

Appendix A

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE (Men)

I. Greeting (10 minutes)

Welcome. My name is _____ and this is my assistant, _____. I want to thank everyone for coming today. The Semipalatinsk State Medical Academy and the National Cancer Institute in the United States are working on a study of radiation exposure and long-term health effects.

The goal of today's meeting is to learn about dairy animals and pasture practices around the time of the nuclear tests between the years 1949-1962. This will help our team from Semipalatinsk State Medical Academy and the National Cancer Institute in their studies of radiation exposure and long-term health effects.

All of you lived in this village during the time of the nuclear testing. You are all knowledgeable about agricultural practices of that time and we appreciate your willingness to share your insights with us.

II. Logistics (5 minutes)

I have a set of discussion topics that I would like to go over with you today. This discussion should last no more than 2 hours. I'll be asking questions, and _____, who works with me, will help with note-taking during our discussion. We would like to tape-record the session so that we do not miss anything important. You will be personally identified only by first name and month of birth. At the end of our discussion, we will ask you to complete a brief anonymous evaluation form in which you will be asked about your impressions of this focus group.

We hope that you will speak freely about your memories, feelings, observations, and opinions because it will help us to learn more about the availability and care of dairy animals at the time of the nuclear tests. We want everyone to feel comfortable participating in this group. Please be courteous and give everyone a chance to speak. Please know that there is no requirement for you to answer questions or participate in any discussions that make you feel uncomfortable. We will be making notes about your recollections and general reactions to the discussion.

III. Consent and confidentiality (10 minutes)

Before we start, we need you to read and sign a consent form. Please read through the form as I read it out loud. Please take your time to make sure the consent form is clear to you. Please let me know if you have any questions

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Moderator Note: File signed forms in an envelope with the date, time, and village name clearly written on the front.

IV. Introductions (10 minutes)

Many of you already know each other, but it would be helpful to me if we could introduce ourselves. Give us your first name and the month of birth. Let us start with those participants that were born in January, then February, all of the way through December.

V. Developing context and stimulating recall (30 minutes)

Let's spend a few minutes thinking about the time of the nuclear tests in the 1950s. Tell me about your memories of the day of the test or tests.

1. What do you remember seeing or feeling at this time?
2. At the time of the tests, did the military contact you?
 - a. Probe: If yes, what did they tell you?
 - b. Probe: Did you have to leave your home?
 - c. Probe: If yes, when did you leave your home? When did you come back to your home?

VI. Houses and schools in the village

Let's start by thinking about the houses in your village in the 1950s. I'm going to ask you about what houses were constructed from in your village – mostly wood, mostly adobe, or were there homes constructed of some other material?

For the Kazakhs:

3. What proportion or fraction of the Kazakh families lived in wooden homes?
 - a. Probe: Was it almost none, less than half, about half, more than half, or almost all Kazakh families?
4. What proportion or fraction of the Kazakh families lived in adobe homes?
 - a. Probe: Was it almost none, less than half, about half, more than half, or almost all Kazakh families?

For the Russians:

5. What proportion or fraction of the Russian families lived in wooden homes?
 - a. Probe: Was it almost none, less than half, about half, more than half, or almost all Russian families?

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6. What proportion or fraction of the Russian families lived in adobe homes?
 - a. Probe: Was it almost none, less than half, about half, more than half, or almost all Russian families?

Now let's talk about the different schools attended by children in your village in the 1950s. We will use this chart on the wall to record our answers.

Moderator's Note: Ask these questions to guide participants through their answers.

7. For each school attended by children in your village, did children attend during the day and then return home in the evenings **or** was it a boarding school where they left home during the week to attend school and came home on the weekend?
 - a. Probe: Where was this school located – in this village or another village? If the school was not in this village, how many km from this village and in what direction was the school located?
 - b. Probe: What grade levels were taught at this school?
 - c. Probe: Who went to this school – mostly Russians, mostly Kazakhs, or both Russians and Kazakhs?
 - d. Probe: Did children from certain parts of this village go to this school?
 - e. Probe: What materials were the outside walls and roofs of the school made of – wood, adobe, or some other building material?

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Wall Chart 1: Schools attended by village children and type of construction materials

School	Boarding or day school	School location	Grade levels in this school	Children who went to this school (Russian/Kazakh)	Construction materials (wood, adobe, other)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

VII. Dairy animals and milk (30 minutes)

Now let's talk about dairy animals and the availability of milk in the months following the nuclear test, August to December.

8. I'd like to ask you about the different types of milk available for the children in your village and where each type came from. This about the time of year when summer turns to winter in the months from August through December. What types of milk – cow, horse, sheep, goat, or some other animal – were available for children in the village to drink fresh during each of these months?

Notetaker Note: Use a check mark to indicate whether a participant reports milk availability for each animal by month.

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Wall Chart 2. Type of milk available by month

Month	Type of Animal				
	Cow	Goat	Horse	Sheep	Other
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					

9. I would like to ask you about where people got their milk from. Did most people get their milk from their own dairy animals, neighbors, a store, or somewhere else?
- Probe: Did any of the milk come from other villages or cities? If so, where did it come from? What type of milk did people get from these villages?
 - Probe: Were there families with no milk animals – if so, where did families with no animals get their milk?
 - Probe: How many of each animal did families typically have from which their children drank fresh milk? Was it different for Kazakhs and Russians?
10. Now I am going to ask you to think back to where and when the dairy animals in your village grazed at the time of the nuclear tests. We want to focus on those animals that provided milk to the children in your village. If there are differences for private- and state-owned animals, please be sure to mention these differences.

Let's start with where the different dairy animals grazed. Can you describe where the animals grazed from August through December – backyards of houses in the village, pastures in the village, pastures outside of the village, or somewhere else? We're only interested in those animals which provided milk to children in your village.

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Wall Chart 3. Animal Grazing patterns by month

Month	Type of Animal				
	Cow	Goat	Horse	Sheep	Other
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					

Moderator & Notetaker Note: Show wall map. If pastures are identified as a place where animals grazed, note on the map where different animals – cow, goat, horse, sheep, and other animals (if mentioned) – grazed.

- a. Probe: Some of you said that animals grazed in pastures. Let's use this map. Where were the pastures for different animals located?
11. At the time of the tests – August through October – and the months following the tests – November and December, what were the pastures like – were the pastures open or covered with snow?
- a. Probe: If pastures were covered with snow, would you say it was fully covered, mostly covered, about half covered/half open, or mostly open with some spots of snow?
 - b. Probe: If pastures were covered with snow did you put the animals out to pasture or did you provide the animals with supplemental feed?

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12. From August through December during the time of the nuclear test, was grazing used exclusively to feed the dairy animals or was some type of supplemental feed given?
- Probe: If supplemental feed was given to the animals what types of feed did this include – hay, grain, something else?
 - Probe: How much supplemental feed was given to dairy animals?

Notetaker's Note: Record amount of supplemental feed for different animals – cow, goat, horse, sheep, and other animals if noted – in kg/day.

Wall Chart 4. Supplemental feed (kg/day) by animal and month

Month	Type of Animal				
	Cow	Goat	Horse	Sheep	Other
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					

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13. I would like to ask about the typical schedule when animals were milked, how many times a day they were milked, how much milk was collected from each animal type, whether the milk from each animal type was consumed the same day it was collected, and where animals were kept at night. Similar to the other questions, please focus on those animals which provided milk to the children in your village.

Moderator's Note: Ask these questions to guide participants through their answers.

Wall Chart 5. Dairy animal milking and milk consumption

	Type of Animal				
	Cow	Goat	Horse	Sheep	Other
Were animals milked daily?					
How many times a day were animals milked?					
How many liters of milk were collected each day?					
How many liters of milk were consumed on the day the milk was collected?					
Where were animals kept at night?					

VIII. Conclusion

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We've reached the end of our discussion. Thank you all very much for your time and valuable input. Does anyone have any questions? Is there something we did not ask about the dairy animals at the time of the nuclear test that you think is important? Before you leave, we have a brief anonymous evaluation form for you to fill out to evaluate your experience with the focus group. There are only a few questions.

Moderator Note: Distribute the evaluation forms.

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