

Determining the size/number of FGDs, and conducting a cost-effective and scientifically sound exercise: a draft of suggestions

We already have a methodology for additional primary data for our situational report (thanks to Dr. Josephine Malonza and Dr. Benjamin Champion). For uniformity and scientifically sound method, there was need to guide the team on the size and number of the FGDs and the group for participatory mapping (PM) exercise. From the team's meeting on 11th August 2022, it was agreed that the identified groups of city residents will answer the FGD and the work on the mapping exercise. This will save on time, logistics and costs. From our budget, the activity is allocated 920 USD for each city. This is very small budget though. Therefore, we can realize a scientific sound exercise and optimize the utilization of the funds by doing the following:

- 1) PIs are advised to conduct a minimum of 5 FGDs (*see Krueger 2002 below*) and use a mixed group of men and women over the age of 20-65 years, who have lived in the city for a minimum of 5 years.

Justification: the mixed age groups will help capture different viewpoints on the presented city issues. Since we are focusing on city problems, it is assumed the groups are homogenous and 5 years is long enough to distinguish some change in the city (cities in developing country change very quickly).

- 2) Code the participants corresponding to gender and age (help explain different views based on gender & age in the analysis)
- 3) Have an assistant to record responses (prepare him/her in advance by going through the questions)
- 4) Have audial recording & shooting of photos of the ongoing FGDs and PM (you need an assistant)
- 5) Have a signed concept from participant that they allowed audial recording (ethical considerations)
- 6) Each FGD to comprise of 5-8 persons of common/lay citizens
- 7) Allocate 1-1.5hrs per FGD, 2 hours for the PM

Logic: if the exercise kicks off at 9am, by 1.30pm all will be done, hence dismiss the group. No logistics for lunch and no payment of meeting hall. You can even plan to meet in a secure open public space e.g. classroom in a school, church social hall etc.

- 8) For PM, it would be good to consider the digital literacy of the participant, availability of digital equipment before deciding to use either a digital or hardcopy map.

Logic: It helps to fully harness spatial information from the participants with little or no misunderstanding, and at minimal costs

- 9) Each PI can decide what participants will receive as transport refund and lunch

Logic: Costs differ from one city to another

Question formulation for the FGD

FGD aim for questions that will give elaborated answers. Questions like “Do customers like green or pink cabbage?” is not appropriate for FGD. Instead, you can frame the same question as “How

do preferences based on the colour of cabbage vary among customers?”. The latter question may reveal more colours of cabbages consumed by customers.

For the UComNetSus activity, the focus is on the 5 thematic areas; waste, public spaces, water & sanitation, pollution and energy supply. The themes are also connected to the social, economic and ecological challenges facing the city. The questions should be organized in to:

- 1) Opening questions (2-3 Qs that are more general) e.g. How do people like this part of the city? What is so interesting in this part of the city?
- 2) Main questions (2-3 Qs focused on the topic) e.g.
 - a) You have mentioned about drinking water, what are the problems that are connected to the supply of drinking water in this part of the city? *Probing questions:* How do the water problems compare to those experienced in the neighbouring residential estates? What do you think are the main health and sanitation challenges linked to water scarcity/shortage in the area? We know there are different sources of drinking water, what could be your advise to diversify sources of drinking water?
 - b) I know you have been living in the city for some time, how would you describe the solid waste problem? *Probing question:* How is the problem changing over time? Which initiatives in the area are addressing the waste problem?
- 3) Closing questions (1-2 Qs on way forward) e.g. How would you describe a dream city? *Probing questions:* In that dream city, who are the key stakeholders and why? If you as residents are a stakeholder, which duties and responsibilities would you be charged with to make the dream city a reality.

HINT: You can have a few questions to ignite the discussion, from which you sustain a tactical conversation that integrates issues of concern, but only in reference to the responses obtained.

Excerpts from literature on FGDs

*“Do not use a statistical formula to determine sample size. Instead, use the concepts of redundancy or theoretical saturation, in which the researcher continues interviewing until no new insights are presented. In effect, the researcher will have exhausted the range of views on the topic, and continuing the interviews would only yield more of what the researcher already knows. Theoretical saturation tends to occur regularly in focus group research after three or four groups with one audience. For example, suppose a researcher were doing a study in a country with several larger urban areas and a sizable rural population and wanted views that reflected the entire country. He or she might decide to **conduct three or four focus groups in the cities and three or four in the rural areas.** If the country had a multilingual and multiethnic population, the researcher likely would want to conduct three or four groups for each language and each ethnicity in both the urban and rural areas. Clearly, the number of focus groups needed can multiply quickly, and the budget and timeline will force the researcher to restrict the size of the study”.*

Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2002). *Designing and conducting focus group interviews* (Vol. 18).

“Both interviews and focus-group data provide qualitative data, which should be recorded, transcribed and analysed, usually by searching for themes that occur across interviews. Deciding how many interviews to conduct should depend on the point at which you expect to reach theoretical saturation when you come to conduct the thematic analysis (Strauss & Corwin, 1990); that is, when you expect a new interview to reveal no new themes. Depending on the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation, theoretical saturation is normally reached **after 10–12 interviews.**”

Breen, R. L. (2006). A practical guide to focus-group research. *Journal of geography in higher education*, 30(3), 463-475.

“The research question and research design ultimately guide how the focus group is constructed. Well-designed focus groups usually last **between 1 and 2** hours and consist of between **6 and 12 participants.**”

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Dickinson, W. B., Leech, N. L., & Zoran, A. G. (2009). A qualitative framework for collecting and analyzing data in focus group research. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 8(3), 1-21.

Participatory mapping [Refer to the attached main methodology Pg. 4]