Survey Implementation

Document

Survey Pretest Protocol

Zone of Influence Survey

*[Survey name]*

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# Abbreviations

CAPI computer-assisted personal interviewing

ICDM In-Country Data Manager

SIO Survey Implementing Organization

TOT training of trainers

USAID United States Agency for International Development

ZOI Zone of Influence

# Introduction

In Feed the Future Zone of Influence (ZOI) Surveys, field staff collect and manage survey data using tablets with an Android operating system and Census and Survey Processing System computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) applications. Field staff will become familiar with the Census and Survey Processing System CAPI system at several points during survey preparation, starting with the training of trainers (TOT) and followed by the survey pretest. The survey pretest is the first opportunity during survey preparation activities to fully test the questionnaire, translations, and CAPI system under field conditions. The main objectives of the survey pretest are to ensure that CAPI data collection applications are aligned with the final questionnaires and function as expected; ensure that there are no issues with translations; and ensure successful data transfer among Interviewers and Field Supervisors, between Field Supervisors and the secure server established for the survey, and between the secure server and the Central Office computer, which the In-Country Data Manager (ICDM) uses to review and process the data. The survey pretest also allows the ICDM to practice running the checks and generating field check reports during fieldwork.

This survey pretest protocol describes the standards and procedures to implement the survey pretest for Feed the Future ZOI Surveys. Before reading this protocol, it may be helpful to refer to the Feed the Future ZOI Survey Methods Toolkits and other key survey documents. A review of the survey implementation process, timeline, and key roles and responsibilities of the survey Contractor and local Survey Implementing Organization (SIO) will ensure a better understanding of how the survey pretest fits into the overall survey process.

# Steps in the survey pretest

At the end of the TOT, TOT participants will conduct the survey pretest. The survey pretest can take up to a week to complete, including traveling to and from the survey pretest locations, conducting interviews, and debriefing with all participants. After the debriefing, adequate time must be allowed for adjustments to be made to survey materials based on the survey pretest findings before the main field staff training begins.

The following steps are required to implement the survey pretest:

1. Select the survey pretest locations and determine the sample.
2. Prepare logistics and materials.
3. Implement the survey pretest.
4. Hold a debriefing session to after the survey pretest to resolve or mitigate issues encountered and to document steps taken.
5. Revise the survey instruments and procedures, as needed, based on findings from the survey pretest.

It is important to note that many TOT participants will act as Interviewers in the survey pretest but will serve as Field Supervisors or Quality Control and Support team members during data collection. The purpose of this is twofold: to give TOT participants experience interviewing so they can better support trainees during the main field staff training and to have enough Interviewers to fully test all questionnaire translations during the survey pretest. Senior SIO staff will act as Field Supervisors during the survey pretest. The main responsibilities of Interviewers, Field Supervisors, and the ICDM during the survey pretest are as follows:

**Interviewers.** Interviewers will follow the procedures outlined in the *Interviewer’s Manual* for approaching households, conducting interviews, and transferring the data after the entire household interview has been completed. Interviewers will work in all female or male/female pairs, with one Interviewer assuming the role of Interviewer A and the other assuming the role of Interviewer B. Before Interviewers begin an interview, they will explain the purpose of the survey and why the survey pretest is being conducted, and obtain the respondent’s oral informed consent. Interviewers will use informed consent statements developed specifically for the survey pretest (**Annex 1.A**). All respondents interviewed in the survey pretest will be at least 18 years of age, although during data collection, individuals 15-17 years of age may be interviewed for certain survey modules. After completing the interview, the Interviewer should thank the respondent for generously contributing their time to the survey pretest.

**Field Supervisors.** Field Supervisors will provide supervision and support to Interviewers throughout the survey pretest. They will also review the data received from Interviewers on their tablet and discuss any issues with the Interviewers. After ensuring that the pretest data are complete and have no unresolved issues, Field Supervisors will transmit them to the secure server. More information about the Field Supervisors’ responsibilities related to receiving, reviewing, and transmitting data is available in the *Field Supervisor’s Manual*.

**ICDM.** The ICDM will use the Central Office application on the Central Office computer to run household structure checks and generate secondary editing reports, cluster status reports, and field check tables during the survey pretest. All four of these tasks are key ICDM responsibilities to help ensure data quality. The survey pretest will also help ensure that the ICDM can provide technical support to field staff if they have issues with their tablets, the CAPI system, or transmitting data. More information about the ICDM’s responsibilities is available in the *ICDM’s Manual*. After the survey pretest has been completed, the SIO will develop a TOT and survey pretest report in collaboration with the Contractor, which the Contractor will submit to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for review. A template for the report is provided in the Feed the Future ZOI Survey Methods Toolkits.[[1]](#footnote-2)

## Step1: Select the survey pretest locations and determine the sample.

The survey pretest will be conducted under realistic field conditions, in communities with cultural, linguistic, and livelihood characteristics that are similar to those in the survey sample. It is important to conduct the survey pretest in areas where the languages of translated questionnaires are spoken so that the translations can be tested and Interviewers can practice carrying out interviews using all questionnaire translations. The survey pretest may be conducted in one or more locations, depending on the language requirements of the survey and the number of interviews to be conducted. It is preferable that the survey pretest is conducted in the ZOI—in areas that are neither adjacent to nor included in the survey sample.

The size of the survey pretest sample depends on the number of TOT participants, the number of translations to be tested, the length of the questionnaires, and the amount of time available for the survey pretest.[[2]](#footnote-3) The survey pretest sample should allow for at least five household interviews to be conducted in each target language and for each Interviewer to lead at least three household interviews. Additional interviews will be conducted if the ZOI Survey includes more than one questionnaire to ensure that each is adequately pretested.

Unlike the survey sample, which will be pre-selected to enable the calculation of indicator estimates representative of the ZOI, the survey pretest sample will be a convenience sample of households. Because survey modules have specific respondent requirements, the SIO should meet with community leaders in the survey pretest locations ahead of the pretest to identify households with respondents eligible for multiple survey modules—that is, households with women 15-49 years of age, children under 5 years of age, children under 2 years of age, and farmers of selected value chain commodities (as relevant)—to include in the survey pretest.[[3]](#footnote-4)

After the survey pretest dates and locations are determined, the Contractor should complete the Survey Pretest Information Form (see **Annex 1.B**) and submit it to USAID.

## Step 2: Prepare logistics and materials.

The SIO should complete the following logistic and material preparation activities ahead of the survey pretest:

1. Plan travel logistics.
2. Prepare required materials:

* Print backup paper questionnaires in all languages.
* Print field forms and other materials for all Interviews and Field Supervisors, including the following:
  + Interviewer’s Assignment Sheets (*Interviewer’s Manual,* Appendix B)
  + Country-specific Calendar Events (*Interviewer’s Manual,* Appendix C)
  + Age and Birthdate Consistency Chart (*Interviewer’s Manual,* Appendix D)
  + Field Supervisor’s Assignment Sheet (*Field Supervisor’s Manual,* Annex A)
  + Interview Observation Form (*Quality Control and Support Team’s Manual,* Appendix B)
  + Survey Pretest Informed Consent Statement (**Annex 1.A**)
  + Any pictures that will be used to aid Interviewers and respondents to identify particular objects (e.g., local brands of medicines, ready-to-use therapeutic foods, oral rehydration solution packets, methods of storing and transporting harvested crops)
* Ensure that tablets have the most recent version of the CAPI system and are charged to 100 percent battery life.

1. Distribute the required materials and equipment.

## Step 3: Implement the survey pretest.

As stated in the Introduction, the survey pretest will ensure that the CAPI data collection applications are aligned with the final questionnaires and function as expected and that there are no issues with the translations or data transmission. During the survey pretest, Interviewers, Field Supervisors, and the ICDM will all use the TOT and Survey Pretest Issues Log (see template in **Annex 1.C**) to document issues encountered that will be discussed during team debriefing sessions at the end of each day and also at the debriefing held with all survey pretest participants at the end of the survey pretest. If, however, an issue must be addressed for the survey pretest fieldwork to continue, the issue should be raised with the SIO immediately.

## Step 4: Hold a debriefing after the survey pretest to resolve or mitigate issues encountered and document steps taken.

The SIO will organize a debriefing session after the survey pretest with all survey pretest participants. At the debriefing session, participants will receive feedback on their performance and issues encountered.

In addition, the debriefing sessions are an opportunity for participants to ask clarifying questions related to the questionnaires and translations, CAPI data collection applications, data transmission, and survey procedures. During the debriefing, proposed actions to minimize or resolve the issues will be compiled by the SIO in one version of the TOT and Survey Pretest Issues Log (**Annex 1.C**), which also contains issues identified during the TOT, and will be submitted to the Contractor. The Contractor will include the log as an appendix in the TOT and survey pretest report (see report template in the ZOI Survey Methods Toolkits).

## Step 5: Revise the survey instruments and procedures, as needed, based on findings from the survey pretest.

The Contractor will review the TOT and Survey Pretest Issues Log and make any necessary changes to the questionnaires (with USAID approval), translations, and CAPI system. All revisions made in response to the TOT and survey pretest findings will be clearly documented in the Log. The Contractor will share all revised materials with the SIO before the main field staff training begins.

# Annex 1: Forms

*Note: The forms in this annex should be used and customized as needed.*

## Annex 1.A: Survey pretest informed consent statement

Hello. My name is [Name]. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. We are a research team from [Survey Implementing Organization]. We will soon be conducting a survey to learn about agriculture, food security, nutrition, and well-being of households in areas close to here. We are currently conducting interviews to test the questionnaires, translations, and tablet-based data collection system to identify any issues that need to be resolved before survey fieldwork begins. Your household has been selected to participate in one of these interviews. The interview includes questions on your household composition, dwelling characteristics, [other survey topics]. The survey includes questions about the household and the individuals within your household, if applicable. The questions about the household and its characteristics will take about [XX] minutes to complete. If additional questions are relevant for individuals in your household, the entire interview in total may take up to [X] hours to complete. Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you can choose to stop at any time or skip any questions you do not want to answer.

## Annex 1.B: Survey pretest information forms

There are two versions of the Survey Pretest Information Form. Use Version 1 if the survey pretest will be conducted in one geographical area (e.g., the administration level 1 and 2 units are the same for all survey pretest locations). Use Version 2 if the survey pretest will be conducted in multiple locations across different administration units.

### Survey Pretest Information Form (Version 1)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Survey Pretest Information Form** | | |
| **Survey name** |  | |
| **Survey Contractor** |  | |
| **Survey Implementing Organization** |  | |
| **Survey pretest dates** | **Fieldwork:**  **Debrief:**  **Travel:**  **Total:** | |
| **Survey pretest location** | **[Admin level 1]:**  **[Admin level 2]:**  **Village:** | |
| **Language** | **Number of Interviewer pairs** | **Number of interviews** |
| [Language 1] |  |  |
| [Language 2] |  |  |
| [Language 3] |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  |
| **Notes and** **additional considerations** | | |

### Survey Pretest Information Form (Version 2)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Survey Pretest Information Form** | | | | | |
| **Survey name** |  | | | | |
| **Survey Contractor** |  | | | | |
| **Survey Implementing Organization** |  | | | | |
| **Survey pretest dates** | **Fieldwork:**  **Debrief:**  **Travel:**  **Total:** | | | | |
| **Language** | **[Admin level 1]** | **[Admin level 2]** | **Village** | **Number of Interviewer pairs** | **Number of interviews** |
| [Language 1] |  |  |  |  |  |
| [Language 2] |  |  |  |  |  |
| [Language 3] |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Notes and** **additional considerations** | | | | | |

## Annex 1.C: TOT and survey pretest issues log template

|  |
| --- |
| **[Year] [Country] ZOI Survey TOT and Survey Pretest Issues Log** |
| **Interviewer team:** |
| **Survey location:** |
| **Notes by:** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stagea** | **Type of issueb** | **QREc** | **Item number** | **Finding or issue** | **Proposed change** | **Statusd** | **Next steps, if not complete** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

a Stage: TOT (T) or Survey pretest (SP)

b Type of issue: Content, CAPI, Translation, or Other

c QRE (questionnaire): Main (M) or parallel (P)

d Status: Complete (i.e., proposed change was approved by USAID and made)

Tentative (i.e., proposed change was made but awaiting USAID approval)

In progress (i.e., proposed change was approved by USAID but not yet made)



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1. <https://agrilinks.org/post/feed-future-zoi-survey-methods> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. A typical survey pretest with 3 days of fieldwork should include at least 18-54 households. For example, if there are 6 Interviewer pairs (3 field teams) that can each conduct 2 household interviews a day, 18 interviews can be completed over 3 days of survey pretest fieldwork. If there are 12 Interviewer pairs (6 field teams) that can each conduct 3 household interviews per day, 54 interviews can be completed over 3 days of survey pretest fieldwork. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. If additional populations are targeted in the survey, the Contractor and SIO must ensure that they are also included in the survey pretest. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)