PolicyWise
BUILD BETTER DATA

Data Lifecycle Resources: *Considerations & Lenses*

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Introduction & Starting Point

The Data Lifecycle is a tool to proactively plan an organization's data journey. It provides a bird's eye view of how data can evolve from inception to reporting and beyond. The intent of the Data Lifecycle is to build a foundational tool for non-profit organizations to use when collecting data to inform service delivery and organizational planning. Good data collection can look different depending on each service organization and their client base and can be reflected upon throughout the Data Lifecycle. It is important to understand how to collect data and then use the data consistently in decisions being made for your organization.[1]

For non-profit organizations, the data lifecycle can be used as a way to inform the planning and implementation of services. The development of outcome measurements is important for the success of the organization and for the progression of clients.[2] Building appropriate processes in advance can also streamline the generation of reports and funding applications when that time comes. The clients are the primary drivers in guiding and generating desired outcomes.[1] It is important to recognize that non-profits are often responsive to community needs and are leaders for underrepresented or marginalized groups.[2]

Data lifecycles provide a structure to organize and think about the activities involved in managing and using data within a project or organization. The data lifecycle resources are organized into the following sections. Each of these topics can be explored in more detail within each section of the Data Lifecycle.

- Considerations & Lenses
- Plan
- Build
- Collect
- Prepare
- Analyze
- Inform

The Data Lifecycle addresses some of the main concerns around data collection, starting with the questions of why and how data is being collected. These sections explore how non-profit organizations can collect data in a manner that is sensitive to the realities of their clients and authentic to their mission. Furthermore, the Data Lifecycle discusses the importance of communication (both internal and external),

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[1] Nonprofit hub & Everyaction. (n.d.). *The state of data in the non-profit sector.* https://nonprofithub.org/datareport/

[2] Benjamin, L.M. & Campbell, D.C. (2015). *Nonprofit performance: Accounting for the agency of clients*. DOI: 10.1177/0899764014551987

minimizing data collection, accuracy, interoperability, and good governance. These aspects are engaged in greater detail in the various sections. For instance, Plan explores best practices of data collection and Collect describes how organizations can increase the impact of their data. The Data Lifecycle serves as an organized guide to the most important facets of data collection, providing a roadmap for non-profit organizations as they work with clients.

> *Where to start in your data journey? We encourage starting with two key questions:*

1. Why are you collecting data?

Data may seem disconnected from the overall mission of an organization. Most staff are dedicated to helping clients first and foremost. Collecting data may seem like additional work. Collecting and using data well can contribute greatly to an organization's mission. Effective data collection and use can help improve programming to be more efficient and impactful.[3]

Data fits within an organization by:

- Building trust
- Demonstrating how organizations achieve their missions
- Creating buy-in from staff
- Providing essential information for funders

For more information, go to the following sections of the Data Lifecycle:

Considerations & Lenses

Plan

Inform

2. How are you collecting data?

To support the needs of clients and provide effective services, data needs to be collected. Data is about people's journeys and stories However, in the rush to get the needed information it is possible to compromise relationships with clients. By thoughtfully considering how you are engaging with your clients, you can foster a more positive relationship.

When collecting data from clients, consider:

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[3] Fruchterman, J. (2016). *Using data for action and impact*. Stanford Social Innovation Review. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/using_data_for_action_and_for_impact

- Ways to build trust including engaging in conversation as an accessible way to collect data. For example, questions and response choices reflect their individual circumstances.
- The way in which questions are asked, which depends on the sensitivity of the information that could be provided (e.g., asking about immigration status, emergency contacts vs. services required, postal code) and in demonstrating transparency and authenticity. For example, clients need to know how the information they give will be used to benefit them.

For more information, go to the following sections of the Data Lifecycle:

Build

Collect

Analyze

[4]

Disclaimer – the information provided in the Data Lifecycle could evolve. If you have ideas or feedback please email info@policywise.com

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[4] Icons made by Freepik from www.flaticon.com.

Considerations & Lenses

Considerations & Lenses

The considerations and lenses are activities that must be considered in each phase of the data lifecycle. For example, the "considerations" are principles such as context, complexity, and nuance that may be useful to reflect on while engaging in each phase of the data lifecycle. The "lenses" refer to the process of aligning approaches to collecting, preparing, and using data on specific communities (e.g., visible minority, LGBTQ2S+) that are being served by the organization.

Considerations

As you review and implement the resources from Build Better Data within your organization, there are several things to take into consideration:

Context: The context in which you do your work - who your clients are, what services you provide, what subsector you represent, what your overall organizational goals are, what resources you have to put to data collection - should inform what data you collect, why you collect it, and how you collect it. Asking and answering the question "why this data?" will help you determine which parts of the toolkit will work best for your organization.

Nuance: Entries included in the toolkit have potential values that range from more to less concrete. For example, a question about income could be as straightforward as "What was your income last month?" where the desired response is a number. A much more nuanced question might ask "Which social class group do you identify with?", which indirectly speaks to income, but incorporates the many aspects that make up social status. Going back to why you are asking for this data will help you determine the level of detail you are looking for in your responses.

Complexity: Entries included in the toolkit have potential values that range in complexity. For example, age is rather less complex, although even that is not as straightforward as it may seem at first glance. (For example, do you ask "How old are you?" or do you ask "What is your date of birth"). Others are much more complex. For example, questions around Sex and Gender reflect both individual and social constructs and speak to issue of self-identification and self-determination. Going back to why you are asking for this data will help you determine which questions you need to ask.

Overlap: Entries included in the toolkit are often found, in practice, clustered together. For example, an entry like Ethnicity is often used as a collective label for aspects of Citizenship Status, Race, or Immigration Status. It can often also be found combined with questions around Language or Country of Origin. Going back to why you are asking for this data will help you determine which specific aspects of these larger categories are the most relevant to address in your data collection.

Lenses

The Build Better Data resource is designed to help with the "how" of data collection. Before this step is the exercise of determining "why" you are collecting the data. You may wish to approach your data collection work through the lens of a particular framework or set of guiding principles, which will shape how you think about your data collection and the ways in which you apply the Toolkit. The following list, while not exhaustive, includes some common frameworks you may want to consider.

GBA+ (Gender-Based Analysis Plus)

"GBA+ is an analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men, and gender diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives"[5]. GBA+ encourages us to look at the ways in which identity factors such as gender intersect and impact how individuals experience the world around them. You can apply GBA+ to your data collection by considering if you and your organization believe that the issues you work on are gender neutral, and whether organizational assumptions prevent asking certain questions and hearing certain responses, or limit the range of possibilities that are considered.

Resources:

- Status of Women Canada. (2020, October 28). *What is GBA+.*Government of Canada. https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/gba-acs/index-en.html
- Guide to Gender-based Analysis (GBA+) and Inclusive Open Government Partnership. (n.d.). *Guide to gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) and inclusive open government*. https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Guide-GBAandInclusive-Open-Government.pdf
- Canadian Human Rights Commission Gender Integration Framework Canadian Human Rights Commission. (n.d.). *CHRC's gender integration framework (GIF).* https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/sites/default/files/gender_integration_framework.pdf

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The United Nations "Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address global challenges we face, including poverty, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice"[6]. Reflecting on the SDGs and how your organization's work contributes to creating a better world can help you determine what kind of data you can collect to best position your organization to achieve its mission. In the context of many community organizations, SDGs numbers 3 (Good health and well-being), 5 (Gender equality), 10 (Reduced inequalities), and 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) may be of particular interest.

Resources:

- United Nations. (n.d.). *Take action for the sustainable development goals*. Retrieved February 8, 2021, https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

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[5] Status of Women Canada. (2020, October 28). What is GBA+. *Government of Canada*. https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/gba-acs/index-en.html

[6] United Nations. (n.d.). *Take action for the sustainable development goals.* Retrieved February 8, 2021, https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

- Sustainable Development Solutions Network. (12, June 2015*). Indicators and a monitoring framework for the sustainable development goals*. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2013150612-FINAL-SDSN-Indicator-Report1.pdf
- Thurston, A. (2020). *A matter of trust: Building integrity into data, statistics and records to support the sustainable development goals*. University of London Press. https://humanities-digital-library.org/index.php/hdl/catalog/view/amot/188/372-1

Trauma-Informed Approach (TIP)

A Trauma-Informed Approach is one that is "based on the knowledge and understanding of trauma and its far-reaching implications"[7]. This approach recognizes the wide ranging and long lasting impact that traumatic events can have on individuals, families, and communities, and acknowledges that many organizations, even though they are aimed at service provision, can induce trauma. Following key principles of a trauma-informed approach - including safety, trustworthiness, peer support, collaboration, empowerment, and considering cultural, historical, and gender issues - will help you think through what data should be collected and, more importantly, how to do so in a respectful and appropriate way.

Resources:

- SAMHA's Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative. (2014, July). *SAMHA's concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach*. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. https://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA_Trauma.pdf
- Klinic Community Health Centre. (2013). *Trauma-informed: The Trauma Toolkit*. https://trauma-informed.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Trauma-informed_Toolkit.pdf
- BC Provincial Mental Health and Substance Use Planning Council. (2013, May). *Trauma-informed practice guide*. https://bccewh.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/2013_TIP-Guide.pdf

Anti-Racism

"Racism is a structural system that assigns value and grants opportunities and privileges based on race"[8]. An anti-racist approach or framework acknowledges racism and actively works to address and prevent racism and create a more inclusive and equitable society. Taking an anti-racist approach can help your organization critically examine what data you are collecting, and why, to ensure that it is not contributing to continued systemic racism.

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[7] SAMHA's Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative. (2014, July). *SAMHA's concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach.* Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. https://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA_Trauma.pdf

[8] National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. (n.d.). *Let's talk racism and health equity.* https://nccdh.ca/images/uploads/comments/Lets_Talk_Racism_and_health_equity_EN_web.pdf

Resources:

- National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. (n.d.). *Let's talk racism and health equity*. https://nccdh.ca/images/uploads/comments/Lets_Talk_Racism_and_health_equity_EN_web.pdf
- Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2020). *Proposed standards for race-based and Indigenous identity data collection and health reporting in Canada*. https://www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/proposed-standard-for-race-based-data-en.pdf
- Government of Ontario. (n.d.). *Data standards for the identification and monitoring of systemic racism*. https://files.ontario.ca/solgen_data-standards-en.pdf

OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access, Possession)

"The First Nations principles of OCAP® are a set of standards that establish how First Nations data should be collected, protected, used, or shared"[9]. The principles confirm that a community or group owns information collectively, that First Nations have the right to control over all aspects of data collection that impacts them, that First Nations must have access to data about them, and that they should have possession of, or physical control over, that data. OCAP® encourages us to approach work with First Nations with respect and to carry it out with integrity, and can help you identify what data you collect, how you collect it, and how you work with First Nations' individuals, communities, and organizations to ensure its appropriate stewardship and use.

Resources:

- First Nations Information Governance Centre. (n.d.). *The First Nations Principles of OCAP®.* https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training/
- First Nations Information Governance Centre. (n.d.). *Understanding the First Nations Principles of OCAP®*. https://fnigc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2be8f15f2eff14b1f122b6a26023836a_fnigc_ocap_brochure_en_final_0.pdf
- First Nations Information Governance Centre. (2014, May 23). *Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP): The Path to First Nations information governance*. https://achh.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/OCAP_FNIGC.pdf

CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance

The CARE principles - Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, Ethics - "are people and purpose-oriented, reflecting the crucial role of data in advancing Indigenous innovation and self-determination. The principles complement the existing FAIR principles (http://www.go-fair.org/) encouraging open and other data movements to consider both people and purpose in their advocacy and

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[9] First Nations Information Governance Centre. (n.d.). *The First Nations Principles of OCAP®.* https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training/

pursuits" [10]. The CARE principles encourage us to acknowledge that Indigenous individuals have the right to derive benefit from data collected and the authority to control how and by whom that data is used, that those working with that data are responsible and accountable to those individuals, and that Indigenous peoples' rights and well-being should drive the data collection. These principles will help you determine what data to collect, how to collect it, and how to use it in respectful and appropriate ways.

Resources:

- Research Data Alliance International Indigenous Data Sovereignty Interest Group. (2019, September). *CARE principles for Indigenous data governance*. The Global Indigenous Data Alliance. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d3799de845604000199cd24/t/5da9f4479ecab221ce848fb2/1571419335157/CARE+Principles_One+Pagers+FINAL_Oct_17_2019.pdf/CARE+Principles_One+Pagers+FINAL_Oct_17_2019.pdp
- OCLC Research. (2020, August 11). *Operationalizing the CARE principles for Indigenous data governance*. https://www.oclc.org/research/events/2020/081120-operationalizing-care-principles-for-indigenous-data-governance.html
- United Nations. (2008, March). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

Disability Rights

Although disability rights are enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, individuals with disabilities face continue to face discrimination and encounter barriers that prevent them from the same opportunities afforded to others. Disability rights and disability justice movements "recognize the intersecting legacies of white supremacy, colonial capitalism, gendered oppression and ableism in understanding how people's bodies and minds are labelled 'deviant', 'unproductive', 'disposable', and/or 'invalid'"[11].This framework encourages us to think about how our organizations and our work can contribute to breaking down systemic barriers that hinder or harm individuals with disabilities. It can help you think about the data you are collecting, how you are collecting it, and how it can contribute to a more just and equitable society.

Resources:

- Berne, P., Levins Morales A., Langstaff D., and Invalid S. (2018). *Ten principles of disability justice*. WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly, *46*, pp.227-230. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/690824/pdf
- Project LETS. (n.d.). *History of disability justice*. https://projectlets.org/disability-justice
- Disability Justice Network of Ontario. https://www.djno.ca

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[10] Research Data Alliance International Indigenous Data Sovereignty Interest Group. (2019, September). *CARE principles for Indigenous data governance*. The Global Indigenous Data Alliance. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d3799de845604000199cd24/t/5da9f4479ecab221ce848fb2/1571419335157/CARE+Principles_One+Pagers+FINAL_Oct_17_2019.pdf/CARE+Principles_One+Pagers+FINAL_Oct_17_2019.pdp

[11] Project LETS. (n.d.). *History of disability justice*. https://projectlets.org/disability-justice

- United Nations. (n.d.). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*. https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html

Design Thinking

“Design thinking is a human-centered approach to innovation - anchored in understanding customer’s needs, rapid prototyping, and generating creative ideas - that will transform the way you develop products, services, processes, and organizations”[12]. Design thinking focuses on the human aspect of the work we do, centering activities in relationships with our users and clients. It reminds us that the processes of defining the what and how of data collection and use are iterative and should be revisited and examined on a regular basis. In a data context, design thinking can help you think about why you are collecting data, and how you can collect and use it in appropriate ways.

Resources:

- IDEOu. (n.d.). *Design thinking.* https://www.ideou.com/pages/design-thinking
- IDEOu. (n.d.). *Design thinking resources.* https://www.ideou.com/pages/design-thinking
- Mitroff Silvers, D. (2013*).* Design thinking: A powerful tool for your nonprofit. *Connect*. https://www.nten.org/article/design-thinking-a-powerful-tool-for-your-nonprofit-0/
- Brown, T. & Wyatt, J. (2010). Design thinking for social innovation. *Stanford Social Innovation Review.* https://ssir.org/articles/entry/design_thinking_for_social_innovation#
- Woods, R. (2019). A design thinking mindset for data science. *Towards Data Science.* https://towardsdatascience.com/a-design-thinking-mindset-for-data-science-f94f1e27f90

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[12] IDEOu. (n.d.). *Design thinking.* https://www.ideou.com/pages/design-thinking

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Sharing Guidelines

It is the hope of all those who contributed to this project that these findings are shared and used to benefit others and inform policy and practice to improve child, family and community well-being. PolicyWise asks the intent and quality of the work be retained; therefore, PolicyWise for Children & Families should be acknowledged in the following ways:

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