



SISTEMAS INTEGRALES
Leading Survey Design and Implementation Worldwide

Final Fieldwork Report

High Frequency Survey in Suriname

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1. Introduction

Regarding the COVID-19 situation all over the world the World Bank initiated a High Frequency Survey (HFS) in Suriname. This survey was conducted through the phone. The purpose was to reach 800 households in each country by means of cold calls.

The execution of the field work was a collaboration between Sistemas Integrales and DataFruit. Sistemas Integrales is the firm that maintains contact with the WB and therefore the management of the survey, both supervising and adapting the questionnaire and DataFruit in charge of the translation to the local languages and the implementation in the fieldwork.

This report gives an overview of challenges met during the execution of the HFS in Suriname. The solutions to these challenges will also be discussed.

1. Translation

The project started with the adaptation of the questionnaire according to the context of Suriname, for this the WorldBank oversaw selecting the questions from wave 1 & 2 that would be used in this version.

The translation of the questionnaire into Dutch and Sranantongo was done by DataFruit by using a google sheet in which the English questionnaire was developed by SIC.

Even though the questionnaire was tested during the pre-test as well as the pilot there were still some translation issues in the sense that some sentences/words used were difficult for the respondent to understand.

More time should be devoted to the translation process.

2. Pre-test

The pre-test was held on the 13th of June. During the pre-test the auditors (2) and supervisors (3) interviewed acquaintances. 5 Dutch and 5 Sranantongo questionnaires were conducted. The purpose of the pre-test was specially to test the duration of the questionnaire.

The pre-test was executed with a 'paper' questionnaire. It was a challenge to maneuver through the questionnaire while on the phone. The average duration of the Dutch questionnaire was 54 minutes and of the Sranantongo questionnaire 45 minutes.

For the pre-test a more user-friendly version of the questionnaire should be made available.

3. Pilot

After the pre-test the questionnaire was programmed with the software CPro by SIC. The pilot was held on the 25th and 26th of June. The pilot was executed with the programmed questionnaire. Again, the auditors and supervisors participated in this pilot and were already familiar with the questionnaire. A pilot form was filled in for each questionnaire in which the supervisors and auditors could note down their

comments. These comments were mostly about skip issues and translation issues which was reported to SIC (see pilot report for details) and was also entered into a google sheet created by SIC.

For the training these comments were integrated into the questionnaire and the questionnaire was tested on several occasions by DataFruit.

In total 8 Dutch and 3 Sranantongo questionnaires were completed. On average a questionnaire took 50 minutes to complete.

After the pilot it was clear that the duration of the questionnaire was too long, and a decision was made to shorten the questionnaire. This was done prior to the training. Unfortunately, many comments that were made before and were already fixed were not anymore when the training started.

2. Training

SIC was in charge of the training. The training took 4 days and commenced on July 4th and ended on July 7th.

In the training 19 interviewers 3 supervisors and 2 auditors participated.

The training was better prepared in comparison with the training of the first round of the HFS in the Caribbean. The PowerPoint is very useful and much clearer than the use of the questionnaire in an excel sheet.

In the training the questionnaire was discussed in much detail and many examples were used to clarify questions. More emphasis should be put on the dos and don'ts when using the CS entry app.

Overall, the participation was good.

After the training the interviewers participated in the final test of knowledge prepared by SIC. It was decided by Data Fruit to keep all 19 interviewers. Due to other projects 2 interviewers could not continue to participate in the HFS survey. The project then started with 17 interviewers.

3. Installation of apps

Regarding the requirements of the applications, we would use for the fieldwork, we bought 20 android smartphones to implement the survey. The installation of the apps went smoothly because these were installed prior to handing the phones over to the interviewers.

After the apps were installed, each phone was tested to make sure the audio works and approved by SIC.

Challenges with the apps:

1. As we use one app for the recording of the phone call and another for the survey, it's still a little bit challenging for the enumerators to work with both as they have some special conditions.
2. There is improvement in the instructions for the interviewers. They now knew when to hang up the phone, so the recording did not get corrupted and to use loudspeaker so we wouldn't get any problem with the audio.

Challenges with the second-hand phones:

1. Overheating of the phones, one could conclude that a normal personal phone is not suitable for many back-to-back hours of operation.
2. The respondent could not hear the interviewer and vice versa due to the overheating of the phone.
3. Sometimes parts of questions would disappear due to the overheating of the phone.
4. At a certain point, phones which meet the requirements of the ACR app to function well will not be available anymore due to constant updates of the OS of the android phones.

Solution:

1. During the calling interviewers needed to take a break to let the phone cool down which also resulted in demotivation and a held up of the work that needed to be done per day
2. Use another system which can record the interviews which does not depend on the OS version

4. Questionnaire

Although a pre-test was executed and after that a pilot, many mistakes that were already noted were still found in the final questionnaire. This was probably caused because of the shortening of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was not tested properly and unfortunately led to the fact that extra work needed to be done after the survey was finished. 615 respondents needed to be called back to ask specific questions which were skipped due to mistakes in the programming.

Interviewers who performed well during the survey were asked to make these call backs.

5. SIC platform

The platform of SIC was updated and DataFruit could easily see who was making calls and who was not. In this way the progress of the project was easy to follow.

Suggestion:

1. The platform should also show the overview of NR in real time per day.

6. Progress of fieldwork

The fieldwork started on July 8th in the afternoon. Due to some internal arrangements delivering the devices, most interviewers started on July 9th. The survey was ended on July the 27th. In total 821 questionnaires were conducted.

The call backs were made from July 27th until July 29th.

6.1 Incentives

From the beginning incentives were offered to the interviewers. If they would meet the target of 50 within 10 days, the fee per successful interview would increase. Unfortunately, this did not work because it did not seem possible in the perception of the interviewers. After this, vouchers were offered. This also did

not have a successful effect and was dropped. The interviewers who were already motivated got the vouchers. The third incentive did work and implied if an interviewer would reach the target of 3 per day the per interview fee would increase to an attractive amount. This worked very well, because the interviewers knew that they were able to reach that target. Until the end of the survey this incentive was applied.

6.2 Interviewer's performance

Not all interviewers had a steady performance. Due to mostly personal circumstances the performance of some interviewers dropped, and some quit early in the project. In the end 11 interviewers were actively working. It was decided by DataFruit and SIC not to train any new interviewers but to work with the supervisors. The supervisors made calls when they were able to, and this boosted the numbers.

8. Auditing

At first 2 auditors were hired to do the auditing. Because of the workload and the part-time availability of the auditors 3 more auditors were added. Every day at 7 pm a meeting was held with the auditors and supervisors where they could brief the supervisors on the performance of their interviewers.

After the meeting the supervisors would immediately report to the interviewers. This was successful as some interviewers correct their mistakes. The interviewers were audited in much detailed and were scored by the auditors. For most interviewers an improvement was noticed.

9. Lessons learned and solutions

1. A second-hand phone is not the best option to work with. Sometimes they already have too many existing problems.
2. At least 2 weeks should be made available for translation for each language, considering the slangs commonly used so the questions can be asked in a more familiar way.
3. Time slots should have been integrated in the timeline so the questionnaire can be tested thoroughly.
4. Better screening of the interviewers and the time they have available. This is a challenge since interviewers will promise anything related to availability to get the job.
5. Preferable not to work from home but from one location. We're still dealing with the pandemic effects.