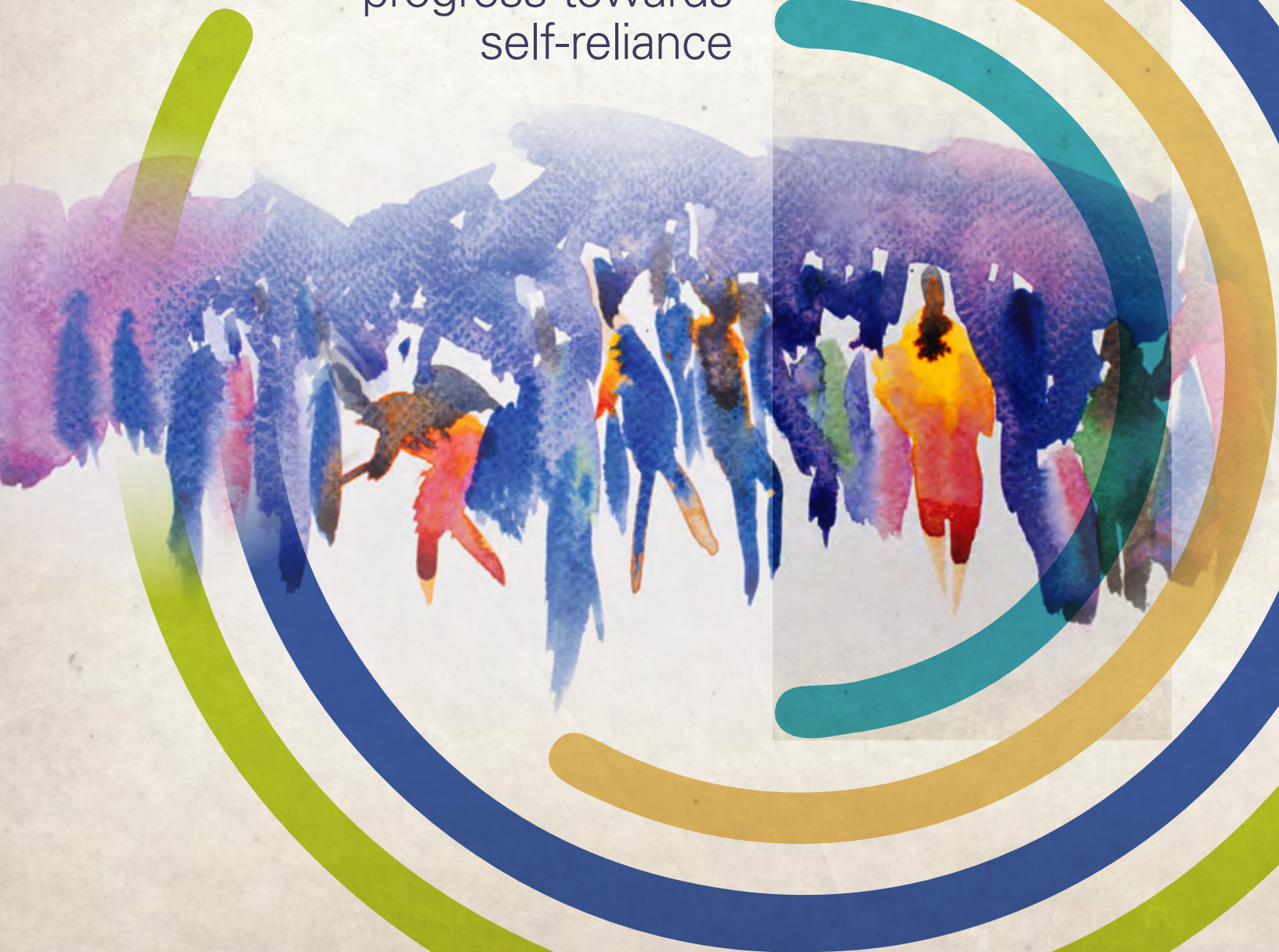


# SELF-RELIANCE INDEX

Version 2.0:  
Indicators to measure  
progress towards  
self-reliance





**Refugee  
SELF-RELIANCE  
Initiative**

## Acknowledgements

The Self-Reliance Index was developed jointly by members of the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative ([www.refugeeselfreliance.org](http://www.refugeeselfreliance.org)), with leadership from RefugePoint and Women's Refugee Commission. Primary drafters were Kellie Leeson (consultant, RSRI), Dale Buscher (Women's Refugee Commission) and Amy Slaughter (RefugePoint). Primary sources drawn on include the Self-Reliance Measurement Tool created by RefugePoint and the Well-Being and Adjustment Index created by the Women's Refugee Commission. Special thanks to Dr. Lindsay Stark and Ilana Seff for their expert guidance and advice throughout the process of creating and testing the tool.

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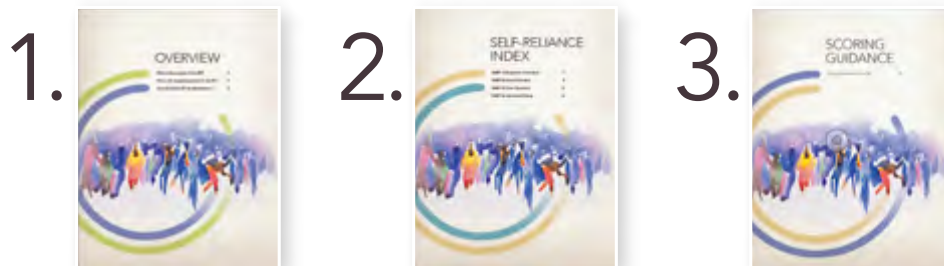
# What is the SELF-RELIANCE INDEX



.....  
...a scored survey tool for  
measuring the progress of  
refugee households toward  
self-reliance over time...  
.....

The Self-Reliance Index (SRI) is a scored survey tool for measuring the progress of refugee households toward self-reliance over time. It is primarily intended to support practitioners in designing and providing effective refugee services in countries of first asylum. It may also assist in targeting populations for assistance, highlighting service gaps, and informing funding priorities. The SRI was developed through a three-year multi-stakeholder process involving over 25 contributing partners, including NGOs, UNHCR, research entities, foundations, and government agencies. The SRI was developed to fill a critical gap in enhancing self-reliance opportunities for refugees by providing a quickly-administered, high-level assessment of key status changes for refugee households. It is expected to evolve and improve as it is increasingly used to support refugees throughout the world to rebuild their lives.

This document is divided into three sections - an overview of the Self-Reliance Index and guidance on its use, the tool itself on pages 6 to 17, and finally scoring guidance for the tool on page 19.



# OVERVIEW

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## What is the purpose of the SRI



### Program Support

The SRI was created and tested to track refugee household progress toward self-reliance but may also be useful in tracking self-reliance for other displaced and hosting populations.

As such, it is envisioned as a support to programming, both at the case level (improving assistance to individuals and households), and at the program level to inform and improve program design. It can be useful in targeting/screening of clients for assistance, as well as tracking their progress over time, and potentially in support of responsibly “graduating” clients from assistance when it is no longer needed.

The SRI can support all types of programming, whether the focus is a sector-based intervention, such as health care or livelihoods, or a broader spectrum of services. As the SRI is meant to track progress or the lack thereof over time, it can assist organizations in prioritizing services and referrals in those domains where progress is slow or lacking.

### Monitoring & Evaluation

Beyond monitoring outcomes for households, the SRI can aid in program-level monitoring to better detect the combined impact of all supports and services provided to the household. If the majority of client needs are catered for by a single agency, the SRI might indicate the effectiveness of those programs, which could in turn inform management decisions. If instead assistance is provided through a network of multiple providers, it might indicate the collective effectiveness of that network, which could encourage greater coordination among local service providers.

The SRI could also be useful for donors to better gauge the effectiveness of existing programs or a collection of programs that they fund. It can also point to gaps requiring additional resources.

### Research

Aggregated data from the SRI could be used to help detect trends and provide comparisons among populations, regions and the relative effectiveness of different types of programming in leading to self-reliance.

## Self-Reliance:

The social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet its essential needs in a sustainable manner.

## Who is the target population for the SRI?

The SRI was designed primarily for use with urban and non-camp-based refugee populations in countries or regions of first asylum. Though untested, the SRI might also prove useful with other displaced populations, including internally displaced, camp- or rural-based refugees, economic migrants, and potentially even non-displaced nationals of the country in question. It might also be tested with resettled or repatriated refugees.

Given the focus on tracking progress over time, the SRI is not envisioned for use with transitory populations (e.g. refugees briefly passing through transit points on their way elsewhere). Rather, it is envisioned for use with populations that are fairly stable in terms of their location, whether or not they have legal residency. It is understood that the SRI may not be suitable for use in every situation and that there may be times when measuring progress at the household level is not appropriate.

## Who is the intended user of the SRI?

The SRI is “open source” and may be used by anyone. The SRI is issued under a Creative Commons license, which allows anyone to use the tool for non-commercial purposes and requires users to credit the source. Service providers assisting non-camp-based refugees with any form of support (e.g. livelihoods, cash, food, health care, child protection, case management, etc.) are expected to find the SRI most useful. These providers may include NGOs, intergovernmental agencies and governments. Within these entities,

it is anticipated that case managers, project officers, or M&E specialists would be tasked with administering the SRI with clients.

It is expected that agencies using the SRI will measure clients on all assessment domains, regardless of their specific project focus or sector. In this way, the SRI may encourage closer coordination among humanitarian, development, grassroots and government services to ensure holistic support for refugee households. Even agencies providing sector-specific support (e.g. only child protection) are likely to find the holistic view of household status provided by the SRI useful in tailoring their services and the questions do not require specialized technical knowledge to answer. As noted above, donors and researchers may also find the SRI useful.

## Is there a User Guide to accompany the SRI?

While the SRI may be used by anyone, users are encouraged to thoroughly review the User Guide and to enter into a simple partner agreement with the RSRI in order to receive any available training, to benefit from updates as they are released, to participate in a user community, and also to foster global learning through data aggregation and analysis.

Please seek detailed user guidance available through the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative website ([refugeeselfreliance.org](http://refugeeselfreliance.org)). General guidance on use of the SRI is provided below.

## SRI Data Collection Platforms

Currently, the SRI can be assessed using CommCare and Kobo data collection platforms. The RSRI will continue to explore expanding the SRI to additional data collection platforms in the future.

# How should the SRI be administered?



## Frequency

It is envisioned that the SRI will be administered with the same clients every 3 or 6 months for the duration of time they receive services or assistance. If they are “graduated” from assistance, it is recommended to continue monitoring the household for some period after assistance ends to ensure sustained self-reliance given the fragility of refugee situations.

## Assessment vs Questionnaire

The SRI is **not** designed as a questionnaire to read verbatim and simply record clients’ responses. Rather, it is a tool to aid an assessor in making an educated evaluation of the household’s status across the domains. The assessor will use a combination of discussion with the clients, direct observation (e.g. during a home visit), knowledge of local conditions, and any prior knowledge of the household’s circumstances, to arrive at an evaluation.

It is understood that assessor bias may be a concern with this type of tool. The User Guide elaborates on assessment elements within each domain to minimize bias, as well as training and administration techniques to maximize the validity of the SRI. An understanding of the local context will also help minimize assessor bias.

## Respondents

For the sake of data-tracking, a “Chief Respondent” should be identified for each household, but that person need not be the traditional head of household. When possible, efforts should be made to include the perspectives of all household members. An inherent challenge in a household-level measurement is assigning a single score meant to reflect the aggregate experience of all household members. Experiences can be highly

individualized, particularly given age, gender, health and other differences. In addition to the SRI, the assessor may wish to use more detailed survey tools to assess differential statuses among household members.

## Scoring

The response options of the SRI cannot cover every variation in a household’s situation. The assessor should select the option that most closely resembles the household’s circumstances. The calculations behind the scores are programmed to compute automatically in the digital versions of the tool. A detailed scoring syntax will be provided to those not using the digital version. Scores on individual domains may aid in making referrals for needed services or improving relevant sectoral responses. The aggregate household score signals the household’s overall level of self-reliance. Agencies may wish to set score thresholds that trigger certain events, such as entry to and exit from services/support.

## Non-exhaustive

The SRI is not designed to be the exhaustive source of information that agencies use for their programming. Service providers will likely want to gather additional information to understand the needs and challenges of each household and its members. The SRI can be used to complement existing monitoring tools.

## Simplicity

Lastly, efforts have been made to pare the SRI down to the fewest domains possible for assessing self-reliance. It is designed for simplicity of use and to respect the refugee household’s time. The intent of the SRI is to provide a high-level, reliable indication of refugee households’ experience and change over time.

# SELF-RELIANCE INDEX

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# Part 1: Biographic Information



## Assessor Information

Name of Assessor				
Date of Assessment	Sex	F <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Agency				



## Client Information\*

Chief respondent's name				
Nationality				
Case/Identity number	Sex	F <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
If follow-up visit: Name of a new respondent (if previous respondent is not available)				
Primary language of household (maximum of 2)	1.	2.		
Documentation held by chief respondent (check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> UNHCR registration	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosting government identity card	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	
Please indicate the documentation necessary to legally live in host country (please check one)	<input type="checkbox"/> UNHCR registration	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosting government identity card	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	
	Do members of the household possess this documentation? All <input type="checkbox"/> Some <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/>			
Language spoken with client(s) during the Self-Reliance Index interview (maximum of 2)	1.	2.		
Household composition (list age and sex of each household member – names not required)				
Number of	Children (0-17):	Adults (18-59):	Seniors (60+):	
Dependency ratio				
Date of (most recent) arrival in Host Country				
Current address of residence	How long have you been living here?			
Preferred form of contact (one required, but please aim for at least two forms of contact)	Primary Phone/WhatsApp Number(s):	Additional contact information (other phone number, WhatsApp):		

\* The biographic information will be anonymized in the aggregate to protect clients' privacy and confidentiality of information.

## Part 2: Scored Domains



### DOMAIN 1: HOUSING

#### DOMAIN 1A: HOUSING ADEQUACY

**Purpose:** To determine the household's type of housing and its adequacy (size and quality).



**Guiding question:**

How would you describe your current housing situation?

1. No shelter
2. Makeshift shelter (shack, kiosk, vehicle)/  
Shelter not fit for safe habitation
3. Temporarily hosted by friends, family,  
community/faith group, or emergency shelter
4. Apartment or house, not adequate
5. Apartment or house, adequate

**Include any important comments here (include relevant information about quality or size of housing):**



.....  
If the household lives in an apartment or house, ask the respondent whether or not he/she feels the housing is adequate.  
.....

#### DOMAIN 1B: RENT

**Purpose:** To determine the household's ability to afford housing.



**Guiding question:**

How many months in the last 3 months have you **not** been able to pay rent?

1. 2-3 times
2. 1 time
3. None
4. Not applicable

**Include any important comments here:**



.....  
This question focuses on the ability to cover rent, regardless of where the money comes from.  
.....

## DOMAIN 2: FOOD

**Purpose:** To determine whether the household is eating sufficiently.



### Guiding question:

How would you describe your household's food intake **yesterday**?

1. Household did not eat yesterday
2. Household was able to eat, but not even a full meal
3. Household was able to eat 1 full meal
4. Household was able to eat 2-3 full meals



- If you are not sure if food consumed constitutes a full meal, ask respondent whether household members felt the meal was enough.
- Score the household according to the lowest scoring member.

**Include any important comments here (including if yesterday's food intake was not typical of the household's food access):**

## DOMAIN 3: EDUCATION

**Purpose:** To determine whether school-aged children are in school.

The Education score refers to primary and secondary formal education and aims to capture whether children are attending school, regardless of the nature of the barrier(s) to their attendance. The assessor will likely want to probe the reasons for non-attendance or irregular attendance.



### Guiding question:

In the last 3 months, have the school-aged children in your household been attending school?

0. No school-aged children in household
1. None are in school
2. Some are in school
3. All are in school



- "In school" is defined as more than 50% of the time that school is in session.
- School-aged should be defined according to local regulations and norms.

**Include any important comments here, especially any details as to why children are not in school (working, prohibitive fees, safety, etc.):**

## DOMAIN 4: HEALTH CARE

**Purpose:** To determine whether the household is able to access the health care it needs.



**Guiding question:**

In the last 3 months, has your household been able to get the health care needed?

0. Have not needed health care in last 3 months
1. Did not receive the needed health care
2. Received some of the needed health care
3. Received all of the needed health care

**Include any important comments here:**



.....  
The Health Care score includes primary and specialized health care, including acute and chronic conditions for all family members.  
.....

## DOMAIN 5: HEALTH STATUS

**Purpose:** To determine the presence of a health condition (mental or physical) that might negatively impact the household's ability to become self-reliant.



**Guiding question:**

Does anyone in your household *currently* have a physical or psychological health condition that interferes with income-generating activities?

1. Adult(s) in household has health condition that interferes with adult employment
2. Dependent(s) in household has health condition that interferes with adult employment
3. None of the above

**Include any important comments here:**



.....  
If two or more options fit the household's circumstance, select the lowest applicable score.  
.....

## DOMAIN 6: SAFETY

**Purpose:** To determine whether the household's perception of safety impedes the *pursuit* of opportunities. Opportunities refer to activities that could help lead to self-reliance, such as going to school or work, attending meetings, etc. See User Guide for more examples.



### Guiding question:

Does your household currently feel safe enough to pursue all of the social, economic and educational opportunities you want?

1. Don't feel safe enough to pursue any opportunities
2. Feel safe enough to pursue some opportunities
3. Feel safe enough to pursue all opportunities

**Include any important comments here:**



Score for the lowest-scoring household member.

## DOMAIN 7: EMPLOYMENT

**Purpose:** To determine whether the household is engaged in income-generating activities.

The Employment score should consider any income-generating activity: self, wage, formal/informal employment, seasonal, part-time, small businesses, etc. Score the highest possible score attained by any adult member of the household (e.g. if one adult is employed full-time and another part-time, score full-time). Part-time or full-time employment could be made up of a number of different jobs.



### Guiding question:

How would you describe the income-generating activities that household members are engaged in, in the last 3 months?

1. No employment
2. Temporary, irregular, seasonal
3. Regular part-time (including self-employment)
4. Full-time (including self-employment), without necessary legal documentation
5. Full-time (including self-employment), with legal documentation, if necessary

**Include any important comments here especially if there is a situation of child labor:**



- If two or more options fit the household's circumstance, select the highest applicable score.
- "Part-time" is defined as less than 35 hours per week. Full-time is 35+ hours per week.

## DOMAIN 8: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

**Purpose:** To determine sources for covering household's basic needs.

Households may use a variety of sources to cover their basic needs, such as remittances, rent support, cash assistance, wages and earnings from income-generating activity, or in-kind contributions, among others.



### Guiding question:

In the last 3 months, how is your household supporting itself to meet its basic needs? [select as many as apply]:

1. Assistance
2. Borrowing money
3. Selling assets
4. Previous savings
5. Remittances/money/in-kind contributions given by friends or relatives
6. Work (including formal and informal work, petty trade, handicrafts, services, etc.)

**Include any important comments here:**



- Ask about each item in the list.
- The term 'assistance' refers to formal assistance or aid (cash or in-kind) provided by an organization, religious institution, the government or another formal entity; food or cash received from family members or close friends should not be considered 'assistance'.

## DOMAIN 9: ASSISTANCE

**Purpose:** To determine whether the household relies on assistance to cover any basic needs.



### Guiding question:

Have you relied on assistance for any of the following in the last 3 months? [select as many as apply]:

0. No assistance
1. Food
2. Utilities/Housing
3. Healthcare
4. Education (primary and/or secondary education)
5. Other (include a description in Comments section)

**Include any important comments here:**



- Ask about each item in the list.
- See definition of 'assistance' above.

## DOMAIN 10: DEBT

**Purpose:** To determine whether the household has incurred debt to cover any basic needs.



### Guiding question:

Do you currently have any debt (no matter how small) for any of the following? [select as many as apply]:

0. No debt
1. Food
2. Utilities/Housing
3. Healthcare
4. Education (primary and secondary education)
5. Transport
6. Investment (include a description in Comments section)

**Include any important comments here:**



- Ask about each item in the list.
- 'Investment' refers to a loan taken to improve one's standard of living in the long-term, e.g. for business, tertiary education, a home or car, etc.

## DOMAIN 11: SAVINGS

**Purpose:** To determine whether the household has any current savings.



### Guiding question:

Do you currently have any money you have saved or put aside, or assets you could sell if needed?

1. No, no savings or sellable assets
2. Yes, but not enough to cover one month's expenses (basic needs)
3. Yes, enough to cover one month's expenses (basic needs)
4. Yes, enough to cover one month's expenses (basic needs) plus enough to purchase an asset, or reinvest into one's business, or to sustain a moderate health crisis

**Include any important comments here:**

Part 2: Scored Domains (cont'd)

## DOMAIN 12: SOCIAL CAPITAL

### DOMAIN 12A: FINANCIAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

**Purpose:** To determine the financial networks available to the household.



**Guiding question:**

**If** someone in your household were to have an emergency, do you know people that would be able to lend you money to cover the associated costs?

1. Knows no one who could lend money
2. Knows someone/ has community support that could lend money

**Include any important comments here:**



.....  
Answer for the highest scoring household member.  
.....

### DOMAIN 12B: RELATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

**Purpose:** To determine the networks and relationships available to the household.



**Ask two questions:**

Are there people that you or your household members ask for advice and/or information?

Are there people that ask you or your household members for advice and/or information?

0. Neither
1. Household members ask others for advice/information ONLY
2. People ask household members for advice/information ONLY
3. Both 1 and 2

**Include any important comments here:**



.....  
By 'people' we mean friends, family, neighbors, etc. but *not* institutions or organizations.  
.....





## Part 4: Interviewer Assessment



### Part 4a:

Are there any issues that came up that weren't addressed in the domains?

### Part 4b:

Detail any referrals for future follow up:

Notes:

# SCORING GUIDANCE

Scoring Guidance for the SRI

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# SRI: Scoring Guidance

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l
Domain	Copy answers from tool	Instruction	Enter score	Instruction	Value	Instruction	Final domain score	Instruction	Value	Instruction	Final domain score
<b>Housing</b>	1a		Item #	---->	=E2	---->		---->			
<b>Rent</b>	1b	Is score from tool 4? If yes, skip rest of domain	Item #	Response '1' = Score of 1 '2' = 3 '3' = 5	=Transformation of response	---->		---->			
<b>Food</b>	2		Item #	Response '1' = Score of 1 '2' = 2 '3' = 3 '4' = 5	=Transformation of response	Use in L16					
<b>Education</b>	3	Is score from tool 0? If yes, skip rest of domain	Item #	Response '1' = Score of 1 '2' = 3 '3' = 5	=Transformation of response	---->		---->			
<b>Healthcare</b>	4	Is score from tool 0? If yes, skip rest of domain	Item #	Response '1' = Score of 1 '2' = 3 '3' = 5	=Transformation of response	---->		---->			
<b>Health status</b>	5		Item #	---->	=E6	Use in L16					
<b>Safety</b>	6		Item #	Response '1' = Score of 1 '2' = 3 '3' = 5	=Transformation of response	---->		---->			
<b>Employment</b>	7		Item #	---->	=E8	---->					
<b>Financial resources</b>	8		Item #	- IF '6' is not selected, then score is '1' - IF '6' is selected AND any other option is selected, then score is '3' - IF '6' is the only option selected, then score is '5'	=E9	---->					
<b>Assistance</b>	9		Count of items	3 or 4 items = 1 2 items = 2 1 item = 3 0 items = 5	=Transformation of response	Use in L16					
<b>Debt</b>	10		Count of items (excluding option 6)	4 or 5 items = 1 2 or 3 items = 2 1 item = 3 0 items = 5	=Transformation of response	---->					
<b>Savings</b>	11		Item #	Response '1' = Score of 1 '2' = 3 '3' = 4 '4' = 5	=Transformation of response	---->					
<b>Social capital</b>	12a		Item #	Response '1' = Score of 1 '2' = 5	=Transformation of response	Average of 12a and 12b					
	12b		Item #	Response '0' = Score of 1 '1' = 3 '2' = 3 '3' = 5	=Transformation of response						
								Sum of scores/number of domains scored:	- (5-score2)*0.15 - (3-score5)*0.1 - (5-score9)*0.2	Recode <1 = 1 Recode >5 = 5	
										<b>Final SRI Score:</b>	

Notes:

Notes:

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