

Research Methodology

TIPS Offices | 234 Lange Street | Nieuw Muckleneuk | Pretoria

15-17 May 2018

Background

Research and the proper interpretation of research findings are critical for the development and evaluation of policies, policy programmes and frameworks and understanding what good quality research is and what type of research can and cannot be done under particular circumstances helps researchers select what to scrutinise and set out what can be said about what is being looked at and reported upon. Importantly, “good” research has implications for policy actions and interventions.

A non-technical, non-specialist research methodology training workshop organised by TIPS seeks to introduce some key elements that would help assist a better understanding of: (a) what social science research is about and what constitutes good research in terms of validity and methodology; and (b) how research is undertaken and what processes are followed to generate findings.

The research methodology training takes place over three consecutive days and will cover the following areas, although not exclusively:

- ☞ Introduction to the theory of change
- ☞ Research terminology, the different approaches to research, when to use qualitative and/or quantitative research methods and what are the advantages and disadvantages of these methods;
- ☞ How to set out good research questions and to address these questions
- ☞ What is a good literature review and why such reviews are important;
- ☞ Surveys: how to survey and how to sample;
- ☞ Qualitative research: interviews (structured & semi-structured), running focus groups

The workshop programme is meant to be fun while being practical. The programme contains some group exercises. Some concrete examples of participants’ research problems will be debated and some practical solutions proposed.

The workshop is **not** aimed at any specialist or at those who are working on technical questions. It is meant as a space to discuss research issues, the research context and at generating new ideas that can help research move forward. This workshop will precede a more focused ‘data in research’ workshop.

Who might benefit from the workshop

The themes covered in the workshop are relevant to all those concerned about the contribution that research can make to policy making. In turn, those involved with policy and who need to reflect on as well as deepen their understanding of research methods would benefit from the training.

More broadly, by returning to the variety of research methods, this workshop would benefit those who are looking for miscellaneous ways to incorporate research findings into their work or who are looking to address a particular research question. The workshop is not technical in anyway, but more advanced data users might also want to participate in the training to reflect back on what they do and how to engage with a diverse non-technical audience.

ABOUT THE FACILITATOR

Your trainer is **DR MYRIAM VELIA**. Myriam is an economist who has worked on a number of projects, including projects that have involved policy-makers. Her interests are with trade and industry policies and with the survival and growth of firms.

Myriam was, until recently, based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s School of Built Environment and Development Studies. She enjoys the challenges of working with data. She has been involved with a variety of qualitative and quantitative research projects and was recently involved with a survey of medium and large manufacturing establishments in Durban. She is currently an independent researcher though still working on firms and policy issues!

Workshop fees (which includes teas, coffees and lunches): R8,000 (VAT incl) per participant.

Registration closing date
2 May 2018