



How to monitor and promote  
policy changes on  
governance of tenure

## What data to use?

Text-only version



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

This course is funded by the European Union through the EU-FAO  
Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction Programme



© FAO, 2016

# In this lesson

LEARNING OBJECTIVES ..... 2

INTRODUCTION ..... 2

WHAT DATA IS OUT THERE? ..... 2

GOVERNMENT DATA COLLECTION ..... 3

IGOS DATA COLLECTION ..... 3

ACCESS TO CSOS DATA COLLECTION ..... 4

ASSESSING THE VALUE OF THE DATA SOURCE ..... 4

CAN WE TURN NUMBERS INTO IMPACT?..... 5

CAN WE GATHER NEW DATA? ..... 6

INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES FOR NEW DATA GATHERING ..... 7

CONCLUSIONS..... 8

SUMMARY ..... 10

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the lesson, learners should be able to:

- understand the range of potential existing data sources;
- identify data collection techniques; and
- know the main steps of a survey.

## INTRODUCTION

*? What data will we use for our monitoring initiative? Is there already available and complete data or shall we collect data on our own?*

Monitoring is based on data, but when you begin to gather **data** for monitoring, you may realize that data cannot be simply categorized into **available** or **non-available**: some data can be easily obtained, while other information can be more difficult to retrieve.

This lesson will introduce potential existing data sources and will review how to evaluate their quality and usefulness for monitoring. Sometimes, you can also decide to gather data directly. This lesson will examine possible data gathering techniques and will show how technical expertise can contribute to this activity.

## WHAT DATA IS OUT THERE?

There are a range of **potential existing data sources** at national, regional and global levels, collected by different actors:

- ▶ **Government produces** a census, officially published statistics, publicly accessible government records, and unpublished data.
- ▶ **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) produce** surveys or other assessment activities, published or unpublished data of researchers.
- ▶ **Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) use** data collected directly by IGOs.
- ▶ **Private firms collect** data for their own use, which can be used by other organizations.

## GOVERNMENT DATA COLLECTION

In particular, data collected by government can be placed in the following categories:

### Publically available data

The most widely available data comes from national censuses and periodic national household and business surveys. This is the **main source of official statistics** published nationally and by IGOs.

### Internal data

Governments also extensively collect **data to monitor their own activities**. This data may not be available, unless there are provisions for freedom of information requests or other opportunities for obtaining this information.

### Data related to governance activities

Land governance activities like **tenure registration** also involve keeping records and **can be a source of data**.

However, it cannot be assumed that data produced by governments is always directly usable. For example...

*“Yes, then why was there a severe delay in the monitoring operations?”*



*“We decided to use data produced by the government: it was available online and could be easily downloaded...”*

*“We had difficulty getting the needed data. Regional government offices had collected data without analyzing it. So, we needed an expert analyst to categorize and made the data usable. As a result, it required more time than we had planned.”*

**NOTE:** It may take investments of time and resources to make this data usable for your monitoring initiative.

## IGOS DATA COLLECTION

IGO datasets tend to be secondary data derived from data collected by national institutions. These data may be useful for your monitoring initiative, especially when making regional or global comparisons.

**NOTE:** Primary or direct data collection by IGOs tends to be limited to monitoring their own programmes.

Some exceptions exist such as the **World Bank's Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF)**, which draws extensively on expert panel assessment and, to a lesser extent, on surveys.



#### *The LGAF experience*

The **World Bank's Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF)** allows organizations to engage in a multi-stakeholder process through jointly developing monitoring initiatives for issues such as land tenure, land-use policy, public land management and land administration. The LGAF can bring in stakeholders with different viewpoints to collaborate with each other in a common framework to address the tenure security issues of different groups of people in a country. This participatory assessment can be the basis of a performance-monitoring system.






## ACCESS TO CSOS DATA COLLECTION

Data produced by the non-state sector can be limited, particularly on nationally representative data. Some organizations may sometimes carry out national surveys, e.g. **Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer** [www.transparency.org/research/gcb/overview](http://www.transparency.org/research/gcb/overview), but this is rare due to the high cost and complexity involved.

**NOTE:** Generally, such data are publicly accessible, though it may be difficult to know that this information is available if the data initiative or organization undertaking the land monitoring is not well known, or has not disseminated the monitoring initiative through various communications channels - online, print and media.

## ASSESSING THE VALUE OF THE DATA SOURCE

When using data from different sources, you need to evaluate its quality and verify if it can be useful for your objectives. Ideally, the indicator itself should be a well-developed statement of the specific empirical measure that is to be used to answer a question or assess compliance with the norm or goal. When that is not the case, the quality and usefulness of data from these various sources can be evaluated according to a range of characteristics. These include:

<b>Relevance</b>		The data should reflect significant aspects of the indicators.
<b>Temporal relevance</b>		Different sources of data collection may need to be explored to ensure that data is relevant for the time period indicated.
<b>Comparability</b>		The data collected should be compared across place and time.
<b>Availability</b>		Different types of organizations and initiatives have different levels of access to data.
<b>Voice &amp; ownership</b>		Different data sources should be assessed to balance different perspectives.

To verify and evaluate your data, you can follow this checklist. If you can answer yes to these questions, it is likely that you have quality data that may be useful for your monitoring initiative...

- ✓ Does the data reflect enough aspects of the indicators or questions? Does it specifically assess the indicator, or also other factors?
- ✓ Is the data temporally relevant?
- ✓ Does the data collected make sense to be compared across place and time?
- ✓ Can you initiative get access to data? What are the costs of getting this?
- ✓ Do you assess different data sources to ensure the data is representative of the actual situation?  
Is gathering data on gender relevant to your initiative?

### Example

The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** publishes national Labour Force Survey data on numbers of self-employed and employed workers in agriculture. Does this data assess the proportion of rural workers in the country that are **landless** (in the sense that they are employed and do not work on their own land)?

No, it depends. **Employed** rural workers may not mean that they are landless. It is not possible to identify if "employed" rural workers mean that they are landless. It may be that they own land which may be difficult to cultivate, or that they are working more to earn additional income.

## CAN WE TURN NUMBERS INTO IMPACT?

Additionally, communication and advocacy are an important consideration when evaluating the quality and usefulness of data from various sources. Ideally, monitoring should capture data that informs

inclusive policy-making, policy implementation and governance processes. In this regard, global and composite indices have a high media impact, and there is much interest in developing such indices for land issues.

**For example:** The Earth Security Index <http://earthsecurity.org> measures resource scarcity by developing indicators along eight themes to develop an index to measure a country's resource pressures and their interdependence across resource "silos". They produced the representation of the index for a country with a high level of deforestation rooted in insecure land tenure and commercial pressures from palm industries, but also the representation of the index for a country with a high dependency on agricultural imports; in particular, corn. Tenure insecurity is an obstacle to resilience of local small- and medium-scale corn producers.

### *TIP: When to use global and composite indexes*



Such indexes are useful when the goals, norms and issues that we wish to monitor are **expressed in abstract terms** that we cannot directly measure, necessitating the definition of a number of indicators to be used as proxies. When more than one indicator is used, we may want to combine them in a single index.

## CAN WE GATHER NEW DATA?

While it may be easier to use data already collected by different types of organizations, if it makes strategic sense or adds value to your monitoring initiative, your organization can also **collect primary quantitative and qualitative data in order** to influence decision-making about responsible tenure governance. Such cross-cutting data- gathering techniques include:

### **SURVEYS**

Surveys can **collect a broad range of information** (quantitative and qualitative) about a population, which can be analysed using statistical methods. The qualitative information gathered can also help to interpret quantitative findings.

The basic steps in carrying out the survey design include:

- **Survey design:** This step includes formulating the questions of the survey, selecting variables that will enable participants to answer the question, designing a questionnaire, translating the questionnaire and guidelines into local languages (if needed), developing a sampling

	<p>method and planning the data collection according to the population sample selected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Data collection:</b> This step includes training people to collect data in a consistent matter, producing guidelines for data collection and defining variables, and having supervisors who ensure that data collection methods are being used correctly. A pilot survey would need to be tested before undertaking the data collection exercise.</li> <li>• <b>Data analysis:</b> Data is analysed to give meaning to the collected data, including the identification of trends, confirmation of its validity or the spotting of errors. If data is collected using quantitative methods, it can be analysed statistically.</li> </ul>
<b>ACTION RESEARCH</b>	Through action research it is possible to collect in-depth quantitative and qualitative research using evaluative, analytical or investigative methods, which <b>can be used by participating stakeholders to find solutions</b> to specific issues or problems.
<b>RECORD-KEEPING</b>	Record-keeping can <b>note historical changes in data</b> by collecting, organizing and categorizing data making it easy for retrieval, access and comparison.
<b>INTERVIEWS</b>	Interviews allow you to <b>collect in-depth qualitative research</b> through structured and unstructured formats.
<b>PARTICIPATORY SCORING</b>	Participatory scoring can directly collect a <b>community's perceptions</b> , rank various factors and perceived impacts, and contribute to bringing a number of grassroots experiences into the monitoring initiative.

## INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES FOR NEW DATA GATHERING

New data gathering can also consider the use of innovative strategies for getting new information.

**For example:** On its web site, the **Land Matrix partnership** collects and visualizes information about large-scale land acquisitions. It also complements its data collection by inviting all users to complete a form providing spatial data, general information, employment, investor information, data sources, local communities, former use and user information relevant to a particular land deal.

This crowd-sourcing methodology of inviting any user to submit details on a large-scale land deal fosters links with public, private and civil society stakeholders in order to increase the quality of the information.

- ⇒ The information is submitted through the web site.
- ⇒ Then, it is verified, to the extent possible by the partnership, through examination of the data sources before it is included in the database.
- ⇒ Other users are also invited to comment openly on the mentioned deal.



### *Additional strategies for new data gathering*

Some organizations also use **satellite imagery** and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to collect and compile land-use data in participatory databases and maps that may then also be used by other monitoring initiatives. **For example**, Instituto del Bien Común (IBC), Peru's Sistema de Información Sobre Comunidades Nativas de la Amazonía Peruana (SICNA) used data sourced from indigenous communities to develop participatory maps to inform interested stakeholders about the lands titled to indigenous communities.

## CONCLUSIONS

You can choose to rely on already existing data. In this case, when you begin collecting data, you will soon realize that it cannot be simply categorized into "available" or "non-available". Instead, there is a continuum of accessibility from easy to access to very hard to get at...

You can decide to collect data for your monitoring initiative. In this case, once you have selected the methodology to be used, you should consider that monitoring could benefit from the support of experts for the initial development of data collection.

In both cases, selecting from different methodologies will need research based on the objectives of your monitoring initiative.

## Examples

Now, you can review the topics covered in this lesson by following the experience of Maricel and Kamal.

**The**


Maricel works for an NGO promoting legal recognition of subsistence fisherfolk to

**background** guarantee their access to fishing in local waters, as defined in the Fisheries Code. Because the post-disaster reconstruction policies failed to account for the resource use and access rights of fisherfolk adequately, her organization has plans to develop a monitoring initiative to address this issue.

In the third lesson of this course, Maricel and her colleague Kamal came to the conclusion that to obtain useful data, the best monitoring approach would be to collect data from the communities directly. The survey has been conducted in the past three months. Now, Maricel's organization is waiting for the report describing how the monitoring initiative was conducted...


### Survey design

Maricel is discussing how to design and develop the report with Kamal...

 *"We will open the report by describing why we chose to carry out a survey rather than using already available data. We made this choice because the data that we had found was not directly usable and up-to-date..". - - Kamal*

*"It would have required a lot of time to make this data usable." – Maricel*  
*"Then we began to design the survey. We had to formulate the questions for the questionnaire and to select variables that would enable participants to answer those questions. In addition, since some groups of fisherfolk do not speak the official national language, the questionnaire and guidelines were translated into the local language. " – Kamal*

*"We also developed a precise method for sampling a representative target population, and planned the data collection according to the population sample selected." – Maricel*  
*"A pilot survey was carried out two weeks before the beginning of data collection operations. The test was needed to expose any problems with the survey and sampling methods used. Fortunately, the test results were good so that only a few revisions to the survey were required."*  
*– Kamal*

 *"Data collection was carried out in two months by people who had been trained to collect data in a consistent matter in order to avoid bias. All teams of data enumerators had supervisors with technical competencies to ensure data collection methods were used correctly." – Maricel*

The Director of Maricel's organization then enters the room. He is interested to know the survey's final results...

*"What can you tell from the data analysis? Are the survey results useful and relevant to our*

*objectives?”- Director*

*“We collected a lot of quantitative data and have analysed it statistically, providing averages, ratios, and ranges from minimum to maximum levels. All information is also presented with graphs and tables and has been interpreted with the help of qualitative findings.” – Kemal*

*Through the entire survey process, a great advantage has been provided by the support of experts for the initial development of the methodology to be used, including a fruitful collaboration between our organization and several academic researchers. In particular, technical experts have been involved:*

*“Good. Now, we will need to communicate our findings to our target audiences to request government support of fisherfolks’ tenure rights...” Director*

*“The support of technical experts provides more strength to our findings. This data is relevant and useful for our objectives...” – Maricel*

Technical experts involved in:

- survey design** ➡ Technical support has proven useful in the design of the questionnaire since the number, order and wording of the questionnaire can have a significant effect on responses. Likewise, to avoid bias, designing the sampling method needs to be technically sound to ensure that the sample is representative and selected randomly.
- data collection** ➡ Data collection supervisors had all the technical competencies to ensure data collection methods were used correctly.
- data analysis** ➡ The data analysis - both quantitative and qualitative - has needed technical support to ensure accurate and verifiable interpretation of the data collected.

## SUMMARY

There are a range of potential existing data sources produced by:

- Government: census, officially published statistics, publicly accessible government records, unpublished data.
- Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs): published data collected directly by IGOs.
- Civil society organizations (CSOs): surveys or other assessment activities, published or unpublished data of researchers.

- Private firms: data collected by private firms for their own use, which can be used by other organizations.

The quality and usefulness of data from these various sources can be evaluated according to these characteristics:

- relevance and temporal relevance;
- comparability;
- availability; and
- voice and ownership.

Organizations can also decide to collect primary quantitative and qualitative data in order to influence decision-making towards responsible tenure governance. Such cross-cutting data-gathering techniques include: survey, action research, record-keeping, interviews and participatory scoring. Technical expertise and support may also be needed to develop the methodology for a monitoring initiative.