

Data Use Net Survey Summary of Findings

In December 2010, an on-line survey was sent to Data Use Net (DUN) members. The objectives of the survey were:

- 1) To identify the user profile of DUN members
- 2) To assess whether material posted on DUN was relevant and useful to members
- 3) To inform future DUN postings and discussions.

At the time of the survey, 735 individuals were members of DUN. Of those, 19% (n=140) responded to the survey. The respondents reported working in 40 countries around the world, mostly for international NGOs (35%), research/policy/academic institutions (16%), or their national government (11%). The majority of the respondents work in M&E (55%) or research/evaluation (18%).

Fifty-two percent of respondents said that they were “very satisfied with the Data Use Net content,” listing “resources (tools, guidance documents and websites) to facilitate data use” as the most important information they receive from the program; and “announcements about upcoming events and career opportunities” as the least important information they receive. Of those who said that they were somewhat, or not satisfied with the content of DUN, the most common suggestions to improve the topics/subjects addressed, included: diversifying input and moderators; increasing specificity and detail of topics to be more applicable and relevant to “on-the-ground” experiences; and linking relevant WebPages, tools and resources to the subjects being discussed.

Almost 80% of the respondents felt that the number of announcements/updates they receive is “just right” and 70% said that the number of discussions held per year is “just right”. Fifty-eight percent of respondents preferred the current format of the discussions – moderator to peer; not real time interactive. However, feedback to improve the platform/format of the discussions included: enabling more idea sharing and interaction, and starting a chat forum.

For future discussion, respondents suggested a variety of topics. The most popular *themes* included: data management and analysis tools/techniques to facilitate data use - including a review of data collection and analysis software packages; specific, innovative processes to effectively facilitate data utilization and sharing - including those that are appropriate for resource limited settings and community-level programs; data quality issues/challenges and audits and their role in data demand and use; and Health Systems strengthening.

Finally, 80% of respondents reported that they integrate the ideas, tools and guidance that they receive from the COP into their work. Select responses regarding how members have used information from DUN include:

- “The announcements have not only strengthened my knowledge on data use for decision making but also benefited my organization that now we have quarterly data use forums.”
- “The Dashboard discussion gave me perspective on using Excel as a Dashboard tool - am currently working on developing a dashboard with the tips from other participants.”
- “I used the Information on data utilization as the basis to engage district directors to use information at the local level both to improve decision making and also as a catalyst to improve the quality of the data.”
- “The barriers to data use. I used it to address the lack of data use among the sub-grantees that we work with, especially at district and regional levels.”

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- “There was a posting on reports outlining challenges and experiences in translating research findings into action. Those reports helped me initiate dialogue with the M&E department for the MoH in my country early last year. We (including the MOH) planned for a conference aimed at exploring and initiating debate on research findings utilization in my country. It became a bigger thing (embracing other aspects of research) eventually and this happened in Nov 2010!”
- “Data demand and Information use in Health sector publication. I was able to convince my facility based on the regular M&E report that we really have a problem of lost to follow up and the information generated was used as a tool for getting money for tracking of patients.”

For more detailed information from respondents see <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/measure/our-work/data-demand-and-use/dun-survey-responses-names-removed.pdf/view>

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