

## **FACT SHEET**

**Key Informants** – Define – Individuals possessing special skills, knowledge, position, or ability particular to the survey on research being done

### **Why Use Key Informants (KI)?**

1. Efficiency – KI have a direct route to information
2. Access – KI hold specific positions to be able to glean vital information (usually first-hand information)
3. Significance – KI have vital important specific information or interpretation of information
4. Costs – KI interviews are inexpensive and simple to conduct

### **Steps in Conducting the Interviews**

1. Formulate questions – specific to information being sought but still allow free discussion. You might list questions in key areas with some subtopics listed under each question for possible follow-up.
2. Study in order to have some knowledge to make you an informed interviewer.
3. Select key informants – identify all the major stakeholders and select those to interview who would insure you capture divergent interests and perceptions. KI may suggest other people who be interviewed.
4. Conduct the interview (appointments recommended)
  - Establish rapport – explain your purpose and intended use of the information, address confidentiality
  - Sequence questions – start with factual information and then move to opinion. Begin with the present and move to the future.
  - Elicit information – Ask open-ended question to avoid “yes” or “no” answer. Probe for more information as necessary.
  - Maintain a neutral attitude – minimize translation, let them explain their own observations, ask clarifying questions.
  - Take adequate notes – develop them in detail soon after the session.
  - Analyze interview data – reduce information to manageable themes. Themes could be categorized for presentation to others.
  - Check for reliability and validity – take a second look at the KI list to assess reliability and to check for interviewer or interviewee bias. You may check back with KI’s on your findings or invite all of them to a meeting to present your findings and ask for their feedback.

These tips are drawn from *Conducting Key Informant Interviews in Developing Countries*, by Krishna Kumar (AID Program Design and Evaluation Methodology Report No. 13. December 1986.). <http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/conducting-key-informant-interviews-kumar.pdf>

