

BRIDGE MONITORING & EVALUATION COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Joint SAMEA and BRIDGE CoP held on 22 September 2022

Actioning educational data: Have data, what next?



A different CoP

This CoP event was jointly hosted by the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) as a shared session within the SAMEA conference 'Transforming monitoring and evaluation for an inclusive and sustainable world'. The CoP's thematic focus for the year continued with the next steps in a data journey – actioning analysed data – and aligned with SAMEA's Conference Strand 4 'Monitoring and Data Management'. CoP members and SAMEA conference participants were linked through a hybrid event, with online inputs and participation as well as in-person attendees at the conference, hosting 120 registered participants in all.

The facilitator Margie Roper outlined the key features of a community of practice for those conference participants who are not part of the M&E CoP. The BRIDGE M&E CoP is a learning space for both M&E professionals and for implementers of education programmes, bringing together theory and practice through expert inputs and interactive discussions.

The National M&E CoP is led by BRIDGE together with its partners who bring M&E expertise to the team: Khulisa (Margie Roper: CoP facilitator), SAMEA as the association for M&E professionals, and Tshikululu as a funding body with a focus on M&E.



BRIDGE M&E CoP partners in the room: Margie Roper, facilitator; and Leticia Taimo (Khulisa) and Benita Williams representing SAMEA



Leticia Taimo (Khulisa) giving her presentation



Data Collection and Use for the 2021 ECD Census

Jan Schenk, Ikapadata

Click <https://bit.ly/3rrU2en> to go to the presentation.

Ikapadata is a social usage and survey research company, contracted by the LEGO Foundation on behalf of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to collect data for the Early Childhood Development (ECD) census of 2021. The aim of the census was to collect information on all the ECD programmes (crèches

and playgroups for those under the age of 6 years) in the country. In the context of the ECD function shift from the Department of Social Development to the DBE, the DBE aims to better understand the sector in order to build a data management database to enable better planning, support and budgeting for the sector.

Data on over 42 thousand Early Learning Programmes was captured, deploying 366 field workers in a large-scale nation-wide project. The project involved elements such as training for the field workers, including research ethics, communication, reporting and the use of monitoring tools. See slide 4 for details.

From the perspective of data management, some of the keys to success in the project included:

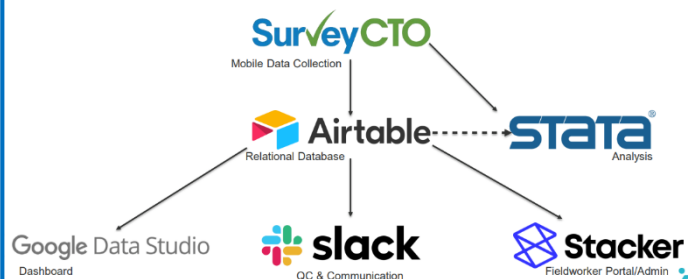
- Supportive and engaged collaboration partners, from the M&E team in the DBE to national and smaller on the ground organisations in the ECD sector.
- The Vangasali project initiated at the start of Covid-19 also collated some existing data sources, including DSD data, so the census did not start from scratch.
- Good branding and an effective public awareness campaign, including national media both print and radio. This gave field workers credibility and easier access to sites and informants.
- Smart data systems and tools (see slides 7 & 8), including automated tools that can be put together without professional coders and relational platforms and database so that data can be linked, and real-time communication and downloading channels for fieldworkers.

How Smart Data Made the Difference

- **Training:** Automated recruitment system
- **KPIs:** Smaller teams working faster
- **QC Alerts on Slack:** Fixing data issues when they occur
- **Maps:** Confirming ward completion
- **ELP Ratios:** Targeting wards that seem undercounted
- **Fieldworker Portal:** Empowering fieldworkers
- **Dashboard:** Data checks and keeping stakeholders in the loop
- **But: SYSTEMS cannot replace actual FIELDWORK**



(Almost) #NoCode for the Win



Having hard evidence of data such as attendance, ratios of ELPs per thousand children, spread of provision and so on helps with identifying areas which are under-resourced, and planning for other forms of support. Jan also noted that the census data can be linked with the findings of the *Thrive by Five* report (a nationally representative survey of learning outcomes in pre-school children); it is important to make connections between different kinds of data in the interests of taking action.

Resources on the ECD Census 2021:

Video: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SMGiNJuzrxZuEYyzm_LoMjZrHJGjhuA1/view?usp=sharing

Dataset, Report: <https://www.datafirst.uct.ac.za/dataportal/index.php/catalog/908/related-materials>

Masterlist: <https://www.education.gov.za/Programmes/EMIS/EMISDownloads.aspx>



Points / questions from participants

- Was the mapping for enrolment data compared to population data to see if there are certain groups who don't have access to ECD?
The number of Early Learning Programmes in a district was compared to the number of children in a district. Jan stressed that the ECD report captures top-level findings, and shares public datasets; this means that others can do targeted analysis, and that there is a lot more research that can be done with this data in comparison to general population data.
- How do you deal with lack of connectivity in certain areas for uploading of data on mobile devices?
Survey CTO allows offline capturing of data, so that field workers can capture as needed and upload and submit later. It is important that field workers have this functionality; Google forms do not have offline capability.
- What are the plans for keeping data up to date, and are there options for ECD sites or programmes themselves to upload data?
Jan noted that this is a huge challenge. The census is the starting point of a database that will be updated in the future, similarly to the school database run by DBE. It will be difficult to get the same level of accuracy for ELPs as for schools, given the varied nature of ECD programmes. Ilifa Labantwana and many other organisations are working with the DBE to improve ECD registration systems so that there is up to date information on the sector.



Data-led Learning for Adaptive Evaluation Processes: Lessons from an early grade reading evaluation in SA Leticia Taimo, Khulisa Management Services

Click <https://bit.ly/3RzHRGY>
to go to presentation.

Khulisa Management Services provides research and monitoring and evaluation services to a wide range of clients. Leticia's presentation drew on lessons learned from a research and evaluation project linked to the ongoing *Early Grade Reading (EGR) Study*. The EGR is a large-scale evidence-driven programme conducted by the Department of Basic Education and US Aid that has been going on for a number of years, following learners from Grade 1 to their final year (Grade 7) in primary school, as well as introducing new elements.

Khulisa's evaluation was begun in 2020 and involved two projects in two provinces in the context of the EGR, complicated by the fact that one set of data needed to answer a number of questions linked to four different objectives. These included:

- Data on the learners involved since Grade 1
- Grade 4 learners involved in a new reading study
- Covid-19 research
- Research to establish reading benchmarks for Nguni language groups.

Data is only useful if it is used and applied to improve outcomes. Decisions regarding what to do with data, therefore, need to be made at the start of a research, monitoring and evaluation process. Khulisa's clients in this context, the DBE and US AID, needed to be involved from the beginning in crafting the

ME& approach, methodology and instrument development, and the training of field workers. Three key questions frame these discussions:

- HOW will the data be used? This is a question that needs to be explicitly discussed at the start of both the project and the evaluation, as it affects the approach to gathering data. For example, in this context, data needs to be gathered and analysed in such a way that it guides ways in which teachers can be supported in teaching reading.
- WHO will use the data? A number of players including principals, teachers, parents, education officials and high level policy makers can use this data to make decisions and adapt teaching approaches, programmes and policy.
- WHAT will the data look like? Data needs to be presented in different formats using data visualisation for accessibility (see slide 6), in relation to the WHO range of audiences noted above.

Other points made include:

- Data sharing needs to be timely. It does not only need to be presented at the end of an evaluation process, as relevant data can be shared at any time during the process: for example, this data might have informed support for teachers during Covid-19; and it may be useful to the DBE in relation to the ECD function shift. Language benchmarks are linked to the reading crisis in the country.
- Data needs to be easily available as it can inform adaptations to other programmes as well. While this data has a systemic and policy function, it can also be helpful at an organisational and programme level.

In sum, the education sector can learn collectively and collaboratively through engaging with data and evidence. Round table discussions on evaluation recommendations are critical, and forums such as communities of practice can help the education sector in actioning data for effective change.

Resources:

EGRS I Impact Evaluation report:

<https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/EGRS/EGRS%20Indaba%202022/EGRS%20I%20Impact%20Evaluation%20Report.pdf>

https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZF11.pdf

COVID-19 research report: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZBHD.pdf

Fieldwork Report: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZD5S.pdf



Points / questions from participants

- What have you found to be the most effective ways to enable/encourage decision makers to take action on the basis of the data presented to them?
Setting up meetings to present the findings before sharing the reports with them encourages more engagement. This enables discussion of questions and issues which would normally come up as responses to, or queries on, a submitted report; this shortens feedback loops and clarifies many of the messages. In addition, what's been working well for clients is producing reports in

PowerPoint format along with a shorter executive summary. This enables direct communication of key messages and clear action points or recommendations they can take forward.

- What research methodology was used for the benchmarking?
The M&E professionals worked with language experts to develop the Setswana assessments. Khulisa built in three rounds of piloting to make sure that the assessments and standards were credible.
- How were the schools selected?
Schools were pre-selected in the context of a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) set up by the DBE.
- How did Khulisa work in terms of the POPI Act?
Because this was done through the DBE, they provided approval for the names of teachers and learners involved. Khulisa also has contracts and confidentiality clauses in place.
- What implications does the study have for CAPs and inclusive education concerns?
There are next steps that need to be taken to establish reading benchmarks across all languages in the context of curriculum reform. The benchmarks help us establish the level at which children **should** be reading – now what? Going forward, the sector as a whole needs to work with DBE in considering what these mean for subject advisors and teachers, and how to action new standards in the classroom.

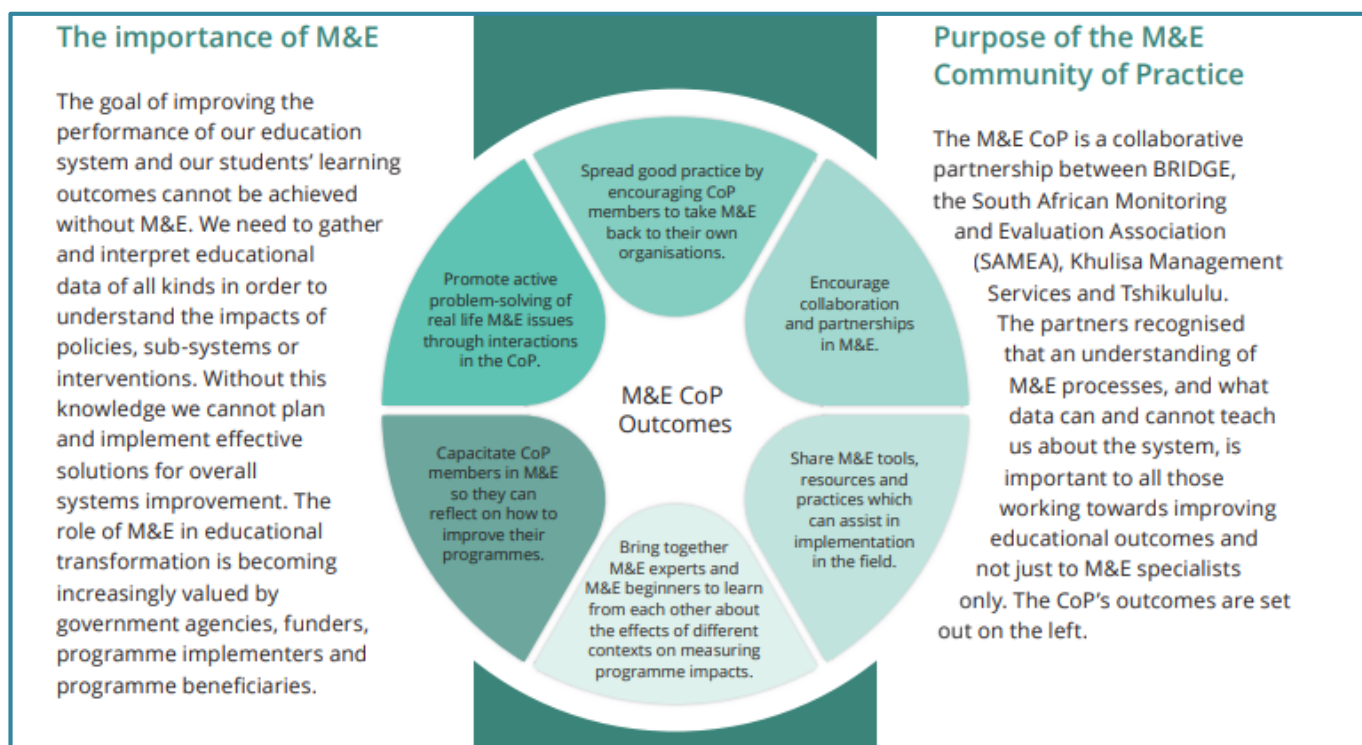


The BRIDGE Knowledge Hub: Sharing of Tools & Resources

Melissa King, BRIDGE Innovation in Learning

Click <https://bit.ly/3fHbYis> to go the presentation.

The aim of this presentation was to introduce the BRIDGE National M&E Community of Practice (CoP) to those who are not familiar with this CoP. See slides for an overview, and the M&E CoP outcomes as set out below.



To join the BRIDGE National M&E CoP, click <https://zc.vg/QyWXz>

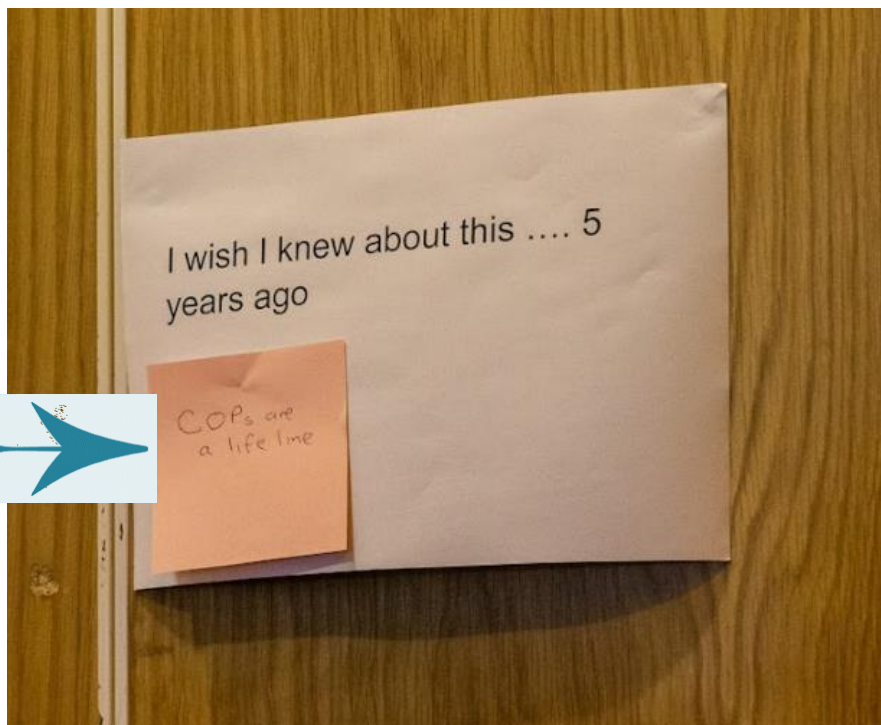


Facilitated Learning Dialogue

Margie Roper (Khulisa), in-person session; Benita Williams (Benita Williams Evaluation), online session

The Learning Dialogue took the form of information sharing through an interactive activity which required participants to answer evaluation questions and make recommendations on M&E practices and resources to colleagues. Online participants used Google, adding in to a 'Yoogle' form, while those in the room did it old-school with flip charts and sticky notes. Facilitators subsequently added in their own suggestions and responses.

This is now a co-created resource which you will find as an **Appendix** to these Meeting Highlights.



CoP Participants

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION
1	Margie	Roper	Khulisa
2	Deizdaria	Magwiro	JET Education Services
3	Mariam	Ally	Malaikas education
4	Heather	Ngulube	Play Africa Group NPC
5	Linda	Khoza	Diodi Primary School
6	Barbara	Valentine	ITEC
7	Melissa	King	BRIDGE
8	Leticia	Taimo	Khulisa Management Services
9	Nthabiseng	Seane	Tomorrow Trust
10	Maria Motsatsi	Mashala	Thusanang Trust
11	Beatrice	Watermeyer	Monitoring & evaluation consultant
12	Khosi	Nkambule	BRIDGE
13	Herman	Meyer	LEAP
14	Nare	Mahwai	CSIR
15	Thoko	Goniwe	IkamvaYouth
16	Jessica	Ronaasen	The Do More Foundation
17	Mutsa	Chinyamakobvu	Datalab Africa
18	Kiasha	Naidoo	Midlands Community College
19	Gilbert	Makgopa	Private
20	Kiasha	Naidoo	Midlands Community College
21	Kerry	White	Western Cape Primary Science Programme (PSP)
22	Naomi	Thomas	Witwatersrand
23	Chosi	Mtoba	Tshikululu Social Investments
24	Romamy	Roberts	ECD
25	Ilham	Choto	True North Consulting NPC
26	Patricia	Adams	Breakthrough Action Nigeria
27	Rex	Molefe	Motheo Training Institute Trust
28	Arista	Bouwer	Private
29	Thami	Mfundisi	Individual
30	Bonita	Daniels	The Early Education Centre
31	Metja	pale	Gauteng Department of Education
32	Akani	Mkansi	BRIDGE
33			
34	Khanyisa	Manzini	Nelson Mandela University
35	Nkhumiseni	Mphathele	Government
36	Samantha	Henderson	Field Band Foundation
37	Leo	Vongrim	Breakthrough Action Nigeria
38	Patience	Voller	BRIDGE Innovation in Learning
39	Nwabisa	Mona	N/A

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION
40	Pandina	Shan	Maths Centre Incorporating Sciences
41	Kaley	Le Mottee	Ntataise
42	Caroline	Tuckey	Flying Children
43	Marion	Bakker	IkamvaYouth
44	Jody-Lee	Arends	ITEC
45	Jody-Lee	Arends	ITEC
46	Sinovuyo	Tanci	Axiom Education
47	Diana	Straw	Natal Early Learning Resource Unit (NELRU)
48	Ryan	Dittmann	ASSITEJ
49	Nyaradzo	Mutanha	NA
50	Dzifa	Tse	eoco
51	Angelina	Mdakane	KST
52	Lulekwa	Tshambula	Department of Basic Education
53	Rosaline	Pineteh	CESAR
54	Dave	Temane	Centre for Statistical Analysis and Research
55	Bruce	Probyn	Principals Academy
56	Nare	Mahwai	CSIR
57	Geeta	Motilal	Wits
58	Sibabalwe	Mpofu	Growthpoint Properties
59	Precious	Msimango	ForAfrika
60	Kelly	Shiohira	JET Education Services
61	Razia	Ghanchi-Badasie	Brenthurst Primary School
62	Luisa	Roscani	NECT
63	Vonani	Ramashia	TUT
64	Zena	Richards	SETMU
65	Leuba	Dikgale	UNISA
66	Kedibone	Mosala	Lesedi Educare Association
67	Zorina	Dharsey	Western Cape Primary Science Programme (PSP)
68	Manqe.T		UNICEF/DBE
69	Leo	Hermanus	GDE
70	Lebohlang	Letsela	Tshikululu
71	MJ	Moloto	Bridge
72	CHRISTINE	WALDIE	LESEDI EDUCARE ASSOCIATION
73	Cate	Carroll	Ilifa Labantwana
74	Zethu	Mhlongo	CREST
75	Simo	Zulu	KZN-EDTEA
76	Robyn	Wienand	Play with a Purpose
77	Malusi	Ntoyapi	HCI Foundation
78	Mziwakhe	Dubazana	Ukzn
79	Benita 2	Williams	Benita Williams evaluation
80	Philisiwe	Ndlovu	toyota teach

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION
81	Palesa Anna	Tyaty	Motheo Training Institute Trust
82	Tracey	Appollis	Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
83	Pumza	Ndamase	DG Murray Trust
84	Tumi	Erasmus	BRIDGE
85	Jan	Schenk	ikapadata
86	Babette	Rabie	Stellenbosch University
87	Anthony	Daniels	The Early Education Centre
88	Kayin	Scholtz	DGMT
89	Zakayo	Wanjihia	Aphrc
90	Rumbi	Mandioma	CREST
91	Siyabonga	Malinga	Tshikululu Social Investments NPC
92	Katie		Nal'ibali Trust
93	Jessica	Horler	UCT
94	Sahar	Mohyuddin	VVOB
95	Shadley	Hendricks	Department of Social Development
96	Moloela	Malatji	City of Johannesburg
97	Tintswalo	Baloyi	Gauteng enterprise propeller
98	MURIEL	MAFICO	UNICEF
99	Tumelo	Ramoshebi	CSIR
100	Jesse	Webb	Khulisa Management
101	Mawenzi	Dlamini	Centre for Financial Inclusion
102	Fulufhedzani	Nulufule	Unicef
103	Charlotte	Msindwana	Limpopo Treasury
104	Pholo		Tshikululu
105	Benita	Reddi	JET Education Services
106	Malusi	Ntoyapi	HCI foundation
107	Geraldine	Mutambala	Free State Education Department - M&E
108	Nelisiwe	Dlamini	UNICEF
109	Robyn	Wienand	Play with a Purpose
110	Nthabiseng	Makopo	Department of Sport, Arts, Culture & Recreation
111	Ayanda	Mtanyana	Data Innovators
112	Tracey	Appollis	Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
113	Mnqobi	Basil Buthelezi	MP Dept of Education
114	Marion	Bakker	IkamvaYouth
115	Vhulahani	Patrick Tshivhase	Vhembe District Municipality
116	Geraldine	Mutambala	Free State Department of Education - M&E
117	Nyiko		GEP
118	Zamagcaba	Thembela	KZN EDTEA
119	Nelson	Isidoro	UNICEF
120	Alexandra	Doyle	DSD, WCG



APPENDIX

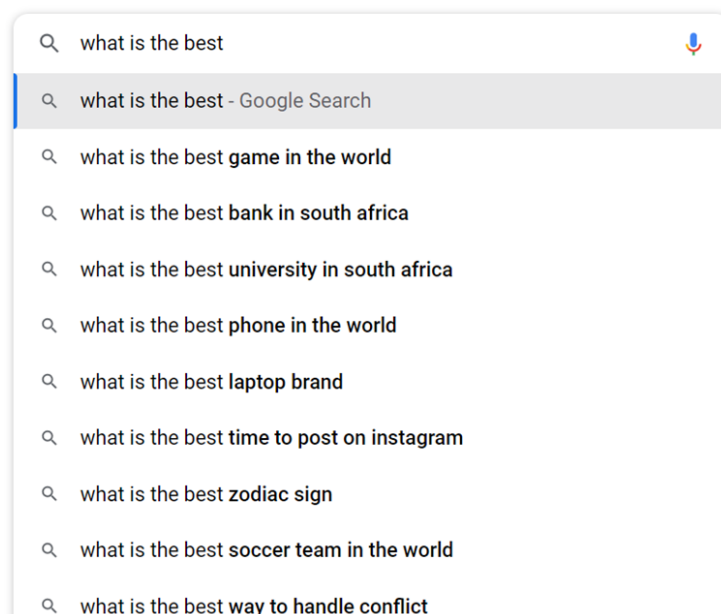
BRIDGE/SAMEA Community of Practice Meeting 22 September 2022

Facilitated Learning Dialogue: Participant Interaction

Introduction

Note: This form includes content from the in-person session as well as the online session at the CoP. Along with participant input, the facilitators have added in their own comments to questions and recommendations (noted in red). Links to websites for resources suggested are provided.

Facilitator: We will do a google autocomplete question and answer session. For example, when I type “what is the best...” into Google, Google completes the phrase by suggesting the most common questions. When you click on one of these autocomplete questions, google serves up the answer. Some autocomplete suggestions are quite entertaining!



Today, we invite you to complete the “auto-suggest” questions, and then we will use the expertise in this room to answer the questions. You will have 5 minutes to choose 2 of the phrases under the “questions” heading and you will fill in the blanks to share a question that you have.

Then, choose 2 of the phrases under the “recommendations” heading and suggest an answer. Write your answers under the relevant heading.

Just start typing your question under the phrase you have chosen. We will then try to match the questions and recommendations and have an interactive discussion.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the best tool to use for ...

Monitoring data real-term or collected real time **Go digital! And select a tool that can collect data when there is no power or signal!**

Dealing with very large quantitative data **Depends on size of sample and dataset, best to make sure your tool fits your data! And go digital!**

Mapping services such as ECD centres **If cost sensitive, use google or open source software; otherwise use an accessible online product**

Collecting data from various units or organisations / Capturing data out in the field for training participants (i.e. names, sex, age etc. and training participants) **Go digital! There are lots of options, select a tool that is fit for purpose and your fieldworkers can easily use ...**

Data collection and cleaning **Set up macros or codes in Excel ... and spend time doing it!**

Offline data collection? **Some say: www.surveyc.to**

Data visualisation: https://www.semrush.com/blog/infographic-examples/?kw=&cmp=Africa_SRCH_DSA_Blog_EN&label=dsa_pagefeed&Network=g&Device=c&utm_content=622528800619&kwid=dsa-1754723150113&cmpid=18364843126&agpid=141057004763&BU=Core&extid=54796224119&adpos=&gclid=Cj0KCQjwj7CZBhDHARIsAPPWv3e6iNCBLLXTFohDCIJDIKtNyBtzZR6vfOTFC0EPg7IPeIT1VQqa4i0aAvqaEALw_wcB

Also Canva.com and piktochart.com

Conducting telephone surveys: *"I used Voxco for telephone surveys (it had a built in fully-fledged call management facility which was important) but I found the interface quite clunky"*

"SurveyCTO has strong phone survey capabilities if you don't need an automatic dialer."

2. Can you use...

Kobo collect for data collection? **Without a doubt**

<https://www.kobotoolbox.org/>
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.koboc.collect.android>

Airtable to manage data? - **You may rely on it**

<https://www.airtable.com/>

Asana to monitor deliverables - **Outlook good**

<https://asana.com/>

Admin data to replace primary data in evaluations? **Depends on the evaluation ...**

Contribution analysis on small scale or low budget evaluations? How do you do this well and inexpensively? **If low budget and small scale, using contribution analysis is probably best suited to interventions that already have an evidence base that one can use to rate the evidence (strong /weak) and the contribution questions are very specific and require sourcing data in a manner that fits with the budget. Otherwise use a different methodology!**

3. Do you always have to...

Use an expert in the subject that you are collecting data on? **Cannot predict now**

Have a theory of change for an evaluation? **No, but it makes an evaluation easier to design**

Verify data? **Yes!**

Be involved in an evaluation and yet remain objective? **We should all try to be!** Implications for results of the evaluation? **Cannot predict now**

Have an organisational CoP? **My sources say no**

4. How long does it typically take to ...

Collect / gather data? **Cannot predict!**

Verify data / Can you verify? **Cannot predict!**

Clean data? **Cannot predict! But it is worth spending the time on doing it!**

Analyse data and produce maps? **Cannot predict!**

Do terms of reference for a long evaluation? **Cannot predict!**

5. Is it possible to ...

Engage with Social workers within the Municipality who constantly monitor ECD centres to assist in collecting data? **It is decidedly so, though it may take time**

Nationally generalise ECD survey findings? **Depends on the sample**

Reach out to poor families to include their children in ECD? **Absolutely**

Monitor in collaboration with citizen participation? **Definitely!**

Do both random sampling and intentional sampling at the same time **Yes you can – but maybe not for the same tool ...**

6. What is the meaning of the term ...

Rapid evaluation? www.beterevaluation.org defines it as: **Rapid Evaluation** is an approach designed to quickly and systematically conduct an evaluation when time or resources are limited

And this is what someone wished they knew about 5 years ago: The impact rapid evaluations can have in times of crises & how to use rapid evaluations

7. What is the most common ...

Approach to understand systemic context of a programme/project? **Start by understanding the policy context, and research done in relation to policy implementation or other similar programmes**

Tool for data collection? **Probably interviews? Or an electronic survey?**

Mistakes made by evaluators? **Look at the answers to the question below on my most spectacular data failure!**

Approach to Tech enabled M&E? **Ask SAMEA's friend** www.merltech.com

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. My most useful website is ...

www.betterevaluation.org (noted X 3)

Canva.com (infographics, report templates, icons)

MeasureEvaluation <https://www.measureevaluation.org/>

<https://www.wits.ac.za/clear-aa/>

<https://ipdet.org/>

2. I wish I knew about this ... 5 years ago

ECD information and how data is collected **We probably know more about ECD now than ever before!**

COPS are a lifeline **Yay!**

How to measure the use of data for planning **Please tell us how this is done!**

"The shorter the report, the better" **Confirmed by @evaluationmaven in this book:**

https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resources/guide/a_short_primer_on_innovative_evaluation_reporting

3. My most spectacular data failure was ...

Missing data / Data accuracy **This can have serious consequences on the analysis!**

Irrelevant information **A common problem – collecting data we don't use!**

Capturing on paper questionnaires and the paper got spoilt – **Capturing electronically is better**

Putting a point in the wrong place **Ouch!**

Using Excel to manage data **Sort error?**

Using the wrong data viz **The fix? Message, Design, Delivery** <https://www.eval.org/Education-Programs/Potent-Presentations>

4. When using a digital tool, this is what I learnt ...

My sources say: They are useful

My sources say: It is best to know what results you are anticipating

My sources say: Integrate M&E systems

My sources say: It should be user friendly. The data collector must be completely comfortable with using the digital tool

My sources say: Always take into account network challenges and consider using a tool that you can capture while offline; Use a tool that doesn't require data or wifi connection for collecting data in the field (ODK)

My sources say: You need to have clear & few codes for the system to work effectively

My sources say: Someone needs to be available for troubleshooting at all times.

My sources say: Use zero rated /data free/low data usage apps

5. One lesson I have learnt about monitoring data is ...

To work closely with the implementing/monitoring team (if you are on the evaluation side) to make sure that the monitoring system is set up from the beginning to be useful for evaluation as well.

Without a doubt!

It is a lot easier to manage conceptually when a Theory of Change has been developed. Yes definitely

To distinguish what is relevant at what time Data must be Timely

A mixed method analysis is always key (mentioned twice) Or is it?

Monitoring data always gives the best result at the end You decide which is best for your purpose!

Use innovative online tools for recruitment and data collection, reducing costs Good advice!

Get reliable information and reports produced are more realistic And write short reports!

Always use credible and recent sources, which are not older than 5 years Also good advice!

Google says decidedly: this website came up lot:

https://www.ictworks.org/lessons-learned-scaling-mobile-data-collection/#.Yyw_oexBy3I