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6 August 2020

*Template for country adaptation and use*

**Pacific COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Awareness Survey**

Title of the document

# BACKGROUND

In responding to this pandemic, Pacific island country and area (PIC) governments, civil society organisations, and development agencies have undertaken comprehensive risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) campaigns. Through these activities, information about COVID-19 and recommended preventative measures has been shared with the public and efforts undertaken to prepare communities to respond to the threat of community transmission, should this situation occur.

It has been approximately five months since many PICs initiated these activities and broader health emergency preparedness efforts. Given the current situation and timing, and also given that we know that the threat of COVID-19 will exist until an effective vaccine or treatment is available, it is important to gain feedback on how this information was received, interpreted, and applied across communities in the Pacific.

This survey has been developed as a template to support Pacific Ministries of Health in their COVID-19 response efforts.[[1]](#footnote-1) Insights from this survey are intended to inform and guide governments and partners to adjust response plans and activities as required, expand successful interventions, inform essential health services delivery, and support communications and community engagement for the ‘new normal’ period of living with COVID-19. Survey questions are intended to measure people’s knowledge, attitudes, and practices to reveal any misconceptions and misunderstandings that act as barriers to behaviour change. The survey also considers individual capacity, motivation, and opportunity to adapt new behaviours.

The template can be used to develop initial rapid or in-depth surveys and tailored to local context. PICs that have already conducted rapid awareness surveys early in the pandemic, may consider conducting a new survey, using this template, to collect more in-depth quantitative and qualitative information on knowledge, attitudes, and practices of the community. Questions from the any previous surveys should be maintained in the new questionnaire to help measure the impact and effectiveness of the RCCE activities and evidence shifts in public perceptions, attitudes and behaviours (pulse checks).

This survey is intended to:

* assess communications and community engagement efforts for COVID-19;
* identify COVID-19 knowledge gaps, misunderstanding, misinformation, and questions of importance by the public;
* understand environmental barriers to the public adopting COVID-19 prevention measures; and to
* learn from individual’s experiences in accessing essential health services during times of COVID-19.

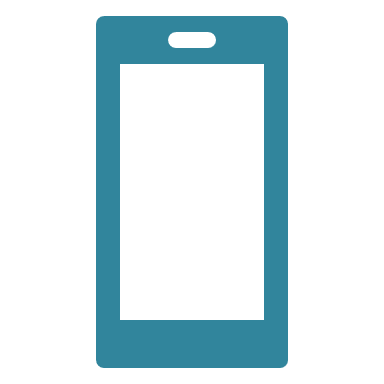
**Survey template**

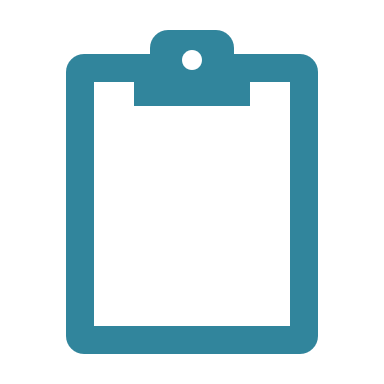
To ensure that this survey template is easy to use and taking into consideration the costs of data collection and analyses, the survey is made up of different blocks. This allows countries to choose which areas to research. The questions are built around six themes.

1. Consent
2. Demographics
3. Knowledge and preventive practices
4. Trust in communications and sources
5. Community participation and relationships
6. Access to essential health services

**Data collection**

The following methods for data collection can be considered and used individually or in combination. Each method has different advantages and disadvantages. It is recommended that Ministries select one or more methods of data collection to support them in their efforts.





Community engagement

Face to Face

Online

Text messages

*Table 1. Comparison of data collection methods*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Method** | **Reach to communities** | **Costs** | **Data analysis** | **Other** |
| **Face to face**  *(refer below for further details on approach and recommended prevention measures)* | Focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews can be held in rural areas, reaching vulnerable groups of society. | Costs may include transport, payments to interviewers (or recruit volunteers), training of interviewers, etc. | Qualitative-rich data will be collected, which will take more time to analyze. |  |
| **Online** | Population who have access to internet) will be able to participate. | There are low-cost survey methods available online. | Quantitative data is often automatically sorted and categorized to facilitate analysis. | Targets a more urban, middle class audience. |
| **Text messages** | Mobile phone ownership is relatively high, even in rural areas. | Cost per participant, on the researcher side, can be kept low. | Quantitative data is often automatically sorted and categorized to facilitate analysis. | Data on phone ownership of women is limited. |
| **Community engagement workers/key partners** | Focus group discussions can be held in rural areas, reaching vulnerable groups of society. | Additional costs can be kept low as these visits are already taking place. | Qualitative, rich data will be collected, which will take more time to analyze. |  |

**COVID-19 rapid perception survey –** *online template*

We would like to understand:

* what you already know about COVID-19;
* what you still want to know about COVID-19;
* how you are adapting to the new health guidelines to limit the spread of COVID-19; and
* if you and your family are still accessing health care services when you need to.

This survey will take about 10-20 minutes (adjust according to the number of questions) and include questions about health and communication. Your answers will help us improve the way we communicate and respond to COVID-19. Thank you for taking part.

Please note that this survey is anonymous so we will not ask you for your name or address. We will combine all the answers we receive, from you and from many other participants, and we will store those answers securely. We, or our partner organisations, might use the answers in the future, but no one will ever be able to identify your specific answers.

**For this online survey:** Start the survey when you have time to complete it with no interruptions. Please close other programmes (e.g. chat or email) to avoid distractions.

**How you can contact us?**

Email: [insert email, phone or other contact information]

Do you agree to answer a few questions?

Yes

No (stop survey)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Guidance:** A first set of fundamental questions is presented below. Details on the structure of some questions are highlighted in yellow. The Annex lists more questions that you can include, depending on context and secondary data. | | |
| **Demographics** | | |
| No. | Questions | Answer structure |
|  | Where do you live? | Country  District  City or town  Village  Island |
|  | What is your gender? | * Male * Female * Other * Prefer not to say |
|  | What is your age? | |  | | --- | | * 18-29 years * 30-39 years * 40-49 years * 50-59 years * 60-69 years * 70-79 years * Over 80 years | |
|  | Do you identify as someone living with a disability? | * Yes * No |
|  | What is your highest level of education? | * Completed primary schooling * Completed Year 10 * Completed Year 12 * Some university * Completed university * Completed post graduate education |
|  | What is your employment status? | [Open question or options]   * Government employee * Private sector employee * Other employment for wages * Self-employed * Not working * Student * Retired * Unable to work * Other : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Knowledge and practices** | | |
|  | Do you know what COVID-19 is?  (Choose one answer)  Include filter to display after question No or Don’t know  COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. ‘CO’ stands for corona, ‘VI’ for virus, and ‘D’ for disease. Almost all countries in the world have reported having cases. Some countries in the Pacific have no cases up until this moment in time.  Sources: WHO, UNICEF, IFRC | * Yes * No * Don’t know |
|  | If so, how or where did you hear about COVID-19? | Open question |
|  | How dangerous is COVID-19? (Choose one) | * Very dangerous * A little dangerous * Not dangerous * Don’t know |
|  | How is COVID-19 spread? (Select as many answers as you think correct) | * Blood transfusion * Droplets from infected people * In the air * Direct contact with infected people/animals * Touching contaminated objects or surfaces * Mosquito bites * Eating contaminated food * Drinking unclean water * Don't know |
|  | Who is most at risk from COVID-19?  Include filter to display after question  People of all ages can be infected by the virus. However elderly people over 60 years of age, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) are more at risk of becoming seriously ill. | * Everyone * Older people * People who are sick or have other health conditions * Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * Don't know |
|  | What are the most common symptoms of COVID- 19? (Choose one or more options).  Include filter to display after question  The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, dry cough, and tiredness. Other symptoms that are less common and may affect some patients include aches and pains, nasal congestion, headache, conjunctivitis (red eyes), sore throat, diarrhoea, loss of taste or smell, and/or a rash on skin or discoloration of fingers or toes.  These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some infected people experience only very mild symptoms. | * Fever * Dry cough * Tiredness * Aches and pains * Nasal congestions * Headache * Red eyes * Sore throat * Diarrhoea * Loss of taste or smell * Asymptomatic [showing no symptoms] * Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * Don't know |
|  | Do you and your family do any of the following things to protect yourselves from COVID-19?  Include filter to display after this question.  Key things you can do to keep yourself and your family safe from COVID-19.   1. **Wash your hands frequently.**   Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.  Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands   1. **Maintain physical distancing.**   Maintain at least one metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.  When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.   1. **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.**   Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose, or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.   1. **Practice respiratory hygiene.**   Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.  Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.   1. **Stay informed and follow advice given by your health care provider.**   Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your health care provider, your national and local public health authority, or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.  National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.  *Sources:* WHO, UNICEF, IFRC, SPC | * Wash your hands regularly using hand sanitizer with 70% alcohol or soap and water for 20 seconds. * Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. * Avoid close contact with anyone who is coughing or sneezing. * Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. * Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces. * Stay indoors. * Follow the recommendations of authorities in my country to prevent the spread of COVID-19. * Use traditional herbal remedies. * Use a mask. * Don't know. * Other ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­ |
|  | What would you do if you or someone from your family is sick and experiencing symptoms of COVID-19?  Include filter to display what people should do after this question. Potential response below to be tailored to country context.  **If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early.**  Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority.  National and local authorities will have the most up-to-date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections. | Open question |
|  | Do you have everything you need to protect you and your family from COVID-19? | * Soap and clean water for hand washing. * Alcohol-based hand-rub for cleaning hands. * Disinfectant or chlorine for cleaning your home and vehicle. * Separate utensils for use by a family member who may become sick with COVID-19. * Separate bedroom or space for self-isolation for a family member who may become sick with COVID-19. * Separate utensils and bedroom for a family member who is at risk for getting COVID-19 (e.g. 60 years+, compromised immune system etc.). |
|  | Do you have barriers that prevent you from:   1. Staying informed on the latest advice from your health care provider or health authority? 2. Practicing hand-hygiene with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub? 3. Practicing respiratory hygiene (e.g. covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze; wearing a mask if recommended by your country)? 4. Physical distancing (1-2 metres) from someone that is coughing or sneezing in your community? 5. Physical distancing (1-2 metres) from someone that is coughing or sneezing in your home? 6. Staying at home when there are orders to not go to school or work? 7. Accessing medical care when you are sick? 8. Accessing mental health and psychosocial support services when you need them? 9. Other…………………………………. | 1. Yes/No 2. Yes/No 3. Yes/No 4. Yes/No 5. Yes/No 6. Yes/No 7. Yes/No 8. Yes/No 9. ……………………………… |
|  | What worries you most about COVID-19?  For each data point, please use the scales (never worry; rarely worry; frequently worry). | * Family or friend passing away. * Getting sick. * Health system being overloaded. * Schools closing. * Small companies closing down. * Financial issues. * Losing my job. * Restricted access to food supplies. * Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Vaccinations** | | |
|  | Have any of the children under your care not been vaccinated because of COVID-19? | * Yes * No |
|  | If yes, what is the main reason that prevented the child from receiving vaccinations?  Choose one or more answers. | 1 = I am concerned about getting COVID-19 if I go out  2 = My family and friends don’t want us to go out  3 = The government said that people can go out only for essential services  4 = I am concerned about getting COVID-19 at the vaccination clinic  5 = A health care provider recommended delaying or missing vaccines  6 = The vaccination clinic is closed or not giving vaccines due to COVID-19  7 = It’s hard to get an appointment even though the vaccination clinic is open  8 = Something else:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Access to essential health services** | | |
|  | Do you or one of your family members have an underlying chronic health condition? | * Yes * No |
|  | If so, has COVID-19 changed the way that you receive care and medication for your chronic conditions? | * Yes * No |
|  | Have you or your family member been able to continue to access your required medical treatment over the last 4–5 months? | * Yes * No |
|  | If not, please explain what has been hampering you from continuing to access your medical treatment? |  |
|  | Do you trust health care facilities will take the necessary precautions to keep you and your family safe during the COVID-19 pandemic? | * Yes * No |
| **Sources of information** | | |
|  | What kind of information have you received about COVID-19 (prior to doing this survey)? (Choose one or more options) | * How to protect yourself from COVID-19. * The symptoms of COVID-19. * How COVID-19 is spread. * What to do if you have the symptoms of COVID-19. * Health risks of COVID-19. * Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  | How often do you use the following sources of information to stay informed about COVID-19?  For each data point please use the scales never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always. | Media   * Television * Printed newspapers * Radio stations   Online and social media   * Websites or online news pages * Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, Line) * Search engines (e.g. Google)   Your community   * Conversations with family and friends * Community health workers * Community or religious leaders   Traditional   * Traditional healers * Traditional midwives   Government   * Ministry of Health   Humanitarian   * Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers * UNICEF * WHO      * Other sources, such as: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  | How much do you trust the following sources of information in their reporting about the COVID-19?  For each data point please use the scales very little trust; a moderate amount of trust; a great deal of trust. | Media   * Television * Printed newspapers * Radio stations   Online and social media   * Websites or online news pages * Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, Viber) * Search engines (e.g. Google)   Your community   * Conversations with family and friends * Community health workers * Community or religious leaders   Traditional   * Traditional healers * Traditional midwives   Government   * Ministry of Health   Humanitarian   * Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers * UNICEF * WHO * Other sources, such as: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  | What type of information do you need now? (Choose one or more answers) | * Symptoms of COVID-19. * Personal stories from others about how they cope. * Information about development of new vaccine against COVID-19. * Information about development of treatment for COVID-19. * How I can prevent spread of the disease in my country. * How I can take care of a person who is in the risk group. * What I can do if me or my family member have symptoms. * How I can best take care of my children’s school education. * Details on travel restrictions. * Other, please specify:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Comments/Suggestions** | | |
|  | Do you have any suggestions for better communication about the disease? | * Open question |
|  | Do you have any suggestions for community activities that could prevent the spread of the disease or support the community in preparing for dealing with people getting infected with COVID-19? | * Open question |
|  | Is there anything that we could do to improve in the way we give information about COVID-19? | * Open question |
|  | END OF SURVEY | Thank you very much!  Your answers will help us to give everyone useful and timely information about COVID-19.  Click CONTINUE to submit your answers. |

**ANNEX 1: Optional menu of questions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographics** | | |
| No. | QUESTIONS | ANSWERS |
|  | Interviewee occupation: | * Employed for wages * Self-employed * Out of work and looking for work * Out of work but not currently looking for work * A homemaker * A student * Military * Retired * Unable to work |
| **Knowledge** | | |
| No. | QUESTIONS | ANSWERS |
|  | Do you think you have a higher than average chance of getting COVID-19? (Choose one option) | * Yes, because:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * No * Don’t know |
|  | Do you consider it important to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your community? (Choose one option). | * Yes * No * A little * Don't know |
|  | What do you usually do if you have a regular flu? (Choose up to two options) | * Nothing. I continue with my normal life and after some time the flu goes away. * I stay at home, so I don’t infect others. * I wear a mask. * I drink tea until I recover. * I seek advice from my neighbours. * I seek advice from local healers. * I go to the health centre. * Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

**ANNEX 2: Recommendations for all types of surveys (online, text messages, face to face, etc.)**

Pretesting is an important step to ensure that the questions are tailored to the local context, culturally appropriate and all kinds of errors or misunderstandings are addressed. Any necessary revisions should be made to the questionnaire after the pretesting. Pretesting can be done quickly on a small sample (5–10) of respondents from the target population.

1. **COVID-19 rapid perception survey – text messages**

Recommendations for the use of text messages.

* Use a tool that can handle a two-way communication.
* Be mindful of character limitation (usually 160 characters for alphabets). When a message becomes longer than 160 characters, it will be broken to more than one text for simple mobile phones. Cost for text messages will be higher.
* Put one question per text message for simplicity; otherwise a clear instruction is required to request more than one data (e.g. request for a number of males, female, total in one text).
* Add a statement of privacy protection and confidentiality before proceeding to actual questions.
* Require parental consent if targeting children aged under 18 years old. Ensure that only those who declare that parental consent has been given are able to proceed to actual questions.
* Mobile phone numbers are personally identifiable information, so anonymization should be considered.

1. **Rapid-Pro**

RapidPro is an open source software used for various kinds of two-way communications. There is more information available online to support the set-up of Rapid-Pro, but these are some tips. To set up a Rapid-Pro-based survey, the following items will be required:

* A toll-free short code.
* Arrangement for SMS (incoming and outgoing) with Mobile Network Operators MNOs). SMS cost depends on offer from MNOs. The estimated number of SMS required for the survey can be calculated as (number in target audience) × (estimated response rate) × (number of questions) × 2 = number of SMS required.
* Selection of channels (SMS, Facebook Messenger, Viber, WhatsApp, Telegram, etc.). If internet-based chatting tools are available, SMS cost can be reduced.
* A set of survey questions/multiple choices (need to be optimized with a consideration of character limitation).
* Means of announcement of the survey (e.g. SMS blast, social media/radio/TV to promote a short code and a key word to participate in the survey, push the survey to existing contacts).

**Template of SMS surveys (using RapidPro):**

If recommended, set up a template survey on RapidPro and make it accessible

* Channel easy to set up as a sandbox, e.g. Viber.
* Instructions of how to access to RapidPro surveys.
* Modification required from the survey template.
  + Length (within 160 characters).
  + Ideally a single answer for multiple choice questions (multiple answers can be handled, but automatic data analysis may not function).
  + RapidPro can handle an unlimited number of questions, however, be mindful of respondents’ time commitment.
  + A key word needs to be set to trigger the survey.

1. **COVID-19 rapid perception survey – face-to-face or telephone**

If a face to face or group consultations approach is undertaken for survey collection, it is important that interviewees/facilitators maintain COVID-19 prevention measures, including physical distancing and hand hygiene. Refer to the [Interim Guidelines for infection prevention and control during COVID community outreach](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17nDcJCEfBAb3RNlhxsZmTPhpTTKRNYBZ/view?usp=sharing) for guidance on prevention measures when conducting in-person survey collection.

For face to face surveys, organizers may consider the following:

* equal representation of men and women.
* representation of different age groups.
* inclusion of those with a disability.
* inclusion of both rural and urban populations.

Interviewer briefing is important for face-to-face or telephone interviews. An interviewer guide or package should be developed to provide interviewers with the knowledge and capabilities necessary to conduct the interviews successfully and consistently. The package should include:

* key messages and information on COVID-19, including Frequently Asked Questions from the country Ministry of Health;
* free COVID-19 hotline details, if available;
* links to official trusted websites related to COVID-19; and
* any country official communications tools dedicated to COVID-19.

Interviewers should also be briefed on the importance of:

* survey introduction (how they introduce themselves, describe the topic and purpose of the survey, and the expected time to complete the survey) to create a good rapport with respondents and to gain their cooperation;
* assuring confidentiality and ensuring that respondents understand that their participation is voluntary and anonymous;
* recording questions or concerns that respondents raise that are outside of the guiding package or that they are unsure of how to answer. Note: A follow-up plan should be put in place detailing ways in which the respondents can obtain a response, advice or further information (e.g. by phone-call or visit from a Ministry of Health representative or partner, among others).

Training, including practical sessions (e.g. role-play), should be organized if possible, to familiarize the interviewers with the questions and how they should ask the questions and respond to any questions or concerns from responders.

Instructions for interviewers can also be included below each question in a different colour or format (e.g. *italics*) to guide them during the interview. See example below:

|  |
| --- |
| **Question:** What would you do if you or someone from your family is sick and experiencing symptoms of COVID-19? |
| *Tip for interviewer: This is an open question, please write the response from the respondent and share the correct answer below with him or her if the response was incorrect or not complete* |
| Correct answer: If you or someone from you family has fever, cough and difficulty breathing, call this number xxxx quickly before going to the hospital. |

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Description automatically generated*****This template has been developed in accordance with global guidance and contextualized to the Pacific context by IFRC, SPC, UNICEF, and WHO from the COVID-19 Pacific Joint Incident Management Team.*

1. This survey template has been adapted from global surveys for COVID-19, principally developed by IFRC, UNICEF and WHO, and tailored to the Pacific context. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)