



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# USER GUIDE: USAID POVERTY ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR CAMBODIA

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## **DISCLAIMER**

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

This document is intended to guide users on the proper use of the USAID Poverty Assessment Tool (PAT) for Cambodia. A copy should be given to each interviewer during the training, and it should be reviewed thoroughly by all those involved in the interviewing process, including those who will be doing the quality control and data processing.

This PAT survey is divided into 5 sections with *Interviewer Instructions* spread throughout. The sections are:

- *Client Information* (page 4)
- *Quality Control Checks Box* (page 5)
- *Household Roster* (page 5)
- *Black Box* (page 8)
- *Household Questionnaire* (page 9)

The next page outlines each of these sections on the Cambodia PAT. The remainder of the guide contains detailed information on each section including information on asking questions, recording answers, beginning and concluding the interview, and general interviewing procedures and techniques.

Data from the 2004 Cambodia Socioeconomic Survey (CSES) was used to develop this PAT, which closely replicates the poverty results of the CSES using a smaller number of carefully chosen, statistically derived indicators.

For more information on, or to download, the PAT Surveys, Data Entry Templates, or other implementation materials, see [www.povertytools.org](http://www.povertytools.org).

**Interviewer Instructions**  
 These are throughout the survey, indicated by "Interviewer:"

**Client Information**  
 Includes "Survey Number" at top right

**Client Assessment Survey - Cambodia**

*Interviewer: Fill out the information below before the survey begins. Do not ask the respondent for this information.*

Date of Interview :   
 Interviewer (code) :   
 Branch (code) :   
 Region :   
 1=Phnom Penh 2=Coastal 3=Plateau/mountain  
 4=Plains 5=Tonle Sap  
 Client Location :  Urban#0; Rural#1  
 Time in Program :  Months  
 Client or ID # :

Quality Control Checks	
Field Supervisor	
Date _____	Initials _____
Headquarters	
Date _____	Initials _____
Data Processor	
Date _____	Initials _____

**Quality Control Checks Box**

*Interviewer: Introduce the survey to the respondent. Say: "Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I work for the organization \_\_\_\_\_. We are trying to learn a little bit more about the clients we work with, and so I have a few questions I would like to ask today. It should only take us about 20 minutes, and the answers you provide will be put together with answers from other households. All of your answers are completely confidential and your name will not be given with your answers. Are you willing to take some time to answer these questions today?" After he/she agrees, proceed with the dialogue below.*

*Interviewer: I would like to ask you some questions about the people in your household. Let me tell you a little bit about what we mean by "household." For our purposes today, members of a household are those that live together and eat from the "same pot." Each person contributes to and benefits from the household. It should include anyone who has lived in your house for 6 of the last 12 months, but it does not include anyone who lives here but eats separately. Do you have any questions about that? Answer any questions the respondent has before proceeding.*

*Interviewer: Ask the respondent to list all members of the household, using the definition above. After completing Column A, then ask for the information in Columns B-E, filling out each row completely before moving to the next household member. Write the information down in the chart as he/she relays it to you. Say to the respondent: "Now I would like you to identify each person in your household and then answer some basic questions about each person."*

A. Household Member	B. Sex	C. Relation to household head	D. Age	E. For persons 5 years of age and older only Can [NAME] read a simple message in any language?
	Female ...0 Male .....1	Head .....1 Spouse .....2 Child .....3 Parent .....4 Grandchild .....5 Grandparent .....6 Other .....7	(check appropriate)	No .....0 Yes .....1
1) Respondent				
2)				
3)				
4)				

**Household Roster**

*Interviewer: Skip this section and return to fill in the answers after the interview. Do not ask the respondent these questions; fill in the answers from the information in the table above.*

2. Number of people living in household (record number of members from column A above):

3. Sex of household head (record sex from Column B for person who is identified as household head in Column C):

4. Age of household head (record age from Column D for person who is identified as household head in Column C):

5. Number of people age 18 and older (excluding head) who can read (record total number who answer 1 in Column E, excluding household head, who are identified as 18 years or older in Column D):

**Black Box**

*Interviewer: Say: "Now, I would like to ask you some questions about your housing conditions. By housing I mean all the rooms and all the separate buildings in which you and your household members live."*

*Interviewer: For questions with multiple choice answers, do not read the answers. Ask respondent the question and match the answer to the option most similar on the survey. If respondent's answer is unclear, probe until you find an adequate answer.*

6. What is the primary construction material of the roof of the housing/dwelling unit occupied by your household?

Thatch .....1 Mixed but predominantly made of galvanized iron/aluminum, tiles or fibrous cement .....7  
 Tiles .....2 Fibrous cement .....3 Mixed but predominantly made of thatch or salvaged materials .....8  
 Fibrous cement .....3 Galvanized iron or aluminum .....4 Plastic sheet .....9  
 Galvanized iron or aluminum .....4 Salvaged materials .....5 Other .....10  
 Salvaged materials .....5 Concrete .....6

7. What is your household's main source of lighting?

Publicly-provided electricity .....1 Kerosene lamp .....4  
 Privately-generated electricity/Generator .....2 None .....5  
 Battery .....3 Other .....6

8. Did your household boil or otherwise treat its drinking water last month?

Yes, always .....1  
 Sometimes .....2  
 No, never .....3

9. What type of fuel does your household mainly use for cooking?

Firewood .....1 Publicly-provided electricity .....6  
 Charcoal .....2 Gas and electricity .....7  
 Firewood and charcoal .....3 Privately-generated electricity .....8  
 Liquefied petroleum gas .....4 None/don't cook .....9  
 Kerosene .....5 Other .....10

**Household Questionnaire**  
 This consists of all of the remaining questions on the survey

*Interviewer: Say: "Now I would like to ask you a few questions about some items that may be present in your dwelling."*

10. How many televisions does your household own?  number

11. How many video tape players or video tape recorders does your household own?  number

12. How many motorcycles does your household currently own?  number

13. How many e-bikes does your household own?  number

## General Instructions

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Except where noted, **all** the information on the survey form must be completed and entered into the data processing software, or that record/interview will not be included in the poverty calculation. Thus, it is extremely important that all interviewers are sufficiently trained, have an opportunity to practice applying the questionnaire, and will ensure that each survey is complete and legible before leaving the interview.

**Interviewer Instructions** – In numerous locations throughout the survey, instructions are included for the interviewer. These instructions are in *italics* and are preceded by “Interviewer” in bold letters. The portions of the instructions enclosed in quotation marks are recommended phrases to be read to the respondent. They usually introduce a new section. Other instructions are NOT to be read but are for the interviewer’s information.

For the purpose of this guide, we will provide additional information on Interviewer Instructions as they appear throughout the survey.

## Client Information

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Complete the top section of the questionnaire with the appropriate information before beginning the interview. Most of the information in this section can usually be taken from the program records (MIS), and should be filled out prior to the interview, whenever possible.

**“Survey Number”** – Each questionnaire **must** have a **unique** survey number that is written on each page of the survey (in case pages become separated) before the interviewer goes into the field. It is essential for each survey to have its own, unique number, with no repetitions, in order for the data cleaning and analysis to function properly. Sequential numbering (001, 002, 003...) is recommended and additional coding can be included, if desired, to help identify when and where an interview took place. For example, the first 2 digits of a survey number could represent the year in which the interview was done, the second 2 digits could represent the branch number, and the final 3 digits could be the sequential numbering system. With such a design, survey number “0711001” would indicate that it was administered in the year 2007 to a client of Branch 11 and that the respondent was number 1 (001) on the list.

**“Date of Interview”** – (optional) Record the date of the interview. This is useful for tracking the survey process, including having the option of comparing results from different time periods.

**“Interviewer (code)”** – (optional) A unique code should be assigned to each interviewer before the interviewing process begins. During the quality control process, it is helpful to know which interviewers are making mistakes so that it can be brought to their attention, and additional training can be provided, as needed.

**“Branch (code)”** – (optional) This number identifies the branch to which the respondent belongs. This can be useful for tracking the forms and also allows for comparison of branches if one is doing additional data analysis.

**“Region”** – Indicate the major region of the country in which the respondent lives. If the Region response options are not well known by your interviewers, then it is recommended to create a master list of all municipalities or branch offices where your clients are located, along with the regional codes corresponding to each of the municipalities or branches. For the Cambodia PAT, the five options include the Phnom Penh metropolitan area, Tonle Sap, and the Coastal, Plateau/mountain, and Plains regions.

**“Client Location”** – The determination of the respondent’s status as either urban or rural should match the definition used by your country’s national statistics office for classifying the population. As with the Region variable, if your interviewers will have difficulty in determining whether some respondents are rural or urban, then a master list of all municipalities or branch offices should indicate which ones are urban and which are rural.

**“Time in Program”** – (optional) This is the amount of time in months, not years, the respondent has been involved in the program according to your records. If the information is not available, the respondent may be asked. If the response is given in years, then translate that into months. Do not include periods of time when the respondent was not a client (if they left the program and came back). This field can be used when doing additional analysis, for example, comparing client attributes by amount of time in the program.

**“Client or ID #”** – (optional) Use the same client identification number that you use in your client records (MIS). Some organizations create unique ID numbers, while others use the client’s national ID number. This can be used to help verify that the correct respondent is interviewed. The Client ID number is used instead of the respondent’s name in order to maintain confidentiality. However, to ensure complete confidentiality, the ID number can be crossed out (made illegible) once the Sampling and Survey Tracking Coordinator has confirmed that the proper respondent was interviewed.

## **Quality Control Checks Box**

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This is to be completed as follows:

- The Field Supervisor signs and dates it while still in the field, after he/she has reviewed the survey for missing, illegible or inconsistent answers.
- The Project Manager or Sampling and Survey Tracking Coordinator signs and dates it at headquarters after confirming that the survey is properly completed and that it is consistent with the sampling plan.
- The Data Processor signs and dates it to confirm that he/she was able to enter the data into the database accurately and completely. If doing double data entry to minimize data entry errors, then both data processors should sign and date the survey form once they have finished entering the data.

## **Household Roster**

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The purpose of the roster is to learn about each member of the household in such a way so as to build trust with the respondent and minimize any bias. Collecting household information with a

roster will facilitate data collection. It is harder for the respondent to remember and answer questions about all the members of the household without listing them and asking specifically about each member. Using a roster helps identify all the members in an organized fashion, making sure nothing is left out, and also provides a rich level of information that can be used for further analysis.

**Interviewer Instructions – Interviewer Instructions** – Introduce the survey. The introduction printed on the original PAT survey is recommended; your team will have customized the introduction for your location and cultural appropriateness. The introduction should include the following components:

1. Introduction of yourself (the interviewer)
2. Request to speak to the client / beneficiary to be interviewed
3. Description of the survey’s purpose and how long it will take
4. Request permission to conduct the interview
5. Ask client / beneficiary if they have any questions
6. Description of the definition of household

*Parts 1-3:* Many PAT implementers have reported that the initial client approach and introduction are the most important parts of the interview so it is very important to be clear and courteous and to respect all appropriate cultural norms.

While introducing the survey, be sure to describe the purpose of the survey as agreed upon by the survey team and supervisors. While it is important to be honest and open with respondents about the purpose of the survey, giving too much detail could bias their responses. If respondents think that their answers will have an impact on their program participation, they may try to give answers that make them look more or less poor. It is usually sufficient to let respondents know that you are ‘trying to learn more about our clients.’

Also understand that the poverty assessment survey uses a limited number of questions to estimate which households are below the extreme poverty line, but it does not try to capture ‘all’ assets or dimensions of poverty. This is why it may seem at times that specific questions are not ‘good’ indicators of poverty, or that other questions seem as though they would be good indicators of poverty, but do not appear on the survey. It is the specific *combination* of questions that predicts a household’s wealth status.

*Parts 4 & 5:* Asking permission to proceed with the survey and answering any questions are important for building trust with the respondent.

*Part 6:* Since some people may attribute different meanings to the word “household,” a standardized definition of the term must be used to maintain consistency in the survey. An explanation of this definition will provide the respondent with an understanding of who should and should not be included when listing the members of the household. As the interviewer is recording the names of the household members in the roster list, he or she should remind the respondent of the definition to make sure the list is accurate according to the definition. It is a natural tendency to just list the immediate family members, so it is

important to ensure that the respondent is using the definition provided in the survey introduction (and explained below).

In order to be considered part of the household, a person must meet both of the following criteria:

1. Generally speaking, a household member is someone who both contributes to and uses the resources (food, materials, and other household items) of the household. If someone stays in the house but does not both contribute to it and take from it, he or she is not a household member. People with limited capacity to contribute to the household (because they are too old, young, or ill) are still considered part of the household.
2. A household member must live in the house the majority of the time. If someone has lived outside the household for more than six out of the last twelve months, he or she is not a household member. Exceptions to this rule are for those who have joined the family recently, such as a newborn, adopted child, or spouse (newlywed) or student who lives at a boarding school and only comes home during holidays. Another exception is that the head of the household is always considered part of the household, even if he or she lives away for most of the year. It is up to the person who is being interviewed to determine who is the head of household. In general, the head of household is the person who provides the prime source of income and/or makes most decisions for the household.

*Filling out the Household Roster* – First, ask the respondent to list all the members of the household. Record this information in column A, and make sure the list of household members is complete before asking for additional information. Then, one member at a time, ask all the remaining questions in columns B through E. Record all the information pertaining to a household member in the same row, and then move on to the next household member (row).

- A. “Household Member” – Notice the word “respondent” appears at the top of the roster list. Always fill out information for the respondent first. If the respondent is not comfortable giving you the first names of the other household members, you can write their relationship to the respondent, instead—such as “brother1”, “sister 1”, “sister 2”, etc., to help assure the respondent that the information will be treated confidentially.
- B. “Sex” – When the respondent lists the members of the household, the sex will often be easy to guess. However, you should confirm the proper sex of each household member with the respondent.
- C. “What is [NAME]’s relationship to the Household Head?” – BE CAREFUL. This is NOT the relation to the respondent! You may need to probe to make sure you are capturing the relation of each family member to the “head of household.” It is for the respondent to decide who they consider to be the head of the household. If they are not sure, do not understand the term “head of household” (which may occur in rural areas), or insist that both the husband and wife share the responsibilities and are both heads of the household, then more specific criteria can be used. These criteria could include who provides the most support or who makes most of the decisions for the family.

- D. “How old is [NAME]?” – Record age in complete years only. Do not include decimals or fractions, or round up to the next number. For newborns, put “0” if they have not reached 1 year of age.
- E. “Can [NAME] read a simple message in any language?” – For household members 5 years of age and older, ask if that person can read a simple message in any language.

## **Black Box**

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The 4 questions that are inside the Black Box after the household roster (#2 - #5) are NOT to be asked of the person being interviewed, but instead filled out by the interviewer *after* the interview has been completed.

**Interviewer Instructions** – “Skip this section and return to fill in the questions after the interview. Do not ask the respondent these questions; fill in the answers from the information in the preceding table.” It is very important that the interviewer does NOT try to complete this section during the interview, as it will not only break the flow of the interview, but will also greatly increase the chance of errors if the interviewer tries to get it all done at the same time.

After the interview is completed, the interviewer will take the information collected in the roster and calculate the answers to the questions in the Black Box beneath the roster. This is an area with a lot of room for human error, so it is very important to review these responses as part of the quality control process. The proper procedures for interpreting the roster responses and filling out the questions in the black box (#2 - #5) should also be reviewed and practiced extensively during the interviewer training.

- 2. “**Number of people living in household (record number of members from column A in the roster)**” – Record the total number of people listed in column A of the household roster. When collecting the roster information, be sure to probe to make sure that everyone meeting the definition of “household” is included in the list.
- 3. “**Sex of household head (record sex from column B for person who is identified as household head in column C)**” – Identify which household member is listed as the household head in column C (code = ‘1’), and then record that person’s sex from column B.
- 4. “**Age of household head (record age from column D for person who is identified as household head in column C)**” – Identify which household member is listed as the household head in column C (code = ‘1’), and then record that person’s age from column D. Be sure to record only the number of complete years, and do not round up.
- 5. “**Number of people age 18 and older (excluding head) who can read (record total number who answer 1 in Column E, excluding household head, who are identified as 18 years or older in Column D)**” – For all household members 18 and older, with the exception of the head of household, record the number of them who have a “1” in column E.



## Household Questionnaire

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**Interviewer Instructions** – “Now I would like to ask you some questions about your housing conditions. By housing I mean all the rooms and all the separate buildings in which you and your household members live.” These transitional comments are important for letting the respondent know when you are changing to a different topic. These questions refer to the dwelling in which the family currently resides.

**Interviewer Instructions** – For questions with multiple choice answers, do not read the answers. Ask respondent the question and match the answer to the option most similar on the survey. If respondent’s answer is unclear, probe until you find an adequate answer. Reading out the answer options is a LAST RESORT. If it comes to the point where reading is necessary, say: “I am going to read to you a list of several options. Please do not answer until you have heard all the options.”

6. **“What is the primary construction material of the roof of the housing/dwelling unit occupied by your household?”** - If the respondent indicates that more than one type of material is used, then probe to determine which material is most prevalent.
7. **“What is your household’s main source of lighting?”** – Indicate the primary source of lighting used in the home. If there is no lighting, then record a “5”. If they list more than one source, then ask which source is used more often, and provides more light.
8. **“Did your household boil or otherwise treat its drinking water last month?”** – If the respondent does not understand the question, then ask from where the household obtains its drinking water, and then, if necessary, ask if they do anything to the water before drinking it. Make sure that the respondent is only considering the last month of time in their response.
9. **“What type of fuel does your household mainly use for cooking?”** – The response should only be the type of fuel used most often. If the respondent says that they use various types of fuel at different times, then probe—without suggesting an answer—to determine which cooking fuel is used more often.

**Interviewer Instructions** - "Now I would like to ask you a few questions about some items that may be present in your dwelling." Continue with question #10.

*Note:* Make sure the respondent is speaking for the *entire* household. If you suspect that the respondent is answering only based on what assets he or she has, be sure to emphasize “your household” when reading the question to the respondent. Also, if any of the following assets are not currently functioning, then do not include it unless it can be easily repaired.

**10. “How many televisions does your household own?”**

**11. “How many video tape players or video tape recorders does your household own?”** – This should include any type of VCR or VHS player or recorder, but do not include DVD players.

**12. “How many motorcycles does your household currently own?”**

**13. “How many suitcases does your household own?”**

**14. How many dining sets does your household own? By dining set, I mean a dining table with chairs.**” – Be sure to clarify that a “dining set” includes both a dining table and chairs.

**15. How many wardrobes or cabinets does your household own?”** – Include all wardrobes and any cabinets that are pieces of furniture, but not a kitchen cabinet that is built into the wall.

**Interviewer Instructions** - Interviewer: Please make sure that the setting of the interview ensures confidentiality before beginning this section. Say: "I know that the following questions may be sensitive. I assure you that the answers will not be shared with anyone else."

**16. “How many times in the past 7 days did your household consume fish, fish paste, squid, shrimp and prawns, etc. at home?”** – Be sure to clarify that we want to know how many times (meals) that fish or seafood is consumed, and not the number of days during which it was served. Also be sure to only include seafood consumed at home, and not any seafood consumed outside of the home.

**17. How many times in the past 7 days did your household consume other meat, such as beef, pork, chicken, duck, etc. at home?”** – As with question 16, be sure to clarify that we want to know how many times (meals) that meats such as beef, pork or fowl is consumed, and not the number of days during which it was served. Also be sure to only include meats consumed at home, and not any meats consumed outside of the home.

**Interviewer Instructions** – “Look over the survey to see if you have missed any questions. If you have, please ask those questions of the respondent. If not, it is the end of the interview. Remember to thank the respondent for his/her time in helping you answer these questions!”

“Now return to the questions in the black box below the roster and fill in the answers.” After ending the interview, go back to the Black Box and fill in the response boxes with the appropriate answers from the roster. Double check to be sure that all the values were calculated correctly.