

The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire research (OMB clearance number 0607-0725). We plan to conduct semi-structured interviews on the hard-to-reach in the Gulf region of Louisiana. These interviews will be used to inform improved screening questions and procedures in an attempt to reduce coverage error.

The decennial census and ongoing surveys conducted by the Census Bureau aim to collect data from a complete cross-section of the population. However, certain sub-groups are difficult to identify, recruit and reach through conventional data collection procedures and are often missed in the census frame, and hence missed in the surveys. Lack of representation from these sub-groups biases the census counts and survey estimates in unknown but potentially important ways.

We propose to investigate the hard-to-reach (H2R) population in the Greater New Orleans region. We focus on this area due to its high levels of poverty and relatively large and diverse transient populations, including (1) individuals and families still displaced by Katrina and transitioning between households; (2) a growing Spanish-language immigrant population attracted to the state by rebuilding-related job opportunities; (3) those in the fishing industry displaced by the BP oil spill; and (4) “off-the-grid” primarily low-income populations that are difficult to reach through traditional survey research methods.

From July through September, 2012, Census Bureau staff and professors and graduate students from Louisiana State University (LSU) will be conducting a maximum of 50 semi-structured interviews with residents of the Gulf region of Louisiana. Two different types of respondents will be sought:

1. Complex Households: the nature of complex households – those with unrelated household members, blended families, children whose divorced parents share custody, girlfriends/boyfriends who cycle between houses, etc. – makes them vulnerable to within-household omissions for a number of reasons. We identify complex households using existing datasets from the Louisiana Health Interview Survey (LHIS), a repeating cross-sectional telephone survey conducted in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2011. These datasets contain indicators that identify households with multiple “census family units” and they contain a flag for households with eight or more members. These indicators were used to generate a list of phone numbers eligible for a short telephone screener conducted by LSU staff. The purpose of the screener was:
  - a. to determine if the phone number still reached a household;
  - b. if so, to take a household roster (asking for first names or aliases only), age, sex and relationship
  - c. to determine whether the household would still be considered complex and
  - d. to inquire whether a face-to-face interview could be scheduled for a later date

To date roughly 180 household screener interviews have been conducted and roughly one third of them are considered complex. The next steps are to prioritize the most promising candidates and call back to schedule interviews.

2. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs): LSU staff has a working relationship with the Greater New Orleans Data Center (GNODC) and other community based organizations that

work directly with various H2R subgroups. Efforts to gain cooperation with the CBOs is continuing but to date two leads show strong promise:

- a. Fishermen displaced by the BP oil spill: GNODC staff put us into contact with an organization called SeedCo. This is a non-profit organization offering financial and housing counseling assistance to fishermen along the Gulf coast. SeedCo staff have visited several marinas along the Gulf coast conducting outreach to fishermen and have said they could help put us in touch with individuals who have used their services, including several in the Vietnamese fishing community. This population is likely considered H2R, and coincidentally the BP spill was roughly concurrent with the decennial census.
- b. Musician's Village: following Hurricane Katrina, Habitat for Humanity built a three square-block area of new housing for musicians, and several homes used Chinese drywall later found to be a health hazard. Habitat knew which specific homes used the Chinese drywall, so they temporarily relocated the residents of those houses, replaced the hazardous drywall and moved the residents back. This occurred November, 2010 thru January 2011. LSU staff have been in touch with senior staff at the Habitat office involved in the Musician's Village and continue to work on outreach to the community to recruit interviewees from the residences that were temporarily displaced.

Interviews will be conducted at local community-based organizations and/or in third-party locations (such as community centers and public libraries). A copy of the questionnaire and protocol is enclosed. Respondents will be paid \$40 for their participation.

Respondents will be informed that their involvement is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by employees involved in the research project.

We estimate that each interview will last a maximum of two hours, thus the maximum burden for this research is two hours times 50 respondents (100 hours).

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and study design is listed below:

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