

# Welcome to the training

## "Qualitative survey methods applied to natural resource management"

---

The approach proposed in this e-training is applied to surveys in rural areas but can be transferred easily to other fields once you are equipped with a theoretical support for the field in question.

The training consists of four modules:

- A. Constructing the PROblem statement (code: PRO)
- B. CHOosing the survey method and preparing the semi-structured interview (code: CHOI)
- C. CONDucting a semi-structured interview (code: COND)
- D. Processing and interpreting data (code:DO)

## CONTEXT

In standard curriculum offered to **future natural resource managers**, certain modules cover management methods for rural areas and biodiversity, implemented in partnership with the populations with a stake in the territories harboring this biodiversity, but few modules address qualitative survey methods enabling one to establish a dialogue with these populations, and to come to understand their knowledge, perceptions, and strategies concerning their territory. Surveys are required if one is to draw from local knowledge, perceptions and strategies.

When survey training is proposed, it often concerns survey methods with closed questionnaires and statistical data processing. This tool, while useful in certain situations, is not adapted to professional situations in which environment managers do not know the practices, perspectives, or strategies of stakeholders in an area and thus find themselves in a position where they need to discover the social context in which they must work.

Our training aims to give **rigorous methodological tools** - the use of which is sharply different from a random accumulation of informal discussions creating the illusion of knowledge about stakeholders in a territory -- that complement survey methods using closed questionnaires, pre-established response codes, and the statistical processing of outputs.

The **semi-structured interview** is one of the principal qualitative methods proposed in the social sciences. It relies on only a few, open-ended questions that allow the people interviewed to develop their responses. It is used in all fields when one wishes to collect testimonies, opinions and thoughts about practices, knowledge, social perceptions, and strategies of stakeholders (for example, before a closed questionnaire survey).

In a first step, those conducting the survey must define different themes according to the topic of the study or research. The semi-structured interview is conducted with the help of an interview guide, and it requires very precise know-how and interpersonal skills which will enable the collection of structured qualitative data, as well as their processing, analysis, and interpretation.

## PEDAGOGIC APPROACH

In this training, the teaching approach is active: you are sometimes led to question yourself and to analyze survey situations (through discovery and application exercises) before proceeding to the theoretical section.

Several sessions offer an inductive approach: working from examples, you gradually build up your knowledge by conducting critical analyses.

Some lessons draw from case studies, the descriptions of which are provided.

Lastly, the teaching materials are varied in nature: texts, videos, on-line self-assessment.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the four modules are:

**Construct the problem statement (PRO):** Know how to analyse a commission and move from the commission to the problem statement:

- Analyze and reformulate a study commission
- Construct a problem statement: define the research questions and response hypotheses, identify the variables to be informed
- Establish a conceptual framework that will be used throughout the survey and during the interpretation of the data
- Launch a process that promotes the rigor that is critical to a scientific approach

**Choose the method and prepare the semi-structured interview (CHOI):** Know how to choose, coordinate, and organize investigation methods adapted to the problem set.

- Construct hypotheses and variables
- Organize the survey methods, including surveys using semi-structured interviews
- Calibrate and choose the relevant survey unit
- Construct an interview guide.

**Conduct the interview (COND):** Know how to implement investigation techniques for social science questions.

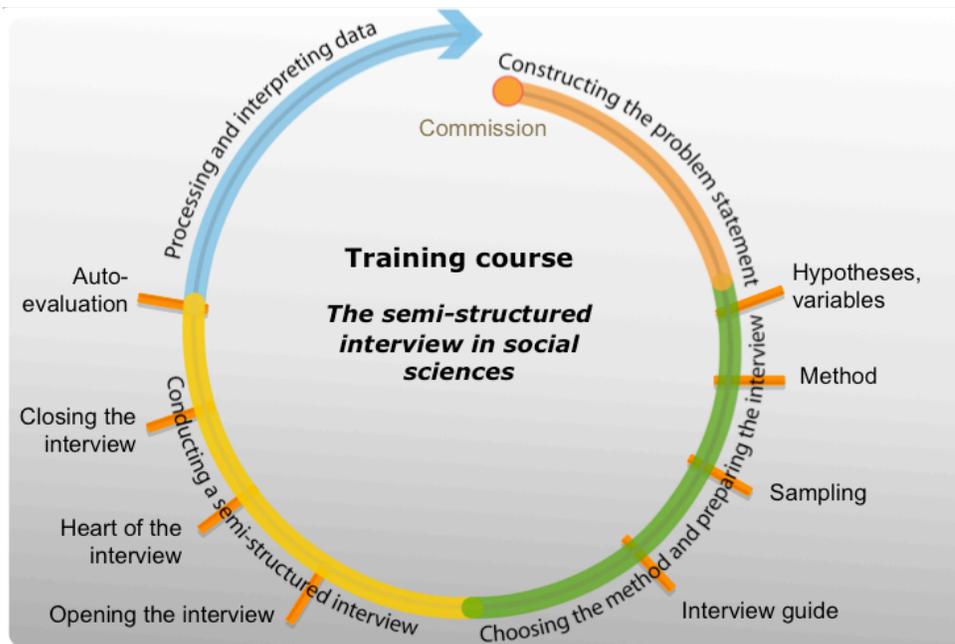
- Identify the steps of an interview
- Manage setting the stage, the level of language, presentations (of oneself, the study)
- Understand the nature of the interview questions
- Build a relevant interview guide
- Adopt a professional attitude during the interview
- Take efficient notes during the interview.

**Process and interpret data (DO):** Know how to process the data collected and understand the principles of interpreting results:

- Improve and clean up notes
- Class data and build a corpus
- Evaluate the reliability of data
- Analyze the data using the theoretical framework chosen
- Interpret the results: principles and pitfalls to avoid.

**The estimated time needed to complete the training without a tutor is:**

- **40 h minimum** for a rapid review if you already have some experience;
- **up to double that time** if you apply the lessons to the preparation of your research or study and if you read the recommended materials in the bibliography.



You can follow the lessons in order, but each module was designed to be autonomous, so you also can choose which to enter according to your own learning needs.

*Here, you have access to a free version of the training without a tutor. If you are interested in a more in-depth, supervised training format, contact us at:*

[sibelet\(AT\)cirad.fr](mailto:sibelet(AT)cirad.fr)

*In the version accompanied by a tutor, discussions between participants are encouraged to facilitate an exchange of viewpoints and solutions tried by others. Being accompanied by a tutor allows one to benefit from constructive feedback on completed exercises.*

☞ **You may now start the training.**

#### **Pedagogic design team**

Nicole SIBELET (CIRAD), Madeleine MUTEL (consultant),  
Pierre ARRAGON, Maïlys LUYE, Eric Bidart and Sonia POLLET (IAMM)

#### **Translation**

Grace DELOBEL, Anita SAXENA DUMOND

To cite this training in your bibliographies: "Sibelet, N; Mutel M; Arragon P and Luye M. 2013. Qualitative survey methods applied to natural resource management. Online learning modules. Available at: <http://enquetes-cirad.iamm.fr/>".