



MAPS

Methodology for Assessing
Procurement Systems

Guidance: Survey-based indicators

2021



INTRODUCTION

Quantitative indicators are an important aspect of substantiating the evaluation of a range of assessment criteria throughout the MAPS framework. Analyses in quantitative terms provide assessors with the opportunity to test the robustness of their discretionary conclusions, because they deliver a different type of data than what is gained from document analysis and interviews. When it comes to questions of perception and engagement with external actors, survey-based quantitative indicators are particularly useful, since they offer data from a wider range of respondents than what is feasible with interviews.

PURPOSE

This document is intended as a high-level guide to putting together surveys and dealing with their resulting data. It is structured around the key choices that assessors have to make when deciding to deploy surveys for quantitative analyses. While the MAPS framework does not mandate a particular way of doing surveys, it is important for the quality of the assessment that when survey-based indicators are used, it is done in a structured, consistent and coherent manner. By answering the questions posed in this guide, assessors will be able to demonstrate a robust assessment design. The answers can be included in the assessment report in support of the validity of its findings.

I. Which are the survey-based indicators in MAPS?

There are in total seven survey-based indicators in the core MAPS framework. These are:

1. 5.d.a: Avoiding conflicts of interest
 - Perception that the normative/regulatory institution is free of conflicts (in % of responses)
2. 10.a.a: Dialogue and partnerships between public and private sector
 - Perception of openness and effectiveness in engaging with the public and private sector (in % of responses)
3. 10.b.b: Private sector organisations and access to the public procurement market
 - Perception of firms on the appropriateness of conditions in the public procurement market (in % of responses)
4. 13.c.b: Decisions of the appeals body
 - Share of suppliers that perceive the challenge and appeals system as trustworthy (in % of responses)
 - Share of suppliers that perceive appeals decisions as consistent (in % of responses)



5. 14.c.d: Effective sanctions and enforcement systems
 - Gifts to secure public contracts; number of firms admitting to unethical practices, including making gifts (in % of responses)
6. 14.d.a: Anti-corruption framework and integrity training
 - Percentage of favourable opinions by the public on the effectiveness of anticorruption measures (in % of responses)
7. 14.e.c: Stakeholder support to strengthen integrity in procurement
 - Number of domestic CSOs (including national offices of international CSOs) actively providing oversight and social control in public procurement

In addition to these indicators in the core methodology, some survey-based indicators are used in the supplementary modules.

II. Why use survey-based indicators?

The survey-based indicators of the core MAPS are all *recommended quantitative indicators* meaning that they do not constitute a mandatory part of a core MAPS assessment. However, as can be seen from the overview above, they are listed in conjunction with assessment criteria where other types of data is unlikely to be readily available to the assessment team.

Using survey-based indicators can therefore greatly increase the validity of the assessment of the related sub-indicators and as such of the MAPS assessment as a whole. While it may seem like extra work for the assessment team, it is an important investment, because it will strengthen the final report and provide a more robust foundation for the recommendations made in it. This, as well as the fact that using survey-based indicators largely involves engaging with actors outside public institutions, makes it more likely that the assessment report will enjoy broad support. Thus, survey-based indicators are a key way of enhancing the prospects of deploying a core MAPS assessment as a vehicle for procurement reform.

III. How should a survey be constructed?

It goes without saying that any survey should pose questions that provide data for the assessment criteria in question. There are, however, different ways of setting up the questions, which may influence the results significantly. Since nearly all of the survey-based quantitative indicators listed above use percentage ratios as indicative expression, closed questions with predefined answers should be used (as opposed to free text answers). In basic terms, there are then two ways in which the answer options for the questions can be constructed:

- Binary, e.g. “Do you agree with statement X? Agree/disagree”
- Gradient, e.g. “To what extent do you agree with statement X? Agree/Agree somewhat/Neutral/Disagree somewhat/Disagree”



While binary answer options are easier to manage and compute, gradient answer options provide more nuance. Additionally, as they allow for answers other than a firm yes or no, gradient answer options are more accommodating to respondents with mixed views and may as such help increase response rates.

When formulating the questions of a survey, it is important to be mindful of the wording. Questions should be presented in the respondents' native language and thus translation of the questions must be handled with attention. Furthermore, differently formulated questions on the same topic can render significant changes in responses. This applies especially when the issues covered by the questions are perceived as controversial.

Two approaches can serve to minimise potential risks with wording and varying responses because of ambiguous understanding of the question. First, it is important that anonymity is guaranteed and that controversial questions are stated indirectly. For example, instead of asking for if an individual has given gifts to secure a government contract, the assessment team might ask if the individual knows of a person or company that has done this. Second, if that is a possibility, questions can be piloted with a small group to tweak wording and terms, especially if they have had to be translated to a local language.

IV. How should a survey be carried out?

The assessors should collect a set of contacts from country authorities to send out the surveys or a plan devised to approach the possible respondents at events or meetings. Contact lists of chambers of commerce or those that can be obtained through supplier registers are useful to start with. The assessors should provide information about the context of the assessment, the use of answers collected, the anonymity of responses and how data will be treated and collected. A good explanation about the exercise will increase the response rate.

The MAPS framework does not ask for any specific requirement related to the tool used to carry out the survey. To facilitate data collection and analysis, online survey tools can be very useful. There are many such tools available including, but not limited to the following:

- SurveyMonkey
- Enalyzer
- TypeForm
- Google Forms
- Microsoft Forms

At any rate, the assessors should guarantee that respondents can answer anonymously. They must also bear in mind how easy will it be for potential respondents to answer the questions using a certain tool.

Surveys may also be carried out through interviews. While this requires more time and effort from the assessment team, it will often have the benefit of increasing response rates. It can also help ensure that respondents understand the questions posed. Interview-based surveys are considered more reliable, because respondents tend to take the survey more seriously and put more consideration into their answer when speaking to an actual interviewer.

Other possibilities to increase the response rate are to use specific moments when several stakeholders will be gathered to ask them to answer the survey from their own mobile devices or distributing paper



copies of the surveys, which can be tabulated afterwards. These moments might include launch events, big meetings or workshops.

V. Which and how many respondents should be surveyed?

After having determined which of the recommended survey-based indicators are going to be applied in the assessment, the assessors should determine which type of respondents they should reach out to. Some questions are to be directed to suppliers (be it persons or companies), while others are to be answered by the general public, including the private sector and civil society. In any case, to guarantee the best use of the respondents' time, as well as increase the numbers of answers obtained, all questions to a specific group should be compiled in a single survey, instead of having respondents receive more than one survey to answer.

The composition of the sample matters as well. For example, for 10.b.b where firms are surveyed for their perception of the appropriateness of conditions in the public procurement market, it is important that both smaller and larger firms are included in the sample. It might also be relevant depending on the context, to include firms from different parts of the country if that is possible. Furthermore, the composition should reflect the variety of the jurisdiction. Thus, for example, the assessors should refrain from drawing conclusions from only a limited number of answers all coming from big incumbent suppliers, which usually get contracts awarded, and should rather try to reach out as wide an audience as possible.

Care should also be taken to ensure that enough respondents are surveyed for the results to be considered credible. That being said, however, a certain amount of proportionality is advisable in terms of how many resources are used for conducting the surveys. The assessors should strive to have enough answers to draw conclusions from, even if they do not achieve a very high statistical significance.

VI. How should information resulting from surveys be included in the assessment?

The assessors should describe in the concept note why and how they plan to use survey-based indicators for the MAPS assessment. Key elements that should be described are which sub-indicators that will be substantiated using survey-based indicators, how the surveys will be carried out and which stakeholders are going to be approached for purposes of the survey.

Quantitative information resulting from surveys should be included in the assessment matrix, and it should serve to identify strengths, gaps and possible recommendations to be included in the main report. One of the best practices is to include as an annex the list of questions and more in-depth analyses including tables and graphs to show the answers received.

During interviews and through the validation exercises and workshops, the assessors must strive to understand the links and correlations between the survey results and the assessment as a whole. For example, if a certain country has sound legal provisions against corruption, but the general perception is that there is a lack of effectiveness of these measures, the assessors must identify the possible reasons for this mismatch and provide recommendations on how to improve.

