

Survey Quality Frameworks and Quality Assessments

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Webinar Goals

Foundations of Survey Quality

- Key concepts of survey quality and why they matter for reliable, credible data

Integrated Quality Frameworks

- Structured frameworks for assessing quality across the full survey lifecycle

Practical Approaches to Quality Assessment

- Tools, indicators, and methods for assessing quality using survey processes and outputs

Value of Systematic Quality Evaluation

- How quality assessments support improvement, transparency, and trust in survey programs

Importance of Survey Quality

Quality as a Moving Target:

- Changing modes, expectations, and integration needs require demonstrable quality

Quality as Risk Management:

- Make risks to accuracy, credibility, and use explicit and manageable

Credible & Usable Data :

- Reflect reality with documented limits; meet decision-makers' needs

Trust & Interoperability:

- Transparent controls build confidence and enable comparable, integrated data

What is a Survey Quality Framework?

A Shared Reference System

- Defines how survey quality is conceptualized, monitored, and discussed

Multidimensional by Design

- Encompasses accuracy, relevance, timeliness, accessibility, coherence, and related quality dimensions

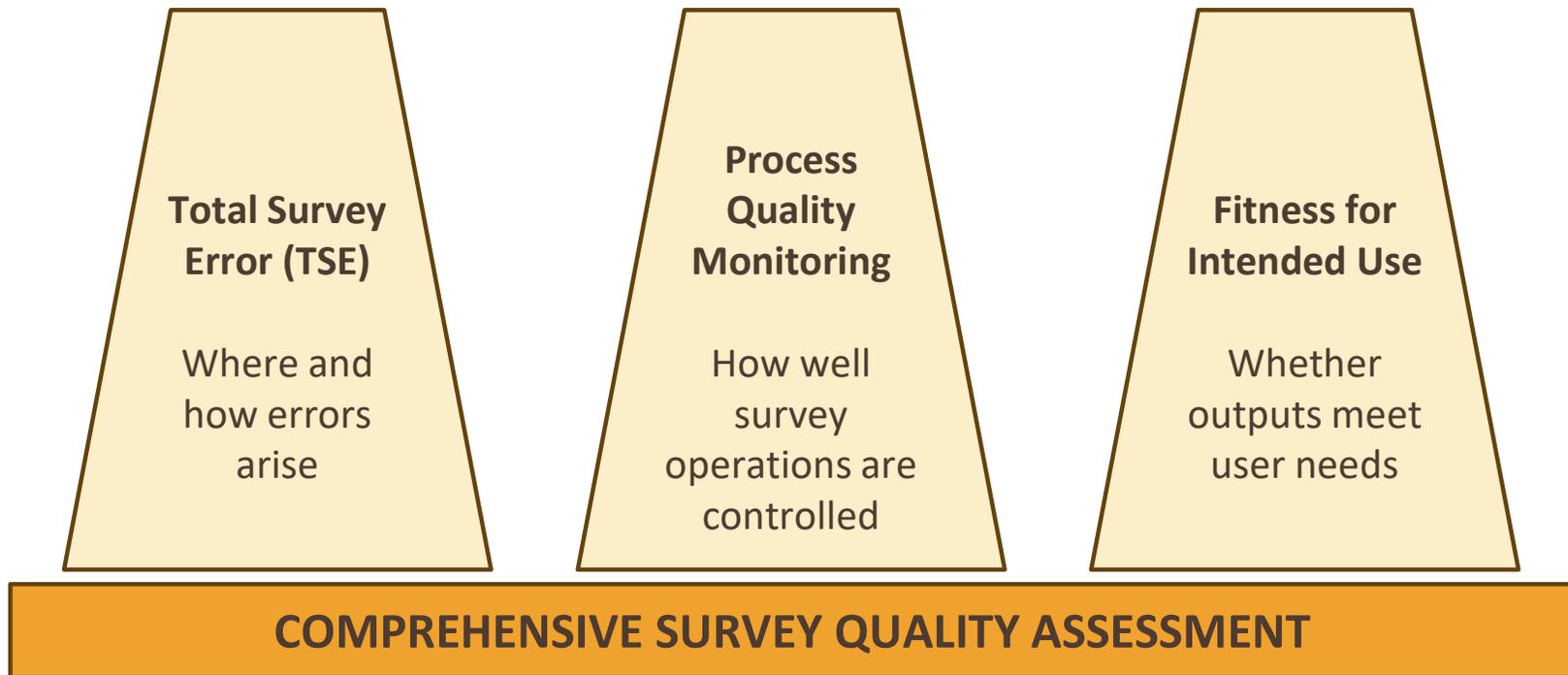
Supports Professional Judgment

- Makes assumptions, priorities, risks, and trade-offs explicit

Organizational Value

- Strengthens consistency, transparency, accountability, and communication

Core Perspectives on Survey Quality



Quality Assurance vs. Quality Assessment

Quality Assurance

- Planned and ongoing
- Embedded across the lifecycle
- Prevents and detects issues early
- Focus on process control and monitoring

Quality Assessment

- Periodic or post hoc
- Evaluative and diagnostic
- Identifies strengths, risks, and limitations
- Focus on interpretation, accountability, and learning

Effective survey quality relies on both!

Integrating Quality Perspectives Across the Survey Lifecycle

Different questions, complementary answers

- TSE, process monitoring, and fitness-for-use capture different aspects of quality

Applied across the lifecycle

- Design, implementation, outputs, and dissemination benefit from all three perspectives

Trade-offs made explicit

- Integration helps balance accuracy, timeliness, cost, and usability

Foundation for quality planning and assessment

- Integrated perspectives underpin QA plans, monitoring systems, and assessments

Tools for Quality Assurance and Assessment

From quality frameworks to operational tools



Assurance, assessment, and learning
in practice

Management Quality Assurance and Surveillance Plan (MQASP)

- Defines quality standards, indicators, and control points
- Clarifies roles, escalation, and decision authority
- Integrates assurance, assessment, and learning
- Quality assurance components defined for each stage of the survey lifecycle

Standardized checklists and SOPs tailored to functional areas:

- Finance
- Contracts
- Questionnaire development
- CAPI development
- Survey operations
- Survey deliverables
- Data analysis
- Dissemination
- Archiving

Consistent structure across components enables transparency, accountability, and continuity

Defining Quality Standards and Indicators

Fitness-for-intended-use indicators

- Quantitative and qualitative signals linked to intended uses

Process quality standards

- Required steps and protocols for survey operations

Targets and documentation

- Thresholds, evidence sources, and responsibilities defined upfront

Foundation for monitoring and assessment

Standards define expectations; Assessments evaluate performance

Within a Component of MQASP: An Example of Internal Structure

Within each
MQASP
component:

Performance standard

- What “quality” means for this activity

Roles and responsibilities

- Accountable and responsible parties clearly defined

Operational checklist

- Concrete steps and required elements for implementation

Documented evidence

- Records used for monitoring and assessment

Example: Quality Assurance Checklist

Survey Operations

Activity: Request for Proposals (RFP) for Survey Implementing Firms
Performance standard: RFP includes all criteria necessary for identification of a firm to conduct high-quality survey implementation

Roles:

- Accountable: Director of Operations
- Responsible: Country Manager

Checklist:

- Survey title
- Survey objectives
- Key indicators
- Target population definition
- Sample size and geographic coverage
- Languages of administration
- Requirements for field team composition (e.g., gender balance)
- Description of special survey modules (e.g., anthropometry, agriculture)
- Fieldwork timeline and Gantt chart
- List of survey deliverables

Evidence: Final RFP document archived in project repository

The RACI Model

R – Responsible

Implements the task

A – Accountable

Owens the decision and outcome

C – Consulted

Provides technical input

I – Informed

Kept aware of progress or results

Roles defined per activity within the MQASP

Quality Assurance Plan (QAP)

Step	What the QAP Defines
1. Quality dimension	Accuracy, relevance, timeliness, etc.
2. Intended use	What decisions or analyses the data must support
3. Indicator(s)	Quantitative and qualitative proxies
4. Standard / benchmark	Target, threshold, or expected range
5. Evidence source	Paradata, field metrics, documentation
6. Interpretation notes	What the indicator does and does not imply

Quality Assurance Plan: Example from a Comparative Survey Assessment

Lifecycle Stage	Key quality dimension	Indicator	Target	Assessment
Sampling	Coherence & Comparability	Percentage of countries where a common set of variables are used for stratification	100%	Met
Sampling	Accuracy	Percentage of countries where the sampling frame covers at least 95% of the populations	100%	Not met <i>(Details)</i>
Sampling	Accessibility	Percentage of countries for which the characteristics of the reference statistics are documented in complete accordance with the template	100%	Met
Translation	Punctuality	Initial translation delivered at agreed date	Y	Met
Interviewer training	Accuracy	Training materials cover strategies for convincing reluctant respondents	Y	Met

After Action Reviews (AARs)

Purpose

- Respond to deviations from quality standards and emerging trade-offs in real time

When applied

- After pretests and pilots
- Early in fieldwork (e.g., first weeks)
- At data close-out
- After dissemination events

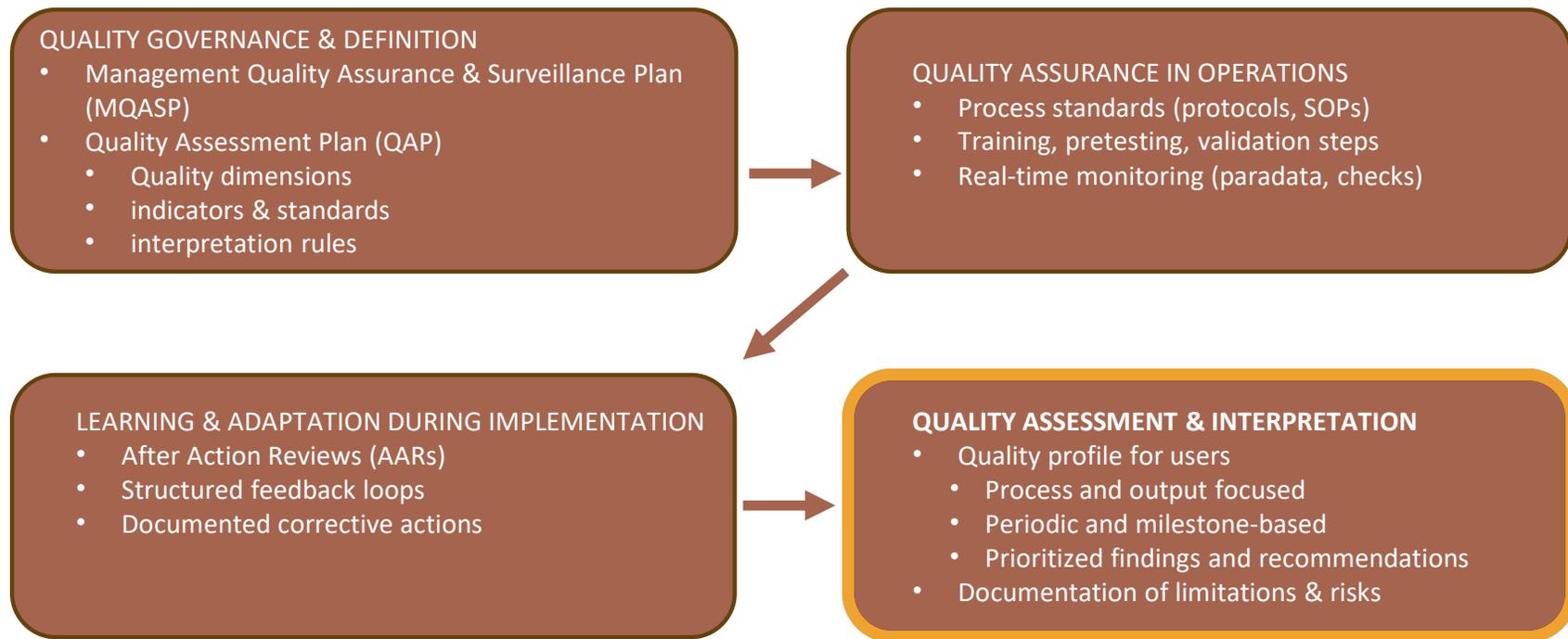
Core questions

- What was intended to happen?
- What actually happened?
- Why were there differences?
- What should be done next?

Outputs

- Documented decisions and actions
- Assigned owners and timelines
- Inputs to ongoing monitoring and future planning

Conducting Quality Assessments: How the Tools Fit Together



Survey Quality Assessment: Example Outline

- Purpose and scope
- Achievement of targets in the Quality Assurance Plan
 - Organized by survey lifecycle
 - Organized by TSE components
- Assessment of survey outputs
 - Key quality indicators (e.g., age heaping, missing data)
 - Response rate
 - Demographic benchmarking
- Comparative assessment, if applicable
- Data limitations
- Summary findings and recommendations

Framework for Recommendations

Table 1. Prioritization of Recommendations for Sampling Frame Development Activities

	Low cost		High cost		Source of error
	High impact	Low impact	High impact	Low impact	
Recommendation 1	X				Nonresponse error
Recommendation 2	X				Sampling error
Recommendation 3		X			Coverage & nonresponse error
Recommendation 4		X			Comparison error
Recommendation 5			X		Sampling error

Benefits of Systematic Quality Assessment

Improved Data Reliability

- Systematic quality assessments enhance data reliability by proactively identifying and addressing errors.

Enhanced Transparency and Accountability

- Quality assessments promote transparency and accountability, building trust in official statistics.

Capacity Building and Best Practices

- Assessments provide insights for capacity building, helping organizations strengthen processes and adopt best practices.

Culture of Continuous Improvement

- Ongoing quality assessments foster a culture of continuous improvement, adapting to user needs and technology.

Key Recommendations for Ensuring Quality

Early Integration of Quality Frameworks



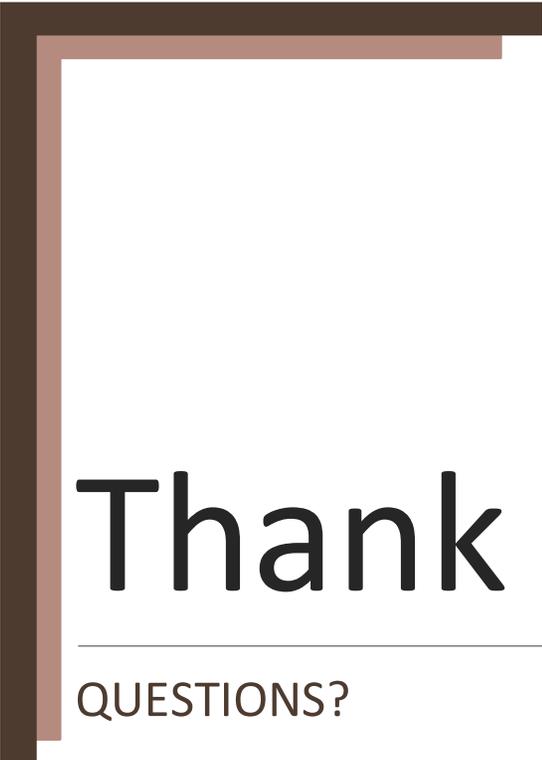
Comprehensive Documentation



Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation



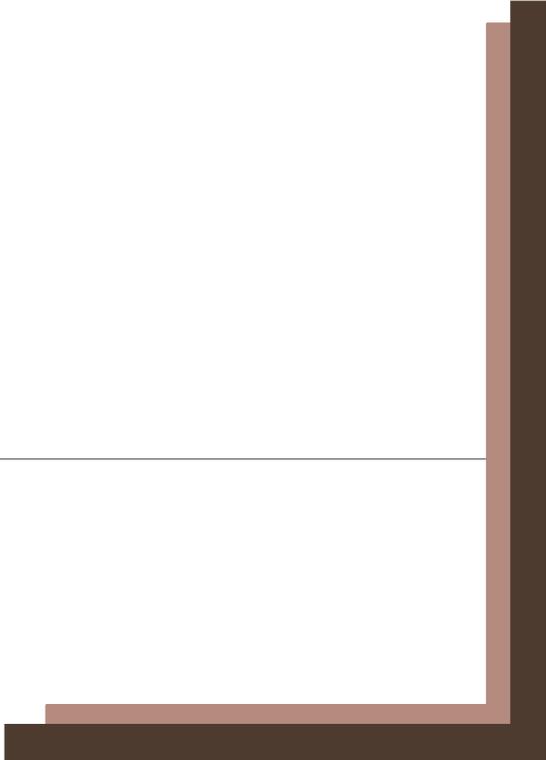
Engagement and Learning Culture



Thank you!

QUESTIONS?

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Resources

- European Quality of Life Survey 2016: Quality Assessment | Eurofound:
 - <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/publications/all/european-quality-life-survey-2016-quality-assessment>
- How to conduct a Data Quality Assessment (DQA):
 - <https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/bc4a91c3-b912-48cd-bee9-eceae9be4e07>
- Eurostat's Quality Assurance Framework
 - <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/european-quality-standards/quality-assurance-framework>
- AAPOR-WAPOR Task Force Report on Quality in Comparative Surveys
 - https://aapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/AAPOR-WAPOR-Task-Force-Report-on-Quality-in-Comparative-Surveys_Full-Report.pdf
- Cross-Cultural Survey Guidelines: Survey Quality
 - <https://ccsg.isr.umich.edu/chapters/survey-quality/>