



# Content Testing Guidelines

February 2017



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# Content Testing

## Objective

Assess content against qualities of actionability, clarity, geographical relevance, timeliness and usefulness by running onsite one-to-one interviews and focus group sessions with farmers using voice content messages as test material.

## Resources / Materials

- A fully charged smartphone
- Voice messages copied on smartphone
- Notebooks and pens
- Printed activity schedule and itinerary that includes farmers names and other relevant data e.g. crops they cultivate, meeting times and addresses, contact numbers
- Voice recorder or mobile phone with sound recording functionality
- Camera or mobile phone with camera
- Translated and printed interview guide
- Translated and printed crop cycle stages (one per page)
- Fully charged laptop(s)+charger(s) (for debrief and synthesis after the interviews)

## Research techniques

- One-to-one interviews
- Focus group sessions

## Resourcing

- 1 interview moderator (local language speaker)
- 2 assistant moderators/note takers (local language speakers)
- An agronomy expert (local language speaker)

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## Activities

### Recruiting participants for content testing

#### 10 days to 1 week before the activity

Organiser to recruit farmers who are willing to participate in the activity. These ought to be farmers with experience in growing the crop(s) for which the activity takes place rather than farmers who are looking to cultivate the crop for the first time in the future. So, if testing maize content's quality, genuine maize farmers need to be recruited. For content testing, aim to select crops that are seasonal at the time of the activity.

When recruiting farmers, give an estimate of the length of the one-to-one interview or focus group session. If women are also involved in the cultivation of the crop, aim to also include women taking into account cultural sensitivities.

#### 2 days before the activity

Organiser to call farmers to confirm meetings and meeting details.

#### On the day of the activity

Have a plan B i.e. appoint people who can assist with last minute recruitment of additional farmers. Be prepared to shift meetings in the agenda.

### Selecting interview locations

Content testing should run in multiple locations that reflect the variety of agro-climatic conditions at which the crop is cultivated. Aim for a minimum of five one-to-one interviews and one focus group session per location with each focus group comprising not more than five participants.

Consider local weather conditions on the day of the activity and how these can impact accessibility to content testing locations (e.g. flooded, inaccessible roads due to torrential rain) and access to farmers (e.g. farmers may be off work due to particularly high temperatures). Consider local festivals and other events which could impact the activity. Consider running content testing on site i.e. in the field.

### Creating itinerary

Following confirmation of all farmer meetings two days before the activity, finalise the agenda and create the itinerary. Factor in time for travel, lunch, snacks.

### Interview recording

Use a voice recorder or mobile phone with sound recording functionality to record the discussions and create transcripts of the most compelling views.

Voice recordings allow you to track not only words but also verbal expressions which may be an alternative way for a farmer to express approval or disapproval of a content message.



## **Taking photographs**

Bring a camera or phone and take photos of farmers, crops, fields, facilities, tools etc. Ask for permissions first!

### **Tips:**

- Avoid leading questions that make farmers feel they should respond “yes” or “no” to. For example, “Do you like this message” is a leading question as it pushes farmers to say yes. Instead you could ask a more open question such as “What do you think of this message” which forces farmers to respond in more detail.
- Debrief immediately after each focus group session
- Offer incentives to focus group participants after the session

## **Feedback synthesis & updating of content**

Once back at the office and following completion of all activities, run synthesis of insights and identification of common themes, create actions and assign owners.

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## Interview Agenda

All text in *italic* is notes to the interview moderator unless it is otherwise stated.

Text within speech marks refers to interview questions.

*Remind note takers to take notes during the activity!*

### **Introduce yourselves, the service and scope of the one-to-one interview/focus group session (~5 min)**

“Hi, my name is XXX and I work for XXX. Today, we are looking to receive feedback on content for crop(s) XXX.”

“We really appreciate all your honest feedback and comments.”

### **Housekeeping (~5 min)**

- **Others in the group**

“As you see, I have several colleagues with me today. They are here to take detailed notes and offer support so that I can focus on our conversation.”

*Ask colleagues to introduce themselves and introduce non-native speakers*

- **Recording & consent**

“We would like to record our discussion today, on audio (and/or video), and capture certain moments with a camera. This is merely to ensure that we capture your thoughts and opinions accurately and I can assure you that neither your name nor your photo will ever be used publicly unless you agree to that. We can show you the photos at the end and, if there is any photo that you don't like, we can remove it. Are you happy with this?”

- **Time**

“How much time do you have today to talk to us? This is going to last for XXX, are you good with that?”

## Warm up (~5 min)

*Aim of this stage is to establish rapport and build some credibility*

“Could you tell us about you?”

“When did you start farming?”

“How big is your farm?”

“What crops are you growing at this time of the year?”

“What crops are you growing at other times?”

“Do you grow these crops for own consumption or to sell?”

“What is the single most important issue you face with crop XXX?” (*Crop XXX is the crop farmer says he is growing*)

“Do you have a phone? Can you show it to me? Who else uses this phone?” (*Some families share one phone. Note down the handset model*)

“What farming advice services are you aware of?”

*At this point, interview moderator briefly explains to farmer the objective of the interview.*

## Clarity


### Exercise description

- Is content presented in a clear manner?
- Is information on pest and disease symptoms and morphology easy to understand and reflecting reality?

**As part of this exercise, test farmer’s knowledge of measurement units and scientific language/technical terms (humidity, temperature, pH, salinity etc.)!**

“Here I have a number of messages for crop XXX.”

“Could you describe in your own words what this advice means? Do you agree?”



*Play voice messages.*

*Ask farmers if they prefer empirical ways to measure temperature, humidity, distance etc.*

## **Timeliness**

### **Exercise description**

- Does content release follow the crop calendar?
- Is content farmers are getting relevant to their activities at that particular point in time?

**Align sheets with crop cycle stages in chronological order. Play voice messages and ask farmers to say which crop cycle stages they believe these messages relate to. If farmers are unsure which crop cycle stage a message relates to, make a note.**

“Here I have the sequence of crop cycle stages for crop XXX.”

“And here I have a number of voice messages for crop XXX.”

“I will play each of these messages and I want you to tell me which crop cycle stage you think each of these messages relates to.”

*Play voice messages.*

*Probe farmers on the selection of crop cycle stage.*



## Geographical relevance

### Exercise description

- Is agricultural advice relevant to farmer's specific location?
- Would farmers recommend this advice to someone in their own community?

**Play voice messages and ask farmers whether they would recommend this advice to someone in their own community or somewhere else in their province/country? Why? Keep track of feedback by message by farmer.**

"Here I have a number of messages for crop XXX."

"How does this message relate to how you farm crop XXX in your area?"

"Would you recommend these messages to some other farmer in your community and why?"

"Would you recommend these messages to some other farmer in some other region of the country and why?"

*Play voice messages.*

*Probe farmers' answers.*

## Actionability

### Exercise description

- Do farmers have the resources (money, equipment, knowledge) to act on the advice?
- Is information on pest and disease management enough for farmers to act on?

"Here I have a number of messages for crop XXX."

"What might be some of the challenges that prevent you from acting on this advice?"

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*For pests and diseases management:*

“What other information might you need to act on the advice?”

*or if farmer responds negatively to previous question*

“What other information do you wish you could have had?”

## **Usefulness**

### **Exercise description**

- Do farmers think they are getting content that is new to them?
- Is content useful to the farmer?

“Here I have a number of messages for crop XXX.”

“Did you know about this advice before?”

*If farmer responds positively, then ask:*

“How did you learn about it?”

*If farmer responds negatively, then ask:*

“What new knowledge have you gained from this message?”

“How does this information help you farm better?”

“What other information would you like to see about this crop?”

### **Final questions**

“What else would you like to hear about?”

“What are the topics you are most interested in?”

“Name two other crops you want to get content about”



**Give incentives/small gifts**

*This interview agenda was created with voice messages in mind.*



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