



Vision

"To be a global leader in promoting good corporate governance"

Motto

सत्यं वद। धर्मं चर। इष्टं कुरु। श्रेयं कुरु।

Mission

"To develop high calibre professionals facilitating good corporate governance"

Fieldwork Process: Sampling & Data Collection in Social Impact Assessments (Part-II)

The data collection methods and subsequent analysis are critical components of the social impact assessment process. Below is a structured overview of the various methods for collecting data, ensuring data quality, and analysing and interpreting results.

Data Collection Methods

The social impact assessor should choose appropriate methods for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data:

1. Observation:

- This method involves collecting information through direct observation using an observation checklist, without interacting with respondents.
- It focuses on current happenings and is not influenced by past or future instances, making it independent of the respondents' willingness to respond.

2. Interview Method:

- Interviews can be conducted face-to-face or via telephone, using either structured or unstructured formats:
 - **Structured Interviews:** Involves a predetermined set of questions that the interviewee responds to in a defined order. This method ensures consistency in data collection.
 - **Unstructured Interviews:** Offers flexibility in questioning, allowing the interviewer to adapt questions based on the conversation. Supplementary questions can be added or omitted as needed.

3. Focused Group Discussion (FGD):

- In this method, a selected group of individuals discusses their opinions and experiences related to the social project.
- The discussion is moderated by the social impact assessor or their field team, making it a valuable tool for gathering stakeholder insights and validating quantitative data collected from beneficiaries.

4. Other Data Collection Methods:

- Data can also be collected through online surveys, virtual interviews and satellite imagery for monitoring purposes, such as forestry coverage.

Data Quality Indicators

The social impact assessor should ensure data quality by evaluating the following indicators:

- **Validity:** Ensures that the data collected measures what it is intended to measure.
- **Reliability:** Confirms that data measurements are based on standard methodologies.
- **Completeness:** Ensures that all aspects of the data are captured according to the chosen method.
- **Integrity:** Protects data from bias or manipulation.
- **Timeliness:** Ensures that the data is current and collected promptly.

Data Analysis and Interpreting Results

1. Data Cleaning:

- This process involves checking for duplicate, erroneous, or incomplete data and identifying outliers.
- If data is incorrect, the outcomes may not be reliable, even if they appear correct. The cleaning process may vary depending on the dataset.

2. Data Analysis:

- Data analysis involves collecting, modelling, and analysing data to extract insights that support decision-making.
- It is essential for making informed decisions, reducing costs, and effectively targeting stakeholders.

3. Analysis Methods:

- Data may be analysed using various methods, such as trend analysis and regression analysis, to interpret the data meaningfully.

4. Handling Multiple Entries:

- The social impact assessor should avoid reporting unverifiable information. Duplicate entries should be removed, or multiple counts should be grouped. For example, two beneficiaries from the same family may be counted as one family.

5. Interpreting Results:

- Results should be interpreted in the context of the Theory of Change (TOC), which outlines the linkages from inputs to activities, outputs, outcomes, and ultimately to impact.
- The assessor should study the outcomes and the actual social impact on target segments to identify any gaps and compare actual results with expected outcomes or benchmark data.

6. **Stakeholder Feedback:**

- Capturing stakeholder feedback is crucial for assessing impact, validating findings, and avoiding overclaiming.
- The review process should address key questions, such as:
 - What was the situation before the project, and what would have happened without it?
 - How much did the project contribute to the observed changes compared to pre-project conditions?
 - What unintended impacts (positive or negative) occurred due to the project?

7. **Validation of Findings:**

- The analysis and interpretation of data should be discussed with stakeholders to validate the findings.
- The social impact assessor should compare the actual social impact with the intended impact of the project, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the project's effectiveness.

By following these structured methods for data collection, ensuring data quality, and conducting thorough analysis and interpretation, social impact assessors can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and impact of social projects.

Source: NISM Series XXIII: Social Impact Assessors Certification Examination workbook
