



International  
Labour  
Organization

## ► Forced labour module for multi-topic household surveys



- ▶ **Forced labour module for multi-topic household surveys**

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## ► Introduction

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### Context

In 2018, the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) endorsed *Guidelines concerning the measurement of forced labour*.<sup>1</sup> The guidelines outline the conditions for the statistical classification of a situation of forced labour within a survey; they are the concomitant existence of a situation of *involuntary work*, and of a situation of *threat or menace of a penalty* linked to the involuntary work circumstance.

Since the adoption of the ICLS guidelines, the ILO, in cooperation with national partners, has implemented surveys pertaining to forced labour in different countries, with different strategies regarding sampling and questionnaire design.<sup>2</sup> Some of these surveys went through exhaustive cognitive testing, with the aim of ensuring respondents' comprehension of the questions so as to minimize the risk of type 1 and type 2 errors in the detection of forced labour.

The present module is based both on the ILO's and its national partners' experience collected during the implementation and analysis of previous modules on forced labour as well as on extensive discussions with national and international experts. Importantly, this module is a living document and will be regularly updated given additional experience in the field.

### Scope

The questionnaire presented in the Annex is to be attached to a labour force survey or a multi-topic household survey, likely implemented using computer assisted personal interviews (CAPI). It is meant to capture the necessary information for the calculation of the prevalence of forced labour of adults. It assumes that some of the variables would already be captured under previous modules (such as eligibility for some individuals, or job characteristics in case of exploitation happening in the current job). To ensure quality of the data about involuntary work and coercion, topics difficult to capture in survey settings, the questionnaire is recommended to be administered exclusively through self-response (and not proxy response).

The survey can identify the prevalence of forced labour, as long as necessary sampling considerations have been considered in the design and implementation of the survey. In addition, it can be expanded to capture additional characteristics linked to the exploitation situation, such as more information on the type of involuntariness and coercion, on recruitment or working conditions.

To be able to further analyse the prevalence of forced labour by demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the individuals or their households, modules about demographics, employment of other household members and household characteristics should be administered in the master survey.

This 2024 version is the first version of this module to be publicly available; it is expected that new releases will be developed as more testing is undertaken and experience is accumulated.

### Flow

The flow of the questionnaire follows the ICLS guidelines. Its aim is to initially capture the existence of a circumstance that can lead to the characterization of involuntary work; if this is characterized, a further assessment is done to precisely identify the characteristics of the job and the possible

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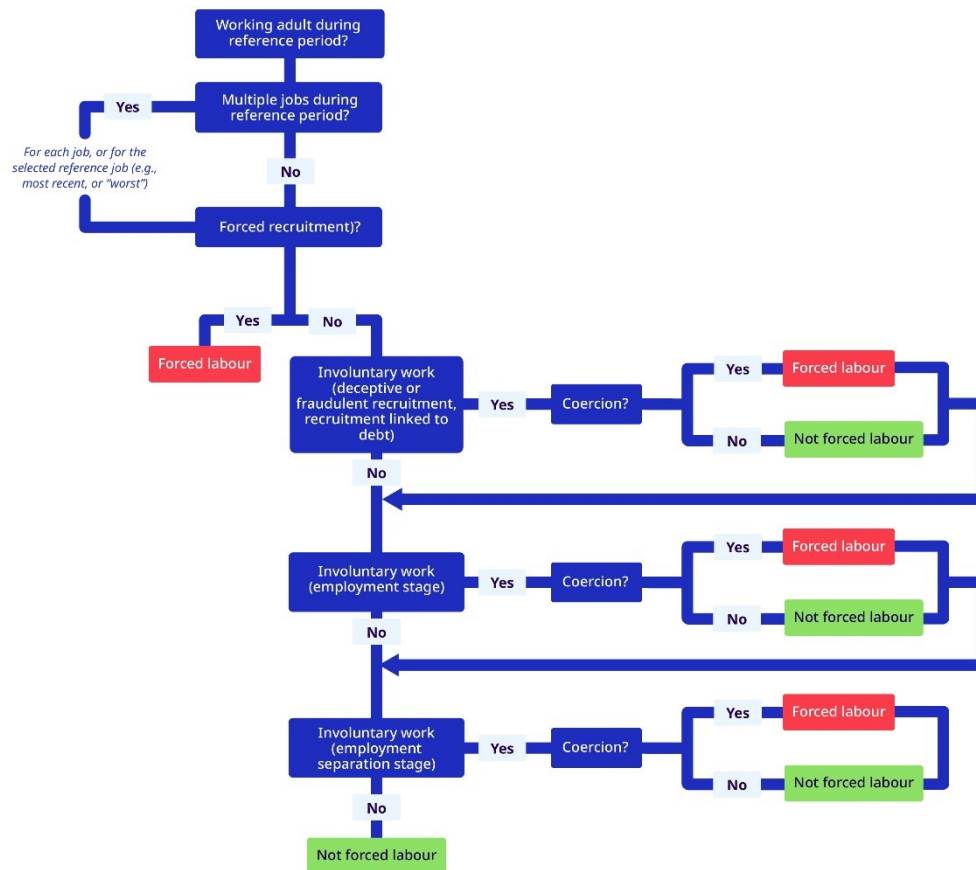
<sup>1</sup> ILO, [Guidelines concerning the Measurement of Forced Labour](#), ICLS/20/2018/Guidelines.

<sup>2</sup> ILO, [Measurement of Forced Labour: Stocktaking and Way Forward](#), Room document 22, ICLS/21/2023.



situations of threat and menace of a penalty linked to it. Figure 1 shows a simplified version of the questionnaire flow.

► **Figure 1. Questionnaire flow**



Source: ILO, [Hard to See, Harder to Count: Handbook on Forced Labour Surveys](#), Third edition, 2024.

## Adaptation to national context

Although this questionnaire is designed to capture forced labour in all sectors and countries, it needs to be adapted to the local context. These adjustments can be best implemented in cooperation with local partners or other national experts.

The adaptation requires (where relevant) the translation of the questionnaire, with special attention paid to the local terminology related to forced labour, as well as the insertion of explanations or examples based on the country or sectoral context. In some cases, it could require adding further questions to identify the particularities of forced labour situations.

## Counting rules

Using the data collected based on the present version of the questionnaire, counting rules can be used to determine whether an individual is in forced labour or not. Tables 1 and 2 describe the detection of involuntary work and coercion, respectively.

► **Table 1. Counting rule for involuntary work**

| Involuntary work (for adults) |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
|                               | Question responses                                                                                                                                                                                           | Meaning                                                         |
| <b>IW.1</b>                   | (Invol_1==1) OR<br>(Invol_2==1 & Invol_2a==1 & Invol_2b==2) OR<br>(Invol_3==1 & Invol_3a==2)                                                                                                                 | Deceptive or unfree recruitment                                 |
| <b>IW.2</b>                   | (Invol_4==1 & Invol_4a==1 & Invol_4b==2) OR<br>(Invol_5==1 & Invol_5a==2) OR<br>(Invol_6==1 & Invol_6a==2) OR<br>(Invol_7==1 & Invol_7a==2) OR<br>(Invol_8==1 & Invol_8a==2) OR<br>Invol_9==1 & Invol_9a==1) | Involuntariness regarding work activities or working conditions |
| <b>IW.3</b>                   | Invol_10==1                                                                                                                                                                                                  | No freedom to terminate the contract                            |
| <b>IW</b>                     | IW.1==1 OR IW.2==1 OR IW.3==1                                                                                                                                                                                | Involuntary work                                                |

► **Table 2. Counting rule for coercion**

| Coercion   |                                                                                                                                                                   |                              |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|            | Question responses                                                                                                                                                | Meaning                      |
| <b>COR</b> | PEN_2==1 OR<br>PEN_3==1 OR<br>PEN_4==1 OR<br>PEN_5==1 OR<br>PEN_6==1 OR<br>PEN_7==1 OR<br>PEN_8==1 OR<br>PEN_9==1 OR<br>PEN_10==1 OR<br>PEN_11==1 OR<br>PEN_12==1 | Penalty or menace of penalty |

As based on the ICLS guidelines, an adult is in forced labour if they are in both involuntary work and coercion. This is demonstrated in table 3, that describes the counting rule for forced labour.

► **Table 3. Counting rule for forced labour of adults**

| Forced labour of adults |                                        |                         |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------|
|                         | Question responses                     | Meaning                 |
| FL                      | Invol_1==1<br>OR<br>[IW==1] & [COR==1] | Forced labour of adults |



## ► Annex: Forced labour survey module questionnaire

| For selected household member of age >=18                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                        |                                                                                        |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| ELIGIBLE_1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Have you worked in the last [three] years?                                                             |                                                                                        | If LFS includes a module on employment history, pre-fill                                               |                                                  |
| ELIGIBLE_2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | In the last [three] years, have you performed any paid activity or service, even for a short duration? |                                                                                        | If LFS includes a module on employment history, pre-fill                                               |                                                  |
| <b>PROMPT: We will now talk about some situations that can happen in the context of a job. Sometimes people face situations where they must work against their will, or because they are threatened. These situations can happen to anyone. We will focus specifically on situations that might have occurred to you in the last [three] years.</b> |                                                                                                        |                                                                                        |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
| Risk of involuntary work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                        |                                                                                        |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
| INVOL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | In the last [three] years, from [DATE - MM/YY] to today                                                |                                                                                        |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Invol_1                                                                                                | Were you forced or coerced into doing a job under a threat against you or your family? | Yes<br>No                                                                                              | If Yes → Invol_1a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_2 |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Invol_1a                                                                                               | Who made you do this job?                                                              | Recruiter<br>Employer<br>Immediate family member<br>Other relatives<br>Friends<br>Other, specify: ____ |                                                  |

|  |                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |           |                                                  |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------|
|  | Invol_2                                                                | Have you taken a job and realized it was a different type of work than what was described to you?                                                                                                                                                                               | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_2a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_3 |
|  | Invol_2a                                                               | Were you tricked into taking this job, e.g., through false promises?                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_2b<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_3 |
|  | Invol_2b                                                               | Would you have taken this job if you had known the actual conditions you would face at work?                                                                                                                                                                                    | Yes<br>No |                                                  |
|  | Invol_3                                                                | Have you taken a job to pay off a debt with your employer or recruiter?                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_3a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_4 |
|  | Invol_3a                                                               | If you wanted, could you have refused to take this specific job?                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Yes<br>No |                                                  |
|  | <b>PROMPT: In the past [three] years, have you had a job where ...</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |           |                                                  |
|  | Invol_4                                                                | You worked in conditions that made you fear for your safety or health?                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_4a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_5 |
|  | Invol_4a                                                               | Some jobs are inherently dangerous; for example, when you work as a firefighter, you would expect to face hazardous situations. You mentioned that you worked in conditions that made you afraid. Were these conditions worse than what is to be expected for this kind of job? | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_4b<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_5 |
|  | Invol_4b                                                               | Would you have accepted this job if you had known that you would have to endure these hazardous conditions?                                                                                                                                                                     | Yes<br>No |                                                  |
|  | Invol_5                                                                | You had to perform extra tasks very often for your employer unrelated to your regular tasks or workplace?                                                                                                                                                                       | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_5a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_6 |

|  |                                             |                                                                                                                         |           |                                                   |
|--|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------|
|  | Invol_5a                                    | If you wanted to, could you have said no to these tasks without consequences?                                           | Yes<br>No |                                                   |
|  | Invol_6                                     | Did you frequently have to work longer hours than you agreed to, leaving you with little or no time to rest or recover? | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_6a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_7  |
|  | Invol_6a                                    | Would you have accepted this job if you had known this would happen?                                                    | Yes<br>No |                                                   |
|  | Invol_7                                     | Did you work for no wages or wages lower than initially offered?                                                        | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_7a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_8  |
|  | Invol_7a                                    | Would you have accepted this job if you had known this would happen?                                                    | Yes<br>No |                                                   |
|  | Invol_8                                     | Has your employer made you work for someone other than him/her/your company?                                            | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_8a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_9  |
|  | Invol_8a                                    | Would you have accepted this job if you had known this would happen?                                                    | Yes<br>No |                                                   |
|  | <b>PROMPT: In the last [three] years...</b> |                                                                                                                         |           |                                                   |
|  | Invol_9                                     | Have you had housing or lodging provided by your employer or recruiter?                                                 | Yes<br>No | If Yes → Invol_9a<br>If No, or Refusal → Invol_10 |
|  | Invol_9a                                    | Was this place overcrowded, without ventilation, had little light (or similar conditions)?                              | Yes<br>No |                                                   |
|  | Invol_10                                    | Have you tried to escape from a job but were prevented from doing so?                                                   | Yes<br>No |                                                   |
|  |                                             |                                                                                                                         |           | <b>If No to all Invol probes, END</b>             |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                             |                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>MULTIPLE_JOBS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | You mentioned that [Involuntary work_detected] happened to you in the last [three] years. Have all these situations happened in the same position (job with the same employer)?                                        | Yes<br>No, in multiple jobs |                          |
| <p>INTERVIEWER READ:</p> <p><b>IF MULTIPLE_JOBS=1</b><br/>I will now ask you a few questions specifically about the job you mentioned.</p> <p><b>IF MULTIPLE_JOBS=2</b><br/>I would like you to think about the job in the last [three] years where you had to endure the most difficult situations. <b>From now on, I will ask you more questions ONLY about this specific job.</b></p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                             |                          |
| <b>CURRENT_JOB</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Is this your current job?                                                                                                                                                                                              | Yes<br>No                   | If Yes →<br>[WHEN_START] |
| <b>OCC</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | In this job, what were you doing?<br>(e.g. Cattle farmer – breed, raise and sell cattle; Policeman – patrol the streets; Cook – plan and prepare meals; Primary school teacher – teach children how to read and write) | WRITE IN                    |                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | OCC_1: OCCUPATIONAL TITLE, IF ANY                                                                                                                                                                                      | Specify:<br>_____           |                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | OCC_2: MAIN TASKS AND DUTIES                                                                                                                                                                                           | Specify:<br>_____           |                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>OCC_3: TO BE FILLED IN BY THE INTERVIEWER</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>ISCO CODE:</b><br>□□□□   |                          |

|                        |                                                                                                                                 |                                                |                                        |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>IND</b>             | In this job, what is/was the main activity of the place or business where you worked?<br><br>TO BE FILLED IN BY THE INTERVIEWER | <b>ISIC CODE:</b><br><br>□□□□                  |                                        |
| <b>WHERE_AT</b>        | Was this job here in [country of survey]?                                                                                       | Yes/No                                         | If Yes →<br>[WHERE_INCOUNTRY]          |
| <b>WHERE_ABROAD</b>    | In which country was this job?                                                                                                  | ....                                           | → WHEN_START                           |
| <b>WHERE_INCOUNTRY</b> | In which region / district / city was this job?                                                                                 | ....                                           |                                        |
| <b>WHEN_START</b>      | In which month and year did you start this job with this employer?                                                              | a. _____<br>MONTH (MM)<br><br>97 DON'T KNOW    |                                        |
|                        |                                                                                                                                 | b. _____<br>YEAR (YYYY)<br><br>9997 DON'T KNOW | If CURRENT_JOB = Yes<br>→ INV_MULTIPLE |

|                                        |                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                 |                                |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>WHEN_END</b>                        | In which month and year did you leave this job with this employer?                                                              | a. _____<br>MONTH (MM)<br><br>97 DON'T KNOW                                                     |                                |
|                                        |                                                                                                                                 | b. _____<br>YEAR (YYYY)<br><br>9997 DON'T KNOW                                                  |                                |
| <b>INV_MULTIPLE</b>                    | Which of these situations happened in this job?<br>[multiple allowed]                                                           | (list all INVOL that were mentioned)                                                            | Ask only if<br>MULTIPLE_JOBS=2 |
| <b>Coercion</b>                        |                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                 |                                |
| <b>PROMPT</b>                          | <b>I will now ask you a few questions trying to understand further the situation that you experienced in this specific job.</b> | Note: If current job, the questions will be worded in present tense, if past job, in past tense |                                |
| <b>PEN_1</b><br>Ask for all INVOLS     | Have you accepted this job because you or your family needed the money?                                                         | Yes<br>No                                                                                       |                                |
| <b>PEN_2</b><br>Ask only for INVOL2-10 | Have you or your family suffered or were threatened with physical violence?                                                     | Yes<br>No                                                                                       |                                |
| <b>PEN_3</b><br>Ask only for INVOL2-10 | Have you or your family suffered or were threatened with sexual violence?                                                       | Yes<br>No                                                                                       |                                |
| <b>PEN_4</b><br>Ask for all INVOLS     | Were you in a completely isolated region / place, with no other work options?                                                   | Yes<br>No                                                                                       |                                |

|                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                            |           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>PEN_5</b><br>Ask only for INVOL4-10                                                                                       | Were you monitored outside working hours (for example, you had difficulty keeping in contact with your family or friends)? | Yes<br>No |
| <b>PEN_6</b><br>ask for all INVOLs,<br>except INVOL3                                                                         | Did you have a debt with your employer or recruiter that was difficult to pay?                                             | Yes<br>No |
| <b>PEN_7</b><br>Ask only for INVOLs 4,<br>5, 6, 7, 8, 9 OR 10                                                                | Have your employer or recruiter threatened to deny you food, water, or sleep?                                              | Yes<br>No |
| <b>PEN_8</b><br>Ask for all INVOLs<br><br>Ask if migrant OR<br>country of exploitation<br>country survey OR non-<br>national | Have your employer or recruiter threatened you with deportation or legal action?                                           | Yes<br>No |
| <b>PEN_9</b><br>Ask for all INVOLs                                                                                           | Has your employer or recruiter withheld your identification documents (e.g. passports, birth certificates)?                | Yes<br>No |
| <b>PEN_10</b><br>Ask if INVOL = 4, 5, 6, 8<br>OR 9                                                                           | Has your employer or recruiter withheld your wages or other benefits you were entitled to?                                 | Yes<br>No |
| <b>PEN_11</b><br>ask for all INVOLs                                                                                          | Have you been physically prevented to leave the workplace outside working hours?                                           | Yes<br>No |
| <b>PEN_12</b><br>Ask if INVOL = 4, 5, 6, 7,<br>8 OR 9                                                                        | Were you threatened to be fired a lot of times?                                                                            | Yes<br>No |



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