

Data Confidentiality, Anonymity and Privacy in Relationship to use of Technology

Data confidentiality and anonymity are among the few critical concepts, that can influence our data collection, regardless if we utilize technology or not; however, technology certainly adds some new dimensions to the context of confidentiality and anonymity.

Confidentiality means that the project team (or designated staff members) may know the identity of the responders; however, they commit to certain principles to keep everything they learn confidential within the project team. This commitment of confidentiality may be voluntary or legally required, depending on the circumstances and context of the purpose of data collection. Confidentiality is a scale, from all data collected is public on one side, to all data (and results from data) are fully confidential and cannot be shared, beyond the designated individuals.

Anonymity is the degree to which the respondents can be connected to the answers we recorded. This means that specific measures were considered to assure, that the responses (data) cannot be traced back to the respondents. Anonymity can be achieved by removing from the data collection or data set any responses or variables that could lead to the ability to trace answers or data towards individual respondents. Anonymity is also a scale from responses/data that is easily traceable to individual respondents (e.g. contains names) on one side to completely anonymous responses/data that cannot be matched with respondents.

Guiding questions for discussion:

- 1) Can confidentiality or anonymity affect honest responses?
- 2) When (why) would we want to have data anonymous and when not?
- 3) What data we should never collect (and what would be the exceptions to this rule)?
- 4) Can we share project data with other organizations/government and if yes, are there any measures to be taken?
- 5) How can we strengthen the commitment of confidentiality from the project staff and other stakeholders, engaging with data?
- 6) How to collect informed consent and what should such a consent include?

Group Exercise: Data Confidentiality versus Anonymity in Relations to use of Technology and Data

1 Select group leader – who will help to guide the discussion

2 In your group, discuss the topic, especially focusing on the guiding questions provided, documenting key points and outcomes of the discussion.

(15 minutes)

3 List key recommendations around privacy, confidentiality and anonymity that came from this group discussion and that you would like to share with your colleagues from other groups (5 minutes)

Please make recommendations as a clear statement, so they are easy to understand without understanding the full context of the discussion.

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4 Transfer your group recommendations on a flip-chart
(5 minutes)

Data Safety and Security in Relationship to Use of Technology for Data Collection and Storage

While concerns about data safety and security are well known, the majority of us are overwhelmed by the scale and risks related, making it very hard to navigate, what our priorities should be and what are the simplest steps to keep our data safe and secure.

Data Safety refers to the physical existence of data (on which medium and where is the data stored), the ability to store it and access it over a period required for data usage, or legal requirements to maintain certain data for a certain period.

Data Security refers to the human-caused threat to the data (e.g. unauthorized access to the data; intention to prevent you from accessing your data).

Guiding questions for discussion:

- 1) Who should have access to project data/results and why?
- 2) What are the good practices in preventing accidental loss of data (e.g. due to failure or loss of data storage device)
- 3) Does it make sense for an SMO to store data in the cloud and what is cloud anyway? (what are pros and cons)?
- 4) What should be the very minimum for keeping our data secure?
- 5) What are the threats to data security and safety we should care about the most
- 6) Do we need to read the boring Privacy Policy and Terms of Use for software or online service we use?
- 7) What are the specific risks emerging from the use of technology for data collection and storage (e.g. data in the cloud and what is data cloud anyway?).

Group Exercise: Data Safety and Security in Relationship to Use of Technology for Data Collection

- 1** Select group leader – who will help to guide the discussion
- 2** In your group, discuss the topic, especially focusing on the guiding questions provided, documenting key points and outcomes of the discussion.
(15 minutes)
- 3** List key recommendations that came from this group discussion and that you would like to share with your colleagues from other groups (5 minutes)

Please make recommendations as a clear statement, so they are easy to understand without understanding the full context of the discussion.

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- 4** Transfer your group recommendations on a flip-chart
(5 minutes)

Risk and Benefits of Engaging Technology for Data Collection and Storage

Virtually each of us engaged some piece of technology to some extent in the process of data collection design (being it an online survey, mobile data collection, Excel, or any other way) and while sometimes the decision making process about engaging technology is clear, following the pros and cons, in other cases this process may be complex and unclear.

When to use the technology (what are the benefits to your organization and or the targeted communities/individuals from utilizing technology for data collection).

When not to use the technology (what would be the key draw-backs and cons when engaging the technology for data collection wouldn't make sense).

Guiding questions for discussion:

- 1) What are the key benefits of using new technology for data collection (and storage)?
- 2) What would be the reasons for when NOT to engage technology for data collection?
- 3) What are the key risks you would consider while engaging the technology (either devices or software or both) and how to mitigate these risks?
- 4) What would be key ingredients for making the adoption of new technology for data collection and storage successful and sustainable across your organization?
- 5) How should technology for low-resource settings look like, what are the key requirements?
- 6) What about the pros and cons of engaging social media in our data collection?

Group Exercise: Risk and Benefits of Engaging Technology for Data Collection and Storage

- 1** Select group leader – who will help to guide the discussion
- 2** In your group, discuss the topic, especially focusing on the guiding questions provided, documenting key points and outcomes of the discussion.
(15 minutes)
- 3** List key recommendations that came from this group discussion and that you would like to share with your colleagues from other groups (5 minutes)

Please make recommendations as a clear statement, so they are easy to understand without understanding the full context of the discussion.

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- 4** Transfer your group recommendations on a flip-chart
(5 minutes)

Technology for Qualitative Data Collection and Storage

It is commonly known that technology can have a significant positive impact on data collection for quantitative data (e.g surveys). The use of technology for qualitative data remains partially in the dark, as the old fashion paper just seems to be a good fit. However, our ability to think outside of the box as well as new and emerging technologies open-up a space for engaging technology also in the collection and storage of qualitative data.

Qualitative data can have many different shapes and forms common qualitative data collection methods are Focus Groups, Interviews, Stories, Observations, Photos, Community Maps, Drawings, Timelines etc.

Guiding questions for discussion:

- 1) What qualitative data do you commonly collect in your organizations?
- 2) Do you already use any technology for collecting or storing qualitative data? If yes, which and for what specifically?
- 3) What are common challenges with qualitative data and how could technology possibly help us to overcome these challenges?
- 4) Are there any risks or limitations for using technology specifically for collecting/storing qualitative data?
- 5) Is there any qualitative data that technology may allow us to collect that we wouldn't be able to collect otherwise?

Group Exercise: Technology for Qualitative Data Collection and Storage

- 1** Select group leader – who will help to guide the discussion
- 2** In your group, discuss the topic, especially focusing on the guiding questions provided, documenting key points and outcomes of the discussion.
(15 minutes)
- 3** List key recommendations that came from this group discussion and that you would like to share with your colleagues from other groups (5 minutes)

Please make recommendations as a clear statement, so they are easy to understand without understanding the full context of the discussion.

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- 4** Transfer your group recommendations on a flip-chart
(5 minutes)