MANGO
Marianas Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations

Data Management for Nonprofits

Why Data Matters | Session 2

Good data helps you understand your work, improve programs, and build trust with your community and funder.

1 WHAT IS DATA?

Data is information that helps answer questions.

- How many people were served?
- What changed?
- Who participated?
- How do we know?

2 WHAT DATA IS NOT

Data does NOT have to be complicated.

- ✗ Not just spreadsheets
- ✗ Not just statistics
- ✗ Not only for large organizations
- ✗ Not only for funders

3 TYPES OF DATA

Nonprofits already collect many types of data.

- Counts and totals
- Stories and testimonials
- Photos and documentation
- Observations and feedback

Strong nonprofits use BOTH numbers and stories.

4 DATA IN ACTION

Examples show how simple information improves programs.

YOUTH PROGRAM EXAMPLE

- ✓ Tracks: Attendance logs,
- ✓ Parent feedback
- ✓ Teacher observations

Question:
Are students attending consistently?



FOOD DISTRIBUTION EXAMPLE

- ✓ Tracks: Households served
- ✓ Repeat visits, Food distributed

Question:
Are families returning for support?



5 DATA VS. OPINION

OPINION
"Our program is very successful."

STRONGER DATA STATEMENT
"We served 120 families between January and March."

★ KEY TAKEAWAY

Data helps others understand and believe your impact.

HOW DATA BUILDS SUPPORT & FUNDING

1 WHY DATA BUILDS CREDIBILITY

Data builds trust with:

- Funders
- Boards
- Community members
- Partners

2 WHAT FUNDERS WANT TO KNOW

Funders often ask:

- ✓ Is there a real need?
- ✓ Who did you serve?
- ✓ How many people participated?
- ✓ What changed?
- ✓ How do you know?



These are all data questions.

3 WEAK VS STRONG STATEMENTS

WEAK ✗

"Our program helps youth succeed."

→

STRONGER ✓

60 youth enrolled.
52 completed.
40 reported improved attendance.

WEAK ✗

"Our community garden improves food security."

→

STRONGER ✓

We provide 400 pounds of produce to 30 families over 3 months.

4 WHY EVIDENCE REDUCES RISK

Funders support organizations that can:

- ✓ Show results
- ✓ Track progress
- ✓ Demonstrate responsibility

Data reduces uncertainty and increases confidence.

5 CLEANING UP DATA

Helpful questions when preparing information for reports or grants:

- ✓ What information is unclear?
- ✓ What is missing?
- ✓ What should have been tracked better?

6 SIMPLE DATA DO'S & DONT'S

DO

- ✓ Set benchmarks
- ✓ Follow ethical practices
- ✓ Clean data regularly

DON'T

- ✗ Keep unnecessary data forever
- ✗ Ignore your data after collecting it

EVIDENCE MAKES YOUR IMPACT STORY STRONGER AND MORE BELIEVABLE.

1 YOU MAY ALREADY HAVE DATA

Most nonprofits already collect:

- Attendance records
- Registration forms
- Volunteer hours
- Feedback comments
- Photos
- Case notes

2 HIDDEN DATA

Sometimes data is informal:

Is there a real need?

Who did you serve?

How many people participated?

What changed?

If it helps you understand your work, it counts as data.

3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE

‘WE DON’T HAVE DATA”

An after-school program believed they had no data.

But they already had:

- Weekly sign-in sheets
- Parent surverys
- Teacher comments
- Activity photos

The challenge is often organizing data – not collecting more.

4 COMMON DATA CHALLENGES

Organizations often struggle with:



Limited time



Too many priorities



Unclear expectations



Not knowing what to track

5 SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

Helpful strategies include:

- ✓ Build data into existing work
- ✓ Track fewer things better
- ✓ Share responsibilities
- ✓ Use data for learning – not blame



6 SHARING YOUR STORY

Your data can support:

- Reports
- Grant proposals
- Community updates
- Board reports

YOU ALREADY COLLECT MORE USEFUL INFORMATION THAN YOU MAY REALIZE.

CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY GOALS (SDGS)

1 YOUR WORK IS PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER

Nonprofit programs support community goals like:

- Education
- Health
- Food security
- Employment
- Environmental protection
- Equity

2 WHAT ARE THE SDGS?

- ✓ 17 shared global goals for a better future
- ✓ Help describe long-term impact
- ✓ Connect local work to larger progress



3 SDG ALIGNMENT EXAMPLES


→ Food pantry **Zero Hunger**


→ Ocean cleanup **Life Below Water**


→ Health screening **Good Health & Well -Being**


→ Youth leadership camp **Quality Education**


→ Job readiness training **Decent Work & Economic Growth**

4 WHY SDG ALIGNMENT HELPS

- ✓ Clarify impact
- ✓ Strengthen proposals
- ✓ Connect with partners
- ✓ Show contribution beyond one project



5 PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

Instead of saying:

"We run a youth program."

You can say:

"Our program supports Quality Education by improving attendance and academic confidence."

6 BRINGING IT TOGETHER

Data helps organizations:

- ✓ Answer important questions
- ✓ Improve programs
- ✓ Improve programs
- ✓ Build credibility
- ✓ Connect local work to larger community goals

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Good data helps communities understand the value and impact of nonprofit work.

STAY CONNECTED

MANGO supports nonprofits through:

- TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING
- PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION
- RESOURCES AND TOOLS



Thank You

for taking the time to learn and reflect.

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