Research Proposal Guidelines

Deadline: December 20, 2013 (11:59 pm Eastern Daylight Time)

The Global Financial Inclusion Initiative (GFII) at Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) aims to support rigorous evaluations of innovative products and programs that enhance poor households' access to and usage of improved financial tools, products, and services. The initiative, supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Citi Foundation, focuses on three key areas in the financial inclusion domain: (1) **savings products**, (2) **payment channels and mobile money**, and (3) **financial capability**.

We are pleased to invite full research proposals from selected teams that responded to our Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI). Full proposals are due by **Friday, December 20, 2013 at 11:59 pm EDT**.

Guidelines for Proposal Preparation

The selection of your EOI submission brings you to the second stage of the application process. In this stage, we would like to receive more details on the idea that you proposed in the EOI.

Please use the GFII_Proposal_2013 Word document to submit your full research proposal. The guidelines below address the most common questions you may have about the proposal application.

Cover Sheet

Title of Study: Please keep the study title short yet descriptive.

Study Type: Submissions to the competitive fund will be assessed under two project categories. All submitted projects must demonstrate a clear hypothesis and a rigorous study design for a randomized evaluation. Innovative research projects building on existing field experiments will also be accepted under each category.

1. **Product Tests:** We consider a product test to be a randomized field experiment that primarily involves the collection and analysis of administrative data from the financial service provider to measure impact on client outcomes.

   Product Test awards will be given to research projects that use randomized controlled trials to compare the relative effectiveness of interventions and product features in achieving behavior change or in improving financial outcomes, primarily using administrative data. These grants could fall under either of the following sub-categories:

   a. **Single-Site Product Test (capped at $75,000 per grant):** Grants awarded in this category will conduct one or more product tests in a single country.

   b. **Multi-Site Product Tests (capped at $250,000 per grant):** Multi-Site Product Tests will be awarded only under the Citi IPA Financial Capability Research Fund (FCRF), to conduct product tests across multiple countries. Projects will use randomized controlled trials conducted across three or more countries that seek to improve the policy relevance of findings and the richness of tests under different contexts and implementation arrangements. The replications should speak to a cohesive theory that incorporates context and mechanism tests and not merely be a proliferation of one evaluation in multiple locations. All sites and partners need not be identified at the time of the proposal submission, but a timeline for implementation should be provided for implementation with at least one partner, and a credible strategy for identifying and managing the replication with additional partners should be detailed.

2. **<u>Product Evaluations (capped at $150,000 per grant):</u>** We consider a product evaluation to be a randomized field experiment that primarily involves the collection and analysis of survey data from households to measure impact on welfare outcomes.

   Product Evaluations will be awarded to research projects that use randomized controlled trials to measure the impact of an intervention on the take-up and usage of a financial service/product and the resulting welfare impact on its users. Grants in this category will typically involve field data collection using surveys combined with administrative data from the financial service providers.

Abstract: Please be sure to clearly state the objectives of your research and summarize the research design.

Section 1. Research Team

1.1 **Primary researcher and co-researchers**: List all researchers engaged in the project. Primary researchers must be affiliated with a research institution or a university. They must either hold a PhD or be a current PhD. candidate in a relevant social science or engineering discipline such as economics, statistics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, public health, education, or computer science. They must demonstrate experience in field research. The primary researcher should not be affiliated with the practitioner organization implementing the program. Note that only the primary researcher field is mandatory; all co-researcher fields should be filled out only if applicable.

1.2 **Practitioner organizations**: Provide contact information for the practitioner organization that is implementing the intervention or program that you propose to evaluate. <u>A practitioner organization is typically a financial service provider, or a provider of related training or services</u>. Please note that the practitioner organization cannot be the same as the research implementing organization (Section 4). For multi-site product tests, please list at least one organization that has already endorsed the project.

In Section 7, you will be asked to attach a signed letter of support from this organization confirming its role as your practitioner partner. Please do make sure that your partner has read and understood in detail the research proposal and is copied in the email submission. If you have already attached to your EOI a letter of support from the partner you will not need to submit another letter unless your design has changed. *If you are working with additional practitioner organizations, please be sure to list them in Section 1.2a and to attach letters of support from them as part of section 7.*

Section 2. Research narrative

The research narrative is the core of your proposal. Please submit a detailed exposition on the proposed research project that builds on the basic outline presented in your EOI. The recommended length of the narrative is 5-6 pages. The narrative should contain the ten sections listed below:

2.1 **Context and target problem**: Please describe the market and policy context that motivates this research. What is the target problem? What is the current state of knowledge in addressing the target problem? Please provide adequate references to prior academic work on this topic.

2.2 **Research questions and academic contribution**: Describe your research question(s) and study hypotheses. How will this study provide original insights on the target problem? How will this study contribute to the existing literature? Which specific mechanisms/ barriers will the study test, and why are they relevant to the given context?

2.3 **Proposed intervention, target population, and theory of change**: Provide details on the intervention/treatment proposed and the target population. Please describe the theory of change that links the intervention/program with the anticipated outcomes in the target population. Why might we expect this particular intervention to be especially effective in addressing the target problem?

2.4 **Study location and practitioner organization**: Describe the study location, and the practitioner organization(s) carrying out the intervention. What is the status of your relationship with the practitioner organization(s)? Has the research team already agreed on steps and responsibilities to ensure proper randomization and respect for research protocols? For Multi-Site Product Tests, please outline your strategy for identifying and managing other practitioners interested in participating in the study.

2.5 **Study design and research methodology**: Provide a detailed description of your study design (please include a table or chart). Provide details on your sampling frame, unit of randomization, and randomization strategy. Please include power calculations to show how your study will have sufficient power to reliably detect the expected change in outcomes.

2.6 **Data collection and analysis**: Specify target outcomes, data collection and data analysis plans clearly. For example, for product evaluations, indicate how you plan to use administrative data from the practitioner organization, alongside surveys and interviews.

2.7 **Threats to validity**: Briefly present the potential biases and threats to the internal validity of your study. How do you expect to limit such risks or correct for them?

2.8 **Study implementation and project timeline**: Detail the activities that you will carry out in your study, including the roll-out of the intervention and your data collection procedures. You should include a table that lists the timeline for the major activities involved in the project. Please also describe the roles and responsibilities of the members of the research team.

2.9 **Results dissemination, opportunity for replication, and scale-up**: Briefly describe how you intend to disseminate the results from your study. If appropriate, describe the scope for the study to be replicated in other contexts, or for the intervention to be scaled up if the present study demonstrates significant impact of the intervention.

2.10 **Policy implications and cost-effectiveness**: Discuss how this research will realistically contribute to changes in practice and policy, including on cost-effective ways to improve savings products, payment channels and financial capability among poor clients. Please describe whether the intervention is backed by a business case for its scale-up.

Section 3. Project Milestones

In this section, please insert each key milestone of the project and provide its target start and end date. Most projects will list 8-15 milestones. You may add or remove lines as needed from the table provided in the form. Examples of milestones include ‘Baseline Survey Design,’ ‘Baseline Survey Implementation,’ ‘Baseline Data Analysis,’ and so on. Remember to include milestones relevant to each stage of your project, including the baseline survey, treatment and implementation activities, the endline survey, and publication and dissemination.

Section 4. Research Implementing Organization

Please list the name and contact information of the organization that will assist you with management and implementation of the randomized evaluation. All projects that plan to hire staff in the research country and/or plan to conduct field-based data collection are required to list a research implementing organization. As a general rule, please prepare your budget and timeline of activities jointly with the field research implementing organization with whom you plan to partner.

In Section 8, you will be asked to attach a letter of support from the research implementing organization signing off on the proposal and confirming its role as the research implementing organization.

If you are planning to implement your research in one of the countries where IPA has a country program or is working to develop a country program, we strongly recommend that you plan to work with IPA to prepare your proposal and manage your field research. Please do get in touch with the relevant Country Representative as soon as possible (see table below) to discuss and prepare your proposal.

Countries with IPA Programs and Project Development Capacity		
Country	*Country Program Point of Contact*	*Email Address*
Bangladesh	Shoraez Shahjahan	sshahjahan@poverty-action.org
Burkina Faso	Nicolo Tomaselli	ntomaselli@poverty-action.org
Colombia	Pablo Villar Pace Phillips	pvillar@poverty-action.org pphillips@poverty-action.org
Ghana	Tom Vincent Chase Stafford	tvincent@poverty-action.org cstafford@poverty-action.org
Kenya	Colin Christensen Carol Nekesa	cchristensen@poverty-action.org cnekesa@poverty-action.org
Mali	Nicolo Tomaselli	ntomaselli@poverty-action.org
Paraguay	Adam Kemmis Betty Dylan Ramshaw	akbetty@poverty-action.org dramshaw@poverty-action.org
Peru	Adam Kemmis Betty Dylan Ramshaw	akbetty@poverty-action.org dramshaw@poverty-action.org
Philippines	Nassereena Sampaco-Baddiri Mark Miller	nbaddiri@poverty-action.org mmiller@poverty-action.org
Rwanda	Kris Cox Pace Phillips	kcox@poverty-action.org pphillips@poverty-action.org
Senegal	Nicolo Tomaselli	ntomaselli@poverty-action.org
Sierra Leone	Loic Watine	lwatine@poverty-action.org
Tanzania	Colin Christensen Pace Phillips	cchristensen@poverty-action.org pphillips@poverty-action.org
Uganda	Jeff Alumai Daniele Ressler	jalumai@poverty-action.org dressler@poverty-action.org
Zambia	Elana Safran	esafran@poverty-action.org

If you are not working in a country where IPA has a country program and you select option D in section 4.1, we ask that you fill out section 4.2 to provide details of your Research Implementing Organization. Please make sure that you identify an organization that has experience conducting high-quality field research. List a reference from another researcher, or an organization that has conducted a relevant high-quality research study matching the Research Quality Guidelines (Appendix B) through this research implementing organization. The experience and expertise of the research implementing organization will be taken into account during proposal review. Please note that all awards will be subject to satisfying IPA's due diligence requirements for subcontractors and subgrantees.

Section 5. Budget Narrative

Please include a short (up to one page) narrative that discusses your budget estimates and assumptions in some detail.

If you are planning to conduct this study with a third-party research implementing organization, please note that administrative charges are capped at 10% of direct costs or $10,000, whichever is smaller. If you are planning to conduct this study with IPA as your implementing partner, you should work closely with the appropriate country office management team on the budget. The country office management team will create an initial project budget based on the scope of project activities. Please note that for projects implemented through an IPA country office, you do not need to include IPA's Indirect Cost Rate in your project budget, since support from the GFII team and assistance from IPA headquarters have already been accounted for.

For proposals requesting partial or top-up funding, please list the other funding sources and corresponding amounts. Please present the reasons for partial or top-up funding requests and discuss in detail the specific components of the study for which you are seeking funding from the Global Financial Inclusion Initiative.

All funding is for research costs. Implementation costs for the program are expected to be covered by other sources. Any exceptions should be adequately justified in the budget narrative, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the selection committee.

No funding will be provided for the salary or time of researchers. In certain cases, adequately motivated funding for the salaries and/or time of researchers in developing countries may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the selection committee.

Refer to *Appendix A: Budgeting Guidelines* for detailed budget guidelines and recommendations.

Section 6. Budget

Please use the attached Excel file, GFII_Budget_2013, to detail project costs.
Refer to *Appendix A: Budgeting Guidelines* when preparing your budget.

Section 7. Letter of Support from the Practitioner Organization

Please attach a signed letter of support from the financial service provider partner or other practitioner organization(s) (i.e. the organization(s) implementing the intervention being evaluated) that confirms their participation in the proposed study and endorsement of your research plan. Refer to Section 1.1 for more details. *Note that in the case of Multi-Site Product Tests, at least one practitioner organization needs to be identified at the time of proposal submission, with a letter of support provided for this organization.*

Section 8. Letter of Support from the Field Research Implementing Organization

Please attach a signed letter of support from the organization implementing research activities in the field. Refer to Section 4 for more details. A letter of support will be necessary even if your project is being carried out with an IPA Country Program as the research implementing organization.

Instructions for Proposal Submission

Please follow the submission instructions below carefully. In all filenames, replace "[ResLastName]" with the last name of the primary researcher and "[PracOrg]" with the name of the main practitioner organization.

- Save the Cover Sheet, Research Narrative, Milestones, and Budget Narrative as a single Microsoft Word file. Title: **[ResLastName]_[PracOrg]_GFII_Proposal_2013**
- Save the Budget as an Excel file. Title: **[ResLastName]_[PracOrg]_GFII_Budget_2013**
- Attach the signed Letter of Support from the practitioner organization in PDF format. Title: **[ResLastName]_[PracOrg]_GFII_PracLetterSupport_2013**
- Attach the signed Letter of Support from the field research implementing organization in PDF format. Title: **[ResLastName]_[PracOrg]_GFII_ResLetterSupport_2013**
- Email your proposal documents to gfii@poverty-action.org. The subject line of your email should read: "GFII Proposal 2013 [ResLastName] [PracOrg]". **Full proposals are due Friday, December 20, 2013.**

Additional Requirements and Notes

If your field research implementing organization is IPA: Please get in touch with your country program contact(s) as soon as possible to discuss the proposal and the due process for submitting your proposal through IPA. Please note that you will need to complete the proposal one week in advance of the official deadline, to allow time for IPA to process your application. Please contact gfii@poverty-action.org to be connected with the relevant country program.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval: Funding for approved projects will be conditional on the successful completion of a formal IRB approval process for research involving human subjects. We recommend that applicants submit IRB approval requests to their own university. If you are unable to submit to your university, IPA has an IRB that can review the project. If the proposed project already has IRB approval, please submit the certification with the project proposal.

Deliverables from Grantees: Projects that are selected to receive grant awards will be expected to share their results and progress on a regular basis with the GFII team. Final deliverables will include submission of a Final Report, a Working Paper and Policy Brief, conducting a seminar on the study's results, and participation in other dissemination activities.

Review Procedures

Full research proposals will be reviewed using the evaluation criteria listed below. Proposals will be reviewed by the GFII team with the support of a policy advisory committee comprised of practitioners and policymakers. Proposals and recommendations will be presented to the Executive Committee of the Global Financial Inclusion Initiative, comprised of funders, industry experts, and academics, for review and final award selection. Grant awardees will be notified in late January 2014, and awards will subsequently be disbursed starting February/March 2014.

Evaluation criteria:

Criterion	Assessment
Industry Relevance and Innovation	Is the project topic in an area of critical **industry and policy relevance**? Do the study results have the **potential to challenge or shift current practice**? Does the study test an **innovative product, process, or service**? Are the intervention and research questions **novel** i.e. examining a topic that has not been adequately examined in the literature?
Replicability and Scalability	Does the intervention being tested have high probability of replication if value is demonstrated? How **context-specific** is the intervention? Could the intervention be cost-effectively scaled up?
Research Design and Methodological Rigor	Is the study **well-motivated** and based on prior research? Is the target **research question specific** and well-formulated? How well motivated is the choice of the **target population**? How well thought through is the **theory of change**? Does the proposal thoughtfully address one or more of the **barriers to financial inclusion** identified by GFII? Are the study's **main outcome measures** clearly stated? Is the proposed **measurement and data collection plan** effective in operationalizing the Theory of Change & study's outcomes of interest? How appropriate is the proposed **unit of randomization**? If a clustered RCT, is the choice properly justified? Has the **sample size** been appropriately calculated, given the unit of randomization, outcomes, and expected takeup-effect sizes? How effectively does the proposal address any potential concerns over attrition, spillovers, Hawthorne effects, and other **threats to the validity** of the study?
Project viability	Has a **pilot** been conducted, and if so, have results been incorporated into the research design? How **reasonable are the assumptions** on issues of take-up, timing of rollout, timeline, etc. that, if not met, might negatively impact the study's viability? How well does the proposal address **potential location-specific threats**, or risks to the study's implementation and timeline? Does the budget contain **appropriate country-level budgeting estimates**, including costs associated with data collection, travel, other direct costs, staff, overhead, and country-level oversight costs?
Research Team's Experience	How much **experience** does the PI team have with RCTs of similar scale and scope? Has the primary researcher conducted research in this country before? Has the implementing partner ever conducted an RCT? Does it have the **capacity to conduct an RCT** and conduct high quality data collection? Does the proposal demonstrate **clear practitioner buy-in**? Is it clear that the practitioner was part of the design / concept of the study?

The Global Financial Inclusion Initiative manages two research funds to address evidence and innovation gaps in research on savings, payments, and financial capability: the Yale Savings and Payments Research Fund supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Citi IPA Financial Capability Research Fund supported by the Citi Foundation. Please direct all questions related to the initiative to gfii@poverty-action.org. For more information about the initiative, please visit www.poverty-action.org/financialinclusion.

Appendix A: Budgeting Guidelines

Please use the Excel file titled "GFII_Budget_2013.xlsx" to present your proposed budget. Categories and subcategories listed in the template are non-exhaustive and non-binding suggestions intended to guide you through the budgeting process. You should feel free to modify categories and lines of the budget template according to the specific needs of your project.

Do not add or delete any columns unless your project stretches over more than two years. Provide a description (if not clear from the item name) and an annual spending estimate for each item. If your project has, or expects to have, other funders please make sure that you provide the full project budget and indicate what the contribution requested from the GFII grant is for each item.

As a general rule, please be sure to prepare the budget and timeline of activities jointly as a research team involving researchers, practitioner organization and the field research implementing organization. The experience and expertise of the field research implementing partner will be taken into account in the proposal review. (See *Appendix B: Research Quality Guidelines* for more information on research implementing partner quality checks.)

Support from the GFII team and the research support team will be available to all selected projects.

General Guidelines

These brief guidelines have been created by IPA to help researchers ensure that important items in project budgets are not forgotten. Be aware that this list is not exhaustive and mostly includes items that tend to be forgotten or underestimated.

1. Project Management

Staff time and benefits: The total amount of staff time required to implement a project often tends to be underestimated. IPA normally requires that there is at least one project associate or coordinator throughout the duration of each of its projects. Keep in mind that staff costs may increase if short-term staff are required during busy periods of the project, or if staff members quit and need to be replaced. Thus, it is a good idea to be generous in budgeting for staff costs. To take into account salary increases and inflation, budget for a 5% increase in personnel costs each year. If you are planning to conduct this study with a third-party field research implementing partner, be sure to account for staff benefits and insurance, vaccinations, relevant out-of-pocket medical expenses, and travel to and from the project country. If you are planning to conduct this study with IPA as your implementing partner, you should work closely with country program management to understand staff salaries, benefits, and office space costs.

Researcher time and benefits: No funding will be provided for the salary or time of researchers. In certain cases, adequately motivated funding for the salaries and/or time of researchers based in developing countries may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the selection committee.

Training for personnel: Be sure to budget enough time and funding to provide training to staff. If you are planning to conduct this study with a third-party implementing partner, we require that any staff you hire for longer than six months participate in IPA's one-week training course. If you are planning to conduct this study with IPA as the implementing partner, keep in mind that the training course is mandatory for all new IPA project associates and project coordinators. You should budget to pay the per-employee rate of $1000, plus the cost of travel to and from the training site. The cost of the training for non-IPA-affiliated staff is $2000, plus the cost of travel to and from the training site.

Equipment and software: Do not forget the cost of computer(s) and software, including STATA and Stat/Transfer licenses. If you must get equipment from the US, be sure to include the cost of shipping and customs fees. If you are planning to conduct this study with IPA as your implementing partner, you should work closely with country program management to understand the cost of necessary equipment and software.

Other: Do not forget costs of visas when budgeting for international travel.

3 Data Collection

Survey costs (when applicable)

We recommend that you decide as early as possible with the relevant IPA Country Program or your research implementing organization whether you will conduct paper or electronic surveys as this choice typically has important budget and logistics implications.

Do not forget surveys: Be sure to include all the surveys you will need. For example, if you do not have any other household lists available, you will probably need to do a census; be sure to account for that census survey.

Buffer days and buffer printing: When you budget for a survey, make sure you include buffer days. In our experience, it is likely that surveying will go on longer than planned. You may also want to include printing costs for extra surveys.

Translation: Make sure to include costs of back translation (which will probably be as expensive as translation).

Transportation: Depending on the logistics and location of survey sites, you have to decide if you will provide staff with travelling allowances, or organize transport for them. If you have to organize transport, keep in mind that the required traveling distance could vary during your survey depending on the location of your survey sites.

Printing and scanning: If you are planning to administer paper surveys, please remember to include these costs in your budget. We also strongly recommend scanning your completed questionnaires.

Fieldwork management and quality control: Make sure to include the costs of monitoring your data collection. (See *Appendix B: Research Quality Guidelines* for details on what types of monitoring IPA performs, and what you should anticipate for your project.) If you do not have enough time or information to budget for this precisely, we would recommend that you budget 8% - 10% of your survey costs (on the higher side if your sample size is small).

Inflation and exchange rate: When you budget for midline and endline surveys, which may take place more than six months from today, be sure to account for inflation costs as well as possible exchange rate fluctuations.

Tracking: Be sure to factor in costs associated with tracking down respondents for the endline, as it may be more difficult to find respondents than it was during the baseline, and some may have moved. Depending on the context, add 5% - 30% of survey costs for tracking down respondents.

Other: Do not forget training costs, the cost of compensating respondents (if applicable), and equipment for surveyors.

Data entry (when applicable)

Double entry: Make sure to budget for double data entry.

Software: Do not forget the cost of developing the data entry software.

Error rate checking: Make sure that you budget for conducting data entry error rate checks on a sub-sample. If you want to do a quick estimate, add 5% of data entry costs.

Treatment monitoring

Make sure that you anticipate any data collection costs associated with treatment monitoring. Treatment monitoring is very important and consists of checking whether both the treatment and the control groups complied with the assignment. This may involve quick data collection, the costs of which should be included in the budget.

Survey equipment and shipping

If you plan to use equipment (GPS, health check-up equipment, etc.), make sure to budget for the cost of purchasing and shipping the equipment (including custom taxes, etc.).

Unforeseen costs

It is useful to include a line for unforeseen costs in case any aspect of data collection turns out to be more expensive, or takes longer than expected. Include up to 5% of the total data collection cost here.

4 Intervention Implementation Costs

All funding is for research costs. Implementation costs for the intervention are expected to be covered by the financial service provider partner or from other sources, except when adequate justification is provided for their inclusion in the research project's costs as part of the budget narrative. Fully justified implementation costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis. No funding will be provided for the salary, or time, of the practitioner partner.

5 Indirect Cost Rates

If you are planning to conduct this study with a third-party field research implementing partner, please note that administrative charges are capped at 10% of direct costs or $10,000, whichever is smaller. If you are planning to conduct this study with IPA as the implementing partner, you should not include IPA's Indirect Cost Rate in your project budget, since support from the GFII team and assistance from headquarters have already been accounted for.

Appendix B: Research Quality Guidelines

The following section lists the quality guidelines that are embedded in every project that is implemented by IPA. If you are working with an IPA country program, country program management will work with you to ensure that your project adheres to these guidelines. It's a good idea to read through this list so that you know what to expect.

If you plan to work with a third-party implementer, we will be asking the implementer to sign a subcontract that introduces financial and research quality reporting requirements. This will help us guarantee that your project results in high-quality research that is comparable to field experiments carried out by IPA. Please note that IPA may require third-party implementing organizations to complete a due diligence questionnaire on their past experience and financial management. IPA may raise concerns about the implementing organization if the submitted materials do not reflect an ability to implement your project while adhering to the quality guidelines listed below.

IPA Standard Quality Guidelines

1. Research Design

Protocols:

- Monitor Treatment and Control compliance
- Randomization
  - Field Randomization must be audited
  - Randomization code must be documented and capable of being replicated
- All supported projects will be required to register in the AEA Trial Registry

Recommendations:

- Power calculations documented and shared

2. Project Management

Protocols:

- All project activities are budgeted for and approved in advance
- Documentation
  - Project Manual describing the entire project
  - Project documents are clearly labeled and organized
  - Sample tracking file to monitor attrition across treatment and control

Recommendations:

- Follow the recommended folder structure for maintaining project documentation
- Upload final documentation to the project workspace on SharePoint

3. Human Subjects

Protocols:

- IRB approval from the relevant institution before any activity involving human subjects is undertaken
- IRB training certificates for all personnel who will handle the data and identified surveys in the field
- Administer informed consent to every respondent
- All field officers (including surveyors) sign confidentiality forms
- Full local and international IRB compliance

Recommendations:
- IRB application submitted at least 6 weeks before hitting the field
- Informed consent checklist for enumerators to describe key human subjects considerations

4. Measurement & Questionnaire Design

Protocols:
- Informed consent included with every survey
- Unique ID for every data point
- Translation
    - Written: The questionnaire must be back-translated (translated in the local language and then translated again by another person into the original language).
    - Oral: The survey team creates a dictionary of key terms and their translations
- All final questionnaires shared on SharePoint
- All questions are piloted before data collection begins

Recommendations:
- Pilot data is entered and analyzed
- Personally identifiable information (PII) is removable from paper questionnaire
- Use two unique ids for each data point
- Questionnaires are reviewed by IPA/J-PAL during design

5. Data Collection

Protocols:
- Training
    - There is a survey manual for each survey
    - Appropriate length of training
- Team Structure
    - Appropriate ratio of surveyors for each field supervisor
    - Appropriate ratio of field teams per field manager
- Monitoring
    - Accompaniments: each surveyor is occasionally observed by a supervisor
    - Editing & Logical Checks: A dedicated person who edits every paper survey or checks the data every day
    - Back checks are done with multiple back check instruments that cover the entire survey
    - Random Spot Checks: Done weekly by an independent monitor on every surveyor
- Documentation
    - Data collection plan submitted for review of team structure and monitoring plan
    - Keep a master tracking document that tracks all field interviews separately from the data
    - Write survey notes to document decisions made during data collection
    - Attrition rates are documented throughout the survey
- Securely store and transport personal identifying information contained in both paper surveys and electronic data

Recommendations:
- Train more surveyors than will be hired
- Surveyors are administered tests and quizzes during training to assess their knowledge of the questionnaire

- Accompaniments: A minimum of 10% of respondents surveyed by each surveyor are observed by a supervisor
- Back checks:
  - 10% or 40 surveys per week (whichever is higher)
  - A bare minimum of 10 questions, or 10% of your total survey instrument
- Random Spot Checks: At least 15% by senior project management and more during the first two weeks
- Each monitoring activity is scheduled and designed so that each surveyor is observed, editing and back checked, at minimum, once a week
- Monitoring feedback, including back check analysis, happens daily as part of team meetings

6. Data Entry & Digital Data Collection

Protocols:

- Software encrypts PII or remains offline
- Double entry and reconciliation of all data
- An independent audit is performed on double-entered data
- Security
  - PII is stored separately from original data (both paper and electronic) and encrypted
  - All data is securely backed up offsite
  - All transmissions of data are secure

Recommendations:

- Survey Specifications and data entry/CAI programs submitted
- Data available in a common format (.dta, .sav, .csv) with associated codebook
- All final datasets made publicly available after completion of proposed study

7. Data Cleaning & Analysis

Protocols:

- Reconciliation (with entries, audits, field tracking data), high-frequency checks
- De-identify data before beginning analysis
- Properly comment all .do files
- Use relative references in all .do files
- Properly name and label all variables

8. Administration - Finance, Human Resources, Legal

Protocols:

- Finance & Grants: Budgets, actuals, reporting
- HR: Follow safety and security protocols
- Legal: Obtain approval before signing MOUs
- Communications: Obtain researcher approval before publishing results externally (blogging, social media, etc.)
- Policy: Document the cost of the intervention and intervention materials