

SURVEY DESIGN

Journey of an IE survey



The reason for surveys

- They are an important source of data, especially in regions where administrative data-sources are lacking
- Researchers rely on them heavily to measure the outcome of a program/intervention
- ...but they are time consuming for respondents and expensive so we need to make sure we get it right!

Steps

- 1 What are you trying to assess?
- 2 **Start broad:** Read the literature, and see what outcomes are measured
- 3 **Stay organized:** Put together a paper version of your survey
- 4 **Finish on-point:** Start writing down your hypothesis (PAP)
- 5 Place the finishing touches: pilot, pilot, pilot!

Case Study: Idleness in Refugee Camps

- Visualize these steps through the lens a real data collection exercise
- Today's focus: understanding the psycho-social benefits of employment for refugees
 - Motivation (1): Many countries place severe restrictions on refugees right to work despite being signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention.
 - Motivation (2): Literature is sparse on the psycho-social impacts of idleness in refugee contexts

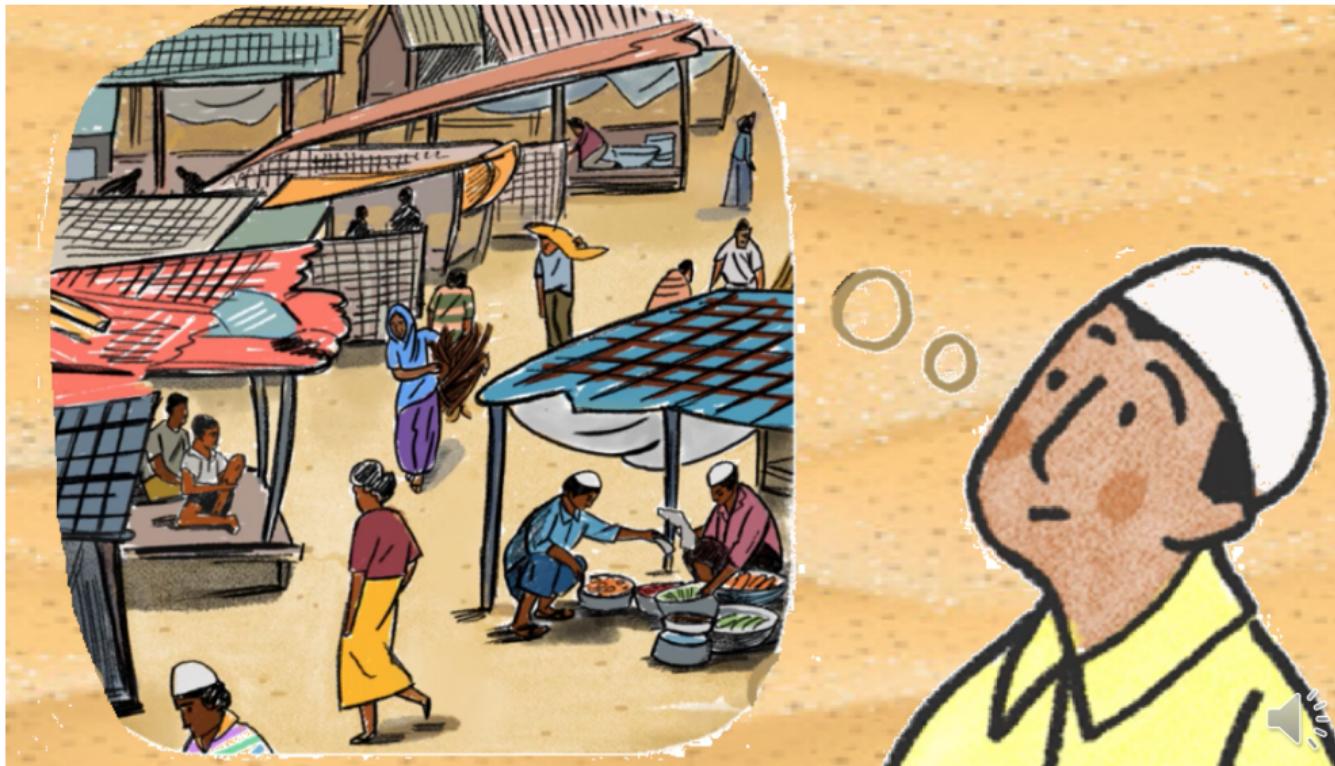
Case Study: Idleness in Refugee Camps

- **Treatment 1:** Provide opportunity to conduct work task
 - Long-duration form of employment, which capitalizes on occupying idle time, being social, developing a sense of purpose behind the work.
- **Treatment 2:** Provide cash
 - The purpose of the cash treatment arm is to identify the causal effects of employment on psychosocial wellbeing – beyond those of receiving an income alone.

Case Study: Idleness in Refugee Camps

- We enrich our experiment by examining the mediating roles of two features: past violence and future uncertainty
 - Past violence: exploit quasi-random variation in the extent to which individuals experienced violence
 - Future uncertainty: experimental variation in the extent to which individuals face certainty about their work schedule
- We are motivated by a literature in psychology that recognizes a key predictor of depression to be the repetitive contemplation of typically dark thoughts around past trauma and future uncertainty.

Case Study: Idleness in Refugee Camps



Step 1: What are you trying to assess?

Step 1: What are you trying to assess

- 1 Isolate your primary research questions. State them clearly and concisely.

Step 1: What are you trying to assess - case study

- 1 What is the impact of productive employment – beyond direct monetary benefits – on the psychosocial wellbeing of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh?
- 2 Does future uncertainty reduce the benefits of employment?
- 3 Do experiences of past violence limit the benefits of employment?

Step 2: Staying Broad

Step 2: Stay Broad - reading literature

- While your specific research may be new, there are probably many others out there that have thought about similar issues
- No need to re-invent the wheel, and being able to rely on previously tested and validated survey instruments is helpful
- While there is currently no "database" of surveys, many authors either make these available on their websites, or in the appendix of their papers - so check them out, and be sure to cite them!

Step 2: Stay Broad - reading literature - case study

Psychological Well-being

PHQ9	The standardized total score of 9 questions from the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ9) (Haushofer et al. 2018)
Life Satisfaction Index	A standardized average of survey responses to four questions from Diener's standardized scale, responses made along a seven-point Likert scale. (Bessone et al. 2020)
Stress Index	The standardized total score from three elements adapted from the Cohen Stress scale. "How many of the last 7 days have you [been able to fall asleep peacefully / felt nervous / felt frustrated]?" (Ridley et al. 2020)

Gendery Dynamics

IPV	The standardized total score of five questions regarding norms for intimate partner violence (IPV) from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) (Haushofer et al. 2019)
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Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome clouds

- Brainstorm widely about what types of outcomes you want your research to be able to speak to
 - Multiple attempts
 - Work as a team
- Important to think of the study as a whole, not just the single round of data you're collecting at that point.
 - Multiple survey rounds?
 - High frequency data?
 - Smaller baseline?

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome clouds - case study

Stress Anxiety Health
Depression Decisions Work
Time use Stability

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

T_0	T_0	$T_0 + 1$ week	$T_0 + 8$ weeks
Baseline	Midline	Weekly	Endline

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

	T_0 Baseline	T_0 Midline	$T_0 + 1\text{ week}$ Weekly	$T_0 + 8\text{ weeks}$ Endline
Psychological Well-being				
PHQ9	X			X
Life Satisfaction Index	X			X
Stress Index	X		X	X
Sociability (Total)	X		X	X
Sociability (Positive)	X		X	X
Self Worth Index	X			X
Locus of Control	X			X
Allocation Decision Game		X		X
Stability Index		X		X
Physiological Wellbeing Index	X			X

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

	T_0 Baseline	T_0 Midline	$T_0 + 1 \text{ week}$ Weekly	$T_0 + 8 \text{ weeks}$ Endline
Psychological Well-being				
PHQ9	X			X
Life Satisfaction Index	X			X
Stress Index	X		X	X
Sociability (Total)	X		X	X
Sociability (Positive)	X		X	X
Self Worth Index	X			X
Locus of Control	X			X
Allocation Decision Game		X		X
Stability Index		X		X
Physiological Wellbeing Index	X			X

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

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Stress Index	X		X	X
Sociability (Total)	X		X	X
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Self Worth Index	X			X
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Allocation Decision Game		X		X
Stability Index		X		X
Physiological Wellbeing Index	X			X

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

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Locus of Control	X			X
Allocation Decision Game		X		X
Stability Index		X		X
Physiological Wellbeing Index	X			X

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

	Baseline	Midline	Weekly	Endline
Financial Well-being				
Savings	X		X	X
Borrowing	X			X
Economic Decision Making				
Risk Preference		X		X
Time Preference		X		X
Economic Decision Making				
Exposure to Violence	X			

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

	Baseline	Midline	Weekly	Endline
Financial Well-being				
Savings	X		X	X
Borrowing	X			X
Economic Decision Making				
Risk Preference		X		X
Time Preference		X		X
Economic Decision Making				
Exposure to Violence	X			

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

	Baseline	Midline	Weekly	Endline
Financial Well-being				
Savings	X		X	X
Borrowing	X			X
Economic Decision Making				
Risk Preference		X		X
Time Preference		X		X
Economic Decision Making				
Exposure to Violence	X			

Step 2: Stay Broad - outcome rounds - case study

	Baseline	Midline	Weekly	Endline
Financial Well-being				
Savings	X		X	X
Borrowing	X			X
Economic Decision Making				
Risk Preference		X		X
Time Preference		X		X
Economic Decision Making				
Exposure to Violence	X			

Stay organized: Put together a paper version of your survey

Step 3: Stay Organized - paper survey

- Goals:
 - Consolidate your ideas in one place: Google/Excel Forms
 - Make sure the survey flows
 - Get a sense of timing
 - See where you might want to cut
- Approach
 - Good organization helps you make sure you haven't forgotten anything
 - Include a table of contents at the beginning to see the progression of outcomes
 - Create a new tab for each outcome you want to measure

Step 3: Stay Organized - paper survey - case study

Table of Contents

- | | |
|----|--------------------------|
| 0 | Location |
| 1 | Background |
| 2 | Income |
| 3 | Education |
| 4 | Well-being |
| 5 | Communication |
| 6 | Daily-Life |
| 7 | HH Hunger Scale |
| 8 | Physical Health |
| 9 | Mobility |
| 10 | Family and Peers |
| 11 | Sense of Security |
| 12 | Memory |
| 13 | PTSD |
| 14 | PHQ |
| 15 | Locus of Control |
| 16 | Stability |
| 17 | Cognitive bias |
| 18 | Digit span |
| 19 | Oral Math |
| 20 | Home |
| 21 | Willingness to Integrate |
| 22 | Resource Allocation |
| 23 | Games |

Step 3: Stay Organized - paper survey - case study

Table of Contents	Theme
0 Location	
1 Background	General
2 Income	General
3 Education	General
4 Well-being	Psycho
5 Communication	Psycho
6 Daily-Life	General
7 HH Hunger Scale	Health
8 Phsical Health	Health
9 Mobility	Mobility
10 Family and Peers	Social network
11 Sense of Security	Psycho
12 Memory	Math
13 PTSD	Psycho
14 PHQ	Psycho
15 Locus of Control	Psycho
16 Stability	Psycho
17 Cognitive bias	Math
18 Digit span	Math
19 Oral Math	Math
20 Home	Home
21 Willingness to Integi	Home
22 Resource Allocation	Home
23 Games	Home

Step 3: Stay Organized - paper survey - case study

Table of Contents	Theme	Minutes
0 Location		2
1 Background	General	3
2 Income	General	4
3 Education	General	4
4 Well-being	Psycho	4
5 Communication	Psycho	4
6 Daily-Life	General	5
7 HH Hunger Scale	Health	5
8 Physical Health	Health	3
9 Mobility	Mobility	6
10 Family and Peers	Social network	6
11 Sense of Security	Psycho	9
12 Memory	Math	6
13 PTSD	Psycho	10
14 PHQ	Psycho	10
15 Locus of Control	Psycho	5
16 Stability	Psycho	5
17 Cognitive bias	Math	6
18 Digit span	Math	9
19 Oral Math	Math	9
20 Home	Home	9
21 Willingness to Integ	Home	10
22 Resource Allocation	Home	3
23 Games	Home	10
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Step 3: Stay Organized - paper survey - case study

GENERAL WELLBEING (SECTION GW)

GW1	Is there a place near you where you can go to receive healthcare?	Yes No	1 >> GW2 0 >> GW3
GW2	Where would you usually go to receive healthcare?	Community clinic Hospital Doctor in private chamber At home Pharmacy store Traditional Practitioner Mobile clinic Other, specify	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 96
GW3	In general, how would you say you are feeling overall? (needs more work)	[READ OPTIONS OUT LOUD]	1 1 2 2 3 3 4 4 5 5 6 6
GW4	In general, how is your household doing financially? (needs more work)	[READ OPTIONS OUT LOUD]	1 1 2 2 3 3 4 4 5 5 6 6



Cover & Tracking Sheet

General Wellbeing

Economic Impact

Primes

Resource Allocation

Integration

Responsibility

Refugee Diseases

Finish on-point: Start writing down your hypothesis (PAP)

Step 4: Finish on point - hypotheses

- Now it's time to think more carefully about what impacts/changes your research is hoping to detect.
- Eliminate anything that seems superfluous to the study
 - You may add things too but generally if you start broad this is the stage where you cut.
- Tradeoff:
 - Make sure you cover everything you need
 - Response fatigue, attrition, quality of data

Step 4: Finish on point - hypotheses

"In our sample of rural Ghanaians, we find that response fatigue leads to an undercounting of livelihood activities by an average of 8%. However, the impacts of this response fatigue are not shared equally. Notably women and youth are disproportionately impacted by respondent fatigue. This bias comes from two sources. First, women and youth are systematically listed later in household rosters and thus exposed to different amounts of fatigue. And second, the effects of fatigue on reported labor contributions are stronger for female and younger household members (their labor contributions are less valued)"

- Ambler, Herskowitz and Maredia (2020)

Step 4: Finish on point - hypotheses - case study

- 1 What is the impact of gainful employment relative to cash alone?
 - Yes: measures of psycho-social well-being (full)
 - Yes: indicators of economic decision making
 - Yes: time-use
 - No: time-use and labor allocations of other family members
 - No: measures of dietary diversity

Step 4: Finish on point - hypotheses - case study

- 2 How does past violence mediate the psychosocial impacts of employment?
 - Yes: measures of mental health and stability
 - No: indicators of economic decision making
 - No: time-use
 - No: time-use and labor allocations of other family members
 - No: measures of dietary diversity

Step 4: Finish on point - hypotheses - case study

- 3 How does alleviating future uncertainty affect psychosocial wellbeing?
 - Yes: measures of stability
 - Yes: indicators of economic decision making
 - No: time-use
 - No: time-use and labor allocations of other family members
 - No: measures of dietary diversity

Finish on point - hypotheses - case study

- Yes: measures of psycho-social well-being
- Yes: indicators of economic decision making
- Yes: time-use
- ~~No: time-use and labor allocations of other family members~~
- ~~No: measures of dietary diversity~~

Last Steps

Step 5: Pilot, pilot, pilot

- Do participants understand the question?
- Do we see significant variation in respondent's answers?
- Can we cut/adjust further?

Integration Pilot Data Initial Analysis

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Figure 5: Completed at least 1 day of remuneration work in past year?

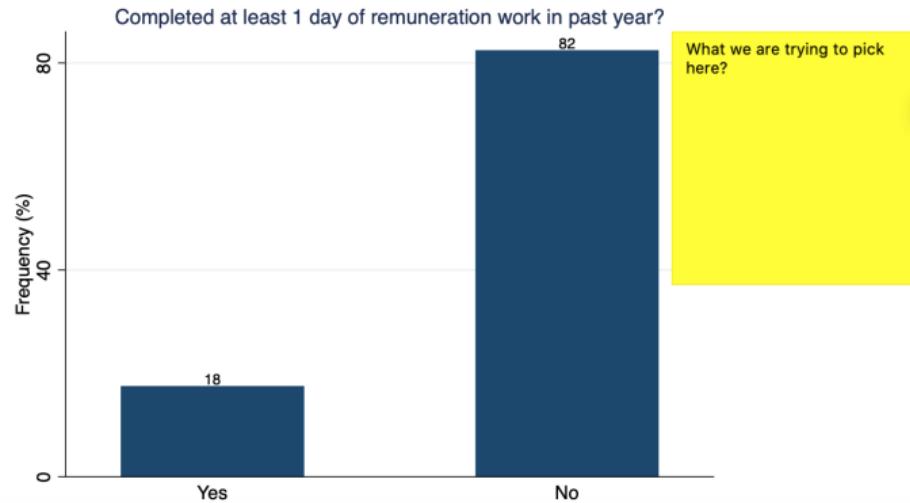
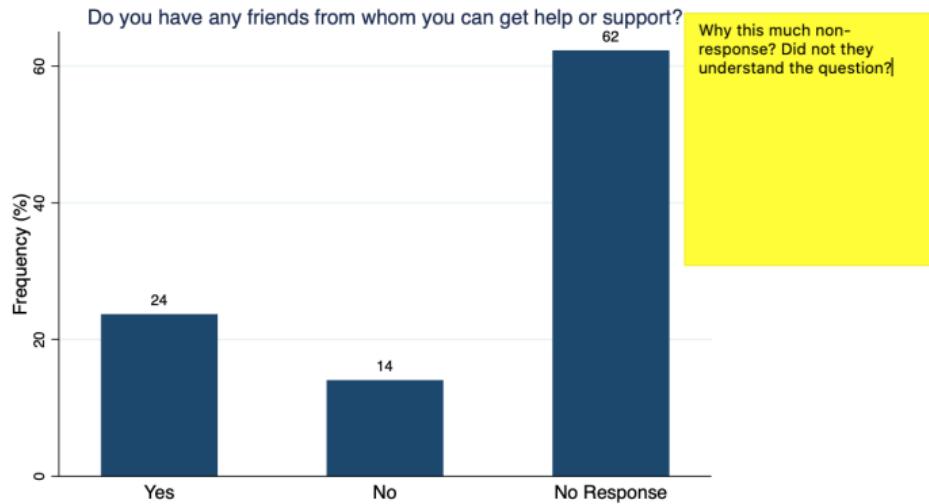


Figure 37: Do you have any friends from whom you can get help or support?



Step 5: pilot, pilot, pilot!

- SurveyCTO (or equivalent) is designed to reduce mistakes
- Once you've finalized the set of questions, run through the full survey a few more times (submitting real/fake data)
- Can we cut/adjust further?

Step 5: pilot, pilot, pilot!

- Use the piloting stage to make sure everything is well documented
- Anyone can pick up your survey and run with it
- Anyone can pick up where you left off, and know how the survey fits in with everything else.

Thank you!