Customizable .NET Event History Calendar:
Looking to the Future

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Outline

• (Re-)Introducing ReSIPP
• Results of this year's Field Test
• Requirements for the next Field Test
• New design and implementation
What is SIPP?

• Very large national survey of income, program use, and wealth

• Currently being conducted quarterly, in CASES

• Respondents interviewed every four months
What is Re-Engineered SIPP?

- To cut costs, shifting to annual interviewing (Re-enginnered SIPP – ReSIPP)
- Use Event History Calendar (EHC) to help with longer recall
- Series of field tests prior to final deployment
2010 Field Test

- Almost 8,000 cases in sample
- Half of ReSIPP questions asked in the DEP, half in the EHC
- EHC is a .NET COM object DLL launched from the DEP.
- Many many questions were being asked in the EHC
- Described in detail at last conference
Results of 2010 Field Test

• Issues with survey content:
  – interview was too long,
  – questions too repetitive
  – Respondents often frustrated by the length of the interview
  – e.g.: “Who in your HH is covered by this program?” is asked and re-asked of everyone in HH.
More 2010 Results

• Navigation within the EHC was not a big issue despite concerns

• No technical issues or significant glitches

• Initial data analysis shows data compares well to existing SIPP – (preliminary findings only)
Goal of 2011 Field Test

• Sponsors and field staff wanted us to help them create
  – a smarter and
  – quicker interview experience.
Requirements for 2011 Test

• Reference period increased to 13-18 months to help feed info into subsequent waves

• A lot of data needs to be copied during the interview between HH members, in order to get rid of redundant questions (e.g. Residency, Marital Status)
More 2011 Requirements

- Calculate the “Time without a job” periods dynamically based on gaps of employment, and put on route follow-up questions about those periods

- Improve processing of complex rules statements and edit checks
New Design

- Use the EHC primarily to display and enter calendar dates
- Return to the DEP for follow-up questions that were asked in the EHC in 2011
- Streamline GUI interface of the EHC and make navigation more intuitive
**If necessary probe with additional question:** Did you have a paid job, or do any work at all, no matter how small, that earned some money?
Movie Time!
Implementation Details

- Use of flags to exchange data from DLL to DEP to put blocks on path

- Attaching DLL to end fields in the DEP and returning to EHC, placing the focus on the desired topic

- Data structure remained the same as previous release
Transition issues

• Fairly painless, quick transition thanks to the customizable design of the EHC object

• Copying data between HH members – extensive use of Manipula

• Dynamic creation of periods of “time without a job”
Transition issues, continued

• Single audit trail implemented
  – Set CloseFile =1 in .aif file
  – Much easier to read than multiple audit trail files.
  – Easier to automate re-keying of data
  – Easily adaptable so that we may write paradata to the audit trail
Conclusions

• Attempted to make instrument “smarter”

• A more efficient, less frustrating instrument

• Proved that our design of the EHC was truly customizable.

• Appreciation for robustness of DEP and Manipula
Questions or comments?

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