information about how the client has been empowered personally, in her family, in her community, and in her businesses. By asking of categorical and probing questions about the portraits the client has drawn, the interviewer can determine how a client has been empowered over time and the extent to which this change can be attributed to the program. (See Figure 8-1, Experience with Self-portraits, and Figure 8-2, Self-portraits by a Group of Clients in Colombia.) In the second methodology, the interviewer uses a direct interview to ask the client a number of categorical questions about herself in the past and present.

Method 1: Drawing Self-Portraits

Step 1:   Introduce

Introduce yourself to the client and explain the purpose of the interview. Explain that you are interested in learning how the client has changed over the past year. Tell the client that you will be asking about the specific changes that have taken place in each of the following four areas: personally, within the family, in the business, and in the community. Make it clear that you do not need to know anything about money, per se, but rather, if and how the client behaves differently now than she did in the past.

Step 2:   Warm Up

Some clients may have trouble identifying the period in time that constitutes "past". Together with each client, you might want to identify major events in her life that occurred before she joined the program such as her marriage, the birth of a child, or a move that will help her situate herself in the appropriate time.

Begin the conversation with a warm-up question such "Do you think you have changed in the last 12 months? In what ways?

Step 3: Give Directions on Drawing

Explain to the client that pictures often help us in explaining different things. For this reason, you will ask her to draw some pictures of herself, either as she actually is or using symbols to portray key features about herself. Give the client a piece of flip chart paper and markers and the following explanation. Then, allow her enough time to think and draw.

> *Think of yourself before you joined the program (*Refer to the markers identified earlier*). You can draw a mirror image of yourself if you want, or you can draw a symbol to represent your life. What was it like? How did you feel? What were you doing mostly? Please draw yourself at that time, before you joined the program.*

When she has finished this first picture, ask her to draw another portrait of herself today. Again, allow sufficient time for the client to complete the drawing.

Option: You might want to prompt the client by giving her some images that will help guide her to that time in the past (or present). For each picture, read the corresponding script, very slowly.

> *Part I (past):* Relax and be comfortable. Close your eyes. Think of some time in the past, before joining the program. What picture comes to mind?. See yourself going through a normal day. What are you doing? Are you very busy? (Pause.) Now see yourself with your family. What are you doing? Are your relationships good with your family members? (Pause.) Now see yourself in your community. What are you doing? What makes you feel a part of this community? (Pause.) Now see yourself in your business. What are you doing? Is the business going well? (Pause.) Now, with all these pictures you have in your mind, think of one image of yourself in the past. When you have that image, open your eyes and draw it.

> *Part II (present):* Relax and be comfortable. Close your eyes. Think of yourself now. Put yourself in whatever picture has come to mind. See yourself going through a normal day. What are you doing? Are you very busy? (Pause.) Now see yourself with your family. What are you doing? Are your relationships good with your family members? (Pause.) Now see yourself in your community. What are you doing? What makes you feel a part of this community? (Pause.) Now see yourself in your business. What are you doing? How is the business doing? (Pause.) Now, with all these pictures you have in your mind, think of one image of yourself today. When you have that image, open your eyes and draw it.

Step 4: Discuss the Pictures

For each of the pictures the client has drawn (and thus, each time period), make the following four open-ended statements:

- Tell me about this person.

- Tell me about this person in the family.

- Tell me about this person in the business.

- Tell me about this person in the community.

Each of these questions suggests many probing questions to get more information about the clients' behavior with respect to individual, family, community and business, as well as any changes that occur. Structure the discussion by time frame; that is, start with the past and talk about all aspects of the client's life *then* before moving on to the present. When asking probing questions, it is important to ask the same for each domain and for each time frame. This will allow for a comparative analysis later.

<table>
<tr><td>

FIGURE 8-1.
Experience with Self-portraits

1st Example:

When the drawing method was used in Ghana, the client (a seamstress) drew the following portraits: a picture of a sewing machine for the past (symbolizing her dependence on the machine for her livelihood), an open Bible for the present (symbolizing her faith which had grown in the past 12 months.), and a large house for the future (symbolizing the "salon" she would have to show the fashions she had created, and incorporating a school for her apprentices). While she protested slightly about her ability to draw, she was very capable of conveying her images and talking about them in response to the interviewer's probing questions.

2nd Example:

In Colombia, women drew themselves in the first picture with unsmiling faces, bent over, and without joy before they joined the program. They depicted themselves with smiling faces, standing tall and joyful, in response to the request for a self-portrait since participating in the program.

</td><td>

As with all the qualitative tools, the probing questions you ask will be linked to and driven by each client's specific responses. Though it is impossible to provide a ready-made list of probing questions in advance, you will most likely want to know more about how the client describes herself, why she said what she did, how she was feeling, what happened to make her feel that way, etc. See the attached menu of questions to get ideas about how to probe for more detail and expand a client's responses to each of the four categorical questions. Be aware of the need to flush out any information that will help you establish a link (or lack thereof) between the behavior changes the client identifies and her participation in the program. What other situations, such as events, people, and forces, were taking place at the same time?

</td></tr>
</table>

Step 5:   Record Responses

Write down everything the client says during the discussion in response to each question you have chosen from the suggested list. For each client, you will probably have at least one page per time period. The same set of questions will be repeated for each time period. When recording responses, use the client's own words as much as possible. Avoid writing summary statements. Use a tape recorder, if the client agrees.

After the probing questions have been answered and recorded, have the client look at the portraits again. Ask her if she can determine if there is any pattern to the changes implied in each of the portraits. Ask how these changes have made her feel and how the changes were made. In her own words, encourage her to give as broad a response as possible. This will allow her to report on her own patterns.

FIGURE 8-2.
Self-portraits by a Group of Clients in Colombia

When this tool was implemented in Colombia with an entire village bank, just two instructions were given: "Draw a picture of yourself in the past (before the program) and now." The bank members were all very friendly with each other and did not mind sharing their portraits in a group. They "acted out" their pictures and told the group how they had changed in the domains they felt were most important.

One woman talked about taking better care of her children since joining the program; another related how she interacts with customers in a more friendly manner and so attracts more customers; and another talked about the community projects in which she has become very active in the past 12 months. In each case, clients drew a conclusion about the changes in their lives brought about by participation in the program and, collectively, the members felt they would never again be the person they drew in the "past" portrait. The interviewer was not able to ask as many probing questions as is possible when conducting an individual interview, but she did capture what the client reported about her picture.

Method 2: An Open-Ended Interview

In preparation for the interview proposed here, review the menu of categorical and probing questions and choose those that best target the information that will be most valuable to your organization. Repeat the selected set of questions for each time period (past and present).

Step 1:   Introduce

Introduce yourself to the client and explain the purpose of the interview. Explain that you are interested in learning how the client has changed over the past 12 months and describe the process. Tell the client that you will be asking about the specific changes that have taken place in each of the following four areas: on an individual level, within the family/household, in the business, and in the community. Make it clear that you do not need to know anything about money, per se, but rather, how the client does things differently now vs. in the past, with respect to herself individually, her business, her family/household, and her community. Ask the client's permission to use a tape recorder.

Step 2: ***Warm Up***

Some clients may have trouble identifying the period in time that constitutes "past." Together with each client, you might want to identify major events in her life that occurred before she joined the program such as her marriage, the birth of a child, or a move that will help her situate herself in the appropriate time.

Begin the conversation with a warm-up question such as, "Do you think you have changed over the past year? In what ways? Do you think differently? Are you doing anything now that you weren't doing before? Do you have different goals now than you did before?" Explain that these are the kinds of things you will be asking about during the interview.

Step 3: ***Interview***

Start with the past. Ask clients to think about themselves and how they were before joining the program. If the client needs further encouragement, tell her to close her eyes to help her think and give her a moment to situate herself in the past. Then begin asking the questions about herself and her activities in the past that you have chosen from the menu of questions.

Move to the present. Instruct the client to move in her mind to the present, when she is a member of the program. Ask the same questions for the present.

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

Caution

In Peru, when interviewers posed the *past* and *present* questions, clients were fluid in their responses, shifting from past to present without prompting. It can be a challenge to remain focused on the time period under discussion.

</div>

Step 4: ***Determine a Pattern of Change***

At the end of the interview, ask the client if s/he can determine if there is any pattern to her changes over the past 12 months. Ask how these changes have made her or him feel, and how these changes were made.

Step 5: ***Record Responses***

Write down everything the client says in response to each question. Record answers using the client's own words as much as possible. (Prepare a format ahead of time that lists each question you want to ask with enough space to record the answer.)

Preparing for the Interviews: Step by Step

Select Respondents

Use the Client Empowerment tool with clients who have been associated with the program for at one year. The purpose of the tool is to help identify changes in behavior that are linked to program participation; but those changes, if they do occur, need time to take hold. In the case of new clients, there will be little to assess, because they will not have participated in the program long enough for program effects to take hold.

After identifying clients who have participated in the program for at least one year, select clients randomly from the program registers. Plan on interviewing at least ten clients. Alternatively, decide to construct a sample of interviewees that reflects selected program characteristics, such as urban/rural, small borrower/large borrower, years of participation (cohorts of one-year, two-year, three-year clients). It might be useful to your organization to understand better when in the program clients experience a change in self-perception and whether it is related to loan size, the relationship between the client and the group, or the group and the organization. The sample could also reflect geographic distribution, gender differences or industry divisions, if the organization has a desire to relate changes in empowerment to these different cross-sections.

For specific characteristics selected, however, it is important to include several clients who represent a range within that characteristic. If deciding to select for loan size, make sure loan sizes vary among the clients chosen.

Prepare for the Interview

Step 1:   Define "Empowerment"

With the whole team, brainstorm the meaning of the word "empowerment". The word itself does not translate easily into all languages. For example, in French, an AIMS team chose the word *realization* to convey the concept. Make sure everyone understands the basic idea and agrees on the terminology you will use.

Discuss how to recognize empowerment among your clients. In our cultural context how do we know when a person has been empowered to do something? (For example, women's mobility might be important in areas where it is generally restricted.) What specific behaviors would indicate that a woman is empowered? Have you seen these types of changes in your clients? Will clients recognize them? Knowing what to look for will help you develop probing questions during the interview.

### Step 2:	Choose the Method To Use

Both methods have been used successfully in multiple settings. The self-portraits can be a great way to initiate a sensitive discussion and make it fun. In some places, however, illiterate clients may not have had enough experience holding a pencil or crayon to enable them to draw. Some interviewers have not felt comfortable asking clients to do so. The choice of method will depend on the context and the comfort or skill of the interviewers.

If you choose the second method and decide to conduct a direct interview, prepare the list of categorical questions you will ask. From the menu of questions, select a few from each category – individual, business, family/household, and community. To keep the interview to a reasonable length, you will only be able to ask two or three questions from each of these four categories. Again, the questions you select are repeated for each time period (past, present). Prepare recording sheets by listing the selected questions, leaving enough space after each one to record client responses.

### Step 3:	Brainstorm Probing Questions

For each of the categorical questions you have decided to ask, brainstorm a number of probing questions that you might use—based on what you know about changes in clients—to delve more deeply. (See training exercises in the last section of this chapter, "Training Staff To Use the Client Empowerment Tool.")

### Step 4:	Translate the Questions into the Clients' Language(s)

### Step 5:	Practice the Interview

(See training exercises in the last section of this chapter, "Training Staff To Use the Client Empowerment Tool.")

### Step 6:	Schedule Interviews with Clients

### Step 7:	Gather Necessary Materials

For Method 1, the interviewer will need paper and markers or crayons and his or her own notebook to record the conversation. For Method 2, the interviewer will need recording sheets tailored to the interview he or she has designed.

Analyzing Data

Guidelines on analyzing and writing up the data are the same for both methods. The data analysis process recommended for this research entails the following five main steps: (1) writing up field notes, (2) summarizing key information on an empowerment analysis matrix, (3) develop tables, (4) ask for meaning, and (5) analyze data from all tables and matrixes and write the analysis.

Step 1:   Write Up Your Field Notes

Qualitative data analysis begins with writing up your "field notes," i.e., the entirety of the responses clients gave to your questions. If you used a tape recorder during the interview, listen to the tapes. *Do not be selective when you record*; write down *everything* the client said as well as possible without interpretation or bias. For this exercise, label sections for the past and present portraits/sets of questions. Then, within each section, develop paragraphs for each of the categorical questions you asked. This initial narrative will appear like a sequential story or a client case study.

Step 2:   Summarize Key Information on a Client Empowerment Summary Matrix

For each client, extract the key points at each level and in each time period and enter this information on a matrix. Figure 8-3, Client Empowerment Summary Matrix, summarizes one client's responses to two questions.

FIGURE 8-3.
Client Empowerment Summary Matrix

Question	Past	Present
Feelings about individual self, business, family/household, and community	Low self-worth; not able to take control of life or business; dependent on others; hears gossip about how poor her family/household looks, and how badly her business is run.	Respected by village bank members; is a cell group leader; plans work days herself.
Dreams and goals about individual self, business, family/household, and community	No "big" dreams; wanted her business to grow; wanted to be able to feed her family well; wanted people in the community to respect her.	Wants to franchise her tortilla business and open a restaurant, send her children to university, and organize community groups to help people who don't have enough to eat.

A pattern of change in this client can be determined from this summary. She has moved from a very poor perception of herself to a very good one, as demonstrated by the changes in her goals or dreams and in the way she has taken control of her life and her business. Where there was once no dream there is now a "big" dream.

Step 3:   Develop Tables

To summarize the data from all matrixes and identify patterns of behavior, develop a table that tallies how many clients have experienced similar changes. Figure 8-4 illustrates what such a table might look like.

FIGURE 8-4. Decision-making Shifts from "Other" to "Self" (n=15)		
Change in:	**Past**	**Present**
Decisions about individual self	3	8
Decisions about business	4	10
Decisions about family/household	2	12
Decisions about community participation	0	5

This table indicates that, in the past, few clients felt empowered to make decisions over anything. Over time, however, a change has occurred. Since the clients have begun participating in the program, they feel greater empowerment to make decisions in all four areas.

Step 4:   Ask for Meaning

Assembling and summarizing data in a systematic manner allows for patterns of behavior to emerge. As you review what the data indicate, ask the following questions:

In one community in Colombia, a Women's Opportunity Fund sponsored Trust Bank mobilized the community to bring electricity in from the main line. Members of another Trust Bank established a reforestation program in their village. If women are part of a group lending methodology, their empowerment may be evident not only in their own behaviors and self-esteem, but also in group behavior, where strength comes from working together.

- How are the responses to one question related to the responses of another?

- Has a change in self-perception resulted in a change in behavior?

- Has a change in behavior resulted in greater well-being? How?

- What types of decisions do clients report they make on their own now as opposed to the past?

- What kinds of group or community activities does the client now participate in that she did not before?

When asking and answering these questions, do not forget about the context that may influence behavior change, particularly the respondents' marital status. For example, one woman reported being unable to make business investment decisions in the past and depended on her spouse to decide how to allocate resources. Since joining the program, however, the client's spouse passed away and she has found herself making the decisions he had always made for her. At the same, participation in the program has given her new confidence. Only through further probing can you determine the extent to which her empowerment can be attributed to the program and how much is related to her specific situation (for example, the death of her husband). Compare this story with that of other clients to test the strength of the program's effect against other, similar mitigating circumstances. (See the example in Figure 8-5, Empowerment at the Community Level.)

Step 5: Analyze Data from all Tables and Matrixes and Write the Analysis

Cluster the answers from each respondent together by question or by time period. Study summarized data from all clients interviewed. Can you find any patterns? What is common in the responses? Which replies are unique? Are changes concentrated at one level (for example, changes in business behavior are clearly apparent but less so within the family/household or community)? Are there groups of clients that have responded in similar ways? Two team members (evaluators) should do this together to verify that both see the same commonalities, and to ensure that nothing is left out.

This step is different from writing the field notes narrative. You must consider in-depth all the data that has been summarized in different formats as well as the connections among the data that you have found. The analysis should be just that—a separation and recombination of the different pieces of data gathered during the interviews.

The type of analysis conducted will depend on what your organization wishes to know. The options presented are only suggestions for directions in analyzing the data.

Scheduling

The Client Empowerment tool involves tasks in the three phases explained above: (1) preparing (2) researching, and (3) analyzing data. Guidelines for approximating the time required for each are offered below.

Preparing

Although the amount of time needed for preparation and training will vary by the experience and skills of the interviewers, three days are recommended for the set of activities described in this manual. Figure 8-7, Allocating Time for Field Preparation, illustrates a breakdown of tasks into a three-day period.

FIGURE 8-7.
Allocating Time for Field Preparation

Task	Time
Selecting the sample	0.5 day
Extracting and reviewing client records	0.5 day
Training interviewer	1.0 day
Field testing tool	1.0 day

Researching

Each in-depth interview is estimated to take between 60 and 90 minutes. (Your field test will give a better idea of how long the interviews will actually take.) To determine how much time you will need to plan for these interviews, you must add up the number of interviews you plan to conduct and add the estimated travel time to and from each client. Finally, leave enough time at the end of each day for interviewers to write up their field notes from that day's interviews, estimated at one hour per interview. Taking into account the time needed for travel, the actual interview and processing field notes, one interviewer can possibly manage a maximum of three interviews per day, assuming minimal travel time between interviewees. You might be wiser to schedule only two interviews per interviewer per day.

Analyzing Data

Two days should be allocated to the analysis of all the empowerment data. This estimate assumes that interviewers have been able to process their field notes at the end of each day by summarizing each interview on the Client Empowerment Summary Matrix. The process of analysis can be broken into three tasks, as illustrated in Figure 8-8, Allocating Time for Analyzing Empowerment Data.

FIGURE 8-8.
Allocating Time for Analyzing Empowerment Data

Task	Time
Summarizing reporting matrixes	0.5 day
Tallying and analyzing results	0.5 day
Writing the results in a narrative report	1.0 day

Training Staff To Use the Client Empowerment Tool

This section presents two exercises that evaluation supervisors or team leaders can use to train staff in applying the Client Empowerment tool.

Training Exercise #1
Developing Probing Questions

Goal:　　　　To determine changes in empowerment over time.

Objectives:　At the end of the session, participants will be able to

- Recognize indicators of empowerment; and
- Develop probing questions about empowerment.

Materials:　Handout 1, Categorical Questions; flip chart paper; markers

Time:　　　90 minutes (1-1/2 hours)

Process:

Step 1:　　Discuss Indicators of Empowerment

Explain that to know how to probe effectively during an interview about empowerment, it is essential that we understand what "empowerment" means. The first step, therefore, is to develop a common understanding about the concept of empowerment. Discuss the different ways people demonstrate their power. Ask the following questions and write the answers on a flip chart.

- How does your president demonstrate his power?

- How does your boss or supervisor demonstrate his or her power?

- How does your mother demonstrate her power?

- How do you demonstrate your power?

Explain to participants that in each culture different people demonstrate they are empowered to act in different ways. Sometimes this power is situational, and sometimes it is related to the perceptions a person has about him or herself, or to the roles an individual has in the family/household and community. Brainstorm those actions and behaviors of clients that indicate a change in thinking, self-confidence and personal relationships. These are signs of empowerment.

Step 2:   Develop Probing Questions

Distribute Handout 1, Categorical Questions, to participants. Ask participants to form groups of two or three and provide the following instructions:

> *This handout includes five different statements about empowerment that clients have made. For each statement, develop at least ten different probing questions. Be sure to include questions the answers to which will help you understand how empowerment is demonstrated in the individual, in the family/household, in the community, and in the business.*

Step 3:   Share Questions

Have each small group share the questions they generated with everyone. Compare and contrast the type of questions, including how they are constructed, the type of response they might elicit, and the quality of information that will be obtained.

Step 4:   Prioritize Questions

After the discussion, have two small groups exchange their questions with each other. Ask groups to circle the five most useful questions in each category. Ask the two groups to get together to explain their results to each other.

Step 5:   Conclude

Explain that this exercise should be undertaken in preparation for the empowerment interviews, to consider, in advance, the different lines of probing questions that can be asked during the real interview.

Categorical Questions

Instructions: **Develop ten probing questions for each statement made by clients.**

1. In the past, my husband made all the decisions about my business, and then I had to give him something. But now I make most of the decisions.

2. Before I joined the program, I never went to my children's school for anything, not even on parents' day. Now I go all the time.

3. I was too shy to participate in community meetings or politics. Last week I was asked to serve on the District Citizen's Advisory Board and I am thinking about how to respond.

4. I used to walk around with my eyes looking on the ground. I never looked at anybody in the face. I was too ashamed. I'm getting better now—I look around at people when I am walking around, but I still don't look people in the face. I hope I can do that in the future.

5. I used to get very confused about when I needed to buy more stocks, and then I never had money at the right time. Now I am able to plan when I need to buy more because I watch my stock and know which time of the month I sell more.

Training Exercise #2
Practice Empowerment Drawing And Interviewing

Goal:　　　　To determine changes in empowerment over time

Objectives:　At the end of the exercise, participants will be able to

- Depict themselves in pictures;

- Ask questions about the drawings; and

- Interpret answers to probing questions.

Materials:　Flip chart paper; markers; lined paper; pens or pencils

Time:　　　　90 minutes (1-1/2 hours)

Process:

Step 1:　　Introduce

Brainstorm the difference between pictures and words. Ask participants to think about the advantages of drawing a picture as a way to communicate.

Step 2:　　Draw Self-Portraits

Distribute flip chart paper and markers to all participants. Instruct them to draw either pictures or symbols of themselves (1) when they were children or (2) as they are now.

Step 3:　　Develop Probing Questions To Explore the Pictures

Distribute a piece of lined paper to each participant. On the basis of what they know about their own drawings, have them develop five probing questions related to empowerment for each picture. Then instruct participants to team up with another person, and to exchange pictures. Tell the partners to develop five probing questions about empowerment on what they see in each other's pictures.

Step 4:   Interview

Instruct participants to take turns interviewing each other about the pictures each has drawn using the questions just developed for each other's pictures. "Interviewers" should be taking note of which questions worked well and which need revising.

Step 5:   Compare Questions

After all questions have been asked and answered, have the dyads exchange the questions they developed about their own pictures. How similar or different are they from those that their partner wrote? What different issues were important to bring out? Were the interviewers sensitive to the interviewees? How were questions adapted to follow on the responses given?

Step 6:   Conclude

Explore the experience of drawing the self-portraits by asking the following questions:

- Was it difficult?

- How many drew a mirror image?

- How many used symbols to represent themselves?

- How can you explain the task to clients?

- Will the picture help open the discussion about empowerment?

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of this technique?

Explain that this exercise provides participants with two views of empowerment—their own and their colleague's. By exchanging questions, participants have the opportunity to understand empowerment from the interviewee's perspective and to practice asking probing questions in preparation for the actual implementation of the Client Empowerment tool.

Chapter 9

Scheduling and Budgeting an Impact Assessment

- Exploring possible roles for external personnel

- Completing tasks before the evaluation begins

- Performing tasks during the three-week evaluation process

- Staffing

- Keeping costs low

Chapter 9
Scheduling and Budgeting an Impact Assessment

All five tools (Impact Survey, Client Exit Survey, Loan Use Strategies Over Time, Client Satisfaction, and Client Empowerment) in this manual were used in a full-scale impact assessment in Peru, South America, in November 1999. Before that, the tools were tested twice, once in Honduras, Central America and then in Mali, West Africa. In all three cases, all five tools were used to evaluate an NGO-sponsored credit program. Their application took place over a three-week time period and required an intensive, coordinated effort by the NGO management, staff and external supervisors. This section provides guidelines for scheduling, staffing, and other logistical requirements for such an assessment. Please note that these guidelines represent the best possible scenario where planning is begun early and preparations are carried out far enough in advance to avoid stressful last minute pressure and the mistakes that result. Clearly each user will schedule these tasks according their own timetable. Please note also that the schedule, staff requirements and budget outlined below are based on the use of all five tools. Users will have to work out their own requirements based on the extent of the evaluation process they plan and the number and type of tools they use.

Exploring Possible Roles for External Personnel

From the outset, AIMS, together with SEEP, intended to develop an approach to impact assessment that can be carried out by and for practitioners. Primary in their concern has been to offer a process that practitioners control—from the choice of hypotheses to be tested to the analysis of the data collected and use of the findings. Second, as indicated in chapter 1, the team searched for a balance between feasibility of implementation and credibility of results. Not surprisingly, the balance they found—the process outlined in this manual—still represents a significant effort because "quick and dirty" methods usually do not yield valid results. NGOs and MFIs must decide how to actually carry out the work involved, choosing from a range of options that include bringing in outside experts and volunteers, and/or temporarily shifting staff from their daily responsibilities to the evaluation team. The three assessments using these tools that AIMS has supported to date have benefited from at least two external technical advisors who have helped the local NGO to prepare and implement the evaluation. FINCA/Peru's full-scale assessment (November 1999) drew on the resources of several people external to the NGO including an external supervisor, a team of volunteers, and a local consultant hired to write the report. In Honduras, ODEF first carried out a tools test with assistance from AIMS supervisors, but was able to repeat the process the following year using only its own internal resources.

Experience to date indicates that such an assessment will benefit from the assistance of an external evaluator, at least the first time. Competent evaluation assistance can be found in local universities, national consulting firms or NGO support organizations. This detailed manual should provide enough guidance to anyone with some evaluation experience and enough time to learn the process so they can provide invaluable assistance to the organization seeking to implement an assessment of its program.

External personnel could play several roles, including (1) designing the assessment, (2) planning and coordinating the assessment, (3) conducting client interviews, (4) processing client data on the computer, and (5) preparing the final report. Each of these roles is described below.

Designing the Assessment

The NGO leadership may want outside expertise to help think through the assessment design—the hypotheses and indicators, the tools, the scale of effort, and the human resources needed to carry it out. Making such design decisions well in advance will enable management to determine how to provide the required resources.

Planning and Coordinating the Assessment

A small NGO may want a consultant to handle the multiple logistical and technical details that need to be done well before the actual assessment begins. It is easy for busy executives to give priority to today's pressing needs over tasks associated with an event that will occur months in the future. However, these tasks cannot wait until the team has assembled and is ready to interview the clients. This role can carry into one of overall coordination of the effort if the NGO cannot allocate this responsibility to a staff member. However, an external coordinator should be supervised by an NGO manager who both knows the context and is clear about the agency's goals for the process.

Conducting Client Interviews

A large number of client interviews may call for additional people outside the agency. Outsiders will need careful training to understand clients' references to specific aspects of the program, and it will be easier to train them for the quantitative surveys than for the in-depth interviews associated with the qualitative tools.

Processing Client Data on the Computer

If the NGO does not have computer technicians on staff, they can easily be hired on a short-term basis.

Preparing the Final Report

Because writing the final report actually begins during the first week of the assessment process, when agency staff are immersed first in training and subsequently in data collection and analysis, an external consultant should be hired to write the final report, a job that is estimated at roughly twenty-one days.

When considering the involvement of external consultants, examine the implications such involvement has for the budget and the dates of implementation. Take care to plan the whole process well in advance to determine how many and what types of outsiders to hire, as well as to secure funding for their participation.

Completing Tasks Before the Evaluation Begins

Starting to plan the impact assessment well before the data collection actually begins enables you to (1) carefully consider the various design decisions you will have to make, (2) build the right team, and (3) minimize logistical problems during the three-week, on-site assessment.

Six Months before the Evaluation

Seven tasks to complete six months before the evaluation are (1) getting to know the tools, (2) discussing evaluation with staff, (3) identifying the hypotheses to be tested, (4) selecting tools most appropriate for your design, (5) determining the composition of the assessment team, (6) setting a date for the three-week evaluation, and (7) translating the tools to the language used by the program staff. These seven tasks are described below.

1. Getting To Know the Tools

This manual gives you the tools and detailed instructions for all aspects of their use. A thorough study of the manual will introduce you to design considerations (for example, selecting your hypotheses) and help you figure out which tools you want to use and what type of preparation each will require.

2. Discussing Evaluation with Staff

Discuss both the goals and design of the proposed evaluation with staff. Why are we interested in an impact evaluation? Who are our stakeholders? What are our concerns as staff? Can we achieve our goals with this approach? Staff will be motivated by different goals and it is important that everyone understand the type of information to be sought before investing in the effort. This is particularly critical if outsiders are to be contracted to participate as you will want them to operate under the same goals and expectations.

3. Identifying the Hypotheses To Be Tested

This process requires much more time than you might think. Start with the hypotheses that informed the design of these tools and add/delete as necessary to capture your organization's own priorities for understanding how program services affect clients. Please resist the time-saving temptation to simply adopt the AIMS hypotheses and indicators under the assumption that they cover your organization's approach. Again, a careful reading of this field manual and a thorough understanding of the program's products, procedures and services are necessary to adapt these tools to your priorities and specific context.

4. Selecting Tools Most Appropriate for Your Design

Please note that two of the qualitative tools can be applied in different ways, and these should be tested to see which work better in the local setting. Staff should try out the different methods and select the one they want to use on the basis of actual experience instead of simply eliminating a method that may appear awkward or difficult to use. By selecting the methods that will be used in advance, training during the first week of the evaluation can be focused on that which will be used with clients.

5. Determining the Composition of the Assessment Team

If you plan to hire outside consultants to help, now is the time to investigate their costs and availability. (See the discussion in the previous section.)

6. Setting a Date for the Three-Week Evaluation

Choose the date in relation to your organization's other priorities. Try to avoid periods when staff is pre-occupied with other major organizational efforts – such as peak times for approving and disbursing loans, or a planned installation of a new MIS.

7. Translating the Tools to the Language Used by the Program Staff

A second translation may need to be done later into the local language used by clients but this should wait until program staff have refined the tools.

Three Months before the Evaluation

Seven tasks to complete three months before the evaluation are (1) holding a planning session with the evaluation managers, (2) reviewing the indicators and questions in the selected tools, (3) translating the tools into the clients' language (if necessary), (4) field testing the translated tools with clients, (5) developing the sampling strategy, (6) compiling secondary information about the

communities from which the sample is to be drawn, and (7) recruiting volunteers if needed for the evaluation team. These seven tasks are described below.

1. Holding a Planning Session with the Evaluation Managers

If choosing to work with an external evaluation expert, consider a planning session of several days with that person. Although expensive, such a session can be the most efficient and effective way to finalize the evaluation design, review the selection of and changes to the tools, decide on sampling strategies, and develop a plan for completing other preparations.

2. Reviewing the Indicators and Questions in the Selected Tools

Add or delete as necessary. Make sure the questions are clearly worded to obtain the information sought in the indicators. An incomplete adaptation of the tools can result in lack of clarity of both the questions asked and the answers given. By the time the problem is discovered, it is usually too late to correct. Make sure the questions get at what you and your organization really want to know. For example, the Client Satisfaction tool uses focus groups to discuss client reactions to different program elements. The highest priority items should be discussed first rather than those elements that you may not be willing to change.

3. Translating the Tools into the Clients' Language (if necessary)

This task requires a process of careful checking to make sure that the questions ask what is intended and that clients understand the language used.

4. Field Testing the Translated Tools with Clients

Make sure senior program staff participate in these field tests so they can make any necessary adjustments.

5. Developing the Sampling Strategy

Study the client data base to understand the stratification of clients and to select the variables to be used in sampling. Share the design with people inside and outside the program and improve it based on their feedback Note that sampling will be a challenge for organizations with weak management information systems. If it is not possible to obtain client data from a computerized source, additional manual work has to be done to pull records to create the basis for sampling. Experience has shown that additional clerical help is often needed for this process.

6. Compiling Secondary Information about the Communities from which the

Sample Is To Be Drawn

The five tools collect information via interviews with mature and ex-clients and non-clients. You will want to supplement this with information about the context in which the program is operating. For example, it is difficult to analyze empowerment of clients without understanding the context of gender relations in the household, employment opportunities, and the leadership positions of women in the community. Similarly, you need to research the macroeconomic situation. For example, the presence of a strong recession, as occurred in Peru in 1999, might help explain the fact that mature clients are borrowing less than they were two years ago. Without knowledge of this socioeconomic context, analysis of the numerical data might have led one to conclude that clients are becoming worse off the longer they remain in the program.

7. Recruiting Volunteers if Needed for the Evaluation Team

Many programs may be interested in providing volunteer labor in exchange for learning the process. Be sure to get a firm commitment from the volunteers and their supervisors, with a signed agreement specifying the number of hours they will invest, their responsibilities, and any compensation or reimbursement that will be given.

One Month before the Evaluation

Eight tasks to complete one month before the evaluation are (1) constructing the client sample for the Impact Survey; (2) completing a standard data form for all mature clients, incoming clients, and ex-clients who are drawn in the sample; (3) planning transportation logistics based on the sample that is drawn; (4) deciding how to notify sampled clients about the interview; (5) selecting team leaders; (6) finalizing contracts for external participants; (7) reserving adequate space for the evaluation; and (8) ordering necessary office supplies. These eight tasks are described below.

1. Constructing the Client Sample for the Impact Survey

Constructing the client sample at least two to three weeks ahead of the evaluation will provide time to correct any problems. Sample at least 35 percent more clients than are needed for the evaluation. In Peru, a 20 percent extra sample was inadequate because of the difficulty of finding the clients during week two of the evaluation, the interview week.

2. Completing a Standard Data Form for all Mature Clients, Incoming Clients, and Ex-clients Who Are Drawn in the Sample

The standard data form should have all the basic information that the current database can provide, including the exact addresses of the client's home and business and any other information that can assist the interviewer to locate the client. If the database is inadequate,

allocate enough time to go through manual records to get the information needed to complete a form for each client sampled. The credit officer who knows the client should review the forms for accuracy and draw a small map on the back to help locate her. (Note that these data sheets should have both the client and interview number; they should be attached to the interview form. Upon return from the field in week two of the evaluation, the quantitative or qualitative teams should process the forms and information.)

3. Planning Transportation Logistics Based on the Sample that Is Drawn

After planning the transportation logistics, based on the sample that is drawn, it is easier to finalize the budget for the evaluation.

4. Deciding How To Notify Sampled Clients about the Interview

Failing to notify clients in advance can result in wasted time traveling to homes or businesses only to find clients absent. This can be exhausting and demoralizing for the interviewers. In addition, notified clients are likely to be more relaxed and responsive than if they are caught by surprise by a stranger at their door seeking personal information. Regular meetings of communal banks or solidarity groups are convenient venues to find clients together for purposes of notification. If group meetings are to serve as focus groups, their schedule and program can be adjusted for the convenience of the evaluators with advance notice.

5. Selecting Team Leaders

Select team leaders, orient them to their tasks, and assign specific preparation.

6. Finalizing Contracts for External Participants

When finalizing contracts for external participants, do not underestimate how long this task will take, especially if it has to be done in accordance with donor requirements.

7. Reserving Adequate Space for the Evaluation

Reserve adequate space for the evaluation, including (1) a training site for the first week of the evaluation, (2) a base for the field operations for the second week, and (3) an office space with a sufficient number of computers for the analysis and writing work in the third week. If necessary, budget for rental.

8. Ordering Necessary Office Supplies

When ordering basic office supplies and equipment, make sure to have the most up-to-date antivirus program installed on all computers that will be used to enter and process data.

One Week before the Evaluation

Six tasks to complete one week before the evaluation are (1) meeting with the board of directors; (2) reviewing preparations, logistics, staffing, and equipment; (3) designing uniform systems for numbering interviews and naming computer files; (4) training team leaders and trainers; (5) finalizing computer operations; and (6) orienting the evaluation team. These six tasks are described below.

1. Meet with the Board of Directors

The evaluation team leaders, together with the NGO Executive Director should meet with the Board of Directors to explain the evaluation's purpose and process. You should find a date for a full session of the board at the end of the three-week period to review findings. It is important that both the board members and the evaluators are looking forward to that date during the three-week process.

2. Reviewing Preparations, Logistics, Staffing, and Equipment

The team leader should be on site the week before the evaluation to review preparations, logistics, staffing, and equipment and to make last-minute corrections.

3. Designing Uniform Systems for Numbering Interviews and Naming Computer Files

Designing a uniform numbering system for the interviews, as well as a uniform system for naming the computer files, will save time and confusion during the time of the evaluation.

4. Training Team Leaders and Trainers

Because the first week of the evaluation is devoted to training the field team on using the tools, the team leaders and trainers themselves may need orientation and training.

5. Finalizing Computer Operations

The person who coordinates data entry and statistical analysis should be on site several days before the evaluation begins to (1) train his or her team on correct data entry and backup procedures, (2) code the final questionnaire, and (3) ensure that the proper computer equipment

is in place. This last task includes verifying the antivirus software and the adequacy of hard disk space.

6. Orienting the Evaluation Team

Organize an orientation day for the team before the first week of training begins, especially if you have several outsiders arriving to participate. They should become familiar with the evaluation methodology, their role in the process, and the evaluation site.

Performing Tasks During the Three-Week Evaluation Process

Specified tasks performed each week of the three-week evaluation process include (1) preparing to collect data, (2) collecting and inputting data, and (3) processing and analyzing data. These tasks are fully described below for each week of the evaluation process.

Week 1: Preparing to Collect Data

Eight tasks to perform during the first week of the evaluation are (1) going over the team composition, roles, and responsibilities; (2) training personnel in qualitative and quantitative methods; (3) revising instruments (as necessary); (4) field testing each instrument one last time; (5) making a final copy of each instrument; (6) reviewing each team plan for data collection and corresponding logistics; (7) testing software; and (8) beginning to write parts of the final report. These eight tasks are described below.

1. Going Over the Team Composition, Roles, and Responsibilities

Be sure that everyone involved in the evaluation understands who makes the final decisions within each team and with respect to each function (such as revising the tools, quality control, and data entry) during the three weeks. Identify any changes in assignments that need to be made.

2. Training Personnel in Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

Use the training exercises for each tool provided in the manual. This can be done in two different subgroups, one learning the two quantitative tools and the other learning the three qualitative tools.

3. Revising Instruments (as necessary)

During the training, team members will probably find changes they want to make to the language of the tools. Portable computers at the training site will facilitate making these changes.

4. Field Testing Each Instrument One Last Time

Do this mid-week in order to have enough time to revise as necessary based on experience in the field. These changes need to be approved and noted. Revise any of the precoding of the quantitative instruments to correspond with any changes that have been made to the questions in the surveys. Set up the coding sheets for answers that cannot be precoded for each of the quantitative instruments.

5. Making a Final Copy of Each Instrument

This is your new original. Duplicate and collate enough interview forms for at least the first three days.

6. Reviewing Each Team Plan for Data Collection and Corresponding Logistics

Make sure that each interviewer is familiar with the system of coding and numbering for the interviews that he/she will be handling.

7. Testing Software

The data entry team can use data collected during field test to try out software. Make any adjustments necessary to limit the input fields and make sure that the record files are clear. Clean data to identify common mistakes being made.

8. Beginning To Write Parts of the Final Report

During week 1, begin writing the following parts of the final report: the program profile, the sampling strategy, and biographical summaries of the evaluation team members.

Week 2: Collecting and Inputting Data

Seven tasks to perform during the second week of the evaluation are (1) checking client eligibility, (2) reviewing completed interview forms daily, (3) adjusting logistical plans each day, (4) entering data, (5) writing up the qualitative interviews each day, (6) writing additional parts of the final report, and (7) duplicating and collating survey forms. These seven tasks are described below.

1. Checking Client Eligibility

Before conducting each interview, check the respondent's eligibility by checking to see if he or she matches the minimum criteria established for that instrument (for example, check to see if the person has been a client for at least two years).

2. Reviewing Completed Interview Forms Daily

Team leaders conduct quality control of each team member, checking to see if each interview has been completed correctly. In the case of errors, assign them for the next day or find substitutes from the sample for those respondents who could not be located.

3. Adjusting Logistical Plans Each Day

Adjusting logistical plans each day may require, for example, sampling additional clients if one group is proving hard to find. In the office one person for the quantitative team and one for the qualitative team should be assigned to make these adjustments every day during the interview week (week 2). These persons need to maintain the list of numbers of the interviews and do a daily tally of how many interviews have been completed and how many did not get done in their assigned day. Reassignments and adjustments must be made daily to complete the desired total in the limited number of days allocated to data collection.

4. Entering Data

Enter the quantitative data into the computer and do appropriate data cleaning. (Epi-Info has a system for double entering the same data; the computer assists the second data entry person to identify typographical errors).

5. Writing Up the Qualitative Interviews Each Day

Interviewers will find it easier to write up the qualitative interviews each day if they have taped the interviews with clients.

6. Writing Additional Parts of the Final Report

The person writing the final report can write additional parts covering the events of weeks one and two. He or she can prepare for data analysis by examining which variables should be used first when the quantitative data is complete.

7. Duplicating and Collating Survey Forms

The logistics team should duplicate and collate additional interview forms, maintaining at least a three-day supply on hand.

`Sample Production Schedule`

Figure 9-1 illustrates how the production schedule for data collection can be laid out. Such a schedule will differ greatly for each evaluation depending on how far apart the sampled clients live from one another, the ease of transportation and locating respondents, and the skill level of the interviewers. Any production schedule will need to be adjusted according to the initial experience in the field during week one and in the first days of week two.

In this example, the quantitative team is scheduled to work all day each of six days. After completing their interviews, they have relatively little work to do on the forms. In contrast, the qualitative team members interview only half a day and use the other half day to listen to the tapes, review their notes and write up the interviews. The qualitative team is scheduled to spend only five days in the field leaving time to complete the write-ups and put together case studies to facilitate analysis.

FIGURE 9-1. **Production Schedule for Data Collection**	
Daily Interviews During Week Two	**Total Number of Interviews of Each Type**
Impact Survey takes an average of 45 minutes: 4 surveys per interviewer/day x 9 interviewers = 36 surveys/day. If each supervisor of three interviewers does 2 surveys/day x 3 = 6/day.	36 surveys by interviewers plus 6 surveys by supervisors/day = 42/day x 6 days= 252 impact surveys. (The same survey is done with mature clients and non-clients. This 252 could be composed of 172 clients and 80 non-clients.)
Client Exit Survey takes an average of 18 minutes. 2 surveys /day x 9 loan officers = 18 exit surveys/day.	18 exit surveys/day x 6 days = 108 exit surveys. (This could be 54 from one type of client and 54 of a second type of client.
The **focus group** requires about one hour and 45 minutes for a two person team. 2 group interviews/day x 2 teams = 4 group interviews/day	4 group interviews /day x 5 days = 20 group interviews (The sampling can be purposeful to get the opinion of clients who have had more time in the program and who are using different types of loan products.)
Loan Use Strategies Over Time interviews take about 40 minutes. 4 individual interviews /day x 1 interviewer = 4 loan use interviews/day	4 loan use interviews /day x 5 days = 20 individual interviews. (Note that the qualitative are able to do less interviewing per day because they need time to them up daily.)
Client empowerment interviews take about 60 minutes. 3 individual interviews /day x 2 interviewers = 6 individual interviews/day	6 empowerment interviews /day x 5 days = 30 empowerment interviews. (Typically the interviewing is done in the afternoon when the clients have more time and the write up is done the following morning.)

Week 3: Processing and Analyzing Data

Nine tasks to perform during the third week of the evaluation are (1) finishing any remaining quantitative field work, (2) finishing data cleaning and entry, (3) analyzing quantitative data, (4) gathering all data collected with each qualitative tool into one computer file, (5) integrating qualitative analysis with quantitative results, (6) merging client satisfaction data, (7) holding a team meeting, (8) writing the analysis chapters of the final report, and (9) preparing a presentation for the board of directors. These nine tasks are described below.

1. Finishing Any Remaining Quantitative Field Work

Allocate only one day to finishing work left over from week two because you will need most of the time in this week to analyze the data.

2. Finishing Data Cleaning and Entry

3. Analyzing Quantitative Data

Use a statistical software package (such as Epi Info) to analyze data from the Impact Survey and Client Exit Survey.

4. Gathering All Data Collected with Each Qualitative Tool into One Computer File

A coordinator for each qualitative tool should organize the cases for content analysis and lead the group process to analyze the data collected with that tool. Tabulate the results of focus groups (A spreadsheet can be used to compare and contrast the results of multiple focus groups.)

5. Integrating Qualitative Analysis with Quantitative Results

After completing the analysis of the data collected with each qualitative tool, integrate the findings with the quantitative survey data.

6. Merging Client Satisfaction Data

To merge client satisfaction data, draw from the focus group tool, the last questions in the Impact Survey of mature clients, and several questions from the Client Exit Survey.

7. Holding a Team Meeting

Hold a team meeting for reviewing the initial analysis that each team has done to identify any emerging patterns that would be useful to pursue in greater depth.

8. Writing the Analysis Chapters of the Final Report

Write the analysis chapters of the final report by reviewing the draft report as it emerges for the first time as a whole, filling in the missing pieces, and adding appendixes.

9. Preparing a Presentation for the Board of Directors

When preparing a presentation for the board of directors, consider preparing transparencies that summarize the initial findings and resulting recommendations.

Week 4: After the Three-Week Evaluation

Seven tasks to perform during the fourth week, after the evaluation, are (1) completing the analysis; (2) reviewing, revising, and improving the report; (3) refining recommendations; (4) reviewing results; (5) deciding on the report's translation and dissemination; (6) creating a record of the process; and (7) preparing a final accounting. These seven activities, which may be completed over several weeks, are described below.

1. Completing the Analysis

When completing the analysis, correlate qualitative and quantitative findings to achieve, when possible, complementary information and a more complete evaluation. If not done in the third week, share the tabulated data and analysis with members of the data collection team and include their reactions and interpretations in the final version of the document.

2. Reviewing, Revising, and Improving the Report

When reviewing, revising, and improving the draft report prepared in week three, ensure that it includes information of interest to all stakeholders.

3. Refining Recommendations

Refine the recommendations section on the basis of a completed analysis.

4. Reviewing Results

Review the results with the management, highlighting possible decisions indicated by the data. Include in the final report any decisions that management has made as a result of the evaluation findings.

5. Deciding on the Report's Translation and Dissemination

Decide on a process for translating and disseminating the report.

6. Creating a Record of the Process

Clean manual and computer files to create a complete record of the process. The team leader completes process notes. Write up the lessons learned from the process and the suggested changes to the tools.

7. Preparing a Final Accounting

Finish the financial work and prepare a final accounting for the final report and for those who funded the evaluation.

Staffing

In Peru, a team of more than twenty people carried out the impact assessment using these five tools. In Honduras and Mali, teams of approximately thirteen people each conducted the tools tests using a smaller number of interviews than would be required by a full-scale evaluation. In each case, two of these people were AIMS facilitators from outside the organization. The remaining members were primarily staff people of varying occupational backgrounds, ranging from management to credit promoters. In each case, some of the staff were from partner organizations. (See the example in figure 9-2.)

FIGURE 9-2.
Composition of the Teams

Team 1: Quantitative Tools	Team 2: Computer Work on Quantitative Tools	Team 3: Qualitative Tools	Team 4: Quality Control	Team 5: Report Writing	Team 6: Logistics	Team 7: Overall Coordination
9 interviewers (can be field agents) with 3 supervisors (who are conducting a lesser number of interviews while doing quality control)	2 data entry staff (preferably with computer skills). 1 person skilled at supervision and the computer program. More data entry people may be needed at peak time in Week 2	3 staff minimum for individual interviews and four persons to form two teams for focus groups (preferably trainers or those familiar with qualitative methods)	At least 2 mgt. staff (mainly in the office)	1 consultant hired to write the final report (works for one day prior to the beginning of the eval. exercise, 2 days in Week 1, 1 day in Week 2, and 4 days during Week 3; then 10 days at the end.) Others work with the consultant during the evaluation to ensure a good draft at the end of the three weeks.	1 manager to work in the office overseeing transportation, computers, and other logistics; 1 messenger and secretarial help. Others may be added as needed.	Can be NGO manager or combination of external consultant and NGO manager. who has the ability to make executive decisions and organize staff resources. Others on the coordinating team might represent funder.

FIGURE 9-3.
Responsibilities by Week

	Team 1: Quantitative Tools	Team 2: Computer Work on Quantitative Tools	Team 3: Qualitative Tools	Team 4: Quality Control
Week One	1. Receive training; 2. Test and revise tools; 3. Plan how to carry out the interviews of the sample of clients, non clients and ex-clients; and 4. Do a detailed plan of the data collection for the following week.	1. Install and practice software (e.g., Epi Info); 2. Input sample data and check quality; 3. Debug and eliminate viruses; 4. Plan for the following week; 5. Pre-code interviews; 6. Code tests; and 7. Revise survey forms on computer as indicated by Teams 1 and 3.	1. Receive training; 2. Practice; 3. Test and revise tools; and 4. Plan data collection for the following week.	1. Help train; 2. Accompany teams 1 and 3 on tools test; 3. Help revise the instruments; 4. Make sure that the sample is ready for the teams; 5. Plan for the following week; and 6. Make sure that the logistics, materials, and budget are in order.
Week Two	1. Collect data; 2. Code and check data for quality; and 3. Make sure that production is on schedule.	8. Input and clean data; 9. Return incomplete interview forms to Team 1; and 10. Maintain an accurate count of the sample accomplished each day	• Conduct in-depth interviews and focus groups; • Make sure that production is on schedule; and • Write case studies.	• Review quality of data collection, cleaning and input; and • Assure completion of assignments.
Week Three	4. Finalize data collection in the first day(s); 5. Data analysis; and 6. Write report.	11. Complete data input; Clean data and ensure quality control; 12. Basic analysis; and 13. Compile demographic information on interviewees of each type.	5. Write case studies; 6. Tabulate focus group results; 7. Analyze qualitative data; and 8. Write report.	7. Supervise final data collection, cleaning, input, and analysis; and 8. Help coordinate report writing.

This division of responsibilities is based on the composition of "quantitative" and "qualitative" teams, which allows for specialization of personnel by focusing on fewer instruments. Logistically, however, it may be easier to compose multidisciplinary teams that can work with both types of tools, a strategy that would enable you to send just one team to each geographical area. (See figure 9-3.)

Avoiding Bias

You must not send field staff (for example, credit promoters) to interview clients with whom they have had previous business or personal relations. The most effective way to avoid this type of bias is to assign promoters to zones other than those in which they work. It is also important, however, to anticipate the normal difficulties that strangers will have locating the clients to be interviewed. The regular program staff who know each area can serve as guides. They could direct the interviewer to the appropriate home or place of business without actually crossing the threshold with him. This lack of presence of the regular program staff will reinforce clients' trust in the promised confidentiality of the interview.

Educational Level of Staff

Ideally, field workers will have at least a secondary education and team coordinators, a university education. although education levels of team members can and will vary. Practitioners and field workers actually make better interviewers than university students because they are more familiar with the subject matter and are better able to perceive more subtle meanings, especially in qualitative interviews. This familiarity makes probing easier.

In Honduras and Mali, the majority of the quantitative interviewers had no prior evaluation experience and only a secondary education. Those who did have some previous experience were very helpful to the process during the first week of training and were already accustomed to techniques to maintain objectivity. Those with a higher level of formal education (university and graduate school) were usually deployed in the qualitative interviewing. This additional educational background proves helpful for content analysis and writing long narrative reports.

The computer assistants in Honduras and Peru were working on university degrees in computer related subjects while in Mali the person who did data entry was a Peace Corps Volunteer. Those with knowledge of the relevant computer programs who could supervise the data entry have had graduate degrees.

Keeping Costs Low

One goal of a practitioner-led evaluation is to keep costs low. Nevertheless, an evaluation using multiple qualitative and quantitative tools requires resources to cover personnel, transport, and supplies. Figure 9-4 lists the person days involved in each tools test and in the full-scale evaluation conducted in Peru; Figure 9-5 outlines their direct dollar costs. Clearly, these figures will vary widely with each application. The accompanying description of the equipment and infrastructure necessary for an evaluation based on these tools will help users to develop their own budgets.

FIGURE 9-4.
Person Days

	Person Days in Honduras	Person Days in Mali	Person Days in Peru
On site planning, training and pre-testing	78	68	90
Data collection	75	78	100
Software installation, data entry	59	13	40
Data cleaning	18	2	7
Analysis	30	36	40
TOTAL	**260**	**197**	**277**

Note the substantial difference in time spent on software installation, data entry, and data cleaning in Mali and Honduras. In Mali, the data entry person had university training in computer systems and had used the program previously, while his counterpart in Honduras was totally new to the Epi-Info program and needed time to learn it. The figures are much higher for Peru given the much larger number of interviews.

Note also that 260 person days carried by a team of 13 people in Honduras was too burdensome as everyone worked long hours seven days a week. To plan a more manageable process, there are two options:

1. Expand the team from 13 to 17 people which would allow for 85 person days in week one, (17 persons x 5 days); 85 person days in week two (17 persons x 5 days); and 90 person days in week 3 (17 persons x 5.3 days); or

2. Spread out the evaluation tasks, especially the analysis, over a longer period of time.

FIGURE 9-5.
Direct *Local Costs*

Honduras tools test 1997	• 160 survey interviews • 23 exit interviews • 22 in-depth interviews • 6 focus group interviews	$11,105 in direct costs; $4,775 in opportunity costs
Mali tools test 1998	• 94 survey interviews • 20 ex-client interviews • 24 in-depth interviews • 6 focus group interviews	$11,500 in direct costs Opportunity costs of 4 loan promoters and 3 administrative staff involved.
Peru full-scale evaluation 1999	• 223 survey interviews (including127 with clients and 96 with non- clients) • 63 ex-client interviews. • 46 in-depth interviews (17 loan and saving use; 29 empowerment interviews) • 13 focus group interviews	$18,000 in direct costs (50% covered by local funder). Opportunity costs of 6 promoters and 4 others not disbursing loans during 3 weeks.

The opportunity costs noted in figure 9-5 represent the lost income due to using loan officers who would normally be working on bank formation, loan origination and collection of payments, all of which would have provided income to the organization during this three week period.

The opportunity costs noted in figure 9-5 represent the lost income due to using loan officers who would normally be working on bank formation, loan origination and collection of payments, all of which would have provided income to the organization during this three week period.

FIGURE 9-6.

**Peru:
Allocation of Evaluation Costs**

Budget Category	Percent of local budget
Personnel ⇒ NGO staff ⇒ local consultants ⇒ indirect personnel support costs	27.5% 27.5% 11.0%
Operational Costs ⇒ photocopying ⇒ transportation ⇒ supplies ⇒ communications ⇒ secretarial	25.0%
Translation	6.0%
Space Rental	3.0%

s in Peru in 1999 (see figure 9-6),
nis, 27.5% was allocated to cover half of
the local consultants hired to for data entry
at a minimum of $2,000 (11% of the
s to support the evaluation. The direct
ggest of these were, in declining order of
work costs, office supplies,
both the tools and the training materials
ntal for training required about 3%.

ain categories: (1) transportation, (2)
ace. Each of these cost areas is described

s to the data collection teams for at least ten
termined in part by the area chosen for the
evaluation and the sample size. In Honduras, the team supervisors were the drivers. When they
were not driving and picking up interviewers, they were waiting in the vehicle and checking the
forms that had already been filled out. In addition to vehicles, motorcycles can provide the field
workers with the flexibility to quickly reach clients in less accessible areas. In Peru, the transport
was provided by taxis and motorcycle cabs. This raised the costs but provided flexibility to only
contract transport when needed. Taxi drivers also assisted in locating clients.

2. Computers

At least two computers will be used at least 8 hours a day during data input and processing
during weeks two and three. Having use of two computers simplifies data cleaning because Epi-
Info has a feature that allows one to enter the quantitative data twice and compare them to catch
any errors. In all three sites, at least three laptop computers were used during the entire three-
week period.

During the third (last) week when data is being analyzed and reports are prepared, the team will
need six to eight computers for eight hours each day. During the last half of the second week and
the first half of the third week, the qualitative team members need to each use a computer at least
four hours per day. In Peru, the team rented computers during peak times from cyber cafes.

If the reports are being written in an area where electricity is unstable, battery back-ups or
generators or UPS and stabilizers and surge protectors will be necessary. Up-to-date antivirus
software is essential to prevent infection and loss of data. Computer printers are needed during
the whole process, but especially in the third week.

3. Duplicating Materials

Copying services will be needed, especially at the end of week one and during week two to copy, collate and staple interview forms. (See figure 9-7.) It may be tempting to lower costs by do such copying in house; in Peru, however, it was far easier to have such a high volume of photocopying done commercially at a copy center. The quality should be spot checked before the forms go out into the field because incomplete interview forms can totally stop production.

FIGURE 9-7. Photocopying Required by Week	
Week 0	Training materials for week 1 tools training
Week 1	Survey forms for field test; final revised forms for actual data collection
Week 2	Additional interview forms
Week 3	Draft case studies, analysis, report for team review

4. Office Space

The evaluation team will need separate office and desk space to dedicate to this process during the evaluation period, especially during weeks one through three. Experience indicates that this space should be accessible both during the days and evenings. Due to the work into the evenings by the computer technicians and the coordinators, it helps to have the external evaluators' lodging nearby.

If the organization does not have sufficient space within its existing offices, it should budget for rental as space is critical to maintaining necessary organization of the work. In Peru, separate space was rented for training in week one, and for the presentations in week three.

Computer operators need separate, quiet space to input the quantitative data without being interrupted by noise from teams 1 and 3. Plenty of table or counter space is necessary to allow for a clear flow of documents through the process of data input, cleaning and analysis.

Appendix A
Suggested Outline for Final Report

Reporting Guidelines

When the evaluation process has been completed—the evaluation designed, the team trained, the data collected, and results analyzed—the evaluators likely will have the responsibility for writing a final report. Depending on the audience, this report can take several forms. Donors and evaluation professionals will be interested in all aspects of the process, while program managers may need only the results and recommendations. This section contains a suggested table of contents for a full report from which shorter versions can be tailored for specific purposes. To see examples of complete evaluation reports that the SEEP teams wrote after the tools tests in Honduras and Mali, go to the Internet (www.mip.org/pdfs/aims). The specific address for the Honduras report is http://www.mip.org/pdfs/aims/honduras.pdf. Acrobat reader software is necessary for reading these reports and can be downloaded from the Internet (www.mip.org/pubs/pubs~def.htm). AIMS also has a report written in Spanish from the evaluation carried out in Peru in 1999.

Sample Table of Contents

Acronyms
Foreword
Acknowledgments

I.   Introduction

    A.   Background and Brief Description of the Evaluation
    B.   Conceptual Framework
    C.   Domains of Impact
    D.   Specific Hypotheses
    E.   Measures of Client Satisfaction

II.   The Microfinance Program Evaluated and Its Context

    A.   Country Socioeconomic Context
    B.   Mission and Brief History of the Program
    C.   Organizational Structure and Services
        1.   Lending Services
        2.   Savings Services
        3.   Nonfinancial Services

III.   Evaluation Methodology

    A.   Process and Schedule
    B.   Evaluation Instruments Used
    C.   Data Analysis and Report Writing
    D.   Staffing
    E.   Cost

IV.   Sample Design

    A.   General Design Issues
        1.   Cross-sectional Design
        2.   Client Stratification and Categories of Respondents
        3.   Selection of the Comparison Group
    B.   Selection of Communities and Clients for the Survey
        1.   Categories of Selected Urban and Rural Communities
        2.   Criteria and Process for Selecting Credit and Savings Associations
        3.   Criteria and Process for Selecting Individuals (clients, non-clients)
    C.   Sampling for the Exit Survey
    D.   Selection of Respondents for the Qualitative Tools
        1.   Loan Use Strategies Over Time Tool
        2.   Client Satisfaction Tool
        3.   Client Empowerment Tool
    E.   Summary of the Sample Selected
        1.   Description of the Sample by Evaluation Tool
        2.   Demographic Information on the Sample

F.   Limitations of Sample

V.   Findings Related to the AIMS Hypotheses

A.   Overview
B.   Impact at the Enterprise Level
    1.   Net Cash Flow
    2.   Changes in the Enterprise
    3.   Differentiation between Enterprise and Family/Household
C.   Impact at the Family/Household Level
    1.   Family/Household and Personal Income
    2.   Family/Household Assets
    3.   Household Welfare
D.   Impact at the Individual Level
    1.   Self-esteem
    2.   Client Productivity
    3.   Child Labor
E.   Impact at the Community Level
    1.   Paid Employment
    2.   Solidarity and Participation in Community Events

VI.   Findings from Former Clients: Reasons for Leaving and Perceptions of Impact

A.   Reasons for Leaving
B.   Ex-client Experiences with the Program
C.   Ex-client Perceptions of Impact
D.   Implications for the Program

VII.   Use of Loans, Enterprise Profits, and Savings

A.   Access to Credit and Savings Services
B.   Use of Program Loans
    1.   Productive Investment of Program Loans
    2.   Expansion and Diversification
    3.   Direct Consumption and Other Nonproductive Uses of Loans
C.   Use of Enterprise Profit
D.   Use of Savings
E.   Programmatic Implications

VIII.   Client Satisfaction

A.   Client Satisfaction
B.   Client Dissatisfaction
C.   Client Recommendations for the Program

IX.   Client Empowerment

A.   Empowerment and Self-esteem Measured by Tool
B.   Analysis of Cases
C.   Trends and Attributions to the Program
D.   Programmatic Implications

X.   Implications of the Findings

   A.   Recommendations for Program Change
   B.   Management's Initial Decisions for Change Based on Findings

Appendixes

   A.   Implementation Schedule
   B.   Organization of the Evaluation Teams
   C.   Biographical Summaries of Staff
   D.   Empirical Data from Surveys
   E.   Case Studies from Qualitative Interviews
   F.   Focus Group Reports
   G.   Lessons Learned for Future Impact Evaluations

Bibliography

Explanation of Selected Contents

Section II of the sample table of contents above, "The Microfinance Program Evaluated and Its Context," is often lightly treated in evaluations done by external evaluators. In reviewing many impact studies completed before the AIMS tools tests, analysts found that one of the most common mistakes in writing evaluation reports was the weak description of the program being evaluated. It is essential to describe the program well so that the reader will understand the implications these findings have for other programs using a similar methodology. To overcome this common problem, the SEEP/AIMS working group created guidelines for program profiles titled, "Protocol for Writing a Program Intervention Profile for use in Evaluations" (Garber, 1997).

Another useful document for evaluations is *Protocol for Extracting Data from an MIS System, To Use in an Impact Evaluation* (Garber, 1997). This document gives an overview of the type of information that should be available from a management information system (MIS) and some of the problems with MIS within microfinance institutions and their lack of standardization. The document lists indicators, which are important in an impact evaluation and possible sources within the MIS. The document includes a bibliography on MIS.

Basic Instructions for Using Epi Info 6

This appendix provides information about the Epi Info 6 computer programs. It explains the programs, provides information for accessing and installing them, and describes how to use them.

A. Introduction to Epi Info 6

This section describes Epi Info 6 and directs the reader to more information about the computer programs.

What is Epi Info?

Epi Info is a series of computer programs produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It provides public domain software for word processing, database, and statistical work, originally designed for public health usage. Epi Info programs and manuals have been translated into several non-English languages, including French and Spanish, and are in use in more than 120 countries.

The program is modular, and individual parts can be loaded and used separately. The full version 6 occupies 8.3 MB for the main files, example, and manual. Just the Epi Info 6 manual is 600 pages—when loaded it occupies 1.15 MB. Each of the program files then expands in size when installed on the hard disk.

The program is designed to be used with less advanced hardware and can even run on a 386 computer. Version 6 runs on IBM-compatible computers under DOS and requires only 600K of memory (RAM). It is a self-contained series of programs, and thus does not have to be entered through other software such as the Microsoft Suite.

Web Site and Hotline

The Web site for Epi Info is http://www.cdc.gov/epo/epi/epiinfo.htm.

The CDC provides funding for the Epi Info technical support line—hotline support is available only in English. The support is free, but it is limited to problems that cannot be solved after

reference to the respective manuals. The technical support line operates Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time).

To contact the Epi Info hotline
1.   Telephone: (404) 639-0840 (U.S. telephone)
2.   Fax: (404) 639-0841
3.   Email: Epi Info@cdc.gov

For an introduction to the program, see the five tutorials (in English) on the Internet at http://www.cdc.gov/epo/epi/intro/simutut.htm.

B. Instructions for Installing Epi Info 6

After going to the Internet site and making the four (or five) floppy disks (or receiving the software on disk from another source), for the English version, please use the following instructions to install the disks on the hard drive of your computer. (*Note:* There are three disks for EPI and one for the Y2K update—plus a fifth disk for the manual, which is not necessary to install and run the program, but is recommended.)

Installing EPI via MS-DOS (see 'Installing EPI via Windows' at the end of these instructions)

- Open the MS-DOS Program

- Go to the "c:\>" prompt. (If the program opens in "c:\windows>" or another prompt, type "cd\" until you come to "c:\>")

- Create a temporary directory on your hard drive by typing "md epi6temp"

- Go to the epi6temp directory by typing "cd\" and then type "cd epi6temp"

- Insert disk #1 and type "copy a:*.*"

- Repeat step 3 for disks #2-#4

- After completing the steps for disks #1 to #4, at the "c:\epi6temp>" prompt type "epi604_1EXE"

- Then type "epi604_2EXE"

- Then type "epi604_3EXE"

- Then type "epi6man"

- At the "c:\epi6temp>", type "install"

- Follow all instructions on the screen, pressing F4 to proceed with the installation

- Put in the disk with the file: "4bupdate" ("actu_b_c" in Spanish version), and copy it to the new EPI6 directory that was created with the installation of Epi. (Go to the EPI6 directory by typing "cd\" and then type "cd epi6". Then copy the file as you did for other disks in step #5 above→Insert disk #4 and type "copy a:*.*")

- Then, as you did in steps 7-10 above, at the c:\epi6 prompt, type "4bupdate", and then type "Y" and <Enter> quite a few times to overwrite existing files. This will "update" Epi Info to make it Y2K compatible.

After installing Epi Info 6, you can open the program as follows:

- If opening the program in Windows, go to the "Start" menu and select "Run". Type "c:\epi6\setup.exe".

- If opening the program in MS-DOS, go to the "c:\>" prompt. (If the program opens in "c:\windows>" or another prompt, type "cd\" until you come to "c:\>"). Type "cd epi6" and then "epi6".

<u>*Note:*</u> *If you have copied* Epi Info 6 *in other languages, you will notice that the file names are different and thus the instructions for installing the files on your hard drive will be different.*

Installing EPI via Windows

- Go to Windows Explorer (or File Manager in Win 3.1) and create a temporary directory/folder on your hard drive called "c:\epitemp".

- Put disk 1 in the a: drive and copy the file on the disk (epi604_1; or ei604es1 in Spanish) to the epitemp folder.

- Do the same with disks 2 and 3 (epi604_2 and epi604_3).

- After all three files of the files are copied, "double-click" on each of the files. This will open an MS-DOS window and you will see: "Continue extraction?" Type in "Y" and press <Enter>, which will cause the file to "unzip" and extract the files necessary to install Epi. With each step, you must close the DOS window that remains.

- (**IF** you now see three folders called 1, 2, and 3, then all of the files from these three folders will need to be combined into one folder. From Windows Explorer, open directory/folder 2 and copy all of its files to folder 1. Then do the same with folder 3.)

- After ensuring that all of the files are in the same directory, double-click on the file named "Install". You will then be prompted to answer a few questions:

Question:	Response:
"Which drive is the SOURCE drive?"	Type in "C"
"Which drive is the DESTINATION drive?"	Type in "C"
"Does this drive have FLOPPY disks?"	Type in "N"
"For a normal Epi installation, press <Enter>"	Press <Enter>
"Would you like to INSTALL….?"	Type in "I"

- The screen will now say "Select Video Drivers". Press F8 to select all the options. You will then see a check mark next to all of them; hit F4 to continue.

- You will next see "Select Groups to Install". Make sure that they are already selected with a check mark, then hit F4 to continue. Now it will say "You can still change drive letters….". Hit F4 again to continue.

- You will now see the computer installing all the files of Epi Info. After each question concerning the autoexec.bat and config.sys files, answer "Y" for yes.

- Hit <Enter> to leave the installation process, and then close the DOS window.

- Put in the disk 4 with the file: "4bupdate" ("actu_b_c" in Spanish version) and copy it to the new EPI6 directory that was created with the installation of Epi. You may have to click on "View" and "Refresh" in Windows Explorer to see the newly created EPI6 folder. Double-click on the "4bupdate" file that is now in the EPI6 folder, and then type "Y" and <Enter> quite a few times (approx. 20) to overwrite existing files. This will "update" Epi Info to make it Y2K compatible. At the end of the process, close the DOS window.

- Now find the file in the EPI6 directory called "Setup", and double-click on it. You should first see a message stating that EPI (or "your group(s)") was successfully installed, and then a small window with the EPI icon.

- If you wish to create a shortcut to your desktop: In Windows 98, "right-click" on that icon and then select "Send To" and "Desktop as Shortcut"; in Windows 95, right-click on the EPI icon, then select "copy". Next, minimize or close the open windows, right-click on the desktop, and then select "paste shortcut".

- The "epitemp" folder and its contents can be deleted, if desired. But if you have sufficient space on your hard drive, it would be better to leave the folder in case EPI ever needs to be reinstalled. A good compromise solution is to delete everything in your "epitemp" folder EXCEPT the three files you started out with. They can always be unzipped again to repeat the installation.

C. Instructions for Using Epi Info 6

This section provides a brief summary of the main steps for using the programs in Epi Info 6. The key steps are as follows:

- Creating a Questionnaire
  a. Creating the Questionnaire in Epi Info 6
  b. Creating the Questionnaire in Windows or Other Software
- Creating a Record
- Limiting Data Entry to Specific Values
- Entering the Data
- Analyzing the Data

1. Creating a Questionnaire

The first step is to create a questionnaire in Epi Info 6 based on the format of the questionnaire or survey being used in the field with the clients. To simplify and limit error in the data entry process, the Epi Info 6 questionnaire should follow the same chronological order of the questionnaire or survey being used in the field.

a. Creating the Questionnaire in Epi Info 6

Step 1:
From the "**Programs**" menu select "**EPED Word Processor**".

Step 2:
To get to the questionnaire format press "**F6**". You will see that "**WW/TXT/QES**" is highlighted. Tap the **space bar** until the WW/TXT/QES mode is set to "**QES**". Using the arrow keys, go to "**Save Settings this Mode**" and press <Enter>.

Step 3:
You will now see the cursor blinking in the upper left-hand portion of the screen. You are ready to create the questionnaire. First, input basic survey data (for example, Interviewee Name/Number, Date, Loan Cycle) as identified by your program. Then type in the question number, the questions themselves (in an abbreviated form), and then the answers.

Step 4:
At the end of each input line of the questionnaire (for example, the basic survey data and the questions, but *not* the answers—in other words, every line that has a space for entering data) you must indicate the variable that the input data or question calls for. In other words, in the questionnaire or survey from the field, the answers are coded by number (for example, 1,2,3,4), by letter (for example, "M" = male or "F" = female or a,b,c,d), or by date, or they are open (for example, 'why' questions). The computer provides for each of these options. To go to the list of these options, press "**Ctrl-Q-Q**". Some of these options include the following:

_____	free form response (Last Name_____)
##	numeric response (Income #####)
<A >	alphanumeric response (Sex <F>)
<Y>	Y or N response (Owns own home <Y>)

Step 5:
Epi Info creates variable names automatically from the original questionnaire. When it encounters an underline or other special character, it looks for text on the same line that can be the basis for a variable name. The first 10 non-punctuation characters become the name. This name is used in the ANALYSIS program to refer to the data entered in this

field. More helpful variable names can be created by putting the "{" and "}" brackets around the words or parts of words to create a useful name. For example, if the question states "What is your Last Name _____ ", the variable name will be "isyourlast", since selected words like "what" are discarded automatically, along with spaces and punctuation. A more useful variable name can be created by typing the following:

"What is your {Last Name} _____ " (The number of spaces will be the number of spaces for input.) This will create the variable name LASTNAME. The bracketed variable name needs to be on the same line as the coded blank. More than one set of brackets can be used to define the variable name, as long as no more than 10 total characters are selected. When the questionnaire form is printed out from the .txt file, the brackets will be printed.

If there is more than one blank or other type of variable on a line, Epi begins the search for a useful variable name after the preceding blank. Thus,

Name _____ Age ____ Sex ____

produces three variables entitled NAME, AGE, and SEX.

For longer surveys, it may be helpful to include the question number **at the end** of the variable name to more easily identify each variable during analysis.

Note: Do NOT use letters with accents or other diacritical marks (tildas, umlauts, etc.) within the variable name.

Step 6:
If you wish to center the text in the questionnaire, type "**Control-O**" and then "**C**" to center text.

Step 7:
After finishing the questionnaire, save the file by pressing **F9**. This should change the file extension from .txt. to .qes. If it does not, then you need to go back to F6 and change to QES; then Save and go back and save by pressing F9.

You need to have this saved as a .QES file before you can open a .REC file in the next section.

b. Creating the Questionnaire in Windows or Other Software

Step 1:
If you wish, you may prepare your questionnaire in another word processing program. If you do so, do not forget to include the answer variable after the question (see section C.1.a.4).

Please save the file as a MSDOS (ASCII) text file. Now the extension should be .txt as the ending.

Step 2:
If you are working in Windows and want to import the program to Epi Info, "**Copy**" the file into the "**epi6**" subdirectory or folder of your computer.

Step 3:
To open the file in Epi Info 6 from the "**Programs**" menu, select the "**EPED Word Processor**".

Step 4:
To get to the questionnaire format press "**F6"**. You will see that "**WW/TXT/QES**" is highlighted. Tap the **space bar** until the WW/TXT/QES mode is set to "**QES"**. Using the arrow keys, go to "**Save Settings this Mode**" and press <Enter>.

Step 5:
Press "**F2**" and select "**Open file this Window**". To obtain a list of files press <Enter> twice. If you get a message that it does not find your file, make sure you type in the correct subdirectory.

Step 6:
Select your file with the extension .txt

Step 7:
After you have opened the file, you may edit it as described above in section C.1.a. Be sure to save it with F9 and make sure that the saved file now has the extension .QES

Note: Make sure that your questionnaire (QES file) is not longer than 500 lines. If it is longer, you will have to delete some lines of text that DO NOT contain any of your variables. Do so in such a way that the data entry person can still easily follow the flow of questions from the longer physical questionnaire used in the field to what is on the computer screen.

2. Creating a Record

The next step is to create a record. The record is where you will "record" or input the data from the survey and questionnaires completed in the field.

Step 1:
From the "**Programs**" menu, select "**ENTER DATA**".

Step 2:

Type in the name of the record file you want to create (normally this is the same name as the questionnaire) with a ".rec" extension instead of a ".qes" extension. Press <Enter>.

Step 3:
Type "**2**" for "**Create new data file from .qes file**" and press <Enter>.

Step 4:
At the "**New Questionnaire File .QES**" type the name of your questionnaire file (with the .qes extension) and press <Enter>.

Step 5:
At the "**OK**" prompt, select "**Y**" and press <Enter>.

Step 6:
You should now see the questionnaire in a format that allows you to input data. Check over the file to make sure that the lines do not extend beyond what is visible on the screen and that all data entry spaces and variable names in brackets are clearly visible. If you see any problems, this is the time to go back and edit the .txt file in the editing program; save it as a new .qes file, and then follow the directions to create a new .rec file. Be sure to get it correct before you start entering data.

Step 7:
Before inputting the data, however, it is necessary to limit data entry to specific values. To exit this program, select "**F10**".

3. Limiting Data Entry to Specific Values

Before entering the data, input the parameters for the answers. This helps limit errors in the data entry process. Specifically, if only four answers are possible for a question (for example, 1,2,3,4), make sure that when inputting data, the computer does not accept the answer of "5" or "23".

Step 1:
From the "**Programs**" menu, select "**CHECK Customize Entry**".

Step 2:
Type the name of the .rec file you have just created in step 2 above.

Step 3:
You will now see the record. The cursor will be blinking in the answer box. You should now go through each input line (for example, basic survey data, questions) and limit the data entry to specific values.

Step 4:

At the bottom of the screen, you will see a number of options for limiting the specific values such as the following:

F1   to set the minimum value (type in the minimum value then press "**F1**").

F2   to set the maximum value (type in the maximum value then press "**F2**"). For non-numeric fields, the 'range' is based on alphabetical order.

F3   to repeat the value in the previous field, which can then be changed manually during data entry, if desired (with cursor in field, press "**F3**").

F4   to require this field be filled in (just press "**F4**" in the required answer field).

F6   to identify specific answers <u>only</u> which will be recognized by the computer (for example, for sex, the only options are "M" or "F"; type "**M**" then press "**F6**" etc.).

F7   to skip to a different field depending on the data entered.

F8   to type in valid values.

etc.

(See Chapter 10, beginning on page 111, of the Epi manual for more details.)

Step 5:
If you need to make changes to the limits you have set, press "**F9**" and delete the limits you want to remove. To return to the record, press "**Esc**".

Step 6:
Press "**F10**" to exit. (The file will automatically save.)

4. Entering the Data

Now that the parameters for the answers have been set, begin entering the data.

Step 1:
From the "**Programs**" menu, select "**ENTER data**".

Step 2:
Type the name of the .rec file you created in Step 2.

Step 3:
Type 1 for "**Enter or Edit Data**" and press <Enter>.

Step 4:
At the "OK" prompt, type "**Y**" and press <Enter>.

Step 5:
The data entry screen now appears. Valid values for a particular answer variable are shown at the bottom left of the screen.

Step 6:
At this stage, begin entering the results of the first survey or questionnaire into the computer. After filling in all the answers for each client, the system will ask "**Write Data to Disk (Y,N,<Esc>)?**". Type "**Y**" to save the input.

Step 7:
To search for individual records you have input, type "**Ctrl-F**". At the bottom of the screen, you will see a number of options for searching the database. For example, "**F7**" and "**F8**" allow you to scroll through the records.

Step 8:
To print individual records, press "**F5**".

Step 9:
To return to the main menu, type "**F10**".

Step 10:
After all the surveys have been entered, the recommended method for verifying that the data has been entered correctly is to have a second person re-enter each record. To do this, at step 3 above, type "4" for "Reenter and verify records….", instead of "1". The user will then be asked to enter "Names of Identifying Fields". It is recommended to use the survey identification number, which will be unique for each record. Thus, for the "Name of Identifying Field", the exact name of the survey number variable should be entered (as it appears in the QES file). Then, each time a survey number is entered to identify which record is being re-entered, any data entered differently the second time will generate an error message and give you the opportunity to correct it.

Note: To facilitate the re-entering of data for quality control, the surveys should be split by region. Person 1 enters all of region A, and then "re-enters" all of region B, which has already been entered by Person 2.

When you enter data:
- Fields will accept only the type of data shown above the prompt line.
- Pressing <Enter> in a blank field without entering data enters a missing value.
- When a field is full, the cursor moves automatically to the next field.
- Errors on entry are signaled by a "beep" to signal you to correct the item immediately.
- Each blank is called a "field". Each copy of the questionnaire you complete is called a "record". The records are stored in the file with the name ending in .REC, called either the data file or the >REC file.

After the information has been entered in the last field of a questionnaire, the question "Write to the disk (Y/N)?" appears at the button of the screen. Replying "Y" saves the

record and brings up the next available empty record. Note that the record number on the lower right changes. If the reply is "N", the cursor jumps to the first field in the questionnaire and you have another opportunity to edit the record.

To exit from the program at any time, use the F10 function key. If you haven't saved the current record, ENTER asks if you would like to "write to disk" and then returns to the EPI6 menu or to DOS.

5. Analyzing the Data

After inputting the data, begin analyzing it.

Step 1:
From the "**Programs**" menu, select "**Analysis of Data**".

Step 2:
To begin analyzing the data entered in your .rec file, type "**read filename.rec**" (replace "filename" in the example with the name of your .rec file).

Step 3:
In analysis, you will need to know the variable names—the 10-character names given to the different questions in the questionnaire. Remember, you gave your variables a name when you designed your questionnaire by placing key words within brackets (please see C.1.a.5). To view the list of variable names, press "**F3**". A printed list of variable names is useful during analysis. After doing the "read filename.rec" command, then enter "variables", and print (see #9 below).

Step 4:
There a number of ways to analyze the data. They include assessing frequency and cross-tabulating results. The frequency variable—"**FREQ**"—gives the frequency with which a certain variable occurs in your questionnaires. This enables you to see the variety and number of responses, whether the variable is ordinal or interval, and so on. For example, if you wanted to find out how many respondents were women, and if the variable name for the sex of clients was "**SEX**", at the "**EPI6>**" prompt, type "**FREQ SEX**". This would give you the breakdown of men and women for all records that have been input into the file. To generate percentages or other statistics (such as standard deviation) with your analysis data, type in the command line: "set percents=on" or "set statistics=on".

Step 5:
To learn about the relation between two variables, do a cross-tabulation. For example, if you have a variable named PART, which tells you if the person is a participant or not, then do the following. To know the breakdown for participants and non-participants by their sex, at the "**EPI6>**" prompt you would type "**TABLES SEX PART**".

The "**PART**" variable—which you assigned to differentiate between clients and non-clients—is a key variable to complete and have correct for all respondents since all comparisons are made on the basis of this variable. If you have two credit programs, there may be four variables for PART.

Step 6:
To develop a list of clients by their record number and gender (for example, at the "**EPI6>**" prompt), type "**LIST SEX;** this would give the sex for each participant.

If you type **LIST** only, you will get a readout of all variables for all the files, which is helpful for data cleaning. The better one for this function is the F4 key for **BROWSE.**

Step 7:
Another useful command is **MEANS**, which measures the mean of a specific indicator being measured. For example, "**MEANS AGE AMOUNT**".

Step 8:
Epi Info also can create bar graphs, pie charts, and line graphs. The quality, however, is not as good as when exporting to the Microsoft Office Suite and then manipulating the data into charts and graphs. It is possible to export Epi Info data to twelve different database formats. Type F2 for other commands.

Step 9:
The information from analysis can be sent to the printer or screen, or to a disk for later careful analysis. The F5 key is a toggle switch for sending what is coming over the screen to the printer. To print, press F5 so that it says "Output – Printer" at the top of the screen, and then enter the command for FREQ or TABLES, etc.

Step 10:
To leave the analysis program, type beside the "**EPI6>**" prompt, **CLOSE**. Now at the next line beside the "**EPI6>**" prompt, type **QUIT**. (In Windows, you can just use the F10 key.)

Epi Info Analysis Guidelines for the Impact Survey

These guidelines provide the basic Epi Info commands to analyze data collected from the Impact Survey. Further descriptions of the statistics and the meaning of the results are in Chapter 4, Tool #1, Impact Survey, Part F, Guidelines for Data Coding and Analysis. More detailed instructions are also available in the Epi Info Manual (order from the Epidemiology Program Office, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Atlanta, Georgia 30333, USA. (404) 728-0545. EpiInfo@cdc1.cdc.gov.)

Commands for Analyzing Data in Epi Info

Eleven main commands are used to analyze data in Epi (additional commands can be obtained by pressing the F1 button while in Epi Analysis). The following four are file commands:

1. **READ**
   tells Epi to read (or access) a specific data file.

2. **SET**
   changes the setting in the program.

3. **ROUTE**
   sends the data to a file in the computer, in the printer, or to the screen.

4. **WRITE**
   creates a new recfile after new variables have been created. **New variables will *not* be saved unless a new recfile is written.** Generally it makes sense to save updated recfiles in a sequence—doe example, FILENAMEa, FILENAMEb, or FILENAME1, FILENAME2. To create a new recfile, type:
   ROUTE {FILENAMEb.REC}
   WRITE RECFILE

The following seven are data commands:

5. **LIST**
   displays specific variables when the command is followed by a list of variables. For example**: LIST ID MEMB SCHOOL**…etc. If the list is scrolling too fast over the screen try typing**: ROUTE SCREEN** to bring the data up in screen sizes because it may route directly to a file or the printer.

6. FREQ
displays the frequency with which the observation is occurring.

7. TABLES
displays a cross-tabulation of two variables to compare categorical or binary data—for example, when 1 is assigned for males and 0 for females or yes/no questions—as well as a chi-squared test to see if the prevalence in two column groups differ significantly.

8. MEANS
displays a cross tabulation of continuous data—for example, age, income, number of children—and also the mean and standard deviations of the column groups as well as an ANOVA to see if the means are significantly different across groups parametrically. ANOVA measures the differences in means between groups. If the p-value is less than 0.05 then the means of the groups are significantly different from one another. However, when testing more than two groups at a time, ANOVA does not specify which groups are different from each other so it is necessary to select two groups to test at a time. When looking at two groups the ANOVA test is equivalent to a t-test. If the variances of the two groups are significantly different one of the necessary assumptions for parametric statistics is violated. This procedure is outline in Question #3-1. You will be advised to use the Kruskill-Wallace test beneath the ANOVA results to see if the means are significantly different across groups non-parametrically.

9. SELECT
filters the data so that unwanted records can be removed or single records can be observed by themselves. For example, to analyze a sub-sample of the data, such as two-year clients *only*, type: **SELECT CLIENT=2**. Typing SELECT by itself deselects all the filter elements and the program will go back to analyzing all records. SELECT can be indicating a specific value, a categorical number (0,1, 98,99, etc) or **a missing value indicated by a "."**. The common operators used with the SELECT command are

> greater than
< less than
>= greater than or equal to
<= less than or equal to
= equal to
<> not equal to

DEFINE
used when adding new variables. Variables are commonly numeric and the variable name is followed by #s which determine how many digits must be reserved for the new value—for example, **DEFINE PROFIT ##.##** for a maximum values of $99.99. If the amount were $100.99 there would need to be an additional digit, ###.##. Common operators used with the DEFINE command are as follows:

+	addition
-	subtraction
*	multiplication
/	division
DIV	division with integer results
If	sets criteria—for example, IF CLIENT=1
Then	sets new values—for example, THEN MEMB=1
Or	sets new value if *one or more* definitions are true—for example, IF CLIENT=1 OR CLIENT=2 THEN MEMB=1
And	sets new value if *all* definitions are true—for example, IF CLIENT=1 AND MONSIN=4 THEN MEMB=1
Else	sets the value for all other responses—for example, IF CLIENT=1 THEN MEMB=1 ELSE EMB=0

11. **UPDATE**
Type **UPDATE** at the prompt when you want to make corrections or changes to the actual data file. **Before typing UPDATE, it is <u>very important</u> to first type SELECT so that all the data will be shown and the system will not save the updates without all the data, it is possible to lose data if you do not type SELECT first!** The screen will display the data with the variables in the columns and each respondent's responses by row. When these changes are made the program will ask "Write data to disk? Yes/No." After typing "y" there is no need to write a new recfile as the change has been automatically saved to the database. Use the **F10** button to exit the database and return to the Analysis prompt.

Most of the variable names are already included in the qes file provided; however, the data file and new variables will be named in the field. When the name of the file or variable is not provided, it will be referred to as {FILENAME} or {VARIABLENAME}. The appropriate file or variable name should be used in it place *without* the {}.

First Steps

To bring up a file into Epi for analysis choose the "Programs" drop down menu, and then choose "Analysis of Data." At the Epi6> prompt type:

READ {FILENAME}
there is no need to type the file extension such as .REC since Epi Analysis only reads .REC files

To get the percents of the results (highly recommended), type:
SET PERCENTS=ON

To look at the data, press the **F4** button to 'browse'. Changes cannot be made to the data from browse, they must be made after the **UPDATE** command.

1. Client Information

To begin analyzing the data it is necessary to know the basic parameters of the data set. This analysis provides information as to how many respondents are included in each sample group, how many respondents are from each community or borrower group, and how long on average respondents participated in the program. These are basic commands to analyze this data.

Q: To determine the number and percentage of one-year clients, two-year clients included in the survey and incoming or non-clients, type:
    FREQ CLIENT
    The variable CLIENT represents a descriptive grouping of the client status where
    1= one-year clients,
    2= two-year clients (or longer) or
    3= incoming clients or non-clients.

Q: To determine the number and percentage of respondents coming from the different Credit Associations included in the survey, type:
    FREQ GROUP
    This will summarize the responses of *current clients* (one-year and two-year clients) only because this section of the survey will be blank for non-clients.

Q: To determine the average number of months in the program for the one-year clients (CLIENT=1) and two-year clients (CLIENT=2), type:
    FREQ MONSIN
    look to see if there are any 99 or 98 responses. If there are then type:
    SELECT MONSIN<>98

SELECT MONSIN<>99

Before comparing the means of any variable, it is necessary to exclude from the analysis responses coded as 98 (does not apply) or 99 (don't know) by using the **SELECT** command. The **SELECT** command defines which cases to include in the analysis. If included, the 98 and 99 responses will affect the mean when actually no response was given. This may skew your results to very high if you are looking at the age of children, or very low if you are looking at income, so be aware of unusual results. Excluding 98 and 99 responses can be done in either of two ways:

1. if none of the true responses would be greater than 98 (for example, 100), then the above command can be used **SELECT {VARIABLENAME} <98**.
2. if a true response is greater than 98 then type **SELECT {VARIABLENAME}<>99** and {**VARIABLENAME}<>98**.

To see if a 98 or 99 response was given one can always check first with the command **FREQ {VARIABLENAME}**. It is also important to compare the total number of cases with the total persons interviewed. If there are missing cases it could be that the data was not entered into the database, or that the responses were coded incorrectly.

It is necessary to clear the selection line after each analysis and return to select all the records by typing **SELECT**. Otherwise, the selection criteria will continue to be applied to all subsequent analysis.

Skip these commands if there are no 98 or 99 responses

MEANS MONSIN

will provide the average values for all clients participating in the program

MEANS MONSIN CLIENT

including CLIENT will provide an average value for the 1-year and 2 year clients**. The first variable after the data command (for example, MEANS) will be the row values (for example, MONSIN), the second variable will be the column values (for example, CLIENT).** The second variable in a command is the grouping variable and will be the groups for which the means are compared in the t-test.

SELECT

will deselect all the filter criteria such as MONSIN<98 and MONSIN<99. Look at the top of the screen to see that the Criteria "All records selected" is indicated.

Q: To determine the average number of loans the clients in the two groups have taken, type:

SELECT LOAN<>98 OR LOAN<>99
MEANS LOAN CLIENT
SELECT

Q: To determine the number and percentage of clients in the two groups behind in their repayments, type:

TABLES REPAY CLIENT

Q: To determine the average amount of savings of the clients in the two groups, type:
SELECT CURSAV<>98 OR CURSAV<>99
MEANS CURSAV CLIENT
SELECT

Q: To determine if clients' savings in the two groups are more than the required amount, type:
TABLES SAVMR CLIENT

Q: To determine the average amount of first loans by client groups, type:
SELECT FSTLOAN<>98 OR FSTLOAN<>99
MEANS FSTLOAN CLIENT
SELECT

Q: To determine the average amount of current loans by client groups, type:
SELECT CURRLOAN <>98 OR CURRLOAN<>99
MEANS CURRLOAN CLIENT
SELECT

[The previous heading is #1. The following is #3. Where is #2???]

3. Comparing the Basic Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Respondents

These commands are to analyze the similarities and differences in regard to **basic demographic** information (age, marital status, years of education, literacy, family size, measures of wealth like assets or occupation). Understanding the demographic composition of the respondent groups is very important to impact analysis. Significant differences in basic demographic variables between groups may be the underlying cause of differences in outcome variables of interest rather than the effect of the program. If significant differences are found in the demographic variables there are advanced statistical methods to control for this differences which are not discussed in this manual or the Epi Info manual.

Comparisons can be made in two ways: First, between members (current clients which are the one-year and two-year clients) and non-members (incoming or non-clients). This comparison is done by grouping using a newly created variable— **MEMB** (see below). Second, comparisons can be made between three groups using the **CLIENT** variable as the grouping variables. In order to interpret using statistical tests the **CLIENT** variable should be compared using to groups at a time. After this point, either **CLIENT** or **MEMB** can be used as grouping variables.

Q: To classify the two participant groups create a new variable {MEMB}, type:
      DEFINE MEMB #
      IF CLIENT=1 OR CLIENT=2 THEN MEMB=1 ELSE MEMB=0
      MEMB should be used as a grouping variable in order to make comparisons between members and nonmembers. To make comparisons between the three groups CLIENT should be used as the grouping variable.

Individual Level: Basic Information

Q #1a: To find out if the respondent has ever been a program member, type:
      FREQ MEMB
 Or type:
      TABLES MEMB CLIENT
       for the same information across the three client groups

Q #1b: To find out how long on average respondent were members, type:
      SELECT LONGMEMB<>98 OR LONGMEMB<>99
      TABLES LONGMEMB CLIENT

Q #2: To find out the gender of the respondents between members and nonmembers, type:
      TABLES GENDER MEMB
 Or type:
      TABLES GENDER CLIENT
       for the same information across three client groups

Q #3: To compare age of members and nonmembers, type:
      FREQ OLD
       to see if the responses includes a 98 or 99
      SELECT OLD<98
       if at least one 98 is included in the results, or skip if no 98s or 99s
      MEANS OLD MEMB
       average age for all members and nonmembers. The averages will be compared and the
       p-value will indicate if there is a significant difference in the ages
 To compare between the one-year clients, two-year clients and non-members, type:
      MEANS OLD CLIENTS
 To find the average age of all the respondents, type:
      MEANS OLD
      SELECT

Q #3-1: To compare differences using a t-test to compare the average age of respondents for one-year clients, two-year clients and incoming or non-members, it is necessary to compare only two groups at a time, type:
      SELECT OLD <98 (to exclude those who might have said 99. Don't know)
      SELECT CLIENT<>3

This deselects non-members from the comparison
MEANS OLD CLIENT
 will compare average age of one-year clients and two-year clients have received
SELECT
SELECT OLD<>1
MEANS OLD CLIENT
 will compare the average age of two-year clients to non-members
SELECT
SELECT OLD<>2
MEANS OLD CLIENT
 will compare the average age of one-year clients to non-members

SELECT

To analyze marital status, it is necessary to create a new variable with the value 0 or 1.
0 indicates not married (combine the answers 3. divorced, 4. single, and 5. widowed) and 1
indicates married (combine answers 1. Married/ monogamous free union and 2.
Married/polygamous free union).

Q #4: To find out what the marital statuses of respondents are across groups, type:
     TABLES MARITAL CLIENT

**Q #4-1: In order to compare how many respondents are married to those who are
unmarried across groups it is necessary to create a new variable which defines only
married people: if married the {VARIABLENAME}=1 if not married then
{VARIABLENAME}=0. To create this new variable and compare married to unmarried
respondents between members and nonmembers, type:**
     DEFINE MARYES #
     IF MARITAL=1 OR MARITAL=2 THEN MARYES=1 ELSE MARYES=1
     IF MARITAL=. THEN MARYES=.
     TABLES MARYES MEMB

Q #5: To compare amount of schooling members and non-members have received, type:
     SELECT SCHOOL < 98
      this excludes cases where the response was 99-don't know or 98-not applicable
     MEANS SCHOOL MEMB
     SELECT

Q #6: To compare whether there are differences in literacy of current members and nonmembers, type:
> **SELECT READ <98**
> **TABLES READ MEMB**
> **SELECT**
>
> Or to determine if there is a difference between the three groups, use the **CLIENT** variable and the **SELECT** command as you did in the example for question #3-1 to restrict comparisons to two groups at a time.

Household Level: Basic Information

Q #7: To determine whether there is a difference in the average number of adults and the average number of children in households between members and nonmembers, type:
> **SELECT ADULT<>98 OR ADULT<>99**
> **MEANS ADULT MEMB**
> **SELECT**
> to compare adults
>
> **SELECT CHILD<>98 OR CHILD<>99**
> **MEANS CHILD MEMB**
> **SELECT**
> to compare children

Q: #7-1: To compare the total family size of members and nonmembers it is necessary to total the number of people in the family. First check that no 99 or 98 values were included in the ADULT or CHILD variables. To create a new variable FAMTOT and add the number of adults, number of children 5-17 and the number of children under five years of age, type:
> **DEFINE FAMTOT ##**
> **IF ADULT=99 OR ADULT=98 THEN FAMTOT=.**
> **IF CHILD=99 OR CHILD=98 THEN FAMTOT=.**
> **FAMTOT=ADULT+ CHILD**
> **FREQ FAMTOT**
> to check to see of the new variable looks accurate. It is also possible to check by typing:
> **LIST ID ADULT CHILD FAMTOT**
> which will bring only these variables up on the screen. If the list is scrolling by too fast, you may
> want to type; **ROUTE SCREEN** in case the program is routing to the printer. Select a few
> examples to ensure that **ADULT + CHILD = FAMTOT**.
> **MEANS FAMTOT MEMB**

Or to determine if there is a difference between the three groups, use the **CLIENT** variable and the **SELECT** command as you did in the example for question #3-1 to restrict comparisons to two groups at a time.

Q #8a: To determine the number of economically active family members, type:
MEANS ACTIVE MEMB

Q #8b: To determine the number of salaried family members, type:
MEANS SALARY MEMB

Q #9: To determine whether the household head is female or male, type:
TABLES HEAD MEMB

Q #9-1: It may be useful to create a new variable for how many female head of household respondents there are and to use that information for other analysis such as how specifically female head of households use their loans, etc. To create a new female head of household variable, type:

DEFINE FEMHEAD #
it is important to determine all the permutations possible for the head of household and include this when defining the new variable. In this case if a female is the head of the household, FEMHEAD will receive a value of one, if there is a male head of household FEMHEAD will receive a value of 0.
IF GENDER=2 AND HEAD=1 THEN FEMHEAD=1
this indicates that the gender of the respondent is female and they are the head of the household
IF GENDER=2 AND HEAD=2 THEN FEMHEAD=0
this indicates that the gender of the respondent is female and their husband or a male is the head of
the household
IF GENDER=1 AND HEAD=1 THEN FEMHEAD=0
this indicates that the gender of the respondent is male and they are the head of the household
IF GENDER=1 AND HEAD=3 THEN FEMHEAD=1
this indicates that the gender of the respondent is male and female is the head of
the household
IF HEAD=3 THEN FEMHEAD=1
IF HEAD=2 THEN FEMHEAD=0
TABLES FEMHEAD MEMB

4. Education of Children

Q #10a: To determine whether there is a difference between members and nonmembers of the average number of school age children, type:
>**SELECT SCHAGE<>98 OR SCHAGE<>99**
>**MEANS SCHAGE MEMB**
>**SELECT**

Q #10b: To determine whether there is a difference between members and nonmembers of the average number of children that currently attend school, type:
>**SELECT INSCHOOL<>98 OR INSCHOOL<>99**
>**MEANS INSCHOOL MEMB**
>**SELECT**

Q #10c: To determine whether there is a difference between members and nonmembers of the average number of children that have never attended school, type:
>**SELECT NEVER<>98 OR NEVER<>99**
>**MEANS NEVER MEMB**
>**SELECT**

Q #10d: To determine the whether there is a difference in the average highest grade level completed between members and nonmembers, type:
>**SELECT GRADE<>98 OR GRADE<>99**
>**MEANS GRADE MEMB**
>**SELECT**

Q #11: To determine whether there is a difference between members and nonmembers in the direction of change (increase or decrease) in spending on education, type:
>**SELECT SCHEXP<>98 or SCHEXP<>99**
>**TABLES SCHEXP MEMB**
>**SELECT**

Q #11-1: In order to compare whether members or non-members increased their spending relative to last year, define a new variable, type:
>**DEFINE SCHMORE ##**
>**IF SCHEXP=3 THEN SCHMORE=1 ELSE SCHMORE=0**
>**IF SCHEXP=. OR SCHEXP=99 OR SCHEXP=98 THEN SCHMORE=.**
>**TABLES SCHMORE MEMB**

>Or to determine if there is a difference between the three groups, use the **CLIENT** variable as the grouping variable and the **SELECT** command as you did in the example for question #3-1 to restrict comparisons to two groups at a time.

5. Loan Use and Individual Income

Q #12a: To determine whether there is a difference in investment into an income generating activity across groups, type:
      TABLES INVINC CLIENT

Q #12b: The question requires that the INVEST1, INVEST2, and INVEST3 variables are tallied in order to get an accurate count of the responses. To determine the reasons respondents decide to undertake a specific enterprise, type:
      TABLES INVEST1 MEMB
      TABLES INVEST2 MEMB
      TABLES INVEST3 MEMB
       the results from the table can be hand tallied to get the total count of each response. If there are many responses they could be pulled into common groups and a collective variable can be created to represent them—see the following directions. If a specific activity is of interest a variable can be created in the same way to tally the data from all the tables for that variable.

To create a new variable which tabulates a single variable, type:
      IF INVEST1=1 OR INVEST2=1 OR INVEST3=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1
      ELSE
      {NEWVARIABLE}=0
       repeat this process with each of the possible types of investment

TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB
       will provide the total number of responses for that variable, for example, how many respondents invested in commerce/trade/retail across groups. Or to make comparisons can be made between one-year and two-year clients only, type:
      SELECT CLIENT<>3
      TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} CLIENT
      SELECT

Q #12c: These responses should have been coded as yes/no responses.
1. **To determine how many clients used at least some of their loan on food, type:**
      SELECT FOOD<>99
      TABLES FOOD MEMB
      SELECT
2. **To determine how many clients used at least some of their loan on family expenses, type:**
      SELECT BUY<>99
      TABLES BUY MEMB
      SELECT
3. **To determine how many clients used at least some of their loan lending to someone else, type:**
      SELECT GIVE<>99

> **TABLES GIVE MEMB**
> **SELECT**

4. **To determine how many clients held on to some of their loan rather than invest, type:**
> **SELECT KEEP<>99**
> **TABLES KEEP MEMB**
> **SELECT**

Q #13: To determine whether there is a difference between members and nonmembers in the direction of change (increase or decrease) the households' overall income, type:
> **SELECT INCHOUS<>98 or INCHOUS<>99**
> **TABLES INCHOUS MEMB**
> **SELECT**

Q #13-1: In order to compare whether members or non-members have increased household income, define a new variable, type:
> **DEFINE MOREINC ##**
> **IF INCHOUS=4 OR INCHOUS=5 THEN MOREINC=1 ELSE MOREINC=0**
> **IF INCHOUS=. OR INCHOUS=99 OR INCHOUS=98 THEN MOREINC=.**
> **TABLES MOREINC MEMB**
>
> Or to determine if there is a difference between the three groups, use the **CLIENT** variable as the grouping variable and the **SELECT** command as you did in the example for question #3-1 to restrict comparisons to two groups at a time.

Q #14a: To determine whether earnings increased or decreased between members and nonmembers, type:
> **SELECT EARN<>99**
> **MEAN EARN MEMB**
> if there was an overall increase in a group, the mean should be above 3, and overall decrease would result in a mean below 3, and a mean of 3 would indicate that income stayed the same the table will also provide the frequency of each change for each group
> **SELECT**

Q #14a-1: Another way to determine whether income increased which is easier to analyze is to create a new variable which would take the value 1, if income increased, and the value 0 if income did not increase. To create this new variable, type:
> **DEFINE EARNINC #**
> the **EARNINC** variable is grouping the **loan** variable into two groups—respondents with increased income and respondents without increased income
> **IF EARN=4 OR EARN=5 THEN EARNINC=1 ELSE EARNINC=0**
> **TABLES EARNINC MEMB**
>
> Or to determine if there is a difference between the three groups, use the **CLIENT** variable and the **SELECT** command as you did in the example for question #3-1 to restrict comparisons to two groups at a time.

Q #14a-2: To see if there is a relationship between the number of loans a member has received and whether they say their income has increased, type:
> **SELECT MEMB=1 AND LOANS<99**
> **MEANS LOANS EARNINC**
> **SELECT**

Q #14a-3: It is also possible to investigate this question with the actual loan amount by typing:
> **SELECT MEMB=1 AND CURRLOAN <> 99**
> to exclude if the loan amount is not known
> **MEANS CURRLOAN EARNINC**
> **SELECT**

Q #14b: The question requires that the DEC1, DEC2, and DEC3 variables are tallied in order to get an accurate count of the responses. To determine the reasons why income decreased, type:
> **TABLES DEC1 MEMB**
> **TABLES DEC2 MEMB**
> **TABLES DEC3 MEMB**
> the results from the tables can be hand tallied to get the total count of each response. If there are many responses they could be pulled into common groups and a collective variable can be created to represent them—see the following directions. If a specific activity is of interest a variable can be created in the same way to tally the data from all the tables for that variable.

To create a new variable that tabulates a single variable, type;
> **IF DEC1=1 OR DEC2=1 OR DEC3=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE {NEWVARIABLE}=0**
> repeat this process with each of the possible reasons for a decrease in income
> **TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB**
> will provide the total number of responses for that variable, for example, respondent or household member
> has been sick.

Q #14c: The question requires that the INC1, INC2, and INC3 variables are tallied in order to get an accurate count of the responses. To determine the reasons why income decreased, type:
> **TABLES INC1 MEMB**
> **TABLES INC2 MEMB**
> **TABLES INC3 MEMB**
> the results from the tables can be hand tallied to get the total count of each response. If there are many responses they could be pulled into common groups and a collective variable can be created to represent them—see the following directions. If a specific activity is of interest a variable can be created in the same way to tally the data from all the tables for that variable.

To create a new variable that tabulates the a single variable, type;
> **IF INC1=1 OR INC2=1 OR INC3=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE {NEWVARIABLE}=0**

repeat this process with each of the possible reasons for an increase in income

TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB

will provide the total number of responses for that variable, for example, respondent expanded existing enterprise

6. Enterprise Level Income, Labor, and Working Capital

Q #15a: To determine whether there is a difference between members and non-members in whether they had worked as hired labor in the last 4 weeks, type:

SELECT WORKPAY <> 99
to exclude 99 don't know responses
TABLES WORKPAY MEMB
SELECT

Q #15b: To determine whether there is a difference between members and nonmembers in whether they had worked on their own business in the last 4 weeks, type:

SELECT ENTERPR <> 99
to exclude 99 don't know responses
TABLES ENTERPR MEMB
SELECT

NOTE: The outcome variable that is relevant to assess impact on enterprise income is the TOTAL PROFIT (the returns on Activity 1 plus the returns on Activity 2). To this end, the costs, revenue and profit data from activity 1 MUST be added to the costs, revenue and profit data from activity 2 for the total monthly values. These activities can be looked at separately for descriptive purposes, but they are not relevant by themselves for evaluating impact.

Q #16a and #17a: The number of responses for 16a should equal the number of ENTRPR=1 responses in question #14b. **To determine the type of business members worked in during the last 4 weeks, type:**

SELECT ENTERPR=1
select for those respondents that worked on their own business in the last four weeks
TABLES ACT1 MEMB
TABLES ACT2 MEMB
to view the different activities. The results from each of the type of business owned should then
Is hand tallied by code to get the *total result.*
SELECT

Q #16b and #17b: To determine whether respondents own a business, engage in a family business or are in a partnership, type:

SELECT ENTERPR=1
TABLES OWN1 MEMB

TABLES OWN2 MEMB

   to view the different activities. The results from each of the type of business owned should then be tallied by code to get the *total result.*
   SELECT
To create a new variable that tabulates a single variable for both activities, type:
   DEFINE {TOTOWN} #
   IF OWN1=1 OR OWN2=1 OR THEN TOTOWN=1 ELSE TOTOWN=0
   IF OWN1=. OR OWN2=. THEN TOTOWN=.
   TABLES TOTOWN MEMB

Q #16c and #17c: To determine the frequency product cycle for the businesses, type:
   SELECT ENTERPR=1
   FREQ PROCYC1
   FREQ PROCYC2
   to view the different activities. The results from each of the type of business owned should then
   Is hand tallied by code to get the *total result.*
   SELECT

Q #16d and #17d: Responses should all have been recorded as monthly amounts. **To determine monthly costs for enterprise #1, type:**
   SELECT ENTERPR=1
   FREQ MONCOST1
   FREQ MONCOST2
   Remember that any 99-don't know responses and 98-not applicable responses need to be excluded from the results
To create a new variable that tabulates the variables for both activities, type:
   DEFINE {TOTCOST} #######
   IF MONCOST1=. THEN MONCOST1=0
   IF MONCOST2=. THEN MONCOST2=0
   IF MONCOST1=98 OR MONCOST1=99 THEN MONCOST1=.
   IF MONCOST2=98 OR MONCOST2=99 THEN MONCOST2=.
   TOTCOST=MONCOST1+MONCOST2
   MEANS TOTCOST MEMB

Q #16e and #17e: Responses should all have been recorded as monthly amounts. **To determine monthly sales for enterprise #1, type:**
   SELECT ENTERPR=1
   FREQ MONSALE1
   FREQ MONSALE2
   Remember that any 99-don't know responses and 98-not applicable responses need to be excluded from the results
To create a new variable that tabulates the variables for both activities, type:
   DEFINE {TOTSALE} #######

> **IF MONSALE1=. THEN MONSAL1=0**
> **IF MONSALE2=. THEN MONSALE2=0**
> **IF MONSALE1=98 OR MONSALE1=99 THEN MONSALE1=.**
> **IF MONSALE2=98 OR MONSALE2=99 THEN MONSALE2=.**
> **TOTCOST=MONSALE1+MONSALE2**
> **MEANS TOTSALE MEMB**

Q #16f and #17f: Responses should all have been recorded as monthly amounts. **To determine monthly profits for enterprise #1, type:**
> **SELECT ENTERPR=1**
> **FREQ MONPROF1**
> **FREQ MONPROF2**
> Remember that any 99-don't know responses and 98-not applicable responses need to be
> excluded from the results

To create a new variable that tabulates the variables for both activities, type:
> **DEFINE {TOTCOST} ##**
> **IF MONPROF1=. THEN MONPROF1=0**
> **IF MONPROF2=. THEN MONPROF2=0**
> **IF MONPROF1=98 OR MONPROF1=99 THEN MONPROF1=.**
> **IF MONPROF2=98 OR MONPROF2=99 THEN MONPROF2=.**
> **TOTCOST=MONPROF1+MONPROF2**
> **MEANS TOTPROF MEMB**

Q: To determine if there is a difference between respondents' own estimate of monthly enterprise profits and the respondent's reported costs and sales, type:
> **DEFINE NETINC ######.##**
> **NETINC=TOTSALE-TOTCOST**
> this command subtracts product costs from product sales to equal net income
> **IF TOTSALE=. OR TOTCOST=. THEN NETINC1=.**
> if either sales or costs information is unknown, then net income will be blank
> **MEANS PROFTOT MEMB**
> **MEANS NETINC MEMB**
> compare the means of the declared profit and the net income derived from the costs and
sales
> information
> **SELECT**

Repeat this process with MONCOST2 and MONSALE2 to create a new variable for the second activity—NETINC2 and compare to MONPROF2. This allows for a comparison between each activity.

Several different ways of looking at differences between members and non-members include the following:

> **SELECT MEMB=1**

to select one-year and two-year clients only
MEANS NETINC CLIENT
SELECT

SELECT CLIENT<>2
to compare one-year clients and non-members
MEANS NETINC CLIENT
SELECT
etc…

Q #18: To analyze how many in each group estimated their costs, revenue and profits with difficulty, type:
FREQ RATE MEMB
or use **CLIENT** as a grouping variable

Q #19: To analyze how many children under 10 and children from 11 to 17 years old helped in the business and how many missed school to help, type:
TABLES UNDER10 MEMB
TABLES UND10MIS MEMB
TABLES 11TO17 MEMB
TABLES MIS1117 MEMB
or use **CLIENT** as a grouping variable
a new variable can be created adding **UNDER10** and **11TO17** together to get the total number of children than missed school

Q #20: The question requires that the USE1, USE2, and USE3 variables be tallied in order to get an accurate count of the responses of the three principle ways profits were used. To determine the different uses of profits, type:
TABLES USE1 MEMB
TABLES USE2 MEMB
TABLES USE3 MEMB
the results from the tables can be hand tallied to get the total count of each response. If there are
many responses they could be pulled into common groups and a collective variable can be created
to represent them—see the following directions. If a specific activity is of interest a variable can
be created in the same way to tally the data from all the tables for that variable.
To create a new variable which tabulates a single variable, type:
IF USE1=1 OR USE2=1 OR USE3=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE
{NEWVARIABLE}=0
repeat this process with each of the possible types of USE
TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB
will provide the total number of responses for that variable, for example, to buy food. Or to make comparisons can be made between one-year and two-year clients only, type:

SELECT CLIENT<>3
TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} CLIENT
SELECT

7. Enterprise Level: Improvement and Assets

Q #21: The following are yes/no/don't know questions. **To determine what changes were made to the respondents' businesses over the last 12 months and to compare the frequency of each change between members and nonmembers, type:**
a) If the size of the enterprise was expanded:
   SELECT EXPAND<>99
   TABLES EXPAND MEMB
   SELECT
b) If new products were added:
   SELECT NEWPRO<>99
   TABLES NEWPRO MEMB
   SELECT
c) If more workers were hired:
   SELECT HIRE<>99
   TABLES HIRE MEMB
   SELECT
d) If the product was improved or value was added to the product:
   SELECT IMP<>99
   TABLES IMP MEMB
   SELECT
e) If costs were reduced by buying inputs at a greater volume:
   SELECT VOLUME<>99
   TABLES VOLUME MEMB
   SELECT
f) If costs were reduced with a cheaper source of credit:
   SELECT CHPCDT<>99
   TABLES CHPCDT MEMB
   SELECT
g) If a new enterprise was developed:
   SELECT NEWENT<>99

   TABLES NEWENT MEMB

   SELECT
h) If the product was sold in new markets or locations:
   SELECT NEWMARK<>99
   TABLES NEWMARK MEMB
   SELECT

Or to determine if there is a difference between the three groups, use the **CLIENT** variable and the **SELECT** command as you did in the example for question #3-1 to restrict comparisons to two groups at a time.

Q #22: The following are yes/no/don't know questions. **To determine if the respondents made any purchases or invested in assets for their income-generating activity over the last 12 months and to compare the frequency of each change between members and nonmembers, type:**
a) If small tools or accessories were purchased:
   SELECT SMTOOL<>99
   TABLES SMTOOL MEMB
   SELECT
b) If major tools were purchased:
   SELECT MAJTOOL<>99
   TABLES MAJTOOL MEMB
   SELECT
c) If they purchased a means of transportation for their product:
   SELECT TRAN<>99
   TABLES TRAN MEMB
   SELECT
d) If they invested in a storage structure:
   SELECT STOR<>99
   TABLES STOR MEMB
   SELECT
e) If a minor investment was made in their marketing site:
   SELECT MKTSITE<>99
   TABLES MKTSITE MEMB
   SELECT
f) If they invested in a structure for their marketing site:
   SELECT STRUCT<>99
   TABLES STRUCT MEMB
   SELECT

Or to determine if there is a difference between the three groups, use the **CLIENT** variable and the **SELECT** command as you did in the example for question #3-1 to restrict comparisons to two groups at a time.

8. Savings and Enterprise Skills

Q #23: To determine how many people in each group have cash savings, type:
   TABLES CASHSAV CLIENT
   To see if there is a significant difference between the three groups it is necessary to restrict
   analysis to two variables at a time as in question #3-1.

Q #24: Of those who have personal cash savings, to determine whether the respondent's savings increased—a mean greater than 3, stayed the same—a mean of 3, or decreased—a mean less than three, type:
> **SELECT CHGSAVE<>99**
> **MEANS CHGSAVE CLIENT**
> the table also provides the frequencies of the different changes between groups
> **SELECT**

Q #24-1: To determine if there was any difference in the occurrence increase in savings between members and nonmembers by creating a new variable indicating increase in savings only, type:
> **DEFINE INCSAVE #**
> **IF CHGSAVE=4 OR CHGSAVE=5 THEN INCSAVE=1 ELSE INCSAVE=0**
> **IF CHGSAVE=. OR CHGSAVE=99 OR CHGSAVE=98 THEN INCSAVE=.**
> **TABLES INCSAVE MEMB**

Q #25: The question requires that the DECID1, DECID2, and DECID3 variables are tallied in order to get an accurate count of the responses. To determine the reasons respondents decide to undertake a specific enterprise, type:
> **TABLES DECID1 MEMB**
> **TABLES DECID2 MEMB**
> **TABLES DECID3 MEMB**
> the results from the tables can be hand tallied to get the total count of each response. If there are
> many responses they could be pulled into common groups and a collective variable can be created
> to represent them—see the following directions. If a specific activity is of interest a variable can
> be created in the same way to tally the data from all the tables for that variable.

To create a new variable which tabulates a single variable, type:
> **IF DECID1=1 OR DECIDE2=1 OR DECIDE3=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE**
> **{NEWVARIABLE}=0**
> repeat this process with each of the possible variables
> **TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB**
> will provide the total number of responses for that variable, for example, how many respondents take begin
> an enterprise because it is work they are familiar with.

Q # 26a: To determine how the respondents manage their enterprise money, type:
> **TABLES SEPAR MEMB**
> if the respondents keep their enterprise money separate from other earnings
> TABLES CALCU MEMB

if the respondents calculate their profits based on records of their costs and earnings
TABLES KNOW MEMB
if the respondents know their profits
TABLES PAY MEMB
if the respondents pay themselves a wage
TABLES FIXSELL MEMB
If the respondents sell their goods or services at a fixed location
TABLES FIXSTOR MEMB
If the respondents have a fixed location for their production

Q #26b: To determine how many members in the one-year and two-year adopted these after joining the program, type:

SELECT CLIENT<>3
This will show the differences between one-year and two year clients only
TABLES SEPARCL CLIENT
TABLES CALCUCL CLIENT
TABLES KNOWCL CLIENT
TABLES PAYCL CLIENT
TABLES FIXCL CLIENT
TABLES FIXSTCL CLIENT
SELECT

9. Assets

Q #27: These questions are in a series, make sure that the responses make sense, for example, the number of responses to response parts b, c, and d for each asset should equal the number of "yes" or "1" responses for part a.

Q #27a: To determine if the respondent owns the following assets, type:
      TABLES RADIO MEMB
      TABLES CHAIR MEMB
      TABLES BIKE MEMB
      TABLES BED MEMB
      TABLES STOVE MEMB
      TABLES TV MEMB
      TABLES MOTOR MEMB
      TABLES CAR MEMB
      TABLES TRACTOR MEMB

Q # 27b: To determine how many of each asset the respondent owns, type:
      TABLES RADN MEMB
      TABLES CHRN MEMB
      TABLES BIKEN MEMB
      TABLES BEDN MEMB
      TABLES STOVEN MEMB
      TABLES TVN MEMB
      TABLES MOTORN MEMB
      TABLES CARN MEMB
      TABLES TRACTN MEMB

Q # 27c: To determine if the asset s purchases in the last two years, type:
      TABLES RADMOR MEMB
      TABLES CHRMOR MEMB
      TABLES BIKEMOR MEMB
      TABLES BEDMOR MEMB
      TABLES STOVEMOR MEMB
      TABLES TVMOR MEMB
      TABLES MOTORMOR MEMB
      TABLES CARMOR MEMB
      TABLES TRACTMOR MEMB

Q # 27d: To determine if the respondent was a member when this asset was purchased, type:

      TABLES RADPR MEMB
      TABLES CHRPRMEMB
      TABLES BIKEPR MEMB
      TABLES BEDPR MEMB
      TABLES STOVEPR MEMB
      TABLES TVPR MEMB
      TABLES MOTORPR MEMB
      TABLES CARPR MEMB
      TABLES TRACTPR MEMB

In order to understand the relative wealth between groups respondents can be scored based on the number of assets and the values of those assets. This information is revealing about the *relative* socioeconomic status of the households for comparison, although the scores hold no meaning by themselves.

To create a simple score based on the mean number of assets owned by households in member and nonmember groups, type:
      DEFINE {TOTASSET} ##
      TOTASSET=RADIO+CHAIR+BIKE+BED+STOVE+TV+MOTOR+CAR+TRACT
OR
      MEANS TOTASSET MEMB

The simple score above treats each of the assets equally whether they cost $50 or $15,000. To To create a score that reflects the relative value of the assets scores must be assigned to each asset group and a new variable must be created to reflect that score. For example, assets worth on average less than $100 could receive a score of 1 (ex. radio=1 and chair=1); assets worth between $100 and $1000 receive a score of 10 (ex. bicycle=10), and; assets worth more than $1000 receive a score of 100 (ex. motorcycle=100).

To create a variable that reflects the relative value of the assets, type:
      DEFINE {RADIOSCR} #
      IF RADIO=1 THEN RADIOSCR=1 ELSE RADIOSCR=0
      DEFINE {CHAIRSCR} #
      IF CHAIR=1 THEN CHAIRSCR=1 ELSE CHARISCR=0
      DEFINE {BIKESCR} #
      IF BIKE=1 THEN BIKESCR=10 ELSE BIKESCR=0
      etc… for each of the assets

To create a score based on the mean value score of assets owned by households in member and nonmember groups, type:
      DEFINE {TOTSCR} ####
      TOTSCR=RADIOSCR+CHAIRSCR+BIKESCR+BEDSCR+STOVESCR+TVSCR
+

MOTORSCR+CARSCR+TRACTORSCR

    if the string of command gets to long split it into two commands in the following manner:

        TOTSCR1=RADIOSCR+CHAIRSCR+BIKESCR+BEDSCR+STOVESCR
        TOTSCR=<u>TOTSCR1</u>+TVSCR+MOTORSCR+CARSCR+TRACTORSCR
MEANS TOTSCR MEMB

Another score based on the number and value of assets acquired in the last two years can also be created in the same manner to reveal the comparative improvement of socioeconomic status over the last two years.

To create a score based on whether the asset was purchased in the last two years and make a relative comparison between members and nonmembers, type:
    DEFINE {ASSETLST} ##
    ASSETLST=RADMOR+CHRMOR+BIKEMOR+BEDMOR+STOVEMOR+TVM
OR
    +MOTORMOR+CARMOR+TRACTMOR
    MEANS ASSETLST MEMB

To create a score based on the mean value score of assets purchased in the last two years by households in member and nonmember groups, type:
    SELECT RADMOR=1 OR CHRMOR=1 OR BIKEMOR=1 OR BEDMOR=1
    SELECT STOVEMOR=1 OR TVMOR=1 OR MOTORMOR OR CARMOR=1
    SELECT TRACTMOR=1
    this selects only for those who responded 'yes' to purchasing an asset in the last two years
    DEFINE {LASTSCR} ####
    LASTSCR=RADIOSCR+CHAIRSCR+BIKESCR+BEDSCR+STOVESCR+TVSC
R
    +MOTORSCR+CARSCR+TRACTORSCR
    if the string of command gets to long split it into two commands in the following manner:

        LASTSCR1=RADIOSCR+CHAIRSCR+BIKESCR+BEDSCR+STOVESCR

    LASTSCR=<u>LASTSCR1</u>+TVSCR+MOTORSCR+CARSCR+TRACTORSCR
    MEANS LASTSCR MEMB

10. Housing Improvements

Q #28: To determine if the respondent many any repairs, improvements or additions to their how in the last two years, type;
> **SELECT IMPROV<>99**
> **TABLES IMPROV MEMB**
> **SELECT**

Q #29a: The number of responses to questions 29a should equal the number of "yes" responses in question #28. To determine what kind of repairs, improvements or additions were made, type:
> **TABLES FIX MEMB**
> if the respondent made any house repairs
> **TABLES EXP MEMB**
> if the respondent made any expansions in their house or yard
> **TABLES WATER MEMB**
> if the respondent improved the sanitation system or made a new well for their house
> **TABLES ELECT MEMB**
> if the respondent hooked up electricity or lights in their house

Q #29b: To determine if the respondent was a member when these improvements were made, type;
> **TABLES FIXPR MEMB**
> **TABLES EXPPR MEMB**
> **TABLES WATERPR MEMB**
> **TABLES ELECTPR MEMB**

11. Diet and Coping with Difficult Times

Q #30: To determine the condition of the respondents' diet over the last 12 months, type:
> **TABLES DIET MEMB**

Q #30-1: To analyze if there was a significant difference in the improvement of diet groups, create a new variable that equal 1 if DIET=3 and 0 if DIET<>3.
> **DEFINE {BETTDIET} #**
> **IF DIET=3 THEN BETTDIET=1 ELSE BETTDIET=0**
> **IF DIET=. OR DIET=99 OR DIET=98 THEN BETTDIET=.**
> **TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB**
> This can also be used to test if there was a significant difference in the worsening of diets between
> groups by creating a variable that equals 1 if **DIET=1** (worsened), etc.

Q #31a: To analyze if there was a significant of how diets worsened between members and nonmembers (or to get the frequency for each reason) type:

    TABLES DIETWOR MEMB

Q #31b: The responses to each of the factors in **DIETIM1**, **DIETIM2** and **DIETIM3** should be tallied to provide an accurate count of the way that the diets have improved. **To determined how the diet has improved, type:**

    TABLES DIETIM1 MEMB
    TABLES DIETIM1 MEMB
    TABLES DIETIM1 MEMB
    to get a frequency of the total number of responses to each factor

To create a new variable that tabulates the variables for each response, type;

    IF DIETIM1=1 OR DIETIM1=1 OR DIETIM13=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1
    ELSE
    {NEWVARIABLE}=0
    repeat this process with each of the possible variables

TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB

    will provide the total number of responses for that variable, for example, how many respondents were able
    to buy more cereal, etc.

Q # 32a: To determine if the respondent experienced a period in the last 12 months where it was necessary to eat less due to a lack of food or money to buy food, type:

    SELECT HUNGRY<>99
    TABLES HUNGRY MEMB
    SELECT

Q #32b: To determine how long in months the hungry period lasted on average between groups, type:

    SELECT HUNG1ST<>99
    MEANS HUNG1ST MEMB
    SELECT

Q #32c: The number of responses to **HUNGDO1** should equal the number of **HUNGRY=1** responses in question #31a. The responses to each of the situations in **HUNGDO1**, **HUNGDO2** and **HUNGDO3** should be tallied to provide an accurate count of the ways that respondents dealt with a lack of food in their household. **To determined how the ways in which respondents dealt with a hungry period, type:**

    TABLES HUNGDO1 MEMB
    TABLES HUNGDO2 MEMB
    TABLES HUNGDO3 MEMB
    to get a frequency of the total number of responses to each factor

To create a new variable that tabulates the variables for each response, type:

    IF HUNGDO1=1 OR HUNGDO2=1 OR HUNGDO3=1 THEN
    {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE

{NEWVARIABLE}=0
> repeat this process with each of the possible situations

TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB
> will provide the total number of responses for that variable, for example, how many respondents borrowed
> money from family, etc.

Q #33a: To determine if there was ever a period in the last 12 months where a respondent did not have enough money to conduct their business, type:
> **SELECT STOPBUS<>99**
> **TABLES STOPBUS MEMB**
> **SELECT**

Q #33b: To find out how long this period lasted, type:
> **SELECT LONGSTP<>99**
> **TABLES LONGSTP MEMB**
> **SELECT**

The following questions are for one-year and two-year clients only.

Q #34a: To find out if clients had any difficulty repaying their loan to the program during the last loan cycle, type:
> **SELECT CLIENT<>3**
>   this removes all incoming or non-clients from the dataset
> **SELECT PROBREP<>99**
> **SELECT PROBREP CLIENT**
> **SELECT**

Q #34b: The number of responses to **WHY1** should equal the number of **PROBREP=1** responses in question #34a. The responses to each of the situations in **WHY1**, and **WHY2** should be tallied to provide an accurate count of the various reasons clients had difficulty repaying their loan. **To determined the reasons clients had difficulty repaying their loan, type:**
> **SELECT CLIENT<>3**
> **TABLES WHY1 MEMB**
> **TABLES WHY2 MEMB**
>   to view the frequency of the total number of responses to each reason

To create a new variable that tabulates the variables for each response, type;
> **IF WHY1=1 OR WHY2=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE**
> **{NEWVARIABLE}=0**
>   repeat this process with each of the possible reasons

TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} CLIENT
> will provide the total number of responses for that reason, for example, the client's loan activity was not
> profitable

Q #35: The responses to each of the situations in **LIKE1**, **LIKE2** and **LIKE3** should be tallied to provide an accurate count of the three things clients like most about the program. **To determined the things clients liked most about the program, type:**

> **SELECT CLIENT<>3**
> **TABLES LIKE1 MEMB**
> **TABLES LIKE2 MEMB**
> **TABLES LIKE2 MEMB**
> to view the frequency of the total number of responses to each reason

To create a new variable that tabulates the responses for each possible like, type;

> **IF LIKE1=1 OR LIKE2=1 OR LIKE3=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE**
> **{NEWVARIABLE}=0**
> repeat this process with each of the possible reasons clients liked the program

TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} CLIENT

> will provide the total number of responses for that reason, for example, the program had
> a lower interest
> rate

Q #36 The responses to each of the situations in **LEAST1**, **LEAST2** and **LEAST3** should be tallied to provide an accurate count of the three things clients like most about the program. **To determined the things clients liked most about the program, type:**

> **SELECT CLIENT<>3**
> **TABLES LEAST1 MEMB**
> **TABLES LEAST2 MEMB**
> **TABLES LEAST2 MEMB**
> the results from the tables can be hand tallied to get the total count of each response. If there are
> many responses they could be pulled into common groups and a collective variable can be created
> to represent them—see the following directions. If a specific activity is of interest a variable can
> be created in the same way to tally the data from all the tables for that variable.

To create a new variable that tabulates the responses for each possible like, type;

> **IF LEAST1=1 OR LEAST2=1 OR LEAST3=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE**
> **{NEWVARIABLE}=0**
> repeat this process with each of the possible reasons clients least liked about the program
> **TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} CLIENT**
> will provide the total number of responses for that reason, for example, high interest
> rates or commission

Q #37: To get the frequency of responses about ways the program could be improved create a variable that tallies the responses from **BETT1** and **BETT2**. To look at the frequencies for each response, type:

> **TABLES BETT1 MEMB**
> **TABLES BETT2 MEMB**

To create a new variable that tabulates the variables for each response, type:
IF BETT1=1 OR BETTE1=1 THEN {NEWVARIABLE}=1 ELSE
{NEWVARIABLE}=0
 repeat this process with each of the possible variables
TABLES {NEWVARIABLE} MEMB
 will provide the total number of responses for that variable.

Appendix D
Guide to Files on Disk

For the convenience of the user, a computer disk with several files accompanies this manual. The user will likely need to adapt and revise the files based on the specific needs of the particular impact assessment. The disk includes each of the five tools (Impact Survey, Client Exit Survey, Loan Use Strategies Over Time, Client Satisfaction, and Client Empowerment) so that implementers need not start from scratch in creating a computer version. The disk also includes some additional files pertaining to Epi Info for those planning to use that software for the Impact Survey analysis.

<survey.doc>
This file is the English version of the Impact Survey as seen in chapter 4.

<exitsurvey.doc>
This file is the English version of the Exit Survey as seen in chapter 5.

<loanuse.doc>
This file is the English version of the Loan Use Strategies Over Time interview as seen in chapter 6.

<clientsatisfaction.doc>
This file is the English version of the Client Satisfaction interview as seen in chapter 7.

<empowerment.doc>
This file is the English version of the Client Empowerment interview as seen in chapter 8.

<aimsurv.qes>
This Epi Info file corresponds to Tool #1, Impact Survey in chapter 4. It is a QES file as described in Appendix B, Basic Instructions for Using Epi Info 6. For each survey question, a variable has been named and defined. Variable names are set off in brackets—{}—and cannot be longer than 8 digits in length. All but one of the variables in the survey has been defined as numeric. So responses such as "increased" or "decreased" will be entered with a unique numeric code. Variables that have been defined as numeric are followed by a pound sign (#). The number of pound signs indicates the maximum number of digits allowed for that variable. For example, responses to the question: How old are you?{old} ## would be loaded into a variable named

<old> that is a maximum of two digits in length. One variable is defined as a date and only requires two digits for the day, month, and year. dd/mm/yy.

This QES file can be revised as the Impact Survey is adapted to the particular program. After data collection is underway the QES file can be used to create a data entry file. As described in appendix B, the QES file can be opened to create a record or REC file. The REC file converts the variable specifications in the QES file to fields into which data can now be entered.

Appendix E
Interviewee Information Form

It is important to develop a standard form to record demographic data and information on how to find the clients you plan to interview. This form can be used for the four tools that involve individual interviewees—Impact Survey, Client Exit Survey, Client Empowerment, and Loan Use Strategies Over Time. Fill in as much of the requested information from client records as possible, and attach the form to the specific questionnaire before going to the field. If all the information is not available before the interview, the interviewer may complete it by asking the interviewee. This form, which contains the client's identity, remains attached when the completed questionnaire is being checked for quality in the office, but is separated from the completed questionnaire after the data has been processed.

The information on this form is processed in the statistical computerized program with the other quantitative data for the Impact Survey and the Client Exit Survey tools. For this reason, the numbering of the questions begins with 40, which is higher than the numbers of any of the questionnaires. For the two qualitative tools, this quantitative information is processed using the statistical program and then reported with the demographic summary at the beginning of the analysis section of each of these two tools.

The form below is a sample, illustrating the type of information that can be included. This form will vary significantly for each organization depending on the types of information each one collects on its clients and ex-clients. Additional guidance about the types of information that should be available from a management information system (MIS) can be found in the AIMS document, *Protocol for Extracting Data from an MIS System, To Use in an Impact Evaluation* (Garber, July 1997).

EXHIBIT E-1. Interviewee Information for the Impact Evaluation

Interviewee number: _____ Interview form number: _____
Client number in the organization's system: _____
Code of interviewer: _____

Interviewee Information

40. Complete name: _____
41. Type: ____ Mature client _____ Comparison client _____ Ex-client
42. Community code: _____
43. Code of usual loan officer: _____

Interviewee's Address (*Do not computerize this section*)

44.Home address:_____
_____
45. Business address:_____
_____

46. Additional information to help find the client : _____
_____
Note: Add a map drawing on the back of this sheet if the address is not clear.

I. Personal Data

47. Sex: _____
48. Birth date: _____ 49. Age: _____
50. Place of birth: _____
51. Years of schooling: _____
52. Civil status: _____ 1. Married/live in 2. Separated/divorced
               3. Widowed 4. Single or never married
53. Number of children (less than 18): _____

II. Condition of House

54. _____
Note: *Housing conditions should include three or four categories spelling out the types of construction to provide objective measures.*

III. Business

55. Business being financed (according to program records): _____
56. Type of business: _____
        1. Retail 2. Food service 3. Service (other than food)
        4. Production 5. Agriculture 6. Animal raising
        7. Other _____
57. Place of sales
        1. Fixed location 2. Mobile business 3. Sales according to orders
        4. Transport business 5. Other: _____

IV. Loans

58. Number of lending group: _____ Name: _____
59. Loan cycle of lending group: _____
60. Beginning date of lending group: _____
61. Beginning date of client in program: _____ (dd/mm/yy)
62. Total number of months that client has been in program: _____

63. Number of loans from program to date: _____
64. Amount of first loan: _____
65. Amount of last loan: _____
66. Difference: _____

67. Number of loans from lending group to date: _____
68. Amount of first loan: _____
69. Amount of last loan: _____
70. Difference: _____
71. Is the client behind in payments to program or lending group? _____

V. Savings

72. Amount of savings in last period: _____
73. Do they exceed the required savings amount for this period? _____
74. Has the client had to deduct from savings to pay a loan to the program or to the lending group?

References

Babbie, Earl. 1986. *The Practice of Social Research*, 4th edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Barnes, Carolyn and Jennefer Sebstad. 2000. *Guidelines for Microfinance Impact Assessments.*

Barton, Tom. 1997. *Guidelines to Monitoring and Evaluation: How are we doing*? CARE-International in Uganda.

Butler, Lorna M. 1991. *Focus Groups: A Group Approach for Situational Assessment* (draft). Puyallup, WA: Washington State University, Cooperative Extension.

Butler, Lorna M. 1992. *Participatory Approaches to Situational Assessment. Nominal Group Process* (draft). Puyallup, WA: Washington State University, Cooperative Extension.

Carvalho, Soniya and Howard White. 1997. *Combining the Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches to Poverty Measurement and Analysis. The Practice and the Potential*. World Bank Technical Paper No. 366. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Chambers, Robert. 1997. *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the first last.* London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Crane, Julia G. and Michael V. Angrosino. 1992. *Field Projects in Anthropology. A Student Handbook,* 3rd edition. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Edgcomb, Elaine. 1996. *PVO/NGO Tools for Household and Business Impact Assessment: Report of a Planning Meeting.* AIMS paper. Washington, DC: Management Systems International.

Edgcomb, Elaine and Carter Garber. 1998. *Practitioner-Led Impact Assessment: A Test in Honduras.* AIMS report. Washington, DC: Management Systems International.

Fink, Arlene. 1995. *How to Ask Survey Questions,* Volume 2, *The Survey Kit*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. pp. 18-22.

Frey, James H. and Sabine Mertens Oishi. 1995. *How to Conduct Interviews by Telephone and In Person,* Volume 4, *The Survey Kit.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Gosling, Louisa and Mike Edwards. 1995. *Toolkits: A Practical Guide to Assessment, Monitoring, Review and Evaluation*. Development Manual 5. London: Save the Children.

Krueger, Richard A. 1997. *Developing Questions for Focus Groups, Focus Group Kit 3.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

MkNelly, Barbara and Karen Lippold. 1998. *Practitioner-Led Impact Assessment: A Test in Mali.* AIMS report. Washington, DC: Management Systems International.

Narayan, Deepa. 1996. *Toward Participatory Research.* World Bank Technical Paper Number 307. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Patton, Michael Quinn. 1990. *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. 2nd edition. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.

Patton, Michael. 1986. *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, 2nd edition. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.

Rossi, Peter H. and Howard Freeman. 1989. *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach,* 4th edition. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.

Sebstad, Jennefer, Catherine Neill, Carolyn Barnes, and Gregory Chen. 1995. *Assessing the Impacts of Microenterprise Interventions: A Framework for Analysis.* USAID Managing for Results Working Paper No. 7. Washington, DC: USAID/CDIE.

Stecher, Brian and W. Alan Davis. 1987. *How to Focus an Evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.

The United Nations ACC Task Force on Rural Development, Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation. 1984. *Guiding Principles for the Design and Use of Monitoring and Evaluation in Rural Development Projects and Programmes.* Rome: The United Nations.

USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation. 1998. *Performance Monitoring and Evaluation TIPS Guidelines for Indicator and Data Quality*, No. 12. Washington, DC: USAID/CDIE.

USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation. 1996. *Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Tips. Conducting Key Informant Interviews.* Washington, DC: USAID/CDIE.

Warwick, Donald and Charles Lininger. 1975. *The Sample Survey: Theory and Practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill.