

# USING DATA FOR MANAGEMENT DECISION MAKING

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# OUTLINE

- What is data
- Types of data
- Sources of data
- Uses of data
- Benefits of data
- Barriers in generating data
- Data use in decision making
- Conclusion

# What is data

- Data are facts and statistics collected together for reference , analysis or decision making
- Data use -is the process of putting information to use- to make decisions, to make changes, or to take other specific actions designed to improve outcomes
- Data should be available on a frequent enough basis to inform decisions throughout the lifecycle of the project
- An effective project manager embraces data and places importance on setting up a strong monitoring and evaluation system as part of their project

# Types of data

- Empirical- based on testing and experience **HARD FACTS**
- Anecdotes- base on hearsay, rather than hard fact.

# Sources of data

- Primary

Surveys ,questionnaires ,registers, studies , investigations

- Secondary

Internet ,reports ,articles

# Types of data

- Human resources data –health force decision making
- Commodities data-making decision about logistics
- Facility data-service delivery decision making
- Financial data

# Uses of data

- Inform policies and plans.
- Raise additional resources
- Strengthen projects and improve results.
- Ensure accountability and reporting
- Improve quality of services provided
- Contribute to global lessons learned

# Benefits of using data

- Decisions based on data tend to be better decisions.
- Staff feel motivated when they have collected data and see it being used.
- Data helps project staff and stakeholders understand why a certain decision was made
- It promotes transparency.
- Data can help explain decisions to a donor.



# Making decisions without data

- Intuitive decisions are based on one's feelings or instincts and are influenced by stories, experience, or politics.
- With intuition-based decision-making, the process of making decisions is based solely on something that is perceived, understood, or believed without actual evidence.
- Decisions made in this manner are sometimes necessary and can be valuable at times.

# Making decisions without data

- Tends to capture the social context in which decisions are made and can draw upon experience and expertise that has not been captured as data.
- This approach to decision-making can lead to overlooking routine events, over-estimating rare ones, and introducing errors and personal biases.
- More importantly, the decisions we make based on instinct do not always address the actual problem or help us achieve our desired results.

# Best practices

- You are accountable for the decisions you make, and it's important to use data for decision-making when it is available to you
- But it's also important to trust your instincts and make decisions in a timely manner.
- You don't always want to react too slowly because of a formalized decision-making process.
- **As a project manager, your decisions can come under scrutiny from your supervisor, from staff you supervise, or from your donor or stakeholders.**

# Using data to make financial decisions

- Your staff report that they are consistently working over-time. You review your spending as compared to your budget and decide you have enough funds to hire another staff person.
- Your trainings are costing more than you budgeted for. You review the details of the training costs and make some adjustments to lower the total cost per training.
- One of your project sites is reporting delays in reaching project targets because of frequent power outages. You review the budget and spending and decide to purchase solar panels for a back-up power supply. It's a big investment, but one you think will pay off long-term.

- When thinking about project design, a needs assessment can help you gather information about important stakeholders and identify gaps in terms of needs and wants of the target population.
- Before you begin to implement your project, determine what data you need and include it in your project plan.
- In your project plan, consider the data you will collect AND who the audience is.
- Who will the information benefit

- Identify product and dissemination channels – determine which products are required for the different audiences, and how your data will fit into those products.
- Reports for donors
- Internal organizational reporting requirements
- Pamphlets for educational information such as for community members
- Presentations for an audience at a meeting – local, national, or international
- Sharing results via a website, journal articles, and press releases

- Enforce the importance of monitoring and evaluation by hiring adequate staff and properly budgeting for M&E activities.
- Use the data you collect. Use it to illustrate the high-quality results of your project.
- Consider comparing your results to the baseline or previous reporting periods
- Propose actions or recommendations based on project results and findings, backed up by your data!

# Barriers to data generation for decision making

- Lack of tools to work with
- Poor quality of data collected
- Low knowledge among health workers
- Few trained health information officers in health and high work volume



# Barriers

- Lack of monitors
- Lack of proper indicators
- Poor Communication
- Lack of electronic gadgets
- Low capacity building of data generators

# Improving data use in decision making

- Improving the data use context
- Engaging data users and data producers
- Improve data quality and availability
- Identifying information needed

# Improving

- Building capacity in data use core competence
- Strengthening organizational data
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Communicating data



## Utilization of Hill's Causal Guidelines

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Arriving at a tentative inference of “causal” or “noncausal” is a subjective process in which one judges how well the individual guidelines have been met.

*“All scientific work is incomplete – whether it be observational or experimental. All scientific work is liable to be upset or modified by advancing knowledge. That does not confer upon us a freedom to ignore the knowledge we already have, or to postpone the action it appears to demand at a given time.”*

- Sir Austin Bradford Hill, 1965

# Conclusion

- To wrap up, there are many ways that data influence the way we make decisions as project managers. It's important to use data for management decision-making and to promote using data within your project.



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