

# Activities and Considerations in Conducting FGDs and KIIs (Qualitative Study)

ISDN4AHD

Adolescent Health and Development  
Learning Tool No. 18-03

## Guidebook

- i. **Identify respondents and number of FGDs or KIIs.** Based on the identified information gaps, identify the type of respondents who could provide the needed information. In identifying the type of respondents and the number of FGDs and KIIs needed, consider the homogeneity or sameness of the relevant characteristics of the participants and the saturation of the responses to more completely understand the issue or the information needed. When the final FGDs or KIIs do not reveal new insights or ideas anymore, saturation has been reached. It is also important to consider the number of the respondents in an FGD. On average, six to 12 people participate in each FGD because fewer than six participants produce less than a critical mass of discussion and interaction; groups larger than eight to 10 people can be hard to manage and it can be difficult to give everyone a chance to voice their opinions.
- ii. **Develop guide questions.** After identifying the types of the respondents, start drafting a list of questions that match the research objectives and the identified respondents. Review the purpose and objectives of the study and the information needed after finalizing the questions. The list of questions may be narrowed to the ones that are most relevant and important for the research, ideally seven to 10 questions, with the consideration that each question will be followed by additional probing questions. Some probing questions may also be crafted to validate and deepen the understanding of the research team on the underlying causes of the issue or behavior being discussed. The FGDs or KIIs should not be overloaded with too many questions.

An FGD will generally last for one to two hours and an in-depth interview is usually shorter. The goal of qualitative research is to go deep into a few key ideas, not to cover a lot of topics superficially. Good FGD questions are those that are open-ended (i.e., they cannot be answered simply by “yes” or “no”) or those that invite ideas and stimulate conversation. Questions should not be biased and do not have language that might encourage participants to answer in a specific manner.

Once focus questions are refined and finalized, arrange them in such a way that it begins from the more general to the specific and in a way that will be comfortable for the participants. The first one or two questions should be simple introductory or warm-up questions that put the respondents at ease, help establish rapport between them and the interviewer, and lead into the more serious questions.

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- iii. **Select or assign facilitators and interviewers.** From among the members of the research team, select or assign facilitators and interviewers for specific types of respondents. Assign an additional person who can take notes on the discussion so the facilitator is free to moderate the discussion.
- iv. **Develop a script.** In addition to the focus questions, formulate a script to ensure standard messages from the opening to the closing parts of the FGDs or KIIs. The script may contain an opening statement which provides the introduction of the participants; explanation of the background and objectives of the FGDs or KIIs; securing the consent from the respondents for sharing and recording of the information from them; assuring confidentiality of the information to be generated; and laying of certain ground rules in the conduct of the FGD. The script may also contain a closing statement to summarize some general themes and insight that came out of the conversation and for the final words of the participants. *(Please see Annex A for sample FGD and KII Guide).*
- v. **Select a conducive place or venue for the FGD.** Before proceeding with the FGDs and KIIs, ensure that a conducive place is selected for the FGDs and KIIs. The venue should be accessible to the respondents; ensures privacy and confidentiality of the discussions; and ensures comfort or is facilitative to open discussion, large enough for the number of participants, and free from internal and external distractions.
- vi. **Conduct the FGDs and KIIs.** After all necessary arrangements are coordinated with respondents and other partners, conduct the FGDs and KIIs as scheduled. Consider the following in the conduct of the FGDs and KIIs:
  - a) Open the FGDs and KIIs by welcoming and introducing the facilitators and respondents. Explain the purpose of the activity and ensure them of the confidentiality of information to be gathered. Ask for their consent to the recording of the discussion.
  - b) Effective facilitation and interviewing should be able to create personal rapport and trust that will enable the participant to honestly share his/her opinions and feelings.
  - c) Both facilitators and interviewers should be able to effectively keep the discussion on track and ensure that every participant is able to voice out his/her opinions or ideas about the question.
  - d) Facilitators should be open-minded, flexible, patient, observant and good listeners and ensure that they do not lead or influence the conversation. They need to be able to capture and follow on trends in the conversation and use active and reflective listening. They should also internalize the subject and objectives of the FGD or KII so that he or she can help keep the conversation centered on the purpose and needs of the study.
  - e) The documenter should be able to note all important inputs from the respondents. Record the entire conversation with an audio or digital recorder.
  - f) Close the FGD and KII by thanking the respondents for their participation and reassuring them that the information gathered will be used only for the purpose of the study.

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- vii. Transcribe the discussions and interviews.** Once the FGD or KII is finished, write down any impressions or observations made during the discussion or interview that might help the analysis. This might include messages from the non-verbal gestures of the respondents. The audiotape of the discussions should be carefully transcribed and, if needed, translated. The more immediate an FGD or In-depth Interview (IDI) is transcribed, the more accurate the transcription is.
  
- viii. Analyze the information gathered through FGDs and KIIs.** Results of the FGDs and KIIs should be analyzed and coded for common themes and messages in relation to the purpose and objectives of the study. These findings should be put into a report that details the methods of the study, the key results and findings of the discussions and/or interviews, and the resulting implications as they relate to the design of the health campaign or program.