

# Elements of High-Quality Data

What do we mean when we talk about high-quality data? What defines such data and separates them from lower-quality data? High-quality data are built on essential elements that address how best to collect, report, analyze, and use data, thus ensuring data can be confidently relied on as credible for decision-making. Use these elements to think about your own data and what you might do to improve them.



**Accurate:** Data are free of errors, unbiased, precise, and authentically reflect the real world.



**Complete:** All necessary data are present to fairly represent and address the issues and populations of interest.



**Consistent:** Comparable data sources align and are free of contradictions or irregularities across datasets and time periods.



**Relevant:** Data are important for the context in which they are used and provide significant value for decision-making.



**Secure:** Access to the data is restricted to maintain privacy consistent with the sensitivity of the data.



**Timely:** Data are collected and reported within specified timeframes, are up to date, and are available when needed.



**Usable:** Data are readily available, clearly described, accessible, and easy for all pertinent audiences to comprehend and use.

