



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MANUAL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF USAID POVERTY ASSESSMENT TOOLS

PREPARED BY
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FEBRUARY 2008

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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACRONYM

Acronym	Explanation
BDS	Business Development Services (also called ED – Enterprise Development)
IRIS	Institutional Reform and Informal Sector Microenterprise Programs – this includes MFIs as well as BDS/ED providers
MEPs	
MFI	Microfinance Institution
PATs	Poverty Assessment Tools

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Tools - U.S. Legislation and USAID Requirements

In 2000, the United States Congress passed the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act, which requires that half of all the money provided by USAID to the microenterprise sector must reach the very poor. This legislation was amended in 2003, and now defines the “very poor” as those living on less than \$1 a day, as calculated using the purchasing power parity exchange rate method (the international poverty line), or those living in the bottom 50% of those below their own country’s poverty line (the national poverty line). The law also requires USAID to develop and certify at least two tools for assessing the poverty level of the microenterprise beneficiaries of those organizations receiving USAID microenterprise funding.

The law, which took effect October 2006, does not:

- It does not require all of the 400-500 organizations that are partnering with USAID on microenterprise development at any given time to exclusively target 'very poor' families.¹
- It does not mandate that 50 percent of each organization's clients be among the very poor, but that 50 percent of USAID's total microenterprise development resources benefit that group.
- It does not mandate that enterprise development programs or policy reform activities cease or even that they necessarily be scaled back.
- It does not require that all microenterprise partners measure poverty levels of all clients, or even all incoming clients. A sample of 300 incoming or current clients is sufficient to meet the new USAID reporting requirements.

The law specifies that at least half of the microenterprise funding that USAID disburses be used to benefit the very poor (as defined in the footnote below). This requirement was previously monitored and measured through the use of a regionally adjusted loan size proxy. In place of this proxy, USAID has been directed to develop and certify at least two tools that measure, with reasonable accuracy, the poverty levels of microenterprise clients in order to ascertain what percentage of the total project financing can be counted towards the 50% target. In other words, each microfinance or microenterprise development organization receiving USAID microenterprise funding will have to measure the poverty level of a sample of their clients, but will not have to reach the 50%

¹ The legislation defines 'very poor' as those earning less than US\$1 per day per capita -- adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP) -- or those who are in the bottom half of those under the poverty line in their country.

target themselves. (See the second bullet point above).

Research has shown that international or regional tools will not be sufficiently accurate, and we are in agreement that at least one tool will need to be certified for each of the countries that receive USAID microenterprise funding (and most will need to be recalibrated every 3-5 years, depending on socioeconomic changes). USAID worked with practitioners to develop certification criteria for the country-specific tools. Please consult the USAID MicroLINKS website (www.microlinks.org) for additional information.

USAID commissioned The IRIS Center at the University of Maryland to develop, test and disseminate poverty assessment tools that meet Congressional requirements for accuracy and practicality. Accuracy tests of poverty indicators were implemented by IRIS in Bangladesh, Peru, Uganda, and Kazakhstan in 2004. Datasets from the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Survey were also analyzed to identify the most accurate poverty indicators in eight additional countries (Albania, Ghana, Guatemala, India (Bihar and Uttar Pradesh only), Jamaica, Madagascar, Tajikistan, and Vietnam). The field tests for practicality were carried out in late 2005 and early 2006. Combining the accuracy and practicality results, IRIS has developed a country-specific tool for each of the 12 countries involved in the research, and is continuing to develop new country-specific tools. These 12 original tools were certified by USAID and will be implemented in FY2007, along with five additional tools developed more recently. (see www.povertytools.org)

The tools are designed to assess the poverty level of groups of clients of microenterprise practitioners (MEPs—which include both microfinance and business development service providers), compared to either the national or the international poverty line. They are not intended for assessing individual poverty, targeting new clients, or assessing the impact of microfinance services on the lives of existing clients.

Intended Manual Users

The poverty assessment tools (PATs) are designed to be utilized by microenterprise practitioners in order to report on their poverty outreach to USAID in compliance with Congressional requirements. The PATs also may be useful for reporting to other donors, boards, investors and other stakeholders. Although this manual attempts to present as simply as possible the techniques involved in conducting a poverty assessment, we recommend that the implementation process be supervised by staff members who are experienced in monitoring and evaluation techniques.

How to Use This Manual

There are three possible methodologies for implementing the USAID PATs: 1) a **Household Survey** that is carried out periodically (e.g., once a year) on a sample of clients; 2) as part of the client **Intake** process (such as a loan application) when the questions are added at the beginning of the existing intake process for clients; and 3) as

part of an **Ongoing Monitoring** system that already is in use by the organization, such as impact monitoring. To avoid three separate manuals, this document provides instructions for the Household Survey, along with separate chapters with instructions for using the PATs with the Intake or Ongoing Monitoring methodologies. Thus, the instructions in chapters 2, 3 and 4 assume the use of the Household Survey methodology. Specific instructions for incorporating the PAT into an Intake Tool are in Chapter 5, and instructions for using the PAT as part of an Ongoing Monitoring system are in Chapter 6.

Three Methodologies for PATs

Household Survey (HHS)

The HHS methodology is designed as a stand-alone survey to be implemented periodically (e.g., annually). Since it is usually conducted in the home of the client and can include direct observation of living conditions, the household survey often will be the most accurate assessment method, and can be implemented by any organization, regardless of their intake or evaluation methods. However, conducting an annual survey for the purpose of poverty assessment could prove to be the most expensive and time-consuming assessment option.

Intake

The client intake methodology is designed to add the poverty assessment indicators at the beginning of an existing client intake form (such as a loan application or renewal form). The expanded version of the client intake form can be used with all clients, or with just a sample. This methodology provides certain benefits in terms of time and cost, as it is integrated into existing activities. However, the respondents are more likely to give inaccurate answers if they feel the questions are being used for targeting rather than assessment.

Since the questions are asked during the client intake process, the clients might incorrectly assume that the “correct” answers will make them more or less eligible to participate. Thus, it is recommended that the survey be implemented after the client has already been approved, to reduce this potential bias.

See chapter 5 for more information on implementing the client intake survey method.

On-Going Monitoring

While the client intake methodology adds the PAT to an intake form, the ongoing monitoring method adds the PAT to an existing monitoring tool that is regularly collected from a sample of clients. Unlike the intake form, the monitoring tool is used as an

independent tool. If your organization already has a monitoring tool that you plan to combine with the PAT, then the PAT questions must be inserted at the beginning of the monitoring tool, with the pre-existing questions following that. To minimize the chance that clients will bias their responses in order to qualify for a loan or other product, it is recommended that the on-going monitoring tool also be administered soon after the client receives a loan or other product.

See chapter 6 for more information on implementing the client intake survey method.

PAT Help Desk: pathelp@iris.econ.umd.edu

An email Help Desk is available **only** for those organizations that are required to implement a PAT. If you are required to implement a PAT as part of USAID reporting requirements, and have any questions about the tools and implementation process, send a message to the address above with:

1. Your name
2. Name of your organization
3. Country where you operate
4. Name of USAID-funded project with microenterprise activities
5. A detailed description of the issue and the pertinent questions you have.

***Please make sure that the response from the PAT Help Desk does not end up in your spam or junk email folder.

For anyone wishing to implement a PAT, the www.povertytools.org website will continue to provide links for downloading all of the USAID-certified tools, corresponding data entry templates, and the latest version of the implementation manual, as well as a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) to assist you in learning the procedures for tool implementation and meeting USAID reporting requirements.

CHAPTER TWO

PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Precise planning, careful time management and diligent field supervision not only contribute greatly to holding down costs, but are also essential for carrying out an efficient and successful field survey implementation. This chapter covers four key aspects of successful field operations: 1. schedule; 2. budget; 3. personnel and equipment; and 4. logistical support.

1. Scheduling for Tools Implementers

A time frame for starting and completing the study, including the order in which the various activities will take place, needs to be established early in the process. The time required and the amount of overlap between activities should be carefully estimated; the implementation team should be careful not to cut corners to save time. Field operations are best scheduled to avoid major national or religious holidays, periods of bad weather, or heavy workloads. Below is a list of activities and estimated time frames for implementing the poverty assessment tool.

- Two representatives receive training from IRIS or another PAT trainer for one week
 - ½ day for each representative to read training materials received prior to training week
 - ½ day to prepare documents on your organization to bring with you to the training
 - 5 full days of training (Monday through Friday) , with some reading in the evenings
 - 1 day to travel to (or return) to field offices to commence implementation
- Brief management team in-country and select profiles and initial names for the implementation team – ½ day
- Prepare Training Schedule, including final adjustments to plan and logistics – 2 days
- Develop sample frame and generate lists of clients to interview for pre-test and implementation – 4 days
- Hire interviewers – 4-7 days (can be completed during the same time as the sample frame)
- Translate questionnaire to the local language(s), and back-translate to ensure accuracy - 2 days
- Set up logistical support as necessary (for pre-test and implementation) – 3 days + ongoing
- Train interviewers – 5-7 days

- Copy questionnaire for pre-test – ½ day (less if outsourcing)
- Conduct pre-test interviews – 1 day with all interviewers (can be part of interviewer training)
- Evaluate results and conduct Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to help identify difficulties or inaccuracies in interviewing - ½ day for entire team + ½ day for supervisors (can be part of interviewer training)
- Edit translation and wording of questionnaire to ensure it is understood by the clients and that it maintains its original meaning
- Copy questionnaire – 1 day (less if outsourcing)
- Prepare field supplies and test logistics – 2 days
- Conduct client interviews and quality control in field – 5-10 days, depending on number of interviewers and which tool is being used
- Debrief interviewers, address any residual issues – 1 day for entire team
- Enter and clean data – 3-5 days, depending on tool length and experience of MIS staff
- Analyze data – less than 1 day (more time may be spent for additional analysis, if desired, but generating data for USAID reporting will require less than 1 day)
- Send results and database to USAID – less than 1 day

Note: The times listed above are approximate and will likely be different for the Intake and Ongoing Monitoring methodologies, especially in terms of travel time.

2. Allocating the Budget

It is very important to review the budget regularly to ensure that cost estimates remain in line with how much is actually spent during the implementation. You should make a small contingency fund available to cover unforeseen expenses.

3. Personnel

Qualifications, Roles and Responsibilities of Implementation Team

Skilled personnel who are well trained and motivated can strongly influence the success of your field operation. The implementation team for the PAT should include an overall project manager, at least two field supervisors, 5-8 interviewers, a tracking coordinator, a data processing coordinator, and two data entry personnel. If the implementation is carried out over a longer period of time, one field supervisor and fewer interviewers could be used. Depending on the skills and available time of the project manager, an additional member of the research team can be helpful for documenting the time and budget in each step, while others are doing the field work. It also might be appropriate for an MIS manager to oversee the data analysis.

Outside staff can be hired temporarily to assist on the project, especially for the roles of the enumerators and data entry processors. However, it is recommended that the project manager, the field supervisors and the data entry coordinator roles be filled by in-house staff in order to facilitate an efficient and effective implementation process.

The Implementation Team should include the following members:

- Project Manager: oversees planning and implementation of the field survey.
- Field Supervisors: coordinate daily activities of interviewers, and quality control in the field.
- Interviewers: thoroughly learn survey questions and interview techniques to minimize bias, and conduct interviews in a confident and relaxed manner.
- Sampling and Survey Tracking Coordinator: creates and maintains tracking system for survey implementation; ensures sampling plan is maintained.
- Data Processing Coordinator: identifies and trains data processors and maintains quality control in data processing
- Data Processors: enter and clean data collected in the survey, and possibly help with generation of client lists for sampling and data analysis.

Project Manager

A project manager will take overall responsibility for planning and implementing the field survey. The manager will oversee and participate in the training of staff, supervise the translation of the survey, and verify that the sampling is being done correctly and that only sampled clients are being interviewed. He or she will monitor progress towards completing the survey and will do “spot checks” to verify that interviewers are following the questionnaires consistently during interviews and filling in the forms correctly and completely, and that the supervisors are carrying out their quality control function (see Internal Audit section at the end of Chapter 4). The manager will monitor the team’s progress in staying on schedule and within budget as the field work progresses. Ideally, the manager will have previous assessment or monitoring and evaluation experience, as well as an excellent track record for successfully managing resources and personnel. The project manager should complete the following tasks:

During Planning/Training

- Hire/assign team members
- Plan, implement, oversee training with field supervisor
- Develop implementation plan (schedule, logistics, etc.)
- Qualitative review of training materials, sample, questionnaire, and internal control system
- Questionnaire translation and editing

During Interviewing

- Communicate with field supervisor on a regular basis
- Inquire on a regular basis about results vs. targets

During Data Processing

- Inquire about data entry issues and results vs. targets
- Conduct spot checks

Throughout:

- Budget
- Communications with Help Desk, as needed
- Submit deliverables

Required Qualifications/Competencies

- Project management experience
- Staff management experience
- Monitoring & evaluation experience
- Budget management experience
- Good communications skills
- Team spirit/motivates staff
- Capable of delegating responsibilities
- Ability to translate final objective to field staff
- Knowledge of local context
- Good report writer

Field Supervisors

It is recommended that two field supervisors manage between three and four interviewers each. Obviously, only one field supervisor may be used if the travel logistics permit the use of one interview team for the field work. They should help with the interviewer training and translation of the survey. Field supervisors are responsible for coordinating the daily activities of the interviewers, including arranging movement to and from interviews and transport from one survey site to the next. Supervisors also take responsibility for strict quality control, including ensuring that the questionnaires are filled out correctly and completely and that the information contained in them is accurate before leaving each survey area. Field supervisors check the work of each interviewer on

a daily basis to minimize the number of errors and missing values. Supervisors also conduct occasional random spot checks to verify the accuracy of data by partially repeating a client or beneficiary interview without the interviewer being present.

Field supervisors report regularly to the manager on progress, costs incurred, and any irregularities in the field. Supervisors should have prior experience in conducting quantitative surveys, have strong leadership skills, excellent attention to details and time management, and be assertive in supervising interviewers to ensure that high-quality data is collected.

Tasks

During Planning/Training

- Help with translation of survey
- Plan fieldwork logistics (transport, schedules, distribution of interviewers)
- Help with interviewer training

During Interviewing

- Coordinate daily activities of the interviewers
- Quality control (questionnaires filled correctly, completely, random spot checks)
- Check/observation of interview process
- Report to project manager (progress and irregularities)

During Data Processing

- Solve questions (data processors)

Required Qualifications/Competencies

- Prior experience in conducting quantitative surveys (including as an interviewer)
- Strong leadership skills (assertive in supervising interviewers; listening skills)
- Attention to detail
- Time management
- Ability to receive criticism/to provide constructive criticism
- Initiative to make decisions and solve problems on the spot

Interviewers

Interviewers with prior field and survey experience are desirable, but just as important are individuals with strong communication skills who can carry out interviews in a confident and relaxed manner while maintaining consistency. All interviewers require thorough training that includes in-depth review of the questionnaire to understand its intent and repeated practice in posing the questions in the local language.

Do not send field staff to interview clients with whom they have had previous business or personal relations. Institutions have the option to use administrative staff or to use field staff from other regions so that they do not interview anyone they know.

*Tasks*During Planning/Training

- Participate in training
- Understand the aim of the survey
- Review the questionnaire
- Repeat practice in interviewing, using the questionnaire
- Role play
- Be available throughout the training process

During Interviewing

- Respect the schedule and planning process
- Respect clients and explain questionnaire according to their level of education and ability to understand
- Follow instructions
- Ask questions with precision
- Record information accurately
- Use probing questions when necessary
- Maintain the same quality of work throughout the process
- Resolve any logistical or other problems or report to the field supervisor as necessary
- Take an active part in the de-briefing process
- Be aware of process issues

Qualifications/Competencies

- Knowledge of local language
- Previous field experience
- Observation skills
- Recording skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Willingness to follow instructions and accept supervision
- Precision in asking and recording information
- Good disposition and ability to put the interviewee at ease
- Efficiency in getting the interview done while meeting all the cultural norms for politeness, thus leaving a good (or at least neutral) impression about the MEP in the mind of the interviewee
- Curiosity about the research topic that will lead to better probing, ensuring that they are recording what the interviewee said and not what they preconceived about what the person “should say”
- Culturally acceptable appearance
- Willingness to work long hours while maintaining the same quality in the last interview as in the first interview
- Ability to observe body language, the quality of house construction, the setting in the house, the tools and stock in the business, etc., and to use probing questions when the answers seem to contradict what is being seen.

Spending more time in selecting excellent interviewers can yield abundant rewards:

- Fewer persons who are trained and then drop out or have to be eliminated at the end of training
- Fewer discipline problems for supervisors
- Less time in replacing bad interviewers
- More likelihood that the person will be observant and can be helpful in debriefing.
- Fewer errors or missing values.
- Fewer inconsistent answers in the survey as a careful interviewer will probe when the interviewee contradicts a previous answer.

The number of interviewers will depend upon the sample size, the percentage of respondents sampled who will likely not be able to be interviewed, and the calculation of the average number of interviews to be completed per day (this will vary by geography, type of transportation, and distances involved). As is seen in the example in the chart below, with this information, it is possible to determine how many interviewers need to be assigned to each geographic area and how many days during the training week, each will have to interview. The next step is in the final column to the far right, assigning a specific person to a specific area.

Sample Size composed of needed interviews plus 40% extras sampled	Time of interview & time between interviews in urban area	Geographical type within branch and minimum number to be interviewed	Number of surveys/day x number of days	Total interviewers assigned to this area	Total interviews expected per week and per team of interviewers	Letters that indicate which of team members is assigned
300 clients that need to be interviewed + 120 extras = 420 clients sampled	15 minutes to interview + 30 min between interviews = 45 minutes	100 Semi-urban	10 surveys/day x 5 days	2 interviewers	100	A, B
		100 Rural	7 surveys/day x 5 days	3 interviewers	105	C, D
		100 Remote rural	5 surveys/day x 7 days	3 interviewers	105	E, F

In addition, the planner needs to take into account the tool methodology to be used, the number of languages, which of the interviewers can interview in which languages, and a series of other factors. Usually, it is necessary to make several versions of this chart before arriving at the final version.

Sampling and Survey Tracking Coordinator

The Tracking Coordinator plays a key role in tracking the progress of survey implementation and maintaining the sampling plan.

*Tasks*During Planning/Training

- Work with Coordinator and Team Leaders to set up numbering system for all surveys: test surveys and actual surveys, including replacement selections for each sampling category.
- Participate in sampling selection and oversee the assignment of survey numbers.
- Set up a system to monitor location and status of each survey, including the assignment of surveys from the replacement list.
- Assist with training, as needed.

During Interviewing

- Monitor distribution and collection of surveys from each sampling group, including constant communication with all Team Leaders and Project Manager (or Coordinator) to ensure that all production goals are being met.
- Assist with quality control of surveys and returning of surveys to the field, if necessary.
- Provide daily feedback to supervisors and project manager so that problems can be correctly quickly.
- Assist with supervision of data processing and other duties, as needed.

During Data Processing

- Confirm that all surveys have been handed in and are completely filled out.
- Compile statistics totaling number of surveys completed for each sampling group and supervise a physical counting of documents to confirm the totals.
- Assist with data cleaning and analysis, and with all tasks involved in generating statistics, graphs and tables for the final report.
- Assist in final organization of computer files and filled in questionnaires.

*Required Qualifications/competencies*Education

- Degree in social sciences or equivalent

Experience

- Research experience
- Team management
- Work experience in MFI/development institution (2 years or more)
- Can make quick decisions

Data Processing Coordinator

This coordinator oversees the data processing system. S/he trains the data processors and performs spot checks to ensure data is accurately entered into the system. Specific tasks include:

Tasks

During Planning/Training

- Lead training on Epi Info (see Chapter 7), survey coding and data entry techniques.
- Participate in survey design and how that affects the data input and forms.
- Install Epi Info software and copy all pertinent files containing forms and procedures to hard drive of all applicable computers.
- After supervising translation of data entry template into local language (if needed), personally test data entry.
- Directly oversee data entry of first few surveys to ensure everything is being done correctly.

During Interviewing and Data Processing

- Participate in and oversee quality control of survey forms, and make sure that incomplete forms are returned to appropriate supervisors for completion.
- Solve Epi problems that come up each day.
- Supervise data input and cleaning.
- Oversee file management, file merging, and maintaining backup copies of databases.
- With other team leaders, set up a standard format for distributing updates and corrections to all members of evaluation process (such as a bulletin/newsletter)—and contribute information daily.

Finalizing Data Processing and Analysis

- Make sure that all surveys have been entered and re-entered, and that Compare Data function of Epi Info is done to find errors.
- Data cleaning to ensure all records are complete and properly entered.
- Meet with Project Manager (or Coordinator), team leaders, and program executive management to discuss specific goals for data analysis (if further analysis is carried out).
- Analyze data, including demographical information, to confirm sample is representative.
- Assist all personnel working on final report in the retrieval of data, analysis, and creation of tables and graphs for presentation of data.
- Ensure survey forms are filed and kept in a safe and accessible place, and that final database is properly backed up. Both the survey forms and database need to be kept for a possible audit by USAID.

Required Qualifications/Competencies

- Professional degree or extensive experience in data processing
- Experience in data analysis
- Ability to ensure confidentiality
- Leadership capabilities
- Teamwork
- Good communication
- Decision-making initiative

Data Processors

Those entering the survey data into the computer should have experience in both data entry and related quality control procedures. It would be preferable for them to have experience in the “cleaning” of statistical data, the ability to sort and extract client lists from the MIS to be used for sampling, as well as some basic knowledge of statistical analysis. The ability to create graphs in Excel and also use PowerPoint would help in the preparation of any presentations to be given to the management, Board or USAID.

In many cases, personnel involved in field operations may be the same as those who later participate in the data analysis. Even those with no statistical training can help those who do have it in interpreting what the results mean for your particular organization.

Tasks

During Planning/Training:

- Receiving specialized training
- Make/Discuss a plan of needs during the project (logistics, etc.)
- Prepare equipment and test systems
- Learn to use Epi Info

During Interviewing:

- Finalize all equipment and systems (1st day)
- Daily data entry
- Back up files on a daily basis
- Report problems/obstacles to Data Processing Coordinator

During Data Processing and Analysis:

- Continue data entry
- Quality control of your own work
- Report problems to Data Processing Coordinator
- Provide Data Processing Coordinator with requested information

Required Qualifications/Competencies

- Two-three years experience in data entry (statistics a plus)
- Knowledge/experience with MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint (depending on need)
- Detail oriented
- Availability throughout project period
- Can keep data confidential

TIP: If an MEP does not have an in-house data processor, the organization could contact data processing companies in their own countries to see if they have suggestions about hiring staff, or to contract data processors for them.

Training methods for the implementation team are discussed in detail in Chapter 9. All of the aforementioned personnel need to participate in the training to ensure that they all share a common understanding of how to use and interpret the questionnaire.

4. Logistics, Equipment and Planning Workload

Logistics

Well-planned logistical support—coordinated transportation, communications, field supplies, and contingency plans for disruptions—also greatly enhances the quality of field implementation. Logistical support needs to be carefully planned at all stages of the survey process, especially where operations take place in remote locations with limited infrastructure.

Some important logistical considerations:

- Check with local field staff to make sure time estimates for travel between interview locations reflect current road and traffic conditions.
- Communication methods and back-up plans also should be identified (cell phones, phone cards, etc.)
- Route planning should include access to petrol stations, food, and accommodations, if necessary.
- Consider variations in schedule to accommodate local customs, holidays and political circumstances to avoid problems.

Equipment

Your organization will need to dedicate the appropriate resources to the poverty assessment to ensure its success. The requirements for each implementation will be different but they should include:

Transportation: The vehicles and drivers necessary for the implementation team to conduct the field work. Vehicles should be large enough to carry the field team and supplies, and sturdy enough to withstand road conditions in survey areas. (It might be more cost-effective to use taxis or other public transport in urban areas.)

Computers: a minimum of two computers should be designated full-time for use **only** by the poverty assessment team during the period of field work and data entry. One is for report writing (if needed) & scheduling and the other is for data input. With two data processors, there should be two computers exclusively for data entry, if possible. The exact number should be determined by the manager during planning.

Photocopying: Several hundred copies of the survey form will need to be copied, collated and stapled. Your organization should consider outsourcing this task, as it can be time consuming.

Office Space: Office space and desks should be dedicated to the poverty assessment team during the field work and data entry activities. Adequate training space will be necessary during the interviewer training and debriefing sessions. The data processing should be done in a separate room to avoid distractions to the personnel.

Workload

The interview may not take that much time to conduct. However, locating the correct client, making introductions, and departing smoothly can easily triple the time needed. Depending on how far apart the interviewees are the transportation will usually take much more time than the interviewing process.

A *minimum* target of eight interviews per day for each interviewer is recommended, although some adjustment may be needed to reflect survey length and logistical conditions. If the travel time and logistics are relatively easy, up to 10-12 interviews could be done in one day. If the clients are coming to the branch office or other meeting place, as many as 15 could be done in one day. Too many interviews per day could compromise interview quality; fewer interviews per day could increase field costs. It is critical that each interviewer spends time immediately after each interview to make sure the survey form is complete, with answers to every question, and will be readable by the supervisor and data entry personnel.

Incentives can be used to encourage the interviewers to do a good job. If the performance measures are only based on time and number of interviews, it could adversely affect the quality, so quality control measures such as handing in complete and legible survey forms should be included in any incentive system that is used in the field.

For more detail on quality control in the field, see the section of Chapter 4 on Field Supervision.

5. The Poverty Assessment Tool

Importance of Maintaining Survey Order

As previously stated, this manual is intended to be combined with a questionnaire that provides a well-tested list of questions that have been phrased, coded, and put in a specific order and format to produce consistent, measurable results. All of the questions from the poverty assessment tool should be included and maintained in their general form and in the same order under all circumstances. No changes should be made except for

translation of the survey into local languages. Significant changes will alter the results and invalidate the data.

Translation and Back-Translation of Questionnaire

In most instances, the PAT will need to be translated from English into one or more local languages. The entire questionnaire must be translated before the interviewer training. Allowing the interviewers to translate during the interviews will bias the results, since each interviewer might phrase a question a bit differently (the only instance where a written translation into the local language is not required is when the local language does not have a written form.)

An early step in the translation process should be a discussion by the implementation team leaders on how to translate the survey. Staff members who interact with the clients on a regular basis should be included in this discussion to make sure that the local terms being used in the translation will be understood easily by those being interviewed. Once everyone agrees on a ‘dictionary’ of terms to be used, the tool can be fully translated and available in printed form in the local language for the interviewing process.

Bias may creep into survey items in a variety of ways when translating. It is important to be aware of these areas when customizing the questionnaire and training your staff.

- *Incomplete set of responses.* Bias is introduced when the multiple choice response alternatives available to the respondent leave out valid choices they would otherwise make.
- *Leading questions.* A leading question is one that seems to lead or encourage the respondent to answer in a certain way. For example, “You like the way this manual is written, don’t you?” makes it harder for a person to say that he or she does not like the manual. In contrast, “Do you like the way this manual is written, yes or no?” does not lead the respondent. When you translate questions it is important to maintain the intended structure and not introduce or rephrase the question so that it suggests the preferred response.
- *Unfamiliar terms and jargon.* Wherever possible, words that are likely to be familiar to the respondent should be substituted for unfamiliar terms or technical jargon.
- *Poor grammatical format.* Weak grammatical format can introduce bias by confusing the respondent.

An essential step in the editing of the translation is to “back-translate” into English by someone who has not seen the original English version. A comparison of the back-translation and the original English version is the best way to ensure that the translation is similar to the English original. The differences can assist in editing and improving the translation.

Pre-testing a Questionnaire

Pre-testing the questionnaire with people who are similar to the sampled respondents is an essential step in finalizing the questionnaire. No matter how experienced your staff may be, the pre-tests almost always bring out potential problems, inconsistencies or other sources of bias and error. The pre-test should include at least 30 client or beneficiaries of the same socio-economic, ethnic group and location to those respondents who are in the final sample (none of the pre-test respondents should be included in the final results). If the survey is going to be implemented in a rural area, the pre-test is also conducted in a rural area.

Pre-testing a questionnaire in the field should involve everyone in the survey team. The pre-test is essential for finding weak points in translations and errors in the logistical plan, as well as identifying the need for additional field staff training. The quality control persons and data processing team also should process the pre-test questionnaires so that they can have an opportunity to check their systems and procedures to identify problems that may arise.

Pre-testing provides an opportunity for your team to make corrections before doing the actual survey. The pre-test also allows your project manager and field supervisors to learn more about the time and resources required to locate and interview respondents. Pre-testing is done as part of the interviewer training.

Implementer's Guide²

Appendix C consists of an implementer's guide to the survey. The guide describes the different question categories and some of the questions within them. The guide is meant to serve as both a training tool and as a reference material for the enumerators.

² Adapted from interviewer manuals used in fieldwork conducted by Manfred Zeller, Julia Johannsen, Charity Irungu, and Jean-Luc Dubois. Additional materials adapted from Carla Henry, et al. (2003). *Microfinance Poverty Assessment Tool*. CGAP: Washington, DC.

CHAPTER THREE

SAMPLING

The most thorough way to learn about the characteristics of all of your clients (or any “population” that you are studying) would be to interview all of them. This, of course, is not practical, and would take too much time and money. A very reliable alternative is to select a sample—a representative group of MEP clients or non-clients to be interviewed. If the sampling process is done properly, it can yield very reliable data about the characteristics of the target population (such as the clients in your program). The sample must be large enough and truly random to be representative of all of your clients. The size of the sample will be discussed later in this chapter, but the most important rule in sampling is that, to be random and, thus, representative, every client **MUST** have the same chance of being selected in the sample.

The best way to ensure that your sample is random would be to create a list of all clients in your program, and then to randomly select the number required for your sample (a small-scale example would be to put everyone’s name on a piece of paper, cut the names apart, put them all in a hat, and then draw a few names). However, sampling from a master list can be impractical in two ways: the clients are very spread out, geographically, so that it would be very time consuming and costly to have the interviewers travel so much between interviews; and, with a large number of clients and loan groups that are renewing at different times, it can be very difficult to generate a list of **ALL** clients that is up-to-date.

To avoid the problems in generating a master list of clients, two sampling methods are available to use instead: cluster sampling and the random walk. In most instances, cluster sampling will be used to divide the clients into smaller groups (such as regions or branches), which will allow the sample selection to be done using a shorter list, or lists, of clients. If it is impossible to generate any lists of clients (such as a new program that is assessing potential clients, or an organization that offers services to everyone in a community but does not have a list of specific clients), then the random walk method may be used.

Those organizations implementing the Intake methodology can choose to interview all new and returning clients during a specific period of time, and thereby avoid having to do sampling. See Chapter 5 for further information.

Cluster Sampling

Cluster sampling is a method whereby you divide the population into geographic units, sample the units, and then divide the selected units into smaller geographic units and re-sample, repeating the process until the actual people to be interviewed are selected. For instance, in the first stage of sampling, regions may be sampled; then states or

departments; then cities may be sampled; then communities; and finally clients. So, instead of taking a random sample of clients from a very long list spread out over a wide geographic area, the sampling is divided into stages. You could select 3 out of 5 regions, and then randomly select 2 departments/states from each of the 3 selected regions. To further narrow down the number of geographic areas in which the interviews would be conducted, certain cities and rural areas could be selected from each department, and certain communities within each city. The final step is to make a random selection of individual clients. Now that you have a much more manageable list (of clients in just a few communities or cities), you can easily number them from 1 to 100, for instance, and then randomly select the desired number from a random number list. However, it is very important to make sure your final sample is representative of your client population—so it is recommended to compare the demographic information from your client records with that from your sample to make sure all types of clients are represented adequately.

The Random Walk Method

If you are going to sample a population for which it would be very difficult to generate a complete list (even within each cluster), such as non-clients or an entire community, then the ‘random walk’ method of sampling might be more appropriate. Organizations will have to sample non-clients when they are beginning a program or entering a new region, since a list of current clients will not be available. The random walk can also be used by existing programs that focus on communities rather than individual clients, such as some BDS/ED programs. The random walk method can be used to assess the overall poverty characteristics of potential clients in a geographic target area. However, if using this method, you will have to be careful of “tarmac bias,” that is, selecting only houses that are easily accessible from the road. The cluster sampling method is recommended for the majority of those implementing the poverty assessment tools.

The Sampling Process

The primary sampling rule is that *everyone has to have the same likelihood of being selected*. In order to achieve this objective, you should develop a sampling plan by first mapping the organizational structure of the MEP to determine the organizational and geographic breakdowns already existing within its operational area. Once the geographic organization of the MEP is identified, you will follow a series of steps to ensure that the final set of clients surveyed represents a random sample of all possible clients that could have been interviewed in the operational area of the MEP. These steps are described in detail below.

Step 1: Define the Population and Sampling Method

Determine the geographical area to be sampled

Before deciding which clients or beneficiaries to sample, the sampling area must be determined. The operational area is the geographic area in which your organization operates. The operational area may be best divided according to existing regions or

branch offices. These areas may in turn be subdivided into areas of coverage by individual field agents. Note the ways in which your organization breaks its operational area into sub-units. Also note how these breakdowns compare to those used by local government offices and identify ways in which the two methods can be matched up (to identify the “clusters” used in your sampling plan). If your organization offers more than one type of program to its clients, the operational area may also be divided by type of program. These programs may or may not overlap geographically.

Identify any problem areas that may not be feasible to survey. In general, the implementation team will need to determine a standardized rule or set of rules for filtering out unfeasible survey areas and then follow this rule consistently. However, the process of eliminating areas from consideration needs to be carefully scrutinized to avoid any unintentional introduction of bias. Before setting any rules to limit the possible survey area, you need to consider whether the implementation team’s proposed rules would result in a possible selection bias. The team may have reasons for excluding operational areas from the survey. In some cases, these reasons need to be respected, such as the likelihood that the survey could create local animosity towards your organization. In summary, determining the feasible area for the survey requires good information and careful judgment to avoid bias.

Document any potential source of bias from limiting the feasible area. Exclusion of unfeasible areas may introduce a bias if the areas excluded are likely to be either below or above the poverty levels found in the remaining areas. Exclusion of some areas may result in the under or over reporting of the poverty outreach of your organization. Bias may also be introduced if excluded areas receive a different set of services or are subject to different targeting methods than the survey areas. In cases where services differ between areas, sampling methods will need to distribute the random selection of clients proportionally across the two programs.

Step 2: Construct the sampling frame

The sampling frame refers to lists of the number and distribution of clients within your operational area. These lists can be used to determine which localities (and the number of clients in each) will be surveyed. The number of current clients can be structured according to the geographic breakdowns (or clusters). In most cases, you may not need to compile an actual list of all qualifying client households. Instead, information on the distribution of clients within the operational area can be used to randomly select a handful of smaller geographic areas, making it necessary to prepare client lists only for these areas. Ideally, you will have access to the number of clients in each region or branch down to the number of clients located in each field agent area. If appropriate, information on the number of clients in each program type may also be needed. Determining the locations of the actual survey will require the use of several sampling techniques, as described below.

Determining required clustering stages

Most MEPs are sufficiently large and dispersed to require at least a two stage cluster approach. In addition to a random selection of approximately five to six geographic clusters (departments or branches), a second random sampling is done within each area to select a set of client households. Random sampling within a cluster usually requires a list of the number of clients residing in the area and a random selection method to sample clients from this list. For example, suppose a microenterprise program (MEP) needs to select 300 clients to survey. The MEP serves four geographic areas with eleven branches total. The project manager randomly chooses five of the branches from which to sample clients, and then obtains a list of all of the clients within those 5 branches. The project manager then randomly selects 300 people from that list, who each have an equal chance of being chosen. A mistake would be to select one-fifth of the 300 clients (60) from each of the 5 branches. Assuming that each branch has a different number of clients, choosing 60 from each would introduce bias by giving clients different likelihoods of being selected. Those in the smaller branches would have a greater chance of being selected than those in the larger branches.

In some cases, a three-stage cluster may be appropriate, particularly when MEP clients represent groups of individuals. Here, random selection of client groups within each randomly selected geographic cluster would be followed by a random selection of members within that group.

Step 3: Determine appropriate sample size

Calculating sample sizes is one of the most technically demanding aspects of survey design. On a practical level, sample size is partly determined by the time and resources available for the survey. On a technical level, four factors affect the decision on sample size: (i) the desired precision of the survey, (ii) the probability distribution of the variable that the survey seeks to measure in the population, (iii) the choice of sampling design (i.e., single random sampling or multi-stage random sampling), and (iv) the number of variables (in this case, poverty indicators) that the survey seeks to capture. Without prior knowledge of the distribution of poverty indicators among clients, a rule-of-thumb approach must be applied to determine sample size. To meet USAID requirements, your organization should interview at least 300 people. If you have fewer than 2000 total clients (or new clients) that you are sampling from, then please contact the PAT Help Desk to inquire about an adequate sample size for a small population

Step 4: Select the actual sample

You have already seen the benefits of using several levels of geographic clusters to reduce the number of client households from which to choose a random sample. Although it is more convenient, when sampling is done in stages, or clusters, not all clusters will necessarily be the same size, so it is more likely that not everyone will have the exact same chance of being selected. For example, group A has 50 clients and group B has 100 clients. Selecting 5 out of 50 gives everyone in group A a 10% chance of being selected, while selecting 5 out of 100 gives everyone in group B a 5% chance of being selected. Thus, if we choose (or “sample”) 5 from each group, each person in group A is

twice as likely to be selected as each person in group B and that violates our primary sampling rule, that everyone has to have the same likelihood of being selected.

Since the clusters that are used to divide up the target population will be of different sizes, you will need to select a different number of clients from each region. In another example, Region 1 has 1000 clients, Region 2 has 2000 and Region 3 has 3000, for a total of 6000 clients. If your desired sample size is 300 clients, then 150 should be selected from Region 3, 100 from Region 2, and 50 from Region 1. Half of the sample will come from Region 3 because it has half the clients, one third will come from Region 2 and one sixth from Region 1. Please contact the IRIS Help Desk if you have any questions about your sample selection.

Once the clusters are decided and it is decided how many to select within each cluster, the actual random selection of client households can proceed. See below for an example of sampling.

Selecting “Extras” for the Sample

In addition to randomly sampling clients to interview, you should prepare a second list of randomly sampled clients to place on a reserve list in the event that a sampled client does not qualify for an interview or is unable to be interviewed. As a rule of thumb, the reserve list should contain an additional 4 reserve names for each 10 sampled names. Once the survey process is underway, the first name on the reserve list is taken to replace the first sampled client that cannot be interviewed. All additional replacements are made in the order in which they appear on the reserve list.

Troubleshooting Scenarios:

- What if there are not enough with the 40% extra?
 - Check with the sample tracking coordinator to give you new names
- What if there is not enough time to get new names from the sampling tracking coordinator?
 - Use a random number table and select clients from master list that have not already been selected
 - If you do not have a random number table, choose random numbers in your head, or ask a coworker to invent random numbers within the specified range. Do ***NOT*** introduce bias
 - Write down the changes that you made and how you did it

Examples

Steps in Taking a Simple Random Sample:

- Number a copy of the complete client list or the list of a selected “cluster” or subgroup, and note the total number of clients (the last number)

- Decide on your sample size
- Create a list of random numbers in Excel or use a random number table from a statistics book
- Use Excel or a random number table such as the one below to find numbers to select on your numbered client list. If using the table, select either a vertical or a horizontal row to guide you:

32	50	92	46	24	69	48	93	77	87	47	17	29	36	55
81	34	70	46	99	27	95	04	69	59	71	30	74	42	36
45	11	49	20	50	86	16	75	80	55	33	98	93	66	76
13	56	08	38	43	12	11	01	21	41	13	87	08	47	98
64	61	65	94	30	17	51	54	45	85	41	22	96	26	64
38	09	93	01	49	43	06	09	24	42	23	23	21	65	14
95	76	09	00	24	54	15	04	34	41	58	61	05	09	82
97	30	78	89	23	44	66	18	71	83	08	21	74	18	91

Sampling for BDS/ED Providers

BDS/ED providers often have clients for only limited periods of time or offer services to other organizations which teach the skills to their clients, thus called indirect clients. These circumstances make it difficult to select a representative sample of their total client pool. There are multiple ways to identify clients to interview; the key is to interview service beneficiaries by the proportions they represent in subgroups of total population.

One way to determine the individuals to interview is to choose from the pool of potential indirect beneficiaries (especially if there are many more indirect than direct clients). To start creating the sample plan, first determine the total number of clients to be interviewed. In the example below, that number is 300. The BDS/ED provider can then generate a list of the direct clients and divide them by subgroup, such as the type of services offered (see example below). The number of indirect clients to be interviewed per subgroup may depend upon another overarching factor, such as the proportion of the total budget the subgroup represents (as in the example below), or the proportion of the total client population the subgroup represents. For instance, if it is estimated that 50% of the total indirect client population is from the irrigation subgroup, then 50% of the sample to be surveyed can be from the irrigation subgroup (instead of only 40%, which is according to the budget, like in the example). Next, generate lists of the indirect clients that fall into each major subgroup. Finally, randomly select the number or proportion of indirect clients per subgroup based on the overarching factor you chose. In the example below, the overarching factor was the percentage of the budget the subgroup constituted. Since potable water services comprise 25% of the budget, 25% of the sample goal of 300 clients should comprise the sample. The number comes to 75 people. After determining the number of indirect clients to be interviewed, the groups can be broken down into even more subgroups, such as type of client and location. This procedure is very similar to cluster sampling. See the example for the final breakdown:

Subsector	Irrigation		Cashew		Potable Water	
% of total project budget	40%		35%		25%	
Total number of direct clients	366		15		149	
Total number of indirect clients	5500		200		3500	
Number of Indirect clients to be interviewed	120		105		75	
Type of client	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Groups</u>	<u>Shellers</u>	<u>Peelers</u>	<u>Tubewell</u>	<u>Rope Pump</u>
Percentage of total	65%	35%	45%	55%	10%	90%
Number to be interviewed	78	42	47	58	8	67
						Rural
						Peri-urban
						30%
						70%
						20
						47

It is important to note here, as mentioned earlier, that the poverty calculation required by USAID is based on the aggregate client population, not on subgroups or on individuals. If your organization chooses to analyze the poverty level or other characteristics of subgroups, you could use the USAID poverty assessment tools to do so, but there must be a minimum number of 30 complete surveys in each subgroup to even have a chance of finding statistically significant differences among the subgroups being compared. In the example above, only 5 tube well clients are included in the overall sample, which is representative of the total population of tube well clients and necessary to analyze the poverty level on an aggregate basis, but you would need at least 30 to compare differences with other subgroups. If you choose to analyze clients on an individual level, we recommend that you look outside of these tools to find an appropriate mechanism to meet your needs.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERVIEWING CLIENTS

This chapter describes the steps involved in the interviewing process. Creating the proper environment, notifying the person to be interviewed ahead of time, introducing yourself and explaining the purpose of the interview are all essential parts of a successful interview. The poverty assessment interviews should only be done **AFTER** the client has been accepted to receive a loan or other product or service, which will lower the temptation for the client to say what they think the institution wants to hear.

Introducing the study and screening clients

Ideally, introductory information should be written ahead of time so that your interviewers can introduce themselves and the reasons for the interview precisely and accurately to the client. The following instructions indicate the kinds of information provided to the respondents.

How to introduce the study

Step 1: Identify yourselves

Clients will be more cooperative if they know who is conducting the study. An important point to mention is that the survey team is not directly involved in making decisions on the clients' participation in or access to services.

Step 2: Show letters of introduction and endorsement

In some countries it is expected that outsiders will first seek permission from local leaders before approaching clients in a given locality. In addition to introducing the survey, these courtesy visits also can provide you an opportunity to collect important information about the community being surveyed. In some cases, a letter of introduction from your headquarters to clients and from local authorities to non-clients can reassure clients and further facilitate introductions.

Step 3: Inform clients of your purpose

Most clients will not fully understand the methodology used for this study. However, many will quickly fathom the overall purpose: to determine their living conditions or poverty status. Further clarification of the purpose of determining whether the clients are relatively poor or wealthy is discouraged. This information could influence the way that

questions are answered by the clients and thereby introduce a major source of error in the results.

Step 4: Explain why the client has been selected

Clients also appreciate knowing that they have been selected for an interview on the basis of a random process. Those making introductions can draw analogies to such methods as pulling names from a hat to explain exactly what this means.

Step 5: Assure respondents of confidentiality

In many countries, fear of crime or traditional beliefs may also inhibit many people from sharing private information. Introductions should incorporate clear statements about the neutrality of the interviewer and the confidentiality of information collected for the study. The interviewer should guarantee that no outside body will access the data for purposes other than those intended. Also remember to keep the language in your explanation simple and easily understood.

Example of introductory dialogue:

Interviewer: "Hello. My name is _____. I work for the organization _____. The organization _____ is trying to learn more about their clients by asking you a few questions about your household. Asking these questions should only take us about 15 minutes. All of your answers are completely confidential and your specific responses will not be shared with anyone else. You have not been chosen to participate for any specific reason; you were randomly selected the same way that one name is pulled out of a hat containing several names. Your responses have no connection to your status with our organization, nor the services you receive. Please be completely honest with your answers. Are you willing to take some time to answer these questions today?"

Before Meeting with Client

- Before meeting with the client to begin the interview, record the survey number in the top right corner. This is taken from the survey tracking or sampling list.
- Fill in the interviewer's code (or name) and the sex of the interviewer.
- Fill in the branch code or name, which regularly deals with the client.
- What goes in the box for client type will be assigned by your organization. For example, it could be the loan type (communal bank; solidarity group; or individual loan). Another example of how to use this box could be for the number of the loan cycle in which the client is currently.
- Fill in the time in the program.
- Fill in the type of geographical location (rural/urban) where this client's household lives (not where the business is).

- The Enterprise type in the upper right hand corner refers to the specific enterprise that your organization is assisting.
- Finally, fill in the client's name and identification number(s) used by the organization, and the client's group number (if applicable).

As You Begin the Interview

- Fill in the date of the interview.
- If your organization is concerned with the amount of time it takes to complete a survey, start here by writing the precise time of the beginning of the interview in the appropriate line.
- Remember to write the time again at the conclusion of the questionnaire in the box provided. In case of some interruption, write the time when interviewing stopped and the time you re-started after the interruption.
- Begin your conversation with an introductory dialogue explaining the organization's interest in learning more about the client and ensuring confidentiality. Ask the client permission to interview her before asking her any survey questions.

Interviewing Techniques:

Conducting the Interview

- Ask the exact question (as written).
- Listen/determine the relevant information.
- Show interest. Pause. Repeat question if necessary. Repeat her reply to stimulate the client to say more, or to recognize an inaccuracy.
- Record answers in boxes/correct places
- Probe (*not prompt*) to increase accuracy/clarity & completeness
- Avoid unnecessary reinforcement: "oh, that's very good!"
- Never suggest an answer

Ending the Interview

- Thank the client.
- Tell her that she has provided important/helpful information for the study.
- Answer any questions she has.
- Quickly proofread completed questionnaire. Find and correct errors. Clarify answers with client if necessary.

Additional Tips:

- Do not get involved in long explanations of the study.
- Try to keep interruptions to a minimum and make sure to keep track of amount of time spent on interruption.

- Do not deviate from the sequence of questions or question wording.
- Do not rush the respondent; give her adequate time to answer and clarify anything she does not understand. Do not let anyone else answer for her.
- If a client is unresponsive, then politely conclude the interview when appropriate and eliminate her incomplete survey at a later time.

Type of Respondent and Preferred Interview Venue

Whenever possible the client who receives the products and/or services from your organization should be the person who is interviewed. For a microfinance organization, you should interview the loan client. In cases where you are interviewing non-clients to ascertain the characteristics of potential clients or an entire community, then the head of household should be interviewed.

The location of the interview can influence the quality of the data you collect for some of the survey questions. The interviews should take place in the home of the client, if possible, so that the interviewer can observe the condition of the house, assets, etc., and help to make sure the responses are accurate. Seasonal demands on the time of the clients should be taken into account as well.

Examples of Incentives for Client Participation

Stress to the client that her participation is appreciated and that her opinion/information matters. Try sending the message that the organization views them as more than “just a number.”

Make sure to reassure her of the confidentiality of her responses and to kindly ask her permission to participate. Be sensitive to any concerns she has and build trust with her. Being able to trust her interviewer is one of the most effective incentives for participation and sincere answers.

Enumerators must remember that even though the client was selected at random for this survey, her participation is voluntary and there are costs to her in terms of time and possibly money. Not only is she giving her time for the actual interview, but if interviews are conducted during her group meeting and it extends the period of the meeting, she is giving even more of her time. Extensions to group meetings should not exceed 30 minutes. Also, if the client comes to the office specifically for the interview, then transportation costs are incurred as well. Please be mindful of these contributions. Incentives such as refreshments or institutional stickers and pins can be provided, but do so cautiously. Providing gifts can create a culture of expectation that could make future assessments more problematic. Additionally, giving presents to a sample of clients might create jealousy among others.

Field Supervision

Time Management

Once the sample has been selected, including alternates, then you will need to prepare a careful logistical plan for conducting the interviews. Traveling to and locating those to be interviewed can easily take up more time than the interviews themselves. Adequate advance planning to minimize travel time and to maximize the chances that the interviewer will be able to easily find the client is essential.

Your field staff that will work with the clients in each area should be consulted concerning the travel routes and the best time of day to find the clients. These same staff members also should inform the clients ahead of time about the interview to increase the chances that clients will be available at the intended time.

A time-saving alternative would be to schedule the interviews to occur immediately after meetings that are already taking place with the client (such as a regular group loan meeting or a training session). This method can reduce greatly the amount of time your interviewers spend traveling and trying to find those on the sampling list, although it will likely prevent the interviewer from being able to observe the housing situation.

Quality Control in the Field

The best time to correct mistakes is immediately after they occur. *Thus, the most important step in the quality control process is carried out by the interviewers and field supervisors while they are still out in the field.* Once the survey forms have returned to the central processing location, it will be very expensive to try and return to the field to re-interview anyone. The basic steps of the quality control process in the field are:

- Interviewer confirms that the person to be interviewed is on the sample list before beginning the interview.
- Interviewer looks over the survey form immediately after completing the interview, looking for missing, incomplete, or inconsistent entries, or any writing which a data entry staff member might not be able to read. If the interviewer sees that any information is missing, he or she might be able to remember what the answer was or be able to ask the interviewee before they leave. Since the poverty level calculation is based on all responses to the survey, every question must be completed.
- Field supervisor meets the interviewers after each one or two interviews to collect the surveys and look them over to make sure they are complete, easy to read, and have no inconsistencies. If the field supervisor sees a number which looks like a “0” but could be a “6,” instruct them to clarify it ASAP. Even if s/he can tell the difference, the data entry staff member who enters the data

may not. The supervisor also should check the sampling list to make sure the sampled person was interviewed or that the substitution was done correctly.

- Even though some supervisors prefer to wait until all of the interviewing is completed before entering any data into Epi Info, it is recommended to enter at least a few surveys each day, even if you delete the data later. Doing this helps you find erroneous responses or patterns that you otherwise would not have caught when looking over the form in the field. Chapter 7 provides instructions on how to enter the data and run frequencies to see the distribution of the answers.

Troubleshooting Scenarios:

- After leaving the field, it becomes apparent that a few survey forms have missing data and it is not possible to find the respondents and ask them for the information. The interviewers do not remember the responses, either.
 - Solution: Throw the questionnaires away. Since the poverty level calculation is based on the responses to all of the questions, all of the answers must be provided. Find additional names of clients to interview that fit into the sampling plan to make up for the loss. Try to complete the interviews in the next few days, but if you have to spend an extra day to make up the loss, then start planning the logistics for the extra day.
- After all of the interviewing is completed, the data entry staff notice problems with several of the survey forms and are unable to use them. It would be expensive and difficult to return to the field to interview appropriate replacements.
 - Solution: Your oversampling should be able to make up for the loss in order to reach the goal numbers of clients in your sampling plan. If the oversampling does not make up for the loss, then consult the Help Desk for further instruction. This scenario is a good example of how important it is to both oversample and to test entering data in Epi Info before the interviewing process is complete.

Document Control and Tracking

It is critical to ensure that there is a system in place for collecting and tracking all documents, including survey numbers that are written on each questionnaire prior to the interviews, and a log book for tracking the status of each document.

Internal Audit

Training interviewers and other team members well, selecting a representative sample, and properly tracking the documents and data processing are all essential for accurately assessing the poverty level of your program beneficiaries. The surveys should be reviewed for completeness and consistency at several levels of quality control. However, survey review and document tracking will not necessarily detect or prevent someone from taking shortcuts or “gaming the system.” Lazy interviewers could interview the wrong person or even spend the afternoon sitting under a tree and filling out the surveys by themselves. Interviewers could also mistreat the interviewees and damage the reputation of your program.

To prevent such problems, an internal audit should be an essential but distinct component of the PAT implementation process. The project director, a senior manager, or perhaps a member of the organization’s financial audit team should conduct “spot tests” by re-interviewing a random sample of those who have already been interviewed by the implementation team. Ideally, this would include at least 2 interviews of clients that were already interviewed by each interviewer. The “re-interview” should include:

- Confirmation that the person interviewed is on the sample list and was actually interviewed
- Comparison of the responses with the completed survey from the initial interview
- Additional questions to make sure the client was treated properly and that proper interviewing techniques were followed.

In addition, the internal auditor should:

- Review the sampling process to ensure proper procedure was followed and that the sample selected is truly representative. This can include comparing the demographic information from the sample to the demographic profile of clients already captured in the program MIS database
- Examine the document tracking system, including a random selection of survey forms in various stages of the process to ensure that each step of the process is tracked, including each level of quality control

CHAPTER FIVE

USING THE INTAKE METHODOLOGY

The client intake methodology is designed to incorporate the poverty assessment indicators into an existing client intake form. There are several pros and cons to consider.

Intended Users

These Poverty Assessment Tools are designed to be implemented by microenterprise practitioners in order to report on their poverty outreach to USAID in compliance with US Congressional requirements. The Intake method in particular is designed for institutions and programs that have an established intake process that can easily incorporate poverty assessment indicators. Additional questions are added at the beginning of intake interviews done with new and continuing (renewing) clients in order to assess the level of poverty.

Important Note: An extremely important part of the intake methodology is that the survey should be administered to a client *after* she has been accepted into the organization's program. If she has not already been approved, there is a much stronger chance she will falsify answers in order to make a "good first impression." The ideal time to administer the survey is after she has been accepted into the program but before she begins using the organization's services.

Benefits and Costs of the Intake Method

This method presents the following benefits and costs:

The benefits of the method are:

- It is added at the top of a form that is filled out when a client enters the program rather than being a separate survey, thus lowering the number of interviews with any client.
- Because of this, it may be less expensive than a separate survey.
- If an organization has a relatively low number of clients entering each year, it can interview all incoming clients, thus eliminate having to sample (which some organizations find cumbersome).
- If the institution has a high number of clients entering each year, then a sampling method can be designed so that additional poverty assessment questions are not asked of all incoming clients.
- Most organizations already have a form and a system set up for collecting and processing this data. Thus, the PAT is put into an existing system and is thus easier to initiate as well as having a lower variable cost of adding more questions to an already existing fixed cost of interviewing new clients.

The financial costs are:

- Adding additional questions into the intake form adds additional time for:
 - Training interviewers
 - Filling out the form (if each question takes half a minute and you are adding 6 questions, then it is three extra minutes per client. So if you doing this for each of 1000 clients per month, then it is taking your staff 3000 minutes or 50 hours more per month to fill in the additional questions.
 - Data input
 - Data analysis
 - Data reporting

The non-financial costs are:

- Possible staff resistance as they are expected to collect additional information and yet are not receiving additional incentives.
- Lowered staff performance because additional time is spent in conducting the interview instead of in other activities, resulting in loss of financial or non-financial incentives as they fall further behind doing additional work for the same number of clients.
- Possible client resistance as clients realize it takes longer for intake than it did when they entered other similar programs.
- Possible client resistance to the type of questions that are being asked.

The potential for bias in results are:

- It is being performed on a person who has little or no history with the agency. Thus, the individual is likely to be wary and concerned to make a “good first impression” with the interviewer. The client may manipulate the answers thinking that the interview is being used to screen applicants rather than assess them and that their answers will determine whether or not they receive services. *Thus, if the respondent feels that the agency will look more kindly upon a poorer applicant, the answers may underestimate income and assets (or vice versa).*
- Thus, indicators collected during the client intake process present a higher likelihood of client manipulation, as clients can incorrectly assume that the “right” answers will make them more eligible to participate. Therefore, indicator groups for use with the client intake methodology may be further refined to exclude indicators that are considered to be highly subjective and might have a high incidence of misreporting.

Use of the Intake Method

With this tool, organizations will have the option to assess all or a random sample of incoming clients/beneficiaries. The selection will be made based on the average monthly intake of new clients. Thus, if the monthly intake is higher than the total needed for the PAT sampling, the organization may elect to take a random sample of all the incoming

clients during the period that they will be using to report to USAID. There are several ways that randomness can be ensured. For example, each incoming client is assigned a number and then a random number table (which can be generated in Excel) can be used to select which clients should be interviewed. Or it can be done with a more easy method such as instructing the intake worker to apply the USAID tool questions in addition to the regular ones to every other client, or every third client. As with any sampling method, it is important to make sure that every incoming client has an equal chance of being selected.

The implementation of the USAID PAT will require a sample of at least 300 clients. The client sample should be randomly selected from the complete list of incoming clients. The main reason for sampling is to ensure that those interviewed fairly represent the population of clients. A sample, then, should have the qualities of being as much like the population from which it was drawn as possible. The most common way to achieve adequate representation and fairness is to use random sampling. For example, microenterprises with group lending methodologies can randomly sample the groups first, and then the individuals within the groups. For those organizations required to implement a PAT as part of their USAID reporting (MRR), the USAID PAT Help Desk can assist in the preparation of a sampling plan. (See Chapter 3 for more information on sampling).

CHAPTER SIX

USING THE ONGOING MONITORING METHODOLOGY

The On-Going Monitoring methodology is designed to incorporate the USAID Poverty Assessment Tool (PAT) into existing, periodic client evaluation. To implement the tool, program staff will incorporate the PAT questions into an existing client evaluation form, and will use the instrument to interview clients. Since the existing monitoring system is already in place, adding the additional poverty assessment questions at the beginning of the survey will not add significant time to the process, perhaps 10-15 minutes.

With this tool, organizations will have the option to assess all or a random sample of clients/beneficiaries.

Intended Users

These Poverty Assessment Tools are designed to be implemented by microenterprise practitioners in order to report on their poverty outreach to USAID in compliance with US Congressional requirements. The On-Going Monitoring method in particular is designed for institutions and programs that have an established monitoring system as part of their evaluation activities. These monitoring procedures can include periodic client surveys, questionnaires at the beginning of each loan cycle which are then put into the management information system (MIS), or other forms of regular assessment of individual clients.

Benefits and Costs of the Ongoing Monitoring Method

This method presents the following benefits and costs:

The benefits of the method are:

- It is integrated into an already defined process, and therefore has fewer additional fixed costs.
- The organization may already have a sampling plan identified and new ones do not need to be introduced.

The financial costs are:

- Adding additional questions into the existing evaluation adds additional time for:
 - Training interviewers
 - Filling out the form (an additional 10-20 minutes per interview, depending upon the length of the PAT).
 - Data input

- Data analysis
- Data reporting

The non-financial costs are:

- Possible staff resistance as they are expected to collect additional information and yet are not receiving additional incentives.
- Lowered staff performance because additional time is spent in conducting the interview instead of in other activities, resulting in loss of financial or non-financial incentives as they fall further behind doing additional work for the same number of clients.
- Possible client resistance if the clients do not realize any benefits by taking part in the process.
- Possible client resistance to the type of questions that are being asked.

Use of the Ongoing Monitoring Method

As previously stated, this method is designed to incorporate the PAT into periodic client interviews. The PAT questions must be added to the beginning of the existing client evaluation form. You will not be able to mix the questions in the existing form, but rather, are asked to place them, as a block, at the front of your existing evaluation form. Any duplicate questions should be deleted from your existing form so that they are asked only once. The answers to any duplicate questions can then also be entered into the normal fields of the existing survey and/or database that is used to process the evaluation form, if desired.

Depending on the number of clients desired in the sample, organizations will have the option to ask these questions of all clients or only a random sample of clients/beneficiaries. It is assumed that organizations with an on-going monitoring system already have clear sampling procedures. For more on sampling, see Chapter 3.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PROCESSING THE DATA IN EPI INFO

The following chapter outlines the data entry and poverty level calculation process as part of the implementation of a poverty assessment tool. After surveying a representative sample of the institution's clients, the practitioner needs to enter the collected data into a database (the data entry template for your country) using the Epi Info software and to run the subprogram that calculates the percentage of respondents who are 'very poor' for reporting to USAID. The process entails work done by two separate data entry personnel and a data entry supervisor. The directions below describe the process, step-by-step, from quality control at the end of the field work to reporting the results to USAID, ending with a section on troubleshooting.

Quality Control at Main Office

Once enough paper surveys have been completed to meet both the sampling and oversampling requirements for the institution, a final round of quality control should be done prior to data entry. Since the calculation of the poverty level of the respondents will be incomplete unless all of the responses are entered for each survey, the documents should be reviewed one more time to ensure they are complete. Any forms that are missing any answers should be sent back to the field supervisors to return to the field to either complete them or interview replacement candidates. If a survey is found to have missing information and it is too late to return to the field, the survey must be discarded. *It is very important that missing values are not replaced with a "0" (or any other placeholder value) if that was not the correct answer. An incorrect "0" value will skew the data and invalidate the results of the poverty calculation. (this applies to missing responses only. In some PATs, instructions will tell you to fill in a "0" if the question does not apply to a member of the household, for example).* Supervisors should use the quality control check boxes at the top of the survey to help keep track of which forms have been checked.

The final round of quality control is also an excellent opportunity to clarify any hand written answers which may be difficult for data entry processors to read and to ensure that the surveys are in correct survey number order.

Data Entry Tool

The software to be used for entering and processing your data is Epi Info 3.4.3, produced by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization. It is public domain software and both the software and manual can be freely downloaded and copied, without cost. The features which make it suitable for use with the USAID tools include

its adaptability, simple point and click procedures, customized data entry with controls to limit errors, and the ability to compare data to minimize errors.

The data entry screen that matches your survey has already been created in the database file that you received (such as USAID_PAT_COUNTRYABBREV.mdb), including controls to prevent the entry of incorrect values and the program necessary for calculating the poverty level of the clients interviewed in your sample. The survey tool and the Epi Info data entry template for each country's PAT are available for download at: http://www.povertytools.org/USAID_Tools/USAID_Tools.htm

System Requirements for Epi Info

- Windows 98, NT 4.0, 2000, or XP is required.
- 32 MB of Random Access Memory. More RAM: 64 MB for Windows 4.0 and 2000, 128 MB for Windows XP.
- 200 megahertz processor is recommended - 300 for Windows XP.
- At least 260 megabytes of free hard disk space (Drive C) to install; 130 megabytes after installation

If you attended a formal training for poverty assessment tools, the Epi Info program is included on the CD you received at the training. On the CD, there is a folder entitled "Epi Info Program". The file in that folder is: "setup". Copy that file directly onto the hard drive of the computer onto which you want to install the Epi Info program. After copying the "setup" file onto your hard drive, double-click on it to begin the installation process.

Entering Data

The pre-test provides an opportunity for the data entry personnel to practice entering actual survey data. The completed surveys from both the pre-test and the full implementation should be entered twice to check for consistency and accuracy (see the section on the Data Compare utility, below), and each data entry person should also practice how to edit, save, and reopen the data files before the full implementation. The data entry process must follow systematic procedures to minimize data entry errors and keep all the files organized.

Enter: The Data Entry Program for Epi Info

The Enter program (accessible by the "Enter Data" button on the primary Epi Info screen) performs the following functions:

- Creates a data table for the data being entered
- Controls the data entry process, using the settings and limited ranges of values for each field to minimize data entry errors.
- Includes a search function so that records can be located that match values specified for any combination of variables.

The cursor moves from field to field and from page to page automatically, saving data as necessary. Navigation buttons provide access to new, previous, next, first, and last records.

To start entering data, select File, and then Open. Find your database file, click on it, and then click on Open. Make sure your table/View is selected and then click on OK. Move your pointer over the Survey Number data entry box and click on it. Enter the corresponding value from the first survey. Hit enter or tab to proceed to the next data entry box and enter its corresponding value. Fill in the values until the end of the page. After entering the last value and hitting enter, the next page of the template will automatically open up on your screen. Complete all of the data entry boxes until the end of the survey. After entering the last data value, hit enter and a new data entry record will open. Continue to enter the values in this record for the next paper survey until all surveys are entered. The ‘Survey Number’ field is coded as “Must Enter”, so the program will not allow you to advance to the next screen without entering the survey number. Note that having a unique identifier (such as the survey number) for each survey is crucial for file organization and data quality control procedures. If you have to return to a previous field to enter data that was skipped, then you must move to the final page of that record and press enter while the cursor is in the last data entry cell, in order to proceed to a new data entry record.

When the first data entry processor finishes entering each survey, a second one can begin entering the same data. Each data entry processor must begin with a different copy of the same database (identical copies, with different file names). In this way, the two databases

can be compared later to identify errors. Entering the data twice might seem at first inefficient, but comparing the two files after they are completed is an excellent way to detect data entry errors. The instructions describing how to compare the data appear later in this chapter, under the section “The Compare Data Function.”

The top left corner of the Enter screen shows on which page you are located, and the bottom left corner displays which record the program is currently being displayed, as well as the total number of records that have been entered into the database.

The buttons just below the record number allow the user to move between records. Use the double arrows to move to the first or last record. The single arrows will move the user one record at a time. If the user knows the record number, they can change the actual number of the record and press Enter to be directed to that record. Clicking the New button brings up a new blank record.

Saving a Page or Record: Pages are saved automatically. The current page is saved when you move to the next record or page.

To find records matching specified criteria: If you discover that an incorrect value has been entered into the database, the Enter program can be used to make any necessary corrections. With a database table of 200 or more records, it can be difficult to scroll through each record to find the one that needs to be modified. To find a specific record:

1. Click on the Find button that is located in the left-hand column
2. The Find Record screen will be displayed.
3. Choose the fields to search and then type the values to be found in the field(s) that appear.
4. Click the OK button to perform the Find.

An example would be if one record has an age of “5” instead of “55”. Choose the “Age” variable on the left-hand side of the screen, and then type in the value “5”. Click on OK, and all of the records with an age value of 5 will be selected.

To go to and edit any of the records found, move the cursor on top of the small arrow at the far left of the row, and double-click on the arrow of the chosen row. The record will then be displayed on the screen. Make the necessary edits and they will be saved automatically upon exiting.

Missing values

Normally, missing values on questionnaires require special procedures for data entry coding. **However, due to the fact that any missing values will affect the calculation of poverty level, it is ESSENTIAL that you ensure that every survey is COMPLETE!** If any of the questions needed for the poverty calculation are blank, the program will have to exclude that record from the final poverty calculation. As noted earlier, do not arbitrarily replace missing values with place-holder values like “0.” Doing so will distort

the poverty level calculation. During the data entry process, the template will issue a warning at the end of the record in which needed values are missing, and the data entry operator will be able to return to the first missing field

Making electronic backups

Entering data is a time-consuming process. Once entered, data will be cleaned and further prepared for analysis, all of which takes time. After installing Epi Info on the computers that will be used for data entry and processing, copy the survey database file into the Epi Info folder that is located on the C: drive (the Epi Info folder is automatically created during the installation of the program). An extra copy of the original file should be stored on another computer, a CD, or a memory stick. As with any computer files, it is highly recommended to make backups of all of the files created or modified during the process. At the end of each day, make sure that a back-up copy of your work exists.

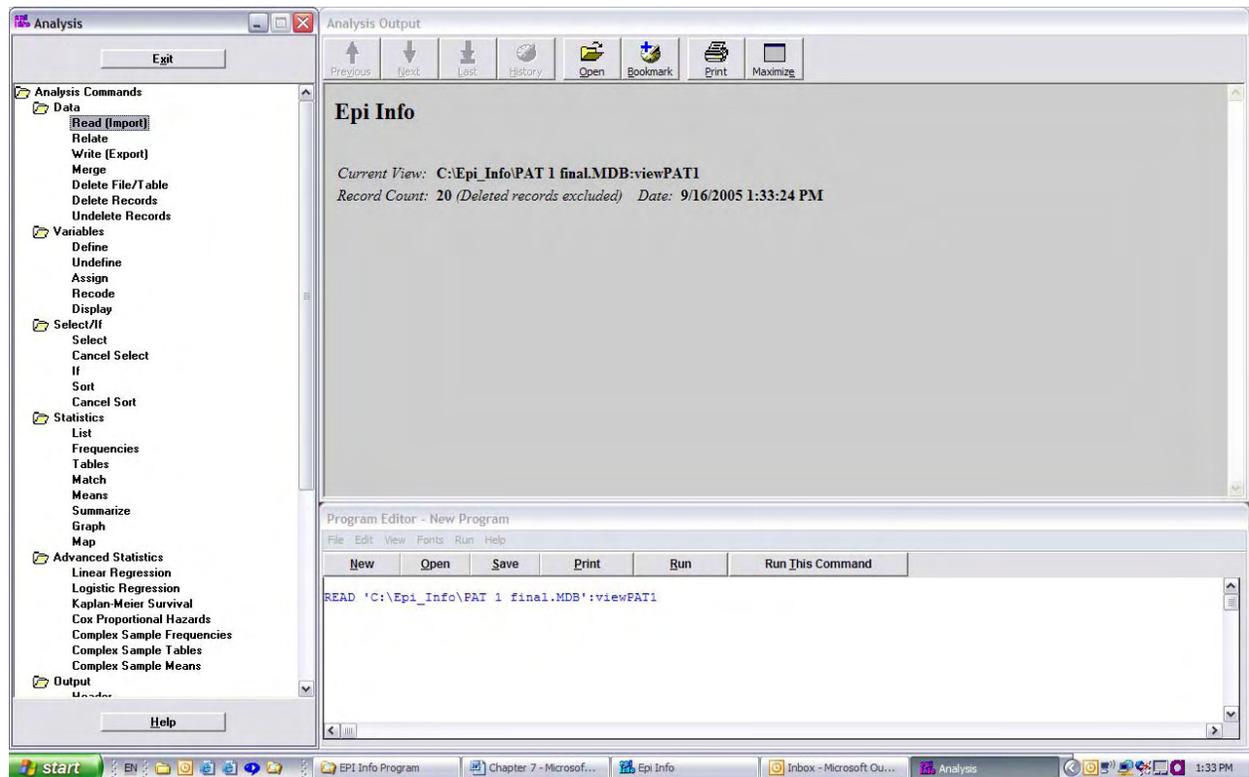
Cleaning the Data

Consistency checks: The field supervisor should be doing an initial round of quality control to look for inconsistent answers in the written surveys. Checks for inconsistencies during data cleaning can be used to find data errors. For example, clients that indicate they had no food shortages in the past year would not indicate they did not have enough to eat in the past month.

Errors that occur during the data entry process can be detected by looking for outliers and using the “Compare Data Function.” The two methods are described in the following pages.

Checking for ‘Outliers’ using the Frequency command

After the records have been entered using the "Enter Data" component of Epi Info, running a frequency on the values can identify outlier or oddball values. This can be done by the following steps:



1. Click “Analyze Data” on the main Epi Info screen
2. Open the database of interest by clicking “Read (Import)” from the menu on the left hand side.
 - a. Select either your current project or click “Change Project” to select another project.
 - b. Click on the View of interest, then click ‘OK’
3. Click on “Frequencies” under the “Statistics” heading of the left hand side menu.
4. Select the variables, one at a time, from the drop down menu in the middle of the “FREQ” dialog, then click OK.
5. Check the output for values that seem out of place or inappropriate, for example, a client whose age is 5.

The Compare Data Function

A more effective means of detecting errors with minimum effort is to enter all data twice, each time into a database file with a different name. Epi Info can be used to compare the two files to see where differences occur. Then the original paper copy can be checked to see which is correct for each discrepancy. Because data entry is estimated to take no more than 3-5 minutes per questionnaire, entering data twice can be more cost-effective than searching for errors at later stages.

1. The same records are entered twice using “Enter Data”, preferably by two different data entry staff, and saved to two separate databases.
2. These databases should be given similar, but not identical names, to facilitate comparison. For example, data entry person Brian would save his database as PAT1_Brian.MDB, and Anthony would save his as PAT1_Anthony.MDB.
3. These two databases will now be compared to identify differences in the coding of the questionnaire values between Brian and Anthony to identify typographical errors made by one or both. To do so:
 - a. From the main Epi Info screen, select the “Utilities” menu near the top left corner of the screen. Select “Data Compare”
 - b. In the “Data Compare” screen, select “New Script” from under the File menu. A “Data Compare Wizard” will appear on the screen.
 - c. Select “Epi Info View” as the table type, select the first database and view under the “MDB 1” heading, and the second database and view for “MDB 2.” Click “Next” at the bottom.
 - d. A unique identifier is needed to match records between the two databases for comparison. For our surveys, that identifier is the variable “Survnum.” Check the box next to that variable and click “Next.”
 - e. Make sure that all fields are checked (since we want to compare the data for all the variables). If they are not all checked, click “Check All” to include all fields. Click “Next.”
 - f. We do not need an HTML report of the comparison, so leave the box unchecked and click “Next.”
 - g. Click the “Compare” button on the lower right hand side.
4. Records which differ between the two databases will appear under the “Differences” tab. Any record that was entered in one database but not the other, will appear in the “Unmatched Records” tab.
 - a. Select the “Differences” tab.
 - b. Values which differ between the two databases/tables are highlighted in color. Examine these carefully.
5. To correct mistaken values:

- a. If it is clear that a value in the Table 1 was incorrectly entered, but that in Table 2 was correctly entered, one can replace that incorrect value with that from Table 2. To do so, click on the correct value in Table 2, and then click on the “Accept Value Table 2” button.
- b. If it is not possible to click on the “Accept Value” buttons, then it is necessary to switch from Read-only mode to Edit mode. To do this, locate the icon above the Differences tab that resembles a person’s Eye and click on it. Then you will be able to use the Accept Value buttons.
- c. If neither of the databases has the correct value for a particular variable and the value needs to be changed, double-click on the value to be changed and type it in, and then accept that value as the correct one by using the appropriate Accept Value button.

Consistency checks: The field supervisor should be doing an initial round of quality control to look for inconsistent answers in the written surveys. Checks for inconsistencies during data cleaning can be used to find data errors. For example, the number of males in the household plus the number of females in the household should add up to the total number of household members.

Merging a Table into another Table (Append and Update)

If different portions of the survey forms are entered into two different computers, the two databases will need to be merged into one. The Merge command is used to perform this function. Before copying both database files onto the same computer, ensure they have different file names from one another (such as PAT1-Brian and PAT1-Anthony). Once the two files are both in the C:\Epi_Info folder, the second database can be merged into the first database.

1. Open the Analysis program by clicking on the Analyze Data button.
2. Select READ from the list of Analysis Commands in the left-hand column.
3. Click the Change the Project button and find the first database (.mdb) that you want to copy everything else into.
4. Click Open.
5. Under Views, choose the desired view.
6. Click OK.
7. From the list of Analysis Commands, select MERGE
8. Under Data Source, click the Find File button on the right-hand side (the button with three small dash marks to the right side of the Data Source field), and locate the second .MDB file that will be merged into the first file.
9. Click Open.

10. Click on the View name and confirm that Update and Append are checked.
11. Click on Build Key.
12. Choose the “Survnum” field from the Available Variable drop down list. (click on the small black arrow on the right side of the Available Variables field, then select Survnum from the list of variables.)
13. Click OK for the selection to appear under the Current Tables section.
14. Repeat the process by choosing the same “Survnum” variable from the Available Variable drop down list.
15. Click OK for the selection to appear under the Related Table section.
16. Click OK again, this take you back to the MERGE dialog box.
17. Click OK from the Merge dialog box to create the Merge/Update/Append.
18. Click OK to bypass the Read dialog box that requests a name for a temporary link.
19. To view the new data, READ (open) the first database table. You should be able to see that the Record Count listed at the top of the Analysis results screen indicates that the first database now includes the total number of records from both databases that were merged.

The content from the second table has been added and updated into the first database table. Please note that the name of the first database will remain the same, even after you have added (merged) all of the records from the second database. It is good practice to rename the file with the merged records and also to back up the file at this point.

Calculating the Poverty Level

Once the database files have been merged (if some surveys were entered on two different computers), and the Compare Data utility has been used to look for errors between the two databases entered by separate data entry personnel, then you are ready to calculate the poverty level of the entire sample. ***Do not perform this function until you have completed all of the merging and data cleaning procedures outlined above.***

1. Open the Analysis program by clicking on the Analyze Data button on the main Epi Info screen.
2. Select READ from the list of Analysis Commands in the left-hand column.
3. Click the Change the Project button and find the database file (.mdb) that contains all of the merged and corrected records.
4. Click Open.
5. Under Views, choose the desired view.
6. Click OK.

7. The number of records displayed should match the total number of surveys that were completed in your sample.
8. Look at the bottom portion of the Analysis screen to the section entitled: Program Editor, and click on the Open button.
9. A Read Program box will appear on your screen. In the second field of the Read Program inset box, labeled Program, click on the small black arrow on the right side to see the drop-down menu of choices.
10. There will be only one option available: “prog1”. Select it, and then click on OK, which will close the inset box. You will now see that many lines of commands have been added to the Program Editor section. **DO NOT change anything in that area** or it will prevent you from successfully calculating the poverty level of your client sample.
11. In the Program Editor section at the bottom of the screen, click on RUN. This will execute all of the lines of the program, and you will see a table appear in the main section of the Analysis screen above the Program Editor.
12. The table should appear similar to this:

Verypoor	Frequency	Percent	Cumul. Percent	
0	8	40.0%	40.0%	
1	12	60.0%	100.0%	
Total	20	100.0%	100.0%	

13. In the left-hand column of the table, the value of 1 is equal to Yes, and the value of 0 is equal to No. In the Frequency column, the total number of surveys is shown, along with the number of those calculated to be not ‘very poor’ (the row beginning with “0”), and the number of sampled clients calculated to be ‘very poor’ (in the row beginning with “1”).
14. The Percent column indicates the percentage of those interviewed who are NOT ‘very poor’ (first row), and the percentage who ARE ‘very poor’ (second row). Thus, in the sample above, the percentage of the 20 clients in this example who are calculated to be ‘very poor’ is 60%.

Reporting to USAID

If USAID requires your organization to report the percentage of your institution’s clients who are “very poor,” then the final database used to do the poverty calculation can be sent to the PAT Help Desk along with your results, upon completion. When sending the database, make sure to use WinZip or another file-compression software to compress the database file prior to sending it to the Help Desk as an attachment. Subsequently, you will include the results from your PAT implementation with your regular MRR submission.

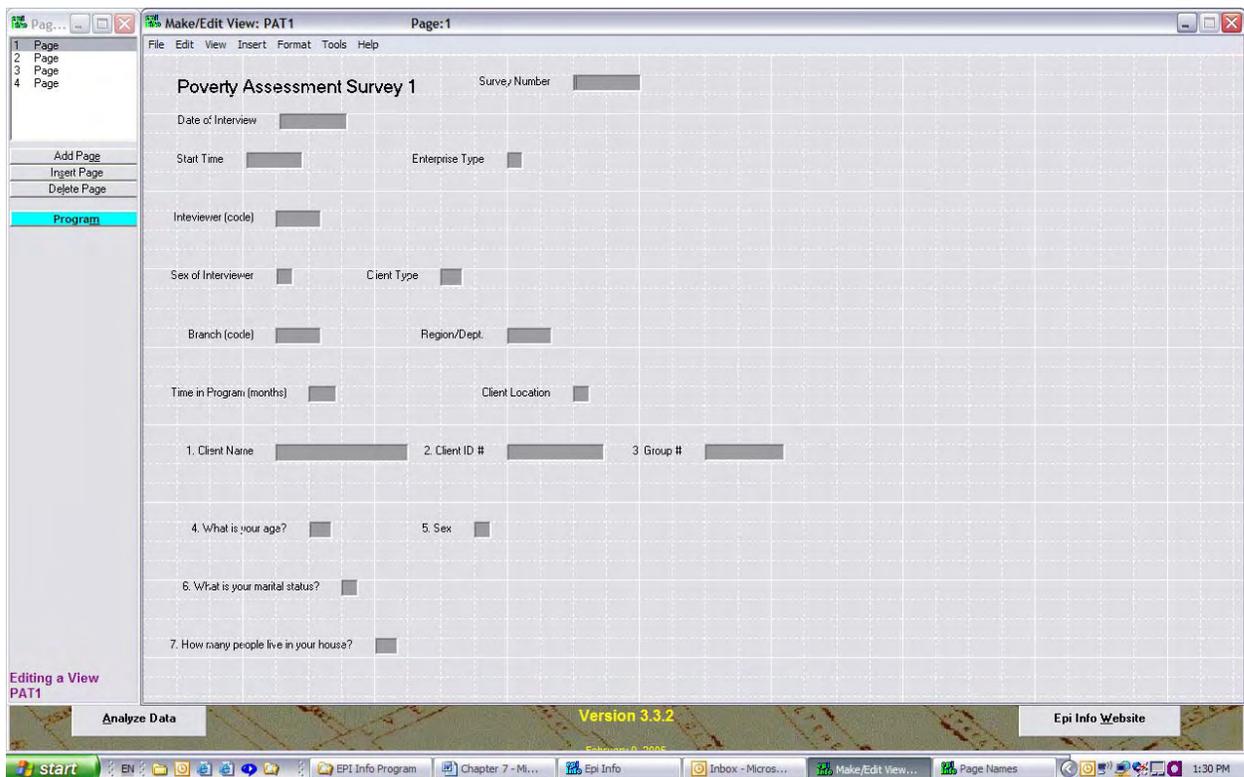
If you are required to measure poverty and report to USAID, and are having trouble with the data processing, please contact the PAT Help Desk at pathelp@iris.econ.umd.edu.

Troubleshooting

1) What if I need to translate the data entry template?

If you have translated the survey questions and would like the data entry screen to match what is on the survey used in the field, you can change the questions that appear on the Epi screen to the translated version.

After opening the Epi Info program, click on the “Makeview” button. From the Makeview screen, click on File and then Open. Select your database project file (such as PAT1) and click on Open. Then make sure the View is selected and click on OK.



You will see the data entry screen, but the actual spaces for the data are in grey (data cannot be entered in Makeview).

Place your cursor directly over the words of the field you wish to edit and right-click. The Field Definition screen will appear. The first area at the top of the Field Definition box is labeled: “Question or Prompt”. This is the **ONLY** information you are allowed to change. **Do not change any of the other information on the Field Definition screen.**

Place the cursor in the Question or Prompt area and replace the original question with your translated version, and then click OK. Repeat this process for each question on the survey until your data entry screen in Epi is similar to the printed survey used in the field. In the upper-left corner of the screen you can click on a different page number to move from one page to another.

2) How do I make copies of the database files or send them via email?

How to make copies of database files

The files used by Epi Info are database files ending in “.mdb”. Within each database is the table where your data is stored (called a “View”). There is only one table/View per database. The Epi database files can be easily copied to another computer or another folder.

Remember that the Epi files are created and stored in the Epi Info folder directly on the C: drive of your computer (the folder is NOT in My Documents, but directly on the C: drive). It is recommended to create another folder on the C: drive to facilitate making backups and copies of your database files. Open Windows Explorer and locate and click on the C: drive. Then use the File menu at the top of the screen and select “New”, and then “Folder”. This will create a new folder in the C: drive. You can name this folder “Epi Copy”.

Then locate the Epi database file that has already been copied to your C:\Epi_Info folder (such as “PAT1.mdb”). Copy that file to the C:\Epi Copy folder, change the name, and then copy it back into the C:\Epi_Info folder. Now you will have two identical databases with different names. You will want to make enough copies with different names so that each person entering data will do so into a database file with a unique name. When you copy the original (empty) database file onto other computers, the filenames should be changed, and it is also important to write down which files are being used by each data entry person, and also which surveys are being recorded into each file. This will be important when it comes time to merge two sets of files (with different records), or to compare the data in two files (with the same records entered by two separate people, to check for errors).

Transferring Epi Info databases by email

Sometimes email software (such as Microsoft Outlook) does not allow a database file created in Epi Info (.mdb) to be opened as an attachment. To get around this, be sure to use WinZip or another file compression software to compress the database. Then it can be attached to an email and opened by the recipient. The database files will reduce in size significantly using WinZip (sometimes to as little as 10% of the original file size). This makes it very easy to transfer the database files by email or other means.

CHAPTER EIGHT

TRAINING INTERVIEWERS AND SUPERVISORS

Desired Qualities of Trainers

PAT co-trainers should be experienced in:

- Quantitative interviewing techniques
- Survey design and the construction of hypotheses, indicators & questions
- Field work with teams doing surveys
- Adult education techniques
- Coordination and facilitation of large groups
- Understanding of the MEP and the purpose and desired outcomes of the field work

Interviewer trainers should work closely with the project manager. Hopefully, the same person(s) also will analyze the results from the interviewing. This method ensures that the trainees will learn the intent behind each of the questions directly from those who have worded and approved the initial translations, as well as will be interpreting the data results. The dialogue between those who are interviewing the clients and those who are leading the study begins here and continues with debriefing the interviewers on a regular basis, including at the end of the interview stage.

Train more than minimum number of interviewers

It is recommended always to train more persons to be interviewers than the number of interviewers required. There are always illnesses or family and work emergencies that pull trainees away at the last minute and there usually is not time to train substitutes adequately. Therefore, it is best to train more people than needed. Also, during or at the end of the training, the Manager or Trainers want the ability to recommend that certain trainees be discontinued because they did not prove during the pre-test to have the skills needed to be good interviewers.

The supervisors and all of the other people who are going to be involved in the process (data processors; logistics persons; etc.) should go through the same training so that they know what is being asked and expected of the interviewers. This will allow them to be of better assistance to the interviewers during the days of interviewing.

Possible staff incentives include:

- Financial rewards for completion of the entire data collection or data entry processes;
- Letters of recommendation for interviewers hired from outside of the organization;
- Emphasize to all team members the importance and utility of the skills they are learning during this process;
- Feedback loop to ensure that all staff members have access to the results of the survey work and its implications. Seeing the results and importance of their work acts as its own incentive.
- Incentives should always be tied to the process, and not the results. That is to say, both interviewers and clients should be encouraged to provide accurate and unbiased responses, and if incentives are provided, they should be based on efficiency and accuracy, and not on perceived poverty levels.

Overview of the Schedule for the Training, Interviewing & Analysis

It is important to schedule the training week early during the time period required for the entire process of the PAT research project. Each organization will have its own schedule for the PAT process. However, all will have three distinct phases.

- Phase 1 is Planning, Sampling, Training, Tools Pre-test and Preparation for the field work
- Phase 2 is the Interviewing in the Field and the Entering of Data as it comes through the quality control process
- Phase 3 is for Obtaining the Findings, doing the Analysis, and Reporting to USAID.

In the first day of training, it is important to explain to the trainees and others the process of the first two phases that they will be working on so that they have the context of when they will be where, doing what. Explaining this early the first day will eliminate a lot of potential anxieties and provide them the information that they need to tell their families about their need for family-prepared food, being out of town, whether they can leave a cash advance behind with the family, etc.

The chart below is broken down by the three phases in rows; the columns represent three separate teams. The interviewer trainees and their supervisors compose Team 1. The other two teams support them.

Responsibilities Team during the 3 Phases

	Team 1: Interviewers using PAT and supervisors doing the initial quality control in the field	Team 2: Data Processing Team to process completed survey forms	Team 3: Staff in Central Office who perform quality control between Team 1 and 2 and for Team 2
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Phase One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive training; • Practice tools; • Test tools; • Plan how to carry out the interviews of the sample; • Review the transportation plan and do a detailed plan of the data collection for the following week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and practice software; • Input sample data and check quality; • De-bug and eliminate viruses; • Plan for the following week; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help train; • Make sure that the list of sampled clients is ready for the teams, with directions for finding clients; • Plan for the following week; • Make sure that the logistics, materials and budget is in order.
Phase Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data; • Field supervisors fill in their part; • Code and check data for quality; • Make sure that production is on schedule; • Collect and provide feedback on questionnaires. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input and clean data; • Return incomplete interview forms back to Team 1; • Maintain an accurate count of the sample accomplished each day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review quality of data collection, data cleaning and input; • Ensure completion of assignments, with a minimum number of completed surveys of each type.
Phase Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize data collection in the first day if necessary; and debriefing of interviewers before they are dismissed; • Supervisors help with data cleaning if needed, especially looking for exceptional cases and aggregated data that does not make sense; • Data findings and analysis; • Write report(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete data input; • Clean data and ensure quality control; • Basic analysis; • Compile demographic information on interviewees to verify if sample is representative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervise final data collection, cleaning, input, and analysis; • Help coordinate report writing (if additional analysis is done for your organization).

Schedule for the Week of Training

Interviewer training follows a format aimed at building skills step by step. Normally, interview training takes a minimum of three to four days, with an additional day required for pre-testing the survey with clients. The major determinants of training length are the amount of field experience already possessed by both the interviewers and field supervisors and the number of survey tools to be learned.

The time needed for interviewer training is estimated at five to six days and it is best to do them in a consecutive manner if feasible. The figure below, called “Sample Interviewer Training Schedule” outlines the focus of each day. The remainder of this Chapter gives the suggested daily training activities.

Sample Interviewer Training Schedule

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
--Introductions; agenda for data collection; agenda and logistics for training week. --Purpose, objectives and key concepts of this research and the tools. --Interviewers’ roles and responsibilities. --Reviewing the survey in the first language. --Techniques of survey interviewing. --Practice first survey.	--Review the questionnaires in each of the languages and make consensus changes in writing. Pass the changes to typists. --Practice each of the surveys in the local languages. --In a parallel training, be working with the data processing team to introduce them to their duties.	--Finish any remaining practice from Day 2. --Practice exercises. --Learn sampling and interviewee replacement techniques. --Prepare for going to field to interview early in the morning on Day 4.	--Pre-test the survey(s) with sample clients and non-clients; --Reflect on pre-test experience and lessons learned.	--Make final changes to each of the tools in each language. --Print up the final versions in each language and make enough copies for each of the interviewer’s goals. --The interviewers should practice again.	--Map out all the logistics, including transportation, and accommodations, for the next week of interviewing. --Get all of the materials, per diems and travel advances, etc. needed to each team. --Move each team to their areas. --If have time, begin the first interviews on 6 th day. --Dismiss the trainees in the mid afternoon of 6 th day and give them the 7 th day to rest.

APPENDIX A

GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Purpose of this Focus Group Discussion (FGD): To focus on how to improve: interviewer training, translation, building trust with the clients, and efficiency of the interviewing process. Essentially, this exercise will help the trainer ensure that each interviewer understands how to conduct the survey accurately and respond to unforeseen complications properly.

Participants: Interviewers after they have had experience in asking the questions to the clients.

Personnel needed: A FGD requires a facilitator (or moderator) to ask the questions and a note taker (or assistant moderator) to write down all that is said relating to each topic.

When to be used:

- The first time should be after the pre-test and before any additional interviewing. If necessary, again after one or two days of formal interviewing.

Instructions: The instructions to the facilitator are given in italics in the table below. Remember to encourage honest and open critique and comments in order to help the interviewers to correct problems that they have encountered. Please encourage suggestions about how the questionnaire and process could be improved for your implementation and in the future.

Use of the following Table: In the first column are the core questions, which are the main questions that the facilitator is asking. In the next column to the right are the probing questions to go along with the core question. These help the facilitator to probe more deeply to find out more about the topic of the main questions. The guide is divided by subject matter.

<u><i>Core Questions</i></u>	<u><i>Related Probing Questions</i></u>
<u>Warm-Up Questions Regarding the Process</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are the interviews going? 2. How many interviews were you able to 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the greatest difficulties you are having? Are you having difficulties finding the respondents? What is going well? 2. What are the main factors affecting the number

do today? How did that compare to previous days?	you can complete each day?
<p><u>Training Questions</u></p> <p>Now we are going to discuss the training that you received about how to apply the questionnaire.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you feel that you were provided enough training to proper implement the tool? 2. What were the most useful parts of the training? 3. What were the least helpful parts of the training? 4. How could it have been improved? 	<p><i>The following questions are to provide feedback to the trainers in order to make improvements in the future. The trainers are not required to report the responses to USAID.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why? Why not? 2. List specific parts and why they were useful. 3. List specific parts and why they were not useful. 4. How should it be done differently in the future?
<p><u>Translation of Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does it read well in your language? 2. Which ones do you need to improve as you ask the questions? 3. If the questions were not written in your local language, did you have to translate the questions during the evaluation? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How could this be improved? 2. What are your wording changes? <i>Seek consensus among the interviewers.</i> 3. How difficult was this? How do you make sure you are really are asking the same question the same way to each respondent?
<p><u>Demographic Questions</u></p> <p>Please take out a survey form. We are going to look carefully at each of the questions and see where you may be having difficulties. We will start with the questions about the client and household.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Question 1 2. Question 2 3. Question 3 4. Question 4 <p>Etc.</p>	<p><i>The first time you hold this FGD, you should go question by question. The next times, you can go section by section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you have any problems interpreting to the clients the meaning of this question (or the questions in this section)? • Which questions did the clients have difficulty in understanding? Why? • <i>If it is the first or second day</i>, what are other ways to explain the question so it would be more easily understood? • Do you think that the clients are manipulating their answers? Why? • Is there a way that we can verify this information? Can we observe contradictions in the household or in the data that this client has provided to us on other forms?
<p><u>Building Trust with Clients to Provide Correct Answers:</u></p>	

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the techniques you are using to build the trust of the clients so that they give you answers that are reasonably accurate? 2. How do you assure clients when they express concern about why you need this information? 3. Did you find that clients would intentionally misreport their answers? How was this being done? 4. What could be changed to improve their willingness to give us better answers? 5. Were there any questions that they refused to answer or were hesitant to answer? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What techniques should we teach in future trainings? 2. What would you recommend that we say to clients? 3. Why do you think the clients were doing this? 4. Would it be better if we interviewed clients in a different place? Would it be better by making sure that other household members were not present? What could be changed to improve their willingness to be frank? 5. Do you know why? <p><i>To better understand their responses, you can use the following codes to describe the level of client sensitivity. As mentioned before, these answers do not have to be reported to USAID:</i></p> <p>1 = very sensitive—many clients felt very uncomfortable or refused to respond</p> <p>2 = somewhat sensitive-many clients were a little uncomfortable in responding</p> <p>3 = not sensitive-unlikely to make the client feel uncomfortable</p>
<p><u>Amount of Time:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did the clients make any remarks about the amount of time it took to answer such questions? 2. How do you think we could make the process more efficient in terms of time? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What remarks did they make? 2. What specific suggestions do you have?
<p><u>Final Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any changes that we should make in the process of interviewing? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What specific changes?

APPENDIX B

CHECKLIST FOR IMPLEMENTING POVERTY ASSESSMENT TOOL

Checklist for Implementing Poverty Assessment Tool	
1.	Two representatives receive training from IRIS or other PAT trainer for one week
	a. ½ day for each representative to read training materials received prior to training week
	b. ½ day to prepare documents on your organization to bring with you to the training
	c. 5 full days of training (Monday through Friday), with some reading in the evenings
	d. 1 day to travel to (or return) to field offices to commence implementation
	Brief management team in-country and select profiles and initial names for the implementation team – ½ day
3.	Prepare Training Schedule, make final adjustments to plan and logistics, 2 days
4.	Develop sample frame and generate lists of clients to interview for pre-test and implementation – 4 days
5.	Hire interviewers, if necessary – 4-7 days (can be completed during the same time as sample frame)
6.	Translate questionnaire to the local language(s), and back-translate to ensure accuracy - 2 days
7.	Set up logistical support as necessary (for pre-test and implementation) – 3 days + ongoing
8.	Train interviewers – 5-6 days
9.	Copy questionnaire for pre-test – ½ day (less if outsourcing)
10.	Conduct pre-test interviews – 1 day with all interviewers (can be part of Interviewer training)
11.	Evaluate results and conduct FGD to help identify difficulties or inaccuracies in interviewing. - ½ day for entire team + ½ day for supervisors (part of interviewer training)
12.	Edit translation and wording of questionnaire to ensure it is understood by the clients and that it maintains its original meaning
13.	Copy questionnaire – 1 day (less if outsourcing)
14.	Prepare field supplies and test logistics – 2 days
15.	Conduct client interviews and quality control in field – 5-10 days, depending on number of interviewers and which tool is being used
16.	Debrief interviewers, address any residual issues – 1 day for entire team
17.	Enter & clean data – 3-5 days, depends on amount and experience of MIS staff
18.	Analyze data – 1-2 days (exact number of days depends on preparation stage of entry template, experience of staff, and how much ‘extra’ analysis is done)
19.	Prepare report and send to USAID – 1 day

APPENDIX C

GENERAL IMPLEMENTER'S GUIDE

The following section is a general guide for poverty assessment survey questions. The guide is divided by indicator categories, with each category explaining the meaning and purpose of different types of questions which could be on your survey. The categories include household roster, housing, education, health, employment, assets consumption and food security, and “other.” Since not every poverty indicator mentioned is on each survey, please skip the paragraphs which do not pertain to your tool. This guide is intended to assist in training and also serve as a reference material for interviewers/enumerators. Since multiple poverty tools exist, this guide aims to address the general issues involved in each indicator category; if you need further assistance with specific questions, please contact the Help Desk.

Household Roster:

The first section of most surveys will require the interviewer to help fill in a household roster. To do this efficiently, it is strongly suggested that you follow this procedure:

1. Explain to the respondent how ‘household’ is defined in this survey (see below).
2. List all members of the household and their sex in the first two columns. Always list the respondent first.
3. Identify the head of household (see below) and indicate each member’s relation to this person in the third column.
4. Fill in the other columns, one line at a time.

“Household:” A household is a person or a group of people who live together and take food from the “same pot”. In this survey, a household member is someone who has lived in the household for the last 12 months, and at least half of the week in each week in those months. In other words, a household member is someone who has lived the equivalent of 6 of the last 12 months in the household.

Even those persons who are not blood relations (such as servants, lodgers, or agricultural laborers) are members of the household if they have stayed in the household at least 6 months of the last year and take food from the “**same cooking pot.**”

If someone stays in the same house but does not bear any costs for food or does not take food from the same pot, they are not considered household members. For example, if two brothers stay in the same house with their families but they do not share food costs and they cook separately, then they are considered two separate households. However, if two brothers, their wives, their children, their parents, and their aunts, uncles, and cousins live in the same family compound, cook together, and share food, they would all be considered household members.

1. Generally, if one person stays more than 6 months out of the last 12 months outside the household, they are not considered household members. We do not include them even if other household members consider them as household members.
2. Exceptions to these rules should be made for:
 - A. A child less than 3 months old, usually a new born baby.
 - B. Someone who has joined the household through marriage less than 3 months ago.
 - C. Servants, lodgers, and agricultural laborers currently in the household but arrived less than 3 months ago and will stay for next couples of months.
 - D. Students in boarding schools who only come home during holidays.

People in categories A – D above should therefore be considered as household members.

This definition of the household is very important. The criteria could be different from other studies you may be familiar with, and will require some explanation with your respondents. Please discuss any questions with your supervisor.

“Head of household:” is a sensitive subject, and families define it in different ways. It can be the main income-earner, the main decision-maker, or the oldest person in the family. You should allow the respondent to tell you who they consider to be the household head, and not impose a specific guideline to follow in making this decision. Generally, in the case where a husband lives away from the home most of the time, but contributes regularly to the household upkeep and supports no other known household, the head of household would be the wife who remains at home. This household would be considered “female-headed” and the husband would be included as the ‘spouse.’ However, this must be determined by the respondent himself/herself.

“Age:” For age, please record age only in complete years. If any person’s age is 5 years 11 months or 5 years 1 month record 5 years. If the person is unsure of his or her age, try to get a close approximation. If the respondent only knows in which year they were born, subtract that from the current year to get the age. Only record age in the chart, do not record birth year.

Education

Most education questions are found in the roster, and then followed up in a “box” of questions below the roster (which is filled out after the survey is over). Usually there is one column which asks for the highest education level attained or year completed. Some surveys also have a second column asking for the highest diploma or certificate attained. The numbers provided in the survey are meant to be a short-hand guide for the interviewer and should correspond to the schooling system of your country. Always answer according to what was the last year completed. If someone finished primary school (for example, 7 years) and started the first year of middle school but did not finish it, the highest education level she would have obtained is 7 years and the highest certificate or diploma would be for primary school.

Additionally, there should be an option for no schooling for those with not formal schooling. In this case, being literate is not the issue; it is whether they attended a formal school. Other, separate questions get at whether the household head is literate or not. In this instance, the benchmark should be whether the person can read and write a complete sentence.

The follow-up education questions ask you about the education levels of certain people in the household, and usually have detailed instructions below them to assist you in finding the answer. The purpose of the education questions is to approximate the income earning potential of the household.

Health

These questions refer to illness that prevented the respondent or other household members from participating usual daily activities. Do not record if a person only suffered from a normal flu and had no problem performing his/her normal activities. Illnesses that might prevent normal daily activity include infectious diseases (including STDs, HIV, and tuberculosis), skin diseases, diseases of digestive system, kidney disease, ear/throat/nose diseases, respiratory illnesses, heart and circulatory system diseases, etc.

Housing

“Household Indicators” In this section, you will ask questions related to the current residence or dwelling of the household. Questions referring to “your house” refer to all enclosed living spaces used by the family on a routine basis. Questions on the type of exterior walls, roof and floors, refers only to those of the primary dwelling structure. The word “shared” means that the toilet facility is shared with other households, not with those in the same household (i.e., those that eat from the “same pot”). It is important that the respondent understands the word “primary” in this question. Some respondents may have multiple sources of drinking water, or may change the source of the drinking water at different times of the year. The client should understand that “primary” is the most important source at the time the interview is taken. If “living situation” is not immediately clear, “housing situation” can also be used, or another suitable term.

When in the field, interviewers may find that certain materials/sources/types do not match the mentioned pre-coded answers for the questions. Surveying during the pre-test should catch problems such as this. Consult the Help Desk if the answer options are inappropriate or inadequate.

“Observable Household Indicators” For some housing questions, the enumerator does not need to ask the client. They are generally regarding the quality of the house and its structural condition. *Ideally, the questions should not be asked directly of the respondent. Interviewers who are already at the respondent’s home should not ask these three*

questions, but instead observe and make a judgment. If the survey is conducted not at the respondent's home, then the interviewer should ask the question directly of the respondent. The interviewer needs to indicate on the survey whether the entries for these three questions result from direct observation or from the respondent's response.

You should decide what elements could be observed and train enumerators to use a standard approach. It is crucial that the enumerators are all trained in the same evaluation method, so that their estimation of “small” is consistently used on different days and at different locations. For example, during a test in Uganda, the following guidelines were used by the enumerators:

House size:

Small = one roomed

Medium = a house with separate cooking and sleeping areas

Large = three or more bedrooms)

Structural condition:

Good = in good condition

Average = needing few (minimal) repairs

Bad = in serious need of major repairs or one about to collapse altogether

Lock of the house

1. No lock
2. Wood or metal bar to close from inside only
3. Key lock
4. Security key lock/metal frame with padlock

“Electricity” This question is trying to determine whether there is a working electricity connection inside the household, whether owned or shared, or not. The word “shared” means that the connection is shared with other households, not with members of the same household (see definition above).

“Renting” This question, as the others, should have the entire range of response options necessary for the country context. If not, then please contact the Help Desk for assistance. Note that the difference between response option 1 (“squatting”) and 2 (“living with friends/relatives without paying rent”) is that in the second option, the client indicates permission to live on the property without paying rent. This is not true in the first option.

Employment

Only some questionnaires have employment questions, and they usually pertain to the household head and/or the principle female income earner. The question usually asks for whether the household head works in a specific industry. Sometimes examples are provided, but other times not. If you have a question about a specific type of employment, please contact the help desk.

Assets

Asset questions encompass both consumer durables and agricultural assets. If the agricultural questions do not pertain to your client, then simply answer “0” for the assets they do not own. It may seem odd to ask questions about assets your clients typically do not own. However, some items on the poverty assessment are used to identify who is *rich* just as much as some questions identify who is *poor*. For this reason, if it is possible that some people in your country or region may own these items, you should keep the indicator in the survey. It is still possible that it may be embarrassing to ask some of these questions of certain respondents; see the section on ‘sensitivity’ below which addresses this problem.

Remember the 5% Rule

*The best indicators are items that 5% of the population owns,
or that 5% of the population does not own.*

Sensitivity

Please note that some of these items, such as microwave oven, are certainly only applicable in richer households. For example, if the respondent has told the interviewer that he or she squats in the home, has no electricity, and collects rainwater for drinking, they obviously will not have a microwave oven. Interviewers should be properly trained in when to avoid asking such questions, since they may damage any rapport that is built with the respondents through the humiliation of asking such an absurd question. However, this sensitivity must be heavily weighed with the risk of interviewer bias: it is only in extreme cases that the interviewer should avoid asking such questions. Contact the Help Desk if this occurs.

“Owned” in the context of these questions means the household has the right to sell the item, including land. In the case of land, make sure that you understand what unit of measurement the question requires. It is written next to the box for the answer, but sometimes you may need to convert it. Context-specific conversions are provided on the survey.

“Agricultural land” refers to irrigated or non-irrigated land used for any productive farm usage, regardless of whether the family sells the agricultural goods to others or purely produces them for home consumption. “Owned” in this context means the household has the right to sell the land.

“Audio equipment” represents a luxury consumer item used for entertainment and can include a radio, CD player, etc. Only include items in working order.

“Autorickshaw” proved to be a significant poverty indicator in one country where these items were prevalent. They will not be in most areas. Its purpose is to ask about a

transport vehicle *used for hire to earn income*, which is prevalent among the population you work with, but not the most luxurious one. Only include vehicles in working condition.

“Bed” represents a higher-end piece of furniture, the number of which a household owns can be a good indicator of wealth. It should be applicable in the majority of cases. Do not include hammocks.

“Bicycle” is a simple transportation item that may be owned by the poor, but not the very poor. Only include bicycles in working condition.

“Buffalos” are large animals that constitute real investments for most rural people, not just the poor. They are often kept for multipurpose uses such as meat, milk, breeding, or transport.

“Camera” is an electronic item that may be owned by the poor, but not the very poor. Only include cameras in working condition.

“Car” represents a luxury transportation item. Only include cars in working condition.

“Computer” is a luxury communication device that also might be used in a family business. Similar items could include fax machine, copier, and a separate land line. Only include computers in working condition.

“Cows and horses” are large animals that constitute real investments for most rural people, not just the poor. They are often kept for multipurpose uses such as meat, milk, breeding, or transport.

“Electric or gas cooker/stove” is a kitchen appliance that may be owned by the poor, but not the very poor.

“Electricity generators” are expensive items that maintain a household’s ability to access electricity when public services fail.

“Fodder Machine” will only be applicable if you are working in an area where fodder is being produced for animals. This question aims to ask about farm machinery purchased for post-harvest productive use. Most respondents will not own one. Put “0” in the answer box.

“Leather shoes” represent a female luxury clothing item that was particularly accurate in predicting poverty. Note that the question is asking the total value of all such luxury items owned, regardless of whether they were purchased or received as gifts. If the respondent asks, the question is asking for the present value of these items; however, the interviewer should not raise this issue unless asked as it could easily confuse the respondent.

“Microwave oven” is a luxury cooking appliance.

“Mixer” is an everyday kitchen appliance that the poor may own but the very poor do not.

“Mobile phone” is a high-end communication device.

“Motorcycle” represents a transportation item generally not owned by the very poor. It can also be rented out for hire and used to generate income. Only include motorcycles in working condition.

“Musical instrument” is an all-encompassing indicator and can include such diverse items as electric guitars and reed flutes.

“Pigs” are smaller animals mainly kept for meat (although sometimes for their skin as well). In poorer countries, these are often owned by the wealthy and those around the poverty line, but some of the poorest have them also (but not many, and this is where then the numbers matter).

“Refrigerator” is a kitchen appliance owned by very few individuals, especially in poor rural settings. In many contexts, a refrigerator is a good indicator for showing movement out of poverty, as it means the difference between going to the store every day or spending money on ice for refrigeration and not having to do these things. Only include refrigerators in working condition.

“Rickshaw” proved to be a significant poverty indicator in one country where these items were prevalent. They will not be in most areas. Its purpose is to ask about a transport vehicle *used for hire to earn income*, which is prevalent among the population you work with, but not the most luxurious one. Only include vehicles in working condition.

“Sewing machine” is an appliance a household can use to make clothes (thus avoiding the cost of buying clothes) and also to produce some things for sale. It may be owned by the poor, but not the very poor.

“Standing fan” should be asked in climates that have extremely hot weather which would require the use of a cooling appliance. It represents an appliance a person would buy to change the climate or temperature of the home.

“Table” is a household furniture item that may be owned by the poor, but not the very poor. Don’t include small tables such as bedside tables.

“Telephone” is a communication device that may be owned by the poor, but not the very poor. In this case, it refers solely to a land line, not a mobile phone.

The questions referring to the number and value of radios, TV, videocassette or DVD players, and CD players are concerned with audiovisual equipment that may be owned by

a number of households. It is recognized that often a very poor household will own a radio but not any of the other items. See the note on “sensitivity” above for how to deal with this situation. This question is trying to understand the total value of all these items, however, and they should not be ungrouped. Only include equipment in working condition. The total value should be recorded regardless of whether they were purchased or received as gifts and should represent the best estimate possible. If the respondent asks, the question is asking for the present value of these items; however, the interviewer should not raise this issue unless asked as it could easily confuse the respondent.

There is a box marked ‘number’ that you can use to help calculate the total value. If the respondent is unable to give you a value for all of the items owned, prompt with, “How many?” and “what is the value of one (radio, TV,...)?”

If there is still a problem of being unable to use any or all of these four items in your country’s context, contact the Help Desk.

“Thresher” will only be applicable if you are working in an area where there is grain to be threshed. Only include threshers in working condition.

“Tractors” are used for agricultural purposes and to carry goods with the purpose of producing income (either on the respondents’ own land or by renting the tractor out for hire). If the question asks for the value, the total value should be recorded regardless of whether they were purchased or received as gifts and should represent the best estimate possible. If the respondent asks, the question is trying to ascertain the present value of these items; however, the interviewer should not raise this issue unless asked as it could easily confuse the respondent.

“Truck” represents a transportation item generally not owned by the very poor. It can also be rented out for hire and used to generate income. Only include trucks in working condition.

“Vacuum cleaner” is a luxury household cleaning appliance.

“Video equipment” represents a luxury consumer item used for entertainment.

“Watch” is a common item that may be owned by the poor, but not the very poor. It should be applicable in the majority of cases.

Consumption and Food Security

Consumption and Food Security questions usually pertain to the frequency of eating or the type of food eaten. Some refer to a luxury food item; the frequency with which it is eaten can be a good indicator of relative wealth or poverty. A luxury food is one that richer people in the survey area frequently eat, but that is seldom or never eaten by the poor because of its high price. Their consumption is also not restricted to special religious periods or cultural traditions. Meat, eggs, or dairy products – and some

processed foods or sweets – can act as luxury foods in many parts of the world. In some cases, rice in a non rice-growing region or wheat in a non wheat-growing region can be treated as luxury foods. This can also change by the season – for example, when the price of rice falls post-harvest, it may no longer be a luxury item.

If the items served in one meal in a day, it counts as one day. In each question the maximum days could be seven if it was eaten daily.

Make sure that responses to food security questions are due to lack of money to buy food and that the interviewee is referring to the last twelve months.

The main purpose of storable staple food questions is to understand the amount which is purchased at a time, but knowing the frequency with which this is purchased helps us to put the figure in context. Flour, rice, beans and maize refer are storable staples, for which poorer households generally purchase smaller quantities in higher frequencies because of limited cash availability.

Other

Various other questions that do not fit into the above categories are mentioned in this section. Some of the information provides a definition; other information provides tips on what to keep in mind while asking the question.

“Immediate relative.” This usually refers only to ‘first-degree’ relatives, i.e., parents, siblings, and children.

“Got married” refers to a single major lifecycle event for which the family would have had a major celebration, spending large amounts of money. It should be stressed that this only applies to the immediate family members, not the extended family.

“Traders’ associations and farmers groups” must be translated correctly to ensure they are answered accurately. Traders association refers to any form of formal (registered) or informal (not registered) association for the purposes of furthering marketing interests, such as access to information, better prices, etc. Membership is required regardless of the level of formality of the association. This refers to traders (retailers) only – not producers. A farmers group would play a similar role and refers to any form of formal (registered) or informal (not registered) association for the purposes of furthering farming interests in which membership is required. Be aware that they go by different names in different cultural contexts, and translate accordingly. (For example, in Burkina Faso, farmers group are called “village groups.”)

“Savings or checking accounts” refer to any type of account with a formal or semi-formal institution, including banks, credit unions, MFIs, NGOs. Savings held with informal organizations such as ROSCAs, ASCAs, tontines, etc., are not eligible. Questions about savings may be sensitive. Assure respondents that the answers will not be shared with anybody else, and that this is kept fully confidential. Please make sure that the environment of the interview ensures confidentiality before asking these questions.