



The meta-PEN – sharing and disseminating methodological experiences

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Slide 1



The PEN methodology....

....is 'state of the art' but what happens when it meets reality?

How to assure that we get the best possible data?

Methodological experiences

- Issues relevant to data **reliability** and **validity**
- This presentation is based on a draft methodological paper developed over the fall 2007 and reporting experiences from studies in five countries:
 - Nepal: Lila Puri, Santosh Rayamajhi, Bir Bahadur Khanal Chhetri, and Helle Overgaard Larsen
 - Bolivia: Patricia Uberhuaga
 - Mozambique: Øystein Juul Nielsen
 - Guatemala: José Pablo Prado Córdova
 - Tanzania: Jens Friis Lund



The aim is to improve on our methods....

....and the way we put them into use.

Hence, the focus is on both:

- Methodological aspects
- The practicalities of implementation





The PEN'ers
are coming!

Criteria for selection of research sites and communities

- Purpose of research
 - Variation and generalisation
- Project vs. non-project site
- Remote vs. peri-urban site
- Migration patterns
- Prior experience and contacts
- Local political climate
- Local acceptance



Approaching communities

- First impressions matter
- Negotiating terms
- Openness and information
- Support from local authorities
- Handling local politics



Setting the research team

- Enumerators and research assistants
- Outsiders vs. local enumerators
- Employment conditions
- Team spirit and motivation



Pre-survey field work

- Seasonal calendar
- Local map
- Gaining local knowledge
- Random sampling
- Testing questionnaire
- Training enumerators





Extra-survey work

- Unit standardisation
- Price survey
- Checking recorded information
 - During survey rounds
 - Between survey rounds
- Avoiding household attrition
- Dealing with 'difficult' households



Future developments

- Gathering experiences from individual PEN partners that have done methodological tests
 - Testing for bias of probing thoroughly for use of medicinal plants in Tanzania
 - Testing for differences in results between one and three months recollection periods in Nepal
 - Others?
- Eliciting the experiences of PEN partners in a structured manner
 - A questionnaire to be distributed to all PEN partners

