

INTREC Data Analyses and Writing Capacity Workshop - June 16-21, 2014

Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies

Final Report

Workshop Organization

The data analyses and writing capacity workshop was held from June 16 to June 21, 2014, at Harvard University. This workshop successfully completes the third educational block of the INTREC program. The instructional team received 26 applications from the learners, who had first completed the online Social Determinants of Health course and then regional trainings held in Asia and Africa. Based on the online course performance and the research proposals, 14 INDEPTH researchers from Ghana, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Tanzania, Papua New Guinea, South Africa and Vietnam were selected to participate in the Harvard workshop.¹



¹ Unfortunately, due to visa restrictions two learners, one from Ghana and one from Papua New Guinea, could not complete the travel. An alternative course of block 3 SDH training for these learners is being considered.

The quantitative methods portions of the workshop were led by Professor Guenther Fink. Professor Lisa Berkman, Professor Subu Subramanian and Dr. Daniel Corsi from the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies were also actively involved in discussions of INTREC learners' work. Dr. Joke Haafkens from University of Amsterdam supervised student work on qualitative methods.

Training Content

The overall aim of the workshop was for participants to begin developing a new SDH-focused study, based on the INDEPTH data from their DSS sites. The workshop started with student presentations, where each participant presented their research question, data set and variables, the first ideas for analyses, and the potential audience of the stakeholders to whom the findings should be presented. The presentations were discussed amongst the group and the faculty suggested some directions for the development of each project. The INTREC learners were paired with a postdoctoral fellow of the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies for the daily personal guidance and supervision of the quantitative analyses of the data. Dr. Haafkens provided a similar supervision of the qualitative work.

During the workshop the participants were provided with a personal working space, desktops computers, and analytical software programs. The learners were trained to apply quantitative or qualitative analyses to the data sets using the Stata or MaxQDA Software packages.

The instructional team focused on development of the following skills during the workshop:

- How to access and manipulate data.
- How to generate descriptive statistics and figures to present data.
- How to conduct statistical or qualitative analysis in practice.
- How to see the data in the context of other SDH data available for the country

Every day of the workshop was filled with intense analytical work and concluded with brief presentations of each learner's' progress. On the final day of the workshop, participants presented the first set of regression results in forms of tables and graphs. The categories of qualitative data were also presented and the steps for further analyses in both quantitative and qualitative papers have been discussed

Evaluations

The written evaluations conducted at the end of the workshop showed that the participants were overwhelmingly satisfied with their experience. Among the most useful aspects of the training, they mentioned the following:

Learning how to use STATA; becoming more skilled in data management and

data analyses; having a dedicated consultant for each participant; feeling more confident about writing; learning to frame the analyses on social determinants of health; working as a team and sharing experiences during work.

Next Steps

All participants have suggested a plan for further work on the data and SDH paper writing during the summer. The instructional team from all the partner universities is planning to support the learners' work on the paper drafts. The faculty from HCPDS will be working with students who attended the workshop, focusing on quantitative methods. Dr. Haafkens of UVA will continue to supervise learners who are writing the qualitative papers. Meanwhile, the instructors from Heidelberg University and Umea University are discussing the ways to provide an alternative block 3 training to the students who were not selected to Harvard workshop, but were enthusiastic to continue SDH learning.

Moving towards Block 4 and Dissemination of the SDH Findings to Stakeholders

“Translating Research to Practice” is the focus of the next part of the educational training of INTREC. While the participants are deeply engaged with their data work, they have already started to think how the results they obtain will be presented to larger non-academic community and stakeholders in their country. Professor Laksono Trisnantoro from Gadjah Madah University, Indonesia, joined the second part of the workshop at HCPDS to present and lead the participants in the discussion of Transferring Research to Practice.

The participants have been very engaged in the discussion and started to think together about the ways to approach the politicians, community organizations and the media to talk about the SDH issues in their countries.

This work will be continued with additional online resources provided for all INTREC participants in the program, and also on the online forum where the participants will post their presentations to stakeholders, and discuss with each other and with the instructors the best ways to proceed from SDH research to greater community awareness.