Data Management for Nonprofits

Collecting Good Data | Session 3

1 TODAY'S BIG IDEA

Data helps organizations:

- Tell their story
- Show results
- Improve programs
- Connect to community goals

2 WHY DATA FEELS HARD

Common challenges:

- Collecting too much (or too little)
- No clear purpose
- Different systems and formats
- Data gets lost or unused

⚠ Most data problems are planning problems – not collection problems.

3 WHAT MAKES GOOD DATA?

Good data is:

- Collected for a clear reason
- Easy to gather
- Organized consistently
- Actually used



4 SIMPLE DATA CHAIN

GOAL → QUESTION → DATA

EXAMPLE:

Goal: Increase youth participation

Question: Who is attending?

Data: Name, age, attendance



If data does not answer a question, you probably don't need to collect it.

SIMPLE SYSTEMS TO COLLECT & ORGANIZE DATA

1 DATA WITH PURPOSE

Program Goal: Improve community health

Data Being Collected

- Names
- Favorite color
- Attendance
- Blood pressure
- Number of sessions

Think About It!

- ✓ Which data measures success?
- ✗ Which data is unnecessary?



2 SIMPLE COLLECTION TOOLS

Simple systems work best:



Sign-in sheets



Short surveys



Checklists

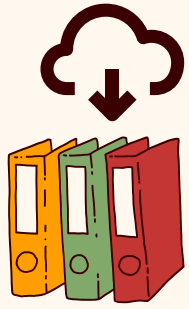
3 GOOD VS. COMPLICATED SYSTEMS

Avoid:	Better Systems:
✗ Too many forms	✓ One clear location
✗ Unclear instructions	✓ Simple process
✗ No clear responsibility	✓ Assigned role



4 SIMPLE ORGANIZATION RULES

- One storage location
- Consistent file names
- One format
- Train your team
- Check data regularly



5 FILE NAME EXAMPLE

- ✗ data_final_v3.xlsx
- ✓ YouthWorkshop_Attendance_March2026.xlsx



BUILD YOUR SIMPLE DATA PLAN

1 START WITH A PURPOSE

Three helpful questions:

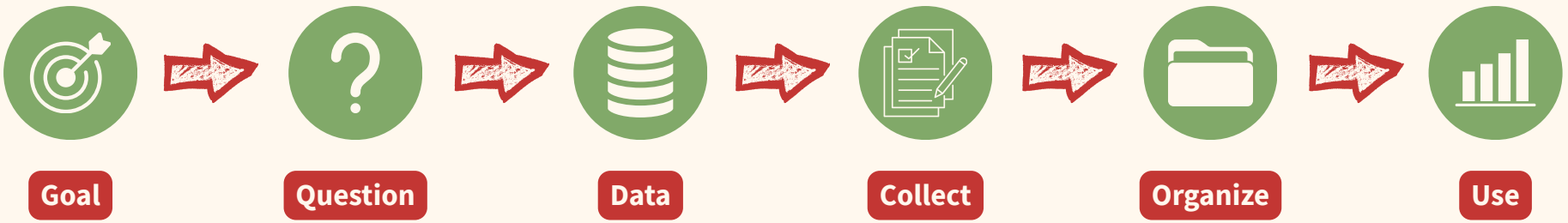
- How much?
- How well?
- Is anybody better off?

2 YOUR DATA PLAN STEPS

1. Program Information
2. Program Goal
3. SDG Alignment
4. Key Questions
5. Data to Collect
6. How Will You Collect It?
7. Who Collects the Data?
8. Where Will It Be Stored?
9. How Will You Organize It?

- Is this too complicated?
- Will your team actually do this?
- What might go wrong?

SIMPLE DATA CYCLE



CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY GOALS (SDGS)

1 YOUR WORK ALREADY CONNECTS TO GLOBAL GOALS

Examples:



Health



Education



Sustainable Communities

2 WHAT ARE THE SDGS?

- 17 global goals
- Address poverty, education, climate, and more
- Use measurable indicators to track progress



3 WHY SDG ALIGNMENT HELPS

- Clarifies
- Strengthens proposals
- Connects you to partners
- Shows contribution beyond one project



4 CNMI CONNECTOIN

CNMI Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan

- Guides smart, safe development for long-term resiliency
- Aligned with SDGs
- Tracks short-term and long-term achievements

5 REFLECTION QUESTION

Which SDG(s) does your program support?



Learn more about SDGs: https://sdg.tw/

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1 WHAT YOU TAKE WITH YOU

- A completed Simple Data Plan
- Simple systems you can apply immediately
- Clear understanding of what data matters
- SDG connection to your work



2 FINAL REMINDERS

- Start small
- Collect only useful information
- Use data consistently
- Keep systems simple
- Organize clearly

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Good data is not about collecting more information.
It is about:

- Collecting what matters
- Organizing it clearly
- Using it to improve your 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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