Funding data management and sharing can extend the influence of evaluations and serve as part of a broader commitment to knowledge sharing.

Where has all the Data Gone? A Tool that Can Help Answer that Question

**Motivation...**

Data gathered in evaluation studies is often not available to others who could benefit from it.

Archiving data extends the life and influence of data and... it is central to the vision of ‘Open’ data and data re-use to generate social benefits. A $200 million Prevention and Early Intervention programme on the island of Ireland, funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies, provides the context for this study.

52 evidence-based services were delivered to children and young people. Almost all services were evaluated positively using rigorous evaluations and resulted in significant government buy-in. Additional funding, after the programme ended, ensured the extensive evaluation datasets were archived, accessible and available for future research.

**Objectives of this study**

To explore the obstacles encountered when retrospectively preparing data for the archive.

To identify patterns in the findings that could inform future archiving efforts and the competencies required to ensure data is as ‘open as possible’.

**Where has all the data gone?**

Data governance issues such as access, data quality and metadata are included.

**What we did...**

Analysed challenges and opportunities identified by the evaluators as datasets were prepared for deposit in the national archives.

Used the Data Value Map as an organising frame to figure out when the challenges arose.

**Data management**

Data management plans and subsequent access to data is increasingly required by funders.

Yet the terminology and the topics that should be covered in a plan lack consistency with an emphasis on post-publication data sharing as opposed to all the operations to be carried out on data from the outset.

The Data Value Map is a useful resolve.

It helps to make sense of the components of data management: how data is gathered; stored; analysed and shared and the value the data will bring.

**Key takeaway**

There is significant cost associated with going back to ‘fix’ data for re-use. Data management plans can save time, energy and resources.

Data is an important output of philanthropic investment and this study demonstrates how it’s possible to leverage it and facilitate reuse, additional analyses and broader learning more generally through sharing it.

The Data Value Map is being used to inform data management in a global Covid19 study.

**Key finding**

Many evaluation studies in our analysis didn’t have a data management plan at the beginning and most of the biggest challenges in archiving the data were a result of this.

The visual map brought to light the journey from data creator to data user and the wider life of data.

**What challenges were encountered...**

Sorted the challenges across the research lifecycle.

**Variable definition and naming**

File versions

Missing data

Anonymisation

Consent and ethics

Many challenges occurred when the data was first collected and processed.

Safeguards to ensure confidentiality and other legal and ethical issues are necessary at the design stage if data are to be accessible.