



Here are some tips to bear in mind when collecting data

1. Before collecting data

Make sure you have all the right paperwork and equipment needed:

- ✓ Enough of the right data collection forms for the task
- ✓ Notebook and pens
- ✓ Audio recorder and spare batteries or phone for recording (optional)(bring extra external battery)
- ✓ Videocamera (optional)(bring extra battery)
- ✓ Photo camera (or phone with camera)
- ✓ Refreshments for participants
- ✓ Attendance forms & petty cash, travel + receipt book
- ✓ Make sure the venue is accessible and suitable
- ✓ Book a sign language interpreter if necessary and brief them about the session

2. During data collection

- ✓ Ideally have one person interviewing/facilitating and one person taking notes (essential in focus group discussions)
- ✓ Note accurately on all forms who you talked to (not their name, but their gender/age etc)
- ✓ Accurately label all audio or video recordings and photos. Use the a simple consistent code for the audio recorded files as for written notes (see below).
- ✓ Make notes in your notebook of anything special/extra that happens
- ✓ Do NOT use people's real names on any type of record. Use a code for the activity eg II for individual interview, FGD for focus group discussion etc and an ID number eg II 1, 2, 3 or FGDPWD 1,2,3 and so on.

3. After data collection

- ✓ Immediately after the event – write detailed extra notes on the form or in your notebook – from your immediate memory of what happened. What were the key messages that came out? Any particular stories or case examples that stood out.
- ✓ Enter the data on to the appropriate excel spread sheet as soon as possible.
- ✓ Make a copy of audio-files – transfer them from the audio recorder to the laptop as soon as possible
- ✓ Make labels for photos – eg FGD 1 with Strategic Partner – health team (use same labels as in your notes)
- ✓ Keep completed forms in an organised locked filing system (or password protected if using electronic system)