Box 3. Criteria for a question answerable by public health triangulation

Public health importance	Is the question being asked of sufficient public health importance to justify the investment of human resources and funding? [e.g., should a question regarding the impact of rare injection drug use in an African country be pursued or one focused on much more prevalent alcohol use?]
Actionable	Will answering the question being asked lead to the initiation of a public health action? Will the risk factors we identify be modifiable and amendable to public health interventions?
Data availability	Are there data available that have asked the right questions and provide answers on the different steps in the sequence of events that leads to a public health outcome?
Appropriateness	Can the question be answered with conventional research methods or with a single available data set? Is a proposed intervention sufficiently new and unique that it should be evaluated by a different methodology?
Feasibility	Are there sufficient human resources and funding available to gather and analyze the data? Unless sufficient resources are available, searching for data and conducting the multiple levels of analysis needed for triangulation may be inadequate.