

Introducing the ACQTool

What is the ACQTool?

The Abortion Care Quality Tool (ACQTool) is a unique set of indicators that allow users to assess the quality of abortion services. The indicators are collected via in-person or phone-based client exit interviews, from abortion clients receiving services from facility-based providers, pharmacies, hotline, or other service providers.

ACQTool survey questions are available in paper form and electronically, and all surveys are available for download in both PDF and Excel formats. Survey questions can be administered alone or integrated into organizations' existing data collection platforms. Indicator calculation and data analysis of survey responses can then be performed using our Stata statistical software code.

The ACQTool is also available as an XLSForm, which can be uploaded and deployed in your KoBoToolbox account. Survey responses are captured using KoBoToolbox's platform, which allows for both online and offline data collection. Collected data can then be downloaded and site-level indicators can be calculated and visualized using our custom Excel performance dashboard.

The maximum of 29 indicators can be used routinely to assess all types of providers, making the ACQTool the first ever global standard for measuring the quality of abortion care in low- and middle-income countries.

What value does it create for our clients?

Measurement of abortion service quality is essential to ensuring safe and ethical care, as well as to improving those services. But previously, measurement of abortion care quality was unstandardized, lacked client perspective, and could be expensive or otherwise impractical for those with the greatest need to measure abortion care quality – including individual projects or service delivery points.

The ACQTool overcomes these challenges, so it enables abortion service providers, donors, governments, and all other stakeholders to use tested, comparable indicators to assess quality of care. Through this use of well researched and comparable indicators, the tool provides evidence for policy, decision-making, funding, training, and capacity building, and change management initiatives. It also provides verifiable, comparable means of assessing different providers or innovations, and for assessing the same service delivery points over time.

Why should clients trust the ACQTool?

The ACQTool is the result of the 4-year Abortion Service Quality Initiative (ASQ Initiative), led by researchers at Metrics for Management, Ibis Reproductive Health, and Ipas, which collected and collated existing tools in use by NGOs, clinics, and ministries, across 80 countries. The team aimed to identify common indicators and determine which were most strongly associated with abortion service quality. This process started by identifying nearly 2,000 unique indicators currently in use. To ensure that the resulting indicators and the final assessment tool appropriately addressed abortion clients' concerns and values for quality of care, they incorporated 39 new indicators developed using data from interviews and focus groups with clients from Argentina, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Nigeria, who had received abortion care. Throughout the development of the tool, ASQ Initiative researchers collaborated with a reference group of reproductive health experts from around the world to inform the development of a reduced, universally effective set of person-centered indicators, and technical and safety indicators that can be used in facilities, pharmacies, or abortion hotlines.

How do people access the ACQTool?

It is available online and is free to use. The comprehensive website provides access to the surveys, indicators, instructions, and much more information.

Access the ACQTool [here](https://acqtool.org).