

Mobile Data Collection (MDC) involves moving traditional paper-based surveys onto mobile devices. **ODK Collect** is the tool that is most frequently used for this purpose.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE ?

Many types of surveys associated with development or humanitarian projects can be carried out with a mobile device. For example surveys on needs assessment; activity monitoring and evaluation; knowledge attitudes and practices; post-distribution; post-harvest; nutrition; water-point use; beneficiary feedback and dozens of other subjects.



- Drastic improvements in data quality if the tools are well-designed
- Almost real-time access to data
- Cheaper in the long term (no double entry)
- A single tool can take photos, GPS points, sounds, videos, barcodes, signatures, etc.
- Multilingual data input



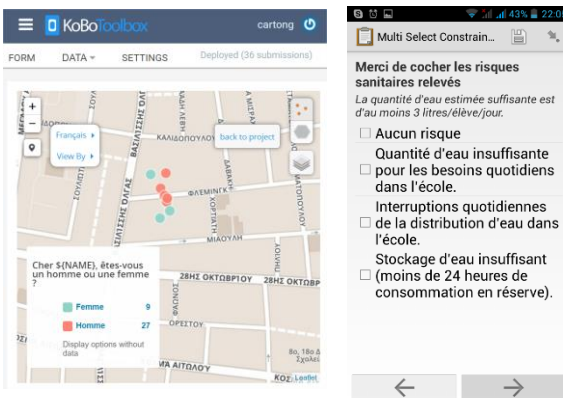
- Requires extra training
- Longer preparation time
- Hardware is fragile and expensive to buy
- Requires a power source
- Risk of loss/theft
- Not acceptable in certain contexts

Prerequisites

- Use smartphones or tablets - see the *Methods* sheet « *Choosing your mobile device* » for specific advice on collecting data with a mobile device
- Install ODK Collect using the app store (e.g. « Google Play Store »)
- Make sure the survey manager has a computer with a stable internet connection



HOW TO DO IT?



1. Design your questionnaire on paper
2. Create an account with the free "[Kobo Toolbox](#)" tool , start a new project and design your survey with the online tools (it is possible to put limits on question responses and to control the question routing to improve the quality of results)
3. Deploy your mobile survey and test it thoroughly, using a pilot site to test it under real conditions. Where necessary, update the content of the survey.
4. Start data collection and make the most of the real-time results that it provides.



If you need extra help designing your survey, you can draw on the Acaps document « Questionnaire Design for Needs Assessments » (accessible [here](#)) and sections about mobiles on the [CartONG blog posts](#).



Cost of the skills training and/or the support (where necessary)



A few hours or days depending on the complexity of the survey and the people who need training