

## HRBF Impact Evaluation Network Quality Assurance Recommendations for Field Work

August 2008

### Overview

The Impact Evaluation Network is providing a number of key recommendations to Country Principal Investigators (C-PI) in order to standardize field work operations and quality assurance for impact evaluations across the HRBF program.

These recommendations will be updated based on further discussions, piloting reports and other sources over the course of the program. The August 2008 recommendations are primarily focused on survey firm staffing, training, field work operations and field data entry, and should be considered by C-PIs as they move forward with budget and schedule negotiations with local survey firms.

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	EXPLANATION
STAFFING	The core survey team should include a minimum of 1 project manager, 1 field manager, and 1 data manager.	The core survey team (hired through the local survey firm) must include a minimum of one FULL-TIME project manager, one field manager and one data manager for the duration of the study. These managers should be involved in all phases of the survey, including training, field work and data entry.
STAFFING	Each field work team should be comprised of 1 supervisor, 2-4 interviewers and 1 data entry operator.	<p>The C-PI and survey firm will have to determine how many teams will be hired for field work given budget and time constraints. However, we recommend each team be comprised of the following:</p> <p><b>1 supervisor:</b> The supervisor is there to do what the data entry program cannot do in terms of quality assurance. With a high-level of supervision on a daily basis, the supervisor should mitigate perverse incentives for interviewers to record incorrect data in order to skip sections or individuals. Well defined field work procedures should be supported by supervision forms, filled by the supervisor and verified at the central level. These forms should be filled for a randomly selected number of households (15-20% of sample) for a randomly selected number of questions (10-15 minutes in household).</p> <p>This level of supervision is intended to prevent moral hazard among interviewers.</p> <p><b>2-4 interviewers:</b> Given the culture and context, the survey firm may need to have a male and female interviewer for each household. The survey firm will need to determine if the field work requires two interviewers per household or one interviewer per household. Depending on how many households are expected to be completed per day, the survey firm should decide if 2-4 interviewers are manageable for 1 supervisor and 1 data entry operator.</p> <p><b>1 data entry operator:</b> The data entry operator is responsible for implementing CAFE, and is therefore responsible for entering data from questionnaires as they come out of the field for immediate inconsistency checks for interviewers prior to their second visit to the household.</p>

STAFFING	The local data manager should be proficient in CS-Pro.	<p>The Impact Evaluation Network will contract a firm to produce a CS-Pro data entry program for the base questionnaire. Each country will need to adapt the CS-Pro data entry program to their localized version of the questionnaire(s). In order to minimize additional programming costs, the C-PI should adapt the questionnaire based on recommendations in the PI manual and work with the data manager in order to adapt the base data entry program to the localized questionnaire.</p> <p>The data manager should understand that in order to implement CAFE, the localized version of the data entry program should be completed by the time the interviewers and data entry personnel are pre-testing the questionnaire and before the training.</p>
TIMELINE	The C-PI and survey firm must develop a timetable which gives enough time for each main activity for the evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of logistics and fieldwork organization</li> <li>• Adapt questionnaire(s) to local context</li> <li>• Translation and back-translation of questionnaire(s)</li> <li>• Purchase/rental of materials: anthropometric and biomarker measurement</li> <li>• Adapt field manuals</li> <li>• Prepare quality control procedures and manuals</li> <li>• Staff selection and recruitment</li> <li>• Local IRB approval (1-3 months)</li> <li>• Pilot test (1 week)</li> <li>• Pilot test report</li> <li>• Training of fieldworkers (supervisors, interviewers and data entry operators) (3 weeks)</li> <li>• Sampling (require household listing in enumeration areas?)</li> <li>• Data management (procedures, program etc.)</li> <li>• Printing of questionnaire(s) and manuals</li> <li>• Field test (1 week)</li> <li>• Fieldwork</li> <li>• Final report</li> </ul>
TRAINING	The training of supervisors, interviewers and data entry personnel should include 4 main components.	<p>The general training should be given to the supervisors, interviewers and data entry operators in order to create a team environment and to allow for substitution between roles should any team member take a leave of absence due to illness or other emergency. Because the training should also serve as a screening process for skilled interviewers and data entry operators, the survey firm should also recruit more interviewers and data entry operators for the training than will be ultimately hired for the project. The supervisors will receive additional training following the general training.</p> <p>The training should be scheduled for a minimum of 3 weeks and include the following four main components. The C-PI and survey firm will need to identify whether or not all training can take place in one plenary group, or if there is too large a number of supervisors, interviewers and data entry operators if it is better to divide the training into several sub-groups. In this case, the survey firm will still need to standardize training across sub-groups by using the same training materials among trainers.</p>

		<p><b>1) Theoretical:</b> The team should review the theory of the questionnaire and each question in order to fully understand the objective of each question.</p> <p><b>2) Classroom practice:</b> Each individual should practice filling questionnaires in the classroom. The team should project the questionnaire and have one interviewer who fills in front of the classroom. It's also a good idea to use vignettes, where the firm designs case scenarios based on typical households (perhaps those found during the supervisor training or piloting) and have interviewers complete the questionnaire based on the vignette. Another idea is to film a pilot interview and have the interviewers fill in a questionnaire for the interview to test consistency across the interviewers.</p> <p><b>3) Field exercises:</b> After theoretical and classroom practice, the interviewers should go to the field to administer the full questionnaire to a small number of households (outside the study sample). The pre-test shouldn't focus on major adjustments to the questionnaire, but rather simulate the administration of the questionnaire under normal circumstances. The pre-test should also serve as a test of the CAFE for data entry operators.</p> <p><b>4) Evaluation:</b> Following the training, interviewers, supervisors and data entry operators should be evaluated based on their understanding of the questionnaire and their ability to correctly record data using the same test scenarios as used in the classroom practice.</p>
TRAINING	The budget for training must include travel, food and lodging for supervisors, interviewers and data entry operators.	<p>During budget negotiations, the C-PI should ensure that the survey firm is accounting for any travel, food and lodging for the supervisors, interviewers and data entry operators during the training.</p> <p>The best case scenario is to have centralized training, where all supervisors, interviewers and data entry operators are in one location and receive the same training (standardized PPTs). In this case, the survey firm must provide necessary coffee and lunch breaks, as well as lodging when personnel travel from out of town.</p> <p>In locations where centralized training is not possible, the survey firm must consider both financial and time budgets to provide standardized training in different locations. Again, the firm must consider the required travel, food and lodging budget for de-centralized training.</p>
TRAINING	An interim meeting should be scheduled to bring together all supervisors, interviewers and data entry personnel after <u>3 weeks of field work</u> .	The survey firm should budget for a two-three day meeting for all supervisors, interviewers and data entry operators to meet after field work begins. A good point in time is 2-3 weeks into field work. This meeting should give the team an opportunity to discuss and correct any problems related to supervision, field work organization, skip patterns and data entry issues.
FIELD WORK	In addition to piloting, pre-testing and main data collection, the survey firm should have an additional budget for producing a complete household listing in selected enumeration areas.	While the Impact Evaluation Network will provide guidelines on power calculations and sampling design, the C-PI will be responsible for working with the survey firm on the implementation of a well-defined sampling plan. In most countries, the C-PI and survey firm will not have an updated census to draw a random sample of households, and the survey firm will need to conduct a complete household listing of all households living in the enumeration areas (for example: Primary Sampling Units (PSUs)) selected for the study. If possible, this listing will include the roster of household members and their ages in order to select the target sample of households with children. This should be accounted for both in the timeline and the budget.

FIELD WORK	Computer Assisted Field Editing (CAFE) should be incorporated into field work.	<p>CAFE does not involve using computers or hand-held devices to <u>collect</u> data. Interviewers will collect data using the paper questionnaire. CAFE involves a system for field data entry, where data entry operators are in the field with the survey team, and enter data into a lap-top computer once data has been collected from the household using the paper questionnaire.</p> <p>CAFE has several requirements in order to be implemented. First, each field team must have a trained data entry operator responsible for entering the data in the field as interviews are completed. Second, the survey firm needs to provide one lap-top per data entry operator. Third, electricity or solar panels will need to be available in order to power the lap-top in the field. Fourth, depending on the team/location/training, the survey firm needs to provide one printer per team to print inconsistency reports for the interviewers before they return to households.</p> <p>Without CAFE, the data entry manager will have a long process of data cleaning post-data collection. In this scenario, the data quality is not guaranteed since it can only match the paper questionnaire, and it is logistically and financially difficult to re-visit a household if inconsistencies are found in the paper questionnaire.</p> <p>With CAFE, we can obtain reliable and timely databases directly from the field. The integration of computer-based quality controls to fieldwork is the best survey data management paradigm available today. It is based on the notion that all inconsistencies in the questionnaires have to be checked while the interviewers are in the field, and corrected in re-visits to the households. The C-PI and the core team have immediate feedback on the performance of the field staff since we can conduct tabulations and inconsistency reports in the field and detect problems in the field early (analyze inconsistencies by team or even by interviewer). With CAFE, we're also able to generate uniformity in quality across teams.</p> <p>In some countries, it may be impossible to enter data in the field. In this case, it is best for the survey firm to schedule at least 2 visits to each household. Questionnaires will be sent to a central location where they will be entered and inconsistency checks will be preformed and delivered immediately to the field team prior to the second field visit.</p>
FIELD WORK	The survey firm should plan field work according to 2 visits per household.	<p>The questionnaire is long and complex and the quality of the answers could be affected by the respondent's fatigue; therefore it could be essential to schedule from the beginning more than one visit <b>in the fieldwork plan</b>.</p> <p>The survey firm should budget at least 2 visits to each household. The first is for initial data collection, while the second will involve interviewing any additional household members not present during the first interview and solving any inconsistencies discovered by the data entry operator. As discussed above, this would be in the case of either CAFE or central data entry.</p>