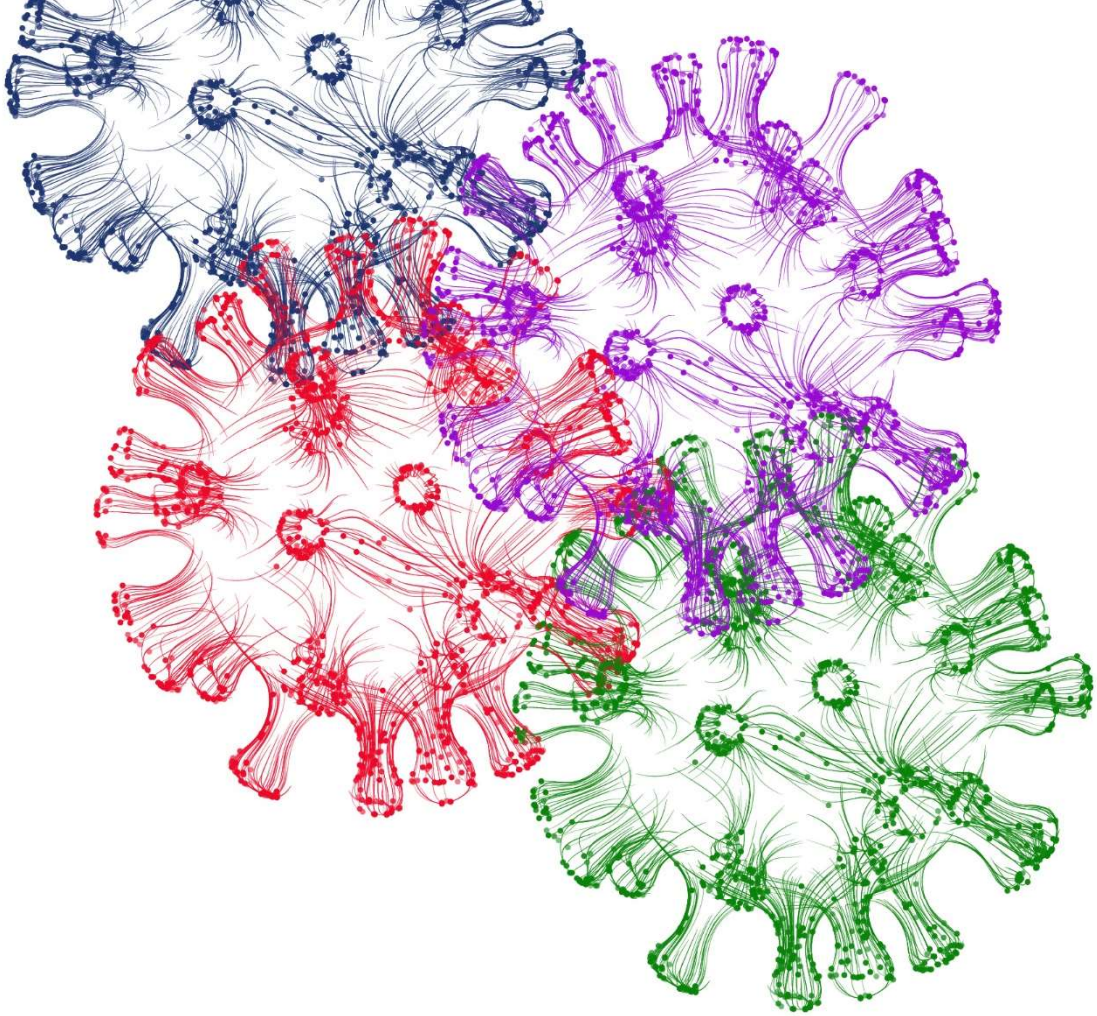

Technical note for RIA's approach to describe

COVID-19

from Impact Assessment data collection

IFAD
Investing in rural people

RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Technical note for RIA's approach to describe **COVID-19** from Impact Assessment data collection[1]

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Context

As the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected most countries around the world, it also has affected ways of working for development agencies in terms of implementing projects but also in terms of collecting data for projects already implemented.

In recognition of the broad and deep impact of the pandemic, IFAD's Research and Impact Assessment (RIA) division, which has responsibility for conducting the IFAD 11 Impact Assessments (IAs), has added some additional questions to its survey. These new questions are meant to gather information that will contribute to measuring and describing[2] the impact of COVID-19.

This note explains how data collection was adjusted and which information was collected in relation to COVID-19.

Questionnaires and information collected in relation to COVID-19

RIA IFAD 11 IAs collects data relative to IFAD project areas, working from a set of RIA-specific questions meant to delve into the impact of 24 projects selected at random from the IFAD universe to participate in the IA. Of these 24 projects, assessments of 18 of them were conducted after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, so this note focuses on the set of 16 countries that had the COVID-19 questions included[3].

Testing different ways of posing questions during COVID-19 to adapt questionnaires

The content of the questionnaire for the IFAD 11 IAs was subject to various adaptations since the travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way in which RIA could collect data for the IFAD 11 selected projects. For example, the traditional face-to-face interviews had to be replaced with phone interviews.

RIA tested the possibility of actually having face-to-face interviews where allowed, but substituting the phone mode when the face-to-face mode was not a viable option.

To perform such a test, RIA contracted the survey firm GeoPoll to explore the best way to proceed. It was selected Kenya as a Country to test a phone survey for data collection using a reduced version of the questionnaire.

In order to test the robustness of phone surveys, the reliability of answered questions and time required to complete the survey, the following steps were taken:

1. RIA developed a short questionnaire to be used for a phone survey data collection based on the traditional version of the questionnaire used for face-to-face interviews (taking up to 2.5 hours on average per household). Indeed, changing survey mode from face-to-face to phone calls inevitably lead to a change in the questions' structure.
2. The collection of the information on the interviews for the same respondent was divided into two rounds, in order to reduce the effort for every single interview person.

The first-round phone calls were administrated and completed by the end of December 2020 and the second round by mid-January 2021.

In order to reach a minimal sample size of 250 completed interviews at the end of the first round, GeoPoll provided a list of 500 potential interviewers for the first round, which accounted for a rate of attrition. The 250 random people who completed the survey in the first round were contacted by GeoPoll to complete the second round of the questionnaire.

Given the high standards needed to manage phone centres for calls, and due to the expense of incentives needed for phone surveys, the presence of potential misallocations in the field and the high attrition rate between the waves, testing determined that traditional face-to-face interviews were preferred to the innovative phone surveys.

[2] It is important to highlight that these descriptive statistics, and associated indicators results, do not provide causal estimates of impacts.

[3] The number of countries for the Impact Assessments for which there questions on COVID-19 is actually 18 but, because it is not possible to find the same thematic areas for all the 18 countries in which there are COVID-19 questions, where countries were grouped in set of similar questions, the total different usable countries are 16, instead of 18, as Mauritania and Bolivia have a different set of Covid-19 questions.

Questions on COVID-19 in the adapted questionnaires

The information collected[4] during the survey in relation to COVID-19 varied across countries but it was also possible to find communalities in the following thematic areas:

- **Resilience**. For the list of possible shocks during the Impact Assessment, it was asked which shocks could be considered a direct consequence of COVID-19 and how households coped with that type of shocks, such as selling assets. The survey also asked whether the household maintained or recovered after the first initial negative effects of COVID-19.
- **Market and Production**. To inform on market adjustments, the survey collected information on whether prices of selling products and access to inputs increased, decreased or remained the same, since the beginning of the pandemic.
- **Education**. Information collected for households asked if children missed school, and received alternative education, because of COVID-19 and, if so, for how long (in months or weeks). If the children had missed school, the survey also questioned whether they had received additional and alternative education.
- **COVID-19 income relief measures**. Specific questions of whether the household received any funds from Government or private sources, and whether these transfers were specifically targeting the response against COVID-19 for the household.
- **Subjective Wellbeing.** A self-declaring subjective evaluation to measure quality of life uses the so called Cantril ladder scale and the adapted Gallup approach:
    1. *Cantril ladder.* Questions concerning living conditions were asked, with answers to be between two extreme values: 0 for worst possible situation and 10 for the best. These subjective measure questions were asked specifically for a period before and after the pandemic started.
    2. *Gallup[5] indicators*: Using the Cantril ladder scale, it is possible to construct indicators for households experiencing suffering, struggling, thriving conditions using with reference the description in '[How Gallup Uses the Cantril Scale]'

[4] Information were reported by enumerators after the self-reported answer from the interviewed person.

5 Gallup's world poll (GWP) is a specialized firm on data collection commonly used to investigate socio-economic issues, especially concerning aspects related to well-being and indicators were constructed with reference on 'How Gallup Uses the Cantril Scale' and Thriving, Struggling, Suffering categories see https://news.gallup.com/poll/122453/understanding-gallup-uses-cantril-scale.aspx

Table 1: Adaptation of the Gallup approach to IFAD 11 IA data on COVID-19 dimensions

	With IA data	Gallup approach online
Suffering	Subjective Cantril scale equal to 4 or lower	"[..] These respondents have poor ratings of their current life situation (4 and below) AND negative views of the next five years (4 and below) [..] " Comment: Only for few Countries there are questions on Cantril scale for the next five years, so only the first condition is kept.
Struggling	Subjective Cantril scale between 5 and 6	"[...] These respondents have moderate views of their present life situation [..]"
Thriving	Subjective Cantril scale equal to 7 or higher	"These respondents have positive views of their present life situation (7+) and have positive views of the next five years (8+)." Comment: Only for few Countries there are questions on Cantril scale for the next five years, so only the first condition is kept.

The information collected from the Impact Assessments on COVID-19, illustrated above, complements additional simultaneous activity on IFAD's Rural Poor Stimulus Facility[6] (RPSF) programme, where the latter collect data exclusively to IFAD beneficiaries and to the qualitative answers for indicators under consideration and for the former collects data on valid control groups and relies more on quantitative variables, specifically for COVID-19-related information.

Information on RIA IFAD 11 IAs indicators are presented in the next subsection.

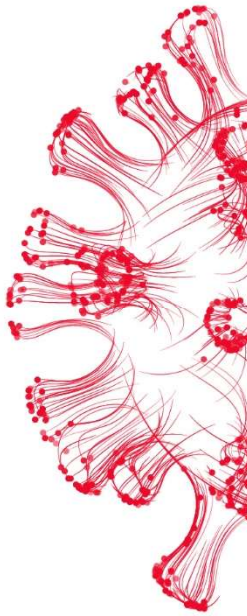
[6] The RPSF is a series of additional IFAD projects specifically targeted for testing their COVID-19 response Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (ifad.org)

Indicators description

Information from the answers received were reported at the household level, and indicators are reported as follows.

Table 2: Indicators in relation to COVID-19 by Country and thematic areas and Domain

Domain	Indicators	Thematic area	Countries
Resilience	Percentage of households with at least one shock due to COVID-19 (among those experiencing shocks). Percentage of households recovering (to same level or above) among those experienced at least one shock due to COVID-19 Percentage of households that sold any asset as a response to COVID-19, among those experienced at least one shock due to COVID-19	The ability of households to recover from COVID-19 varies by country and various households' copying strategies can be adopted.	Tanzania, Malawi, Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia, Papua New Guinea, Kenya, India, Zambia, Tajikistan, Nicaragua, Ghana, Argentina, Pakistan
Market Access	Percentage of household experienced [*higher or same* or *lower]* prices of crops/product sold since the start of COVID-19 (among households selling crops/products)	COVID-19, through lockdowns, is supposed to affect Market access and production.	Nicaragua, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Papua New Guinea, Zambia
Production	Percentage of household experienced [*higher or same* or *lower]* access to input since the start of COVID-19 (among households buying inputs) Percentage of household experienced [*higher or same* or *lower]* price of input since the start of COVID-19 (among households buying inputs)		
Other: **Education**	Percentages of households with at least one child missed school because of COVID-19 Average months of school missed by children because of COVID-19	COVID-19 is expected to affect usual practices of children learning.	Djibouti, Tanzania, Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Zambia, Ghana
Other: **Income support**	Percentage of household receiving at least one income relief measures because of COVID-19 Average amount of transfer for the household because of COVID-19 (value in 2015 USD PPP)	Governments adopted means-testing benefits as a response to COVID-19.	Djibouti, Tanzania, Zambia, Ghana, Kenya
Subjective Wellbeing	Average level of subjective wellbeing on the Cantril ladder (0=worst situation; 10=best situation) for the households [*Before/After*] COVID-19; Average change in the levels on the Cantril ladder (0=worst situation; 10=best situation) for the households; Percentage of Household [Thriving, Struggling, Suffering] [*Before/After*] COVID-19;	COVID-19 is expected to reduce the subjective evaluation, hence it is expected people likely to reduce the declared scale on the Cantril ladder or reduce the percentage of household thriving to increase the ones in struggling or suffering.	India, Zambia, Kenya, Djibouti, Philippines, Argentina, Pakistan, Tanzania, Ghana, Solomon Islands



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