

Funders Report

BRiCE Project DRC and Niger: Baseline Report

Annex 2: Data Collection and Quality Assurance

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1. Ethical standards

The quantitative tools for both countries were reviewed by Save the Children to ensure that ethical principles were met. These tools were designed in a way to limit the time burden for the survey participants. It was also ensured that these tools respected the local culture and nuances related to specific sub-groups and took into consideration the sensitivities of teachers and caregivers affected by violence. Surveyed children were not asked about the situations of violence they faced or witnessed.

In addition, with the support of IDS, the local partner in DRC submitted an application to the national ethical committee in order to receive the authorisation to collect data in the interventions' selected schools. A description of the research questions, the draft questionnaires, the draft consent forms, a draft budget and information on the main researchers were included in the application to the national ethical committee.

The enumerators received a training on how to conduct the surveys in an ethical way. During the training, time was spent on informed consent, data confidentiality, child protection principles, gender sensitiveness and do-no-harm principles. In addition to the training, supervisors ensured that the enumerators followed the trainings' guidelines during the data collection. The surveys only took place once the respondent (adults and children) indicated that he/she understood he/she could refuse to participate in the surveys, his/her responses would remain confidential and he/she had the right to withdraw from the process at any time.

The researchers at IDS and the local partner in DRC securely stored the datasets on a safe and secure private server that can only be accessed by those with a log in username and password. For Niger data collection, only IDS researchers had secure access to the data. Before sharing the datasets externally, IDS will ensure that any information that can identify the respondent (address, name, phone number and location markers) will first be separated from the main data and stored with a unique identification code that can be matched to the main dataset using a certain algorithm. This will protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the responses and data collected. Only anonymised data will be shared externally.

IDS take data protection very seriously and have strict policies in place to ensure that this not violated. All IDS staff are trained on data protection and we are compliant with UK and EU data protections regulations. We abide by the GDPR's 'security principle'. We have appropriate security to prevent the personal data we hold being accidentally or deliberately compromised. This includes from

cybersecurity, as well as physical and organisational security measures. Our cyber security infrastructure complies with the UK cyber essentials scheme.

2. Enumerators selection

Enumerators were recruited in a competitive vetting based on meeting specified education, experience, skills and knowledge criteria. In DRC, the local partner and IDS staff assessed the candidates' applications and conducted interviews of shortlisted candidates. In Niger, while Save The Children Niger team collated the CVs, IDS researchers shortlisted the final enumerators and field co-ordinators. During the training, the skills of selected enumerators were further tested. They had to demonstrate their ability to respect instructions and to conduct successfully interviews.

3. Training

The training lasted five days and included an orientation to the BRiCE study, a review of key ethical standards, and an explanation of each of the data collection tools (individual purpose and how to administer it). The training also incorporated a detailed child protection, security, and data protection session. Enumerators were trained in the use of the tablet used to conduct the surveys. One day of the training was dedicated to practice with the key quantitative tools during which a half day was allocated to the piloting in a local school, accompanied by a half day of debrief and final guidance prior to the start of fieldwork. In Niger, due to lack of time, we had to skip the one day of dedicated practice with quantitative tools, and the training lasted four days with one day of pilot and debrief activities.

4. Fieldwork quality assurance

Supervisors were responsible in ensuring the quality of data collected by the enumerators. They travelled with the enumerators to the selected schools. They first participated in the sampling of the selected teachers and children and subsequently, assisted in the fieldwork quality and supervised enumerators during the data collection in the field. For 75% of interviews, a supervisor was observing the enumerators. During the data collection period, the supervisors reported on a daily basis to the field coordinator about the progress made and highlighted the difficulties faced by the enumerators in the surveys.

The questionnaires were integrated in the tablet application in a way to minimise the number of potential errors made by the enumerators. To ensure that the enumerators only inputted plausible and coherent answers, the type and range of the answer was restricted in most questions. Only relevant questions appeared on the tablet, based on previous answers. Collected data was only uploaded on the local partner's data storage software when the enumerators had addressed all the error messages or unanswered questions.

5. Data checks

While during the data collection, IDS (in DRC and Niger) and local partners (only in DRC) conducted data verification; there were some inconsistencies spotted while analysing the data. We have corrected these to the best of our knowledge, either using reasonable assumptions or through a field recheck. Where the data was unreliable and could not be accurately corrected, we have not made use of the information in this report.

5.1 Teacher survey

- In DRC, for 62 observations, the number of days over the last WEEK the teacher was absent is greater than the number of days over the last MONTH that the teacher was absent from school.
- In DRC, for the follow up questions related the effects of violence experienced by the teacher, it was not possible to link these effects confidently with the particular attack. This was a software problem, which was rectified for Niger data collection. Hence, while we have a list of attacks and the years in which these were experienced, we are unable to use the data linking these attacks to possible consequences and causes (for example, if the attack resulted in displacement or if the attack was caused by a particular armed group).

5.2 Child-caregiver survey

- In DRC, for the 4th exercise in the EGRA and for the 1st exercise in the EGMA, for 58 observations, the sum of the 3 types of answers (correct, incorrect, did not answer) was incorrect. This mistake was noticed and changed immediately at the beginning of the data collection.
- In DRC, in section 2 of the caregiver questionnaire, question on father and mother's occupation and education were not asked if the caregiver was the father or the mother. This was a software problem, and was rectified for Niger data collection.
- In Niger, no child was surveyed from two schools. One of the schools did not provide Grade 4 class. The other school only admitted children with hearing disabilities.

5.3 School survey

- In DRC, the data for the table “Presence of military actors or armed groups” in section 4 was not collected. This was a software problem, and was rectified for Niger data collection.
- In Niger, during the fieldwork it was found that the school list had erroneously clubbed some schools together as one school. We have 72 schools (instead of the original 70 schools) in Niger. However, unique school IDs could not be provided to these as the data collection was already underway.



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