

Cognitive Testing Report

Zone of Influence Survey

**[COUNTRY] [YEAR]**

[Submission Date]

This report is made possible by the support of the American People through the U.S. Agency for International Development under the terms of [contract information]. The opinions expressed herein are those of [Contractor] and do not necessarily reflect those of U.S. Agency of International Development or the United States Government.

**Contact Information**

Feed the Future   
United States Agency for International Development   
1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW   
Washington, DC 20004

www.feedthefuture.gov

[rfs.ald@usaid.gov](mailto:rfs.ald@usaid.gov)

[Contractor’s contact information]

**Table of contents**

[1. Introduction 1](#_Toc137102890)

[2. Methodology 1](#_Toc137102891)

[3. Respondent characteristics 2](#_Toc137102892)

[4. Results 4](#_Toc137102893)

[Appendix: Cognitive testing interview guide 5](#_Toc137102894)

# Introduction

The cognitive test interviews discussed in this report examined a number of new questions designed for inclusion in the [Survey name]. The questions included in the cognitive test included [number and description of questions].

The objective of the cognitive test was to explore whether respondents understand the selected survey questions as intended, whether they are accurately able to answer the questions, whether response categories are comprehensive, and whether there are any other misunderstandings or issues with the questions or any translation-related issues.

# Methodology

**Training.** On [dates], [training organization(s)] led an intensive [X]-day training on cognitive interviewing techniques for [X] participants ([X] women and [X] men). The training focused on the following:

* Cognitive testing objectives and how the approach differs from standardized interviewing
* The cognitive response process and how to use cognitive probes to identify areas of confusion
* The recommended cognitive probes in the cognitive testing interview guide and the intent of those probes, including strategies on how to avoid the use of leading or biasing probes
* The non-verbal cues that indicate respondent difficulty, such as a long silence, looking at feet, or looking away
* The intent of each question in the cognitive testing interview guide and the probes that have been designed to elicit the necessary data
* The use of a recording device, if it is possible to record the test interviews (highly recommended)
* Taking detailed notes on how the respondents’ answers to probes satisfy the testing objectives
* Practicing administration of the cognitive testing interview guide with each other, including practicing taking notes while interviewing
* Mock interviews in English so that the trainer can follow along and provide suggestions for improvements as well as mock interviews in translated languages

**Data collection.** On [date], [X] staff from [organization] conducted cognitive test interviews with a total of [X] respondents in [X] languages in [location]. **Table 1** in Section 3 presents additional information on respondent characteristics.

Respondents gave verbal informed consent to participate and were given a paper copy of the informed consent agreement for their records. All cognitive test interviews were conducted face-to-face, generally in respondents’ homes. A retrospective probing method of cognitive testing was used to assess the efficacy of selected questions in the survey questionnaire. After each survey question, the interviewer immediately followed up with specific probes to understand the considerations made by the respondent when selecting a response to the survey question. (Please see the cognitive testing interview guide in the **Appendix**).

The average cognitive test interview was approximately [X] minutes in length overall ([X] minutes in [language 1], [X] minutes in [language 2], and [X] minutes in [language 3]). [Additional details here about whether interviews were recorded or whether interviewers took detailed notes during the interview, and whether respondents were given a token of appreciation (and, if so, specifying the item)].

**Debrief.** On [date], all interviewers came together to debrief on the findings of the cognitive test. [Additional details here about how debrief was conducted.]

**Data entry.** After the virtual debrief, the Contractor provided the interviewers with an Excel spreadsheet in which they were requested to record both the quantitative survey responses and the qualitative notes they collected, verbatim, for each test item. These data were provided to the Contractor on [date]. [If applicable: Audio recordings were used by the interviewers to fill in information missing in their notes and to verify the accuracy of the data. Note if transcribed and translated and if those were used in analysis.]

**Table 2** in Section 4 presents the key findings and recommendations from the cognitive test debrief.

# Respondent characteristics

A total of [X] respondents, [X] men and [X] women, living in [site(s)] were interviewed. Respondents ranged from [XX] to [YY] years of age. Interviewers conducted [X] interviews in [language 1], [X] interviews in [language 2], and [X] interviews in [language 3].

Table 1: Background Characteristics of Cognitive Test Respondents by Language of Interview

| **Background characteristic** | **Number of respondents**  **([Language 1])** | **Number of respondents ([Language 2])** | **Number of respondents**  **([Language 3])** | **Total number of respondents** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** |  |  |  |  |
| 18-29 |  |  |  |  |
| 30-39 |  |  |  |  |
| 40-49 |  |  |  |  |
| 50-59 |  |  |  |  |
| 60+ |  |  |  |  |
| **Sex** |  |  |  |  |
| Male |  |  |  |  |
| Female |  |  |  |  |
| **Education** |  |  |  |  |
| None |  |  |  |  |
| Primary |  |  |  |  |
| Secondary |  |  |  |  |
| Higher |  |  |  |  |
| **Farming/livestock status** |  |  |  |  |
| [Crop/Livestock #1] |  |  |  |  |
| [Crop/Livestock #2] |  |  |  |  |
| Does not farm |  |  |  |  |
| **Total number of respondents** |  |  |  |  |
| **Length of interview (minutes)** | | | | |
| Average |  |  |  |  |
| Median |  |  |  |  |

# Results

Table 2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations from the Cognitive Test

| **Question number** | **Original question** | **Findings** | **Proposed change** | **Implications for core survey questionnaire?**  **(Y/N)** | **Response from USAID (approved, approved with modifications, not approved)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Appendix: Cognitive testing interview guide



www.feedthefuture.gov