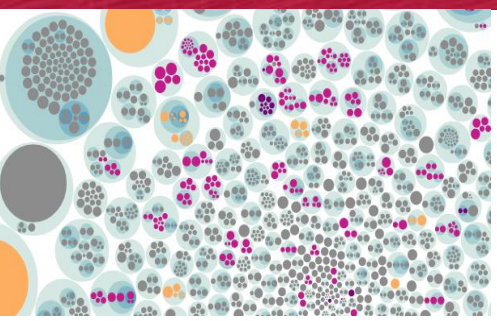
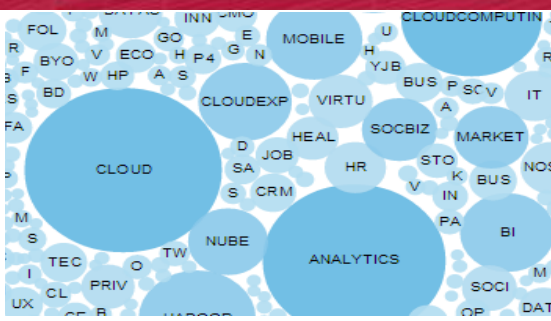


Meeting Highlights:
Monitoring and Evaluation Community of Practice 08-08-2017

Data Visualisation for Monitoring and Evaluation



Setting the scene

Participants at the CoP meeting listed a variety of reasons for wanting to know more about data visualisation. Here are some examples.

M&E has become arcane and circular: we need to 'untrap' the way data is presented.	We want to learn more about how to present data in a meaningful and accessible way.
Data needs to lend itself to the presentation of comparisons.	Data should not just be for the experts, but should also tell a story to non-experts in the sector.
We want to understand our own school-level data and what this means in comparison to national data.	We want to improve our expertise in interpreting data.
We are looking for software that suits the development sector.	We want to make closer links between research and data.
Project decision-making processes based on data need to become more innovative.	We want to understand how different ways of presenting data can tell different stories, and be sensitised to being manipulated by data.

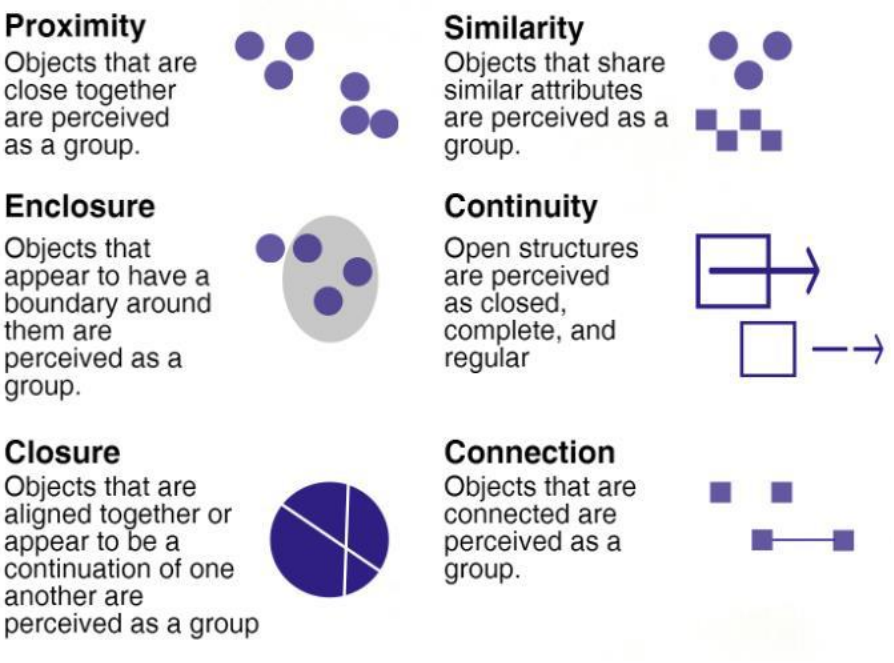
Data Visualisation for M&E: Jerusha Govender

Jerusha Govender is the founder of Data Innovator, a small business that helps organisations manage and analyse their data, and communicate their stories in visual and exciting ways. Jerusha has a background in public health and is also a board member of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA).

Background to data visualisation

Both quantitative and qualitative data can be represented in a number of graphical ways, such as charts, maps, diagrams, networks, pictures, organograms, infographics and so on. While most people are familiar with many of these, it is useful to understand the 'science' data visualisation. People take less time to

process visuals than sound or text; data can be 'chunked' in such a way as to simplify complexity while at the same time presenting relationships in a digestible format.

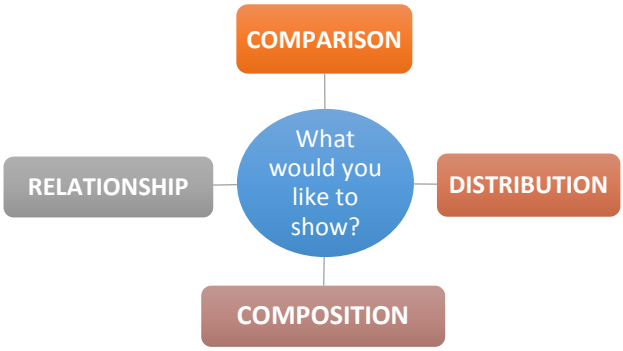


Here is an example of how visual perception effect can be used for group information using data visualisation.

To view the whole presentation, click here

Components of data visualisation

Jerusha then took us through some of the components of data visualisation, using examples of both good and bad illustrations of different types of data representations as the basis for an interactive discussion. Data can be quantitative, qualitative, or story-telling data (or a mix), and different types of graphics suit different kinds of data.



Two key pointers given are to consider the **purpose and audience** of your data representation.

See **'Chart Suggestions – A Thought Starter'** in the presentation for more detail on each of these components.

Some tips on presenting quantitative data

- Know your audience: e.g. matrices using dots which look like little people can be quite appealing for school data.
- Do not give your reader/viewer unnecessary work to do. Make sure that all the information is available on the graphic.
- A caution regarding pie charts: if you have a lot of categories, the small slices of the chart can be misleading.
- 2D representations are easier to interpret correctly than 3D visuals.
- If you are tracking for impact and/or representing progression, the baseline must be evident.

- Locations, scale and geographical relationships are much easier to covey in maps than in words.
- You can combine different types of information into one table (see Indicator performance example in presentation).

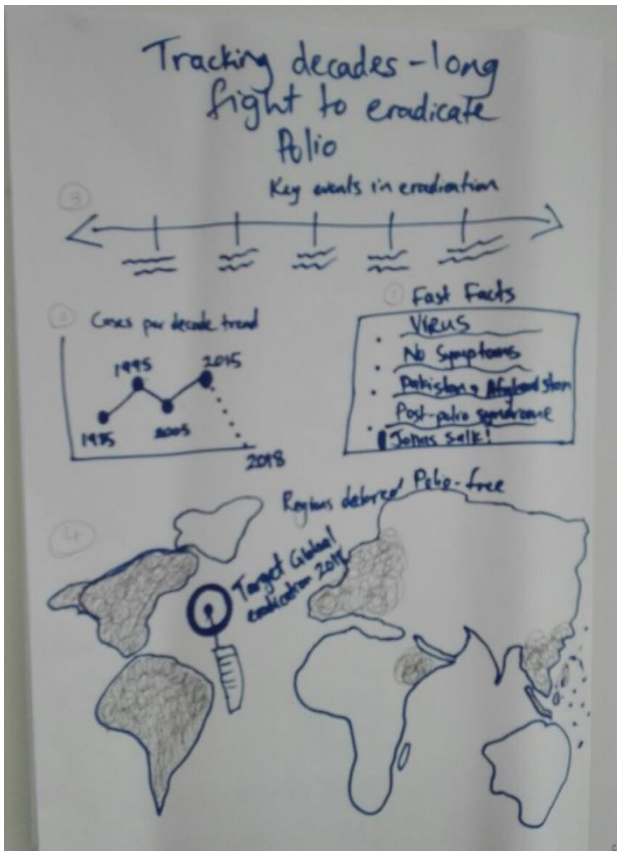
Some tips on presenting qualitative data

- Icons can be used consistently in reporting to avoid having to repeat lengthy descriptions of categories of information, and to minimize reading time.
- Timelines are useful summarised ways of presenting a sequence.
- Photographs can have an emotive impact for reports prepared for the general public.
- When presenting qualitative data in a report, visual data needs narrative support. Images and other graphics can be brought in to the report, in the context of good practice writing conventions.

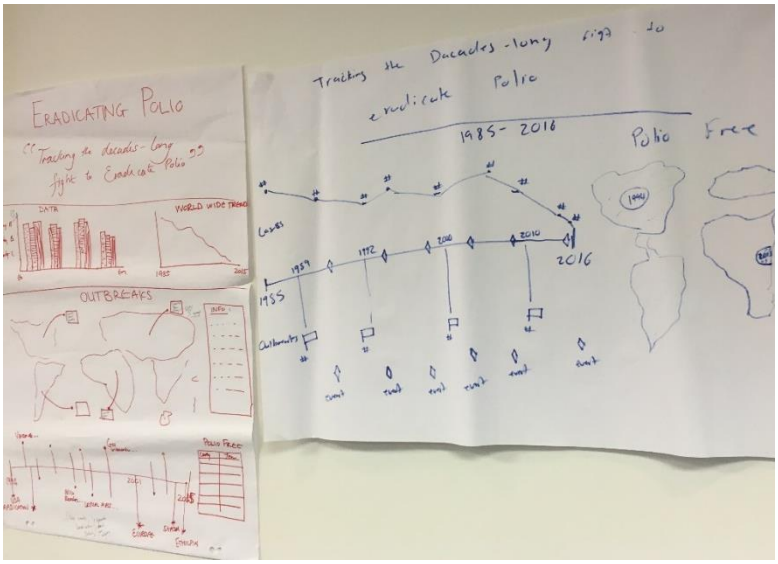
@CoP

Group Activity

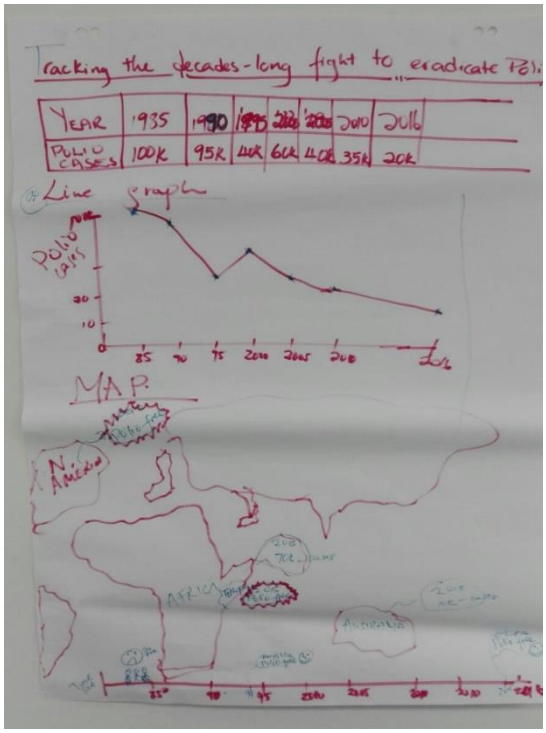
Participants at the CoP were given an opportunity to practise their data visualisation skills. Groups were given categories of data linked to the topic "Tracking the decades-long fight to eradicate Polio", and asked to conceptualise how to present this using data visualisation techniques.



Some examples of data visualisation products from CoP participant teams



CoP members work on their data visualisation



Jerusha shared a number of Toolkits (see presentation) with the CoP that can be accessed online to use in data visualisation activities. Click on the icon to take you to the relevant website.

Lessons and takeaways

Lessons from the Conceptual Activity	Takeaways from the session
Selecting the information was challenging; this would depend on the audience, and different versions may be needed for different audiences.	It is very useful to be reminded of the need to communicate clearly to our audiences, not just to ourselves as evaluators.
The design was an evolving process; one needs to be able to revisit the design and look at different options.	Summarising and packaging relevant content is important: one must be careful not to allow irrelevant content to dominate just because it looks good.
The mode of delivery needs to be taken into account; e.g. if sent out by mobile phone some graphics may not be appropriate.	Funders in particular would find dashboards very useful.
Who should be doing the data visualisation? M&E people or communications people? The best option is a team, so that both meaning and design are supported.	M&E experts need more understanding on how people perceive visual information.
It was interesting to see that different teams chose to represent the data in very different ways, but all were meaningful.	Data visualisation could be very useful to convey information in social development spaces.

APPENDIX: CONTACT LIST

Surname	Name	Organisation	Surnam	Name	Organisation
Biden	Angela	NLF	Williams	Edcent	Amoriway Consultants
Cronje	Helen Cronje	Click Foundation	Maseko	Vusi	South West Gauteng College
Dlamini	Sipho	MGSLG	Miya	Irene	Izibuko Primary School
Fynn	Zelda	Sci-Bono Discovery Centre	Morar	Geeta	The Data Innovator
Govener	Jerusha	The Data Innovator	Moutloali	Carl Tshepo	carltshepoMES
Johnson	Bev	Thandulwazi Maths & Science Academy	Muloiwa	Takalani	New Leaders Foundation
Johnson	Craig	BRIDGE	Nchapa	Christina	Sci-Bono Discovery Centre
Khan	Zarina	Facilitator	Peters	Karen	Civicus World Alliance
King	Melissa	BRIDGE	Rollnick	Marissa	Wits University
Landsman	Priscilla	Business Decisions Consulting Catalyst	Searle	Peter	New Leaders Foundation
Mabhena	Nokuthula	Khulisa	Simangaliso	Twala	COUNT
Madisha	Edwin	Sasol Inzalo Foundation	Sokujika	Thandi	Tomorrow Trust
Magoronga	Wendy	Khulisa Management Services	Taimo	Leticia	Khulisa Management Services
Magutywa	Zandile	Kagiso Trust	Keane	Moyra	Wits University