***PRACTICAL GUIDELINES: open-ended evaluation – qualitative data***

**Context**: to be used when the researcher/NGO staff/development agent is not familiar with the opinions of the farmers about a certain technology and wishes to explore the opinions and experiences of the farmers.

**1. Planning:**

* Define the objective of the evaluation: which type of information, with which technology, with which type of key personnel/resource persons (farmers, livestock keepers, children, processors,)
* Choose the resource persons 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; note of the exact words and expressions the farmer uses, best in the local language
* It is possible to ask direct questions to facilitate comprehension
* Note your own observations on the interview separately

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Open questions:**  *What do you think of this variety?*  *How do you rate this trial?*  *What else could you tell me about this plot?*  *What have you observed?*  *What is your experience with that?*  *Could you give me a few reasons for that?*  *Could you help me understand that better?*  *Do you have any other views about this?* | **Probing Questions:**  To understand more clearly what the farmer has said and for clarifying the translation of certain terms:  *What do you think of this colour?*  *What does the term “short cycle” mean to you?*  *Why do you believe that this is good or useful?*  *Have I understood this correctly?* |

**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