

Section 5: Archiving

Archiving your STEPS Materials

Introduction Once the survey is completed and before the team is disbanded, all records need to be properly stored in order to prevent loss.

Policies and systems Most governments and large organisations will have their own established archival systems, in which case their facilities are likely to be your best long-term storage option. Investigate storing your data at:

- Ministry of Health
 - WHO country office
 - WHO regional office.
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Archival period Decide on the archival period. The duration may have been specified by your ethics authority. If not, consider twelve years.

This is long enough for data to be available for further STEPS surveys, and long enough to investigate query from the results.

Checklist Use the checklist below to help ensure all necessary steps have been completed.

Step	Action	✓
1	Decide on the duration of storage.	
2	Box up all: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• instruments• manuals• interviewing materials• printed versions of all files.	
3	Label all the boxes clearly with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• name and date of the project;• box contents;• names and contact details of site coordinator and one other member of the coordinating committee.	
5	Determine who is entitled to have access to the archive.	
6	Place a copy of the form to apply for access in each box.	
7	Provide copies of electronic files (without personal identifiers) to WHO Geneva STEPS team.	
3	Inform all interested parties where the information is stored.	

Note: Make sure that participant identification information is never stored in the same location (electronically and in paper form) with the rest of the dataset.
