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What's Ketso? A Tool for Researchers, Educators, and Practitioners

James S. Bates

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Researchers, educators, and practitioners utilize a range of tools and techniques to obtain data, input, feedback, and information from research participants, program learners, and stakeholders. *Ketso* is both an array of information gathering techniques and a toolkit (see www.ketso.com). It “can be used in any situation when people come together to share information, learn from each other, make decisions and plan actions” (Tippett & How, 2011, p. 4). The word *ketso* means “action” in the Sesotho language, spoken in the African nation of Lesotho where the concept for this instrument was conceived. Ketso techniques fall into the *participatory action research* family of social science research methods (Tippett, Handley, & Ravetz, 2007). Ohio State University Extension professionals have used the Ketso toolkit and its techniques in numerous settings, including for professional development, conducting community needs/interests assessments, brainstorming, and data collection. As a toolkit, Ketso uses tactile and colorful leaves, branches, and icons to organize and display participants’ contributions on felt mats. As an array of techniques, Ketso is effective in engaging audiences because it is inclusive and provides each participant a platform for their perspective to be shared.

References

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- Tippett, J., & How, F. (2011). *Ketso guide*. Manchester, UK: Ketso.

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