

## Fieldwork Organization and Quality Control for IHDS wave 3

During the earlier two waves of the IHDS survey, data was collected using paper questionnaires. We deployed significant number of field supervisors for field monitoring, who would frequently visit the interviewers during data collection, review some random questionnaires to verify if they were filled in properly. We used to do back-check for a small proportion of questionnaires where our field supervisors would revisit the households to verify some of the answers. Our fieldwork monitoring was much reliant on field-level supervisors.

With digital data collection using CAPI, our reliance on field supervisors went down significantly. We no longer had opportunities to verify questionnaires in the field. We still had some field level supervisors, who used to provide technical support to the interviewers and inform us about the field work progress. The monitoring, this time, was centralized, based on real time actual data and para data. The para data included location GPS, time stamp data, negative screen data, etc. which provides deeper insights into the data collection process, interviewers' behaviour and also quality of the interviews. We did audio recording for some portion of the questions, which were used to monitor the interviewing technique of the interviewers, their comprehension ability and quality of the interviews. Debasis Barik and Bijay Chouhan have written their experience on negative screening as a tool to monitor data quality in the July 2024 version of the IHDS Research Digest.

### 1. Field Monitoring Using Negative Screening Data in IHDS

*-Debasis Barik, Bijay Chouhan*

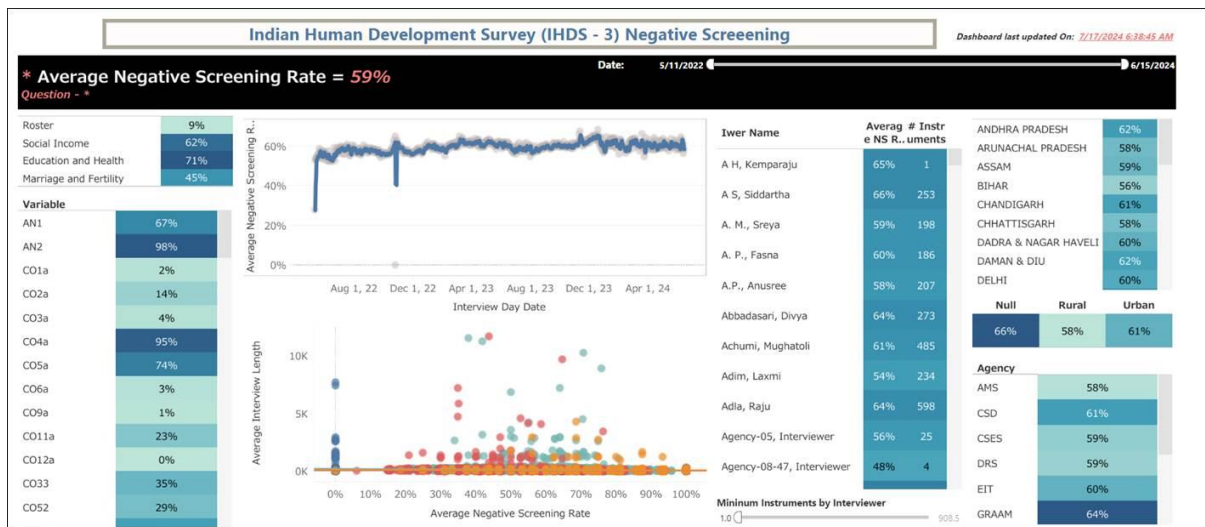
In any survey, screener questions are usually framed to filter out respondents whom the questions were meant for. This implies, not bothering a particular set of respondents for whom those questions were not applicable or irrelevant. For example, a response of “No” to the question “Does your household own any farmland?” ensures that farm-related questions will not be asked to the households who do not own farmland. However, interviewers may use this mechanism to undertake shortcuts by falsifying a negative response on behalf of respondents so that several follow-up questions (in this case, acreage, crop patterns, farm income, expenditure, etc.) can be skipped to minimize time and effort. For this reason, monitoring the negative responses to these screener questions became a vital quality control mechanism used by the IHDS-III field monitoring team. Negative screen rate indicator was created using the set of negative screening questions for different instruments.

A significantly different negative screening rates (NS rate) across interviewers within the same geographical region during the same survey period warrant a closer look into the behavior of the interviewers. While a high NS rate alone cannot ascertain fraud during data collection process, it coupled with other means like

listening to the computer assisted audio recording (CARI) can detect and help in correcting the field malpractices in an early phase of data collection. In IHDS 3, the negative screening rate data, extracted from the survey data collected by the interviewers were uploaded to a quality control dashboard, and the concerned team used the dashboard to monitor the NS rate daily.

Interviews with a higher NS rate reanalyzed carefully using audio recording by a team of NCAER experts and quick feedback was given to the concerned person in a follow-up meeting. We experienced much improvement in interviewers' behaviour after such sessions.

Source: IHDS Research Digest, July 2024



Screengrab from dashboard on Negative Screening

We had a back-end team in Delhi, who would allocate sample lines regularly to the field teams, track the progress of the fieldwork, resolve the technical issues, coordinate with the SRC Michigan team, etc. Another back-end team was involved in assessing the interview quality by listening to the audio recordings of each of the interviewers. We used to hold a weekly feedback meeting with every field team in the evening to resolve field issues, discuss progress and review performance of each field teams and individual members of those teams. We deployed reviewers who were able to understand the interview language to assess the interview better and provide feedback effectively. Best performing teams were rewarded on those weekly meetings to motivate them perform better. Please find below the experience shared by Debasis Barik and Dinesh Tiwari in the February 2024 version of the IHDS Research Digest related to the feedback meetings.

## 2. Data Quality Monitoring in a Digital World: IHDS-III Feedback Meeting

-Debasis Barik, Dinesh Kumar Tiwari

Digital data collection allows us to visualize the survey and associated process data almost in real time. Process data or paradata are real time recording of the survey

process including are how long the interview took to complete, keystroke entry and data correction, skipping of specific sections, whether recording consent was taken, GPS collected, who responded to the interview, etc. This has reduced the reliance on physical monitoring in the field, where the supervisors used to check the filled-in hardcopy questionnaires and inform the interviewers about mistakes they made. With digital data collection, centralized monitoring has overtaken the major part of quality control.

In IHDS 3, we monitor interviewers to check whether they are rushing through interviews, asking questions appropriately and the location in which questionnaire was filled. Then, a dedicated back-end team listens to the audio recordings of interviews of those interviewers carefully. This information is used in weekly/fortnightly zoom meeting with interviewers to provide feedback/clarifications. We also have a few field supervisors, who monitor the quality directly in the field and report the mistakes to our Delhi team. Interviewers, who provide sufficient efforts to collect good quality data are provided cash prizes during these feedback meetings. This boosts the interviewers' morale and acts as a stimulant to collect good-quality data in addition to clarifying any confusion.

Source: IHDS Research Digest, February 2024