

# POVERTY COUNTS™

Powered by Abt Associates

## Measuring Impact

Almost half the world—over three billion people—live on less than \$2.50 a day and more than 1.2 billion live on half that amount. Their world of poverty is too often punctuated by malnutrition, disease, despair and death. It is a world and issue that are the focus of untold programs and initiatives. But how do you measure the extent to which these initiatives reach the poor and mitigate poverty? The reality is that measurement is typically a difficult and often neglected process, resulting either in relatively inaccurate data or more accurate data acquired at overwhelming effort and cost. Now there is a new way of monitoring outreach accurately and cost-effectively. Abt Associates introduces PovertyCounts™.

## What is PovertyCounts™?

PovertyCounts™ is a statistically powerful, convenient tool that simplifies the measurement of the outreach of a given poverty initiative. Building on the USAID Poverty Assessment Tool, it includes indicators that more accurately capture changes in poverty rates over shorter periods of time. The tool automatically calculates the estimated poverty rate along with a measure of the degree of confidence in the result. In addition, the tool can be customized to sub-national areas to better match local circumstances.



## How Does It Work?

PovertyCounts™ streamlines measurement of poverty by using a limited dataset, collected from a sample of households within the target population. Responses are entered into a computer program that collates and analyzes the data to estimate the poverty rate. Only a few inputs from the user are needed to produce the estimated poverty rate, expediting results.

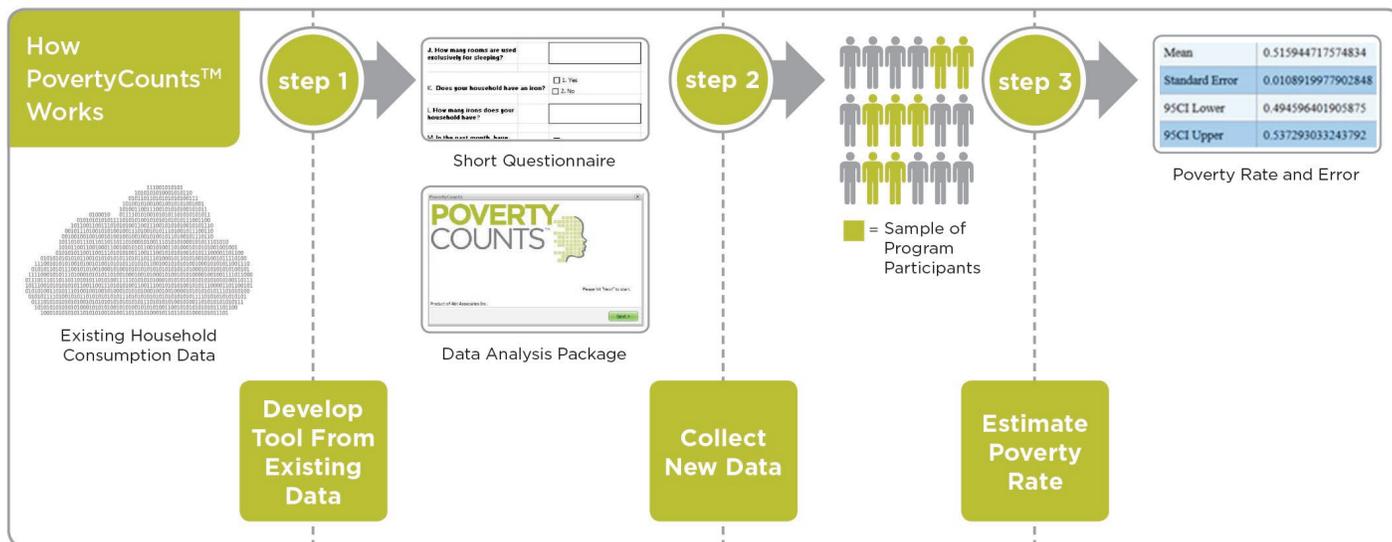


## Tailoring PovertyCounts™ to Your Program

Each iteration of the PovertyCounts™ tool is derived by using existing survey data from a specific geographical area to estimate, rather than directly measure, the poverty rate. This eliminates the need to conduct an expensive and complex household consumption survey each time a rigorous examination of poverty levels among a certain population is needed. To achieve this, Abt employs statistical methods to select a small set of practical indicators (typically 20-25) that are powerful predictors of household consumption in the country or sub-national region of interest. These indicators are incorporated into a questionnaire that can then be administered quickly (in less than 20 minutes per household) to a group of interest. Once collected, the data are passed through the data analysis package to produce an estimate of the poverty rate (and confidence measure).



**BOLD THINKERS DRIVING  
REAL-WORLD IMPACT**



### Who Can Use PovertyCounts™?

Abt developed a prototype PovertyCounts™ for rural Peru, derived from the 2009 Encuesta Nacional de Hogares Survey (ENAHOG). Currently, Abt is also developing PovertyCounts™ tools for sub-national zones within Uganda and Tanzania to offer USAID's Feed the Future partners a concise and accurate way to measure program poverty outreach and how it may be changing over time.

PovertyCounts™, with its widespread applicability, can also assist programs for purposes beyond estimating poverty levels. The USAID Poverty Assessment Tools and variations of the core methodology have been applied in nearly 30 countries to measure poverty and, in some cases, to compare groups involved in microfinance, microenterprise, and health projects. Abt recently adapted the methodology to developing a targeting tool for Lagos, Nigeria, and pilot-tested it in three communities. The Lagos Ministry of Health is collaborating with the DFID-funded PATHS2 project to apply this tool to households as an objective means of determining those who qualify for government subsidies in a community-based insurance program.

### Contact

For more information on PovertyCounts™ and our work in international health and economic growth, please contact **Anthony Leegwater** ([Anthony\\_Leegwater@abtassoc.com](mailto:Anthony_Leegwater@abtassoc.com)).

**Abt Associates** is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Associates is regularly ranked as one of the top 20 global research firms and also one of the top 40 international development innovators. The company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in more than 40 countries.

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