BetterEvaluation

Describe activities, outcomes, impacts and context

Collect and retrieve data to answer descriptive questions about the activities of the project/program/policy, the various results it has had, and the context in which it has been implemented.

1. Sample
What sampling strategies will you use for collecting data?

Probability:

Multi-Stage: cluster sampling in which larger clusters are further subdivided into smaller, more targeted groupings for the purposes of surveying.

Sequential: selecting every n^{th} case from a list (e.g. every 10th client).

Simple Random: drawing a sample from the population completely at random.

Stratified Random: splitting the population into strata (sections or segments) in order to ensure distinct categories are adequately represented before selecting a random sample from each.

Purposeful:

Confirming and Disconfirming: providing deeper insights into preliminary findings and highlighting the boundaries of the findings.

Criterion: involving the identification of particular criterion of importance, the articulation of these criterion, and the systematic review and study of cases that meet the criterion.

Critical Case: identifying cases that have the potential to impact other cases.

Homogenous: selecting similar cases to further investigate a particular phenomenon or subgroup of interest.

Intensity: selecting cases which exhibit a particular phenomenon intensely.

Maximum Variation: contains cases that are purposefully as different from each other as possible.

Outlier: analysing cases that are unusual or special in some way, such as outstanding successes or notable failures.

Snowball: asking a number of people where else to seek information creates a snowball effect as the sample gets bigger and bigger and new information rich examples are accumulated

Theory-based: selecting cases according to the extent to which they represent a particular theoretical construct.

Typical Case: developing a profile of what is agreed as average, or normal.

Convenience:

Convenience: based on the ease or "convenience" of gaining access to a sample. simply in which data is gathered from people who are readily available.

Volunteer: sampling by simply asking for volunteers

2. Use measures, indicators or metrics
What measures or indicators will be used? Are there existing ones that should be used or will you need to develop new measures and indicators?

This task has resources only in the areas of:
- Gender issues
- Governance
- Health
- Human rights
- Inequality
- Poverty
- Quality of life
- Wellbeing.

3. Collect and/or retrieve data

How will you collect and/or retrieve data about activities, results, context and other factors?

Individuals:

Convergent Interviewing: asking probing questions to interviewees and then using reflective prompts and active listening to ensure the conversation continues.

Deliberative Opinion Polls: providing information about the issue to respondents to ensure their opinions are better informed.

Email Questionnaires: distributing questionnaires online via email.

Face to Face Questionnaires: administering questionnaires in real time by a researcher reading the questions (either face to face or by telephone).

Global Assessment Scales: providing an overall rating of performance across multiple dimensions (also called a rubric).

Goal Attainment Scales: recording actual performance compared to expected performance using a 5 point scale from -2 (much less than expected) to +2 (much more than expected).

Internet Questionnaires: collecting data via a form (with closed or open questions) on the web.

Interviews: in-depth, structured, semi-structured, or unstructured.

Key Informant Interviews: interviewing people who have particularly informed perspectives.

Logs and Diaries: monitoring tools for recording data over a long period of time.

Mobile Phone Logging: Targeted gathering of structured information using devices such as smartphones, PDAs, or tablets.

Peer/Expert Reviews: Drawing upon peers or experts with relevant experience and expertise to assist in the evaluation of some aspect or all of a project.

Photo Voice: promoting participatory photography as an empowering option of digital storytelling for vulnerable populations.

Photolanguage: eliciting rich verbal data where participants choose an existing photograph as a metaphor and then discuss it.

Polling Booth: collect sensitive information from participants anonymously .

Postcards: collecting information quickly in order to provide short reports on evaluation findings (or an update on progress).

Projective Techniques (photo-elicitation): participants selecting one or two pictures from a set and using them to illustrate their comments about something.

Seasonal Calendars: analysing time-related cyclical changes in data.

Sketch Mapping: creating visual representations ('map') of a geographically based or defined issue.

Stories (Anecdote): providing a glimpse into how people experience their lives and the impact of specific projects/programs.

Survey: collecting data in response to structured questions.

Telephone Questionnaires: administering questionnaires by telephone.

Groups:

After Action Review: bringing together a team to discuss a task, event, activity or project, in an open and honest fashion.

Brainstorming: focusing on a problem and then allowing participants to come up with as many solutions as possible.

Card Visualization: brainstorming in a group using individual paper cards to express participants thoughts about particular ideas or issues.

Concept Mapping: showing how different ideas relate to each other - sometimes this is called a mind map or a cluster map.

Delphi Study: soliciting opinions from groups in an iterative process of answering questions in order to gain a consensus.

Dotmocracy: collecting and recognizing levels of agreement on written statements among a large number of people.

Fishbowl Technique: managing group discussion by using a small group of participants to discuss an issue while the rest of the participants observe without interrupting.

Focus Groups: discovering the issues that are of most concern for a community or group when little or no information is available.

Future Search Conference: identifying a shared vision of the future by conducting a conference with this as its focus.

Hierarchical Card Sorting: a participatory card sorting option designed to provide insight into how people categorize and rank different phenomena.

Keypad technology: gauging audience response to presentations and ideas in order to gain provide valuable feedback from large group settings.

Mural: collecting data from a group of people about a current situation, their experiences using a service, or their perspectives on the outcomes of a project.

ORID: enabling a focused conversation by allowing participants to consider all that is known (Objective) and their feelings (Reflective) before considering issues (Interpretive) and decisions (Decisional).

Q-methodology: investigating the different perspectives of participants on an issue by ranking and sorting a series of statements (also known as Q-sort).

SWOT Analysis: reflecting on and assessing the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of a particular strategy.

World Cafe: hosting group dialogue in which the power of simple conversation is emphasised in the consideration of relevant questions and themes.

Writeshop: a writing workshop involving a concentrated process of drafting, presenting, reviewing and revising documentations of practice

Observation:

Field Trips: organizing trips where participants visit physical sites.

Non-participant Observation: observing participants without actively participating.

Participant Observation: identifying the attitudes and operation of a community by living within its environs.

Photography/video: discerning changes that have taken place in the environment or activities of a community through the use of images taken over a period of time.

Transect: gathering spacial data on an area by observing people, surroundings and resources while walking around the area or community.

Physical measurements:

Biophysical: measuring physical changes over a period of time related to a specific indicator by using an accepted measurement procedure.

Geographical: capturing geographic information about persons or objects of interest such as the locations of high prevalence of a disease or the location of service delivery points.

Existing documents and data:

Big data: data sets that are so voluminous and from such different sources that traditional analysis methods are not feasible or appropriate.

Official Statistics: obtaining statistics published by government agencies or other public bodies such as international organizations. These include quantitative or qualitative information on all major areas of citizens' lives such as economic and social development, living conditions, health, education, the environment.

Previous Evaluations and Research: using the findings from evaluation and research studies that were previously conducted on the same or closely related areas.

Project Records: retrieving relevant information from a range of documents related to the management of a project such as the project description, strategic and work plans, budget and procurement documents, official correspondence, minutes of meetings, description and follow-up of project participants, progress reports.

Reputational Monitoring Dashboard: monitoring and quickly appraising reputational trends at a glance and from a variety of different sources.

4. Manage data
How will you organize and store data and ensure its quality?

Data Cleaning: detecting and removing (or correcting) errors and inconsistencies in a data set or database due to the corruption or inaccurate entry of the data.

Additional resources available on:
- Data management
- Data quality

5. Combine qualitative and quantitative data?
How will you combine qualitative and quantitative data?

When data are gathered:

Parallel Data Gathering: gathering qualitative and quantitative data at the same time.

Sequential Data Gathering (Sequencing): gathering one type of data first and then using this to inform the collection of the other type of data.

When data are combined:

Component Design: collecting data independently and then combining at the end for interpretation and conclusions.

Integrated Design: combining different options during the conduct of the evaluation to provide more insightful understandings.

Purpose of combining data:

Enriching: using qualitative work to identify issues or obtain information on variables not obtained by quantitative surveys.

Examining: generating hypotheses from qualitative work to be tested through the quantitative approach.

Explaining: using qualitative data to understand unanticipated results from quantitative data.

Triangulation (Confirming/reinforcing; Rejecting): verifying or rejecting results from quantitative data using qualitative data (or vice versa).

6. Analyze data
How will you investigate patterns in numeric or textual data?

Numeric analysis:

Correlation: a statistical technique to determine how strongly two or more variables are related.

Crosstabulations: getting an indication of the frequency of two variables (e.g. gender or income, and frequency of school attendance) occurring at the same time.

Data mining: computer-driven automated techniques that run through large amounts of text or data to find new patterns and information.

Exploratory Techniques: taking a 'first look' at a dataset by summarizing its main characteristics, often by using visual methods.

Frequency tables: arranging collected data values in ascending order of magnitude, along with their corresponding frequencies to ensure a clearer picture of a data set.

Measures of Central Tendency: a summary measure that attempts to describe a whole set of data with a single value that represents the middle or centre of its distribution.

Measures of Dispersion: a summary measure that describes how values are distributed around the centre.

Multivariate descriptive: providing simple summaries of (large amounts of) information (or data) with two or more related variables.

Non-Parametric inferential: data that are flexible and do not follow a normal distribution.

Parametric inferential: carried out on data that follow certain parameters: the data will be normal (ie, the distribution parallels the bell curve); numbers can be added, subtracted, multiplied and divided; variances are equal when comparing two or more groups; and the sample should be large and randomly selected.

Summary statistics: providing a quick summary of data which is particularly useful for comparing one project to another, before and after.

Time series analysis: observing well-defined data items obtained through repeated measurements over time.

Textual analysis:

Content analysis: reducing large amounts of unstructured textual content into manageable data relevant to the (evaluation) research questions.

Thematic coding: recording or identifying passages of text or images that are linked by a common theme or idea allowing the indexation of text into categories.

See relationships among data points:

Scatterplot: displaying the relationship between two quantitative variables plotted along two axes. A series of dots represent the position of observations from the data set.

Matrix Chart: summarising a multidimensional data set in a grid.

Network Diagram: a depiction of how people or other elements are related to one another.

Compare a set of values:

Bar Chart: illustrating the main features of the distribution of a data set in a clear way.

Block Histogram: presenting a frequency distribution of quantitative data in a graphical way.

Bubble Chart: providing a way to communicate complicated data sets quickly and easily.

Track rises and falls over time:

Line Graph: displaying information as a series of data points connected by straight line segments, on two axes.

Stacked Graph: visualising how a group of quantities changes over time. Items are "stacked" in this type of graph allowing the user to add up the underlying data points.

See the parts of a whole:

Pie Chart: a circular chart divided into sectors (like slices of a pie), illustrating proportion.

Treemap: makes use of qualitative information in the form of important distinctions or differences that people see in the world around them. They help overcome some of the problems that may be encountered when dealing with qualitative information.

Icon array: a matrix of icons (usually 100 or 1000 icons) typically used as a frequency-based representation of risk, simultaneously displaying both the number of expected events and the number of expected non-events.

Analyze a text:

Word Tree: a visual display of the words in qualitative dataset, where frequently used words are connected by branches to the other words that appear nearby in the data.

Phrase Net: depicts, in a network diagram, the relationships between different words in a source text using pattern matching (i.e., looks for pairs of words that fit a particular patterns). Matching different patterns provides different views of concepts contained in the text.

Word Cloud: assists an evaluator identify important words during the process of textual analysis.

See the world:

Demographic Mapping: using GIS (global information system) mapping technology to show data on population characteristics by region or geographic area.

Geotagging: adding geographic information about digital content, within "metadata" tags - including latitude and longitude coordinates, place names and/or other positional data.

GIS Mapping: creating very precise maps representing geographic coordinates that could include information relating to changes in geographical, social or agricultural indicators.

Interactive mapping: maps that allow users to interact – e.g. zooming in and out, panning around, identifying specific features, querying underlying data such as by topic or a specific indicator (e.g., socioeconomic status), generating reports

Social mapping: identifying households using pre-determined indicators that are based on socio-economic factors.

Find options (methods), resources and more information on these tasks and approaches online at http://betterevaluation.org/plan/describe