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| Evaluating an Excel worksheet | |
| **Purpose**  What is the worksheet for?  Why was it created?  Reference list, summary report, decision making, field data collection, reports (purpose, frequency), database input, analysis, printing labels …..? |  |
| **Fit for Purpose**  Is the worksheet suitable for its purpose?  Is a worksheet the best software for the purpose? Should it be in a word processor, data base?  Have both the INPUT and the OUTPUT been carefully considered?? Does the worksheet ‘work’ from the point of view of DATA COLLECTION, DATA MANAGEMENT, AND DATA USE? Is the data intended for analysis, calculation, summarising or is it for presentation/ reports? |  |
| **Questions which are able to be answered with the data**  What questions could be answered with this data?  Where are the limitations?  Look back to the PURPOSE of the worksheet and ask if the data is the right data for the purpose, is it in the right format etc? |  |
| **Intended user**  Is the main user the person who created the worksheet or will it be used by others?  This affects a lot of things including the overall style/look of the worksheet? |  |
| **Able to be used by others**  Is it possible for others to easily understand and use the worksheet?  Is it simple?  Comments in the cells, information about who created the worksheet, when, etc, information about its intended use, instructions on how to add data, explain formulae, hidden columns, background information? |  |
| **Flexibility**  Is the data able to be used in different ways?  Is the data broken down appropriately so that the maximum use can be made of the data for sorting or filtering, flexibility in uses including analysis? |  |
| **Clarity**  Is it visually clear and simple? Does the formatting help understanding or make it more difficult? Are there different areas/sheets for data, calculation/analysis and presentation of results?  Have the panes been frozen to allow for easier viewing??  What has been done to help make this worksheet more visually pleasing, easier to look at and use? Are the headings useful and clear, easily understandable? Is there too much free text which should be either in a wordprocessor or written in ‘notes’ attached to cells? |  |
| **Help/Documentation for users**  Is there any information to help users understand the intended use of the data? Are there any commented cells to help advise about data entry requirements? |  |
| **Data breakdown**  Is the data broken down to the smallest size (appropriate in many cases)? Or is it broken down the best way appropriate for the intended use?  Cells with too much data are a sign that there is a problem |  |
| **Ready for analysis**  Is the data clean and ready for use in, say, a Pivot table or for other analysis?  Messy data is USELESS for analysis, pivot charts, formulae, charts, graphs. |  |
| **Good use of worksheets**  Is the data well organised? Has the data been distributed well over worksheets or is it all in one worksheet (sometimes appropriate but for big data sets this can become a problem?  Worksheet design clear with defined input, calculation and output regions |  |
| **Documentation**  Is there good documentation to help understand any formulae/ calculations/ assumptions/ conditions? Are there warnings or advice? |  |
| **Data integrity**  Are there controls in place to ensure that the data entered is correctly formatted (ie dates, text, currency etc)? Are there any other controls such as drop down lists?  All formulae cells in a range within the calculation area to be left to right consistent |  |
| **Problems**  Are there blank rows or columns?  Are any of the cells merged?  Is data centred or formatted unnecessarily?  Do formulae work correctly? Are they correctly referenced?  Hidden columns or rows or even worksheets? |  |
| **Consistency**  Are there multiple versions of the same data in the same column, for example? Eg, Brucella, brucellosis, BRU, bruc…. SELETAN, seletan, Seletan, south, southern  Are there mixed data types in the one cell? Eg Text and number such as Sapi 2, Goats 6. |  |
| **Security**  Are there any password protections? Are any of the fields locked? Has a version numbering system been used when saving the worksheet? Has it been named logically and usefully? |  |
| **Other** |  |