

Guidance for applying and adapting the household/family factors questionnaire

Purpose

This questionnaire is intended to be used to assess the ways in which household/family factors influence an individual's vulnerability. When combined with individual-level data and interpreted in light of the larger contextual understanding about what factors lead to greater vulnerability or resilience captured in the community and structural level tools, it becomes possible to assess the vulnerability to violence, exploitation and abuse of that particular individual migrant. Further, if such data is gathered over time and linked to data from other geographic locations, it can inform understanding of larger trends regarding migrant vulnerabilities in a particular community, as well as regionally. As such, it can potentially inform programming by governments, as well as national and international organizations and service providers.

The questionnaire has been designed in four versions, and the choice of which version to use should be based on the stage of migration the individual is in: pre-departure/at origin, in transit, at destination or following return. They are designed to be comprehensive and therefore to be used primarily as a research tool and to inform programming. However, if vulnerable individuals are identified during this process, they should be referred to appropriate protection actors. Protection actors may wish to use the IOM Screening Form for Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse to assist them in identifying an individual migrant's protection and assistance needs.

Using the questionnaires

The questionnaires can be used in either paper-based or electronic format such as Kobotoolbox or Survey Monkey. Even if paper-based questionnaires are used, the data should be transcribed to an electronic platform in order to ensure the durability of the data collected and the ability to use it to understand changes over time. This is also good for comparison purposes with other contexts and locations and therefore to be able to develop an evidence base for national, regional or global analysis.

Ideally, the household/family forms would be used in combination with the individual forms, in order to have a complete portrait of the respondent's situation. There is some overlap between the individual and household/family-level questionnaires, particularly in Section 1: Interview Information, Section 2: Basic Information and Section 4: Sociodemographic information. It is not necessary to repeat questions to the same respondent.

The vast majority of the questions are close-ended. Where relevant, space is provided to enter additional information or to enter responses to open-ended questions. It is recommended that enumerators/interviewers try to use consistent terminology in those boxes to ensure comparability. Hence, if a person reports the source of income as "working in a shop," the same terminology should be used for a response that indicates the same activity, such as "I work at the florist's." For questions where the expected response is a number, it is recommended to use digits rather than writing the number: that is to say, use "15" rather than "fifteen."

Each of the versions of the questionnaire has similar fields and questions, arranged in the following four sections: Section 1 records information about the interview itself; Section 2 records basic information about the respondent;

Section 3 gathers information on vulnerability factors; and Section 4 gathers sociodemographic information. This guidance provides information on completing each of these sections using the language from the pre-departure/at origin questionnaire. However, the guidance applies to all of the versions of the questionnaire.

The estimated time for migrants to complete the questionnaire at origin/pre-departure is approximately 30 minutes. During transit, at destination and following return, migrants could take approximately 30 to 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Question order

The order of the questions has been designed not only to group topics together, but also to reflect good practice. For example, questions regarding sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity and other potentially sensitive identity-related characteristics are included in Section 4: Sociodemographic Information, at the end of the questionnaire. That is because it is generally good practice to delay such questions until the respondent has been put at ease by answering less-sensitive questions first.

Some questions appear to be repetitive. This is because formulating some questions in more than one way serves to verify the initial question. For example, the questionnaire includes the following two questions: “Is it your own choice to travel/move (not someone else’s)?” and “Is someone else forcing you to travel/move?”. This allows for differentiation between people who feel they are migrating because their current circumstances do not provide other viable choices and have decided for themselves that migration is a practical solution, and those who are migrating because someone is forcing them to.

Section 1: General information

This section includes identifying information for the questionnaire. It is intended to be completed by the enumerator.

- 1.1. Enumerator code:** It is important to develop and implement a system for tracking which questionnaires were completed by which enumerators. This is important as it allows for identification of any systematic errors that an enumerator may be making. For example, an enumerator might be completing certain sections incorrectly, or skipping sensitive questions.
- 1.2. Date:** The date should always be entered in the same format, such as [dd-mm-yyyy] where, for example, the 22nd of May 2019 would be entered as [22-5-2019].
- 1.3. Language in which interview is conducted:** The language in which the interview is conducted may or may not be the same as the language in which the questionnaire is written. This is important to note in case there are inconsistencies in translation between different enumerators.
- 1.4. Location of interview:** It is important to specify the location in which the interview was conducted, which will facilitate analysis and comparison between different communities. It is important to use a precise system for naming the locations to avoid misinterpretation of the data.
- 1.5. Country of interview:** This serves as a further identifier for the survey and can be helpful when analysing surveys from different countries and for comparison purposes across countries.

Section 2: Basic information

This section includes basic information about the respondent.

- 2.1. Respondent’s country of origin** and **2.2. Respondent’s citizenship** provide a basis for assessment of the person’s migration status. Being in a country of which one is not a citizen usually constitutes a vulnerability factor, as the person may not enjoy the same legal rights as citizens of the country.
- 2.3. Age** can serve to identify children who may be in need of additional specific protection, and also for whom parental or guardian permission may need to be obtained before continuing with the interview.
- 2.4. Language(s) spoken:** An ability to speak more than one language can be a protective factor when migrating to countries where the respondent’s language is not the official language or is not commonly used.

Section 3: Household/family vulnerability factors

This section is divided in three parts. Section 3A focuses on household/family composition and migration history, Section 3B focuses on the household/family situation and dynamics, and section 3C focuses on community participation and safety. The questions in these three sections help to identify the presence of different factors affecting the migrant's vulnerability to violence, exploitation and abuse.

Section 3A: Household/family composition and migration history

Questions in this section relate to the composition of the respondent's household/family, as well as to the household/family's history of migration.

3.1. Are you currently homeless?

A yes response is an indicator of migrant vulnerability.

3.2. Who do you live with?

Living arrangements can have an impact on an individual's vulnerability; living alone can be an indicator of vulnerability or of independence and self-reliance, depending on the context. Sharing a dwelling with family/friends or with strangers can be an indicator of vulnerability if it creates additional responsibilities for the individual, but can also provide a support network, again depending on context.

3.3. How many people do you live with (not counting yourself)?

This question seeks information about the respondents' household unit. Household/family size may be a risk factor in some contexts.

3.4. How many of the people that you live with (not including yourself) are children under the age of 16?

Children are, in general, more vulnerable. Having a large number of children in a household may be a risk factor in some situations and contexts.

3.4.1 Are the children that you live with, not including yourself, if you are under 16, currently attending school?

Non-attendance for school-age children and adolescents may be an indicator of vulnerability. This is why it is important to understand the reasons for it.

3.4.1.1 What makes them feel unsafe?

Schools may not always be safe places for children, so it is important to understand if they feel safe there. If not, they may be in need of protection assistance.

3.4.1.2 Why are they not attending school?

Most reasons for not attending school, such as insecurity, lack of funds to support education or the need to work to contribute to the family, are risk factors.

3.4.2 Do any of the children that you live with, not including yourself, if you are under 16, work outside the home to earn money?

Depending on the context, school-age children who also work for money can be an indicator of migrant vulnerability.

3.5. Is everyone who lives with you a member of your household/family?

Living in overcrowded accommodation may be an indicator of vulnerability. Similarly, being part of a large household comprised of family members may indicate increased financial responsibilities. If a person does not know how many people he/she lives with, this may be an indicator of trafficking.

3.6. What is the highest level of education of the members of your household/family?

No education or less than a primary education is an indicator of migrant vulnerability. Further, the level of education of the parents/guardians/heads of household tends to correlate positively with higher educational attainment of children. Note that the questionnaire offers the option of "partial" completion of each level to avoid imprecise responses.

3.7. What is the main source of income of the members of your household/family?

Lack of any source of income for individuals but also for households/families as a whole is a risk factor, as is a source of income that is not stable and secure. Further, the specific sectors asked about – factory work; domestic work; prostitution or sex-related work; forestry, agriculture and fisheries; and mining and construction – are often high-risk sectors.

3.8. Have any members of your household/family ever migrated/moved to another country/region of your country in the past?

3.9. Have any of your friends ever migrated/moved to another country/region of your country in the past?

These two questions are intended to understand whether the household/family and close acquaintances of the respondent have a history of past migration, which depending on the context may be a protective factor (if they have knowledge/information about the process and route) or a risk factor (if they are determined to migrate in spite of having had negative experiences in the past, potentially including having been subjected to violence, exploitation and/or abuse). The sub-questions serve to create a more detailed summary of the migration history of the person's household/family and friends.

Section 3B: Household/family situation and dynamics

Questions in this section seek to understand the current situation of the household/family and the relationships among its members.

3.10. Has your household/family recently (within the last three years) been affected by any of the following situations?

The response options all indicate disruptive situations that may be risk factors for all members of the household/family.

3.11. Have any members of your household/family experienced, or are currently experiencing, any of the following?

The response options are all risk factors.

3.12. Have any members of your household/family been involved or are currently involved in or been affected by any of the following?

The response options are all indicative of risky behaviours that are indicators of vulnerability.

3.13. Does anyone in your household/family (not including yourself) have any debts?

3.13.1 Do you feel they are being pressured or coerced into repaying these debts?

Any personal debt is a risk factor. Indebtedness to an agent, smuggler, trafficker, recruiter or employer is an indicator of vulnerability to trafficking. Being pressured or coerced, regardless of who the debt is owed to, is an indicator of vulnerability to abuse and/or exploitation. Debts owed by any members of the household/family can affect all members.

3.14. Are you able to participate/are you heard when decisions are made for the household/family as a whole?

3.14.1 Why not?

These questions aim to understand the individual's position within the household/family. Not being able to participate in or to feel heard during household/family decision-making is a risk factor. It can also indicate increased vulnerability due to gender or age roles and inequality within the household/family.

Section 3C: Community participation and safety

The questions in this section aim to understand respondents' perception of the community and their and their household/family's place within it. Lack of safety and security, as well as lack of social ties within the community, are indicators of vulnerability.

3.15. Do you feel your household/family is isolated from the rest of the community?

An individual's access to social networks is usually based on the household/family's access to such networks. Lack of social ties and networks is a risk factor.

3.16. How safe is this community, as it relates to you and your household/family living here?

A perception of insecurity is a risk factor.

3.17. How likely do you think women are to encounter violence, exploitation and abuse in this community?**3.18. How likely do you think men are to encounter violence, exploitation and abuse in this community?****3.19. How likely do you think children are to encounter violence, exploitation and abuse in this community?**

These three questions aim to understand whether there is widespread gender- and age-based vulnerability in the community, and the extent to which it can affect the respondent and their household/family. A higher likelihood of violence toward these groups is a risk factor.

3.20. How likely is it that someone in this community will become a victim of human trafficking?

This question aims to assess both the prevalence of human trafficking and the respondent's awareness of its presence. A high likelihood is a risk factor.

3.21. Are you aware of the presence of any gangs or organized crime elements in this community?

This question relates to the perception of safety and security. If gangs or organized crime elements are present, and if the respondent feels they are a threat to him/her and the household/family personally, this is a risk factor.

Section 4: Sociodemographic information

The questions in this section are intended to identify personal and/or group characteristics related to identity that may be associated with increased vulnerability. The extent to which any of these characteristics is a protective or risk factor depends on the context. In the subsequent interpretation process of this data, draw upon contextual knowledge to assess whether these are indicators of vulnerability. Many of the questions may also be particularly sensitive depending on the context; please refer to the section "Adapting the questionnaires to different sociocultural contexts" of this toolkit.

4.1. Race/ethnicity: Race/ethnicity may or may not be a socially relevant trait in the context, and respondents may or may not be familiar with those terms. The following are commonly understood definitions of the terms:

- **Race:** This refers most commonly to a person's appearance based on skin colour, hair texture or shape of nose, but may refer to ancestry as well as to appearance. Examples of terms used in various contexts: white, black, Asian, African, Afro-descendant, Indigenous.
- **Ethnicity:** This term commonly refers to a group identity based on shared social and cultural characteristics, such as language, religion and social practices such as marriage customs. Some examples: Igbo, Zulu, Han, Kikuyu, Hmong, Mapuche, Zapotec and Basque.

Belonging to any race or ethnicity is not in itself an indicator of vulnerability. However, depending on the context, it may be a protective factor if that identity is privileged, or a risk factor if it is marginalized.

4.2. Religion: As with ethnicity, subscribing to any given religion may be a protective or risk factor depending on the context. Note that the list provided in the questionnaire cannot be exhaustive. If the person's religion is not one of the options provided, please enter it in the "Other" space.

4.3. What is your biological sex?

4.4. What is your gender identity?

While for most people these two notions are interchangeable, being "born" male but identifying as a woman, or vice versa, is usually a strong indicator of vulnerability.

4.5. Do you identify as heterosexual?

If the response is no, then it is likely that the person identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual or queer (LGBTQ), which is an indicator of vulnerability.

Responsible data-gathering

Many of the questions being asked in this questionnaire focus upon topics that are very personal and/or very sensitive. There is thus an onus to ensure that the “do no harm” principle is respected through their participation, including by protecting respondent anonymity. Further, if a vulnerable person in need of assistance is identified during the interview, he/she should be referred to the appropriate protection actor. Enumerators should be appropriately trained as regards how to follow these guidelines.

Adapting the forms to different sociocultural contexts

It may be tempting to avoid asking questions about socially taboo topics. For example, in contexts where homosexuality is illegal or where engaging in sexual activities before or outside of marriage is cause for ostracism, it may feel uncomfortable to ask respondents about their sexual orientation or whether they have children if they have indicated they are not married. In spite of this, these questions must be included. Indeed, failing to obtain this information would mean failure to collect data about the very factors that would place such a person at risk, and therefore failure to inform programming designed to protect the person. In addition, the exclusion of such questions would reduce the comparability of the data across regions and therefore curtail the possibility of developing suitable programming options at the global level.

In order to reduce the likelihood of offending the respondent, the most potentially sensitive questions have been placed towards the end of the questionnaire, so that a rapport will already have been established between the respondent and the interviewer. Nevertheless, since each particular sociocultural context is unique, it is possible that certain topics will be more or less delicate in different locations. In those cases, it will be important to use strategies to minimize the possibility of offending the respondent or of someone else hearing the answer. The following are some possible approaches:

- Begin all interviews by explaining to the respondent that answers will be confidential, and that he/she can refuse to answer any questions or decide to terminate the interview at any point.
- When reaching a sensitive question, reassure the respondent again by saying something like: “We know that people who don’t conform to social expectations are usually more vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse, so I need to ask you some sensitive questions. Rest assured that your responses will be kept confidential, and I do not mean to offend you in any way.”
- Preface potentially sensitive questions by saying something like: “I mean no offence in asking, but...”

Whenever feasible, the interview should take place in a private space.

In many cases, specific terms may be difficult to translate in the sense that there may not be a local term that is exactly equivalent to the concept, such as “household/family,” “gender identity” or “heterosexual.” Other expressions, like “risky sexual behaviour” or “informal economy,” will also need to be explained in a socially sensitive yet conceptually accurate way. In other words, while the terms may have exact equivalents linguistically, they may not be commonly used or understood. Wherever possible, we have provided guidance as to the meaning of such expressions within the questionnaire itself. However, it is possible that some terminology will be unfamiliar in particular contexts. In those cases, it will be important to seek a word or phrase that conveys the idea that the questionnaire seeks to address. It is essential, however, that the local terms used should be non-judgemental and non-pejorative.

Questionnaires

The questionnaires can be downloaded from IOM’s website (www.iom.int):

- Household/family questionnaire: origin/pre-departure
- Household/family questionnaire: in-transit
- Household/family questionnaire: destination
- Household/family questionnaire: returned