



LIS Operational Protocol P05 v 3 – Guidelines for Interviewers in the Community Visit

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this protocol is to set clear guidelines for interviewers to conduct the community survey process.

1.2 This protocol shall be included as part of the training for interviewers, and translated as a reference for interviewers as they carry out their work.

2.0 Overview

2.1 The community survey interviews and related activities in the community visit represent the heart of the landmine impact survey. Data collected by interviewers determine all the significant indicators by which we measure the impact of landmines on specific communities. Measuring these relative impacts across all mine/UXO-affected communities makes up the survey.

2.2 The community visit is made up of four activities:

- 1) selecting and assembling an appropriate number of key informants for a group interview, followed by an introduction of the survey team and task;
- 2) conducting a participatory community mapping of SHAs and accidents;
- 3) conducting a community interview and recording responses using questionnaires;
- 4) looking at SHAs and taking GPS readings from safe viewing points directly after the group interview.

2.3 The questionnaire includes both interview questions and the instructions for carrying out the interview. This protocol explains the context behind the questions and the ways in which interviewers must conduct the community meeting. This protocol should be used as 1) a training tool and 2) a resource for interviewers in the field.

2.4 The community interview should be as standardized as possible, so community impacts can be compared. Interviewers should also be flexible so that they can adapt the interview process to the specific conditions of countries. This balance is essential to the training and work of the interviewers.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Senior HQ staff is responsible for the training of interviewers based on this protocol and survey specific guidelines,

3.2 Interviewers are responsible for conducting the community survey according to the guidelines in this protocol and any other survey-specific guidelines taught in the training.

3.3 HQ staff and SAC are responsible for oversight and adaptation of training procedures as needed.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 Community Mapping: A process during the community interview where key informants identify the hazard areas surrounding their community.

4.2 Community Reference Point: A clear and agreed-upon geographical point in a community from which distances are measured.

4.3 Gazetteer: Geographical database of provinces, districts, and communities and their administrative codes.

4.4 GPS: Satellite-based geographic location technology.

4.5 Group Interview: The conduct of a formal interview with a group of key informants in an impacted community on the impact mine/UXOs have on the community, in terms of socio-economic blockage and individual victims.

4.6 IMSMA: International standard database system used for LIS, technical and clearance surveys, and other aspects of mine action.

4.7 Interviewers: survey groups responsible for conducting community interviews.

4.8 Key Informants: individuals who have relatively good knowledge on the suspected hazard areas in and around their community

4.9 Locator Codes: Hierarchical designation of province, district, sub-district, community (and Suspected Hazard Area and Recent Victim as appropriate) assigned to every interview document.

4.10 Modules: Separate, topical sections of the community survey questionnaire.

4.11 Recent Victim: Person injured or killed by a mine or UXO incident in the previous 24 months.

4.12 Recent Victim Module: Section of the questionnaire that deals with the characteristics and information about a specific recent victim.

4.13 Suspected Hazard Areas: Suspected landmine and / or UXO areas as identified by key informants during the community interview process.

4.14 SHA Module: Section of the questionnaire that deals with the characteristics, information and related recent victims for a specific SHA.

4.15 Victim Assistance: Refers to all aid, relief, comfort and support provided to victims (including survivors) with the purpose of reducing the immediate and long-term medical and psychological implications of their trauma.

4.16 Visual Inspection: the process of site observation, from a safe viewing point, of suspected hazard areas indicated by the interviewer team during the community mapping exercise.

5.0 Instructions

5.1 General Tasks of a Community Visit

5.1.1 Interviewers should conduct community visits in teams of two. In each task, the work will be divided between the interviewers in whatever way is appropriate. If cultural sensitivity requires gender separation, this may mean that a male and a female interviewer conduct separate interviews. One interviewer must not conduct observation of SMAs while the other conducts the primary interview, however. **[cf. 6.4]**

5.1.2 Interviewer teams are responsible for five tasks in each community visit. They

- 1) conduct a group discussion with key informants in which they draw maps of suspected hazard areas and fill out the questionnaire,
- 2) visually inspect suspected hazard areas identified by the community from a safe distance,
- 3) meet with other persons or groups, if the main interview group is not representative of the community,
- 4) check all the information from the main group interview and other meetings, and
- 5) meet with the community leader just before leaving, who certifies that the survey took place. **[cf. 6.14]**

5.1.3 The interviewers' report on a community is only considered complete when it is checked by the field editor and the field supervisor approves the paperwork.

5.2 Approaching communities and beginning the group interview

5.2.1 The field supervisor should arrange for the interviewers to meet with at least 6 community members / key informants in the group interview, although more is preferred. The group should consist of individuals from different backgrounds in the community, including 1) the community leader and other elders, 2) farmers, herders, and farm hands, 3) teachers, 4) doctors, nurses and health care workers, 5) merchants, artisans and businesspeople, 6) soldiers, former soldiers and police officers. If cultural conditions allow, the group should be composed of both men and women. **[cf. 6.13]**

5.2.2 If the group interview cannot include both women and men for cultural reasons, then there must be separate interviews for women, individually or in groups, with women interviewers.

5.2.3 When interviewers arrive at the community, they should first talk to the community leader and arrange an appropriate location for the community interview. They should discuss the day's schedule with the community leader.

5.2.4 While waiting for the interview group to assemble, the interviewers should fill out the meeting attendance sheet. They should ask how long it would take to reach suspected hazard areas on foot or by vehicle. They should also try to fill out the background observations of the community, by talking to people already gathered. Interviewers may obtain background information on the community before or after the interview. **[cf. 6.3]**

5.3 Community Mapping and Completing Community Level Module Part 1

5.3.1 Interviewers open the meeting with a formal introduction after enough people have arrived. **[cf. 6.5]**

5.3.2 Interviewers will ask the interview group to draw a map of the suspected hazard areas (SHAs) that are affecting to the community, along with major landmarks, roads and trails, bodies of water, and anything else that is relevant. The interviewers should include compass bearings, the name of the community and the locator code on the top of the map. Drawing the community map should be done on a large poster-size sheet of paper with markers. A set of standard symbols may be developed for each survey. Since the group may not have skills for drawing maps, the interviewers must help the group to draw the map. The community mapping should stimulate and structure the meeting so that by the end of this activity, all SHAs and their locations are identified, and plotted on the map. Each SHA is then given a unique reference, such as "no. 1". For each SHA, an exhaustive list of named recent victims should be completed. After the map is drawn, the interviewers will repeat what has been said, particularly about the suspected hazard areas. Interviewers should write down all the information on the map in the SHA summary table.

5.3.3 During the mapping exercise, interviewers should determine the general extent of the area the group is talking about, and whether it is different from expected. If this is the case, interviewers must decide whether the interview is possible and / or how to redefine the community. They should talk to the field supervisor later and discuss whether another interview is required.

5.3.4 Interviewers should try to find out when the community was established, its current population and whether the population has increased or decreased since the mines were laid or UXOs were found. If the group has information on the return of internally displaced persons, this should be recorded. They should also ask about the level of military activity in and around the community during the war. If the interview group gets

into an argument and starts assigning blame, interviewers should move on to the next question. **[cf. 6.6]**

5.3.5 Interviewers should try to determine a rough number of the casualties from mines / UXO in the past, as well as general feelings in the community about the level of mine / UXO threat recently and in the past. If these questions cause disagreement or argument over details, the interviewers should just write down what was said initially and move on to the next question. **[cf. 6.7, 6.8]**

5.4 Completing the Suspected Hazard Area Module

5.4.1 Interviewers will fill out one module for every specific area with mines / UXO identified by the group when they drew the map. **[cf. 6.15]**

5.4.2 Interviewers will ask the group to repeat what they said about a specific suspected hazard area during the community mapping. Interviewers should check this with the SHA summary table.

5.4.3 Interviewers will ask the group for a geographical description of the area and to note on the map a clear, specific and recognizable landmark that can identify the SHA. Interviewers should ask for an estimate of the size of the area, without getting into specifics or disagreement. If there is a long discussion or disagreement, the interviewers should go on.

5.4.4 Interviewers will then ask about vegetation, landmine marking and types of mines / UXO in the SHA. Interviewers will only ask about the presence of different types of ordinance (antipersonnel mines, antitank mines and UXO) and different types of marking and trees, bushes, grasses, etc.

5.4.5 For each specific SHA, interviewers will ask about how the area is affecting the community by blocking agricultural land, water resources, roads and other infrastructure, housing, etc. Interviewers should only check boxes for blockage that the group is in agreement about.

5.5 Completing the Individual Victim Module

5.5.1 Interviewers will ask the group whether any persons have been killed or injured by mine/UXOs in a certain suspected hazard area in the last two years. If there are, interviewers will fill out a recent victim module for each of them. For recent victim modules, every victim for the past two years must be recorded in a separate module and linked to a Suspected Hazard Area Module, and all recent victim modules should be completed for one suspected hazard area before moving to another suspected hazard area. Even if there is a single accident involving several people, each person must be recorded separately. **[cf. 6.2]**.

5.5.2 For each recent victim, interviewers will ask general information about their age, gender and occupation. They will also ask about the nature of the accident, and when it happened. If the group does not know the details of the victim or the accident, then interviewers should meet with smaller groups and individuals after the group interview. If a particular victim appears to be in the group, then direct information may be solicited but under no circumstances should the victim be sought out and publicly or privately questioned.

5.6 Completing the Community Level Module Part 2, closing the meeting

5.6.1 Once all suspected hazard areas and individual victims have been discussed and recorded, interviewers will ask the group about the number of total victims in the community. **[cf. 6.9]**

5.6.2 Interviewers will then ask whether there has been any mine action done in the community in the last two years: mine risk education, marking of SHAs and surveys, mine/UXO clearing by the community or the outside, or victim assistance.

5.6.3 If included in the survey guidelines, interviewers will ask the group to rank the different suspected hazard areas in their community according to their own feelings about their impact. This subjective ranking done by community members is optional and separate from impact scoring **[cf. P08 – Impact Scoring]**. Before closing the meeting, the interviewers will ask whether the group has anything else they want to say. If the group mentions any new recent victims or suspected hazard areas, more modules should be filled out. Any other information should be recorded at the end of the meeting segment.

5.6.4 Interviewers will ask the group about whether there are other possibly mine/UXO-affected communities nearby. If the group mentions communities not currently suspected by EOC lists, the interviewers shall notify the Field Supervisor. The Supervisor will, in consultation with the interviewers, consider including this community and other nearby communities in the set of suspected affected communities in the EOC list and target these for interviews. **(cf. 6.10)**

5.6.5 When closing the meeting, interviewers should thank the interview group for their time, and tell them what they will be doing for the rest of the day. They should make sure they can meet with the community leader at the end of the day.

5.7 Taking GPS readings at the community center

5.7.1 The interviewers will go to the community reference point, as indicated during the community mapping exercise, and take a GPS reading.

5.8 Other group discussions and individual interviews

5.8.1 Interviewers should meet with informants from any other sectors of society that were not represented in the group interview, to gain new information or perspectives on mine/UXO impact. This is especially required when women were not included in the group interview. Interviewers should decide themselves if they need to use full modules or a shorter series of questions, depending on the situation. **[cf. 6.11]**

5.9 Checking information from interviews

5.9.1 The interviewers should meet together to combine their paperwork and sort out any inconsistencies or explanations that are different from the group interviews. This may be done at the last meeting with the community leader, or with other survey groups after the interview. Interviewers should combine all information from different interviews, and decide on the final information in suspected hazard area and recent victim modules. **[cf. 6.12]**

5.10 Visually inspecting suspected hazard areas from safe viewing points

5.10.1 Cf. P06 v 3 – Visual inspection

5.11 End-of-the-day meeting

5.11.1 The interviewers will meet with the community leader before leaving the community. If there are reports that disagree with or add to the information from the group interview, these should be checked and discussed with the community leader. The interviewers will then ask the community leader to sign the cover sheet.

5.11.2 Before leaving, interviewers should tell the community leader that a field supervisor might visit to check whether the survey had taken place. They should thank him or her, and the community, for their help.

6.0 Rationale / Background

6.1 The core instrument of the community survey is the questionnaire. For each survey, the questionnaire is adapted to suit the needs of the country. In Thailand, the recent victim module was placed in the suspected hazard area module. Questionnaires may be changed to fit the specific circumstances of the communities in question, such as asking about nomadic herders in Ethiopia, though should be done survey-wide by HQ staff and approved by SAC. **[cf. P03 – Minimum Data Requirements and Questionnaire]**

6.2 The sequence and connections between modules is important. Recent victims should be seen as 'belonging' to a suspected hazard area, so all victim modules should be completed for one suspected hazard area before moving to another suspected hazard area. This order gives us a better a sense of the impact that specific areas have on the community, rather than just having a total victim count. **[cf. 5.5.1]**

6.3 Some segments can be filled in by interviewers outside the group meeting, typically those that involve the background of the community, interviewers' observations and GPS readings, and of course the visual inspection procedure. **[cf. P06 – Visual inspection]** Any questions that involve community responses must be filled out in the group interview. **[cf. 5.2.4]**

6.4 Another way of doing this is if the lead interviewer can record the responses while the other is responsible for drawing features on the map. In situations where men and women are separated, a team with a man and a woman should interview separately. **[Cf. 5.1.1]**

6.5 A formal opening to the meeting is important, even if the interviewers were chatting with members of the group before the meeting. The reason for this is to provide structure for the meeting and make the survey process as standard as possible so survey results can be compared across communities. **[cf. 5.3.1]**

6.6 Asking about the size of the community and how the population has changed provides an indication of the affects of conflict on the community. Finding out when the community was established tells us whether this is a new settlement formed by the war or something more established. **[cf. 5.3.4]**

6.7 Asking the group about the approximate number of mine/UXO accidents in the past shows whether the interview group has enough knowledge about impact. If they do not, interviewers should carry out other interviews later, with smaller groups and individuals. **[cf. 5.3.5]**

6.8 This is done to check whether the specific questions later on are correct. **[cf. 5.3.5]**

6.9 Asking the group to repeat their estimate of the number of mine/UXO victims is done to double-check the group's memory of events in the past. This memory may differ widely, as well as the group's thoughts on what the interviewer expects. In Yemen, groups gave details on accidents in the distant past because they thought details would lead to more benefits. If the group tells stories of mine/UXO encounters that are relevant, they should be written down in the interviewer's observation segment. **[cf. 5.6.1]**

6.10 This process tries to find mine/UXO-affected communities not identified by expert opinion collection. **[Cf. 5.6.4 and P07: Sampling False Negatives]**

6.11 The main reason for other interviews is to make sure that the information comes from a representative sample; the less representative the main interview group is, the greater the need for supplementary interviews. This is especially the case if the interview group is all men or all from one section of the community. These interviews are also useful for filling in information – about victims, for example – that could not be found in the group interview. **[Cf. 5.8.1]**

6.12 Resolving conflicting information is a challenge. In Yemen, male interviewees often exaggerated the number of animals killed by mine/UXOs, whereas women tended to be more correct. If there is huge disagreement in all communities (as in the Yemeni case), the survey shouldn't use that indicator for scoring. **[Cf. 5.9.1]**

6.13 In most surveys, conducting the interview in more than one language is impractical. The Survey groups should decide on a balance between conducting the survey in multiple languages or conducting the survey in one language and using local interpreters. One way of doing this is to train local interpreters so that they know about the survey. In Chad, the interviewers made special dictionaries for survey-specific terms for local interpreters.

6.14 Conducting the group discussion (1) is the most important task, followed by the final meeting with the community leader (5), looking at suspected hazard areas from safe locations (2), and checking the information from interviews (4). Meetings with other people of groups can be done if time allows. **[cf. 5.1.2]**

6.15 The inspection of suspected hazard areas should be done separately from the group interview, even though it is part of the Suspected Hazard Area Module. This is done to keep information on different hazard areas separate. **[cf. 5.4.1 and P06 – Visual inspection]**

7.0 Materials

7.1 Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver (required)

7.2 Copy of boundary map (recommended)

7.3 compass (required)

7.4 poster-sized paper (required)

7.5 letter of authorization (required)

9.0 Attachments

[NB: These are documents from different surveys, reports or old protocols that have been attached to this protocol in case they are found useful, interesting or relevant. They are purely optional reading.]

9.1 'Ranking Mine Impacts' – Aldo Benini

9.2 'Resolving Ambiguity' – Aldo Benini

10.0 Related Protocols and Advisories

10.1 P04: Field Organization

10.2 P07: Sampling False Negatives

10.3 P06: Visual inspection

11.0 References

11.1 P05: Guidelines for Interviewers is included in objective 2.3 and Output 8 on the generic timeline.

12.0 Revisions

12.1 Originally written by Aldo Benini 01 01 26

12.2 Edited by Tom Haythornthwaite 02 11 18

12.3 Edited by Dann Naseemullah 03 01 21

Attachments

1. “Ranking mine impacts”, by Aldo Benini

The intent is to find priorities in mine action, particularly for clearance, that communities themselves formulate, rather than using only weights that a group of outside experts sets. This ranking exercise is optional. Surveys with leaders who have experience with participatory methods may be inclined to use it; others may feel more comfortable to move to the end of the community interview faster and dispense with the impact ranking in this form. The experience in Yemen was mixed, with some teams handling it better than others. It yielded some limited insights into popular preferences, revealing, for example, that distance to hazard areas was of greater concern than the estimate contaminated surface in proposing clearance priorities.

Two versions are possible: The interviewers have the informants confirm the major impact realms that were reported earlier, in terms of the socio-economic blockages. For this purpose, the Interviewers peruse the filled-in hazard area modules and write the blockages in big letters on a poster-size paper. The informants then rank types of impact. The SAC questionnaire template exemplifies this version.

A second version, simpler but less discriminating in type of impact, is to ask the informants which of the hazard areas should be cleared first, second, etc. This works only for communities that have more than one hazard area.

2. “Resolving Ambiguity”, Aldo Banini

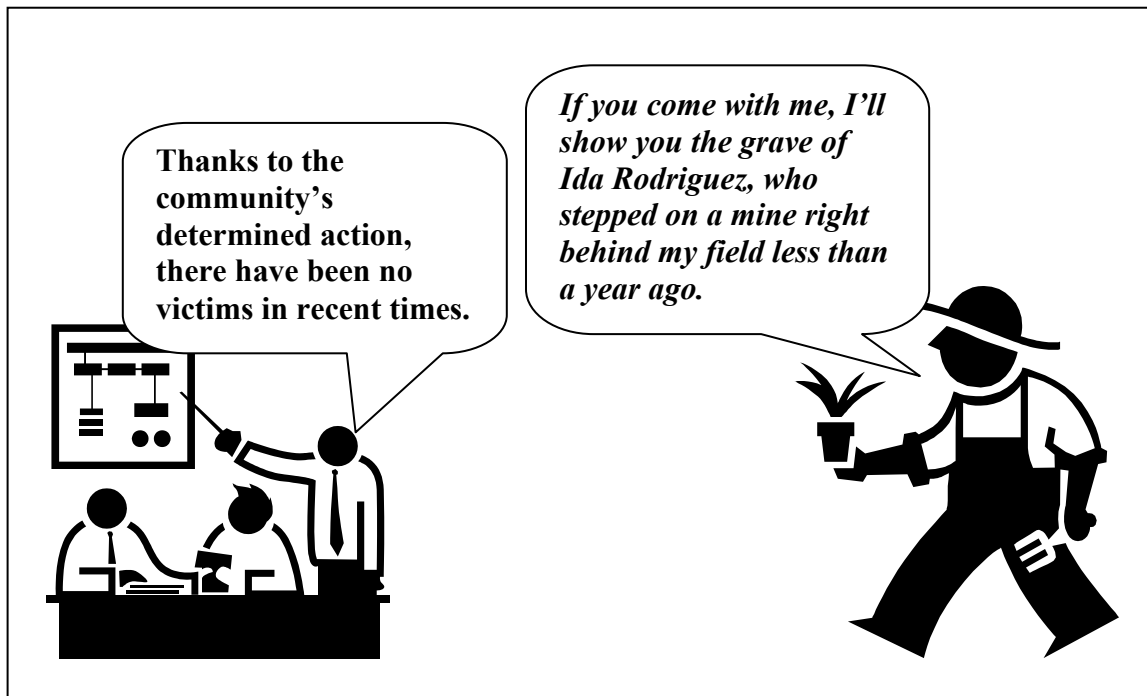


Diagram: The resolution of ambiguity in the information collected from different groups and individuals may turn out to be a major challenge, not only for the Interviewers who are the first to receive it, but for the entire survey organization. Unlike surveys of individuals, where we normally do not anticipate significant needs for eliminating uncertainty within the same person (although they may exist!), community surveys are often fraught with ambiguous, conflicting or otherwise less than straightforward information. In Yemen, for example, some male key informants, deliberately or not, exaggerated the number of animals killed by mines, as Enumerator who subsequently listened to women found out. The downward corrections that the women applied suggested that this information was not usable, and the analysis did in fact not use it. In an ongoing relationship, this could fuel a valuable dialogue, but in a survey relying on one-time visits, most of the uncertainty will have to be eliminated with resolute speed. We propose three devices for this: The end-of-the-day review with a community leader (which, unfortunately, will bias the report to the views of the leader's group), the dialogue between the Enumerator team and their Field Editor, and the obligation to create a simple district map based on mine impact scores worked out in weekly meetings of the Interviewers and their Supervisors. Other means, like, in this fictitious example, the suggestion to visit graves near a hazard area, may have to be ruled out.