

Interviewer Manual of Procedures, Regulations and Duties

**LATIN AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION PROJECT (LAPOP)
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	1
2. Some Basic Definitions	3
2.1. What is a survey?	3
2.2. What is a sample?	3
2.3. Interview	3
2.4. Interviewer	3
2.5. Interviewee	4
2.6. Questionnaire	4
2.7. Supervisor	4
3. Duties and Responsibilities of the Interviewer	5
3.1. Duties and Responsibilities	5
3.2. Interviewer Materials	6
4. Ethical Considerations	7
5. Interview Procedure	7
5.1. Motivational and Inhibitive Factors	10
5.2. Fundamental Aspects to Consider when Conducting an Interview	12
6. Relationship with the Supervisor	13
6.1. Receiving and Returning Materials	13
7. Prohibitions for the Interviewer	14
8. Specific Instructions for the Accurate Completion of LAPOP Questionnaires	16
Appendixes	22
Appendix 1: Letter of Informed Consent	23
Appendix 2: Survey Response Card	24

1. INTRODUCTION

The Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) has been at the forefront of public opinion survey research and has acquired ample experience and recognition for the high quality of information that it has obtained through its surveys. It has been systematically surveying Latin Americans since the 1970s with the purpose of studying citizen perspectives regarding the political climate of the region, specifically their behaviors and values related with democracy – regime support, political tolerance, authoritarianism, corruption, local governments and citizen participation. Moreover, LAPOP has sought to determine the magnitude and the forms by which women can or have been excluded from political participation as well as understand the effects that education in tolerance or that the perception of government corruption produces in the general population.

Previously LAPOP was headquartered at the University of Pittsburgh and currently, since 2004, is part of Vanderbilt University. Over its history the program has conducted more than 60 surveys through which it has probed a variety of topics that are of great interest for social and political researchers, government employees, institutions that work on topics related to the strengthening of democracies in Latin America, and for individuals interested in these subjects.

Although the Latin American Public Opinion Project began as an informal venture, its reputation for quality surveys has generated a growing demand to conduct research about diverse aspects of democracy which has permitted its expansion. Up to the present day, LAPOP has conducted surveys in Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, Chile, Brazil, Jamaica, Guyana, and Haiti as well as the United States, Canada, Madagascar, Israel, and Albania.

Over the years, LAPOP has created an invaluable and treasured database that contains information on Latin American public opinion about politics and more specifically about topics related to democracy. Furthermore, an independent evaluation of the Latin American Public Opinion Project surveys determined that LAPOP has successfully achieved its ambitious objective to produce quality information obtained through surveys – not to mention analysis of those surveys – which meets the highest standards of academic research in the United States as well as Europe.

LAPOP has also succeeded in another of its objectives: contributing to the consolidation of democracy and the development of Latin America and other countries through the impact and use of survey results by analysts, academics, researchers, public employees, and all those involved in the creation of public policy, among others. In fact, all the information obtained over the years has served as the foundation for the elaboration of many articles and academic dissertations. Moreover, it has been utilized by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in its efforts to promote democracy in Latin America, by the World Bank in its measures on governance, in addition to its use by a diverse array of Latin American governments.

The Latin American Public Opinion Project is aware of the enormous responsibility it holds in the elaboration of surveys. Therefore, with the objective of achieving the highest and most rigorous quality, reliability, and integrity in the collection of information, it has designed this interviewer

Interviewer Manual

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manual of procedures, regulations and duties with the purpose of providing a tool that will serve as a guide for the appropriate survey methodology.

This manual contains definitions, procedures, regulations and instructions which should orient and facilitate field work and is particularly directed to interviewers with the purpose that they have a reference tool to aid them in their important work of collecting information because, to a large degree, the success of the surveys depends on their efforts.

2. Some Basic Definitions

This section presents some important definitions for the interviewer's work which will be used throughout this manual.

2.1. What is a survey?

A survey is a tool used to obtain information about a particular population through the use of a questionnaire that is given to the individuals that comprise said population or to a *representative sample* of such.

The information requested may refer to the attributes of the subjects that comprise this population as well as their behavior, attitudes, opinions, needs, or socioeconomic and demographic characteristics (age, level of education, income, employment status, marital status, number of children, etc.), among other possibilities.

Surveys may take many forms including, for example, telephone, mail, or personal interviews.

2.2. What is a sample?

A sample is a cluster of representative cases or individuals of a certain population. For a sample to be representative it must be carefully selected so that it reflects the characteristics, opinions, beliefs and attributes of the total population or complete group that is under study.

The inclusion of subjects in the sample should be undertaken using sampling techniques that will later allow the generalization of the resulting information to the entire population under study.

2.3. Interview

An interview is a conversation that has a purpose. The stated purpose depends on the topics under study. In other words, it is an interaction between interviewer and interviewee where the interviewer asks the interviewee a series of questions in order to obtain information about specific predetermined subjects.

The progress of the interview requires much capability on the part of the interviewer since the objective is to successfully obtain the necessary information completely and objectively in an environment of great respect, discretion, and cordiality.

2.4. Interviewer

The interviewer is the person tasked to complete the interview; that is, to present the questionnaires – pose the questions, listen to and record the answers of the interviewees – in accordance with the procedures and regulations presented in this manual.

The work of the interviewers is critical because, to a large degree, the work of collecting reliable, complete, and high quality information depends on them.

2.5. Interviewee

The interviewee (respondent) is the person selected to answer the questionnaire with whom the interviewer interacts.

2.6. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is the instrument developed to collect the necessary information. It is the document that contains the questions that an interviewer will ask of the interviewees in which there is a specific place to note the answers given by the person being interviewed.

The questionnaire can take a physical (paper) form or an electronic (ex. computer or PDA) form.

Basically there are two kinds of questionnaires:

- Direct administration: where the interviewee records their answers
- Indirect administration: where the interviewer records the answers given by the interviewee.

In general, indirect administration is the most frequently used and is the style utilized in LAPOP studies.

2.7. Supervisor

The supervisor is the person responsible for guaranteeing that the necessary and adequate procedures are applied in the survey process and thus that the required information is gathered. Moreover, the supervisor takes charge of watching over the precision and quality of the gathered data.

Generally the supervisor has a certain number of interviewers under his or her supervision which the supervisor will organize, direct and control during the entire process of the survey project.

3. Duties and Responsibilities of the Interviewer

The work of an interviewer is one of the most important for the conduct of a survey project because the interviewer is responsible for collecting the information in a truthful, reliable, and appropriate way. Moreover, the success of the project is dependent to a great degree on the interviewer's conscientiousness, effort, and cooperation.

3.1. Duties and Responsibilities

- ⇒ Identify the chosen location and the person who meets the necessary characteristics to be included in the sample.
- ⇒ Solicit the interviewee for information courteously.
- ⇒ Read the "Letter of Informed Consent" to each interviewee and only interview those that accept to be interviewed.
- ⇒ Fill out the entire questionnaire.
- ⇒ Complete the demographic and sample information required on the form.
- ⇒ Review each form and questionnaire to ensure that all of the questions were asked and that all of the solicited data has been recorded. Furthermore, ensure that any relevant comments were duly registered or noted.
- ⇒ Correct or complete information by returning to interview the respondent again.
- ⇒ Complete the interviews during personal visits by correctly following the questionnaire.
- ⇒ Give sufficient time to complete the survey at the time chosen by the interviewees; that is to say, the interviewer must be free and available to devote whatever time is necessary to complete the survey.
- ⇒ Maintain appropriate conduct during all field work, especially during interviews. Remember, an interviewer is the public representative of a specific institution.
- ⇒ Always carry identifying documents and badges during field work so that people can readily identify an accredited interviewer.
- ⇒ Take care of any materials received to do the work.
- ⇒ Maintain respectful relations with the project team – supervisors, interviewers, and coordinators.
- ⇒ Attend and actively participate in the training course.

- ⇒ Conduct the survey in accordance with the instructions and directions given during the training course as well as those contained in this manual.
- ⇒ Study this manual with care and in detail in order to gain mastery and comprehension of its contents.

3.2. Interviewer Materials

The material necessary to perform the functions of an interviewer are given out at the beginning of field work and consists of the following:

- ✓ Identification credentials from the institution responsible for the survey.
- ✓ Interviewer manual.
- ✓ Questionnaires or PDA (Personal Digital Assistant). (*)
- ✓ Survey response cards. (*)
- ✓ Necessary implements for carrying out the surveys (pencil, pencil sharpener, eraser).
- ✓ Writing board.
- ✓ "Letters of Informed Consent" which must be presented to each interviewee. (*)

(*) Questionnaires or PDAs, survey response cards, and letters of consent will be handed out to each interviewer daily.

In the case of paper questionnaires, the interviewer must verify that each one is complete; that is to say, the interviewer should count each page of every form to ensure that none are missing. This should be done when receiving materials from the supervisor or coordinator prior to conducting interviews.

Do not forget any of the materials necessary to conduct the interviews.

It is absolutely necessary that the interviewer always carry the credentials that identify him or her as such.

The material received is the property of the institution and must be returned in its entirety and in good condition at the completion of work.

4. Ethical Considerations

- Δ Never alter or ignore the information or opinions given by the interviewees. Changing or excluding information is not permitted under any circumstances.
- Δ Never falsify information. The interviewer may not complete questionnaires or questions that have been left blank with false information; this is to say, the interviewer may not fill in information that has not been volunteered by the interviewees.
- Δ The interviewer must not pressure or obligate interviewees to provide the information solicited in the survey.
- Δ The interviewer must respect the responses and opinions of the interviewees.
- Δ Under no circumstances should the interviewer suggest responses to the respondents.
- Δ The interviewer must not offer any recompense or make false promises in exchange for the information solicited in the survey.
- Δ The interviewer must never divulge, repeat, or comment on the information or opinions given by the interviewees nor should the interviewer show completed questionnaires to anyone not involved with the study. Always remember that any information provided by respondents is **CONFIDENTIAL**.

5. Interview Procedure

Although the task of interviewing is best learned and perfected through experience, this section will detail a series of instructions that will serve to orient and facilitate the interviewer's work during interviews so that the interviewer can perform adequately.

- ◆ **Locating the interviewee:** first, it is necessary to locate possible respondents and make sure that they meet the necessary requirements to be included in the sample.
- ◆ **Appropriate introduction:** it is important that the interviewer appropriately introduce him/herself to gain the trust of the interviewee so that the respondent will provide the required information as naturally and as truthfully as possible.

An appropriate introduction consists of the following steps:

- State the name of the interviewer while showing the credentials that confirm the interviewer's identity.
- Give the respondent the "Letter of Informed Consent".
- Present the study mentioning its general objectives, participating institutions, and sponsors.

- It is necessary to emphasize, how it is mentioned in the informed consent letter, that the respondent was selected randomly just as others included within the sample of the study.
- Finally, it is important to clarify and **emphasize** that any information provided will be kept **CONFIDENTIAL** and that the survey is completely **ANONIMOUS**.

The following is an example of an appropriate introduction:

Good morning/good afternoon/good evening. My name is _____ and I work for [name of the institution responsible for the study]. [Show credentials and provide the “Letter of Informed Consent” ()]. We are conducting a survey and you have been selected at random to participate in a public opinion study. The purpose of the study is to understand your opinions about a variety of subjects related to the current situation of the country and to do so I would like to ask you a few questions which will take about 30 to 40 minutes. Your participation is voluntary. You can leave questions unanswered or end the interview at any moment. You will not receive any type of payment for your participation; however, there will also be no cost to you. All of the answers you provide me will be kept completely **confidential** and the survey is **anonymous**.*

(*) The Letter of Informed Consent is a tool with which the interviewer presents the themes and objectives of the survey, allowing the respondent to clarify uncertainties, ask questions about the survey, and decide whether or not to participate. Moreover, it serves as evidence that the interviewer solicited the interviewee’s consent to conduct the survey (see Appendix 1).

If the respondent does not ask for extensive explanations or clarifications, do not present details that may only confuse them. Present the general introduction and commence with the questionnaire.

Sometimes there are interviewees that ask many more things about the study before agreeing to answer the questionnaire or even once the interview has started. Therefore, we want to give some additional information that will ease the worries of the people interviewed.

- In the presentation letter, it is indicated that we come on behalf of Vanderbilt University. This is a university in the United States that is directing a Public Opinion study (the opinions of the citizens of every country) in 26 countries of the Americas. This study has been carried out for several years in other countries.

- The LAPOP logo appears on the questionnaire, what does LAPOP mean?: Latin American Public Opinion Project.

- ◆ **Appropriate dress:** the interviewer must dress appropriately and carefully to visit assigned locations and present him/herself to the interviewees. The interviewer must not use clothing or visible accessories that contain colors, lettering, or other distinctive marks that would suggest affinity or support for a political party or any particular ideology.

This is an important factor in the interviewer's introduction to respondents and can influence the degree to which the interviewees accept to collaborate

- ◆ **Confidence and certainty:** the interviewer must portray confidence as this will help generate trust with the interviewee. Avoid expressing insecurity or fear.
- ◆ **Privacy:** the presence of other individuals may intimidate the interviewee and influence their responses; it may also complicate the appropriate conduct of the interview. For this reason, it is not advisable to interview a subject with another person present, it is better to isolate – to the degree possible and without threatening the individual's sense of security – the interviewee so that they can be at liberty to express their opinions, beliefs, and other information as solicited in the questionnaire.
- ◆ **Neutrality:** it is vitally important to maintain a professional bearing; that is to say, listen to and record all of the answers with simplicity and above all with respect.

The interviewer must never express his/her opinion or influence the responses of the interviewees. Interviewers must avoid making facial expressions, changing tone of voice, or making sounds that may suggest or communicate their personal position or opinion to the interviewee; that is to say, showing approval, disapproval, or surprise at the answers of the interviewee. Many people tend to express opinions or give answers that they feel meet the approval of the interviewer.

- ◆ **Writing, order, and reading of the questions:** all of the questions on the questionnaire are written with great care and attention to detail so that they will not induce a specific response or suggest that any particular response is good, bad, or preferable to another. Similarly, it is important that the interviewer **read each question exactly and completely as written**, the interviewer must not reinterpret the questions, otherwise they may lose their neutrality or change meaning

Moreover, the questionnaire has been designed to follow a specific sequence and a logical progression of topics. For this reason, the interviewer must ask the questions in the order that they appear in the questionnaire, so that the meaning of the questions does not change thereby inducing certain responses.

Keep in mind that each of the **questions should be read slowly**, loud enough to hear and with the greatest degree of clarity possible, paying attention to the punctuation within each question.

- ◆ **Control of the situation:** one particular quality of an interviewer is to keep calm in unanticipated or uncomfortable situations, such as: excessive questions from the interviewee about the purposes and progress of the interview, complaints, abrupt or violent rejections, interruptions from other individuals, threats, etc.

Also, when the respondent provides long answers with unnecessary explanations, be polite and do not interrupt abruptly, but help guide them to a conclusion and continue with the sequence of the questionnaire.

The interviewer must always maintain control of the situation during the interview and have the necessary patience. Remember that the respondent is collaborating with the interviewer's work and is giving up some of their time.

- ◆ **Repeat the question:** many times interviewees may reply with vague answers or may not want to respond. In this situation, it is necessary to be sure if this happened because the person did not understand the question, is insecure or fearful because the question deals with a sensitive subject, is shy, or simply because the respondent does not remember the fact. **The appropriate way to discover what happened is to ask the question again exactly as written.**

When it is apparent that the interviewee does not understand the question, the interviewer must not give in to the temptation to try to explain what is being asked, personally interpreting the meaning of the question under consideration, because as already mentioned, doing so can change the meaning of the question.

There is no need to repeat the question more than once, if the interviewer does not receive any response from the interviewee. In this case, mark the "no response" option and continue with the next question because otherwise the interviewer may bother or cause discomfort for the respondent.

- ◆ **Avoid assumptions:** avoid making assumptions about the possible answers of respondents due to their personal or socio-economic characteristics. Interviewers must never presuppose or presume what responses may be; they should always wait on the respondents to provide their own answers.
- ◆ **Leaving and thanking:** at the end of every interview, kindly thank the interviewee for their cooperation, the information, and the time provided.
- ◆ **Reviewing the questionnaire:** at the end of the interview it is important to review the questionnaire in order to verify that all of the questions were asked and that each of them has an answer. Also, the interviewer must make sure that the information on the identification form is complete. This should be done before leaving the residence of the interviewee, so that if it is necessary the interviewer can fill in any missing data. If the interviewer left any question unanswered, he/she should ask the interviewee again.

5.1. Motivational and Inhibitive Factors

During an interview there are a few important elements to keep in mind that in some cases may contribute to greater collaboration and a higher response rate on the part of the interviewee and that in other cases may complicate an interviewee's willingness to be interviewed or that may generate resistance or rejection during the progress of the interview.

▪ Motivational factors

- *Expression of opinions or needs:* in general, people have the need to communicate or express their opinions, beliefs, needs and expectations concerning problems or situations of collective interest.
- *Recognition:* obtaining recognition from other people or from organizations may motivate subjects to engage in various activities or actions. Therefore, it is useful to emphasize the importance given to the interviewees' opinions by the institution that is conducting the survey.
- *Spirit of collaboration:* also, the interviewer can make use of the sense of satisfaction most people experience if they feel they are helping others. For this reason, the interviewer can let interviewees know that by accepting to be interviewed they help with the interviewer's work as well as the search for solutions to problems of collective interest.
- *A new experience:* even though such is the case with less frequency, participating as a respondent in a survey may involve a totally new experience for some people and, consequently, they may consider doing so of interest.
- *Cathartic opportunity:* for some people the interview can be an opportunity or the moment to express feelings or opinions that they have repressed or kept to themselves for a long time.
- *Compensation:* in some cases, there will be economic or some other compensation in recognition of the participation of the individuals surveyed, which may motivate the subjects to answer the questionnaire. But when this is not the case, the interviewer must remember that it is prohibited to offer recompense or false promises; nevertheless, the interviewer can emphasize the importance that the information given will have for the study in question.

This list of motivational elements can be very useful to help stimulate an individual's participation in a survey. Therefore, the interviewer should study them and make intelligent use of them to achieve a successful interview.

▪ Inhibitive Factors

- *The survey as a threat:* on several occasions, some topics addressed in the questionnaires may be seen by the respondent as a threat to him/her, above all if they examine prior conduct or lack of conduct that may be reprehensible to others. The interviewer must know how to identify when such circumstances occur and must achieve a climate of trust and empathy that will minimize such feelings in the respondent.
- *Time:* chores or activities that the respondent had planned to carry out at the moment the interviewer solicits their participation may be disruptive or prove to be distracting during the progress of the interview. In such situations, the interviewer must determine if it is the correct moment to conduct the interview

or if he/she should postpone it, in which case, the interviewer will have to make an appointment with the interviewee. However, the interviewer should do everything possible to persuade the individual to accept being interviewed at that moment.

- *Taboos*: some questions may cause rejection, because they explore socially sensitive subjects about which it is uncommon to speak openly let alone with a stranger. Again, a climate of empathy and confidentiality should serve to avoid this obstacle.
- *Traumas*: also, some subjects or questions may touch on or remind some individuals of traumatic experiences, which could make the continuation of the interview difficult. If such a situation may become unmanageable for the interviewer, it is best to give up conducting the interview.

5.2. Fundamental Aspects to Consider when Conducting an Interview

There are certain basic elements to an interview that the interviewer must not forget:

- a. The interviewer must clearly comprehend the objectives of the survey because interviewees frequently ask detailed questions about it.
- b. Interviewers must know the questionnaire in detail as well as all of the conceptual elements involved in their task and the tools necessary to successfully complete the survey (questions, question order, types of responses, survey response cards, etc.). The more knowledge interviewers have of these aspects of their work, the more they will feel sure of themselves and the greater chance they will have to conduct a successful interview and obtain quality information.
- c. It is vital that interviewers establish a good level of communication and empathy with the interviewee, because this will determine the degree of fluidity in the interview as well as the precision and truthfulness of the responses obtained.
- d. The interview should not be boring; rather, it should be lively and dynamic. A tiring interview can have negative repercussions on the quality of information or may lead the interviewee to abandon the remainder of the interview.
- e. The fundamental task and responsibility of the interviewer is to obtain high quality information which will serve as the principal foundation or source for the study under progress.

6. Relationship with the Supervisor

Given that the supervisor is the person responsible to organize and direct a team of interviewers during the entire information collection process as well as to certify the quality of data collected through the surveys, it is necessary to emphasize several points to consider in the relationship between an interviewer and his/her supervisor.

- Supervisors and interviewers must always maintain excellent communication and a respectful and cordial relationship. The interviewer must inform the supervisor about any concern, doubt, or worry that emerges during his/her field work in order to clarify doubts or resolve whatever problems occur together. Remember that the supervisor's word is final when making decisions in relation to the field work.
- The interviewer must keep the supervisor informed about the progress of the field work.
- Remember that one responsibility of the supervisor is to ensure that the interviewer completes his/her work efficiently and satisfactorily and therefore the supervisor may provide instructions to the interviewer which he/she must accept and comply with.
- The supervisor is responsible for determining the work load for each interviewer; that is to say, the number of questionnaires to complete or interviews to conduct. The interviewer must complete the designated work load and must turn in the completed work at the time stipulated by the supervisor.
- If for whatever reason it is not possible to conduct an interview in one of the selected residences, the interviewer must inform the supervisor immediately so that the supervisor can find an appropriate solution.
- Once the work has been completed and the questionnaires have been turned in to the supervisor, he/she will review each questionnaire in order to verify that they are accurate and complete. If the supervisor finds some mistake, he/she will return the questionnaire(s) to the interviewer who must correct or complete the erroneous data by returning and questioning the interviewee again.
- If the supervisor detects some error or deficiency in the completion of the questionnaires, he/she will notify the interviewer at an appropriate and opportune moment so that the interviewer can correct and improve his/her efforts.

6.1. Receiving and Returning Materials

- Every morning the supervisor will provide questionnaires to each interviewer based on their daily work load or will give each interviewer a PDA that indicates how many interviews to conduct. The supervisor will also provide the survey response cards and the necessary number of letters of informed consent.
- The interviewer must turn in each questionnaire to the supervisor immediately after completing an interview or at the time designated by the supervisor.

- Any unused or incomplete questionnaires, work materials (PDA, survey response cards, and letters of informed consent), as well as completed work will be turned in to the supervisor **each day** at the end of the day's field work. No interviewer has permission to take said materials home with them.
- After completing all field work; that is to say, after completing all the necessary surveys for the sample, interviewers must return all materials received from the institution at the beginning of the project.
- All materials must be returned in good condition.

7. Prohibitions for the Interviewer

- ⊘ It is prohibited to delegate or transfer tasks and/or responsibilities to other individuals. The interviewer's work is individual and is not transferable.
- ⊘ It is prohibited to conduct field work in the presence of others not associated with the project; for example, friends, family members, classmates, etc.
- ⊘ Under no circumstances should the interviewer switch the residence or individual selected in the sample unless authorized to do so by the supervisor.
- ⊘ It is prohibited to conduct any other tasks or activities not related to the work and responsibilities of an interviewer during field work.
- ⊘ Interviewers must not make negative comments about the respondents or their place of residence in front of them or other residents of the community.
- ⊘ It is prohibited to ask questions that are not contained in the questionnaire used in the study.
- ⊘ Interviewers must not omit any question contained on the form; nor should interviewers change the wording of any questions. Do not attempt to explain questions by offering a personal interpretation because changing the language of the question may alter its meaning.
- ⊘ Interviewers should not conduct interviews in front of other members of the household or other individuals.
- ⊘ Interviewers must not permit individuals other than the interviewee to offer or suggest responses and/or approve or disapprove particular opinions or information offered by the respondent.
- ⊘ Interviewers must never suggest particular answers even when the interviewee expresses doubt or prefers not to answer the question.
- ⊘ It is prohibited to discuss with the interviewee any answer that he/she has given. It is also prohibited to discuss with the interviewee any of the topics contained in the questionnaire or to discuss any political, religious, or other related topics.

- ⊘ Interviewers must not comment on any information given by respondents with other interviewers or other individuals, especially not in the presence of the interviewee.
- ⊘ Interviewers must never provide the information given by respondents to anyone other than the supervisor. Survey information is confidential. Interviewers found commenting about or revealing said information will be fired.
- ⊘ It is prohibited to fill in questionnaires or questions that have been left unanswered after completing an interview.
- ⊘ Interviewers must not make assumptions about the answers interviewees will provide. Interviewers must always read the questions clearly, word for word and wait for the answer of the respondent.
- ⊘ It is prohibited to drink alcohol or use drugs while collecting survey information or to show up for work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- ⊘ Under no circumstances should an interviewer destroy or refuse to turn in questionnaires or any other work materials. Remember that these materials are the property of the institution that is conducting the study.

8. Specific Instructions for the Accurate Completion of LAPOP Questionnaires

The questionnaires elaborated and used by LAPOP all follow a single structure and completion pattern. This section will provide some general instructions in order to facilitate the use and filling out of questionnaires.

- Interviewers should record or register respondent answers to each of the questions when they are given during the interview. Interviewers must not trust in their memory to try to note down answers after the interview.
- Complete the identification information of the questionnaire: state or province, municipality, home, census classification, zone of residence – urban or rural, date of the interview, start time, etc.
- Paper questionnaires should always be filled out with clear, legible, and unabbreviated handwriting. Moreover, interviewers should use the appropriate size of handwriting for the space available to record answers. Also, interviewers should use the pen or pencil provided by the institution.

In the case of the PDA, interviewers should use the pointer provided to mark the answers expressed by the interviewees.

- Questions should be read as written in the questionnaires. Furthermore, the interviewer should read questions slowly and clearly enunciate each word especially for longer questions.
- Some questions have “**Doesn’t know**” or “**Doesn’t remember**” options, sometimes abbreviated as “**DK or DA**”. When this option exists as a possible answer to a question, the interviewer should **NEVER** mention this alternative even when included among a list of possible answers that, according to the instructions included in the questionnaire, should be read to the respondent.

The questions in which interviewees answer with “**don’t know**” that is that they do not possess an answer to the question, are always coded with an **(88) or (888)**. But when the interviewee states that they “Don’t want to answer the question,” it should be marked as **(98) or (988)**. Codes other than these should not be used or marked.

- Paper questionnaires use different font styles to differentiate between questions and instructions for interviewers, and the interviewer should pay close attention and be careful when reading in order to distinguish these differences. For printed questionnaires, interviewer instructions are **highlighted or in bold** font and are placed within brackets. For example, the following figure shows a set of instructions for what the interviewer should do as he/she reads each question in the block of questions that follows.

Instruction for interviewers

I am going to read a list of groups and organizations. Please tell me if you attend their meetings at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never. [Repeat for each question: "once a week," "once or twice a month," "once or twice a year" or "never" to help the respondent]

	Once a week	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a year	Never	DK	DA	
CP6: Meetings of any religious organization? Do you attend them?	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP7: Meetings of a parents' association at school? Do you attend them?	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP8: Meetings of a community improvement committee or association? Do you attend them?	1	2	3	4	88	98	

In PDA questionnaires, instructions for the interviewer are found only between brackets as shown below.

SGL 1 C11% B100%

Would you say that the services the city/town/NDC is providing are...? [Read options]

- Very good
- Good
- Neither good nor bad (fair)
- Poor
- Very poor
- DK/DR

These instructions should **NOT** be read to the interviewee, they are only given to help guide the interviewer.

- Most answers are precoded; that is to say, the answer choices are already specified for each question and have an assigned code. Nevertheless, the choices should not be read to the interviewee, the interviewer should wait for a spontaneous response. Interviewers should only read answer choices when the instructions for the question indicate to do so, as shown below.

LS3. To begin, in general how satisfied are you with your life? Would you say that you are...
[Read options?]
(1) Very satisfied (2) Somewhat satisfied (3) Somewhat dissatisfied
(4) Very dissatisfied (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer

- When answers are precoded, in the case of paper questionnaires, the interviewer should circle the code of the corresponding answer, as shown:

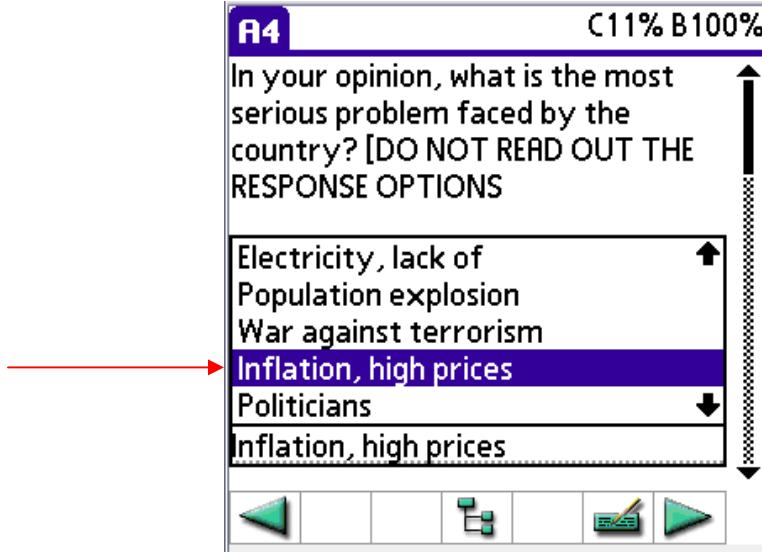
POL1. How much interest do you have in politics: a lot, some, little or none?
(1) A lot (2) Some (3) Little (4) None (88) DK (98) DA

If the answer given by the respondent is not on the precoded list, the interviewer should mark the **other, other answer, or other reason** option when such is given.

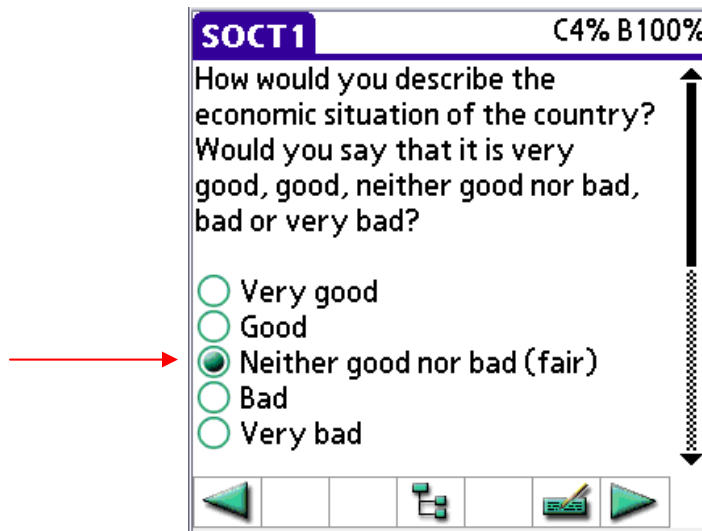
Y4. What was the purpose of the demonstration or protest? [Don't read options. ONLY MARK ONE ANSWER. If the respondent participated in more than one, ask about the most recent protest. If the protest had more than one purpose, ask for the most important.]
(1) Economic factors (work, prices, inflation, lack of opportunities)
(2) Education (lack of opportunities, high tuition, poor quality, education policy)
(3) Political topics (protest against laws, parties or political candidates, exclusion, corruption)
(4) Security problems (crime, militias, gangs)
(5) Human rights
(6) Environmental themes
(7) Lack of public services
(8) Other
(88) DK
(98) DA
(99) N/A

In most cases, this option is not provided because all possible answers are already considered and precoded on the list of possible responses.

When using the PDA the interviewer should just mark or touch the answer with the pointer and the answer will be highlighted with a dark-colored bar as seen below.



For other questions, the interviewer should mark the circle next to the answer given by the respondent.



- Instructions directing interviewers to skip over, continue with by certain questions should be followed as indicated in the questionnaire. If such directions are ignored, it will generate inconsistencies in the information gathered, problems in processing the data, and will frequently cause confusion for the respondent because the questions asked will not be applicable to the interviewee and may appear incoherent in the context of previous questions or given the respondents desire not to respond or elaborate.

When the question should be skipped, the interviewer should code the response as **“Not applicable”** or **“INAP”**. This option is always coded as **99**.

The figure below shows an example of instructions to skip over and pass by questions and the codes that should be marked in questions that are skipped.

+	PROT3. In the last 12 months, have you participated in a demonstration or protest march? (1) Yes [Continue] (2) No [Go to JC1] (88) DK [Go to JC1] (98) DA [Go to JC1]
	PROT4. ¿How many times have you participated in a demonstration or protest march in the last 12 months? _____ (88) DK (98) DA (99) N/A

On PDA's, the program will automatically skip over or pass by questions depending on the answers given. The interviewer need only continue with the following question that appears on the screen.

- When it is necessary to use scales these should be thoroughly explained to the interviewee. It is necessary to ensure that the individual has understood the meaning of the scale and the position of their possible responses within it. In order to do so, interviewers should use the “survey response cards” (see Appendix 2).

[GIVE CARD "A"]
LS6. On this card there is a ladder with steps numbered 0 to 10. 0 is the lowest step and represents the worst life possible for you. 10 is the highest step and represents the best life possible for you. On what step of the ladder do you feel **at this moment**? **Please choose the ladder that represents best your opinion.**
[Point out the number on the card that represents "the worst life possible" and the number that represents "the best life possible". Indicate to the interviewee that he/she can choose an intermediate score].

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	88	98
Worst life possible						Best life possible				DK	DA	

In some cases, the interviewer can easily spot when the interviewee has not understood the scale in use. For example, if, when asking question **LS6** in the previous figure, the respondent answers “**Best life possible**” and yet choose number “**0**” on the scale, it is obvious that the interviewee has not clearly understood the meaning of the scale; in these cases the interviewer should review the meaning and use of the scale.


Another situation that may occur when using the “scales” is that, when a particular scale is used for a long series of questions, the interviewee tends to **always choose the same number** from the scale to answer every question in that series. When this is the case, it is recommended that the interviewer repeat the meaning of the scale and the range of numbers that the respondent can choose from after every three questions.

- The LAPOP questionnaire contains a section that gathers information on whether the respondent owns certain household objects – the series of questions is shown below. When filling out this section, the interviewer need only mark down the answers given by the respondent, it is NOT necessary to verify whether the objects are present in the home.

To conclude, could you tell me if you have the following in your house: <i>[read out all items]</i>				
R1. Television		(0) No		(1) Yes
R3. Refrigerator		(0) No		(1) Yes
R4. Landline telephone (not cellular)		(0) No		(1) Yes
R4A. Cellular telephone		(0) No		(1) Yes
R5. Vehicle/car How many?	(0) No	(1) One	(2) Two	(3) Three or more
R6. Washing machine		(0) No		(1) Yes
R7. Microwave oven		(0) No		(1) Yes
R8. Motorcycle		(0) No		(1) Yes
R12. Indoor plumbing		(0) No		(1) Yes
R14. Indoor bathroom		(0) No		(1) Yes
R15. Computer		(0) No		(1) Yes
R16. Flat panel TV		(0) No		(1) Yes

Nevertheless, there are occasions when the respondent claims NOT to own a particular object (for example, a television), even though the interviewer can readily see that there is such an object in the home. In this situation, the interviewer should respectfully ask the interviewee if the object in question belongs to the household and then mark down the appropriate response on the questionnaire.

- On paper questionnaires, interviewers must NOT write anything in the right-hand column of the forms. This column is only used when codifying the data, which happens at a later stage of the study.

<p>SOCT1. How would you describe the country's economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad? (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer</p>	
<p>SOCT2. Do you think that the country's current economic situation is better than, the same as or worse than it was 12 months ago? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer</p>	
<p>SOCT3. Do you think that in 12 months the economic situation of the country will be better, the same or worse than it is now? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer</p>	

- When the interview is complete verify that the questionnaire is complete. Do not forget to verify that the identification data on the questionnaire is also complete.

It is essential to comply with the directions presented here to speed the progress of the interviews, to facilitate the processing of the information when necessary, and to be able to acquire a reliable record of the information given by respondents.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1
Letter of Informed Consent



VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

January, 2010

Dear Sir/Madam:

You have been randomly chosen to participate in a public opinion study. I am a representative of Vanderbilt University. The project is financed by USAID. The interview will last 30 to 40 minutes.

The principal objective of the study is to understand individual opinions about different aspects of the situation of the [United States].

Your participation in the study is voluntary. You can leave questions unanswered or end the interview at any moment. The answers you give will be kept in complete confidence and anonymity. You will not receive any form of payment for your participation, nor will you incur any costs.

If you have any questions about the study, you can contact ***** at the following number ***** with *****.

Would you like to participate?

APPENDIX 2
Survey Response Card

Card “A”

On what step of the ladder do you feel at this moment?

