

C4D: Describe

Describe is one of the seven clusters of R,M&E tasks in the Rainbow Framework.

The describe cluster of evaluation tasks involves collecting or retrieving data and analyzing it to answer R,M&E questions about situations and what has happened (the activities, outcomes and impacts) and other important contextual information.

There are seven tasks associated with describe. Each task includes C4D specific methods, advice and resources for generating data that describes situations and changes

C4D: Sample

What is it?

In some cases, it might be possible to gather data on an entire population (for example, some data might be available from every participant, or about every project), but in most cases, it will be necessary to take a sample of projects, sites, events, or people. Deciding on sampling strategies is an important part of an R,M&E design. The decision should be strategic and well-considered, informed by the purpose, the nature of the initiative, the nature and requirements of particular methods, and the resources available.

Three broad types of sampling are: random sampling (which uses random or quasi-random methods to select the sample and then uses statistical inference to draw conclusions about the population); purposeful sampling (which selects information-rich cases to study and then use analytical inference to draw conclusions with wider applicability; and convenience sampling (which selects readily accessible cases and is at greatest risk of bias).

General information

More information on [sampling methods](#) is available in the Rainbow Framework. This page is recommended background reading before considering options to apply to C4D. Sampling should be considered alongside issues of response rate and coverage - results are more accurate from a well-chosen sample with a high response rate than from a population with a poor response rate that usually is biased.

Applying the C4D principles

Situations that influence sampling decisions:

Complex

Samples should include multiple perspectives, to understand differences in experiences in different settings. Complex interventions might need sampling strategies that can be adapted to suit

emerging issues and understandings, such as using 'purposeful' sampling (selecting based on what is useful or most interesting) to follow up emerging patterns and findings.

Accountable

Thoughtful and thorough sampling helps to make the R,M&E design more rigorous. In quantitative (numbers based) methods sampling the sample size and the sample selection are key to making credible claims about the findings. In qualitative (words, stories, visual) methods, sharing details about the sample and selection process increases credibility and trustworthiness.

Critical

More generally, sampling should pay attention to equity dimensions, and ensure that the most vulnerable groups are represented and that the data is able to be disaggregated. Additional effort might be needed to get adequate coverage of more remote, more disadvantaged groups due to known biases such as: roadside bias, seasonal bias, pro-literacy bias, etc.

Recommended methods and adaptations for C4D

Resources

- [Doing qualitative field research on gender norms with adolescent girls and their families](#)

This is a guide to conducting qualitative research with children and young people with a focus on gender sensitivity. It includes useful advice relevant to sampling such as 'Include girls from different backgrounds and in different situations', 'Include girls' parents, grandparents, siblings and other family and community members' and 'Think through which issues are priorities for you to explore' (p4). This guide is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:

- **Holistic:** the guidance on sampling suggests thinking about cases as samples, including other people around the girl who influence her context.
 - **Complex:** the guidance focuses on rich descriptions from multiple perspectives, rather than the number of respondents
 - **Realistic:** the guide advises choosing a sample that helps achieve the objectives
 - **Critical:** the guide suggests seeking out girls with different kinds of experiences and backgrounds.
- [How to Determine a Sample Size: Tipsheet #60](#)

This is a clear and accessible guide to making decisions about samples in quantitative data, such as surveys (for example, Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices surveys). It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

Realistic: the steps in the tip sheet move back and forth between the resources available and the desired precision level and risk. Critical: the final tip points to the fact that characteristics of non-respondents are significantly different, and suggests that understanding the limitations of the method and using mixed methods is important.

[C4D: Use measures, indicators or metrics](#)

What are measures, indicators and metrics?

Measures, indicators or metrics are used to succinctly describe the context, implementation and/or results of an intervention (project, program, policy) such as inputs, processes or activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. The terms are often used in different ways in different organisations, so it is important to check their meaning in a specific setting or context. In this guidance, we use the term 'indicator' to refer to all of these terms and make a distinction only where it is important to do so – in particular, to distinguish between a direct and accurate 'measure' of something and a partial, approximate 'indicator'.

General information

The [use measures, indicators or metrics page](#) of the Rainbow Framework provides detailed information about these concepts and a range of resources including examples of how they have been used in practice across different topical areas and sectors. It is highly recommended to read this page first before considering options to apply to C4D interventions.

Applying the C4D principles

Complex

The selection and creation of outcome and impact indicators is a tricky area for C4D since emergent outcomes are hard to predict and are different in each context.

Participatory

Indicators should reflect local ways of looking at and measuring the world. Ideally, those funding, managing, planning, implementing, collecting and using the data should be involved in the selection of indicators. In C4D this includes community groups and partners. [Participatory numbers](#) is a method for generating quantitative measures in participatory ways.

Learning-based

Indicator selection should be focused on the type of 'summary' information that can tell us whether or not the intervention is 'on track' in terms of its implementation and anticipated results. In the first instance, it is important to check if appropriate indicators already exist rather than developing new ones. That way, we can draw on the experience from others in terms of the usefulness and use of an indicator as well as the feasibility of collecting and interpreting the data on a regular basis (i.e., we can learn something from the track record of these indicators to help us decide whether or not to select that indicator for our particular purposes, resources and context). Where the intervention content or implementation needs to be very adaptive and/or the results cannot be fully defined in advance (such as in complex situations), different indicators may need to be selected at different times during the intervention period. The indicators should help to answer the 'key learning questions' that are posed at various times.

Holistic

Indicators are concise, partial, aggregates of information. This is the opposite of holistic, in-depth information. Indicators can be used to 'indicate' areas that might need further, more in-depth, investigation (e.g., negative and positive outliers or lack of change where you expected to see change). Indicators should be used in combination with other more holistic methods to deeply understand situations.

Accountable

We usually think about indicators as being useful for reporting and accountability to managers and donors. Indicators should also be used for providing partners, communication groups and others participating in the intervention with information about what was achieved/not achieved, and the importance of the indicators for their community. When using the data from indicators in this way, it is important to acknowledge that the information is simplified and partial, and that other types of information are usually needed to make informed decisions about the intervention.

Critical

Indicators should specify the required data disaggregations (often this needs to include age, sex, income, levels of vulnerability etc.). Local groups and institutions should be meaningfully involved in the process of developing and using indicators. This inclusion of local perspectives and attention to equity reduces the risk of indicators incentivising easier reach to populations to achieve targets.

Important considerations in selecting indicators for C4D

Indicators can be useful when recognised for what they are: partial information that can provide alerts of things not going as planned and signs of important changes (or lack thereof) which may trigger further investigation. It is important to select an appropriate 'set' of indicators -usually consisting of different types (input, process/activity, output, outcome, impact) - which can be interpreted together to get a more complete picture of what has happened. It might be useful to undertake a 'data rehearsal', where primary intended users of indicator data are presented with different scenarios of data and asked to discuss how they could use these to inform their decisions - and to identify what changes need to be made to their content or presentation to make them more useful. It is recommended to do this as part of the process of selecting or developing indicators.

Collecting, analysing and interpreting longer-term results (outcomes and impacts) is often expensive and difficult to do well. As noted above, these results are also most likely due to a range of interventions, not just C4D. Hence, it is advisable to partner with others (such as those funding or implementing other interventions with similar goals) to ensure this information is collected -where appropriate- at regular intervals and with high quality.

It is also critically important that indicators are not only about results but also about the quality and quantity of implementation (e.g., making sure that a C4D intervention adheres to the principles of 'participation' or that implementation of the C4D strategy is done to the extent needed to expect results).

Given there are many elements to quality assurance, it is often hard to capture through just a

handful of indicators. Therefore using rubrics may be particularly useful to cover different dimensions of what is considered 'success'. Rubrics can complement indicators, can incorporate indicators or can be used as an alternative to indicators (see below).

Characteristics of good indicators and good indicator sets:

For most indicators, we are particularly interested in assessing changes over time (i.e., looking at trends in the indicator data) so it is crucially important to be able to collect, analyse and interpret the data regularly (the frequency will depend on the type of indicator) and with good quality. Indicator data that is of low quality can mislead decision making.

Developing a good indicator can be quite hard. One has to ensure, among other things, that:

- the indicator is fully defined so it is clear to those collecting, analysing, interpreting and using the indicator data what it is that is being measured, how, with what frequency etc;
- it actually measures what it intends to measure or is a reasonable indicator of it (referred to as its 'validity')
- data can be collected consistently by different people and at different times (referred to as its 'reliability')
- it is affordable and feasible to collect the data regularly and with high quality.
- (the [use measures and indicators page](#) of the Rainbow Framework has more information on the common characteristics of a good indicator or good indicator set, such as affordable, comparable, feasible, measurable, operational, reliable, sensitive, specific).

For these reasons, it is usually much better to use an existing indicator that ticks most, if not all, of the boxes of a good indicator and has been used in a real-life context by others. As noted above, a good 'set' of indicators reflects different dimensions of the intervention and the anticipated results along the pathway to ultimate outcomes or impact.

If you need to craft a new indicator, you need to provide in written guidelines:

- Title (indicator label)
- Definition
- Purpose (rationale)
- Method of measurement
- Numerator
- Denominator (where relevant)
- Calculation
- Data collection method
- Data collection tools
- Data collection frequency
- Data disaggregation
- Limitations
- Information to interpret and use the data

You will also need to pilot test data collection and revise the indicator where needed, and provide training for those collecting, managing, analysing and using the data. This may include data rehearsal as described above.

Rubrics: a complementary or alternative way of capturing key information

Different stakeholder groups often have different views on:

- ‘what is important’ in terms of what the intervention provides, how it is done and what the results are intended to be;
- ‘how well’ the program is performing on the things that matter.

This is especially the case for interventions that are complex in nature or operate in a complex environment. Defining ‘success’ needs to go beyond just selecting a handful of results indicators.

Rubrics can be used to assess and judge performance along various dimensions. A rubric has two core aspects:

(1) evaluative criteria that define ‘what is important’ in terms of what the intervention provides, how it is done and what the results are intended to be; and,

(2) descriptions of levels of performance in terms of what constitutes ‘excellent’, ‘very good’, ‘good’, ‘adequate’, or ‘poor’ performance.

Rubrics can incorporate qualitative and quantitative indicators (including important ones that are already in use) and other types of evidence (including emergent) plus specific guidance about the synthesis of this evidence (such as hurdle requirements or benchmarks).

The page on [rubrics](#) provides further information, resources and examples of rubrics.

Recommended steps for selecting and using C4D

In collaboration with key stakeholders (at minimum, [primary intended users](#) of the data, which usually includes partners and community groups):

- Use the intervention’s theory of change (see [Develop program theory or logic model](#)) to identify key questions about the C4D components of implementation and their anticipated contribution to expected results. Clarify which of these key C4D questions might be answered (partially or in full) by using indicators.
- Select - from existing indicator sources - different types of indicators (inputs, activities/processes, outputs, outcomes, impacts) at different levels of the system where relevant (such as individual, community, society) to obtain a ‘set’ of indicators that matches the identified information needs. (A C4D Registry of Indicators is under development).
- Critically reflect on the gaps and assumptions, and consider how well the available indicators reflect local perspectives, realities and priorities.
- Where needed, develop new indicators (ideally, only if existing good indicators do not serve your information needs) using a collaborative process for indicator development. Consider the common standards for good indicators. Then, pilot-test them and revise them as needed before rolling them out for use.
- As part of rolling them out for use, make sure they are fully defined and described (indicator guidelines) and train people in how to collect the data, how to store and manage the data, and

how to interpret and use the data.

- Periodically re-assess the utility of the indicator and continue using it (as is), stop using it, or revise it (you need to weigh up the pros and cons of a disruption in trend data before you stop using or revise the indicator).

Resources

- [Monitoring and evaluation of participatory theatre for change](#)

This resource outlines suggested indicators (21-27), which are tied to the theory of change (p11-14), and include methods to collect the information. See table 2, page 17 for a sample of indicators with timing and methods. Although it has been developed for participatory theatre, the 'Reach, Resonance and Response' framing could be adapted to a range of C4D initiatives. This resource is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:

- **Complex:** the indicators relate directly to the six different, interconnected theories in the Theory of Change.
 - **Realistic:** 'Reach, Resonance and Response' framing provides a powerful yet manageable way to think through groups of indicators. The tools suggested to collect the information are as simple as possible while still achieving rigour and sensitivity. The plan also requires creating a plan for the timing of data collection.
 - **Holistic:** the guide makes specific reference to the importance of thinking about timing, especially for longer-term changes, which should not be measured immediately after.
- [Participatory numbers \(or parti-numbers\)](#)

Indicators tend to require quantitative data. 'Participatory numbers' refers to a collection of methods that involve communities in the process of generating statistically valid and reliable quantitative data. Some of the strategies include: mapping, modelling, pile sorting, pie diagrams, card writing and sorting, matrix ranking and scoring, and linkage diagramming. With planning and testing, these methods could be used to inform and define indicators in C4D, with repeated cycles of data collection to assess trends and changes. See also 'Who Counts? The power of participatory statistics' edited by Jeremy Holland with chapters on the use of different methods from contexts around the world.

- [Participatory rural communication appraisal starting with the people](#)

The Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal Handbook (especially chapters 5 & 6) provides guidance on how to plan and undertake a baseline study, building on the situation analysis framework (used in a similar way to a [program theory](#)) to develop a questionnaire or survey design including pre-testing and sharing results with the community. The resource is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Participatory:** PRCA allow rural people to participate in everything from information collection and analysis, problem identification and prioritisation to decision-making about how best to tackle issues revealed.
- **Critical:** PRCA brings attention to the common biases that can distort the study findings.

- **Complexity:** The process encouraged through PCRA to undertake a baseline includes strong reference to the understandings about underlying causes and contextual factors as understood through the situation analysis.
- **Learning-based:** RPRCA emphasises information sharing, including of the findings from the baseline study.

Example

- [Measuring empowerment? Ask them: Quantifying qualitative outcomes from people's own analysis](#)

This paper, written by Dee Jupp and Sohel Ibn Ali with contribution from Carlos Barahona for Sida, uses the experiences of a social movement in Bangladesh to demonstrate how empowerment can be measured by those who are being empowered.

Additional resources

- [C4D Indicators for MTSP MoRES-HIVAIDS](#)

DOCX
45.49 KB

A list of C4D indicators relating to HIV/AIDS developed by ESARO. Work to build these into a possible C4D Registry of Indicators is ongoing.

- [C4D Indicators for MTSP MoRES-Child Protection](#)

DOCX
67.37 KB

A list of C4D indicators relating to Child Protection developed by ESARO. Work to build these into a possible C4D Registry of Indicators is ongoing.

- [UNICEF GCPAS Handbook for the KPIs' implementation](#)

PDF
4.39 MB

A guide created by the Comms Section for monitoring UNICEF's advocacy and media work. Aspects of this may be useful for C4D, though a more critical and holistic view of communication is likely to be required.

- [UNICEF Concept note: The rationale and recommendation for C4D indicators in national surveys](#)

DOCX
283.24 KB

Mapping of existing indicators and suggestions for new MICS survey questions for C4D in UNICEF.

- [Webinar on C4D and indicators](#)

Use password: evaluatingC4D

[C4D: Collect and/or retrieve data \(methods\)](#)

What is it?

Data collection methods should be selected on the basis of how well they will answer the key questions, with due consideration of available resources. Decisions about methods need to be made in conjunction with other [decisions about the key questions](#) (what to collect data on), whether [indicators](#) might be used, how [sampling](#) will be used, and how data will be [managed](#) and [analysed](#). When decisions are made, these should be [documented in Planning Documents](#). The data collection methods on this page will generate descriptive data: information about what has happened or how things are through measuring or describing things.

General information

While there are many different methods for data collection/retrieval, they can be grouped into the following types: information from individuals (eg key informant interviews); information from groups (e.g. focus group discussions); observation (either directly or through photographs and videos, including aerial observation); physical measurements; and existing records and data (including social media and other media). General information on methods and other methods is available on the [Collect or Retrieve data page](#) of the Rainbow Framework. This page is recommended background reading before considering methods to apply to C4D.

Applying the C4D principles

Participatory

Some methods are more engaging, less extractive, and enable mutual learning, to a greater extent than others. Although this is not the full extent of what it means to take a participatory approach, methods of this nature are recommended.

Holistic

If your key questions set out to explore contextual factors, the methods you chose to answer the questions need to be the type that helps you construct 'thick descriptions' (comprehensive, in-depth, contextual).

Critical

We need to be conscious of gender and other power inequalities that exclude marginalised groups from contributing to the process: analytically reflect on how methods may distort, exclude or silence particular perspectives and voices.

Realistic

Choices about methods must remain practical, pragmatic, and feasible, and fit with the available resources. This may involve compromise to remain realistic, however, in C4D ensuring that local needs, voices and experiences are given prominence should remain a priority.

Complex

Data methods should be chosen for how well they will show different perspectives and experiences, and increase understanding of how contextual factors influence outcomes. In complicated and complex interventions, quick methods (compared to slow methods like national surveys) will be more useful for informing adaptive implementation of C4D.

Recommended methods for collecting data to answer descriptive questions relating to C4D

Data from individuals or groups

- **Communicative ecology mapping**

An interactive method which seeks to uncover rich details about communication environments, uses and contexts through mapping. They can be made with individuals or with groups of people during discussion or drawn up afterwards on the basis of discussions and then checked with the participants. It is particularly useful for C4D situation analysis and intervention design. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Holistic:** Communicative ecology mapping enables participants to share how they use different communication spaces, uses and contexts. It does not assume that communication looks the same in all places in the way that standardised surveys might.
- **Participatory:** Communicative Ecology Mapping can be an engaging and visual method where participants map their communicative ecology (although it can also be created from interview data)

Resource

[Ethnographic Action Research Toolbox](#)

Communicative Ecologies and Communicative Ecology Mapping is covered in the EAR Toolbox.

Example

[EVAC Assessment](#)

Communicative Ecology Mapping was used as part of an assessment of the Violence Against Children campaign in Vietnam. It mapped children's communicative ecologies, and was

intended to be used for planning the next phase of the campaign. See Appendix page 52-54

- **Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal**

Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal was adapted from 'Rapid Rural Appraisal' (RRA) as a way to conduct multidisciplinary and participatory research in rural settings without requiring the intensive time commitment assumed by other qualitative investigations. By actively involving community members in the research process, the method also builds capacity by training people in research and involving them in the analysis. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Participatory:** Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal uses appropriate participatory techniques to involve participants in reflection and learning processes.
- **Realistic:** Like RRA, Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal focuses on 'rapid' and less time-intensive participatory approaches to participatory research.

Resource

[Participatory rural communication appraisal starting with the people](#)

For guidance on data collection tools associated with PRCA [see Chapter 4: PRCA Tools and Techniques](#) and [Chapter 5 \(Toolbox\): Tools and Techniques](#)

Example

[KAP action research study on violence against children](#)

A study exploring Knowledge Attitudes and Practices relating to Violence Against Children in Tanzania used Participatory Appraisal (not necessarily PRCA), among other methods.

- **Critical Listening and Feedback Sessions (also Participatory Viewing and Listening)**

Critical Listening (or viewing) and Feedback sessions is a process of group listening to or viewing content, followed by reflective and analytical discussions and responses. It has been used in C4D as a way for content producers to critically reflect on their content, and to get feedback from key community groups and audiences. This method is consistent with the C4D Framework in the following ways:

- **Learning-based:** The feedback can be used to continually improve content, or as part of an assessment of content.
- **Holistic:** The process enables rich explorations of meaning and interpretation of content.
- **Participatory:** The process is a highly engaging method in which participants engage in mutual learning.

Resource

[Equal Access PM&E toolkit - Module 4 Critical listening and feedback sessions](#)

PDF
409.44 KB

Module 4 of the Equal Access Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation toolkit provides an overview of Critical Listening and Feedback Sessions.

Example

[Ruka Juu II: Young farmers in business](#)

PDF
4.02 MB

The Ruka Juu II Young Farmers in Business impact study (from 2013) is a good example of the use of participatory viewing and listening sessions undertaken with various community groups as part of an impact assessment.

• **Surveys**

Surveys and questionnaires are a set of structured questions that aim to collect specific information from the chosen respondents (written or orally). The questions are designed to gather information about attitudes, preferences and factual information of respondents, and can be useful when information from a representative sample is required. Knowledge Attitudes and Practices surveys (KAPs) are common in C4D. However, experience from practice suggests that KAP surveys are often limited and unsatisfactory for a deep understanding contexts and causes. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Accountable:** Because a survey can collect data from greater numbers of people it helps to give a sense of the scale of impact, which is useful in discussions about effectiveness and impact.
- **Critical:** Surveys should include some questions about demographics, which can be useful for disaggregating data and understanding differences and equity dimensions (see [Sample](#)).

Resources

[FAO Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal Handbook](#)

Chapter 5 of this resource, on baseline studies, provides good advice on constructing a questionnaire or survey

[Questionnaires](#)

This page offers detailed information and links to resources about survey methods.

Example

[T-Watoto](#)

Tuzungumze na Watoto (T-Watoto) is an example of how a system for regular mobile phone household surveys can be set up by partnering with a local call-centre to regularly collect data for monitoring and evaluation. A representative sample of randomly selected households are surveyed, depending on the sample-size requirements. Any member of the household may be interviewed.

- **Key Informant Interviews**

A Key Informant Interview (KII) involves gathering information directly from an individual who has good knowledge or experience on a subject of interest to the study or evaluation. KII is useful and effective when the person doing the interview is trusted by the key informant. This allows the interviewer to probe or ask further questions until he or she gets the necessary information. It is a common method and can be consistent with all the C4D Evaluation Framework principles. In particular:

- **Holistic:** semi-structured interviews with key informants in particular allow for open exploration of points and factors
- **Critical:** people who may not be able to participate fully in group settings may feel more comfortable to speak in interviews, especially if the interviewer is trusted

Resources

[Qualitative research methods for use in equity-focused monitoring](#)

PDF

1.53 MB

Page 10-11 of this resource provides a comprehensive guide with UNICEF C4D examples and considerations.

[Key informant interviews](#)

Provides guidance and links to a range of examples (beyond C4D) and resources.

[Ethnographic Action Research Toolbox](#)

The EAR Toolbox provides guidance on individual and group interviews - useful if you are interested in a more ethnographic approach to interviewing (semi-structured) .

Mack, Natasha, et al. 2005. Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide. Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International, Module 3.

- **Focus group discussions**

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is an effective way to capture information about norms, behaviours, practices and the variety of opinions or views within a particular population or group (e.g., adult married women, female teachers, and male farmers). The richness of focus group data emerges from the group dynamics and from the diversity of the group. FGDs may help identify commonly held views among group members, including - at times -

divergent views. An FGD usually gathers 8 to 15 individuals (not too many) who represent a specific group to talk about a specific subject. The composition of the group is important: depending on the socio-cultural setting, it may be inappropriate to host mixed groups (e.g., adolescent girls and boys). Further, age and gender are important considerations. Focus Group Discussions can be consistent with all the C4D Evaluation Framework principles. In particular:

- **Holistic:** Focus group discussions allow for participants to drive open exploration of points and factors and discuss ideas together.
- **Critical:** In focus group discussions are usually conducted with groups of people that are similar or diverse (such as women, men, adolescents, community leaders, etc.), which helps to reduce barriers to participation, and enrich the quality of voices.

Resources

[Qualitative research methods for use in equity-focused monitoring](#)

PDF

1.53 MB

Page 12-14 of this resource provides a comprehensive guide with UNICEF C4D examples and considerations.

[Ethnographic Action Research Toolbox](#)

The EAR Toolbox provides guidance on group interviews - useful if you are interested in a more ethnographic approach to focus groups (semi-structured)

Mack et al., 2005. Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide. Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International, Module 4. ([find hyperlinks](#))

Example

[KAP action research study on violence against children](#)

A study exploring Knowledge Attitudes and Practices relating to Violence Against Children in Tanzania used focus group discussions in a highly engaged, dialogical way, among other methods.

• Social mapping

Social Mapping is a cartographic, two-dimensional, visual representation of the distribution of resources, services, processes, social relationships, and networks. Mapping may help to assess not only where key resources and places are located, but why certain services are or are not being accessed by all members of the community (e.g., why certain health clinics might not be visited by women or children). It can also be used to understand the organisation of institutions. A variant of Social Mapping, Body Mapping, can reveal people's anatomical ideas and health concepts, aspects related to mental and physical health, wellbeing, and even child protection issues such as sexual abuse. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in

the following ways:

- **Participatory:** The visual and group-based nature of the method makes it a more engaging method where participants can actively lead the direction of discussion.
- **Critical:** This is a critical method that allows for the decentralisation of power and control in the data collection process.
- **Holistic:** By moving away from interview techniques that are strictly guided by predetermined questionnaires or closed-ended questions, mapping and follow-up interviews can reveal cultural barriers, the beliefs that hold them in place, and bottlenecks that may have never arisen from traditional surveys or interviews.

Resources

[Qualitative research methods for use in equity-focused monitoring](#)

PDF

1.53 MB

Page 14-16 provides a comprehensive guide with UNICEF C4D examples and considerations.

[FAO's Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal](#)

This resource includes concise guidance on sketch mapping.

[Social mapping](#)

This method page provides detailed explanation, guidance and links to resources and examples.

[Rural appraisal: Rapid, Relaxed and Participatory](#) (PDF) - IDS Discussion Paper 311

Resource by Robert Chambers.

[Tools together now! 100 participatory tools to mobilise communities for HIV/AIDS](#)(PDF)

Cornwall, Andrea, 2001. Body Mapping in Health PRA/RRA. London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Originally published in RRA Notes (1992), Issue 16, pp.69-76.

• **Transect walk**

The Transect Walk is a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tool for observing the terrain and everyday life in a given place from the perspective of local community members. During the walk, stops are made along the way, and observations are discussed with community members. After the walk is over, a small group discussion may ensue. Use in Equity-focused Monitoring Transect walks can help provide an overview of the distribution of resources, use of a particular service or supply, or other specific features of a settlement in a short period of time. For example, a transect walk may be used to check for treated bed-nets in every other house and asking persons in that house who sleeps under them. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Participatory:** the group-based nature of the method makes it a more engaging method where participants can lead the direction of discussion.
- **Critical:** walks can be a powerful way of uncovering differences between groups.
- **Holistic:** walks can reveal the interconnected nature of problems and change, and locate issues in the local environment and context.

Resource

[FAO's Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal Handbook](#)

This resource includes concise points about Transect Walks.

[Qualitative research methods for use in equity-focused monitoring](#)

PDF

1.53 MB

Page 16-17 provides a comprehensive guide with UNICEF C4D examples and considerations.

[Transect](#)

This method page provides examples, guidance and links to resources

[Transect walk](#) (PDF)

World Bank resource provides an overview of transect walks.

[Integrated Approaches to Participatory Development \(IAPAD\)](#)

The IAPAD website focuses on sharing information on participatory mapping methodologies and processes.

[Transect mapping - IAPAD](#) (archived link)

Existing documents

• Media review

A media review is the process of studying newspaper articles, letters to the editor, television or radio broadcasts, possibly advertisements, and other types of media as applicable in order to understand the range of opinions around a specific issue of concern. It can be used to in the context of advocacy communication work. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Realistic:** The bulk of the work in a media review is desk-based, and it can therefore be a less expensive option.

Resource

[Qualitative research methods for use in equity-focused monitoring](#)

PDF

1.53 MB

Page 8-9 provides a comprehensive guide with UNICEF C4D examples and considerations.

Observation

• Participant observation

Participant Observation is a method used by ethnographic researchers while present in a community or organisational setting to gain a close understanding of people's lives, including actions, interactions, behaviours and practices, through intensive involvement and participation, often over an extended period of time. The intention is that as participants become more comfortable and trust the researcher, the 'observer effect', where people change their behaviours because they know they are being watched, is reduced. Typically it is based on semi-structured and open-ended observation techniques, where extensive field notes are taken and where there is a flexible research design. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Realistic:** Although observation can lead to significant amounts of data in the form of fieldnotes (especially less structured, more open types of observation), it can be a less expensive method compared to interviews and focus groups.
- **Holistic:** Sometimes people's reported behaviour (in interviews, surveys, focus groups etc.) is different to their actual behaviour, where additional environmental, social and other factors can influence behaviour. Observation can help give different, more holistic insights.

Resources

[Qualitative research methods for use in equity-focused monitoring](#)

PDF

1.53 MB

Page 9 provides a comprehensive guide with UNICEF C4D examples and considerations.

Rainbow Framework :

[Collect and/ or retrieve data](#)

Look for the 'Observation' section on this Rainbow Framework page for a list of different types of observation techniques with detailed outlines and links to resources and examples.

[Ethnographic Action Research Toolbox](#)

Participant observation and fieldnotes in the EAR Toolbox - particularly useful for using

observation techniques in the context of an ethnographic approach.

[Qualitative methods](#)

[Finding a voice: Themes and discussions](#)

- **Non-participant observation**

Observing individuals and groups without actively participating or engaging. The observer takes on a more distant position and avoids influencing practices. However, it is important to recognise that even without active participation, people may change their behaviours if they know they are being observed (known as the observer effect). Non-participant observation may be structured (where very specific and pre-determined phenomena and variables are documented); semi-structured (where some areas of interest and variables may be pre-determined, with space to include additional details; or open-ended (without any pre-determined structure). Examples include observation of hand washing practices among child and adult members of a community, observing a clinic session in a local health facility, or observing a community meeting where programme-related issues are discussed.

Resource

[Non-participant observation](#)

Non-participant Observation involves observing participants without actively participating.

Additional resources

- [Monitoring and evaluation of participatory theatre for change](#)

This resource sets out a logical process to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan with suggested tools for collecting data. The guide suggests the following methods: Community Assessment Scans (similar to Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal); Key Informant Interviews; and Focus Groups. This guide is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:

- **Realistic:** the guide suggests a good mix of methods that are fit for purpose, but will not become overly burdensome. The selection of tools is based on the questions, which are based on the Theory of Change.
 - **Participatory:** the actors themselves are often included as part of data collection. This is especially the case for the community scans and the monitoring.
- [Doing qualitative field research on gender norms with adolescent girls and their families](#)

This is a guide to conducting qualitative research with children and young people with a focus on gender sensitivity. Pages 7-9 provide useful advice on framing questions for adolescent girls in sensitive ways. Table 1 on page 10-12 includes a list of useful tools, purpose, who to include and why, key questions to ask, and tips on getting the most out of the tool. It covers

general methods such as: Social Mapping (community mapping, body mapping); in-depth interviews and key informant interviews; and Focus Group Discussions. It also includes guidance on gender-specific methods such as inter-generational trio (exploring social norms with three generations); marital network; outlier case study/life history. This guide is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:

- **Holistic:** the tools suggest very open approaches to understanding contexts and factors, including a range of different people and perspectives.
- **Realistic:** the guide is specific about the strengths of each tool, and offers very pragmatic advice for dealing with sensitive topics and situations.
- **Critical:** the guide is sensitive to discomfort and sensitivities that the girls may be feeling and the suggestions support both the research and the participants.

C4D: Manage data

What is it?

Good data management means that systems are in place for consistent and [ethical](#) collection, recording, storage, security, backing up, cleaning, and modifying, and ownership of data. This is part of data quality assurance (DQA). Data quality assurance (DQA) should be built into each step in the data cycle – data collection, aggregation and reporting, analysis, use, dissemination and feedback and longer-term ownership and retention. An important part of this is 'data cleaning', which refers to checking for inaccurate or missing data.

General information

The '[Manage data](#)' page of the Rainbow Framework provides generalist information, methods and resources about data management. This page is recommended background reading before considering methods to apply to C4D.

Applying the C4D principles

Holistic

It is important to consider that taking a holistic approach to data collection means that the data is often not pre-standardised (e.g. following a standardised interview protocol), but is, rather, more responsive and open to being shaped by the context.

Complex

Where there are multiple project partners, it is important to pay attention to data quality across organisations, data security when sharing data, and compatibility of IT systems. To support adaptive implementation of C4D it is useful to have data management systems that can quickly produce different types of reports in response to changing information needs.

Participatory

In a participatory approach, it is important to think about who owns the data and therefore has responsibility for data management.

Learning-based

Related to the participatory approach, it is important to consider whether stakeholders may need capacity-building support to be able to effectively manage data.

Realistic

Good data management practices are important for keeping analysis processes manageable and feasible.

Accountable

C4D emphasises good data management and ownership processes that are respectful, ethical, and responsible. It is important to agree to policies and processes that prevent or minimise harm (especially for vulnerable groups). These discussions should take place before, during and after the data collection.

Resources

- The following resources provide useful guidance on managing data:
- [Ethnographic Action Research Toolbox](#)

The Ethnographic Action Research Toolbox has a whole section devoted to [dealing with data](#), including documenting data, organising and labelling data, and developing themes and managing codes.

[Equal access participatory monitoring and evaluation toolkit](#)

Page 63 of the Community Researcher Manual for Equal Access (a C4D organisation) covers good data management processes

The resources above are particularly useful in the context of the C4D Evaluation Framework for the following reasons:

- **Holistic:** open ended, unstructured data tends to be messier and more difficult to manage than structured (i.e. survey) data.
 - **Realistic:** both tools were developed in the context of C4D NGOs, and so are inherently aimed towards being as pragmatic as possible.
- [Oxfam Responsible Program Data Policy](#)

This document outlines a rights-based policy for data management, based on the following

rights: the right to be counted and heard; the right to dignity and respect; the right to make an informed decision; the right to privacy; and the right to not be put at risk. This policy is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

Critical: The policy recognises that data and ownership of data entails a position of power and responsibility, and the importance of considering marginalised voices in this process.

Accountable: The policy emphasises the ethical dimensions of data management processes and responsibilities.

C4D: Combine qualitative and quantitative data

What is it?

M&E Frameworks and evaluation/study designs that include the collection both qualitative and quantitative data, are an important strategy for strong and balanced findings. It is important to plan in advance how the different types of data will be combined. Combining different kinds of data enriches findings, it can enable an examination of the generalisability of emerging hypothesis from qualitative data, qualitative data may offer explanations about patterns observed in quantitative data, and triangulation of data can confirm or reject findings from one source of data.

General information

The Rainbow Framework includes detailed information on a range of methods for [combining different kinds of data](#). This page is recommended background reading before considering options to apply to C4D.

Applying the C4D principles

Realistic

As part of being realistic, the C4D Evaluation Framework advocates for the use of mixed-methods. This doesn't mean that every R,M&E activity must include both qualitative and quantitative data, however. For example, a qualitative study might be needed to fill gaps in quantitative data or indicators.

Holistic

Combining qualitative and quantitative data enables different paths into understanding the context. Combining data from different methods gives a more rounded, more holistic view of a context.

Accountable

A key part of being accountable is rigour. Combining data from different data collection methods boosts the rigour by providing different perspectives and ways to understand a problem.

Recommended methods and adaptations for C4D

Resource

- [Qualitative research methods for use in equity-focused monitoring](#)

PDF

1.53 MB

An overview of how triangulation helps with validity is available on page 26 of this resource.

Example

- **Retrospective Analysis study of Open Defecation in Nadia District, India**

The Retrospective Analysis study of successful open defecation initiatives in Nadia, India, was specifically intended to fill gaps in knowledge. Existing quantitative surveys had confirmed that the initiatives had worked at a population level, and by using ethnographic and qualitative approaches, the study could answer questions about how and why the initiative had worked in holistic and contextualized ways.

C4D: Analyse data

What is it?

Analysing descriptive data (data about what has happened or is happening) means looking for patterns and themes, making sense of and summarising the data. It is an important part of every RM&E system or study. Techniques for analysis should be selected alongside the selection of methods in the design of a research study or evaluation. There are two basic categories of analysis methods for descriptive questions: qualitative data analysis and quantitative data analysis.

General information

The Rainbow Framework includes detailed information on a range of [analysis methods](#). In addition, one of the UNICEF Methodological Briefs [Overview: Data Collection and Analysis Methods in Impact Evaluation](#), by the UNICEF Office of Research, Florence covers data collection and analysis. These pages are recommended background reading before considering options to apply to C4D.

Applying the C4D principles

Realistic

Additional resources may be required for analysing qualitative data (words-based data i.e. spoken or

written, stories, interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions, videos etc.). In C4D, qualitative data is often critical to understanding contexts and changes. Qualitative data analysis (summarising and looking for patterns and themes) can be more time consuming compared to quantitative data, and requires different sets of skills.

Participatory

The C4D Evaluation Framework encourages involvement of partners, institutions and community groups in the analysis process. Some methods/approaches have participatory analysis processes built in. A participatory approach to analysing data can reveal new findings and meanings, and support mutual learning.

Critical

The data analysis process should involve looking for differences, exceptions, and a critical analysis of power. To reveal these differences it is useful to involve a diversity of perspectives in the interpretation and meaning-making process.

Complexity

Simple averages, frequency tables and graphs will not be enough to represent complicated and complex aspects of C4D interventions. At the very least, there should be disaggregation in tables and diagrams to show differential effects on different sub-groups. Timelines can be important for showing non-linear change over time.

Recommended methods and adaptations for C4D

- [Equal access participatory monitoring and evaluation toolkit](#)

Module 5 of this resource 'Doing qualitative data analysis' is a useful guide to doing qualitative data analysis. It covers the basic steps involved in undertaking qualitative data analysis, explains the difference between description and interpretation, suggests ways to get feedback on analysis, and discusses how to use triangulation to increase the trustworthiness of findings. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Realistic:** the module sets out the ideal steps for data analysis, and also offers more 'rapid' alternatives.
 - **Holistic:** this module is particularly aimed at helping people deal with and make sense of 'messy' data that comes from more open-ended, holistic data collection approaches.
- [Ethnographic Action Research Toolbox](#)

A brief, web-resource that provides guidance on data management, labelling and analysis, particularly useful for qualitative and ethnographic data. The analysis section includes examples of themes and coding. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Holistic:** this resource is particularly focused on analysing 'messy' data that comes from

ethnographic approaches, which are more open-ended and unstructured.

- **Learning-based:** the resource connects the processes of analysis to learning by linking analysis with developing findings for planning and action.
- [The IDEAS guide and facilitators' guide](#)

Module 9 of the IDEAS Guide provides a guide to doing qualitative and quantitative analysis using sticky notes to summarise and sort data into themes. This guide is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Participatory:** the resource outlines a group-based, visual process for analysing data, and is designed to be accessible for people with little or no prior experience of M&E.
- **Realistic:** the resource uses simplified processes similar to coding. Ideally, participants would be familiar with the data, or sometimes should be allowed for familiarisation with data during the workshop.
- **Holistic:** this resource guides processes of analysing both qualitative 'messy' data and quantitative data.
- [Participatory rural communication appraisal starting with the people](#)

Section 6.4 of the Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA) Handbook provides guidance on how to conduct analysis with community groups and other stakeholders. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Participatory:** The guidance encourages the inclusion of community groups in processes of reflection and analysis.
- **Critical:** The guidance includes a list of key questions to be asking through the analysis process which bring attention to the differences in experiences among different groups.
- **Realistic:** The processes outlined are all quite practical and feasible, getting to the heart of what is important for a participatory approach to analysis.

Example

- [KAP action research study on violence against children](#)

A study exploring Knowledge Attitudes and Practices relating to Violence Against Children in Tanzania used a technical reference group, including community researchers and child-peer researchers, to take a participatory approach to analysis. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:

- **Participatory:** university researchers, community researchers and community groups were all involved in data analysis processes
- **Learning-based:** the involvement of a range of groups enabled mutual learning and for insight to inform recommendations.

C4D: Visualise data

What is it?

Data visualisation is the process of representing data graphically. It can make it easier to see trends and patterns. Data visualisation can be used during data analysis as part of making sense of data. It can also be used to communicate results as part of producing the reports.

General information

The Rainbow Framework includes advice on [choosing data visualisation techniques](#) to suit different kinds of data. This page is recommended background reading before considering methods to apply to C4D.

Applying the C4D principles

Participatory

Data visualisation as part of participatory processes of analysis can enable better engagement and analysis by stakeholders. Some methods (such as mapping, photovoice) generate visual data to begin with and this can also be useful (see [Collect and/or retrieve data \(methods\)](#) for more information) .

Complexity

Data visualisation tools are particularly in complex situations. Trialling a range of different ways to visualise data during analysis can reveal unexpected relationships and change trajectories.

Critical

From a communication of results perspective, data visualisation can help as many groups as possible to engage with data and findings. This has overlaps with the [Ensure accessibility](#) task.

Recommended methods and adaptations for C4D

Resources

- [Visualise data](#)

There are thousands of resources online about data visualisation (or 'dataviz') but this page remains a good place to start when exploring options for visualising different kinds of data.

- [American Evaluation Association Blog Data Visualisation category](#)

This blog category includes a wide range of resources, links and discussions about data visualisation. Ideas and topics include doing sketches and drawings first before transferring to digital, and graphical recording.

- [Conquering the dusty shelf report: data visualisation for evaluation](#)

A blog post outlining three strategies for data visualisation. The third tactic includes an example of incorporating qualitative quotes with a bar graph, which is particularly useful in C4D where qualitative data is common.