
Background

- ILO has published 4 complementary notes to date on COVID-19 impacts on labour market statistics
- Note 1: Overview of country challenges and responses
- Note 2: Guidance on essential labour force survey content and treatment of special groups
- Note 3: Guidance on the different options available to countries to maintain their labour force survey data collection
- Note 4: Guide on capturing impacts on employment and unpaid work using Rapid Surveys
Guidance on maintenance of LFS data collection

Mode of data collection

Mode of data collection used largely determines impact of COVID-19 disruptions

- Face-to-face interviewing (PAPI and CAPI) suspended by most
  - 80% of respondents to an ILO survey in 2018 use these as main mode
- Those with regular collection generally trying to move collection to telephone interviewing (CATI or PAPI by telephone)
- Challenge depends on existing systems, infrastructure and availability of contact details (e.g. published telephone numbers)

Scenario 1:
Surveys planned to be fully carried out with face-to-face interviewing (PAPI, CAPI)

Face-to-face interviewing suspended

Data collection could continue by moving to telephone based interviews

Main data collection challenges
- Retrieving contact details 
  see section 2.1
- Other options for sampling 
  see section 6
- Enabling phone interviews 
  see sections 2.2
- Questionnaire for phone interviews 
  see section 2.3

Main methodological challenges
- Response rates and bias 
  see section 7.1
- Non-response adjustments 
  see sections 7.2 & 7.2.1
- Weighting to population figures 
  see sections 7.2 & 7.2.2

Pre/post evaluation of non-response and bias 
see section 7

Quality Assessment 
see section 8

Survey cannot move to telephone interviewing

Temporary suspension. Complete lost interviews later 
see section 4

Reference period to use? 
see section 4.1

Original or new questionnaire? 
see section 4.1

Timing of the disruption 
see section 4.4

If response rate too low and risk of important bias 
see section 4.4

Dissemination

Advancing social justice, promoting decent work
Contact details and sample frame

Preferred to retain current sample design if possible

Many countries concerned with lack of contact details from respondents

• First challenge – assess possible coverage through different approaches
• Assess alternatives to attach contact details to the frame or selected sample
• E.g. Introductory letters sent to respondent households, searches, merging sources, local contacts

Some countries are re-using old samples for which contact details are available

Alternative sampling frames are being considered by some

Regardless of option care needed to assess coverage and possible biases, breaks in series may arise

Other challenges

Enabling phone interviews – maybe also CAWI, technology, processes, legal requirements

Reviewing questionnaire content – reduction for telephone interview but maintain priority items

Maintaining response rates

Assessing biases

Reviewing weighting approaches and non-response adjustment

Selecting reference periods if collection is delayed

Assessing quality and deciding on dissemination strategy
Range of challenges

Other things to note

- National circumstances and infrastructure critical – challenge is slightly different for every country
- Some countries already entirely use CATI/CAWI – low impact
- Others partially use CAPI (e.g. for first interview) and then telephone interview – some impact (can be substantial)
- Others using PAPI or fully face-to-face CAPI – generally a major impact

Other issues to consider

Note 2

- Need to carefully decide how to treat people on different types of absence depending on national circumstances
- E.g. ILO generally recommending to treat as employed if there is an expected return at the end of a lockdown or if some payment still received from the employer
- Use supplementary analysis to illustrate impacts (reasons for absence, working time etc.)

Note 4

- Rapid surveys can be considered as a way to generate data on labour market impacts
- Session on this topic next week
Summary messages

- Challenges are major — maintaining any continuity or flow of data will be an achievement
- Challenges vary substantially by country and the right solutions can only be identified through assessment of the national context
- Temporary disruption of publication may occur
- Flexible approaches needed to try and maintain data – e.g. use of admin data, old samples, rapid surveys etc.
- In all cases quality assessment and transparent publication approach required to keep users informed
- Consider lessons for the future

THANK YOU

LINKS


