PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH METHODS FOR VARIETAL SELECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF SORGHUM/MILLET PRODUCTION

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES: open evaluation—qualitative data

Context: to be used when the researcher is not familiar with the opinions of the farmers in regard to a certain technology and wishes to explore the opinions and experiences of the farmers in connection with such technologies. Procedure:

1. Planning:
   - Define the objective of the evaluation: which type of information, with which technology, with which type of key personnel/resource persons (farmers, cattle rearer/stock breeder, children, processors etc)
   - Choose the resource person to be interviewed
   - When and where will the evaluation take place?
   - Inform and involve partners well in advance, create confidence

2. Opening phase:
   - Greetings
   - Present the objective
   - Establish the neutrality of the researcher/technician/interviewer: the farmer is free to make positive or negative comments
   - Clarify expectations: how will the data be used?
   - Explain the procedure, the “rules”
   - Explain the functions of each person in the group
   - Invite the farmers to ask questions

3. Dialogue/interview phase at the evaluation site:
   - Verify that objectives and procedure have been correctly understood
   - Record the name and other basic information of the farmer
   - Conduct an open evaluation with open questions and opinion polling that encourages the farmer to express his opinions and ideas; take note of the exact words and expressions that the farmer uses, ideally in the local language
   - It is possible to ask direct questions to facilitate comprehension
   - Note observations on the interview separately

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open questions:</th>
<th>Probing Questions:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you think of this variety?</td>
<td>To understand more clearly what the farmer has said and for clarifying the translation of certain terms:</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do you rate this trial?</td>
<td>What do you think of this colour?</td>
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<td>What else could you tell me about this plot?</td>
<td>What does the term “short cycle” mean to you?</td>
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<td>What have you observed?</td>
<td>Why do you believe that this is good or useful?</td>
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<td>What is your experience with that?</td>
<td>Have I understood this correctly?</td>
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<td>Could you give me a few reasons for that?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Could you help me understand that better?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have any other views about this?</td>
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</table>
4. Final phase:
   - Revise notes and comments with the farmers
   - Verify the acquired information by summarising it with the farmers
   - Agree with all partners on future/ follow-up activities
   - Express gratitude
   - Assign a code identifier to each interview