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III-3



Survey Data
Collection for
Time-Bound
Programmes

International
Programme on
the Elimination
of Child Labour

Survey Data Collection for Time-Bound Programmes

George Okutho*

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1 Introduction

The paper “*Building the Knowledge Base for the Development of Time-Bound Programmes*”¹ outlines the different methodologies that can be applied to generate child labour data at national, regional, local and sectoral levels. As they usually constitute the most consistent approaches for estimating the incidence and nature of child labour, these survey methodologies are thus important in data collection for the design and implementation of Time-Bound Programmes (TBP).² These methodologies, which can be used in a complementary way, are summarised in Table 1. The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour’s (IPEC)

ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour in Development
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
TBP	Time-Bound Programme
RA	Rapid Assessment

surveys covering specific sectors or geographical areas.³

This paper documents how the actual data collection for survey⁴ methodologies should be undertaken and reviews the practical aspects of preparing for data collection, field data collection, data analysis and reporting.⁵ It focuses essentially on data collection in sample surveys. SIMPOC methodologies involving qualitative data collection

approaches are discussed elsewhere, particularly in the Rapid Assessment (RA) Manual.⁶

Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), for example, uses a combination of these methods in designing and implementing baseline

³ In TBP context, a principal use of baseline surveys is for identifying target groups for interventions and/or collecting information capturing the initial child labour situation as a basis for follow-up surveys to measure the effectiveness of programme interventions, as part of programme evaluation and impact assessment. For an overview of issues relating to baseline surveys within TBPs, see S. Mukherjee: *Baseline Surveys for Time-Bound Programmes: An Introduction* (Geneva, ILO, 2003), available in the TBP MAP Kit or from the TBP MAP website: www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/themes/ti mebound/tbpmmap.

⁴ Throughout this paper, the words “survey” and “study” are used interchangeably to mean any of the methods of data collection outlined in Table 1.

⁵ A detailed Survey Methodology Manual on household surveys, baseline surveys and RAs; data analysis and report preparation; data processing, dissemination and archiving are being prepared by SIMPOC of IPEC and will be available late 2003.

⁶ ILO/UNICEF: *Investigating Child Labour: Guidelines for Rapid Assessment: A Field Manual*, available from the SIMPOC website: www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/simpo c

¹ Y. Ofosu: *Building the Knowledge Base for the Development of Time-Bound Programmes* (Geneva, ILO, 2003), available in the TBP MAP Kit or from the TBP MAP website: www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/themes/ti mebound/tbpmmap.

Additional information of relevance may be found in *Situation Analysis and Indicators for the Development of Time-Bound Programmes* and in *Strategic Planning in TBPs*, both of which are available in the TBP MAP Kit and the above-cited website.

² For some illicit and hidden forms of child labour, it might be necessary to combine survey methodologies with some of the other methods outlined in Table 1.

2 Preparation for Data Collection

To ensure successful data collection, adequate preparation should be made to address issues relating to the logistical requirements of the survey team, design and pre-testing of data collection instruments (questionnaires and guidelines), and corresponding training materials. The setting up of computer and data processing infrastructure must also be undertaken early on in the process.

2.1 Logistical arrangements

Making logistical arrangements includes: (a) setting up a central operation headquarters; (b) contacting local authorities where the survey will be carried out; (c) deciding on the size and composition of the field teams; (d) arranging accommodations, transportation and security; and (e) arranging to obtain or prepare copies of local maps.

(a) The study must have a **central operating headquarters**, from which the entire operation will be coordinated. It is often possible to set up this office at a government institution, such as a Central Statistical Office or Ministry of Labour, or to secure offices of the study's implementing agency. Usually, two to three rooms are needed for general administrative activities, in addition to meeting rooms that can be used for training. The headquarters office should hold the computing equipment and serve as storage place for the questionnaires.

(b) It is very important to secure the **support of local authorities**, who must be informed of the purpose of the study and the expected outcomes. In some countries, local chiefs or other community leaders are crucial

for obtaining the general support of the community.⁷ It is therefore important to inform local authorities about the study well before survey staff contacts them. They can also be valuable for identifying suitable local guides and, if necessary, translators. Another area in which local authorities may be helpful is in arranging accommodations for the survey team.

(c) A decision must be made on the **size and composition of the team** well in advance. Indeed, the number of interviewers required depends on the sample size, on the number of days to be spent interviewing, and on the number of respondents one interviewer can handle in a day (estimated from the length of a working day divided by the amount of time it takes to complete one interview – determined after the pre-test of the questionnaire – see below, allowing some travel time). The field team normally comprises a project coordinator, field supervisors and enumerators. To ensure close coordination, a ratio of one supervisor to four enumerators is recommended, taking into account any unique situation of the study area and subject matter.

(d) Arranging accommodation, transportation and security.

(e) Before the fieldwork begins, **copies of the maps** indicating the large areas (states, provinces, districts, towns, etc.) as well as the small areas

⁷ Many researchers have documented the use of local authorities and their importance in facilitating field data collection. See for example UNICEF: *Monitoring progress toward the goals of the World Summit for Children: End-Decade Multiple Indicator Survey Manual*. Division of Evaluation, Policy and Planning, United Nations Children's Fund (New York, 2000)..

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(villages, census enumeration areas, etc.) in which the survey will be

conducted should be obtained in sufficient numbers.



Table 1: Methods of data collection

Methodology	Household-based sample surveys	Community surveys	Workplace/ employers surveys	Rapid Assessments	Street children surveys
<p>Description</p>	<p>Use the household as unit of measurement for identifying its members and quantifying their demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Variables on which information is collected include economic activities of children and adults, school attendance, literacy levels, housing characteristics, socio-economic status (including shocks experienced in the recent past), migration, effects of work on schooling and health.</p>	<p>Collect information from elected or appointed leaders, administrators and other community leaders regarding major locality particulars in order to obtain a cultural, demographic and socio-economic profile of the community. Variables considered include: income level of households or families, poverty level, major economic activities, seasonality, unemployment rates, economic alternatives, literacy rates, availability and quality of schools, hospitals, public communication and transport systems, water, electricity and recreational facilities</p>	<p>Seek to establish the issue of child labour from the demand side – why children are preferred, etc. The establishments are often selected from a prepared list following a household survey or existing directory of establishments</p>	<p>Well-suited for obtaining detailed knowledge of the working and life circumstances of children involved in activities or occupations difficult to identify with other methodologies. The actual techniques used in RA procedures may differ according to the topic being investigated. RA uses semi-structured questionnaires or none at all; in-depth interviews and conversations; careful and attentive observation; and background information derived from a variety of sources, such as survey findings, reports, case studies, key informants or knowledgeable persons</p>	<p>Target two main categories of children on the streets, namely: (a) those who live and work on the street and by definition do not have any other place of residence; and (b) those who work on the streets but normally reside with their parents/guardians. The two categories require different data collection techniques</p>
<p>Technical remarks</p>	<p>The survey is largely quantitative in nature. It is based on scientifically designed samples and therefore ensures better control of data quality and accuracy of results. The sample households are selected using probability techniques and the results can be extrapolated to wider population</p>	<p>Although largely qualitative, some quantitative data (from secondary sources) can be obtained about the variables outlined above. Information from community surveys is very valuable for stratifying and selecting households and establishments/ employers for further studies.</p>	<p>It can be qualitative when it is based on local enquiries in an area to be investigated comprising discussions with key informants, such as producers' associations, unions, government agencies, NGOs, community organizations, community leaders, religious groups and charitable associations</p>	<p>Provides qualitative and descriptive information.</p> <p>The technique is characterized by an association of the following fundamental concepts: (1) it is participatory; (2) it has a system perspective; (3) data collection is triangulated; and (4) data collection and analysis are iterative. The triangulation of data collection means the combination of observations from individuals with differing backgrounds, and/or employing different research methods to provide crosschecks.</p>	<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative in nature.</p> <p>While category (b) can be captured through the households, category (a) cannot. Therefore, a purposive sampling approach is often applied for selecting the areas to be covered and interviewing at random a number of children</p>

2.2 Preparing the questionnaires

Whichever approach or combination of approaches is adopted, the purpose remains to generate child labour data that will enable partners and policy makers to understand the nature, causes, distribution and effects of child labour. It therefore follows that the content of the questionnaires or guidelines for participatory interviews are critically important for this undertaking.⁸ Table 2 shows the content of a typical questionnaire, broadly categorized into four areas, namely

- (a) demographic and socio-economic characteristics;
- (b) educational resources and infrastructure;
- (c) child labour, and
- (d) occupational safety and health.

These variables should be captured in the questionnaires through a series of questions designed in a logical and coherent way to facilitate accurate answers.

In most cases, the questionnaires will need to be translated into one or more local languages. Extreme care needs to be taken to ensure that the meaning of key terminology or concepts are not lost or misinterpreted during the translation. It is recommended that one person, preferably a native speaker of the language, translate the questionnaire and then another independently re-translate the questionnaire back into the original language. The two versions can then be compared. Technical experts familiar with the terms used in the questionnaire should be consulted as often as required.

The draft questionnaire(s) should then be pre-tested. The pre-test should identify potential problem areas, such as dates of

birth, unanticipated interpretations and cultural objections to the questions. The pre-test should be applied to respondents similar to those who will be interviewed during the survey. Specifically, the pre-test should answer the following concerns:

- are respondents willing to answer questions in the way they have been asked?
- are any of the questions particularly difficult to answer, or do they address sensitive issues?
- are the questions well understood by the respondents?
- can the interviewers follow the instructions easily, or do they misinterpret them?
- is the questionnaire designed with adequate space?
- is the coding of answers clear?
- can the open questions be closed after the pre-test?
- is it necessary to create new codes for common answers that were not included in the original questionnaire?
- how long time does the interview take?

The results of the pre-test should be discussed with the technical team and the interviewers and the necessary changes made. For example, if the pre-test reveals that respondents refuse to answer the questions in the form in which they are given in the questionnaire, a decision must be made about the best way of reframing the questions. Note that if a significant number of respondents refuse to answer the questions, the survey may not be worth doing! Once the questionnaire has been translated and pre-tested, sufficient copies should be made for use in field staff training and in the main field data collection itself.

⁸ The actual number of questionnaires will depend on the grouping of the target respondents, which should be decided in advance at the survey planning stage. For example, one could have questionnaires for household heads; and for children separately; and for key informants and focus group discussions as another set.

Table 2: Key elements of questionnaires' contents

a) Demographics	b) Local education resources and infrastructure	c) Child labour	d) Occupational safety and health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of place of origin (village or community/town) • Number in household • Household head(s) • Household older siblings • Age, gender, education status, work activity of children and youth under 18 • Contribution of children and youth to household income • Land tenure (share croppers or owners) and work activity of heads of household • Migratory status of the household: place of origin, length of period living in the village, migratory patterns or practice • Ethnic background (<i>optional</i>) • Housing (structure and amenities) • Annual family income and sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local school enrolment rate • Actual school attendance • Number of out-of-school youth • Grades completed by children and youth • Proximity of schools (primary, junior secondary and senior secondary levels) in kilometres • Literacy rate of children and other family members • Attitudes toward education, formal school and teachers • Attitudes toward access & relevancy of formal education • Attitudes toward, and access to, non-formal education programs • Reasons children attend or do not attend school • School facility, condition and needs • Quality of teaching methodology/curriculum used (formal/non-formal) • Interest in participating in non-formal literacy life skills education program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and attitudes about child labour • Awareness of child/worker rights • Awareness regarding child labour-related national laws and regulations • Existence/mechanisms of enforcement within communities. • Traditions or cultural practices that influence children's activities • Child/youth work performed • Type and location of work at home, farm, other places. • Specific work-related activities performed by the youth/children in household • Hours worked per week • Periods when work is performed • Seasonality of work • Conditions of work (type/frequency, exposure to the sun or to chemicals, evidence of other dangerous conditions, etc.) • Accidents and injuries incurred due to work-related activities (nature and extent of accident/injury). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and attitudes about safe work practices and procedures, by activity (tools and equipment use, exposure to chemicals, sun exposure, heat stress, bites, etc.) • Knowledge and practice of youth on what to do in the event of accidents and injuries. • Knowledge and attitudes related to risk and risk management and prevention of accidents and injuries • Accidents or work related health problems reported by others in the community • Other hazardous or dangerous work evident within the community where children are involved or at risk of involvement (mining, forestry, fishing, prostitution, etc.) • Involvement of children in the application of chemicals such as pesticides: housing/ school proximity to treated work areas, potential for drift, posting, re-entry intervals, methods of application, handling of equipment, maintenance of equipment and protective gear, storage and disposal of pesticide containers, etc. • Knowledge and attitudes about HIV/AIDS and its impact at the family and village level and its prevention

3 Field data collection

The first step in achieving a successful field data collection is to ensure that the areas to be covered have been clearly identified and segmented. Maps should be drawn with clear and easily recognizable boundaries. In most cases, the number of segments is pre-determined during the sample selection process (in cases where probability sampling is applied). In each segment, the number of target respondents should be spelt out, e.g. number of households, number of interviews with key informants, planned number of focus group discussions, etc.

3.1 Field procedures

Fieldwork will be successful only if each member of the interviewing team understands and follows correct field procedures. This means that there must be daily control and monitoring mechanism (through control sheets) that allow supervisors to follow-up progress and promptly solve problems as they arise. The control sheet normally contains list of respondents to be contacted, *although it is up to the enumerator to identify the eligible respondents.*

The process of this identification is therefore crucial to the success of the fieldwork as well as the data ultimately collected. There must be clear guidelines about what the enumerator should do in cases where the eligible respondent has been identified but is unable to answer the questions for various reasons (e.g. refuses to be interviewed, interview not complete, respondent incapacitated). Guidance should also be provided on how many call backs are allowed (normally at least three).

3.2 Conducting the interviews

The actual conduct of the interviews can be a daunting task and must be handled with the greatest tact and skill. Training of field staff in this respect is therefore

very important. In general, the enumerators should ensure that they are neutral throughout the interview and that they never suggest answers to the respondent. They do not change the wording or sequence of questions; handle hesitant respondents tactfully, and do not create expectations.

As a first step, the interviewers must work to build rapport with the respondent. A number of techniques can be applied to achieve this, for example:

- **Making a good first impression.** When first approaching the respondent, the enumerator should do her/his best to feel at ease. The purpose of the interview should be explained in a manner that would be fully understood by the respondent.
- **Having a positive approach.** Enumerators should never adopt an apologetic manner and questions like "are you too busy?" Such questions invite refusal even before the interview starts. Rather, use of polite sentences such as, "I would like to ask you a few questions" or "I would like to talk with you for a few moments" will have a positive impact on the respondent.
- **Stressing confidentiality of responses when necessary.** If the respondent is hesitant about responding to the interview or asks what the data will be used for, explain that the information to be collected will remain confidential, no individual names will be used for *any* purpose, and that all information will be grouped together to write a report.
- **Answering any questions from the respondent frankly.** Before agreeing to be interviewed, the respondent may ask some questions about the survey or how s/he was selected for the interview. Indicate

- the willingness to return at another time if it at that moment is inconvenient for the respondent to answer the questions.
- **Interviewing the respondent alone.** The presence of a third person during an interview can prevent getting frank, honest answers from a respondent. It is, therefore, important that where such *privacy* is warranted (e.g. interviewing women about fertility questions), all questions are answered by the respondent herself/himself. If other people are present, explain to the respondent that some of the questions are private and ask where the best place they is to be interviewed. Although at times asking for privacy will make others more curious, establishing privacy from the beginning will allow the respondent to be more attentive to the questions being posed.

For additional information and guidelines on appropriate interview techniques when

dealing with children, please see *Ethical considerations when conducting research on Children in the worst forms of child labour in Nepal*.⁹

3.3 Checking completed questionnaires

Once the interview is completed, the enumerator should make a quick review of the filled questionnaire. This review should be done before leaving the household or respondent so that the enumerator can be certain that each and every appropriate question was asked; that all answers are clear and reasonable; and that the handwriting is legible. Also check must be made to ensure that the skip instructions has been followed correctly. While the enumerator can make minor corrections, the respondent should clarify any serious error. Completed and checked forms are then handed over to the Supervisor for revalidation and onward transmission to the central operation headquarters for editing and coding; data processing; and data analysis and report preparation.



⁹ C. Edmonds: *Ethical considerations when conducting research on Children in the worst forms of child labour in Nepal* (Geneva, ILO, 2003). Available in the TBP MAP Kit or from the TBP MAP website:
www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/themes/tbmebound/tbmap/index.htm

4 Data analysis and report preparation

It is very important that data analysis be carried out with careful attention to the many details of calculation and interpretation. Before producing tabulations¹⁰ and writing the reports, there are a number of key data-checking tasks that should be completed.

- **Carry out basic checks of data quality (non-sampling errors) and calculate response rates**
In cases where the sample design is used, a target number of households and individual respondents are specified. Check the number of households and respondents that were successfully interviewed. Were the targets achieved? If not, were there particular regions or areas with unusually low response rates? Make note of the major reasons for non-response. If your survey has response rates lower than 90%, you should be aware that your results might be biased.
- **Check for variables with large numbers of missing values**
Make sure that the missing values are not the result of a data entry or editing error that could be repaired. Any variable with 10% or more of the values missing should be used with caution since this usually indicates a problem with the structure of the questionnaire or with the interviewers' understanding of how to administer the questionnaire. If the proportion of missing values is very high you may decide not to use the variable in the analysis at all.
- **Check for variables with large numbers of "don't know" or "other" answers** Depending on the question, "don't know" responses can

indicate that the respondents had difficulty understanding the question. High proportions of "other" answers often indicate that the questionnaire did not account for the most common responses. Sometimes interviewers mistakenly code questions as "other" when the response actually fits into a category listed on the questionnaire. For variables with many "other" responses, it may be possible to retrieve the questionnaires to see if some of the responses can be recoded into existing categories.

- **Check for expected patterns in the data**
Some variables are expected to exhibit particular patterns. If the data deviates significantly from these expected patterns, the reasons should be ascertained and the analysis and interpretation undertaken with caution. Unexpected patterns may result from faulty sample design, improper implementation of the sample, interviewer errors, or inaccurate answers by respondents.
- **Decide on basic background variables and their groupings**
In the tables that will be produced for the survey reports, results are usually reported according to a set of standard background variables. Most often, these include geographic areas, level of education, and urban/rural residence. For geographic areas, the sample design will determine the lowest administrative or geographic unit at which it is feasible to display results, but a decision should be made whether to group these into larger units for most tables.
- **Decide on minimum sample sizes for displaying results**
Depending on the overall size of the sample, some tabulations may yield cells that are based on very small number of cases. This may happen,

¹⁰ It is strongly recommended to develop a tabulation plan after finalizing the questionnaires. This plan should seek to answer all questions relating to the nature, distribution, causes, and effects of child labour.

for example, when tabulating results by categories of background variables in which relatively few respondents fall (e.g., women with higher education). These estimates will not be reliable and should not be shown. In general, it is not advisable to present results based on (i.e., with a denominator of) fewer than 25 unweighted cases.

Once these checks and decisions have been made, report preparation can commence. The primary objectives of the report are to convey the main results of the survey and to stimulate interest in the current child labour situation among government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), other multilateral donors, the press and the public.

While the process of report writing can be tedious, the draft report should ensure that the concepts are well defined, methodologies are accurately and concisely described, definitions are clear and easily interpretable, and the tables and text provide an accurate description of the child labour situation in the country, region or locality. The contents of the report normally comprises the following (Box 1):

Box 1: Content of report
Preface
Table of contents
Executive summary
Chapter 1: Introduction and background (objectives of the study)
Chapter 2: Study methodology (sample and fieldwork organization)
Chapter 3: Findings of the study
Chapter 4: Major conclusions and recommendations
Annexes: Survey instruments

Preface:

Should consist of 2-4 paragraphs written by the National Statistical Office and/or the Minister of Labour or the implementing agency. If the survey is benefiting from ILO supported, then inputs for the preface may be sought from ILO/IPEC. It is common in the preface to describe briefly the contents, importance and intentions of the report.

The preface is also an appropriate place for acknowledgments.

Table of contents:

Used to outline the page numbers for each section and sub-section of the report. Included in or following the table of contents should be a list of tables, boxes and figures, and, if deemed necessary, a list of acronyms used in the text along with their meaning. Careful and thorough checking of the table of contents and the list of tables, boxes, figures and acronyms is extremely important. Report authors should ensure that the exact wording of headings listed in the table of contents is the same as that used in the report. In addition, careful attention should be made to ensure that table titles, figures, and boxes listed in the beginning of the

document are the same as those presented within the body of the text. Since the table of contents appears at the beginning of the report and provides an outline of the entire report, it should be concise and easy-to-read. The table of contents begins with the executive summary and ends with the annexes or appendices.

Executive summary:

A consolidated summary of the main points of the report. The executive summary should be concise enough for the reader to understand the essence of the study yet should provide enough detail that it accurately reflect the contents of the report. The executive summary usually follows the same outline as the main report and should be written such that it can be read independently from it.

Introduction and background:

Should include four main sections: 1) *Background of the country or region or locality*; 2) *Justification for the survey*; 3) *Objectives of the survey*; and 4) an outline of the *Arrangement of the report*. A sentence or two about how the study findings fit into an overall plan to design TBP in the country would be appropriate. Information on the institutions participating in the survey and the sources of funding should also be provided. Background of the country or region or locality should include a discussion of the overall situation as it relates to demographics, health, education and the economy. This information will provide the context for which all of the findings of the survey will be interpreted and clearly understood. In addition, this information will help the reader become more familiarized with the historical and current status of the country or region or locality. Much of this information can be found from secondary sources collected and reported by government agencies.

Study Methodology:

A detailed description of the research methodology (data collection and research methods used, sampling design, number of children interviewed, focus group discussions, if any, problems encountered, lessons learned, etc.).

Findings of the Study:

Description of the child labourers in the country, region or area and their residential, economic and educational levels. Also details on the kinds of work child labourers perform, rates and pattern of remuneration, average educational levels of the working children, relation

between work and school and work and skills training, the children's hopes and future prospects, etc. The analysis based on cross tabulation should bring out issues related to nature, causes, effects, and consequences of child labour. If the study is for baseline purposes the identification of target groups (if possible, a listing or profile of children and families that could benefit from interventions) and suggested key indicators for monitoring

and evaluation of interventions should be included.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Those which can be drawn from the study and their implications for policy and legislation indicated. What are the specific actions that can be taken at the family, community, district, regional and national levels to address the problems identified? These recommendations will serve as an input into decisions on interventions and strategies. If the study suggests further information needs that could not be addressed, these can be included in the recommendations.

Annexes:

Normally includes copies of the questionnaires used and details of estimation procedures and calculation of sampling errors. Also often include list of personnel who participated in the study.

