

Thinking About the Who, What and How of Global Public Opinion

by David A. Jodice

Introduction

Globalization has been advancing over the past 60 years, accelerated by the collapse of most communist polities, the expansion of regional markets and free trade agreements, and the declining real costs of travel, transportation and communication. This expansion has fueled both the growth of the global market research sector and the concentration of the industry into several large and evolving multinationals, such as Kantar/TNS, IPSOS/Synovate, Nielsen, GfK, the Gallup Organization, as well as non-profit research entities such as the Gallup International Institute and the Pew Research Center.

The market research industry has been able to expand and operate almost without limits (excluding US and international sanctions which have applied to a very limited number of countries). Few, if any, countries have put limits on market research, generally being eager to provide a license to locally-registered businesses. While some annual reporting on all forms of market research (especially those by or for foreign clients) is required by some countries (China being an important example since 1999), these post-facto requirements have not hindered the growth of the industry.

The same cannot be said for public opinion research in its fullest sense: collecting data on private opinion and making the results public. In fact, political opposition to public opinion polling (in the classic Western sense) is widespread and growing, putting survey practitioners who conduct polls (even if they are not releasing them) at serious risk to their business, their liberty and, in some cases, their personal safety. These are among the issues we will address in the following pages.

In the past 30 years, D3 has conducted thousands of quantitative surveys on a wide variety of topics in over 120 countries. However, due to the distribution of surveys over time, space and topics, we have not yet collected a body of data that would constitute a global opinion survey. As a commercial firm, we are driven by client demand for data-based insights, so our focus has shifted accordingly. As founders or co-owners of firms in the Balkans, South Asia and Africa, D3 has participated in a number of WIN/GIA End of Year and Voice of the People Surveys since 1997. We have also conducted a diverse array of media surveys as part of global audience measurement for both the BBC (since 1993) and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (VOA, RFE/RL, etc.) since 1999. The largest regional survey we have conducted for the BBC was a 2008 survey into 19 Arabic-speaking countries, in support of the launch of BBC's Arab satellite channel.¹

D3's "Women in Muslim Countries" Survey Program

D3 has also funded its own multi-regional (not quite global as of early 2015) survey of "Women in Muslim Countries" which, since 2007 has conducted 33 F2F or CATI surveys in 26 countries. While we certainly need to add populous Muslim-majority countries in Africa and South-East Asia to our WIMC program, we have conducted our own surveys (or added the WIMC questions to client-funded surveys) in the following Muslim-majority and selected Muslim-minority countries: Afghanistan (5 surveys), Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt (2), France, Iran, Iraq (3), Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Looking ahead, we anticipate surveying Muslim Women (and Muslim men as resources permit) in such key countries as Indonesia, Malaysia and among the large Muslim population in India.²

¹ For more on D3 Systems, Inc., please click on www.D3Systems.com.

² For more on D3's WIMC's program, please write to WIMC@D3Systems.com.

The topics of the WIMC surveys were originally based on the United Nations CEDAW – *the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. Since WIMC's inception in 2007, in cooperation with our academic and commercial research partners, we have developed the research content to cover a wide variety of issues related to the well-being and future of Women in Muslim Countries:

- Women's Status and Rights,
- Self-Perception of Rights and Status,
- Access to Health Care, Media and Financial Resources,
- Experience with the Court System, and
- Political Participation and Efficacy.

Thinking about Global Public Opinion – WHO

There are really two dimensions to the *Who* question. First, as Richard Wike of the Pew Research Center has noted the continuing “centrality of the nation state to international politics and economics” we agree that the nation-state is likely to remain the focus of policy, research and opinion polling for the foreseeable future.

- Which countries must be included in any global survey? And which countries or territories could be excluded without undermining the global coverage?
- And, what populations must be included in order to have representative samples of each country or territory in our design and what populations or sub-populations can we exclude?

For the moment, we are leaving aside the newer idea of true global polling – where the population of the entire planet is the sampling frame and data collection is organized around larger geographic areas than the nation-state

and by linguistic and cultural zones. Changing the design from a collection of surveys of nation-states ranging across the globe to one global survey, does not eliminate the need to define coverage, draw samples and implement field work. And, obtaining funding for that type of global poll would be much more difficult than the current practice of country-by-country research.¹

Most survey practitioners think of public opinion research as the collection of data in a systematic, replicable and explainable way on the private opinions of the general population, generally representative of one or more nation-states. We expect this to continue for at least four reasons:

- The structure of the demand for and supply of market research (which often provides the continuing infrastructure on which opinion research operates, particularly in less developed countries),
- The organization of national governments and international bodies which are the major funders of opinion polling and closely related research on media usage & attitude and development (increasingly monitoring & evaluation of public programs),
- Media reporting which is organized around countries and country-specific topics, and
- The structure of the academic community which places great emphasis on subject matter expertise organized around countries, languages and cultures.²

In addition to the issue of coverage by nation and/or cultural groupings, we have the concern of the exclusion of substantial sub-groups due to design and

1 With a global population of approximately 7,255,000,000 spread over 223 countries and territories, 37% are living in the top ten countries by population: China, India, USA, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Russia and Japan. To be credible and interesting outside of the survey countries, any global survey would have to include a wider array of nations.

2 The BBC is the leader in conducting large-scale multi-country, multi-regional surveys as reported by Doug Miller of GlobeScan. In a very different context, D3 conducted two series of opinion polls in conflict environments (Afghanistan and Iraq) for ABC News' award-winning "Where Things Stand" series. While the surveys were very well received and used across a variety of media platforms within and outside of ABC News, this was a relatively short-term effort reflecting the then high level of US public attention to Afghanistan and Iraq. This research was co-sponsored by the BBC and ARD (a leading German TV channel).

implementation issues (they cannot be reached by telephone, for example) or by their refusal to participate, even in well-designed and well-funded F2F surveys, with higher than the average (3-5) contact attempts.

As Doug Miller observed, the *“problem of representation relates to the under-representation of marginal groups within countries surveyed, especially the very poor. This is due to a number of factors including methodologies (for example, those that rely on mobile telephone ownership or especially Internet connectivity); endemically high refusal rates among those with no formal education; and the infrequent use of plain-language questionnaires where the level of comprehension is appropriate for ultra-poor respondents.”*

Even with the best efforts by our field partners in Africa and the Middle East, we know that many of our surveys under-represent the poorest and least-educated portion of the national populations. This is due largely, but not entirely, to differential refusal rates across household or respondent socio-economic status and possible over-statement of educational achievement by those who choose to participate in our F2F and CATI surveys. While the expansion of mobile telephone ownership gives us greater access to both rural and deep rural areas at much lower cost, it does not solve the problem of differential refusal rates. In addition, the under-representation of low status groups is more likely to occur when we use true probability sampling through respondent selection. The use of a mixed methodology (random selection of sampling points and households followed by quota selection of respondents) will reduce the demographic bias (and increase field costs) but has implications for the weighting and interpretation of the results. Any survey which claims to be a global opinion poll needs to address the inclusion of the poorest populations.³

³ For more on these topics see *Hard to Survey Populations*, edited by Roger Tourangeau, Brad Edwards, Timothy P. Johnson, Kirk M. Wolter and Nancy Bates (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Thinking about Global Public Opinion – WHAT

The *What* question falls into two parts:

- What questions do we want to ask? and
- What questions can we ask?

To determine what we should be asking, we need to look at three dimensions of the acceptability and relevance of opinion polling.

- Do the questions have intrinsic value to the funding organization(s)?
- Will the results be seen as relevant and valuable by those who will consume it (government, academe, the media (old and new) and the general public)? and
- Will the questionnaire appeal to and be comprehended by a diversity of respondents?

The first group of questions which we should ask would be drawn from the long-standing practice of media, academic and foundation polling on such topics as key issues of the day, right/wrong direction for the country, top problems facing the country, economic outlook for the respondent, the family and the country as a whole. Of course, these questions show a Western bias, but so does the entire enterprise of scientifically measuring private opinions and reporting the aggregate results in various public formats.

The second group of questions we should ask would be how information and insights are distributed to a global audience (TV, radio, the internet in its many forms) and how the use of these media and exposure to their messages is trending over time.

The third group of questions would be modules specific to regions or individual countries. Recent examples would be public health concerns such as SARS and Ebola, a concern to countries where the diseases originated and to those countries where they might spread. Other countries would have modules that address issues of importance to their own society – increasing the appeal of the survey in the locality.

The fourth group of questions would be demographics which would define the sampled population and shed some light on their awareness of issues: gender, age or age group, education (categories or years of formal education, residence (urban/rural, geographic areas such as region/state/province/governorate/oblast, etc.), household size and composition, religious affiliation and ethnic group or tribe. Other key demographics would be useful for constructing SES indicators and marketing the products: appliance ownership, ownership of technology (computers, mobile phones, tablets) and ownership of motor vehicles. While household income is a problematic question, we could certainly ask people to rate themselves or their household on a generic SES scale. We would also ask respondents if they would be willing to join a panel and participate in one or more future surveys (collecting mobile and landline numbers and email addresses).

The fifth group of questions is much more problematic, both on the political side (voting, political orientation, rating the performance of political leaders, elected officials and governments, instability, terrorism and violence) and the social side (marriage and divorce, birth control, sexual behavior, and gay and lesbian rights). These questions could face opposition by governments in certain countries and by field teams and respondents.

These possible and very sensitive topics lead to our next major issue. What questions *Can* we ask? This issue also falls into two dimensions:

- Comprehension of the questions by the respondents, and
- Government opposition to the surveys or certain topics and questions.

The first issue is long-standing and common. As a profession of well-educated people, who supply information and insights to a similarly well-educated client group, we often write questions that are much too difficult for the average person to understand or they simply lack, through no fault of their own, the information needed to shape an opinion. Of course, in most cases they want to respond, so opinions are fabricated and duly recorded. It's our responsibility, working with clients and funding organizations, to shape questions that fit

the general public's level of knowledge across a range of countries and levels of development.¹

Government opposition to polling (and other forms of political expression) is on the rise in many countries. Two of the three developments that gave us much optimism about polling across the globe (economic globalization, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Arab Spring) have trended in the opposite direction, at least in terms of government acceptance of polling without censorship of questionnaire content and limits on public distribution. While polling remains an open and free activity in North America, the European Union, much of Latin America and countries of English-settlement, freedom for opinion pollsters is on the decline in portions of the former Soviet Union (particularly Russia and Belarus), South Asia, the Middle East and Africa. And, if polling is not censored by government, the work of pollsters and their field teams can be threatened by terrorists and insurgents, as D3 and its research partners have experienced in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

D3 has experienced both ends of the censorship continuum (recognizing that in most countries where we operate (over 120 countries to date) there is no government opposition to market research and development-related studies) in Afghanistan and China. In Afghanistan, we successfully negotiated in 2005 with the national government to conduct surveys in ways that would be culturally-sensitive but not subject to any prior review of the questionnaire(s) or post field review of the data. Of course, many of our surveys are conducted in support of the Western aid missions, funded in particular by the US and the UK governments as well as the United Nations and the World Bank, and the Afghan leadership has seen the benefit of the programs and the research. That fact that our Afghan subsidiary (ACSOR Surveys) is staffed 99% with Afghans is another factor in building that relationship.

The same cannot be said for China where D3's work has been subject to a censorship regime initiated in 1999 by the National Bureau of Statistics. While Chinese firms enjoy a general approval of all market research studies (and typ-

¹ Of course we can filter the questionnaire by respondent education and/or their willingness and ability to respond to certain topics and then follow-up with modules of questions. This same filtering could be used for socially-sensitive questions that might cause a break-off for many respondents.

ically file a quarterly activity report), there is a requirement for prior review of any public opinion survey questionnaire conducted by Chinese firms, with or without foreign sponsorship. Key topics typically banned from surveys in China, are opinions of the Communist Party, attitudes toward ethnic minorities, military and foreign policy and rating government performance. Of course, public opinion surveys are conducted by or on behalf of the Chinese government and the results are sometimes in the public domain. Any global survey would have to include China in its sample and would need some cooperation from the Chinese government in order to conduct F2F or CATI surveys within China.

Thinking about Global Public Opinion – HOW

How could we conduct a global survey of public opinion? The major design questions are:

- Coverage by countries and territories,
- Sample sizes by countries and territories,
- Sample design, particularly probability vs. and non-probability sampling, and
- Data collection, particularly the choices between F2F, CATI, and new media such as Facebook (1.39 billion “monthly active users” in January 2015) and Twitter (288 million “monthly active users” in the 4th quarter of 2014).

In an ideal world funding would be available from a variety of sources to conduct surveys on the ground in each country or territory and sustain the effort over a multi-year period. Of course, representative samples of 1,000 persons (18+?) conducted in 223 countries and territories would result in a sample of 223,000 respondents and a very high cost. And, in some countries (based somewhat on their population size but more on their internal diversity) nationally-represen-

tative samples of 1,000 persons would be inadequate. So, we need to think about the countries we could cover and how large the sample sizes should be.

There are a number of substantial efforts already underway to measure public opinion on a regional or global basis that definitely provide examples of how to fund, institutionally structure, field and report on a global survey. In addition to Gallup's World Poll and Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, there is the long-standing World Values Survey (WVS). The WVS is the longest-running and broadest cross-cultural survey program, as well described on their website.

The World Values Survey (www.worldvaluessurvey.org) is a global network of social scientists studying changing values and their impact on social and political life, led by an international team of scholars, with the WVS association and secretariat headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden.

The survey, which started in 1981, seeks to use the most rigorous, high-quality research designs in each country. The WVS consists of nationally representative surveys conducted in almost 100 countries which contain almost 90 percent of the world's population, using a common questionnaire. The WVS is the largest non-commercial, cross-national, time series investigation of human beliefs and values ever executed, currently including interviews with almost 400,000 respondents. Moreover the WVS is the only academic study covering the full range of global variations, from very poor to very rich countries, in all of the world's major cultural zones.

The WVS has a strong institutional framework as a purpose-built non-profit organization, with sustained institutional funding, a highly structured core questionnaire and a strong advisory committee of leading academic researchers. Wave 7 is currently in the planning phase for fielding in 2016-2018 and will cover some or all of the 52 countries which participated in Wave 6 (2010-2014). Other countries may join the WVS as it has an open proposal cycle.

In addition to Gallup, Pew and the WVS, there are regional cross-country opinion barometers. First initiated by the European Union in 1973, the Euro-

Table 1: WVS Country Coverage, Wave 6 (2010-2014)

Algeria	Argentina	Armenia	Estonia	Australia	Azerbaijan	Bahrain
Belarus	Brazil	Colombia	Cyprus	Chile	China	Ecuador
Egypt	Estonia	Georgia	Germany	Ghana	Hong Kong	India
Iraq	Japan	Jordan	Kazakhstan	Kuwait	Kyrgyzstan	Lebanon
Libya	Malaysia	Mexico	Morocco	Netherlands	New Zealand	Nigeria
Pakistan	Palestine	Peru	Philippines	Poland	Qatar	Romania
Russian Fed.	Rwanda	Singapore	Slovenia	South Africa	South Korea	Spain
Sweden	Taiwan	Thailand	Trinidad/Tobago	Tunisia	Turkey	Ukraine
United States	Uruguay	Uzbekistan	Yemen	Zimbabwe		

Barometer covers all member countries, countries in the process of joining the EU and countries of interest to the European Commission. The EU sponsors large-scale trend surveys, flash polls and special surveys.

Following the examples of the EU and the WVS, there are (or have been) three other regional Barometers.

- The Americas Barometer, administered by Vanderbilt University, USA, has been surveying from 2004-2014 and covers 26 countries in both North and South America. These countries are: Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, El Salvador, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.¹
- The AsiaBarometer operated by the University of Niigato Prefecture, Japan, to the best of our knowledge, only during the period 2003-2007 and covered Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines and Thailand.

¹ Interestingly, the Americas Barometer also polls in Albania, Israel and Madagascar.

- The AfroBarometer, growing steadily in country coverage from 1998 to 2015, is led by Michigan State University and Democracy in Africa Research Unit (DARU), Center for Social Science Research, the University of Cape Town in cooperation with local African research partners. Field work for Round 6 began in March 2015 and will run for about two years. Round 5 was fielded in 2011-13 and is the largest in terms of number of countries covered (35): Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkino Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cote D'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

While we do not expect to be able to add questions onto existing regional and global surveys, although some teams do offer paid for space on the questionnaire, they do serve as a model for thinking about how we would organize the research and actually conduct the surveys. If we selected the top 100 countries by population, solely for purposes of discussion and cost estimation, the Top 100 Global Opinion Survey would be distributed as follows and would cover 93% of the global population, according to the US Bureau of the Census. (Table 2).

However, the environment for opinion polling varies substantially by country. As Freedom House has clearly indicated in its highly-respected annual reports, freedom is on the decline. In 2014 compared to the previous year, 54% of the countries rated experienced a decline in freedoms (defined in terms of two dimensions: political liberty and civil rights), 40% improved and 6% were unchanged. In the 2014 report (rating countries for 2013) 45% of the countries were rated as free, 30% as partly free and 25% as not free at all. Based on population sizes, 40% of the global population lived in countries rated free, 25% in partly free countries and 35% in countries where are not free at all.¹

Thinking about the environment for polling in the Top 100, a number of factors can affect our ability to draw a probability sample and ask the full range of desirable questions. In most cases, sensitive (or censored) questions tend to

1 For more on these influential rates see Freedom House, *Freedom in the World*, 2014. www.freedomhouse.org.

focus on topics that are perceived to threaten repressive governments: leader ratings, vote intentions, party identification, rating government performance and, to a lesser extent, religious affiliation and social issues. A wide range of questions can be asked of the citizens in each of the Top 100, but it is often not possible to ask the most sensitive questions using traditional means: F2F or within-country CATI surveys.

D3 has developed a subjective rating of each of the 100 countries in terms of the degree of polling freedom (Table 3). D3 has experience conducting surveys in 71 of the 100 top countries. Key factors in this subjective rating are official repression of polling (from the political/state security or religious institutions), instability (insurgency and terrorism) and social limit on participation (access to women in Muslim countries can be limited). Countries rated “1” have no political or other limits on polling. The relatively few countries (still significant at 10) rated “3” are too repressive or are otherwise prevent opinion surveys within the country (Belarus, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam and Zimbabwe.) Countries with a rating of “2” provide a blend of limits and opportunities. In some cases it is worthwhile to conduct surveys in those environments (for example Kenya) where we can draw probability samples and ask wide-ranging questions. However, there are informal constraints to what can be asked about internal politics and there is the rising threat of terrorism which reduces cooperation rates and threatens both the interviewers and the respondents.

How do we move ahead in designing a field operation given the declining in-country environment for global polling? We see three basic strategies:

Strategy 1 has a number of advantages. The techniques (at least the in-country

Table 2: Countries in the Global Opinion Survey (Top 100 by Population)

Rank	Country	Population	Rank	Country	Population	Rank	Country	Population
1	China	1 343 239 923	35	Canada	34 300 083	68	Cambodia	14 952 665
2	India	1 205 073 612	36	Sudan	34 206 710	69	Guatemala	14 099 032
3	United States	313 847 465	37	Uganda	33 640 833	70	Zambia	13 817 479
4	Indonesia	248 645 008	38	Morocco	32 309 239	71	Senegal	12 969 606
5	Brazil	199 321 413	39	Iraq	31 129 225	72	Zimbabwe	12 619 600
6	Pakistan	190 291 129	40	Afghanistan	30 419 928	73	Rwanda	11 689 696
7	Nigeria	170 123 740	41	Nepal	29 890 686	74	Cuba	11 075 244
8	Bangladesh	161 083 804	42	Peru	29 549 517	75	Chad	10 975 648
9	Russia	142 517 670	43	Malaysia	29 179 952	76	Guinea	10 884 958
10	Japan	127 368 088	44	Uzbekistan	28 394 180	77	Portugal	10 781 459
11	Mexico	114 975 406	45	Venezuela	28 047 938	78	Greece	10 767 827
12	Philippines	103 775 002	46	Saudi Arabia	26 534 504	79	Tunisia	10 732 900
13	Vietnam	91 519 289	47	Yemen	24 771 809	80	South Sudan	10 625 176
14	Ethiopia	91 195 675	48	Ghana	24 652 402	81	Burundi	10 557 259
15	Egypt	83 688 164	49	Korea, North	24 589 122	82	Belgium	10 438 353
16	Germany	81 305 856	50	Mozambique	23 515 934	83	Bolivia	10 290 003
17	Turkey	79 749 461	51	Taiwan	23 234 936	84	Czech Rep	10 177 300
18	Iran	78 868 711	52	Syria	22 530 746	85	Dominican Rep	10 088 598
19	Congo, Dem Rep	73 599 190	53	Australia	22 015 576	86	Somalia	10 085 638
20	Thailand	67 091 089	54	Madagascar	22 005 222	87	Hungary	9 958 453
21	France	65 630 692	55	Cote d'Ivoire	21 952 093	88	Haiti	9 801 664
22	United Kingdom	63 047 162	56	Romania	21 848 504	89	Belarus	9 643 566
23	Italy	61 261 254	57	Sri Lanka	21 481 334	90	Benin	9 598 787
24	Burma	54 584 650	58	Cameroon	20 129 878	91	Azerbaijan	9 493 600
25	Korea, South	48 860 500	59	Angola	18 056 072	92	Sweden	9 103 788
26	South Africa	48 810 427	60	Kazakhstan	17 522 010	93	Honduras	8 296 693
27	Spain	47 042 984	61	Burkina Faso	17 275 115	94	Austria	8 219 743
28	Tanzania	46 912 768	62	Chile	17 067 369	95	Switzerland	7 925 517
29	Colombia	45 239 079	63	Netherlands	16 730 632	96	Tajikistan	7 768 385
30	Ukraine	44 854 065	64	Niger	16 344 687	97	Israel	7 590 758
31	Kenya	43 013 341	65	Malawi	16 323 044	98	Serbia	7 276 604
32	Argentina	42 192 494	66	Mali	15 494 466	99	Hong Kong	7 153 519
33	Poland	38 415 284	67	Ecuador	15 223 680	100	Bulgaria	7 037 935
34	Algeria	37 367 226						

Table 3: A Subjective Rating of the Environment for Public Opinion Polling in the Top 100 Countries

Rank	Country	Ratings	D3 Exp	Rank	Country	Ratings	D3 Exp	Rank	Country	Ratings	D3 Exp
1	China	2	1	35	Canada	1	0	68	Cambodia	1	0
2	India	1	1	36	Sudan	3	1	69	Guatemala	2	1
3	United States	1	1	37	Uganda	2	0	70	Zambia	1	0
4	Indonesia	1	1	38	Morocco	2	1	71	Senegal	1	0
5	Brazil	1	1	39	Iraq	1	1	72	Zimbabwe	3	1
6	Pakistan	1	1	40	Afghanistan	1	1	73	Rwanda	2	0
7	Nigeria	1	1	41	Nepal	2	0	74	Cuba	3	1
8	Bangladesh	1	1	42	Peru	2	1	75	Chad	2	0
9	Russia	2	1	43	Malaysia	1	1	76	Guinea	2	0
10	Japan	1	1	44	Uzbekistan	3	1	77	Portugal	1	1
11	Mexico	1	1	45	Venezuela	3	1	78	Greece	1	1
12	Philippines	1	1	46	Saudi Arabia	3	1	79	Tunisia	1	1
13	Vietnam	3	0	47	Yemen	2	1	80	South Sudan	2	1
14	Ethiopia	1	1	48	Ghana	1	0	81	Burundi	2	0
15	Egypt	2	1	49	Korea, North	3	0	82	Belgium	1	1
16	Germany	1	1	50	Mozambique	2	0	83	Bolivia	1	0
17	Turkey	2	1	51	Taiwan	1	0	84	Czech Rep	1	1
18	Iran	3	1	52	Syria	2	1	85	Dominican Rep	1	1
19	Congo, Dem Rep	2	1	53	Australia	1	0	86	Somalia	2	0
20	Thailand	1	0	54	Madagascar	1	0	87	Hungary	1	1
21	France	1	1	55	Cote d'Ivoire	1	0	88	Haiti	1	1
22	United Kingdom	1	1	56	Romania	1	1	89	Belarus	3	1
23	Italy	1	1	57	Sri Lanka	1	0	90	Benin	2	0
24	Burma	2	1	58	Cameroon	1	0	91	Azerbaijan	1	1
25	Korea, South	1	1	59	Angola	1	0	92	Sweden	1	1
26	South Africa	1	1	60	Kazakhstan	1	1	93	Honduras	1	1
27	Spain	1	1	61	Burkina Faso	1	0	94	Austria	1	1
28	Tanzania	1	1	62	Chile	1	1	95	Switzerland	1	1
29	Colombia	1	1	63	Netherlands	1	1	96	Tajikistan	1	1
30	Ukraine	1	1	64	Niger	1	1	97	Israel	1	0
31	Kenya	2	1	65	Malawi	1	0	98	Serbia	1	1
32	Argentina	1	1	66	Mali	2	0	99	Hong Kong	2	1
33	Poland	1	1	67	Ecuador	1	1	100	Bulgaria	1	1
34	Algeria	2	1								

F2F and CATI surveys) are well accepted in the industry. They typically produce surveys based on excellent household and respondent sampling of the national

Strategy 1:	Conduct surveys within each country (by F2F or CATI as best suited to reaching the most extensive and representation sample of the national general population). Supplement within country surveys with new approaches, as discussed below, particularly for the ten category "3" countries.
Strategy 2:	Transition from traditional F2F or CATI to social media. Poll via Facebook or Twitter, with opt-in respondents and/or panels.
Strategy 3:	Conduct all of the surveys from outside each country using cross-border oriented multi-lingual call centers with a common software platform and consistent dual-frame sampling, dialing procedures and field practices.

population and, for CATI surveys, of the national telephone-owning population which easily reaches 80-100% in most of the Top 100. However, there are a number of disadvantages to diversified traditional polling, including government repression, incomparability of sampling and field procedures, political risks to practitioners and respondents and generally higher cost than Strategies 2 and 3.

Strategy 2 would be a centralized approach, operating outside of all of the survey countries but one (presumably the United States, but portions of the research could be conducted outside of the US).¹ Its success would depend on access to Facebook and Twitter users and the representativeness of those who opt-into the research. These would be non-probability samples, with little or no verification of the demographics of the respondents.² The growth of non-probability sampling, largely over the internet in the US (and other countries) is a response to increasingly high refusal rates in CATI surveys (reaching 91% as reported by the Pew Research Center in 2014) and the prospect of substantially-reduced field costs.³

1 Even Twitter is subject to repression. At the time of this writing (April 2015) the Turkish court has just banned Twitter.

2 For more on the debate in the profession over probability vs. non-probability sampling methods, see Reg Baker, et al., "Summary Report of the AAPOR Task Force on Non-Probability Sampling," *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology* (November 2013).

3 For more on the impact of social media on the research profession, see Michael W. Link, et al., "Social Media

Strategy 3 is our preferred approach, taking advantage of diverse, multi-lingual population groupings in areas with high quality call centers (and affordable to varying degrees). As Marita Carballo has observed, *(g)lobalization is not just an economic phenomenon, but a political and cultural one as well, and it is not new. What distinguishes globalization today is the speed and volume of cross-border contacts.* The best method of cross-border surveys contacts is dual frame telephone research, dialing both landline and, increasingly, mobile numbers.⁴

In addition to concentrated call centers with on-site interviewers we see a growth of home-based interviewers logging into the call center, and they may or may not be in the same country. Call centers which meet these criteria can be found in the US (New York, Los Angeles, Miami), Europe (London, Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam/Rotterdam), the Middle East (Istanbul, Tunis), Asia (New Delhi, Mumbai, Singapore) and elsewhere. While it is not necessary to organize the field teams by language, four centers would be able to cover much of the world (English and other European languages, Arabic, Spanish and Chinese). We would need some specialization within the survey country (remote interviewers) or from regional call centers for such languages as Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Swahili, Hausa, Yoruba, etc.⁵

in Public Opinion Research: Executive Summary of the AAPOR Task Force on Emerging Technologies in Public Opinion Research," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Winter 2014).

4 The development of the sampling frames will be country specific, including but not limited to dual mode distributions that best fit each country. For more on this see Burton Levine and Rachel Harter, "Optimal Allocation of Cell-Phone and Landline Respondents in Dual-Frame Surveys," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Spring 2015).

5 Language coverage will be complex. There are 11 official languages in South Africa alone.

Where Could We Go From Here?

There are at least 10 steps in developing a global polling program (Top 100).

Step 1: Develop the concept for a large-scale global opinion survey based on country coverage, sample design, field methods, survey reporting and data distribution and archiving. This would be a one year effort involving a multi-national mix of survey practitioners, university-based subject matter experts, and representatives from possible funding organizations.

Step 2: Identify (or, if necessary, create) a non-profit organization that would (a) conduct the Global Top 100 Survey, (b) manage relations with the funding organizations and (c) handle the distribution and archiving of results. This non-profit organization would be small-scale, but would draw on the expertise of commercial firms, consultants (particularly in languages) and university-based subject matter experts.¹

Step 3: Secure funding for a five year effort, with two waves of Top 100 surveys per year. We project a rough estimate of \$15 million per year for the program, or \$75 million for the necessary five year commitment. As other multi-country survey programs have done, the country coverage of this program could grow with funding over time. Funding would be heavily weighted to data collection, recognizing that a substantial commitment to sampling and data processing is essential. Pursue foundation funding as government funding is more likely to be episodic rather than sustaining. Depending on funding, other countries could be added on an ad hoc basis to cover new issue and explore research opportunities.

Step 4: Develop the baseline survey questionnaire, allowing space in each wave for (a) country-specific questions and (b) global issues of the day.

Step 5: Develop the sampling frames for Wave 1 countries.

¹ The Roper Center for Public Opinion, currently based at the University of Connecticut, is an excellent example of a possible candidate – a non-profit organization, over 30 years in operation, a strong membership base with support from scholars and practitioners and a rich history of data archiving and distribution. The Roper Center has been expanding its collection of international survey results.

Step 6: Select multiple call centers to field Wave 1 with common sampling, dialing and reporting methods.

Step 7: Implement Wave 1 (Field, Data Processing, Data Visualization, Analytic Reports, Archiving and Distribution of Data Files).

Step 8: Release the results through the organizations website, traditional media and social media, and organize one or more global/regional conferences.

Step 9: Further distribute findings through normal professional conferences, articles and books.

Step 10: Review lessons learned and begin Wave 2.