



Making Data Collection Meaningful

Adapting Data Collection to the Covid Context



Capacity-Building
& Knowledge Sharing
for Small and Medium
Organizations (SMO)



A hand holding a smartphone, with a bokeh background of colorful lights. The phone screen is visible, showing a dark interface. The background consists of out-of-focus light circles in shades of purple, blue, green, and orange.

How are organizations revising their MEL and data collection in response to COVID-19?

1. Rethinking MEL Plans & Teams

- ▶ Rethinking plans, designs, methods and use - “Expect and facilitate change.”
- ▶ Do no harm; staff + stakeholders wellbeing #1
- ▶ Non-critical activities; pause monitoring
- ▶ Communicate with funders, staff, communities

2. Evaluating the impact of COVID-19

- ▶ Including data collection focused on COVID-19 impact, response and recovery & identifying solutions for informed policy making
- ▶ Training staff in COVID transmission/protection

3. Collecting data remotely

- ▶ Shift to remote data collection (online interviews, phone surveys, SMS text, etc.)
- ▶ Reliance on local experts for monitoring & reporting
- ▶ SurveyCTO, CommCare offering reduced rates
- ▶ Assessing new methods used

4. Considering “good enough”

- ▶ Maximizing use of current data/secondary data
- ▶ “Rigor” in the context of crisis and uncertainty - Detaching from rigor as an absolute methodological standard

5. Engaging in systems thinking

- ▶ Seeing the interconnections and their implications in programming
- ▶ Increased coordination around joint data collection/sharing of results
 - ▶ DAC Network on Development Evaluation promotes joint and collaborative evaluations (involving multiple development partners) as a tool for mutual accountability and learning.

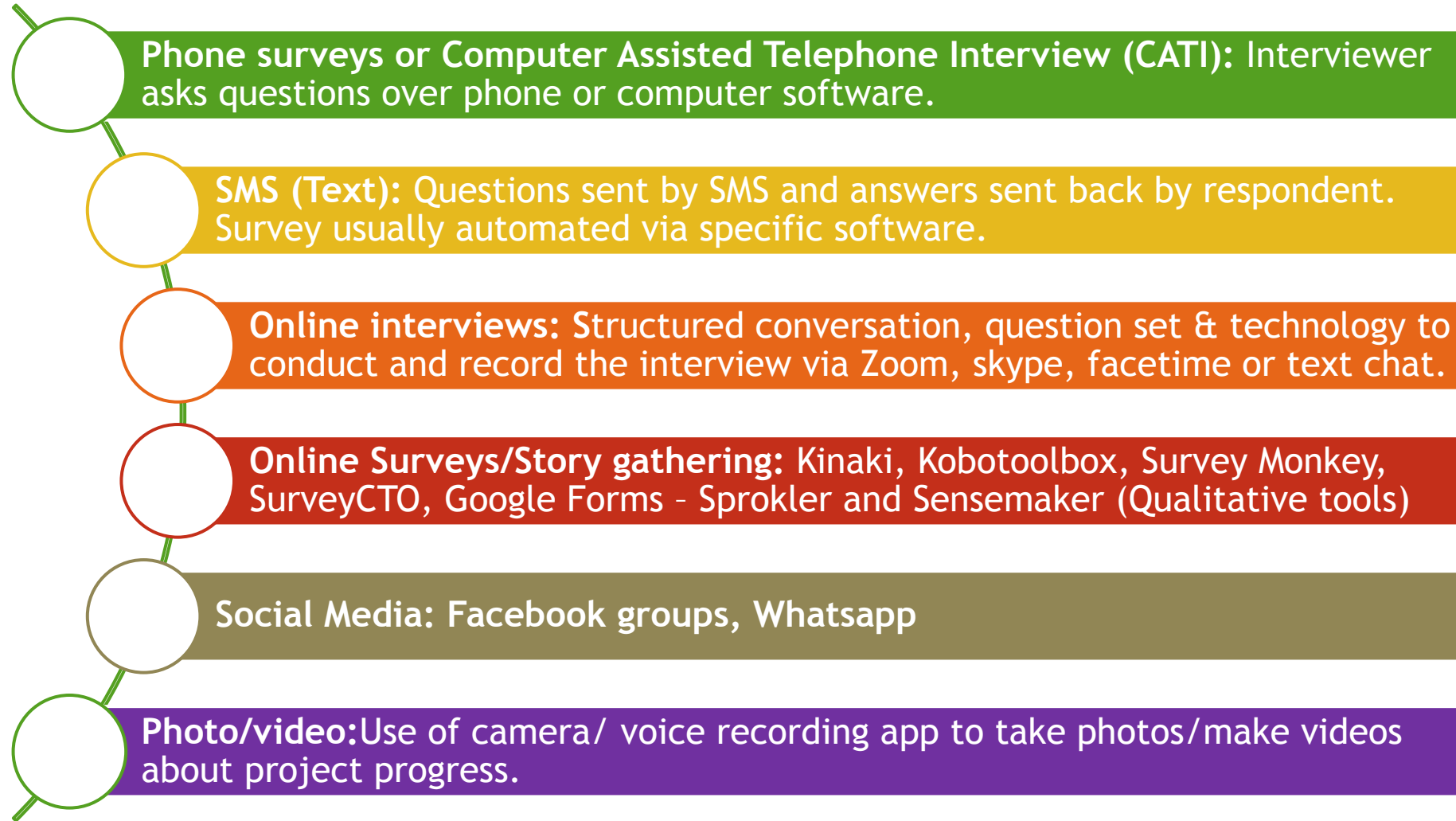
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/jointevaluations.htm>

6. Challenging MEL as usual

- ▶ Questioning the dominant framing of MEL focused on efficiency, effectiveness, economy, value for money, etc.
- ▶ Increased space for approaches based in feminist, post colonial theories.

“Moving what we do on-line now is one issue to discuss but is the MEL we are doing really of greatest value to communities, national governments, for partnership, for inequality and inclusion and diversity?” – Pelican listserve

Top Options for Remote data collection



Challenges: Significant and difficult to circumvent biases, data protection, managing gender inequalities in access.

Key Resources for Remote MEL

1. **Covid-19 Crisis: HOW TO ADAPT YOUR DATA COLLECTION FOR MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY?** by CartONG
 - Summarizes technological alternatives for data collection and data protection issues
2. **GUIDELINES FOR ADAPTING THIRD-PARTY MONITORING in the Context of the COVID-19 Outbreak** by IAPS
 - Recommendations for adapting methods throughout MEL cycle
3. **Doing fieldwork in a Pandemic** by J-PAL
 - crowdsourced doc: numerous methods- photo/video/ wearable cameras/app-based methods
4. **COVID-19: How to include marginalized and vulnerable people in risk communication and community engagement**, Reliefweb
5. **Remote Survey Toolkit Prepared in Response to COVID-19; 60 Decibals**
 - Technology pros and cons
 - Choose your tech cheat sheet

Key Resources for Remote data collection

Cheat Sheet Choose Your Technology



Cheat Sheet Technology Pros and Cons

Technology	Pros	Cons
Phone Calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works in low literacy contexts Well-suited for a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions Can get to the "why" behind quantitative questions with open-ended qualitative questions. Generally richer data than SMS, IVR, email When well-executed, can get very high (+50%) response rates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need access to customer phone numbers 3-5x more expensive than IVR & SMS Requires high-quality training of survey team Must build in protocols to address inconsistent cellphone penetration in some locales
SMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inexpensive Can easily add in customer incentives to reply using an airtime bonus Customer can complete at his/her convenience Can include a handful of open-ended questions Honest responses to sensitive questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need high mobile penetration & literacy rates Surveys cannot be longer than 15 questions Data is much less rich than phone, online
Interactive voice response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works in low-literacy areas Can get honest responses to sensitive questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically low response rate Limited number of questions (10 maximum, ideally less than 5)

1. Remote Survey Toolkit Prepared in Response to COVID-19; 60 Decibals

...e experience
...able to analyze

Access Assessment Tool

Access Assessment Tool					Country:		
For definition of level of access for each combination, please refer to the sheet 'Definitions...' in this workbook							
Accessing Personnel	Beneficiaries, community-based stakeholders	Local Partner's Staff	Implementing Partner's - National staff	Implementing Partner's - Expatriate Staff	Assessment techniques employed when defining Access Levels	Implications of level of access to planned data collection	
A	Beneficiaries						
Please identify, what level of access have various stakeholders (listed in the first row) to project beneficiaries							
Access Levels	Partial Access	Partial Access	Partial Access	No Access			
Notes	ex. Gatherings of maximum 5 people are allowed. All public events are restricted until July, 2020.	ex. Access only with government permission that takes about 10 days to obtain. Access is only permitted to staff who is located within the same district - travelling between districts not allowed.	ex. Same limitations as to Local Partner's Staff	ex. Majority of project expatriate staff were evacuated from the country.	eg. Government restrictions heard from news and confirmed through phone interview with XXX authority.	FGDs can be conducted but participants and facilitator should be no more than 5. Household survey may be allowed but permission from government should be secured. Enumerators will need to come from the same district as respondents.	
B	General Community and its members (other than beneficiaries)						
Please identify, what level of access have various stakeholders (listed in the first row) to community members							
Access Levels							
Notes							
C	Local Government & Leaders & Opinion Makers						
Please identify, what level of access have various stakeholders (listed in the first row) to local government and opinion makers							
Access Levels							
Notes							
D	Local Technical Experts (e.g. district education officer)						
Please identify, what level of access have various stakeholders (listed in the first row) to local technical experts							
Access Levels							