

## Developing Indicators and Collecting Information

Questions to ask	
<p><b>In designing your indicators there are a few broad questions that you need to think through:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What information do we need in order to evaluate whether we are reaching our goals?</li> <li>• What sources of that information are available to us?</li> <li>• What reasonable methods could we use to collect that information?</li> <li>• How reliable will that information be and will it appear credible to others?</li> <li>• Do we have the resources to collect and analyze the information?</li> <li>• Do we have a process for ensuring that the information we collect informs our work going forward?</li> </ul>

Here is an overview of some data collection methods:

<p><b>Questionnaires or surveys:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good for collecting a lot of information from a lot of people</li> <li>• easy to administer and analyze</li> <li>• not good for collecting stories or careful feedback</li> <li>• feeling of anonymity may produce more honest responses than interviews</li> <li>• potential for people to misunderstand questions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interviews:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good for getting in-depth feedback and insights</li> <li>• builds relationships</li> <li>• can be hard to analyze and compare</li> <li>• time consuming</li> <li>• requires some skill on the part of the interviewer</li> </ul>
<p><b>Documentation Review (finances, memos, reports, meeting minutes, etc.)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• easy to collect</li> <li>• doesn't take much time on the part of source</li> <li>• hard to get a full picture</li> <li>• information not always complete and hard to compare</li> </ul>
<p><b>Observation (visiting a program or activity):</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows for great understanding of how something actually looks and feels</li> <li>• time consuming and hard to compare</li> <li>• observations may not be typical, hard to get people to act as they normally do</li> </ul>

<b>Focus Groups:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• allows for in-depth exploration of a topic</li><li>• efficient way to get a range of information</li><li>• can be hard to analyze responses</li><li>• sometimes difficult to schedule</li><li>• participants may influence each other</li><li>• requires skill to facilitate</li></ul>
<b>Community Meetings:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• useful for getting broad response</li><li>• builds ownership over project and relationships</li><li>• difficult to facilitate</li></ul>

Adapted from CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation's Toolkit: Monitoring and Evaluation by Janet Shapiro.