

Questions to Focus Your Interviews

Use this tool to help focus your thinking when doing interviews. Ask yourself, do I understand:

What people care about?

Have I uncovered what is really at issue or do I mostly have surface-level concerns and self-interests? Do I know anything about what people's aspirations are when it comes to this issue, or just what frustrates them?

People's sense of other perspectives?

Do I understand how people sort through perspectives different from their own and what they make of these perspectives?

The tensions and emotions that people struggle with?

Do I know what might make this issue hard or emotional for people? Do I know if they hold conflicting values – for instance the desire to help others but also for people to take personal responsibility?

What people might not know?

Do I understand what people do *not* know and what might be standing in their way to knowing more?

Who and what "rings true"?

Do I know who people look to as an authentic source on this issue and why? What is required for stories about this issue to reflect a full sense of reality?

What progress looks like?

Do I know what people would need to see to believe progress is being made on this issue? Do I know what people can imagine doing themselves when it comes to this issue and what would seem like a stretch?