

WORKSHEET

Improving Data Fluency

This worksheet is a companion to the Improving Data Fluency Action Learning Guide. Consider the worksheet a place to track your progress through the guide and to reflect on your own community's experience with the topic.

The worksheet will take you through the sections of the Action Learning Guide:

The Fact-Finding Cycle



Getting the Most Out of Your Data



How Communities Are Using Data

The Fact-Finding Cycle

One of the first steps involved in using data to improve community health is asking questions. The next step is finding answers to those questions, in other words, searching for data. There is often a cycle of asking questions about the what and the who and uncovering data in response, which then leads to asking more specific questions like why and how.



Generate Questions to Help You Find Data

Here are four questions that when answered can help you build out your fact-finding plan. Read these questions and then use your worksheet to reflect on and answer them using examples from your community.

1. What do you want to know?

First, define what you want to know.

What have you observed in your community that you want to know more about?

2. What should change?

Next, consider what you hope will be different as a result of your efforts.

What actions will you, community leaders, or other organizations take based on what the data show?

How will this information inform your work?

What is your goal and is that goal specific enough (have you defined a timeline for implementation)?

3. Can you be more specific?

Can you make your question more specific?

Which populations, years, and geographic areas do you want to know more about?

What inequities might be uncovered?

4. Do you have the data you need?

Finally, set a goal for what needs to change and think about the data.

What data can you use to define the problem?

What data could support your question?

Who is the “keeper” of these data?

Are they easily accessible or who could you partner with to obtain and make sense of that data?

Getting the Most Out of Your Data

One way to get the most out of your data is to consider where your data come from—including how it’s collected, how it’s being shared, and if any limitations or biases exist.



Choose Your Data Wisely

To get the most out of your data, it is important to consider the strengths and limitations of the data source or sources you are using.

Start your process by researching whether your questions have already been assessed. Even if they have been, you may need to gather additional data to make the research more current or more local. It is important to critically analyze data and data sources to determine appropriate uses and limitations. Otherwise the data you share may perpetuate a bias, even unintentionally.

	Consider...
Who?	Who is responsible for gathering the data <u>and</u> who is included and not included in the data?
When?	What year or years were the data gathered? Will the data be updated in the future?
How?	The methodology used to create the sample (e.g., survey, weighting, imputation, modeling, what specific question(s) were respondents asked?).
Why?	For what purpose or purposes the data were collected? What historic context should be considered?



Discussion & Reflection

Navigate to the County Health Rankings Model and click on a measure you are interested in. Read the methodology tab and use the table above to evaluate the data source.

Selected Measure:

Who collected the data?	When was it collected?
How was it collected?	Why was it collected?

**Have you ever seen conflicting data points that answer the same question?
If so, were you able to determine why these data were different from each other?**

Data Ethics

Getting the most out of your data also includes considering if you are collecting, analyzing, and sharing your data in an ethical way to minimize bias.



Discussion & Reflection

Everyone brings their own lens to the fact-finding process. Ask yourself these questions as you begin to discover more about the population(s) you're studying. Reflecting on these ideas can help minimize your own bias:

How does your life experience differ from the population(s) you are studying?

Do your life experiences influence how you think about the question you are interested in answering?

Or how you interpret the data you discover?

Consider how discussion around different life experiences within your community can help you understand your question and data interpretation.

Do your data represent community experience?

Data are useful in telling the story of your community. After you have chosen a data source, it's important to assess if the data reflect the experience of the community impacted by the condition you're investigating.



Discussion & Reflection

Visit the County Health Rankings snapshot for a county you're interested in learning more about. The measures underlined in blue have data available by race/ethnicity.

<p>Can you identify any measures for your selected county where the county value masks underlying differences by race/ethnicity?</p>	<p>What differences may exist for these differences by race/ethnicity?</p>
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How Communities Are Using Data

Data have many uses. Residents can find that data can support efforts to transform their community into one that allows everyone to thrive. One of the more common uses of data is to tell a story that can help with engaging residents, representing their experiences, or making cases on their behalf.



Discussion & Reflection

<p>How do your data align with resident experiences?</p>	<p>What are some ways that you can invite residents to be a part of data interpretation?</p>
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