

What to consider when selecting data collection methods

On the right we have included 9 considerations for selecting data collection methods to use in measuring impact.

We go into more detail on the topics to the right, including exercises to try out the guidance, in our Impact measurement and management (IMM): Builder eLearning course:

[Click here to view the course](#)

1 What type of data do you need?

What type of information do you need the method to collect?



Will the method collect the right data against your indicator? For example, if the indicators is qualitative you will need to use a method collecting qualitative data.

2 Can you use existing sources of data?

Can you use existing sources of data rather than using a method that requires you to develop or select data collection tools? For example, existing reports or research.



3 What methods and tools are you currently using?

Do you already have tools you could use/amend against a particular data collection method? If you have methods and tools that are working for you already and being used to collect good quality data there is no reason to change this.

4 Do tools relating to the method already exist?

Do data collection tools already exist outside of your organisation for the collection of data in relation to the method that you choose. For example, there, is there an existing validated questionnaire that you could use?

5 What resources are required?

What is the time and cost of using the method? For example, the staff time required to use the method.



6 What skills and experience do you have?

Do your staff or volunteers working on IMM have the skills and experience to use the method, for example, in designing the data collection tools, deploying the tools, analysing the resulting data, or dealing with sensitive issues arising from the data

7 Who are the respondents?

- When and how can respondents be reached?
- What is the cultural and linguistically appropriate method to use?
- Is the method suitable for the social and cognitive levels of maturity of the respondents?
- Do you need specialists to be present when collecting data on sensitive issues?
- Do participants need to be anonymous when giving their responses?

8 How participatory is the method?

How participatory are the data collection methods you could chose from? Are there methods that would be more engaging for participants?



9 What are the advantages and disadvantages of the method?

Every method has it's own advantages and disadvantages and it is important to consider each method individually. We look at the advantages and disadvantages further in the IMM: Builder eLearning course.