CHAPTER 5

REVIEW OF INITIAL APPLICATION PROPOSAL

SOP NUMBER: SOP/005/01

REVIEW COMMITTEE (RC)

NATIONAL STATISTICS BUREAU

Effective Date: Date:25th April,
Supersedes: 

Author: SOP Team
2014

Approved by: Director General, NSB
(Name): Kuenga Tshering
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1. PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure describes how the NSB-RC manages to review an initially submitted proposal.

2. SCOPE

This SOP applies to the review process of the study proposal package submitted for the first time.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the assigned primary reviewers to thoroughly review the study proposals delivered to them, give their decision, observation and comments to the NSB-RC in the Assessment Form and return to the Secretariat on the due date. The NSB-RC will make the review decision during the NSB-RC meeting. It is the responsibility of the NSB-RC Member Secretary to communicate the decision to the investigators and store the documents.

4. FLOW CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Designate primary reviewers to review the study proposals</td>
<td>Chairperson, NSB-RC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Distribute the proposal packages to the primary reviewers</td>
<td>NSB-RC Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Receive and verify the distributed proposal package</td>
<td>NSB-RC Members/Reviewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Review the proposal and complete the Assessment Form</td>
<td>NSB-RC Members/Reviewers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Discuss in NSB-RC meeting</td>
<td>NSB-RC Members / Reviewers/Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Communicate the decision to the investigator</td>
<td>NSB-RC Secretariat / Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Storage of the Documents</td>
<td>NSB-RC Secretariat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

5.1 Designate the primary reviewers to review the study proposal
5.1.1 The Chairperson, NSB-RC shall designate 2-3 members of NSB-RC with relevant expertise to review the study proposals and present to the committee meeting.

5.2 Distribute the proposal packages to the primary reviewers
5.2.1 Prepare the proposal package including the proposal and relevant documents, Assessment Form (AF/01-007/01), Assessment Report Form (AF/02-007/01) and the information of the due date for review and meeting date.
5.2.2 Distribute the proposal package to the primary reviewers at least three days before the due date of the review.

5.3 Receive and verify the distributed proposal package
5.3.1 Sign and date an acknowledgement form upon receiving the packages.
5.3.2 Return the receipt form back to the NSB-RC secretariat.
5.3.3 Check the distributed packages and notify the NSB-RC Secretariat if there are documents missing, or the specified meeting date cannot be met.

5.4 Review the Proposal and complete the review forms
5.4.1 Assessment Form, ANNEX- AF/01-007/01
   - Use the Assessment Form, AF/01-007/01 to guide the review and deliberation process.
   - Make comments where appropriate.
   - Date and sign of the reviewer.

5.4.2 Assessment Report form, Annex- AF/02-007/01
   - The reviewer records the review decision and comments by completing the assessment report form (AF/02/007/01) and sends it to the NSB-RC secretariat. (Refer to SOP/007/01-Use of Study Assessment Form).

5.5 NSB-RC Meeting
5.5.1 The primary reviewer presents a brief oral or written summary of the study design and his/her comments.
5.5.2 The Chairperson may ask the investigator / applicant to present the proposal to the NSB-RC meeting if required based on the recommendations of the reviewers.
5.4.1 The Chairperson or designee entertains discussion on each document under consideration (e.g., proposal, investigator’s qualifications, etc.).
5.4.2 Recommendations for modifications to the proposal as requested by the Committee are noted in the meeting minutes and will be communicated to the investigator.
5.4.3 The Chairperson or designee calls for a separate vote on each element in review. The committee votes to either:
   - Approve the study to start as presented with no modifications. = Approved
   - Approve the study to start with Committee approved recommendations. = Approved with recommendation
   - Require minor modifications to items noted at the convened meeting and follow-up by the Chairperson after receipt of the requested modifications. = Resubmission
   - Require major modifications to the items and Committee review of the materials. = Resubmission
   - Not approve the study, stating the reason for disapproval = Disapproved
5.4.4 If the proposal is to be resubmitted, the Committee should decide whether the review of the resubmission is by the Chairperson or the Committee.

5.6 **Communicate the Decision to the investigator**

5.6.1 If the study is approved, the Secretariat will prepare an approval/clearance letter (see SOP/007/01).
- The letter includes, at a minimum, a listing of each document approved
- An approval and expiration date is specified in the approval/clearance letter
- The expiration date shall be determined by the Chairperson based on the timeline submitted by the Investigator

5.6.2 If the Committee requires modifications to any of the documents, the Secretariat will prepare an Action Letter informing the NSB-RC’s decision with clearly stated recommendations to the investigator.

5.6.3 For the decision disapproval, a notifying letter to the investigator or applicant should state the followings:
- “If you wish to appeal to this decision, please submit your appeal in writing, addressed to the Chairperson, NSB-RC with justification as to why the appeal should be granted”

5.6.4 The Chairperson will review, approve and sign the letters.

5.6.5 The Secretariat forwards the Committee decision to the applicant or investigator within two working days after the decision in the form of action letter.

5.6 **Storage of the documents**

5.7.1 Keep a copy of the Action Letter in the Correspondence file.
5.7.2 Keep the completed Study Assessment Forms, Assessment Report Forms and the minutes of the meeting relevant to the proposal.
5.7.3 Store the documents on an appropriate file.

6. **GLOSSARY**

Initial Review The first time review of that proposal made by two or three individual reviewers (NSB-RC members) in advance of the Committee meeting and comments of the reviewers will be reported to the Committee meeting.

7. **REFERENCES**

- Research Ethics Board of Health Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Ministry of Health, Bhutan
- SSRCS Form 1, retrieved from NSCB website www.nscb.gov.ph as accessed on 22nd April, 2014

8. **ANNEX**

ANNEX 1 AF/01-005/01: Application Form for Initial Review
### I. GENERAL INFORMATION

| 1.1 Proposal Number (To be assigned by NSB-RC member Secretary):………………………….. |
| 1.2 Title of the statistical survey/census |
| 1.3 Proposal Version No………………………………………………………………. |
| 2 Legal basis (optional) |
| 3.1 Proponent agency/individual | 3.2 Conducting agency/PI |
| Name | Name |
| Address | Address |
| 3.3 Other cooperating agencies | 3.4 Funding source/s (Specify) |
| | a. RGOB |
| | b. Local private/Corporations |
| | c. Foreign/DP |
| 3.5 Core team members, if any |
| Name person: | Qualification |
| 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. |
| 4. | 4. |
| 5. | 5. |

4. Objectives and relevance of the survey (Cite specific use of the data to be collected, or programs/issues to be addressed).

5.1 Status of survey 
- a. Existing (Proceed to 5.2) 
- b. New (Proceed to 5.3)

5.2 Status of survey form/questionnaire 
- a. Existing statistical survey form being reported for the first time. What year was this first used? 
- b. Existing form for clearance renewal with revision.
5.3 Is this survey a rider to another survey?
   a. ☐ Yes (Specify)  
   b. ☐ No

5.4 Is this survey a component of a national or international program?
   a. ☐ Yes (Specify)  
   b. ☐ No

II. TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

1. Type and number of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of respondent</th>
<th>Size of universe</th>
<th>Size of sample</th>
<th>Expected response rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Establishment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Enterprise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Government agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Others (Specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Reference period of the survey

3. Geographical area covered by the survey, e.g., Bhutan, Dzongkhag, Gewogs, Chiwogs, etc.

4. Geographic disaggregation of the data to be produced
   a. ☐ National  
   b. ☐ Regional  
   c. ☐ District  
   d. ☐ Others (Specify).................

5. Frequency of data collection
   a. ☐ One-shot  
   b. ☐ Monthly  
   c. ☐ Quarterly  
   d. ☐ Annually  
   e. ☐ Others (Specify).................

6. Method of data collection (Check as many as applicable)
   a. ☐ Personal interview  
   b. ☐ Telephone  
   c. ☐ Mail  
   d. ☐ Others (Specify)......................

   c. ☐ Existing form for clearance renewal without revision.
   If b or c, give previous clearance no. ________________________
7. Survey questionnaire titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version No.</th>
<th>Form No.</th>
<th>Form Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Major data items to be collected (e.g., family income and expenditures, employment, compensation, prices)

9. List of tables and other outputs to be generated (attach table formats)

10. Brief description of the sampling design and estimation procedure. (The details should be provided in the proposal).
   a) Desired level of reliability and the proposed statistical measure to be used for assessing such reliability (e.g., standard errors of means)
   b) Type of sampling design (The details should be provided in the proposal.)
   c) Sampling unit (per stage if applicable)
   d) Domain
e) Sampling frame

f) Sample size (total, per stratum/cluster/stage)

g) Method of determining sample size

h) Estimation procedure (The details and formulas should be provided in the proposal).

i) Imputation procedure for non-response

11. Statistical analysis of results (e.g., descriptive, multivariate)

III. ESTIMATED DIRECT COST OF SURVEY (in Nu.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Personal Services</th>
<th>5. Printing Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses</td>
<td>6. Others (Specify)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Capital Outlay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL COST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 3. Travelling Expenses                     |                              |
| 4. Supplies                                 |                              |

IV. TIMETABLE OF ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Agency Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Planning and preparation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Formulation of survey design (to include formulation of objectives, scope and coverage; development of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology; Formulation of Sampling Design and Frame; Design of Table Formats; Preparation of Questionnaire and Manuals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Pre-test of the questionnaire

3. Revision based on pre-test of the questionnaire

4. Submission to NSB for review of survey design
   (allow 7 working days after submission of all required documents)

5. Finalization of questionnaires and manuals

6. Printing of questionnaires and manuals

B. Field operations

1. Training of personnel

2. Distribution and collection of questionnaires

3. Field editing

C. Data processing

1. Office editing

2. Data encoding

3. Verification

4. Tabulation

D. Report preparation

1. Analysis and interpretation of data

2. Report writing

E. Release of survey results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICANT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Prepared:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INSTRUCTIONS TO FILL IN APPLICATION FORM FOR INITIAL REVIEW (Form AF/01-005/01)

1. Required documents at the time of application for survey clearance:
   - Filled in Application Form for Initial Review
   - Survey proposal
   - Survey Questionnaire(s)
   - Enumerators’ Manual/Manual of Instructions (for new surveys or regular surveys with modifications)
   - Table format(s)
   - Any additional information not stated in the Application form for Initial Review

2. Please submit the above documents to:

   The NSB-RC Secretariat
   Survey and Data Processing Division
   National Statistics Bureau
   Hejo, Near India House
   P.O. Box No. 338
   Thimphu

3. The NSB-RC shall process survey clearance applications within 7 working days upon submission of complete documents by the proponent/conducting agencies. Within this period, review shall be conducted by the NSB-RC on Survey Design.

4. For any inquiries or clarifications, please contact us at any of the following numbers:

   Tel. Nos.: +975-2-333296/335849/
   Fax No.: +975-2-323069
   E-mail: tashinsb@gmail.com
           psangay@gmail.com
           dawatshering@hotmail.com,
I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Proposal Number – It will be assigned by the member secretary

1.2 Title of the statistical survey/census - Give the title of the survey/census for which the questionnaires will be used.

1.3 Proposal Version Number – Write the dated proposal version number on the proposal. For example version 01 dated 20th April, 2014 (one way of doing so is to insert footer in the document).

2 Legal basis - Specify Executive Order or Act if any which authorizes or supports (explicitly or implicitly) the conduct of the survey.

3.1 Proponent agency (Name and Address) - pertains to the agency or institution proposing the conduct of the survey. Usually, the funding agency is the proponent agency.

3.2 Conducting agency (Name and Address) - specify the agency or institution, including the address, that will perform all or the major stages of the survey operations. It may be the same as the proponent agency or it may be another agency contracted by the proponent for the purpose.

3.3 Other cooperating agencies - List down all other agencies that will assist, in one way or another, in the pursuit of the survey.

3.4 Funding source/s - Check and specify, opposite the applicable funding source/s, i.e. (a) Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB); (b) local private/corporations; and (c) foreign/Development Partners.

3.5 Consultants (Name of organization/person and nature of consultancy service) - Give the names of organizations/persons who render consultancy services on any aspect of the survey and specify the nature of corresponding services rendered.

4 Objectives and relevance of the survey - Cite the ultimate objectives (not merely “to collect data on certain items”) of the survey and its relevance to the agency function and/or government as a whole.

5.1 Status of survey - Check whether the survey is (a) new (to be conducted for the first time), or (b) existing (has been conducted before or is being conducted regularly).

5.2 Status of survey form/questionnaire - This shall be answered only if the survey is classified as “existing”.

Check whether the survey form is:

(a) an existing survey form reported for the first time - refers to forms used in existing surveys as defined in item 5.1 above but being reported for the first time. Specify the year the form was first used.

(b) an existing survey form with revision for renewal of clearance - refers to forms with prior clearance but proposed to be revised. Indicate clearance number previously granted by NSB-RC.

(c) an existing survey form without revision for renewal of clearance - refers to forms (no revision) whose prior clearance number is about to expire; hence due for renewal. If so, indicate clearance number previously granted by NSB-RC.

5.3 Is this survey a rider to another survey? - A survey is a rider to another survey if the data to be collected will be incorporated in the questionnaire of another survey, or if data collection will be done together with another survey using a separate questionnaire. If it is a rider, indicate the survey to which it shall ride with. As a rule, rider questionnaires shall be reported separately.

5.4 Is this survey a component of a national or international program? - It is important to identify whether a survey is part of a bigger program which deals with national or international concerns so that the survey can be reviewed within the wider perspective of the program.
II. TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

1. Type and number of respondents - Indicate the type of respondent, size of universe, number of respondents, and expected response rate.

Type of respondent - Check whether individual, household, establishment, enterprise, government agency, etc., depending on from whom data are to be collected.

(a) Individual - refers to a person or individual who responds to the survey in his own capacity or self
(b) Household - refers to an aggregate of persons, generally but not necessarily bound by ties of kinship, who live together under the same roof and eat together or share in common the household food.
(c) Establishment - refers to an economic unit which engages, under a single ownership or control, in one or predominantly one kind of economic activity at a fixed single physical location
(d) Enterprise - refers to an economic unit consisting of one or more establishments under a single ownership or control; may be a single legal entity, such as a corporation, partnership, single proprietorship or a complex family of legal entities under common ownership or control
(e) Government agency - includes any department, commission, board, bureau, division, service, office, authority, or administration in all branches of the national and local governments, including government-owned or controlled corporations.

Size of universe - Indicate the size of the target population from which the sample shall be selected.

Size of sample - Indicate number of prospective respondents from whom data will be collected.

Expected response rate - Indicate the estimated percentage of respondents who are expected to turn in answered questionnaires.

2. Reference period of the survey - Indicate the time period the data collected by the survey refers to, i.e., whether the past calendar year, past week, etc. If some data items have different reference periods, please indicate.

3. Geographical area covered by the survey - Indicate what part of the country the respondents will come from, e.g., Bhutan (nationwide) or specific regions only (East, West, Central, etc.)

4. Geographic disaggregation of the data to be produced - Indicate all levels of data disaggregation to be produced and/or published, such as national, regional, dzongkhag, etc.

5. Frequency of data collection - Check how frequently the data will be collected, whether (a) one-shot (one-time only, ad-hoc, or non-repetitive, or no definite schedule yet for re-conduct), (b) monthly, (c) quarterly, (d) annually, or, (e) other mode of frequency (specify).

6. Method of data collection - Check applicable box.

7. Survey questionnaire titles - Indicate the survey form title and form number, if any.

8. Major data items to be collected - Specify the major items of information to be collected (e.g., employment, compensation, prices).

9. List of tables and other outputs to be generated - Indicate the types and titles of reports or publications to be produced, and the tables to be presented in said reports or publications. Attach copies of proposed table formats.

10. Brief description of the sampling design and estimation procedure - State briefly the information needed in the form. The details, especially on the sampling
design and estimation of the parameters to include the means and variances of characteristics measured, should be provided in the proposal.

(a) Desired level of reliability - Give the minimum degree of reliability you would like your survey results and estimates to have, and the proposed statistical measure to be used for assessing such reliability.
(b) Sampling design - Briefly describe the method of determining or selecting respondents to the survey.
(c) Sampling unit (per stage if applicable) - Specify the unit being selected for each stage, whether individuals, households, chiwogs, gewogs, dzongkhags, establishment, etc.
(d) Domain - The lowest level for which survey results could be produced, i.e., if the domain is the region, then dzongkhag estimates could not be produced. This need not be geographical.
(e) Sampling frame - Identify the list frame or area frame to be used.
(f) Sample size - Give the number of sampling units chosen in each stage and/or grouping and then the total number of units to be surveyed.
(g) Method of determining sample size - Explain how the sample size in each stage and/or grouping was decided.
(h) Estimation procedure - If the characteristics or behavior of a larger group in which the sample is contained will be estimated, show the formulas and computational procedure. Provide all formulas in the proposal.
(i) Imputation procedure for non-response, if any - Explain briefly how non-response items will be estimated.

11. Statistical analysis of results - Indicate the statistical techniques that will be used to analyze the survey results.

III. ESTIMATED DIRECT COST OF SURVEY

Estimated direct cost of survey - Indicate the amount estimated to be spent for the survey in Ngultrum. Include only direct expenditures, which refer to those which will be incurred as a result of the survey, and exclude indirect expenditures, or those which are used for the survey but will be incurred even without survey. **Personal Services** include wages/salaries of enumerators, editors, data processors, etc. while **Capital Outlay** includes cost of computers and other equipment.

IV. TIMETABLE OF ACTIVITIES

Timetable of activities - Under the column for schedule, indicate the month/s of the year or dates when each stage of the survey will be undertaken. Under the column for agency responsible, indicate the agency or institution that will perform each activity.

CONTACT PERSON

Applicant - To be signed by the principal investigator or other individual who is most familiar with all the technical aspects of the survey. NSB-RC shall contact this person for all the inquiries, clarifications, etc.