

Dear Colleagues,

As researchers within the WVS network, we all would like to know that the data we use and we disseminate to the academic community meet the commonly accepted methodological standards. Additionally, it is important for us comparative researchers that the data we obtain from different countries are collected using standardized and therefore comparable techniques. In order to provide you with the highest quality comparative data possible, we are asking all of our PIs to observe the common principles listed below. Following these rules will ensure all of us of the reliability of our data.

## I. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### A. THE COMMON QUESTIONNAIRE

1. WVS requires the implementation of a common questionnaire fully and faithfully.
2. The common questionnaire is drafted by the EC in consultation with members of the Scientific Advisory Board, PIs, and experts in the field.
3. Although each wave has its own questionnaire, keeping previously asked questions to the extent possible is a major concern so as to make longitudinal analysis possible.
4. The master questionnaire is drafted in English.

### B. TRANSLATION

1. PIs are responsible for the translation of the questionnaire into their local language(s).
2. In any given country, the questionnaire must be translated into all languages spoken by at least 15 percent of the population.
3. Translated questionnaires must be back-translated into English by someone other than the person who did the original translation from English into the local language.
4. The translated version, the back-translation and the names of the persons who did the translations must be sent to the EC for approval before the fieldwork can start.
5. Whenever a question has been used in previous surveys, the same translation should be preserved to the extent possible in order to allow over time comparisons. However, obvious and serious errors in translation should be corrected and the EC should be warned about these changes.

### C. DEVIATIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. In principle, every question in the original English questionnaire sent by the EC must be asked in every survey. In exceptional cases, where a PI feels a question is irrelevant or inappropriate for her/his country, s/he may ask the EC for permission not to ask that particular question. However, it must be noted that:
  - a. The PI willing to omit a question should inform the EC ahead of time and explain the reasons for the omission.
  - b. No question may be omitted without EC's written approval.
  - c. EC is not allowed to approve the omission of more than a maximum of 12 questions in any given country.
2. PIs may add to the questionnaire questions that they think are relevant to their country or certain questions may be added at the request of the funding agency.

However, these country-specific questions must be placed at the end of the questionnaire but before the demographics. (The master questionnaire will indicate the exact location.) An exception to this rule is granted if the additional question(s) is (are) directly related to a set of questions or battery in the master questionnaire (e.g. additional group(s) for the “neighbors battery” or additional institution(s) for the “confidence in institutions battery.”)

## II. THE SAMPLE

WVS requires a complete explanation of proposed sampling procedures BEFORE the start of the fieldwork. The sampling plan must be approved by the EC in writing.

### A. METHOD OF SAMPLING

The preferred method of sampling for WVS surveys is the full probability sample. However, recognizing that the very high cost -in terms of finances, manpower and time- of full probability samples may prove to be prohibitive in some cases, WVS allows quota sampling provided that the following principles are strictly adhered to:

1. Selection of PSUs must be probabilistic (and preferably PPS).
2. Selection of first stage clusters within PSUs must be probabilistic (and preferably PPS).
3. Quota sampling should be used only within reasonably small sized clusters that have been selected probabilistically.

Whether the sampling method is full probability or a combination of probability and quota, the minimum number of PSUs is 30. A design with less than 30 PSUs is not permissible.

### B. SAMPLE SIZE

The minimum sample size (i.e. the number of completed interviews) is 1,000. However, given the fact that in most designs the “effective sample size” (sample size net of design effects) is lower than the actual sample size, larger sample sizes are strongly recommended if at all possible.

### C. NON-RESPONSE

Non-response is an issue of increasing concern in sample surveys. Investigators are expected to make every reasonable effort to minimize non-response. More specifically,

1. In countries using a full probability design, no replacements are allowed. PIs should plan on as many call-backs as the funding will allow.
2. In countries using some form of quota sampling, every effort should be made to interview the first contact.

In any case, and as indicated below, a full report on non-responses is required.

### D. COVERAGE

WVS surveys are required to cover all residents (not only citizens) between the ages of 18 and 85, inclusive. PI's can lower the minimum age limit as long as the minimum required sample size for the 18+ population is achieved.

## III. INTERVIEWING

The mode of data collection for WVS surveys is face-to-face interviewing. Other modes (e.g. telephone, mail, internet) are not acceptable except under very exceptional circumstances and only on an experimental basis. In any case, EC approval in writing is necessary for modes of data collection other than face-to-face interviewing.

#### IV. PERIOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Data collection period for the Fifth Wave of WVS is April 1, 2005 through December 31, 2006. Fieldwork in a given country may begin as soon as the translated questionnaire and the sampling procedures of that country are approved by the EC. However, fieldwork in a given country may not extend beyond 14 consecutive weeks. Surveys with a fieldwork completion date of later than December 31, 2006 cannot be included in the Fifth Wave.

#### V. SUBMISSION OF DATA AND THE FINAL REPORT

A. After the completion of the survey, PIs are responsible for turning in a cleaned and complete data set to ASEP-JDS as soon as feasible. PIs also agree to answer inquiries by ASEP-JDS regarding their data set without undue delay.

B. Data set must be accompanied by the completed methodological questionnaire (attached) and a report of country-specific relevant information (e.g. important political events prior to or during the fieldwork, problems particular to that country, and other necessary information).

#### VI. ACCEPTANCE AND SHARING OF DATA SETS

No survey that does not fully and completely adhere to the rules described above will be accepted. Once a country's survey is accepted, its PI and her/his colleagues will have full and immediate access to all surveys completed as of that date as well as to those that will be submitted later. EC is responsible for keeping all PIs informed about the status of all surveys (funding, starting date, completion date, acceptance, etc.).