

Minutes
POVERTY MEETING

Skepper House: 28 April 1967

present: DM, JVW, BAS, PT, HL, SB, CB
apologies: AS

- 1 Report from BAS re negotiations with Ministry of Social Security. Mr Windsor elusive but BAS has appointment in near future with Chairman of Supplementary Benefits Commission which may provide opportunity for further canvassing.

Question raised of possible offence that may be given by publication of DM and HL's reports: BAS to bear in mind but considered that there were ways round the problem.

2 Draft papers on screening survey

- (a) HR 1 - Screening questionnaire - being worked through by PT, SB & HL with help of notes received from JVW, DM & AS. Any other comments on this or other HR documents in writing from individual members of team please to PT or SB HR 2, 3 & 4 will be worked through simultaneously with HR 1 and revised versions of all issued in due course

- (b) HR 5 - Commentary - introduced by PT as stating 7 objects of survey:

- i Full information on refusals, non-contacts etc
- ii Statistical analyses in terms of individuals as well as of households*
- iii Coding of households in a more realistic social way than attempted hitherto in similar surveys
- iv Indication of duration of household situation (permanent v. temporary, short-term v. long-term etc): again an advance on other survey approaches
- v Functional approach to disability
- vi Coding of minority groups
- vii Providing strict definitions (at present inconsistency on bedfast and housebound aged and on low earners - stricter definitions to be worked out)

* Questions of representativeness and bias arise where individuals are concerned. Stuart to be consulted on extent of bias, how much error introduced and whether there are ways of reducing error.

- (c) Discussion on general concepts

Questions were posed:

- (i) Have we got all the poor? (Viz: the aged - 30 aged in random sample, better to aim for 100-200)
- (ii) Is the wage/rent/child complex allowed for? (Ie: Should rent be asked at screening stage?)

Regarding (i) above a category should be added to the aged group: those aged 65 & over receiving retirement pension but not getting supplementary benefit and whose earnings from any other source do not exceed £2 per single person, £4 per married couple OR ask for rent and household income other than pension: if income (other than pension) less rent is above/below £2/£4 allocate to category (c) Second interviews probably necessary

Regarding (ii) above we ought to check on the numbers per 1000 with 2/3/4 children and their housing cost distribution and whether or not we will have enough from our 3000. IF NOT we must decide (a) whether use to be made of Ministry data + our own will suffice OR whether we should amend our approach in order to pick up income and rent early in questionnaire (Ministry will anyway wish to assess how many living at NA standard).

- (iii) Low earners: in order to elucidate who they are (irrespective of poverty) should we include detailed questions about job history/education/type of occupation? Do we want low-earning heads of households only (ie: not women unless heads of households). There is a strong case for including the single woman and her dependant(s)

.../..

- revision of summary needed to cater for woman wage-earner
+ no male wage-earner + dependent(s) other than children OR
woman living on small income and no male contributor to h/hold
income + adult dependent(s).

- (iv) What is a child ? Clearer definition required: "Economically dependent and under the age of 18 or continuing full-time education"

Further discussion on whether all types of poverty represented in present design; alternative approaches, particularly with regard to income and rent/mortgage data; solutions to await paper from BAS based on Ministry survey, showing scope of problem and describing the cut-off point needed to include 99% of households below supplementary benefits level (or £1 above SB level for that matter - the paper will indicate range).

(d) HR 6 - Multiple Interviews.

Table shows that the number of column and the position of the housewife do not constitute problems in the majority of interviews.

Second interview preferred to postal communication in all but exceptional cases.

3 Sampling

HL described some of the problems of identifying urban and rural districts and selecting criteria for stratification. For example, we can:

Split list of constituencies into

<u>Urban</u>	a) rich (based on proportion	or	retail turn-
	b) poor (of Labour votes		over per head

Rural and where difficult to distinguish between rural & urban, take as rural if over $\frac{1}{2}$ proportion of population in constituency living in rural parts

AND look at amount of accommodation rented with farm "as a condition of employment" to distinguish stockbroker belts from farming areas

OR grade constituencies by density of population.

HL prefers population density criterion but policy question arises:

Are we to accept crude indicators in order to get small districts or go on to administrative districts ? On a constituency basis we are in a straitjacket as so little data is published based on constituencies; but there is plenty based on LA administrative areas.

Problems are to be put on paper by HL for next poverty meeting so that we can arrive at firm options and plans for one or more possibilities prior to meeting Stuart again.

4 Rowntree Trust

Meeting third week of May, original application to be revised and summaries of pilots submitted within next ten days. Although present application refers to two samples we should bear in mind that the physical drawing of two samples could be one operation. Inadvisable to circulate Rowntree Trustees as yet with latest documents (the HR series) until revised.

5 Future divisions of labour

Proper that some members of the team should take responsibility for one or two of subject areas within survey and (a) prepare background paper (a) concentrate attention on ensuring the questionnaires elicit the necessary information.

Other work to be shared out: Income and resources (fringe benefits, social services, capital assets, environment & housing)

Information (local and documentary) on areas drawn in the sample

Sheila to be informed by individual members of team as to their preferences.

6 NEXT MEETING Friday 5 May, Skepper House, 3pm.