



Overview of *Count me in! Collecting Human Rights-Based Data*

**Ontario Human Rights
Commission**

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Background

- OHRC interested in data collection since 2003
 - e.g. *Policy and Guidelines on Racism And Racial Discrimination*
- *Count me in!* product of much consultation with representatives from public, private and non-profit sector
 - e.g. school boards, police, government, non-profit organizations, businesses, community groups



Background

- **Why OHRC developed *Count me in!***
 - Meet identified public education need
 - Give guidance to all kinds of organizations
 - Support interest and/or efforts to collect data
 - Demystify collection of human rights-based data
 - Encourage informed dialogue



Table of Contents

- ***Count me in!* talks about:**
 - **Key concepts**
 - **Benefits of collecting human rights-based data**
 - **Common challenges and how to overcome them**



Table of Contents (ctd)

- ***Count me in!*** also talks about:
 - How to collect data in a ***Code-consistent*** way
 - What is involved in collecting data – **“Six Steps to Success”**



Table of Contents(ctd)

- ***Count me in!* features:**
 - **Best practice examples of how diverse organizations have successfully implemented data collection projects**
 - **Examples:**
 - **Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation**
 - **Keewatin-Patricia District School Board**
 - **KPMG Canada**
 - **Maytree & Toronto City Summit Alliance**
 - **Mount Sinai Hospital**
 - **TD Bank Financial Group**
 - **Toronto District School Board**
 - **University of Guelph**



Target Audience

- ***Count me in!* can be a practical resource for:**
 - **ANYONE** who wants to learn more about data collection
 - **ANYONE** who wants to start a data collection project
 - **ANYONE** who wants support to start or continue a data collection project



Target Audience (ctd)

- Examples:
 - trustees, superintendents, principals, vice principals, teachers
 - managers and supervisors
 - human resources professionals
 - human rights and equity advisors
 - unions
 - community groups, parents



Is it legal?

Many people think that collecting and analyzing data that identifies people on Ontario *Human Rights Code* grounds (e.g. race) is not allowed.



Yes it is legal

- Collecting data for a *Code*-consistent purpose is allowed and is supported by Canada's human rights legislative framework
 - e.g. *Code*, s. 15 of *Charter*, *Employment Equity Act*, *Canadian Human Rights Act*



Important Role

- OHRC found that data collection can play useful and often essential role in creating strong human rights and human resources strategies for organizations across sectors.



What is data collection?

- OHRC interprets term “data collection” broadly
- Includes gathering info using:
 - quantitative research methods (e.g. surveys) **AND**
 - qualitative research methods (e.g. focus groups)
- Can collect data on *Code* (e.g. disability) and *non-Code grounds* (e.g. education)



Focus

- *Count me in!* focuses mainly on collecting data in employment and services
- BUT principles and approaches identified can also apply to other social areas where *Code* prohibits discrimination
 - e.g. housing, contracts, and membership in vocational associations (inc: unions)



Why collect data?

- To prevent or address systemic barriers to access and opportunity
- To plan a special program
- To improve equitable service delivery and programs
- To respond to persistent allegations of systemic barriers
- To help recruit and retain a qualified, diverse workforce

Benefits

- Regularly collecting, tracking and reporting data can help organizations to:
 - verify, monitor, measure and address gaps, trends, progress and perceptions
 - e.g. demographic data can tell you who your students and staff are (TDSB; 70% racialized students)
 - e.g. TDSB's Student Census and Parent Survey developed to address academic achievement gap for racialized groups



Benefits (ctd)

- identify opportunities for improvement and growth
 - e.g. if data verifies there is an academic achievement gap, can look at how to address problem and improve educational outcomes for racialized groups



Benefits (ctd)

- improve quality of decision-making, service delivery and programming
 - e.g. KPDSB found with targeted support and programming, Aboriginal students appear to be improving at same rate as non-Aboriginal students, showing Aboriginal students just as capable of achieving
- enhance perceptions of being progressive leaders in their sector or industry



Benefits (ctd)

- gain trust, develop effective, respectful consultations, and secure support of key decision-makers and stakeholders
 - e.g. community consultations, targeted communications strategy and results of data helped KPDSB build trust, respectful working relationships with Aboriginal community



Benefits (ctd)

- reduce exposure to possible legal action and human rights complaints
 - Collecting data can help organizations show they have met duty to protect and uphold human rights



Key Consideration

- Make sure any data collected is:
 - done in a way that follows accepted data collection techniques
 - complies with freedom of information and privacy legislation, and
 - collected for *Code*-consistent purpose:
 - e.g. to identify and remove systemic barriers



Key Challenges

- Some key challenges of collecting human rights-based data:
 - Perceptions of “reverse discrimination”
 - Feelings of anxiety, distrust, concerns re privacy and confidentiality
 - Expensive, highly technical, complex process



Overcoming Challenges

Key to overcoming challenges?

= Effective communications strategy



“Reverse Discrimination”

Perceptions of “reverse discrimination”

- Can overcome by:
 - explaining purpose, goals, method, benefits
 - explaining how process will be transparent, fair
 - consulting with affected communities, stakeholders
 - training



Anxiety, Distrust

Feelings of anxiety, distrust, concerns re: privacy and confidentiality

- Can overcome by:
 - explaining purpose, goals, method, benefits
 - explaining who has access to data and why
 - explaining how info will be handled, stored confidentially
 - compliance with privacy, human rights laws
 - consulting affected communities, stakeholders
 - surveying all employees or service users



Expensive, Complex

Expensive, highly technical, complex process
= Can be

- depends on organization's size, resources, goals, methods used, etc..
- research best practices and possible cost-saving tools (e.g. *Count me in!*, SurveyMonkey, government funding)
- consult other school boards, organizations that have done data collection projects

Code-Consistent Data Collection



- Collect data for a *Code*-consistent purpose
- Inform the public
- Consult affected communities
- Use least intrusive means that most respects dignity and privacy



Code-Consistent Data Collection (ctd)

- Assure anonymity when appropriate
- Distinguish between collection, use and disclosure
- Comply with *Code*, information and privacy laws



Six Steps to Success

- **Step 1:** Identify issues and/or opportunities for collecting data
- **Step 2:** Select issue(s) and/or opportunity(ies) and set goals
- **Step 3:** Plan an approach and methods
- **Step 4:** Collect data
- **Step 5:** Analyze and interpret data
- **Step 6:** Act on results

Step 1: Identify issues, opportunities



- **Step 1: Identify issues and/or opportunities for collecting data**
 - Review policies, practices and procedures
 - Explore organizational culture from human rights, equity and diversity lens
 - Assess external context
 - Check representation



Step 2: Select

- **Step 2: Select issue(s) and/or opportunity(ies) and set goals**
 - **Did review in Step 1 reveal any issues, gaps, trends or opportunities for improvement?**
 - e.g. KPDSB has large, growing Aboriginal student population; concerns re academic achievement gap
 - **If yes, ask questions that will help you choose and prioritize issue(s) and/or opportunity(ies) for collecting data**
 - **If not, collecting data may still be helpful**
 - e.g. to monitor effectiveness of programs, policies



Step 2 (ctd): Set Goals

- Set goal for each issue and opportunity
 - e.g. **Issue**: number and makeup of Aboriginal students?
 - e.g. **Opportunity**: get accurate, reliable data about numbers and makeup

Step 3: Plan

- **Step 3: Plan an approach and methods**
 - Who will the data be collected about?
 - Who will the group of interest be compared to?
 - How should data be collected?
 - What data sources should be used
 - e.g. surveys
 - How long will data be collected?



Step 4: Collect Data

- When planning on how best to collect data, there are practical considerations and best practices to deal with common logistical challenges
 - Get stakeholder and leadership buy-in
 - Identify resources, people, technology needed
 - Identify who will be held accountable; collect data
 - Invest in effective communications strategy



Step 5: Analyze, Interpret

- **Step 5: Analyze and interpret data**
- Can be complex, or less so, depending on methods used and amount of data collected
- Does organization have internal capacity and expertise to analyze and interpret data itself?
- Does organization need help of external consultant?

Step 6: Act on Results

- After analyzing and interpreting results, organization may:
 - decide to act on data
 - collect more information
 - try another approach



Step Six (ctd): Action Plan

- If organization feels it has enough info to develop an action plan, consider including:
 - Summary of results
 - Barriers, gaps and opportunities that may exist
 - Action that will be taken
 - Who input may be sought from (e.g. communities)
 - Short and long-term goals
 - How progress will be monitored and reported



Appendices

- Feature best practice examples of how non-profit, private and public-sector organizations successfully developed and implemented data collection projects, includes lessons learned



Best Practice Examples

- Best practice examples in Appendices include:
 - Keewatin-Patricia District School Board
 - KPMG Canada
 - Maytree & Toronto City Summit Alliance
 - Mount Sinai Hospital
 - TD Bank Financial Group
 - University of Guelph

Best Practice Examples: Content



- Each best practice example talks about:
 - Organization's background
 - Why collected data? Goals?
 - Challenges faced
 - How prepared for project and overcame challenges
 - How data collection project implemented
 - Results
 - How acted on results
 - Best practices & lessons learned



Not one way

- In the end, there is no one or “right way” to do a data collection project

Different Reasons and Ways



- Examples in *Count me in!* show there are different reasons for and ways of collecting data
- BUT also show similarities in terms of best practices and lessons learned



Common Lesson

- You can't monitor or solve what you can't measure!



Key Consideration

- Make sure any data collected is:
 - done in a way that follows accepted data collection techniques
 - complies with freedom of information and privacy legislation, and
 - collected for *Code*-consistent purpose



You can do it

- Collecting human rights-based data can and is being done by all kinds of organizations, including school boards
- Can help and learn from each other



OHRC Website

- OHRC would like to help
- Can download *Count me in!* from www.ohrc.on.ca
- Request free hard copies, USB sticks and CDs
- Can find expanded versions of best practice examples on website



OHRC Website

- Will post resources, tools, more examples
- Please share any data collection tools used for human rights purposes
- OHRC interested in hearing about your experiences and sharing information with others
- Email us at datacollection@ohrc.on.ca