



Baseline Data Collection:
Data Collection Methods, Gender Sensitive Data Collection and Ethics

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Presentation Outline

- Methods for baseline data collection
 - Qualitative data collection
 - Quantitative data collection
 - Operational data collection
- Gender sensitive data collection
- Consent and Ethics for data collection

Types of data collection methods

Data Collection Method	Description
Qualitative data collection	Qualitative data collection captures people's experiences, opinions, attitudes and feelings. Often participatory methods such as focus group discussions and interviews are used to collect qualitative data. Qualitative data can also be collected through surveys that ask people about their perceptions and opinions.
Quantitative data collection	Quantitative data are quantifiable (can be counted), such as percentage of children enrolled in primary school or percentage of women who received at least one antenatal care visit during the last pregnancy. Quantitative data is usually collected through a survey. If the survey is to be representative of the entire population, then the survey sample must be randomly selected.
Operational data	Operational data is data that is routinely collected. This data could be data collected by a school system (i.e. children enrolled) or the health system (i.e. ANC visits) or it could also be data that is collected by the project (i.e. mosquito nets distributed)

Keep in mind that the data collection methods you choose for your baseline will need to be replicated at your end-line.

Types of data – strengths and limitations

Data Collection Method	Strengths	Limitations
Qualitative data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Potential to generate rich, detailed data that leaves participants perspectives intact;-Results can pioneer new ways of understanding ;-Responds to local situations, conditions and needs of participants;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Conclusions may differ depending on the perspective of the researcher;-Replication of the study is difficult;-Results are specific to the study participants;-Increased chance of ethical dilemmas , which may undermine the validity of the study;-Data gathering may be time consuming/expensive.
Quantitative data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Can provide data that is representative of the whole population;-Numerical data is objective;-Possible to compare results with other studies;-Data can quickly be collected from many participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Requires a large sample size to be representative of the whole population;-Can be very expensive;-Data may lack depth as the respondent has a limited number of response options;-May require complex statistical analysis.
Operational data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Data is readily available;-Data is often inexpensive to collect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Data may be incomplete;-Complex procedures may be required to access the data.

Depending on the goals of the project, data may be collected using one method or a combination of methods. A combination of methods is called a “mixed method” study and can be useful to triangulate data.

Gender sensitive data collection

Gender sensitive data collection refers to who collects data, how participants are engaged (particularly women and girls), and where and how data are collected. Gender sensitive data collection is particularly important when the population is vulnerable.

Principles to consider for gender sensitive data collection:

- 1. Women collect data from women; men collect data from men:** This is the gold standard for data collection. Women may be intimidated by men; they may respond as they think they should and hold back their authentic response. Similarly, men may not be willing to answer questions posed by female data collectors.
- 2. Seek diversity in respondents:** Where appropriate and possible, collect data from women, men, adolescent girls and boys, people who are disabled and other vulnerable groups. Include participants who live in hard-to-reach locations as much as participants who are easily reached.

Gender sensitive data collection continued

Principles to consider for gender sensitive data collection continued:

3. **Avoid tokenism:** Avoid collecting data from 10 female focus groups and one male focus group. Remember, gender sensitive data collections includes both genders. Understand and value the importance of the perspective of both genders. Know that in many cultures women's empowerment requires male champions; seek to understand how to create male champions.
4. **Collect disaggregated data:** Ensure that you will be able to disaggregate data when it comes time to do data analysis. Plan to be able to report on outcomes for men and women separately; this is relevant for all types of data collection (qualitative, quantitative, operational). Plan to also disaggregate data by other vulnerability markers including age, ethnicity, rural or urban location, education and disability.

Gender sensitive data collection continued

Principles to consider for gender sensitive data collection continued:

5. **Pay attention to diversity:** It may not be enough to categorize people into two broad categories of “women” and “men”. Young women may not be willing to speak up if they are amongst older women and vice versa. Young men may not speak in the company of older men. You may need to be sensitive to sexual orientation or gender identity when determining how, where and when to ask questions.
6. **Consider the environment where data is collected:** Will you conduct a focus group discussion under a tree where other villagers can listen in? How will you ask sensitive questions to a young woman without her husband or father listening in – or even responding on her behalf? Think about how you will protect the confidentiality of your respondents and their data. Know that if your respondents do not feel safe, they may not provide authentic responses. Train your data collectors on methods for ensuring a safe and confidential environment for data collection.

Gender sensitive data collection continued

Principles to consider for gender sensitive data collection continued:

7. **Manage your expectations:** Vulnerable people may not know how to answer your questions. A woman who has never been asked her opinion, may not easily know how to express her opinion. People may give you the response they think is “correct.” People may agree to be a participant and then not show up; this may be a reflection of the way they were invited to participate – it may also be a reflection of the relevance of the topic to the lives of your participants. When data collection does not produce the results you were hoping for (i.e. deep conversations about lived reality), question how you are collecting data, the environment, your questions and what you could change to get the results you are looking for.
8. **Take time for data collection:** Understand that your participants may have complex lives. Schedule data collection at times that are convenient for participants; offer to come back if the participant is busy or if something comes up. Meet the participant at a location that is convenient for them (i.e. their shop or field). Give respondents time to consider how they would answer a questions. Always let respondents know that they can end an interview at any time.

Consent and ethical clearance for data collection

How you gather consent and ethical clearance for data collection will define the integrity of your project and the work that you do. Never compromise the process of gathering consent and, where required, ethical clearance, for your project. Depending on the circumstances of your project, you may require consent from different levels. These may include:

1. Ethical clearance from a formal Research Ethics Board;
2. Permission from a national authority (Government; Department of Health; Department of Education);
3. Permission from state or district level authorities;
4. Permission from village head (or similar person who is the political representative);
5. Consent or permission from the head of household, school head teacher, head of health department etc.;
6. Consent from the individual who is the respondent;
7. If the participant is a child (0-18 years) you may be required to obtain parental consent as well as assent from the child.

Build time into your baseline planning to develop protocols for consent and gather ethical clearance and or approvals from local stakeholders.

What is informed consent?

Informed consent should include the following components:

- Background information about the project;
- Information about the purpose of the study;
- Information about what the participant will need to do if he/she decides to participate;
- Information about what are the risks of participating in the study;
- Information about the benefits of participating in the study;
- Information about how the participant can withdraw consent at anytime during or after data collection;
- Information on how the data collected will be kept confidential;
- Contact information for the lead organization/researchers;
- A method to indicate (signature) that the participant agrees to participate.

Thank You!

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