

# Hard-to-Reach

## Applied Research Methods with Hidden, Marginal and Excluded Populations

3-7 August 2020

University of Oxford, Nuffield College



# Hard-to-Reach Applied Research Methods with Hidden, Marginal and Excluded Populations

Course Syllabus  
3-7 August 2020

Instructor: [Andrea Rossi](#)

Info at :

<https://cess-nuffield.nuff.ox.ac.uk/applied-research-methods-summer-course-2020/>

## Schedule

*One week, full time course (35 h)*

**Class times: 9:30 - 13:00      and      14:00 - 17:30**

## Course Outline

Focussing on Hard-to-Reach populations, the course provides an introduction to research methods in conducting research, both qualitative and quantitative, on marginal, hidden and excluded population. It will cover research on topics such as migrants; refugees and displaced people; children and adolescents; sex workers; homeless; LGBT; victims of violence, conflicts or trafficking; HIV/AIDS; drug users as well as topics proposed by participants. Aimed to promote action-oriented research, the course introduces the main theories and research approaches on exclusion and marginalization using different frameworks and techniques. It addresses methods and strategies to address the dangers associate with the lack of systematic use of solid research methodology, ethics, data collection and analysis in the formulation and evaluation of policies and programs.

The course is designed to bring together academics (Researchers, PhD and masters students) and practitioners (from NGOs, UN and Government Agencies), creating a unique opportunity for experience sharing and methodological cross-fertilization.

## Course Objectives

The course aims to enable participants to undertake empirical research with marginal and hidden populations, and seeks to encourage participants to develop methodological strategies for the collection and analysis of such data.

The course will provide tools to address key issues such as the lack of known sampling frame, the difficulties in reaching the target group; the concepts of impact, attribution and contribution; and the political dimension of research findings. The course explores topics such as basic and advanced estimation and sampling techniques; participatory research; evidence-based policy versus policy-based evidence; innovation, crowdsourcing and the use of technology; the art of combining qualitative and quantitative methods; and ethical considerations arising when conducting research with hidden and marginalized populations. It covers quantitative techniques such as adaptive cluster sampling, capture and recapture, RDS (Respondent Driven Sampling), network analysis, as well as participatory research methods.

## Course Prerequisites

Basic knowledge in research methods and design. An interest in the topic and some practical research experience, or an acquaintance with applied research, would be helpful.

Take the [online course on Research Ethics](#) prior the beginning of the course

## Provisional Structure

This intensive full time course is structured in morning and afternoon sessions.. Participants will be encouraged to present their past/ongoing/future work to be used and discussed during the course. Combining both taught and practical sessions, the main emphasis of the course is on acquiring practical skills in doing research.

## Program

The following is a provisional structure of the course and it will be adapted according to participants' needs and capacity.

### DAY 1 CONCEPTS, QUESTIONS, AND ACTION

#### **1.1 Hard to reach populations:**

- concepts, definitions, data collection implications

#### **1.2 Applied research and basic research:**

- linkages, opposition, challenges and opportunities

#### **1.3 Evidence-Based Policy vs Policy-Based Evidence**

#### **1.4 How to research *hard-to-reach* populations: objectives, strategies, expectations**

#### **1.5 Using survey with hard to reach population:**

- Online survey. Mobile data collection

*Research methods:* Impact drawing surveys and questionnaires design (introduction), on-line (web) data collection; stakeholders analysis; .

### DAY 2 /3: ESTIMATING HARD-TO-REACH POPULATIONS

#### **2.1 The quest of assessing the magnitude: sampling and**

- Guesstimate and scientific estimation; random and purposive sampling

#### **2.2 Cluster sampling; and Adaptive cluster sampling**

- Time location sampling

#### **2.3 Capture and Recapture**

#### **2.4 Respondent Driven Sampling RDS (intro)**

- Social network analysis applied to hard-to-reach populations (introduction)

#### **2.5 The Politics of Numbers (case study)**

Cases: Estimating refugee and displaced population; *estimating civilian casualties in wars: the struggle between statistics and politics*

## DAY 4 QUALITATIVE METHODS, PARTICIPATION AND ETHICS

### **3.1 Participatory research**

- Participatory research methods
- Rapid assessment
- KAP (Knowledge Attitude and Practice)
- Positive deviance

*Applied methods for participatory research:* e.g timeline, chapati (Venn) diagrams; transect walk; wealth ranking; seasonal calendar; community mapping

### **4.1 Innovation and the use of technology: SMS, crowd sourcing and mapping**

- Using SMS and mobile phones for research and data collection
- Crowdsourcing and mapping (introduction)

### **4.2 Ethical consideration in doing research with marginal population**

## DAY 5 REAL CASE SCENARIO:

### **5.1 Combining research methods**

Students will use all the techniques presented during the course in a real case.

## **Bibliography**

A copy of all the articles in the bibliography will be provided during the course

### **Instructor:**

Andrea Rossi is the former Director of the Harvard Measurement and Human Rights Programme at Harvard Kennedy School of Government (USA) and currently works as Senior Advisor on Social Policy and Economic Analysis for the United Nations in East Asia. Previously he worked in Mozambique, Nepal, New York and a research coordinator at the UNICEF Innocenti Research Center. He is an economist with a particular focus on development and applied research. He coordinated research projects in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe, as well as developing specific research methodologies on children's issues. He has previously worked for the International Labour Organization in the East Africa Area Office, Tanzania where he was in charge of research and statistics. His main areas of interest are applied research methodology; combining qualitative and quantitative methods; applied micro econometrics; and participatory approaches. He has conducted research on human rights, child labour and child trafficking, prostitution, homeless people, illegal migrants, refugees and displaced people.

He has been teaching Research Methods with Hidden and Marginal Populations for more than 15 years at the Essex School of Social Sciences Data Analysis, at the World Bank International Development Evaluation Training, at the University of Milan, and with the United Nations.

The course is organized by the Nuffield Centre for Experimental Social Sciences of the University of Oxford (CESS) in collaboration with UNICEF