

**Staff**

Shana Warren  
Research Scientist for Path-to-Scale Research

Cosma Gabaglio  
Research Manager

Laura Polanco  
Research Associate

Margarita Rosa Cabra Garcia  
Senior Research Associate

Michael Rosenbaum  
Research Methods & Data Coordinator

**Timeline**

9 AM - 10 AM EDT

**Date**

June 29, 2021

# Phone Surveys Using Random Digit Dialing: Lessons Learned from IPA's Multi-Country RECOVR Surveys

On June 29, 2021, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) and the Global Poverty Research Lab (GPRL) at Northwestern University held a webinar on rapid phone surveys. Random Digit Dialing (RDD) has become one of the most commonly used methods for selecting phone survey participants, especially after in-person restrictions were imposed due to COVID-19. Until now, there has been little available evidence on the effectiveness of different RDD strategies for ensuring high data quality and representativeness in low- and middle-income countries. In this webinar, researchers and experts from IPA shared strategies that allowed IPA to implement RDD surveys in nine countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as part of the Research for Effective COVID-19 Responses (RECOVR) [rapid phone surveys](https://www.poverty-action.org/recovr/recovr-survey) (you can also learn more about IPA's RECOVR work on remote surveying methods [here](/recovr/phone-survey-methods)). These surveys documented real-time trends of policy concern and informed decision-makers about the economic toll of the pandemic. Researchers and experts also shared lessons learned on phone survey methods and recommendations to improve these methods based on two motivating examples in Mexico City and Colombia. A Q&A with the audience followed the presentations. These findings come from a collaboration between IPA and the Northwestern University Global Poverty Research Lab (GPRL) on research methods. More on the Research Methods Initiative can be found on the <https://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/research/global-poverty-research-l...>; and [IPA](/researchers/working-with-ipa/research-methods-initiative) websites. These

results are summarized as part of GPRL's working paper series on  
SSRN:

[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3836024](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3836024)>Understand...

Response Rates in Random Digit Dial Surveys

[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3836960](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3836960)>Messaging to  
Improve Response Rates

[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3875808](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3875808)>Optimal Timing for  
Random Digit Dialing

Watch the webinar recording

below:

[https://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/faculty/directory/dillon\\_andrew.as...](https://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/faculty/directory/dillon_andrew.as...)

Dillon (Panelist), Clinical Associate Professor of Development  
Economics, Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Management  
Andrew  
Dillon is a clinical associate professor in the Kellogg School of Management and the Global  
Poverty Research Lab at Northwestern University. He serves as the Academic Lead for IPA's  
Research Methods Initiative and as a Scientific Advisor for IPA's Francophone West Africa  
country offices.

</people/shana-warren>>Shana  
Warren (Panelist), Research Scientist, Innovations for Poverty Action, Path-to-  
Scale Research  
Shana Warren is the Research Scientist on IPA's Path-to-  
Scale Research (PSR) team. She is responsible for identifying opportunities to bring evidence-  
based approaches to development challenges along the path to scale. She is also Principal  
Investigator (PI) and co-PI in several IPA-led research projects, including our RECOVER  
surveys.

</people/cosma-gabaglio>>Cosma  
Gabaglio (Panelist), Research Manager, Innovations for  
Poverty Action, Mexico  
Cosma Gabaglio works as a Research Manager for  
IPA Mexico. He leads IPA's RECOVER survey in Mexico City, which includes questions about  
employment and challenges with returning to work, as well as policing and insecurity. Cosma  
holds an MA in Economics from the University of Zurich and a BSc in Economics from the  
University of Bern.

</people/laura-polanco>>Laura  
Polanco (Panelist), Research Associate, Innovations for  
Poverty Action, Colombia & the Dominican Republic  
Laura works as a  
Research Associate at IPA Dominican Republic and Colombia on the Research for Effective  
COVID-19 Responses (RECOVER) survey. She holds a BA in Economics from the Instituto  
Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (INTEC). She has worked on projects related to environmental  
and behavioral economics as well as evaluating conditional cash transfer

programs.  
</people/margarita-rosa-cabra-garcia>>Margarita Rosa  
Cabra Garcia (Panelist), Senior Research Associate,  
Innovations for Poverty Action, Colombia & the Dominican

Republic  
Margarita works on the Research for Effective COVID-19 Responses  
(RECOVER) survey as a Senior Research Associate at IPA Colombia. She holds a Bachelor's  
degree in Economics and a Master's of Economics from Universidad de Los Andes. She  
pursued a Master's degree in Development Economics from the Georg August University of  
Göttingen.

</people/Michael-Rosenbaum>>Michael  
Rosenbaum (Moderator), Research Methods & Data  
Coordinator, Innovations for Poverty Action, Global Research & Data

Support  
Michael supports IPA's research projects through the creation of

technical research materials, direct technical support to projects, as well as implementation and analysis of projects as part of IPA's Research Methods Initiative. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Policy Studies from the University of Chicago.

City Webinar Country United States