
8 January 2015

Dear Friends,

This week we are sharing information to help your organization develop good data collection practices. We hope you enjoy this edition of the Newsflash!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Resource) A general introduction to data collection - UNESCO

(Resource) Data Collection Tips - Developing a Survey

(Resource) Developing Data Collection Instruments - World Bank Group

(Accepting Applications) 2015 Yale Young African Scholars Program

(Accepting Applications) The Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects (GGP) - Embassy of Japan in South Africa

(Resource) A general introduction to data collection - UNESCO

This website from UNESCO provides an introduction to data collection. The site discusses data collection for education, but the basic principles can be applied to any program area: <http://bit.ly/1woqaOc>

EXCERPT:

Data collection is a term used to describe a process of gathering (or obtaining) specific information about a phenomenon or an activity. Once collected, data can be stored in records or data-bases, analyzed and used for purposes of monitoring or evaluation. The quality of data collected has a direct impact upon the quality of analysis that can be performed using the data, which ultimately impacts upon the quality of decisions that can be made.

in the education sector, data collection through school censuses aims to obtain relevant, up-to-date and reliable data and information regarding the education system as a whole. Officers at all levels of the education administration including school personnel can use the collected data to understand the current state of education in the country, and to support sound policy- and decision-making. While organizing and conducting a school census, the following five principles of data collection should be observed:

- **Relevance:** the collected data should be relevant to the activity or phenomenon

- you intend to analyse and study.
- **Simplicity:** the collected data should be simple in concept and easy to measure.
 - **Accuracy:** the collected data can accurately describe the activity, phenomenon, topic or issue you are studying.
 - **Clarity:** the collected data should be clear, unambiguous, easy to interpret and easy to understand.
 - **Practicability:** the collected data can be easily accessed and reliably used.

These principles may be summarized simply as the following '**5-right principles**':

- **Get the right data:** collect data which are relevant to the specific topic or issue. For example, to better understand gender disparity in school, one must collect data on students separately for boys and girls.
- **Get the data right:** collect data with precise definition and appropriate method of measurement. For example, data on new entrants in Grade 1 must not include those who actually attended another school, dropped out, then enrolled in this school for the first time.
- **Get the data right away:** get current and timely data. For example, school censuses should be organized as close to the start of the school year as possible, once enrollment is complete and attendance has stabilized.
- **Get the data the right way:** get data through a rigorous process which can guarantee data quality and ensure consistency. Instructions about methods and data standards must be explained clearly. The people involved in data collection should be trained.
- **Get the right data management:** collect reliable data which is guaranteed by good quality control conducted by relevant stakeholders. It is important to involve all the stakeholders at different levels of the education system to check that the collected data are reliable and complete before they are processed, analyzed and used.

There is often a tendency for educational administrators to want to collect more data and in greater detail, but then failing to make full use of the data they collected. This should be avoided because the more data you require the schools to supply, the less data you will actually get, because of the negative effects of an increased reporting burden on schools. Always respect the motto: '**Do not collect data that will not be used.**'

(Resource) Data Collection Tips - Developing a Survey

This document from Innovation Network presents an overview of some common issues that nonprofits face when constructing a survey. While there are certainly different ways to structure and administer a survey, these issues apply across all types of surveys. Veterans and newcomers to evaluation can all benefit from keeping these tips in mind.

To view the document, visit: <http://bit.ly/1wQNB1B>

(Resource) Developing Data Collection Instruments - World Bank Group

INTRODUCTION:

Monitoring and evaluation rely on data collection instruments to elicit and record information. There are various types of instruments available for M&E including summary report forms used to aggregate project data, questionnaires, more informal interview guides, inventory forms, and observation checklists. Several formats can be combined on one form. For example, a household survey may include questions for the mother about her family's health as well as a checklist for observations about the size, construction, and cleanliness of the house.

The development of clear, easy to read instruments is a vital component of both monitoring and evaluation. Knowing what to include and how to organize the questions and answers requires skill, common sense, and practice. Considering how the collected data will be analyzed and used before designing the data collection instrument creates a focused, efficient instrument.

To read the full document, visit: <http://bit.ly/13EUIG2>

(Accepting Applications) 2015 Yale Young African Scholars Program

Application deadline: 26 February 2015

The Yale Young African Scholars Program (YYAS) is an initiative modeled off of the Yale Young Global Scholars Program. This program is intended solely for African students attending secondary school on the African continent.

The 2015 Yale Young African Scholars programs will be hosted by Yale University in two locations:

Kenya: August 12 – 17

Zimbabwe: August 20 – 25

The Yale Young African Scholars Program is a high-intensity six-day program designed for African students who will graduate from secondary school in 2017 or 2018, are 18 years or younger at the time of the program, and have the talent, drive, energy, and ideas to make meaningful impacts as young leaders, even before they begin their university studies. The Yale Young African Scholars Program is an official program of Yale University.

There is no cost to students to participate in the Yale Young African Scholars Program. Participants are, however, responsible for getting themselves to the venue at the outset of the program and their return home at the end of the program. Participants will also be responsible for any incidental expenses they elect to incur. Admitted students demonstrating financial need may apply for a limited number of travel assistance grants, intended to help defray the cost of international travel between African countries. Students can only apply for travel assistance after they have received an offer of admission to YYAS.

The programs will help students recognize and understand global issues, strategize responses, and innovate solutions while learning from Yale faculty and African undergraduate and graduate students who currently attend Yale. Students will participate in a lecture series and a number of elective seminars on a variety of topics. The demanding academic content is designed to improve students' analytical thinking, intellectual flexibility, and written and oral communication skills. These skills will be further utilized in small workshops designed to prepare students for the demanding application processes of U.S. colleges and universities.

On-site accommodation is mandatory, and will be provided for all students, along with three meals a day. There is no cost for students to participate in the program.

For more information and a link to the online application form, visit: <http://bit.ly/1wJ2kwK>

(Accepting Applications) The Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects (GGP) - Embassy of Japan in South Africa

Deadline: 30 January 2015

Background

The Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects (GGP) Programme was first introduced as the Small Scale Grant Assistance Programme in 1989. The aim is to assist Non-Profit Organisations (NPO's) by supporting relatively small development projects which have a direct and immediate impact on the well-being of disadvantaged communities at a grass-roots level.

The Embassy of Japan in South Africa covers **South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland**, and deals with applications from these four countries. The site of the proposed project must be located in either of the four.

Criteria

- Registered NPOs may apply and a copy of the NPO registration certificate must accompany the application form. NPOs here include non-governmental

organisations, community-based organisations, education institutions, health institutions and local governments.

- Individual or private companies are not eligible to apply.
- Only one (1) application will be considered per organisation.
- The applicant organisation must have at least 3 (three) years experience in the sector of the proposed project. The applicant organisation is required to have established sound, sustainable and stable foundations in terms of finance, personnel, project management etc. Therefore, the Embassy cannot fund newly established organisations, pilot projects, initial start-up costs etc.

Faxed applications are not considered. The application forms for 2015 may be either downloaded or obtained from the Embassy of Japan.

The relevant application form may be hand delivered or mailed to the Embassy. Only new applications which are postmarked or hand delivered on or before **30 January 2015** will be considered.

For more information and to download the application forms, visit: <http://bit.ly/1GwHbbY>

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website:

<http://www.firelightfoundation.org/resources/newsflash>

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org

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