

COURSE : DISASTER MANAGEMENT (MA/ MSc PART I)

Paper : VI

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Topic : Data Collection Methods

Registration

A register is a depository of information on fishing vessels, companies, gear, licenses or individual fishers. It can be used to obtain complete enumeration through a legal requirement. Registers are implemented when there is a need for accurate knowledge of the size and type of the fishing fleet and for closer monitoring of fishing activities to ensure compliance with fishery regulations. They may also incorporate information related to fiscal purposes (e.g. issuance or renewal of fishing licenses). Although registers are usually implemented for purposes other than to collect data, they can be very useful in the design and implementation of a statistical system, provided that the data they contain are reliable, timely and complete

Questionnaires

In contrast with interviews, where an enumerator poses questions directly, questionnaires refer to forms filled in by respondents alone. Questionnaires can be handed out or sent by mail and later collected or returned by stamped addressed envelope. This method can be adopted for the entire population or sampled sectors.

Questionnaires may be used to collect regular or infrequent routine data, and data for specialised studies. While the information in this section applies to questionnaires for all these uses, examples will concern only routine data, whether regular or infrequent. Some of the data often obtained through questionnaires include demographic characteristics, fishing practices, opinions of stakeholders on fisheries issues or management, general information on fishers and household food budgets.

Interviews

In interviews information is obtained through inquiry and recorded by enumerators. Structured interviews are performed by using survey forms, whereas open interviews are notes taken while talking with respondents. The notes are subsequently structured (interpreted) for further analysis. Open-ended interviews, which need to be interpreted and analysed even during the interview, have to be carried out by well-trained observers and/or enumerators.

Open-ended interviews

Open-ended interviews cover a variety of data-gathering activities, including a number of social science research methods.

Structured interview

Generally, structured interviews are conducted with a well-designed form already established. Forms are filled in by researchers, instead of respondents, and in that it differs from questionnaires. While this approach is more expensive, more complicated questions can be asked and data can be validated as it is collected, improving data quality. Interviews can be undertaken with variety of data sources (fishers to consumers), and through alternative media, such as by telephone or in person.

Direct observations

Observers

Observers can make direct measurements on the fishing vessels, at landing sites, processing plants, or in markets. The variables that enumerators can collect include catch (landing and discards), effort, vessel/gears, operations, environmental variables (e.g. sea state, temperature), biological variables (e.g. length, weight, age), the values and quantities of landings and sales.

Inspectors

Inspectors are a kind of enumerator involved in law enforcement and surveillance (for fishing regulations, sanitary inspections, labour control, etc.). They may work at sea on surveillance vessels, at landing sites on shore, at processing factories and at markets. In general, scientific data are better collected by enumerators who are not directly involved in law enforcement. Nevertheless, many variables collected by the inspectors are very useful, and include landings, operational information, effort, landing price, processing procedure and values of product to the market and processors. Inspectors are also useful in collecting employment data.