TOES

TOES is a structured debriefing tool to help teams 'storytell' after a day of conducting research.

As team members engage different participants throughout the day, it is important to share the key themes, opportunities, extremes, and surprises, so that all team members can hear a comprehensive overview of participants' experiences and stories. This can lead to reflection on similar or different findings, and spark both ideas and questions around what the researchers are hearing.

For example, if team members conducting interviews in adjacent neighborhoods learn that family members' handwashing behaviors are very different, they may further discuss why, and decide to explore that further in the following day of interviews.

The outputs from the TOES discussion can then be captured in notes and used for two important purposes:
1) Inform changes in approach or focus during the next day(s) of research
2) Capture key insights and opportunities from the day, so that you can return to them later without losing their significance or essence

Alternative names include:
- REST (recommendations, extremes, surprises themes)
- SCDO (surprises, commonalities, differences, opportunities)
- TESS (themes, extremes, surprises, spaces for change)

OBJECTIVE

Structuring a debrief using the "Themes, Opportunities, Extremes, Surprises" tool is a quick way to identify insights after a day of research.

WASH-HCD CONNECTION

After a long day of field research, having a semi-structured way to debrief allows for WASH team members to share key findings and insights learned.

TIMING

Quickly: 30 minutes
In-depth: 2 hours
*depending on how many team members are debriefing together

MATERIALS

- TOES TEMPLATE
- PENS OR PENCILS

TOES

STEPS

1.   *Convene.*

After each research day, gather team members for a structured debrief session.

Ask each team member to spend ten minutes reflecting on the day and writing bullet points for each section- themes, extremes, opportunities, and surprises.

💡Keep everything in a single location (i.e. online or white board) for longer research projects. Use sticky notes to be able to move things between categories and identify overlap.

💡 Tired team? Conduct this debrief on the car-ride back from the field and nominate a note-taker who doesn't get car-sick.

Prompt team members to consider the following as they reflect, write, and share:

A.Themes: things that were commonly expressed by multiple individuals or households (could be behaviors, practices, opinions, values)
B.Opportunities: things that may be considered as possible solutions and things that you need to learn more about
C.Extremes: things that came up rarely, were only expressed by a few individuals or households, may want to investigate further
D.Surprises: things that were unexpected, funny, or interesting. Start with the surprises as this is often what comes up first in discussions.

2.   *Facilitate discussion*

Start the discussion focusing on 'surprises,' allowing team members to share the most interesting, funny, stories first. Then move on to themes, extremes, and opportunities. As you debrief each of these, ensure everyone shares so the team can hear diverse stories, experiences, and reflections.

As each person shares, prompt them with follow up questions such as why, or what evidence do you have to support that, to allow for further exploration of the findings.

TOES - TEMPLATE

WHAT ARE SOME RECURRING **THEMES?**

T

WHAT **OPPORTUNITIES** DO YOU SEE?

O

WHAT ARE THE **EXTREME** ANSWERS?

E

WHAT **SURPRISED** YOU TODAY?

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