

A man in a grey suit and green shirt is seen from the side, looking at a tablet computer. He is outdoors, with a blurred background of green trees and foliage. The image is partially covered by a blue curved shape on the right side.

Making Data Collection Meaningful

Module 4: Technology for data collection

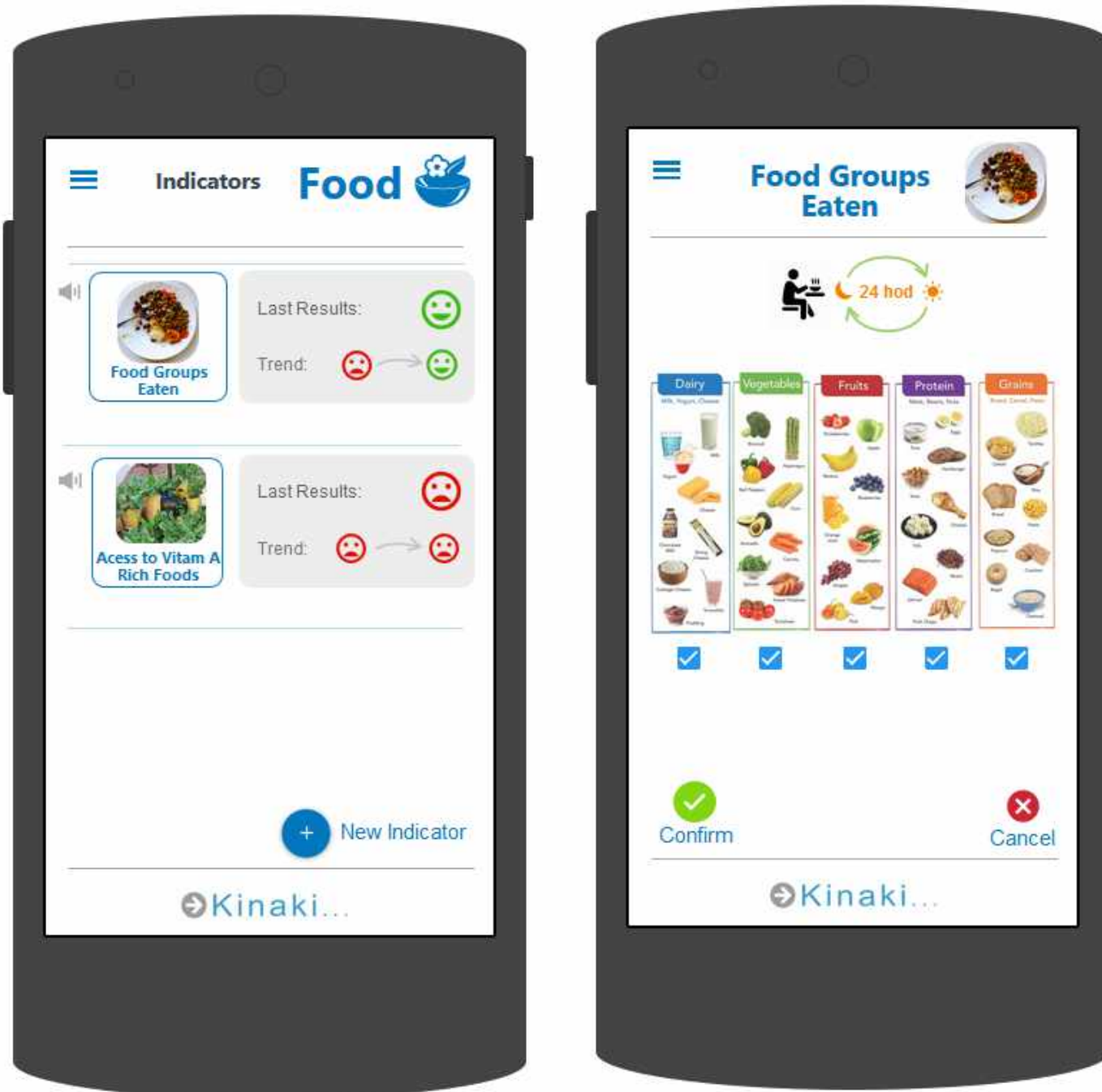
Natalie Zend
Zendialogue.ca



What is our vision for MEL?

Imagine a world where people, even those from low-resource settings, define their own theory of change and while using smart technology, based on pictures and voice, can track their own progress towards this change.

A world where technology enables one to team up with peers to more effectively progress towards the change and voluntarily share aggregated, impersonalized results with governing bodies for better-targeted support and services.



Software for Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) in a Snapshot



Design Project (Logic Model +
Performance Measurement Framework)



Collect Data



Analyze Data



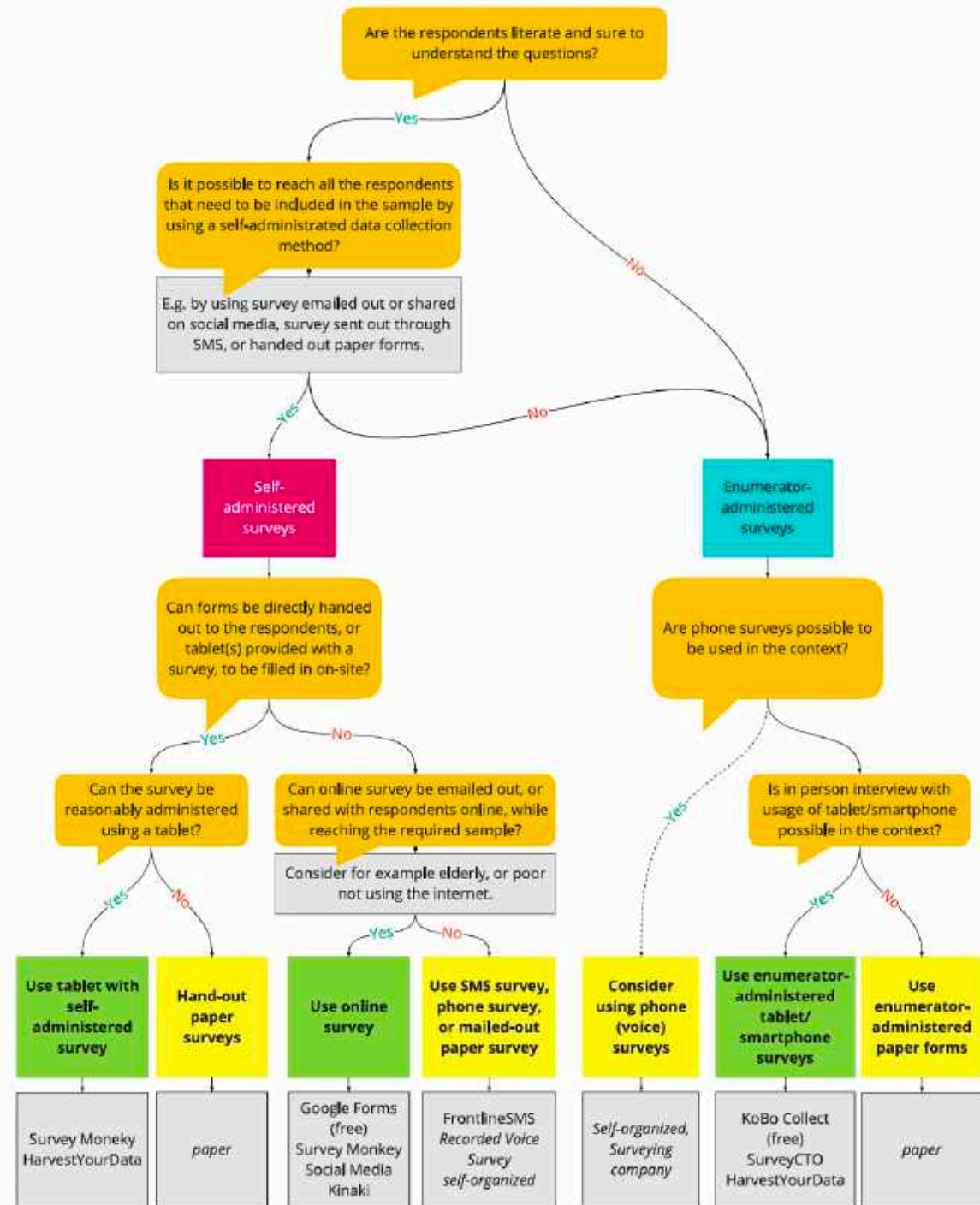
Report Results

**What systems or software are
you currently using to collect
your data?**



Decision Tree for Selecting a Survey Administration Method and Data Collection Tools

(see handout 4)



Examples of how technology can support data collection

+ Examples of specific tools for different purposes



Tools for online forms/surveys (*see handout 5*)

SurveyMonkey	Create surveys and questionnaires, collect data and analyse, filter and export results.	Paid*
Google Forms	Create custom forms for surveys and questionnaires. Gather data in a spreadsheet. Analyse in Google Sheets or export data to Excel.	Free
Microsoft Forms	Create surveys, quizzes, polls. Collect responses in real time and provides charts to visualize data. Can export to Excel.	Paid
Kinaki	Intuitive drag-and-drop survey design and data collection. Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, visualization with charts, tables, graphs.	Paid

Tools for on-site (enumerator-administered) surveys

SurveyMonkey (android/apple)	See above. Online/offline.	Paid*
HarvestYourData (android/apple)	iPad and Android survey app for mobile offline data collection. Design mobile survey with drag-and-drop editor. Capture data on smartphone, iPad or tablet. Real time survey results. Manage one or hundreds of devices and field workers.	Paid
KoBoCollect (android only)	Used for primary data collection in the field. Enter data from interviews to device. Visualize, analyse, share, download collected data. Offline/online.	Free
SurveyCTO (android/apple)	Collect data on Android and iOS mobile devices in a secure way. Monitor and visualize data. End-to-end encryption. Allows for case management. Used globally for field research and MEL. Offline.	Paid

Tool for data collection via text messaging (SMS)

FrontlineSMS	Used by organizations to distribute and collect information via text messaging (SMS). The software works without an internet connection and with a cell phone and computer.	Free
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Tools for live surveys

Polleverywhere	Create a poll with instant results during your workshop/ presentation. Export data for further usage.	Paid*
Mentimeter	Audience uses their smartphone to answer surveys and questionnaires. Visualize their responses in real time. Share and export results for further analysis.	Paid*

Tools for spreadsheets

Excel	Create, view, edit, share spreadsheets. Formulas, graphs, charts.	Paid
Google Sheets	Pre-made spreadsheet templates, built-in formulas. Charts and graphs. Works with Excel. Live collaboration.	Free
LibreOffice	Calc spreadsheet: free alternative to Excel. Built-in wizards, templates. Works with Excel.	Free

Tools for qualitative data

For photos: KoBoCollect	Use a KoBo form for structuring your photos, with fields to note what are you taking the picture of, to rate its characteristics, or to add other information about it.	Free
For interview recordings: Google Speech-to-Text	Play back your recording to Google Speech-to-Text (part of Google Cloud), let it transcribe it, then revise this text.	Paid*
Transcribe by Wreally	Convert interviews to text with automatic transcription. Convert speech to text with dictation.	Paid
Wordle	Generate word clouds from text you provide.	Free

Guiding Principles for selecting data collection software

- **KNOW YOUR NEEDS:** qualitative / quantitative data; expected number of respondents; expected number of data collectors; period for data collection; local context and culture; plans beyond data collection (e.g. planning, analysis, reporting)
- **KNOW YOUR MEANS:** Available budget; available staff time; motivation
- **SOURCE LOCALLY:** If possible, find devices locally to allow for troubleshooting and repair
- **TEST & PILOT & TEST AGAIN:** Don't trust the marketing – test it yourself. Then pilot with real people, real survey and adapt the pilot
- **ENGAGE:** Engage your local team, respondents and if possible also the enumerators in your process as early as possible

- ➡ Use of technology is putting someone at risk (e.g. respondents, enumerators etc.)
- ➡ It is restricted by authorities (e.g. conflict areas and smartphones)
- ➡ It is culturally or socially inappropriate to use technology (e.g. people perceive technology as a tool of oppression)
- ➡ No tech pioneer on our team (enthusiast rather than tech expert)
- ➡ We aim to use technology that is not accessible in the front-line of our area

**When NOT
to use
technology
for data
collection**

Responsible data management



Confidentiality is a must if we want to ensure that respondents answer truthfully, especially as regards power relations.



Anonymity is desired because it can limit damage of unauthorised data leak.

- Note: There other ways to identify respondents than just a name, for example: age + gender + community name might be enough to identify someone in a small community.

Responsible data management



Data Safety refers to the physical existence of data, its storage, access and maintenance.

- ✓ Plan for what will happen after the project, and when the data will be deleted permanently.
- ✓ Consider backing up the data off-site.

Responsible data management



Data Security refers to human-caused threats to the data (e.g. unauthorized access; intention to block your access).

- ✓ Use technologies and apps that ensure encryption.
- ✓ Carefully read the terms and conditions provisions of the services you use.
- ✓ Use a password manager tool.
- ✓ Secure the organization's and your personal computers.

Exercise: Technology Options for Data Collection



Using worksheet 4, take a few minutes to consider tools & apps for data collection about which you'd like to learn more, and the purpose for which you would use each tool back in your work. Refer to handouts 4 (decision tree), 5 (examples of software), and 6 (responsible data management).



Making Data Collection Meaningful

- Bibliography and resources
- Acronyms
- Best Practices for Focus Group Discussions

Thank you!



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& Knowledge Sharing
for Small and Medium
Organizations (SMO)



Provincial & Regional Councils
for International Cooperation



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