







# Data Collection Tools For Evaluation

Technique	Benefits	Limitations
 <p><b>Written Surveys</b></p> <p>Written surveys are questionnaires that are mailed, faxed, or dropped-off at a residence and returned via mail. Surveys of this type may also be handed-out to respondents, who complete it on-site or complete and return the survey via mail using a provided stamped and addressed envelope. Surveys can also be computer-based; they are sent-out and completed electronically.</p> <p><i>Possible respondents include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growers</li> <li>• Health center staff</li> <li>• Patients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions and survey format are carefully created ahead of time, taking into consideration literacy level and language preferences of target population.</li> <li>• Does not require interviewer resources.</li> <li>• Less sensitive to biases introduced by interviewers. For example, respondents are less likely to answer as they think the surveyor wants them to.</li> <li>• Respondents can answer questions privately in their homes.</li> <li>• It is a more anonymous method for giving information on sensitive topics like income, legal status, or mental health.</li> <li>• Leave drop-off survey with intended respondent and not in a mailbox.</li> <li>• Especially useful in obtaining quantitative data but qualitative questions may be included as well.</li> <li>• Can be framed as random sample surveys.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must verify and find correct addresses; survey is limited to addresses that the surveyor has access to. Obtaining accurate, up-to-date farmworker addresses can be difficult.</li> <li>• Survey only captures those that can read, understand, and write the survey language.</li> <li>• Survey must be well written in order to “stand-alone;” no interviewer guides them through the content.</li> <li>• Surveyor cannot control who actually responds to the survey once it is mailed.</li> <li>• Immediate turnaround cannot be expected; allow time for completion and return of survey.</li> <li>• Risk of a poor return rate, as respondents may choose not to mail the survey back. If feasible, allow time for follow-up reminder postcards or phone calls.</li> <li>• Computer-based surveys necessitate access to computers; not a viable option for the majority of farmworkers.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Telephone Surveys</b></p> <p>A telephone survey is a series of questions, or interview, asked of the respondent via telephone.</p> <p><i>Possible respondents include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives from other community agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> <li>• Growers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be completed and produce results in a short time period.</li> <li>• Questions are carefully written ahead of time, taking into consideration literacy level and language preferences.</li> <li>• Process is more amenable to addressing problems as they arise with the survey or interview format than other methods.</li> <li>• Interviewer has greater control than with other methods – s/he can select the respondent in each household and get complete responses to the entire questionnaire.</li> <li>• Telephone surveys can be scheduled at farmworker-friendly hours.</li> <li>• Especially useful in obtaining qualitative data but quantitative questions may be included as well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey sample is limited to those with a telephone and listed number.</li> <li>• Must verify and find telephone numbers.</li> <li>• Interviewer may miss useful data from facial expressions and body cues.</li> <li>• Interviewer bias possible through leading questions, vocal intonation, and respondents answering as they think the interviewer wants.</li> </ul>



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 <p><b>Face-to-Face Surveys</b></p> <p>These surveys involve an oral interview using a written questionnaire between an interviewer and interviewee.</p> <p><i>Possible interviewees include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach workers</li> <li>• Migrant educators</li> <li>• Community figures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniquely suited for populations, like farmworkers, for whom there is no list or who are not likely to respond willingly or accurately by phone or mail.</li> <li>• Amenable to lower-literacy populations. Make sure questions are written at correct grade-level of target population (7<sup>th</sup> grade is highest average grade level completed).</li> <li>• Good for complex questionnaires.</li> <li>• Strength in this approach is gathering rich qualitative data.</li> <li>• Can be framed as random sample surveys.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinating interviews can be time-intensive and expensive, especially when interviewee does not have phone access or when spread-out geographically.</li> <li>• May require vehicle access to meet with interviewees.</li> <li>• Best when interviewers have experience or have been trained in why the research is being done, the format of the questionnaire, and sound interviewing techniques.</li> <li>• Good supervision is key as even the best-trained interviewees run into problems that will need immediate attention.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Key Informant Interviews</b></p> <p>Key informants are community leaders who are knowledgeable about the community being assessed. Informants are asked to identify community needs and concerns through a face-to-face survey or interview.</p> <p><i>Possible interviewees include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmworker leaders</li> <li>• Growers or crewleaders</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with only one person at a time.</li> <li>• Allows for sharing history/trend information.</li> <li>• Information comes directly from knowledgeable people in the community.</li> <li>• Allows for exploration of unexpected information.</li> <li>• Can be easily combined with other data gathering techniques.</li> <li>• Can ask questions that people are uncomfortable answering in a group.</li> <li>• Strength in this approach is gathering rich qualitative data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not efficient for reaching a large number of people.</li> <li>• Must select the right informant(s).</li> <li>• Can be difficult in terms of coordination, time spent, and the relationship-building process involved.</li> <li>• Informant(s) may have biased view(s).</li> <li>• May be susceptible to interviewer bias.</li> <li>• Cannot be generalized to whole community.</li> <li>• Not appropriate if you need quantitative data.</li> </ul>



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 <p><b>Group Interviews</b></p> <p>Used to gather information from a number of farmworker clients or health center/program staff brought together by a facilitator. An interviewer usually asks a series of yes/no questions and records responses.</p> <p><i>Possible opportunities for Group Interviews:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before or after a health education session</li> <li>• During a small group event at a health fair</li> <li>• While talking to a few people at a social event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A quick way to gather information from a large number of people.</li> <li>• Survey a large number in a short time; straightforward and efficient method.</li> <li>• Can be facilitated by an outreach worker, health educator, or other person working to gather information from a group of farmworkers.</li> <li>• Respondents answer yes/no questions about behavior, beliefs, knowledge and future plans.</li> <li>• Can capture self-reported changes as result of an action/intervention.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals may be influenced by the group.</li> <li>• Limited to yes/no questions.</li> <li>• Facilitator bias can influence group response.</li> <li>• Does not provide rich, qualitative information.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Focus Group Discussions</b></p> <p>A focus group consists of a small number (8-12) of relatively similar individuals who provide information during a directed and moderated interactive group discussion.</p> <p><i>Possible discussion participants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmworker women</li> <li>• Providers</li> <li>• Health agency representatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups give rise synergistically to insights and solutions that would not come about without them. Allows for exploration of unexpected information.</li> <li>• Moderator can request clarification and detail in the discussion.</li> <li>• Can select whom you wish to target for group.</li> <li>• Relies on focus group discussion guide, for the moderator's use, to keep the discussion directed.</li> <li>• Make sure to address interpretation, transportation and childcare needs, if appropriate.</li> <li>• Strength in this approach is gathering rich qualitative data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups may be hard to coordinate.</li> <li>• Group dynamics may influence individual responses. Many cultures have established norms of who may speak to whom and when.</li> <li>• Must have a moderator for successful outcome.</li> <li>• Susceptible to moderator bias.</li> <li>• Groups may be hard to coordinate.</li> <li>• The group is not randomly selected, so generalizations cannot be made about the entire community.</li> </ul>

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 <p><b>Community Forums</b></p> <p>The community forum is a gathering of individuals from the community to discuss or address an issue or concern. The value of a community forum is that it is an activity where community members participate together to draw attention to community-wide needs.</p> <p><i>Possible forum participants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community agencies</li> <li>• Farmworkers</li> <li>• Growers or crewleaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets the stage for longer-term building of coalitions.</li> <li>• Specific information about emerging program opportunities and needs.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for immediate feedback and clarification of issues.</li> <li>• Legitimatization of future program plans; clients are more likely to participate in programs for which they have had prior input.</li> <li>• Promotion of interagency cooperation in addressing critical issues.</li> <li>• Can be planned to address interpretation and childcare needs, if appropriate.</li> <li>• Can be organized for a time that is amenable to farmworkers' schedules.</li> <li>• Can be scheduled at a place where public transportation options are accessible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domination by individuals or groups may skew data collected.</li> <li>• Individuals may be reluctant to express concerns/feelings in a group setting. Consider full group and small group discussions.</li> <li>• More challenging to moderate than focus group discussions (due to larger group size).</li> <li>• Be aware that some community members distrust assessments. Some communities may have been assessed too much and may not be receptive to data collection efforts because they don't think anything will happen or they may be worried the data will be used against them.</li> <li>• Not appropriate if you need quantitative data.</li> <li>• May be difficult to coordinate.</li> <li>• May involve high cost.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Existing Documents or Data</b></p> <p>This approach uses existing sources of information and statistical data to learn what other health center staff, agencies or universities have gathered through assessments, programmatic data, evaluation or other studies.</p> <p><i>Possible sources of data:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UDS reports</li> <li>• National Agricultural Workers Survey reports</li> <li>• Community Assessment report from a Migrant and Seasonal Head Start</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids duplication of data.</li> <li>• Can take less time than other approaches.</li> <li>• Can be less costly than other methods.</li> <li>• Can offer information not available through other techniques.</li> <li>• Can yield quantitative and/or qualitative data.</li> <li>• Can include other researchers' statistically valid study results.</li> <li>• Can foster or reinforce collaborative efforts within health center or between organizations.</li> <li>• May identify gaps in farmworker-specific data collection needs, upon reviewing existing sources.</li> <li>• This method is much less invasive and simply relies on existing information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The data can be outdated.</li> <li>• The scope of the information you gather will be limited to what has already been gathered.</li> <li>• Data rarely come directly from the population you are trying to assess.</li> <li>• The results may not capture exactly what you need.</li> <li>• Data may not be accessible due to various factors (e.g. HIPAA, incompatible systems, etc.).</li> </ul>

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 <p><b>Observations</b></p> <p>Used to gather information by having the observer look, listen, and note what is going on in a particular setting. The observer takes notes and later analyzes them along with other observations to look for trends and to succinctly present he/she observed and why.</p> <p><i>Possible locations for observation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmworker camps or homes</li> <li>• Fields</li> <li>• Social events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Useful for collecting information in settings where interviews may not be feasible, for example, for assessing farmworkers’ hand-washing in public areas of the farmworker camps after pesticide exposure or access to wash facilities in the field.</li> <li>• Less invasive than other methods.</li> <li>• Useful when topic is sensitive or setting isn’t conducive to more explicit, structured methods.</li> <li>• Can be conducted by an outreach worker, health educator, or other person working to gather information from a group of farmworkers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited to activities that can be observed; lacks direct insight about the observed perceptions.</li> <li>• Not efficient method for obtaining quantitative data.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Trained Observer Ratings</b></p> <p>A technique used to measure outcomes that can be perceived by the eyes or other physical senses of an observer. Individual trained observers, or a team of trained observers assess outcome conditions using predefined and standard rating scales often in the form of photos, written descriptions or other visual scales to measure the condition being observed.</p> <p><a href="http://www.urban.org/toolkit/data-methods/ratings.cfm">http://www.urban.org/toolkit/data-methods/ratings.cfm</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low cost</li> <li>• Easy to understand</li> <li>• Can quickly result in good usable information</li> <li>• Trained observers can be persons with a variety of educational backgrounds and experience</li> <li>• If using pictures or drawings for the scale, the technique can be used by farmworkers or other community members who have low literacy skills or lack expertise in more formal research methods</li> <li>• Focuses on experiences</li> <li>• Lends itself easily to short-term volunteer opportunities for staff or community members</li> <li>• Can be a highly accurate and reliable procedure</li> <li>• Excellent tool for communicating needs</li> <li>• Can be used with a variety of concerns that can be observed directly in the farmworker context (housing conditions, presence of rodents or pesticides near farmworker housing, conditions of sanitation facilities at the worksite, presence and use of safety equipment at worksite)</li> <li>• It can be fun to do and it’s a good way to get to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Method can be intrusive and may not be a realistic option for observing situations and conditions that are touchy for farmworkers, growers, etc.</li> <li>• Inter-rater reliability can be a problem</li> <li>• Requires adequately training the observers, adequately supervising the rating process and setting up a procedure for periodically checking the quality of ratings</li> <li>• Outside factors may influence observation</li> <li>• Doesn’t necessarily detect hidden conditions</li> <li>• Measurement may not be conducive to other statistical techniques</li> </ul>

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	<p>know aspects of a community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If properly done, the ratings can provide measurements that can be compared over time.</li></ul>	