Data collection & the impact, challenges and opportunities of the COVID-19 pandemic

UNECE Virtual Conference – September 28th, 2021

Delivering insight through data for a better Canada
Background

In Canada, collection activities have adapted to those unchartered time adapting to COVID.

 QPushButton

How we evolved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection staff</th>
<th>Collection workload</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• March 2020</td>
<td>• March to July 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Five call centers were closed</td>
<td>• Collection activities were restraint to mission-critical surveys and COVID-19 related surveys.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• CATI and CAPI interviews are completed by phone from the interviewers’ house.</td>
<td>• July 2020</td>
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<td>• June 2020 – CAPI Lite</td>
<td>• The agency starts supporting health authorities by conducting contact tracing and monitoring activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Start of CAPI letter drop-off activities</td>
<td>• August 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• August 2021 - CAPI Lite Plus</td>
<td>• Regular survey collection workload has resumed – with restriction due to sanitary conditions in CAPI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CAPI interviewers are back contacting respondents (where sanitary conditions allows) contacting and convincing respondents to participate to surveys, updating telephone number and scheduling phone interviews.</td>
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Impact of COVID-19 on StatCan Collection

- Impact on Response Rates

  For EQ/CATI social surveys – stable
  For CAPI surveys substantial decline
  For EQ/CATI business small decline
Collection Opportunities – Introduction of CAPI Lite/CAPI Lite Plus

➢ Health and Safety FIRST - Since June 2020, travelling by CAPI interviewers is allowed in areas where the number of COVID-19 active cases is null or low and where the interviewer has agreed to travel.

• Interviewers are knocking at respondent’s door and making contact at distance. They are:
  • obtaining up-to-date contact information from respondent and/or planning an appointment OR
  • If there is no response at the door, dropping-off a personal reminder letters asking respondent to call back the interviewer and to provide them with updated contact information and/or complete the interview.

Some Results of CAPI Initiatives – LFS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Asking Respondents to Call Back</th>
<th>CAPI Lite</th>
<th>CAPI Lite Plus</th>
<th>Regular CAPI</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 5% Response Rate</td>
<td>• 35% Response Rate</td>
<td>• 65% Response Rate</td>
<td>• 85% Response Rate</td>
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Collection Issues– Introduction of CAPI Lite/CAPI Lite Plus

Coverage Issue

- For sanitary health and safety reasons, CAPI Lite Plus collection is being conducted only in areas that are identified as green (e.g. low incidence of COVID cases/adequate health system capacity)

- In the March 2021, LFS collection, CAPI Lite/CAPI Lite Plus collection was done for 10% of cases only.

- Overall LFS CAPI results – March 2021 - 41%

- Upon reopening of regions, this approach contribute to optimizing responses of CAPI cases.
Collection Opportunities

• Implementing new flexible and agile collection vehicles using EQ/CATI
  • Crowdsourcing
  • Panel surveys
  • Omnibus surveys

- Low cost
- Fast turnaround time
- Shorter content - simpler flow
- National and provincial estimates
Collection Opportunities

• Developing new electronic collection tools
• Mobile collection application - Vitali-T-Stat
Collection Opportunities

• Updating the frames
  • Business Register - increase timeliness of business contact information updates
  • Household Dwelling Frame - increase updates from admin sources, will benefit from Census 2021 updates
Collection Opportunities

- Improving capacity monitoring and hiring process
  - Capacity monitoring/coordination of workload done weekly with all regional offices
  - A new head office team has been created to help support the regional offices in the hiring process
  - Excellent collaboration from all regions and head office in order to meet collection workload objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Staff (persons)</th>
<th>July 2021</th>
<th>September 2021</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2020</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>1,800</td>
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Collection Opportunities

• Adapting respondent relations to the COVID context
  • Standard letter/email template have been developed and includes COVID content that is being reviewed punctually
  • The Informing Survey Respondent portal of the STC website is also being reviewed regularly
  • Refusal conversion strategies were reviewed
Next steps

• New operational context in being continuously updated in regards to staffing and operation (adjustments to collection agreement, re-evaluating CATI/CAPI workload/response rate targets, adjusting the production plan model, training…)

• CAPI Lite Plus is being implemented nationally – close monitoring will be done to ensure safety and security and monitor results

• Continuous reviewing of strategic decision and planning in the uncertain context of COVID-19
Questions ?