

Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide

Round Two (2008)



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About Young Lives

Young Lives is an international study of childhood poverty tracking 12,000 children's lives over 15 years in 4 developing countries – Ethiopia, India (in the state of Andhra Pradesh), Peru and Vietnam. The pro-poor sample is drawn from 20 sites in each country, and includes two age cohorts (2,000 children who were born in 2001-02, and 1,000 children who were born in 1994-95 in each country). Three rounds of the household and child survey have been completed to date, in 2002 2006-07 and 2009, interspersed with a longitudinal qualitative survey in 2007, 2008 and 2010/11. Further rounds of the household survey are due in 2013 and 2016, with the fourth round of qualitative research in 2014.

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Young Lives, Oxford Department of International Development (ODID), University of Oxford,
Queen Elizabeth House, 3 Mansfield Road, Oxford OX1 3TB, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1865 281751 • E-mail: younglives@younglives.org.uk

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The authors

This Guide was written by Laura Camfield and Gina Crivello from the Young Lives research team at the University of Oxford based on discussions and consultation with colleagues in our study countries – Yisak Tafere (Ethiopia), Uma Vennam (India), and Patricia Ames (Peru). We also received extensive advice and guidance from Jo Boyden (Director of Young Lives), Ginny Morrow (Institute of Education, University of London) and Martin Woodhead (The Open University).

Young Lives Qualitative Research Team (Round One)

Ethiopia

Yisak Tafere, Lead Qualitative Researcher

Workneh Yadete, Assistant Qualitative Researcher

India

Uma Vennam, Lead Qualitative Researcher

Anuradha Komanduri, Assistant Qualitative Researcher

Peru

Patricia Ames, Lead Qualitative Researcher

Vanessa Rojas, Assistant Qualitative Researcher

Vietnam

Ton Nu Ai Phuong, Lead Qualitative Researcher

Le Thi My Huong, Assistant Qualitative Researcher

University of Oxford

Jo Boyden, Director, Young Lives

Laura Camfield, Qualitative Research Officer

Gina Crivello, Qualitative Research Officer

Virginia Morrow, Associate Researcher (based at the Institute of Education, University of London)

Martin Woodhead, Associate Researcher (based at the Open University)

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Guide to the Reader

This document is a reproduction of a fieldwork guide produced collaboratively by an international team of researchers taking part in the Young Lives study. Young Lives is a long-term study of childhood poverty in four countries: Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh state), Peru and Vietnam. Young Lives is working with a pro-poor sample of children drawn from 20 sites in each country, and includes two age cohorts (2,000 children who were born in 2001-02, and 1,000 children who were born in 1994-95 in each country). Three rounds of the household and child survey have been completed to date, in 2002 2006-07 and 2009, interspersed with a longitudinal qualitative survey in 2007, 2008 and 2010/11. The longitudinal qualitative study is tracking 50 children in each study country, using a case-study approach to document their changing life trajectories over time. Further rounds of the household survey are due in 2013 and 2016, with the fourth round of qualitative research in 2014.

This document is the manual that guided the second of four planned rounds of data collection in 2008 as part of a longitudinal qualitative research design. The longitudinal qualitative study is tracking 50 children in each study country, using a case-study approach to document their changing life trajectories over time. The research guide for each round of research will be made available on the Young Lives website following each round of data collection.

We share these documents for other researchers carrying out social research with children and young people in poverty to adapt, use and develop in their own work. We have tried to maintain as much of the original document as possible; this means that the language is directed towards field researchers working as part of Young Lives. Internally, we refer to the different rounds of data collection as 'Qual-1', 'Qual-2', and 'Qual-3', and these are the terms used in this document. A further document, the *Young Lives Longitudinal Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers*, provides background and an overview of the longitudinal qualitative research to date.

This document was drafted in early 2008 before we embarked upon the second round of our research. We have checked and updated it, along with guides for the first and third rounds of research, ready for publication in this format in early 2013. We would be very interested to hear from anyone who adapts or uses any of the ideas contained within this Guide for their own work.

Key contact: Gina Crivello (ginacrivello@qeh.ox.ac.uk)

Related documents

Young Lives (2013a) *Young Lives Longitudinal Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers*, Technical Note 26, Oxford: Young Lives.

Young Lives (2013b) *Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide: Round One (2007)*, Technical Note 27, Oxford: Young Lives.

Young Lives (2013c) *Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide: Round Two (2008)*, Technical Note 28, Oxford: Young Lives.

Young Lives (2013d) *Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide: Round Three (2010/11)*, Technical Note 29, Oxford: Young Lives.

1. Introduction

This planning document contains a selection of protocols for collecting qualitative information from children and adults participating in Young Lives. It reflects a consultative and collaborative process that took place between Lead Qualitative Researchers (LQRs) at a meeting in Hanoi in March 2008. This packet of information informed and formed the basis of country-level research design and field manuals for data collection as part of the second round of data collection in Autumn 2008. The document contains the original protocols developed for the second round of qualitative research (Qual-2) and thereby reflects ideas and developments among the Young Lives team at that time. Protocols were revised and developed in light of key lessons learned from the first round of qualitative data collection (Qual-1) and subsequently adapted by each country team to reflect the specific themes and projects within each country. The protocols thus served as guides to data collection for Qual-2.

This planning document begins with an overview of the background to Qual-2, including the aims and specific research questions for the second round of qualitative data collection. The protocols for core and supplementary data-collection methods are then given (a more detailed account of the development and rationale for each method can be found in the justification document (Young Lives Technical Note 26).

1.1. Background to Qual-2

Young Lives is conducting a second round of data collection in 2008 as part of its on-going longitudinal qualitative research, focused on 200+ case-study children across our study countries: India (Andhra Pradesh), Ethiopia, Peru, and Vietnam. The major strength of the qualitative research is that it offers a unique opportunity to study the role of poverty in shaping children's biographies from within a lifecycle framework that is embedded within Young Lives longitudinal design and complements other major data sources, notably household and child surveys and the school-based component (see www.younglives.org.uk). The unique feature of this in-depth strand of Young Lives research is the attention given to children's (and caregivers') detailed narrative accounts, reflecting on their childhoods (past, present, and future) including their perspectives on what has contributed to shaping their situations and well-being, their aspirations and goals, as well as realistic expectations for future outcomes.

From August to December 2007, the first round of Young Lives qualitative research (referred to as 'Qual-1'), was undertaken (see *Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide Round One, 2007*). It involved a sub-sample of 204 'case study' children in four or five sites in each country. Qual-1 was designed to generate a variety of information with the children, their caregivers, teachers, and other community members. A 'mosaic' of methods was used to bring together stakeholder perspectives on the key themes of childhood transitions and child well-being, in the context of structures and cultures within families, institutions, and communities that shape children's experiences and future trajectories.

Qual-1 research was guided by three broad questions:

1. What are the key transitions in children's lives; how are they experienced (particularly in relation to activities, relationships, identities, and well-being); and what influences these experiences?
2. How is children's well-being understood and evaluated by children, caregivers, and other stakeholders? What shapes these different understandings, and what causes them to change? What do children, caregivers, and other stakeholders identify as

sources of and threats to well-being, and what protective processes can enable children to minimise these threats?

3. How do policies, programmes, and services shape children's transitions and well-being? What are the different stakeholder perspectives on these processes? What is the interplay between public, private, and not-for-profit sectors and communities within these processes?

Qual-1 may be considered as a baseline qualitative study for Young Lives, which provides the opportunity to look in depth at key themes that have clear policy relevance and on which broad-based survey data are available for the full sample (especially from the Round 2 survey conducted approximately a year before Qual-1 in most cases). Qual-2 is the second 'link' that makes this qualitative study a longitudinal chain, with plans for additional links to be added following future survey research rounds (notably following Round 3 survey which is scheduled for 2009).

Qual-2, which will be conducted approximately one year after Qual-1, provides a unique opportunity to re-visit the same sites in order to follow up on the three research questions as well as other emerging themes. Country plans will build on the themes from Qual-1, but will also be strongly informed and given necessary focus by emerging findings from the Round 2 household and child survey and Qual-1, as well as country-specific issues identified with policy teams in the course of policy and budget analyses (for example, related to provision of health and education services). In this respect, it is essential to link the Qual work explicitly with the meta-themes identified for Young Lives as a whole. These have been summarised as concerning the *political economy of childhood poverty* (in particular, the causes and consequences of childhood poverty, especially the impact of economic, political, social structures, institutions, and processes on childhood poverty); *transitions and trajectories* (diversities in life-course and inter-generational outcomes); and *well-being, vulnerability, and resilience* (children's experience of risks as well as the resources on which they draw to cope with adversities). This will enable the distillation of policy-relevant findings from the Qual research, which are critical for the credibility of the project at this stage in its history.

1.2. Outline plan for Qual-2

Qual-2 will aim to build on the relationships already established with the children, their families, and community representatives. Wherever possible, the aim should be to involve the same fieldworkers, especially those who were most effective in establishing rapport with respondents and producing transcripts that yielded valuable and rich findings. Boys and girls of the Younger Cohort will now be between 6 and 8 years old, while the Older Cohort will be aged 12 to 15 years old. Most of the younger children will have entered the early classes or grades of primary school, and many of the Older Cohort will have reached the age for transition to secondary school (or the second cycle of primary school in Ethiopia). They may be trying to balance increased levels of work and domestic responsibilities with school, or possibly have left school entirely for work or other activities. This may or may not involve migration. Some older children may have begun sexual relationships, although this might not necessarily emerge during the course of the interview, and a few may have married, had their first children, and possibly moved out of their caregivers' home. These trends are clear from the survey data at Quant-2, although the numbers involved in Qual-1 may inevitably limit scope for in-depth study of relatively infrequent patterns.

Qual-2 research will be more focused than Qual-1; it will involve both prioritisation of the Young Lives core themes and working in a deeper and more contextualised way with our case-study children.

Qual-2 will be carried out within a shorter time scale in each site (two weeks instead of three), which will necessitate careful selection of the methods that are most useful for particular children in particular sites in order to maximise the quality and relevance of Qual-2 data on both general and specific issues and enable it to feed into policy-level analysis.

Qual-2 will use data and materials from Qual-1 to work more deeply with the same children, to strengthen the range and depth of our understanding of 'their story' (that is, their specific experience of childhood and their pathway through childhood). This can happen in a number of ways, all of which require time for preparation before each field-visit interview to enable follow-up to be individually tailored to each respondent. This may include the following:

- a) following up on the comments the children, caregivers, and others made during Qual-1;
- b) inviting an update on events and their current feelings and expectations about aspects of their lives;
- c) encouraging reflection on the issues that concerned them in Qual-1, including how far they are on-going, changed, and/or resolved; and
- d) discussing children's Qual-1 research outputs with them (for example, inviting them to review and add information to a copy of their timeline, or to discuss a picture or photograph created during Qual-1).

Our understanding of the children's 'story' will be underpinned by evidence from their caregivers, teachers, and others, the careful observations, analysis, and reflections of the research team, and the baseline provided by the quantitative data from Rounds 1 and 2 and the context instrument.

Qual-2 will follow up issues that have emerged from analyses of Qual-1 and the second round of household and child survey, or have been highlighted by the policy teams in each country. Some may be relatively general (for example, changing perspectives on well-being); others may be much more country/region/site/cohort-specific (as in children's transitions through country-specific school structures, or the experiences of a particular vulnerable group such as a minority ethnic group, or a group of orphans).

Qual-2 will build on the lessons from methods used in Qual-1. We propose focusing on those that were most successful in eliciting a rich data set, while acknowledging that children's interests and capacities will have changed over the intervening year, and balancing time spent on group work with interviews and observations.

In addition to data-gathering activities, Qual-2 is an opportunity to engage in community-reciprocity activities in conjunction with the policy team.

1.3. Research focus for Qual-2

In light of the above, the broad purpose of Qual-2 is to document processes of change from two points of view:

1. What children perceive as significant events and changes in their lives; and
2. The observed effect on children's lives of major events and changes in their household, community, or nation.

We are interested in events and changes that children have experienced directly. However, we are also interested in factors that may be relatively 'invisible' to children but nonetheless have impacted strongly on their lives. These might include changes and events that affect their families and social networks, within the wider contexts of their communities, and ultimately the political and economic structures in the societies that shape their childhoods.

Examples of these events and changes are numerous, operate at many different levels, and will of course vary between countries, regions, and sites. For example, Qual-2 might draw attention to one or more of the following themes:

- reforms in schooling, health insurance, or local political infrastructure that have altered children's access to services and resources;
- changes in the economic and social basis of the household or wider family network due to job-loss (or improved livelihood), migration, and marriage (or bereavement), as well as changes in the availability of resources such as a new roof on the house, money for school books or a television, which may all have an impact on children's vulnerability;
- environmental events or other shocks that affect the child, household, and community, such as a flood, drought, or earthquake, which might reduce food security.

Global as well as local changes may also change the types of risk to which a child is exposed, the protective factors that can be mobilised (for example, extended family networks), and the resources to which they have access – all of which could have an impact on their well-being. These changes can be both expected and unexpected (for example, enrolment in school versus sudden family illness) and they may affect children's daily activities, relationships, identities, experiences of well-being, and use of local services.

Information on these areas can be gathered through interviews with local service providers and other key informants, relevant secondary literature (e.g. newspaper articles, government reports), data collected through the context instrument or more recently as part of policy and child-budget monitoring, observation in health-care centres, classrooms, market places, and homes, as well as individual and group interviews with children and their caregivers.

By focusing on how children (and others) feel about the changes in children's circumstances, and drawing out the interactions between different 'life domains' (for example, *inter alia* between work/ education and health; education and relationships within the household; and work and identity), we hope to enrich our understanding of their unique biographies and set them in the wider economic, social, political, and cultural contexts that shape their lives and which, to various degrees, constrain or create opportunities. We also plan to revisit their aspirations and expectations for the future; seek explanations when these have changed, and explore their subjective views on the factors that affect present and future well-being, and their capacity to shape it, individually, and/or collectively with family, peers, community, and others. This suggested approach can therefore be seen as a re-working of Bronfenbrenner's 'ecological systems theory' (1979), in that children's understandings and experiences are studied in the context of interlocking systems of mutual influence.

2. Data collection for Qual-2

2.1. Following-up the Qualitative sub-sample

Young Lives qualitative research has been designed as a longitudinal study. Qual-2 research will therefore follow up on the full sub-sample of Qual-1 respondents, particularly the case-study children and their caregivers. This is the core sample for building 'the longitudinal Mosaic'. However, there may be good reason for including some new respondents at Qual-2 (for example, new teachers, siblings, friends, and employers), as appropriate.

Qual-1 involved a small number of 'back-up' children in each site. Qual-2 should maintain contact with the 'back-ups' and their families and involve them when possible in group-based activities. If a case-study child decides not to participate in Qual-2 or is unable to participate, an equivalent back-up child should be selected in his/her place, and the full set of data-gathering activities carried out with him/her.

In the case of a child who migrates, reasonable effort should be made to track the child and, as appropriate, to interview him/her in his/her destination setting. (This may require persistence and sensitivity, as some respondents, for example, working children, may not welcome additional attention from their 'new' neighbours.) Although s/he may not participate in group-based methods, individual interviews may be enhanced with creative techniques (for example, photo elicitation, child-led tour, drawing). If additional resources or time are needed, consult the UK team for advice.

2.2. Preparing for Qual-2 field work

Before revisiting sites, households, and children, review existing data from *all* sources (i.e. the context instrument, relevant secondary data, etc.) and plan for Qual-2 data collection strategically. This will involve revisiting key Qual themes, as well as identifying specific foci that build on analysis of Qual-1 and the quantitative data with the aim of contributing to Young Lives working papers, other peer-reviewed publications, and to policy dialogue.

- Aim to strengthen the 'mosaic' around each case-study child. For example, choose methods that build on the knowledge gained at Qual-1 in terms of the most significant 'stories' that emerged, as well as any gaps in the data that should be followed up. Select methods and lines of questioning according to what you already know about particular children's interests and capacities (including likes and dislikes and sensitivities), as well as those of caregivers, teachers, and others with whom you interacted previously.
- Focus on changes since the last field-work visit, using the framework outlined above, which will enable you to set them in a wider context. These include changes as directly experienced by the child, such as transitions to school, as well as changes in the child's environment (in the broadest sense) as these affect the child's experiences and well-being. (NB: rather than provide a lengthy interview schedule, we will suggest some focusing questions to be supplemented by the activities listed under 'individual conversations'.)
- Use materials and resources created at Qual-1 as prompts for follow-up discussion (for example, life-course timeline, diary, or drawings produced during group exercises). Be aware, however, that the respondent may no longer enjoy methods/activities that he/she liked previously, so be prepared with alternatives.
- Aim for 'group discussions', with lively and focused discussions around a few key topics, rather than 'group interviews'. (NB: some of the strongest data at Qual-1 appear to come from groups, but verbatim quotes are harder to capture. It is likely that more than one voice recorder and note-taker will be required, to ensure that group dynamics and verbatim quotes are recorded effectively.)
- Use creative techniques with focus groups to stimulate discussion: for example, anonymised summaries of data from Round 2 or Qual-1, clippings from local newspapers on relevant policy themes, video clips, photographs and 'vignettes' (stories that have been created to be relevant and engaging in a particular context).

- Look for ways to triangulate (i.e. compare and contrast) information from different stakeholders on key themes: for example, introduce the same vignettes, images, or other methods with adults and with older children, to enable comparison in analysis and in the group itself. Also consider ‘cross-referencing’ between groups (possibly from different sites, to avoid any risk of exposure): for example, where one group discusses the (anonymised) conclusions of another group about indicators and causes of poverty.
- Schedule in more time for informal observation and conversation during children’s everyday tasks, leisure/play, or walks around their neighbourhood, or seize other opportunities that build on the relationship with individuals and small groups to encourage sharing of ideas, concerns, and perspectives. These observations/conversations should be supported by detailed field notes recorded subsequently (and, if possible, verbatim quotes if they can be recalled). We will revisit the guidelines for observations during the next week. We expect they will comprise: (i) structured observations of schools and classrooms focusing on what Young Lives children do at school and the quality of resources, teaching, and learning; (ii) updating observations of children’s home and communities; and (iii) participant observation in informal settings.

3. Interview guides

3.1. Interview planning

As for Qual-1, interviews will be planned to provide evidence related to the core research questions: transitions, well-being and service access. Some general questions will be relevant for all children and caregivers in all sites, but detailed question planning should be country-, site- and child/caregiver- specific.

We suggest that you plan for the following stages:

1. Provide some general suggestions for team review and discussion; ask teams to develop country- and site-specific plans based on your knowledge of the context and the issues facing children and caregivers from Qual-1.
2. As research teams prepare for field work, they will review Qual-1 evidence child-by-child and prepare detailed notes on specific topics to explore and discuss with the child/caregiver (see below).
3. Some in-depth questioning cannot be planned in detail in advance. Questions may only arise ‘in the moment’, based on something that children or caregivers say which leads to further in-depth conversation.

Team organisation

The researcher(s) working with Qual-2 participants will wherever possible be the same as at Qual-1, so they can build on their relationship with the child/caregiver, etc.

Preparatory work prior to interview

Before field work begins, review all evidence available about this community and the Younger Cohort and Older Cohort case-study children within it. This includes the probable changes in their lives since your last visit, including the impact of external events (such as

crop failure or increased food prices), as well as events in their community (e.g. a new school or health centre), or changes related to their age, responsibilities and transitions through childhood (notably transitions through school).

For each case-study child, review the 'mosaic' of data from Qual-1 (i.e. minimally their child profile, individual interview and caregiver interview, as well as any photos, drawings, timeline, etc.). Identify the main features of this child's 'story' at Qual-1: their circumstances, their concerns, their expectations for the future, etc., noting common themes between child and caregiver, as well as any differences in perspective that you may want to follow up (e.g. attitudes to play, school, or domestic responsibilities).

Use this review as a starting point for planning major areas for questioning. Here are some examples.

- At Qual-1 a caregiver talked about her worries about money and how it would affect her ability to support her child through school....so you will want to find out the current situation, what she perceives are the causes of her difficulties, whether the situation has got better or worse, how far and in what ways it has affected the child's schooling and more general well-being, as well the caregiver's feelings about what has happened, whether it could have been prevented, etc.
- At Qual-1 a Younger Cohort child said how much she was looking forward to going to school for the first time and described to you what she thought school would be like....so you will want to ask the child about her actual experiences of going into Grade 1 for the first time, how far being at school differs from being at pre-school, etc.
- At Qual-1 an Older Cohort child talked about feeling that he should do more work to help his family....so you will want to ask whether he is now working, what kind of work, what happens to the money that he earns, what influenced his decision, how much choice he has about what he does and when he does it, how he combines work with school, and how he feels about doing both, now and for the future.

The goal of Young Lives Qual research is to construct a series of detailed longitudinal case studies. As well as reflecting on events and changes between Qual-1 and Qual-2, you will also want to look ahead to Qual-3 (in late 2009 or more likely 2010). So Qual-2 questions will be a mixture of elements:

- *Reflections on the past:* for example, 'When we last met, you were telling me about, X....Has that changed at all?'
- *Talking about the present:* e.g. 'You are now in Grade1. What are the things you like most/ least?'
- *Predicting the future:* e.g. 'When I come back next time, you'll be What do you expect will have happened by then?'

Interview setting and resources

We have emphasised that interviews should be conducted as a conversation: as far as possible as a shared exploration of events, issues, views and feelings, not a formal interview. Conduct the interview in whatever circumstances seem most likely to make the participant(s) feel comfortable and able to talk freely. Bring any visual prompts (photographs from Qual-1) that you think will be useful for the conversation. For example, use the Qual-1 life-course timeline to discuss aspirations for the future, and give them the opportunity to update this with important events that they have remembered, or which have occurred in the last year.

Make every effort to record verbatim what the participant(s) say; for example, wherever possible use voice-recorders to capture the things they say, in the way they say them!

We are also interested in your reflections on both the data-collection process and the actual data ('field notes'), and we suggest recording your thoughts every evening, or during free moments in the day, in a field notebook. We don't expect you to write more than a couple of pages in 'note form' (i.e. you don't need to write in full sentences or check the spelling), which would be primarily for country-team use. Potentially the field diaries can be used as a source of information for the data-gathering report, to enhance reports of group activities, develop child profiles, and increase the information provided in interview and report headers. They will also provide an *aide memoire* of points that you wish to follow up on another occasion, with a different informant, or when you return to the office.

3.2. Younger Cohort interviews

Aims

1. To explore what children perceive as significant events and changes in their lives at home, in school and in their community.
2. To seek their views and feelings about school (according to whether they are not attending/expecting to attend/are already attending/have already dropped out).
3. For those who are now in primary school, how it compares with what they have known before, e.g. home, pre-school, or Grade 1, and any specific events or incidents.
4. To explore how children feel about their well-being in relation to different aspects of their lives at home, in school and in their community.

As noted in the general guide to Qual-2 earlier, informal conversations seem likely to work best with the Younger Cohort, conducted in the context of observations (and participation in) the child's activities at home, school and community, and building on what s/he said at Qual-1.

It would also be good to try to introduce some specific questions. The following examples are about school transitions. Repetition of some questions from Qual-1 is intentional, as a way of recording children's changing views/understanding.

- How is your current class different from the class/pre-school that you attended last year?
- What do you like and dislike about the school/class that you are attending now? (You could use a flipchart with a symbol representing 'we like' on one side and another symbol for 'we don't like' on the other; this could also be extended into representing an 'ideal school/classroom'.)
- Imagine there is a new child who is joining your school/class for the first time. What would you tell her about your school/classroom to make it easy for her when she comes? (Ask about the building, the way children are organised, the rules they need to know, how they should behave, what they will learn, what the teacher is like, what happens if they 'misbehave', etc.)
- Why do you think children go to school? Who makes children go to school? What would happen if you did not go?

Build on pictures, photos, scenarios, or other resources that make the questions meaningful and relevant to the child. It may be possible to combine the conversation with a child-led tour to keep the child's attention and interest, although this will make reporting verbatim quotes more of a challenge.

Proposed methods: Younger Cohort

We suggest one group-based activity to address feelings about school and collective experiences of school transitions. Here are a few examples of focal questions:

- What does a new child or younger sibling coming to your school need to know or have? (Be creative: for example, you could use a puppet for the children to speak to, or use a drawing representing a new pupil as focus of discussion.)
- What would you show or tell them?
- What do you like and dislike about school? (You could use a flipchart with a symbol representing 'we like' on one side and a symbol for 'we don't like' on the other; this could also be extended into representing an 'ideal school/ classroom'.)
- How is your current class different from the class/pre-school that you attended last year?

Other aspects might include the group's specific (and locally contextualised) experiences of school transition.

Individual interview

Qual-1 confirmed the challenges of conducting individual interviews with Younger Cohort children, but some interviews produced good data, particularly where interviewers were warm, informal, and patient; used open-ended questions and probed sensitively; went 'off script'; and did not appear to be judging the child's physical appearance or responses.

In these cases especially, we encourage in-depth follow-up conversations, with the child alone, or with a friend or sibling provided that it builds their confidence to talk and does not adversely affect their ability/willingness to open up. In cases where children were shy and withdrawn in Qual-1, they may be more open to talking a year later. Informal conversations carried out in the context of observing (and participating in) the child's activities at home, school, and community seem likely to work best.

For certain specific topics (for example, feelings about school, or relationships and responsibilities at home), a simple set of up to 10 questions may also be useful. Wherever possible, avoid questions that are abstract or hypothetical, such as 'What do you think about well-being?' or 'What would you have thought if...?'. Build on pictures, photos, scenarios, or other resources that make the questions meaningful and relevant to the child. It may be possible to combine the conversation with a child-led tour to keep the child's attention and interest, although this will make reporting verbatim quotes more of a challenge.

3.3. Older Cohort interviews

Aims

1. To explore what children perceive as significant events and changes in their lives, and the effect on their lives of major events and changes in their household, community, or nation.
2. To discuss children's experiences of educational transitions and their thoughts on the quality of the education that they are receiving, including how this relates to their feelings (e.g. about whether they go to school, which school they attend, whether/when they leave school).

3. To explore changes in how children view their current lives, or their future roles, responsibilities, aspirations and plans, as well as the degree of agency/autonomy that they experience in making decisions and shaping trajectories.
4. To elicit information on children's school experiences, especially as they relate to transitions between grades, classrooms and schools, or transition out of school.
5. To explore any changes in how children feel about their well-being, and the positive and negative factors that determine their well-being in specific areas of their lives.
6. To identify how far children and their caregivers offer similar or different perspectives on these themes, and the implications that this may have for their situation and their future prospects.

The interview may cover changes in various domains of the child's life, with the interviewer probing for more information on the most interesting areas, aiming for *depth* of meaning, rather than breadth of coverage.

Proposed methods: Older Cohort

We suggest the following group-based activities to cover well-being (to address understandings of child poverty) and transitions (see also Methods section below).

Focus groups to explore understandings of poverty: The proposal for focus groups has arisen because it has been suggested that we should try to find out more about children's specific understandings of poverty, extending the work on well-being from Qual-1 and building on Joy Johnston's piloting of the poverty tree and associated methods in Peru in 2006.

Vignettes and storytelling to address key transitions (especially relating to education):

Vignettes, i.e. realistic but fictional short stories or scenarios, storytelling, and story completion are techniques used to elicit respondents' views through group discussion. Scenarios should reflect the local context and issues and be familiar enough for the respondents to relate to them in some way. This method would supplement group discussion about actual experiences, e.g. of education or entering paid employment.

Group timeline: growing up in [my town, village, etc.]: To elicit views on the major transitions and special moments that girls/boys of their age have experienced in the past, are experiencing now, and can expect to experience in the future as members of their community (recognising that there are different groups of children within the community, and therefore that there will be varying expectations based on their differences, for example, by socio-economic status, ethnicity, and/or religious background). This is additional to the timelines created and reviewed during individual interviews.

Individual interview

Group-based methods will be supplemented by individual interviews. These will be mainly structured around in-depth conversations, building on the relationships and themes established at Qual-1. As for the Younger Cohort, there may also be scope for task-based methods, where appropriate. Ideas for creative techniques include the following.

- In addition to the more general timelines developed for Qual-1, a more **'domain-specific' timeline** could provide valuable data and be the starting point for discussion: for example, drawing a school timeline from the start of education (e.g. from classes at the local church) to the present day and beyond to show where the respondent hopes to finish. The timeline can illustrate periods of absence or activity (for example, due to family illness or preparing for exams), setbacks or successes

(such as missing a grade or being ranked top in your grade), and future plans (with an accompanying discussion around what the respondent needs in order to achieve this). The school timeline should enable links to be made between different aspects of the child's life, experiences, worries, and hopes for school, and discussion of both processes behind particular outcomes and possible coping strategies.

- Daily **mobility maps** and **time-use diaries**.
- Use the **Ladder method** from the Round 2 household and child survey qualitatively: for example, use the drawing of a ladder with nine rungs and ask: 'There are nine steps on this ladder. Suppose we say that the ninth step, at the very top, represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom represents the worst possible life for you. Where on the ladder do you feel that you personally stand at the present time?' Ask them to identify the 'resources' (that is, the relationships, materials, opportunities, and skills) that could move them up or down it (see page 30 of the Quant. Round 2 child questionnaire).
- **Photo elicitation**: for example, ask children to use photos to share the important spaces/ activities in their lives; or treat children as researchers and ask them to take pictures to represent their understanding of the lives of children in their community, the challenges faced by children in the community, where children go, and other important aspects of their lives.

Interview guide: Older Cohort children

Make sure the respondents know who you are by name and have basic information about Young Lives (provide a leaflet or postcard if available). Briefly explain why you are interested in talking to them and the main themes you want to explore in the interview.

The themes to be selected for in-depth questioning, as appropriate, include the following.

Home and household relationships	<p><i>(where these appear especially significant for the child's experience since Qual-1)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the location or environment of their home; local moves as well as migration. • Changes in household membership through labour migration, death, marriage/ divorce, birth. • Illnesses or accidents as these affect the child's role and well-being. • Changes in the household's economic status (e.g. parents needing to work more) and any outcomes of these (e.g. use of health services or social protection programmes). • Important family or community celebrations since the last visit, and the child's involvement in them.
Time-use, including roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New expectations and responsibilities at home, including any new tasks and skills (for example, caring for others). • Changes in the child's time spent in paid and unpaid domestic work, other work for family and employers, schooling, recreation, etc. (refer to the Qual-1 time-use diary). • Changes in the locations of these activities (refer to the mobility map).
School and school relationships	<p>For children who are not attending school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did they stop attending school (or why have they never attended school), and how do they feel about it? • What do they believe were the main reasons for leaving/dropping out of school? (e.g. poor quality, low achievement, high costs, risks of abuse, need to work, support family) • Do they feel that they had any influence on the decision – or was it their caregiver's decision, or the teacher's decision, or some combination? • How far do they think that not attending or quitting school has affected their well-being and future, for better or worse?

	<p>For children who are still attending school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences and feelings about current schooling, especially changes, such as a new school, different classroom, new or repeated grade, new teacher(s), new friends, etc. • Views on their school progress, new skills or responsibilities at school, levels of academic achievement, etc. • Changes in their relationships (e.g. new friends or enemies). • Likes and dislikes about school. • How far they feel they have any influence on their schooling, on the choice of school that they attend, on the subjects that they study, and who they have as school friends. • Their views on the reasons for and usefulness of staying in schooling, and their expectations about their educational career (when they will leave, any advanced study, etc.). • If they think that their own feelings and views about school are different from their caregivers', and in what ways.
<p>Psychosocial and subjective well-being (refer to the Qual-1 timeline)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in how the children feel about their lives between now and your last visit: for example, specific events or changes that may have affected them, how much choice and freedom they feel that they have, whether they feel that they have changed, what they worry about or look forward to, whom they admire, etc. • Changes that they expect in their lives between now and your next visit (probably in about a year's time), and how these relate to their own and their parents' expectations for their future.
<p>Closing conversation</p>	<p>Ask if the child has any questions or comments about any aspect of the interview or research. Thank them for taking time to speak with you and for sharing their views and experiences.</p>

3.4. Caregiver interviews

Group-based activities

- Choose a specific theme that is nationally/locally relevant (e.g. whether girls are likely to leave school earlier than boys; or the impact of economic or policy changes such as a rise in coffee prices or a new education policy on parents' decision-making for their children). The discussions could also build on summaries of data that have emerged from Qual-1 or from Round 2 of the Quant survey; or be designed around clippings from local newspapers on relevant policy themes, video clips, photographs, or vignettes.
- As noted earlier, look for ways to triangulate between stakeholders on key themes and consider 'cross-referencing' between groups: for example, caregivers discuss a timeline constructed by a child group, or *vice versa*.

Individual interview

- Discuss particular transitions made by the child during the past year: for example, into education or work, and the level of support provided.
- Discuss the factors that they see as affecting the child, including household events and changes, as well as those affecting the wider community in which they live.
- Draw a timeline with a particular focus on the year between Qual-1 and Qual-2 and predicted events during the next two years (for example, between Qual-2 and Qual-3).
- Talk about their experiences of work and education when they were the same age as their child is now: for example, what they feel they gained from this (if anything); whether they would like their child's experiences to be different from their own; whether or not they see their children as having different prospects from what they had (and if so, why or why not).

Younger Cohort caregiver interview (individual)

Aims

1. To explore what caregivers perceive as significant events and changes in their children's lives, and the effect on their children's lives of major events and changes in their household, community, or nation.
2. To elicit caregivers' views on children's school experiences, especially as they relate (a) to transitions (between grades, classrooms and schools, or out of school); (b) to the quality of the education they are receiving, including how this relates to their expectations, or to decision-making for their child (e.g. about whether they go to school and which school they attend).
3. To explore how well-being is understood for younger children, and the positive and negative factors that determine their well-being in specific areas of their lives.
4. To explore changes in caregivers' views on children's current lives, or their future roles, responsibilities, aspirations and plans, as well as the extent to which they believe the child does have or should have agency/autonomy in making decisions and shaping trajectories, both now and as they get older.
5. To explore in depth the country-, site- and child-specific aspects of these issues from a caregiver's perspective, including their feelings, expectations and decision-making, and their role in shaping their child's life.

The interview may cover changes in various domains of the child's life, with the interviewer probing for more information on the most interesting areas, aiming for *depth* of meaning, rather than breadth of coverage.

Interview guide: Younger Cohort caregiver

Make sure the respondents know who you are by name and have basic information about Young Lives (provide a leaflet or postcard if available). Briefly explain why you are interested in talking to them and the main themes you want to explore in the interview.

The themes to be selected for in-depth questioning, as appropriate, include the following.

Home and household relationships

- Changes in the location or environment of the home; local moves, as well as migration.
- Changes in household membership through labour migration, death, marriage/divorce, birth.
- Illnesses or accidents that affect the child's care, role and well-being.
- Changes in the household's economic status (e.g. parents needing to work more) and any outcomes of these (e.g. use of health services or social protection programmes).
- Important family or community celebrations since the last visit, and their child's involvement in them.

Time-use, including roles and responsibilities

- New expectations and responsibilities for the child at home, including any new tasks and skills.
- Changes in time spent in work, schooling, recreation, etc., and the locations of these activities.
- Changes in the individuals with whom the child spends time, and in the individuals to whom they feel closest.
- Any marked differences in expectations for the Young Lives case-study child, compared with siblings or peers (linked to their sex, age, abilities/disabilities, etc.).
- How their child's daily activities compare with their own activities as a child; the way they would like their child to be able to live; and what they expect will be the future for their child.

School and school relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in their child's schooling, such as starting formal school, different classroom, new or repeated grade, new teacher(s), new friends, etc. • Decisions made by parents and/or teachers about which school and which grade a child attends, and their reasoning behind these decisions, e.g. issues of cost or transport/ practicality versus quality, educational methods/curriculum, use of discipline, selective entry, single-sex versus mixed sex, cultural/religious/caste identity, child's abilities/aptitudes, etc. • Parents' understanding of and involvement with their child's school, via visits, meetings with teachers, etc. (if any). • Views on the child's readiness for school, the ease with which s/he has made transitions, and the child's progress, new skills, or responsibilities at school. • Changes in the child's experiences of school: for example, related to class size, curriculum, style of teaching or discipline. • Changes in relationships (e.g. new friends or enemies). • Likes and dislikes about school. • How their child's schooling compares with their own experiences as a child, and the quality of education that they would like their child to receive.
Psychosocial and subjective well-being (refer to Qual-1 timeline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver's view on general changes in the child's behaviour and approach to life between now and your last visit: for example, specific events or changes that caregivers feel may have affected the child, whether s/he seems more mature, what s/he worries about/ looks forward to, the individuals whom s/he admires, etc. • Caregiver's feelings about their capacity to help their child at this stage of their lives, and what they value and prioritise in their care/teaching/socialisation of the child. • Changes that they expect in their child's life during the year between now and your next visit, and how these relate to their expectations for their child's future.
Closing conversation	Ask if the caregiver has any questions or comments about any aspect of the interview or research. Thank them for taking time to speak with you and for sharing their views and experiences.

Older Cohort caregiver interview (individual)

Aims

1. To explore what caregivers perceive as significant events and changes in their children's lives, and the effect on their children's lives of major events and changes in their household, community, or nation.
2. To elicit information on caregivers' views on children's school experiences, especially as they relate to (a) transitions (between grades, classrooms and schools, or transition out of school); (b) to the quality of the education they are receiving, including how this relates to their expectations, or to decision-making for their child (e.g. about whether they go to school, which school they attend).
3. To explore changes in caregivers' views on children's current lives, or their future roles, responsibilities, aspirations and plans, as well as the extent to which they believe that the child does have or should have agency/autonomy in making decisions and shaping trajectories.
4. To explore how well-being is understood for older children, and the positive and negative factors that determine well-being in specific areas of their lives.
5. To explore in depth the country-, site- and child-specific aspects of these issues from a caregiver's perspective, including their feelings, expectations and decision-making, and their role in shaping their child's life.

The caregiver interview may cover changes in various domains of the child's life, with the interviewer probing for more information on the most interesting areas, aiming for *depth* of meaning, rather than breadth of coverage.

Interview guide: Older Cohort caregiver

Make sure the respondents know who you are by name and have basic information about Young Lives (provide a leaflet or postcard if available). Briefly explain why you are interested in talking to them and the main themes you want to explore in the interview.

The themes to be selected for in-depth questioning, as appropriate, include the following.

Home and household relationships

- Changes in the location or environment of their home; local moves, as well as migration.
- Changes in household membership through labour migration, death, marriage/divorce, birth.
- Illnesses or accidents as these affect the child's care, role and well-being.
- Changes in the household's economic status (e.g. parents needing to work more) and any outcomes of these (e.g. use of health services or social protection programmes).
- Important family or community celebrations since your last visit, and their child's involvement in them.

Time-use, including roles and responsibilities

- New expectations and responsibilities at home, including any new tasks and skills (for example, caring for others).
- Changes in the child's time spent in paid and unpaid domestic work, other work for family and employers, schooling, recreation, etc. (refer to the Qual-1 time-use diary).
- Changes in the locations of these activities (refer to the mobility map).
- Changes in the individuals with whom the child spends time, and the individuals to whom they feel closest.
- Any marked differences in expectations for the Young Lives case-study child, compared with siblings or peers (linked to their sex, age, abilities/disabilities, etc.).
- How their child's daily activities compare with their own activities as a child; the way they would like their child to be able to live; and what they expect will be the future for their child.

School and school relationships

For caregivers with case-study children who are not attending school:

- Why did they stop attending school (or why have they never attended school) and how do they feel about it?
- What were the main reasons for leaving/dropping out of school? (For example, poor quality, low achievement, high costs, risks of abuse, need to work, support family.)
- Who made the decision: the child, the caregiver, the teacher, or some combination?
- How has not attending/quitting school affected the child/household?

For caregivers with case-study children who are still attending school:

- Changes in child's schooling such as a new school, different classroom, new or repeated grade, new teacher(s), new friends, etc.
- Decisions made by parents and/or teachers about which school and which grade a child attends, and their reasoning behind these decisions, e.g. issues of cost or transport/ practicality versus quality, educational methods/curriculum, use of discipline, selective entry, single-sex versus mixed-sex, cultural/religious/caste identity, child's abilities/aptitudes, etc.
- Parents' understanding of and involvement with their child's school, via visits, meetings with teachers etc. (if any).
- Views on child's school transitions and his/her progress, new skills or responsibilities at school, levels of academic achievement, etc.
- Changes in their child's relationships (e.g. new friends or enemies).
- Child's likes and dislikes about school.
- How their child's schooling compares with their own experiences as a child, and the quality of education they would like their child to receive.

Psychosocial and subjective well-being (refer to Qual-1 timeline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver's view on general changes in the child's behaviour and approach to life between now and your last visit: for example, specific events or changes that caregivers feel may have affected the child; whether s/he seems more mature, what s/he worries about/ looks forward to, whom s/he admires; would they would want their child to be like, etc. • Caregiver's feelings about his/her capacity to help the child at this stage of the child's life, and what the caregiver values and prioritises in his/her care/teaching/socialisation of the child. • Changes that s/he expects in the child's life during the year between now and your next visit, and how these relate to his/her expectations for the child's future.
Closing conversation	Ask if the caregiver has any questions or comments about any aspect of the interview or research. Thank them for taking time to speak with you and for sharing their views and experiences.

3.5. Teacher interviews

In most cases, children will be with different teachers from those who taught them during Qual-1. Interviews with teachers will be linked with observations of the school and classroom environment, to provide an overview of children's schooling at Qual-2 which can be compared with Qual-1, as part of developing longitudinal accounts of educational careers experienced by case-study children.

NB: where education observations/interviews were incomplete for Qual-1, it should be possible to revisit pre-school/schools in order to strengthen the data set.

Aims

1. To better understand school transition and quality issues from an institutional/professional perspective, including how educational policy changes or other significant events may have shaped children's school experience; specifically:
 - The teacher's views on readiness for schooling (whose responsibility?).
 - How factors in home, school and community affect children's transitions.
 - The teacher's views on pre-school (where available, and of different types of pre-school, when more than one type exists in community) and views on primary school.
 - Transition arrangements, including any links with pre-school.
 - Major perceived reasons why children do well or badly in early grades (non-attendance, drop-out, low achievement, etc.).
2. To complement children's and caregivers' perspectives on case-study children's schooling by hearing the opinions of teachers.
3. To complement observations of the school and classroom environment.

Major themes

Please refer to the Qual-1 Interview Guides as a starting point for developing questions relevant to country/site. The following questions, taken from the Qual-1 guide, assume that children are now in the first class/grade of primary school.

Interview guide: Teachers of Younger Cohort children

Make sure the respondents know who you are by name and have basic information about Young Lives (provide a leaflet or postcard if available). Briefly explain why you are interested in talking to them and the main themes you want to explore in the interview. The themes to be selected for in-depth questioning, as appropriate, include the following.

Teacher's professional background

- How long have you been teaching (in general)?
 - How long have you been teaching at this primary school?
 - How long have you been teaching this grade?
- Probe for:
- teaching qualifications, from where? (teacher training?)
 - reasons for teaching in LOCALITY? (by choice or assignment?)
 - grades/subjects taught?

General: starting primary school

- What is the expected age for girls/boys in LOCALITY to start primary school?
- When they do not start primary school at this age, what are the reasons?
- Are there any groups of children who are not in primary school? What are the reasons?

Children's readiness

- What do children need in order to be ready for first grade in LOCALITY?
 - *Probe for:* teacher's expectations of readiness: maturity, behaviour, obedience, language, cognitive abilities, etc.
- Would you say that children in LOCALITY are generally well prepared to start primary school? Explain why or why not.
 - Who helps them to prepare?
 - What kind of preparation is provided?
- Do you think any particular groups of children are more or less ready for primary school?
 - *Probe for* beliefs based on gender, minority status, etc.
- What could be done to improve children's readiness for primary school?
 - Do parents have a role? If so, what? Do teachers have a role? If so, what? Who else?

Children's transition experiences

- What could prevent or delay children from entering primary school (e.g. lack of a birth certificate, living in the wrong area)? Probe for details.
- What are the worries/problems that children in LOCALITY have when they first start primary school?
- Is there anything that the primary school can do (or could do) to help children starting school to have good experiences?

Expectations of first grade

- What do you expect children to learn during first grade?
- For this age group, what makes a good first-grade classroom?
- For this age group, what makes a good first-grade teacher? (What are their characteristics?)

Role of/links with pre-school (and other early childhood services as appropriate)

- What makes a good pre-school? How can it help children as they enter first grade (e.g. communication/social skills, cognitive skills, pre-academic skills)?
- How is life in primary school different for children, compared with pre-school? (Talk about different types of pre-school if more than one type exists in the community.)
- As a primary-school teacher, do you co-ordinate directly with the pre-school(s)? (Probe for details.)

Progress and problems

- What are some of the reasons why children make good progress in school?
- Are any of your children not making good progress in school?
 - How do you know they are not making good progress (e.g. non-attendance; drop-out)?

Probe for details:

 - What are some of the reasons why they aren't doing so well?
 - Which children are at the greatest risk (girls versus boys; minority language groups, etc.)?
 - What could help them stay in primary school longer?
 - What about the children in your classroom? What do you expect will happen to them over the next few years, through to secondary school?

Specific questions concerning Young Lives case-study child(ren)	<p>If appropriate, invite specific comments about transition to school for case-study children, to find out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the teacher's knowledge of individual children • child(ren)'s experience of first days at school • child(ren)'s readiness, adjustment to school life • child(ren)'s progress and any problems (poor attendance, competing family demands, etc.) • risks of low achievement, early drop out, etc. • ways in which child(ren)'s prospects could be improved • the teacher's relationship with and attitude to home and parents.
Closing conversation	Ask if the teacher has any questions or comments about any aspect of the interview or research. Thank them for taking time to speak with you and for sharing their views and experiences.

4. Methods

This section provides guidance on methods for Qual-2 data collection. Qual-1 data collection involved individual and group-based methods with both cohorts of children, including interviews with their caregivers, teachers, and adult community members, which in most cases was complemented by observation within communities and home and school settings. Qual-2 will also combine individual and group-based approaches with observation, as described below.

4.1. Some suggestions for group-based methods

Group discussions to explore understandings of poverty (Older Cohort)

The exercise is structured around four focusing questions (see below). However, interviewers are encouraged to deviate from these to follow up interesting responses, get clarification, and elicit concrete examples.

- What are the local terms for (i) children or (ii) households who are poor? (One example given in a well-being exercise was 'a person who goes to bed hungry'.) Are there any other characteristics that a child or household who are [local term] would have? What makes people become [local term] and remain [local term]? (This idea is drawn from Johnston's work with the poverty tree in Peru [2006], where causes of poverty were visually represented as the 'roots' of a tree.)
- What problems do children who are [local term] face? (visually represented as the 'fruits' of the tree)
- How do you think that society views children who are [local term]? (For example, how are children who are [local term] treated in this community/ at school?)
- What can children/ their parents/ the community/ other organisations, etc. do to move out of this state?

Consider asking respondents to identify the three most important indicators, causes, and solutions (see Witter and Bukokhe 2004, Johnston 2008b).

One way to gather information about children's perceptions of poverty is to use a 'poverty tree'.

Poverty tree

Version: Older Cohort (group activity, with individual follow-up)

Note: There may be some overlap with the Well-being exercise, so combine your methods accordingly, and avoid duplication. Asking children to talk about poverty may be sensitive, so think carefully about how the discussion is framed, and about the questions that you ask. Keep the discussion general and not personal.

Information to gather	This exercise elicits children's views on the causes ('roots') and consequences ('fruits') of poverty.
Drawing the tree	As children begin to arrive at the session, ask them to draw a large tree as a group on a large (A2) piece of paper. When everyone else has arrived, gather children around the drawing.
Wealth indicators	<p>Ask the children to:</p> <p><i>Imagine a family with a boy/girl (same sex) of your age (in your community) who are rich/well-off. But do not tell us who you are thinking of. Keep it to yourself.</i></p> <p>When they have all thought of a family, ask them:</p> <p><i>What is it about this family that tells you that they are rich/well-off?</i></p> <p>Gather ideas on index cards or post-it notes. Ask questions about which of these things are most important, how many of the 'imagined families' have these characteristics, etc. [The note taker should take note of the order and if possible photograph the cards.]</p>
The poverty tree	<p>Then say:</p> <p><i>Imagine a family with a boy/girl (same sex) of your age (in your community) who are poor/struggling.</i></p> <p><i>Again, do not say out loud who you are thinking of. Keep it to yourself.</i></p> <p>Remove the 'rich' cards. When they have all thought of a poor family, ask them:</p> <p><i>What is it about this family that tells you that they are poor/struggling?</i></p> <p>Gather ideas on post-it notes. Write single summary words or pictures (e.g. 'holes in their clothes'), but don't record not every single thing mentioned: the tree should serve as a reminder, not a distraction from the discussion.</p> <p><i>What do you think makes families like this one poor?</i></p> <p>Explain that you want to know what makes families like this one poor, how people become poor, etc.</p> <p>Gather these ideas on post-it notes of one colour and arrange them to the left of the poverty cards.</p> <p><i>What are the results of poverty for families like this one?</i></p> <p>Write these suggestions on post-it notes of a second colour. Also ask children:</p> <p><i>What are the results of poverty for children your age in families like these? Is it the same for boys and girls?</i></p> <p>And write these on cards of a third colour.</p> <p>Ask children to draw links between the causes and impacts. Draw arrows if feasible (if the post-it notes can be stuck on a large piece of paper).</p>
Solutions	<p>Then explain that you want to know how people can stop being poor/become richer. Ask them:</p> <p><i>What could children's parents do to stop being poor?</i></p> <p><i>What could children of your age do to stop being poor?</i></p> <p><i>What could the government do to help children of your age stop being poor?</i></p>
Material needed	large sheets of paper and pens; post-it notes; index cards and blue-tack

Vignettes and storytelling

Vignettes were successfully used in Qual-1 to elicit children's views and experiences on school transitions. This was done in a group setting and carried out as a 'story-completion' task. The facilitator or one of the participants read an incomplete story and the group completed it orally, with the facilitator prompting the children to continue filling in the storyline until the story came to a comfortable conclusion. See examples below from Peru for adaptation in-country. (NB: these are about education, but the method can be adapted to address any topic.)

Vignettes and storytelling

Version: Younger and Older Cohorts

What kind of information do we want to gather through the story-completion exercise?

This is a data-gathering technique which may be used to elicit information on any number of topics. The answer to this question will depend on how the country team would like to use this exercise. In previous round, it has gathered information from children about the following:

- school transitions
- balancing school and work
- orphanhood
- decision-making in family contexts.

The facilitator reads the first lines of an incomplete story, and the members of the group take turns adding to the storyline. If you sit in a circle, you may use a ball to change turns from one person to the next. The facilitator prompts the children to continue filling in the storyline until the story comes to a comfortable conclusion.

It is important that the first few lines of the story are clear and that you have follow-up questions in mind to guide the story and to uncover the information that you wish to gather. Avoid providing too much information at the outset, or value-laden prompts (for example, instead of saying, 'As a result, he feels sad', ask 'How does he feel?' to get children's views on the situation).

- Juliana is in sixth grade of primary school. She likes to study, but her parents have told her that she will not continue studying after finishing primary school, because they need help at home. Juliana decided to talk to...
- Juan is in sixth grade of primary school, and he will soon finish school and begin secondary school. But the secondary school is far away, and he is worried. Furthermore, his teachers have told him many things about secondary school, for example that...
- Paola has just started first grade of secondary school. She feels strange, because she has new teachers, new classmates, more courses all in a new school. Sometimes she feels good because... Sometimes she feels bad because...

Illustrative examples of how vignettes might be tailored to specific contexts or interests:

- Nikhil is in his last year of (primary school). He thought he was going to go to the (government) secondary school in his (town/mandal), where his best friend is also going. His mother has just told him that he will go to boarding school outside (XX his mandal), where he will sleep and study. When he hears this, Nikhil feels...
- Mina is in her last year of (primary school). Her two elder brothers attend an English-medium secondary school in the next village. She has learned that next year she will attend the government school in her village. Mina feels...
- Other vignettes focusing on how particular children might experience early marriage, parental illness, entry to paid employment, moving/migrating, etc.

Note: Two or three vignettes seems an appropriate number to focus on in any one session; introducing more than three may become burdensome and does not necessarily yield greater information. You might present two vignettes and have the children choose to role play their favourite one.

Closing the conversation

At the end, thank the children for their participation and ask them if they have any comments or questions that they would like to add.

Items needed

A note or index card containing the standard text of the stories to be read out by the facilitator. Digital voice recorder. Ball or other 'passing' device to pass the turn among the group (e.g. when a child is finished, s/he rolls the ball to someone else in the group); this is optional.

Group timeline: Growing up in my town

Aims

To elicit the views of young people and their caregivers on the major transitions and special moments that girls/boys of their age experience and can expect to experience as members of their community (recognising that there are different groups of children within the community and therefore varying expectations).

The aim is to enhance the transitions data collected in Qual-1 which centred mainly on individual experiences and aspirations and their happy/sad memories. 'Growing up in LOCALITY' should get to what girls and boys as social groups in this community are expected to do/become, and the ways that these changes are marked (for example, through celebrations, ceremonies, separation rituals, and other events of processes). This includes (but should move beyond) institutional transitions such as the first day of school.

Group timeline: Growing up in my town [LOCALITY name]	
Version: Younger and Older Cohorts	
Description	The activity will generate a shared timeline of the major changes and events that young people experience in LOCALITY. As much as possible, the ideas should come from the participants, but the facilitator will probably need to do some prompting to stimulate discussion.
Draw and discuss the timeline	<p>Have a timeline already drawn, with girls or boys of varying ages, roughly sketched from baby to late adulthood, perhaps at five-year intervals, indicating clearly their current age on the timeline.</p> <p>Explain the purpose of method. Explain what the participants will be expected to do. Explain why it is important for us to understand their views on this theme.</p> <p>Facilitator briefly describes what s/he knows about boys/girls of their age in LOCALITY. S/he says she wants the group to walk her through the important things that happen over a lifetime.</p> <p>Start by having the group give a fictional name to a girl or boy (e.g. Pia, a girl) with whom they will walk through life.</p> <p>Go back to birth/baby on the timeline use the timeline to guide a discussion. Ideas for questions to guide the exercise include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does anything special happen when a baby girl is born here? (Celebration? Who celebrates? Why?) • When is the next time that something special happens for that baby? (For example, a naming ceremony / baptism / hair-cutting ceremony.) • Then what? (Will Pia go to school at some point? Any celebration involved? How will her life change? Does she wear different clothes?) • Then what? (Will changes happen to Pia's body? When? How does she feel about these changes? Will there be an event to recognise these changes?) • Then what? (When does Pia leave school? Will there be a party when she leaves school? Why/why not?) • Does she start talking to boys? When? • Will she get married? (How is this celebrated in LOCALITY?) When? • Will she have children? When? (How is this celebrated in LOCALITY, for Pia?) • Will she work outside the house? (Has Pia worked before now? When did she start working?)
Fill in the gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you think of anything else that Pia looks forward to every year? (For example, the harvest, village feasts, national holiday – how does she participate?) • Can you think of anything else that Pia can look forward to in her life?

Differing trajectories: make connections between certain choices and later outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would prevent Pia from starting school? What would happen? (You could quickly do a second timeline above the other, showing how her trajectory might be different.) • Why would Pia choose to do X? • What does Pia need in order to do X?
Extended discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this the same for boys/girls (other sex)? • And the same for their mothers/fathers?
Material needed	<p>Large sheets of paper and pens: pre-drawn timelines for child's use. <i>Note: where drawings are produced, please ensure that these are digitally photographed with accurate identification (Child ID and not child's name).</i></p>

Our community – how it has developed and how it changes

The group timeline described above can be adapted to address meta-level changes happening in the locality that may be impacting on childhoods (i.e. changes in land ownership; expansion in schooling that changes relations at home/within the household; new 'traditions' or practices that favour one group over another, political conflict, corruption, or violence, etc.). This would be done by eliciting a community history and discussing in detail significant changes over the past year and in the six years since Young Lives started coming to the site.

4.2. Some suggestions for individual methods

Daily diaries

The purpose is to gather information about the various activities that children perform inside and outside their household; and more importantly, to learn about the people they spend time with while doing these activities; how they feel about the things that they do; if they find them useful at present and future times; and what sorts of thing they gain/learn from them, etc. The guidelines used in Ethiopia are as follows.

Daily diary

Version: Younger and Older Cohorts

A week-long diary capturing children's time-use and how they feel about the things that they do can then be discussed during the interview.

Step One: Introduce the child to the Daily Activity Record Form

- Child is be given a diary form (as below) or a notebook where he/she can use a separate sheet for each day of the week. Child should be given a diary form and asked to record his/her daily activities every day for 24 hours, starting from when s/he wakes up in the morning.
- The diary should cover seven consecutive days: each day for 24 hours and divided into morning, afternoon and night. As far as possible, include at least two weekdays and two days of the weekend.
- Before the child is given the diary to record his/her daily activities, you must demonstrate how to record their daily activities.

**Step Two:
Recording daily
activities**

- Ask the child to record their daily activities and chores from they wake up in the morning until they go back to bed in the evening.
- Please check diaries every two or three days to ensure that they are being completed correctly and to keep the children motivated. You could also ask the child the following:

I've noticed you carry out ACTIVITY1 several times a week...is this an important activity for you? Why? Do you like to do it? Can you decide whether to do it or not? Has anyone taught you how to do it? Do you feel that you're learning something from it? What things? Would you rather do something different? What would that be? Why? Do other boys/girls do this activity?

- Ensure that the child's major activities, including schooling, work, play, and related activities, are properly addressed in the diary.

On the last date of the diary, the researcher should discuss the contents with the child, focusing on how s/he feels about particular activities and what these mean to her/him. If the method was used in Qual-1, it will also be possible to discuss any changes in their activities.

**Further
questions**

- *Tell me, out of all these activities, is there any that you are being paid for?*
- *If you compare the activities that you do now with those you were doing last year, are there any changes? Why?*
- *Do you feel you've learned something new since our last visit? Did someone teach you? How did you learn that? Do you think this is going to be useful for you in the future? How?*

Identification: file name, child ID, age, sex, date (e.g. 101008–171008)

Period	Estimated time spent (if known)	Activities (include where and with whom)
Monday 10 October		
Between waking up and breakfast		Washed my face and ate breakfast at home
Between breakfast and lunch	2 hours	Played football on the street with friends Ate lunch with my mother
Between lunch and dinner	2 hours 5 hours 2 hours	Played at home with a friend Studied at DSTV house alone Watched football at DSTV house
Between dinner and bedtime		Ate dinner with my father and slept
Tuesday 11 October		
Between waking up and breakfast		
Between breakfast and lunch		
Between lunch and dinner		

Material needed Worksheet or notebook with the seven days of the week, pencil, eraser, felt-tip pens

Mobility maps

These can be used in combination with the daily diaries to get a sense of where particular children go to during the week and where they go to carry out their daily activities. The map can be as simple as a large circle for the child's home, with lines and smaller circles radiating out from this to key destinations to give a sense of the distance travelled. Please ask whether they have left the community since our last research visit, and if so ask them to explain why, for how long, who with, how they felt about the experience, etc.

5. Observations

5.1. The role of observation in Young Lives Qualitative Research

We propose for Qual-2 that greater importance should be attached to observation and detailed note-taking on the contexts of children's lives. It encourages fieldworkers to seize opportunities for spending time with children in the activities and in the places that are important to them, and to produce notes to complement data reports from interviews and group activities.

Given the time constraints and heavy workloads for fieldworkers at Qual-2, we cannot expect to do the kind of extensive participant-observation associated with long-term ethnographic studies. Nonetheless, a selected group of team members with keen observation skills may take a greater role in conducting targeted participant-observation (i.e. concerning specific children, spaces, or events or at community-level). Some possible foci for this include the following.

- Schoolyards or classrooms (to complement more structured observations).
- Children's work activities and places of work (where this does not put the child at risk).
- Children's play and leisure.
- Children's journeys through space (e.g. to work, to school, etc.).
- Community spaces of importance (e.g. religious institutions, main plazas, market place).
- Community events or household celebration (if invitations are issued).

Observations can also capture in a detailed and non-judgemental manner such matters as appearance (clothing, approximate age, sex, physical appearance); verbal behaviour and interactions (who speaks to whom, tone, what they say); physical behaviour and gestures; personal space; human traffic (people who come and go); and people who stand out (or who receive a lot of attention from others).

When observing in school contexts, it is very important to provide details of the setting, the material/educational resources and space available to children and teachers, the routine of the day, the style of interaction and teaching, use of discipline, etc.

Interaction between the 'researcher' and 'researched' is now acknowledged as fundamental to the process of generating qualitative data and it should be fully documented. While a few fieldworkers may be given more responsibility for participant-observation, every fieldworker should be asked to maintain a notebook for writing daily field notes. This will encourage reflection on his/her interaction with specific children and other members of the community. These need not be lengthy (no more than a few pages) and should highlight key observations, interactions and reflections, and (when possible) should include summaries of or quotations from dialogue. It is also desirable to document information and messages communicated through mass media, such as radio and local newspapers, or to gather information from schools (e.g. information leaflets, class rules, etc.), because these help to build a picture of the local context.

5.2. Home observations

We propose that all the teams should produce detailed notes on the child's home, to provide more information than is contained in the paragraph/s on interview context. The notes should focus primarily on the condition and cleanliness of the house (e.g. does the roof leak), how the space is used (e.g. does the child have a separate space to sleep or study), what other household members are doing during the visit, and the presence of resources such as books or a television. Notes made during Qual-1 should be updated to note changes in, for example, the structure of the house (e.g. a new roof), the furniture, child's space for sleeping or studying, and child-relevant resources such as toys, books and school materials. This may be a good moment to explore conversationally any changes in the household composition (e.g. additional children, or people who are renting rooms), rather than asking direct questions during an interview.

Home observation (used in Vietnam and Ethiopia)
1. General information
Observer name and ID
Household ID
Date(s) of observation
Time(s) of observation
Persons present during observation (use name and relation to child); Spaces observed (e.g. living room, child's room, etc.)
Comments (general information)
2. Exterior
Comments (exterior)
3. Interior
Comments (overall interior condition)

4. Evidence of child-focused resources

- a) Materials for child care and play, whether commercial or natural (Describe)
- b) Books, magazines, or other text-based materials (Describe)
- c) Radio, TV, computer, etc.
- d) Any other education-relevant materials
- e) A table or similar area for the child to study (Describe; write n/a if not applicable)
- f) Comments (child-focused resources)

5. Activities and social interaction

What was the child mainly doing during observations? (Describe in detail where possible)

Who did the child interact with during observation? (Describe the nature of interaction)

6. Please rate the overall home (one rating to include interior, exterior, etc.), using the following rating system:

- 1= worse than most homes in this community;
- 2= like most other homes in this community;
- 3=better than most homes in this community.

Other comments on home observation:

5.3. School and classroom observations

Teams should continue to make school and classroom observations using the forms below, as these environments may have changed during the year. Case-study children may also have moved from one environment to another (e.g. from a relaxed and friendly pre-school to a more formal and structured elementary school), and this information will help to contextualise their feelings about the change.

School Observation
1. General information
Observer name and ID
Community ID
Date(s) of observation
Time(s) of observation
Name of school; type of school (e.g. Government, private, grades covered)
Who was present during observation? (e.g. students, head teacher)
Comments (general information):
2. Classroom information
Year-group or grade of classroom observed (or age range of children)
Subject(s) taught during observation
Language of instruction
How many children were present in this classroom?
How many girls were present?
How many boys were present?
How old were the majority of students?
How many teachers or other adults were working with this class?
How did most children travel to school?
If observed: is there organised school transportation (e.g. bus)?
List the words that you think best describe the general tone of the classroom (e.g. well-organised, chaotic, noisy, regimented, informal, child-centred, strict, welcoming, etc.)

Other comments (classroom information)

3. Indoor classroom

Space: approximate size ('feet', 'metres', or other local measure) or relative size

Where do children sit?

Do children have assigned seats?

Is there enough space for each child to sit comfortably?

4. Educational materials

What educational materials appear to be available and in use (e.g. blackboard, computer, abacus, etc.)?
(Describe)

What is the condition of the equipment?

Are textbooks shared or personal?

If shared, between how many students?

Are exercise books shared or personal?

Are educational materials age-appropriate?

5. Play materials

Describe evidence of play items in the classroom.

Are play materials age-appropriate?

6. Key visual displays and other displays

Produced by the children?

Provided by the teacher (e.g. national or regional flag, religious symbols, etc.)?

7. Teaching style

Which of the following best describes the teaching style in this classroom
(A= most formal and E = least formal):

- A Teacher controls class from front of classroom and does not interact with children at all (or only minimally)
- B Teacher mainly uses whole-class instruction, and children mainly reply to instructions/questions in unison
- C Teacher uses whole-class instruction as well as choosing individual children to answer questions or complete tasks
- D Teacher uses a mixture of class-based and group-based instruction, including responding to individual children's questions/comments.
- F Children mainly work individually and/or in small groups, and teacher moves around the room to assist and respond to questions.

Comments:

How does the teacher react when children answer correctly (if observed)?

How does the teacher react when children answer incorrectly (if observed)?

What discipline techniques does the teacher use (or threaten to use)?

What is the overall tone of teacher–student interaction?

What is the overall tone of child–child interaction?

Do the children appear to be happy and enjoying the lesson(s)?

Are children able to make individual choices about what they study, with whom, at what pace, etc.?

Does the school have a library?

If observed: approximately how many books?

Who can access the books?

8. Overall assessment of classroom (to be completed at the end of the observation period)

Rate the quality compared with other classrooms you have seen in similar areas.
Provide comments to justify your rating: 1= poor, 2= good, 3= very good, 4= excellent

Physical resources (e.g. space available, condition, furniture) – score and comments:

Educational resources (books, learning equipment) – score and comments:

Teaching (teacher engagement with children) – score and comments:

Learning (children's engagement with lesson(s) – score and comments:

Other comments:

9. Routines

What arrangements are made for children to eat during the school day?

Where do children eat their meal(s)?

Where is the nearest drinking water?

Where is the nearest toilet?

Is the toilet same-sex or shared?

Is the toilet sanitary?

Is there adequate supervision of children's toilet use?

10. Schoolyard

External condition of school and surrounding space

Where do children eat their meal(s)?

Where do children play?

Is there outdoor play equipment? (Describe.)

Are play items age-appropriate?

10. Transitions

Is there any evidence of preparation for transitions from pre-school to primary, or between different grades/cycles?

Is there any evidence of communication between teachers and parents?

Classroom observation protocol¹

General information

School name

Teacher's name

Grade

Subject

Topic

Time (from-to): hh: mm – hh: mm; date;

Observer name/ID

1. Observing the stage

1.1. The physical stage: Describe briefly the characteristics of the classroom, furniture, decoration, lighting, heating, ventilation. Note down any changes in the scenario produced during the observation (for example, changes in pupils' desk arrangements). (This was often represented as a sketch.)

1.2. The actors: teacher/students: Describe briefly the way teacher and students dress, personal characteristics, racial and body features, body attitude and language. Indicate location of the observer in the classroom and any change in this during the observation.

¹ Adapted from an observation guide developed by Patricia Ames, the Lead Qualitative Researcher in Peru.

2. Observing the interaction

Please register the type of students' participation, classroom environment, the way the teacher addresses the topics, and what methodological strategies s/he uses. Consider the following questions and answer them using examples that arise during the observation.

2.1. Students' participation

- About the teacher: how does s/he stimulate students' participation? How does s/he respond to students' participation?
- About the students: how attentive, interested, involved are the students? How do they respond to what the teacher offers (for example, they write down, listen, ask questions, do not listen, do other things, sleep, etc.)?

2.2. Questions

- About the teacher: does s/he ask questions of the students during the lesson? How often? What type of question does s/he ask?
- Type of question (*researcher ticks yes or no if these were asked*): complete a sentence; ask for an example; repeat information from previous lesson; repeat information from this lesson; check understandings; ask for students' explanations/hypothesis about the topic; ask for students' opinions, points of view.
- To whom does the teacher address the questions (*researcher indicates numbers of the following*): to the whole group; to a particular student; to anyone who wants to reply; to boys; to girls?
- How do the students react to teacher' questions and comments?

2.3. Teacher–student interaction and classroom environment

- Who takes the initiative for the interaction (*researcher indicates numbers of the following*): only the teacher; teacher and students; only the students.
- How does the teacher address the students? Does s/he use the male generic to refer to the whole group? Does s/he show a different treatment if addressing boys or girls or in response to any other observable characteristic among the students? Are there any observable sanctions, punishments or prizes? Describe them. In what circumstances do they arise?
- Educational materials: what educational materials are used in the classroom, and how?
- The lesson: activities, contents and time-use. How does the teacher attract the attention of his/her students? Does s/he try to motivate them before starting the topic? How does s/he develop the topic?
- What are the contents of the lesson? How are these contents presented? Are they presented in a clear, extended, comprehensive way? What is the level of complexity in the development of contents? What activities does the teacher carry out? What type of activities does s/he assign to students? How does the teacher use his/her time during the lesson? What activities take more time? How does the teacher assess the students?

3. The observer

- How does the presence of the observer affect the teacher and the students? How do they react to his/her presence? What is the observer's perception of the teacher, the students, and the institution observed? In what physical and emotional conditions is the observer?
- *The guide concludes with a standard form on which the researcher marks the appropriate square that corresponds to adequate, middling, or good (e.g. they don't have water, children bring it from home; there is water, but you can't use it properly [i.e. it isn't covered]; there is water, and children make good use of it.)*
- The topics covered are (1) Physical environment; (2) Movement; (3) Lighting; (4) Ventilation; (5) Cleanliness; (6) Condition; (7) School furniture; (8) Whether this is appropriate for young children; (9) Toilets; and (10) Water.

5.4. Participant observation: a complementary method for Qual-2 field work

Participant observation is when a researcher shares in everyday activities in the community while keeping a detailed record of his or her impressions. It constitutes a strategic use of fieldworkers' time outside interviews and group sessions to generate information on specific children, groups of children, the community context, and the research process. Participant observation with children and in their communities will be useful for comparing and contrasting what children say they do with observations of what they actually do. For example, a girl tells a researcher in an interview that she doesn't play with a certain group of children, but later the researcher sees the girl playing jump-rope with these children in the schoolyard. This is the kind of contradiction that could tactfully be followed up in subsequent conversations with the child.

As much as possible, child-focused participant observation should centre on the activities that children would normally do if the researcher were not present. For example, a boy might tell the researcher about how he goes to work on his family's fields on Saturday mornings. Accompanying him to his fields will give the researcher insights into the journey that the boy takes to get there, his work setting, and the nature of work that the boy carries out (light or heavy, dangerous, pleasant, etc.), as well as providing a concrete basis for discussing the child's likes and dislikes about working in the fields. Joining in his activities in this way may also demonstrate to the boy that the researcher finds what he does interesting. There is no reason why individual interviews should not take place in such settings, and in fact such settings may make the interview more like a *conversation*, which is preferable.

The twin nature of simultaneously participating and observing makes writing 'objective' field notes difficult. It is therefore crucial that the fieldworker reflect on his or her experiences and role in generating the data. Field notes should nonetheless be written as objectively as possible, trying to strike a delicate balance between describing what you observe (more 'objective') and interpreting what you see (more 'subjective'). Two examples have been extracted from Mack et al. (2005) 'Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide' (p. 15) to illustrate the different approaches to reporting

More objective: The waiting room of the antenatal clinic was empty except for one girl, who looked to be approximately 5 to 8 years old. She was sitting in the corner behind a chair. She peeked out from behind it and looked at us when we entered the room talking. Her nose was running and her eyes were red and swollen.

More subjective or interpretive: The waiting room of the antenatal clinic was deserted except for a young girl who had been abandoned there by her mother. She had been wedged into the corner behind a chair so that she couldn't wander off. She glared at us because we were making so much noise. She had probably been crying for a long time.

6. Ethics: respect and consent

When you start field work, if the fieldworkers are new to your team, be ready to introduce them to everyone in the community – including, of course, the children and families. Explain that while ideally the person who visited previously would still be with us, this wasn't possible, so some details have been handed over to avoid repeating questions.

Remember to seek informed consent for every activity, ideally audio-recording verbal consent. Continue to explain activities, so that people/parents can ask questions. Remember that parents' refusal overrules children's agreement, and if parents agree and a child refuses, the child cannot be included. In your data-gathering report please record any reasons for, or speculations about, refusals by parents or children.

Here are some difficult questions that you might be asked. It would be useful to have a response in your mind. Please add any others that you have encountered in Qual-1 to share with others.

- Why are you here?
- Will you help my child?
- (for children/families in the community but not included in Young Lives research) Why aren't you coming to MY house?
- Why didn't the lady who visited last time/who promised to return come this time?
- How do you know so much about me when we haven't met before? (A useful response to this is to compare the situation to when a new teacher comes to your school: there is a handover process from the outgoing teacher to the new teacher.)
- What are you going to do for us, what are you giving us in return? What do we get out of this?
- Please can you give me your mobile phone number so I can find you when I need help?
- You did some tests last year on my child. How is my child doing in school?

6.1. Research reciprocity

Research reciprocity is one of our ethical principles. There are many ways to prepare information to feed back to the communities, families and children with whom we work. This may be done in an oral presentation (in a village meeting, or a gathering with Young Lives families), but it is also a good idea to go prepared with something written, such as high-quality leaflets aimed at presenting preliminary findings in appropriate formats. These should be simple messages from the research, aimed at a variety of audiences and age groups. Other Young Lives materials might be shared, for example, with interested teachers, where appropriate.

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Young Lives (2013c) *Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide: Round Two (2008)*, Technical Note 28, Oxford: Young Lives.

Young Lives (2013d) *Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide: Round Three (2010/11)*, Technical Note 28, Oxford: Young Lives.

Appendix 1. Memorandum of Understanding: Respecting Children in Research

This Memorandum of Understanding was developed collaboratively amongst members of the qualitative research teams, following piloting and group discussions. These principles were developed for use in fieldworker training meetings and to inspire continual reflection throughout the research process.

Remember to seek informed consent for every activity, ideally audio-recording verbal consent. Continue to explain activities, so that people/parents can ask questions. Remember parents' refusal overrules children's agreement, and if parents agree and child refuses, child can't be included. Please record any reasons/speculations as to why parents or children refuse in the data gathering report.

Key principles: respecting children in research

Note: the form of wording below is directed to children, and may need to be adapted for different respondent groups. This is a protocol, to be translated into relevant languages using locally relevant examples and forms of expression. Ethical considerations are a critical part of planning field research and should be included in training and piloting agendas for discussion.

1. Introduce yourself

Be sensitive to local concerns about children (parental fears of child abduction, for example). Reassure people (parents, professionals, children) about any concerns relevant to the specific sites. The question about 'what's in it for us?' is inevitable, so it is best to tackle it head on: Young Lives is a research study... we are here to learn from you, but we cannot promise to improve your life.

2. Consent

You must explain the following to children/parents/carers/community members:

Who you are

For example, explain to children: *Young Lives is a study of children growing up in four countries, India, Peru, Vietnam and Ethiopia, taking place over 15 years. We are trying to find out about children's everyday lives: the things you do and the important people in your life, and how these things affect how you feel. Bits of what you say/write/draw will be used in reports that we write, which we hope will be helpful to local and national governments when making plans/planning services for children in the future.*

Archiving

The information that you give us will be stored on a computer. We are sharing the information that we collect now, and the information that we collected on our previous visits, with other trusted researchers (people like us) in Ethiopia/India/Peru/Vietnam and internationally. Take particular care not to raise expectations about the impact of the research. We are here to learn from you, but we cannot promise to improve your life.

Explain

- How long you will be in the community on this visit.
- What you are asking them to do, and how long it might take.
- Why you are asking them to undertake activities (whether talking individually, talking in groups, drawing, body-mapping, etc.).
- If you are doing group activities, and other adults are present, politely suggest they leave (if appropriate). For individual interviews, explain that if a child wants another person to be there, such as a sibling, friend or parent/carer, this is OK, but emphasise that you are interested in the child's answers.
- How the data (including photos and videos) might be used.

Anonymity

Data will be anonymous: e.g. *your name will not be used, so we can describe what you think without anyone knowing that it is you. We will also disguise the name of the community where you live.* If children want to put their name on material that they produce, let them do so, but disguise it before the materials are digitally photographed.

Confidentiality

e.g. I will treat what you tell me as confidential. This means that what you say will be shared with other members of the research team, but I am not going to tell your family or anybody in the community what you tell me. Your name will not be used when we tell people what we have found.

Child protection: If you say something that makes me worried about your safety, I will talk to you about it first, then I may talk to my boss/supervisor.

Explain to children/caregivers that they may opt out at any time: i.e. they may ask for all the data and information that they have given to be removed from the project records and destroyed at any point.

Respecting children in research

Emphasise that you are interested in children's descriptions in their own words, and that there are no right or wrong answers. They can leave an activity if they don't want to carry on. They don't have to answer all the questions or participate in all the activities.

Respect the fact that a child may be reluctant to speak about a sensitive topic. If you feel that children are reluctant to speak for any reason, move on to the next question. This is especially important in a group, so that they don't feel embarrassed in front of other children. Be sensitive to children's body language and tone of voice. Do not put words into their mouths, although you may need to probe, in which case avoid leading questions. Some examples of leading questions are: *School is good, isn't it? ... Health-care workers treat people in your community badly, don't they?* Use open questions, not closed questions that lead to yes/no answers. For example: *Tell me how you feel about school. ... How do health-care workers treat people in your community?*

Ask children for permission to make audio recordings, and explain why (If they ask, let them hear themselves for a short while). Ask children for permission to take photos/video, and for permission to photograph their drawings or other material that they produce. Leave their drawings with them to keep.

4. *Conduct in the field*

Be punctual and well organised, and listen. Keep appointments. Find the room, set out chairs and materials in advance. Turn off your mobile phone. Offer refreshments. Keep a flexible timetable and be prepared to have a break between activities, especially when children appear to be unmotivated or are struggling to focus on certain tasks.

As a representative of Young Lives, under no circumstances should you hit /strike a child, even if this is acceptable in local contexts. Do not speak to children in a rude or insulting way. Avoid raising your voice throughout the sessions. Rather than creating a school-like atmosphere where discipline is valued, try to create a place where children can communicate freely and spontaneously. Avoid guiding or directing children: for example, when drawing (e.g. by questioning their choice of colours, or shapes, etc.) or when discussing in groups (e.g. by contradicting them).

At the end of your visit, explain to the children what will happen next with the information that they have produced. (i.e. it will be taken back to local HQ, typed up, and then sent to the main HQ in Oxford). Ask them if they have any questions, and allow them time to prepare questions before you leave. If appropriate (i.e. if they seem comfortable and forthcoming), ask them how they experienced the activity, and include examples of this in your group report.

Thank the children for their participation. They do not need to thank you, nor should they be expected to. Allow children to say goodbye to you, if they wish to.

5. *Finally*

After field work, you must return all material (written, audio, visual) to the Lead Qualitative Researcher. Be sensitive to the possibility of inadvertently revealing personal information in the community (e.g. don't recycle paper in the community/locally; after typing your reports, manually shred your notes if necessary). You must respect confidentiality at all times, i.e. do not discuss data with people outside the team. Young Lives (country office) and Oxford HQ retain full responsibility for the use of Young Lives material.

I have read the instructions above and agree to them.

I have read the instructions above and agree to them.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide: Round Two (2008)

This document is a reproduction of a fieldwork guide produced collaboratively by an international team of researchers taking part in the Young Lives study. Young Lives is a long-term study of childhood poverty in four countries: Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh state), Peru and Vietnam. Young Lives is working with a pro-poor sample of children drawn from 20 sites in each country, and includes two age cohorts (2,000 children who were born in 2001-02, and 1,000 children who were born in 1994-95 in each country). Three rounds of the household and child survey have been completed to date, in 2002, 2006-07 and 2009, interspersed with a longitudinal qualitative survey in 2007, 2008 and 2010/11. The longitudinal qualitative study is tracking 50 children in each study country, using a case-study approach to document their changing life trajectories over time. Further rounds of the household survey are due in 2013 and 2016, with the fourth round of qualitative research in 2014.

This document is the manual that guided the second of four planned rounds of data collection in 2008 as part of a longitudinal qualitative research design. The longitudinal qualitative study is tracking 50 children in each study country, using a case-study approach to document their changing life trajectories over time. The research guide for each round of research is available on the Young Lives website.

We share these documents for other researchers carrying out social research with children and young people in poverty to adapt, use and develop in their own work. We have tried to maintain as much of the original document as possible; this means that the language is directed towards field researchers working as part of Young Lives. Internally, we refer to the different rounds of data collection as 'Qual-1', 'Qual-2', and 'Qual-3', and these are the terms used in this document. A further document, the Young Lives Longitudinal Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers, provides background and an overview of the longitudinal qualitative research to date.

This document was drafted in early 2008 before we embarked upon the second round of our research. We have checked and updated it, along with guides for the first and third rounds of research, ready for publication in this format in early 2013. We would be very interested to hear from anyone who adapts or uses any of the ideas contained within this Guide for their own work.

About Young Lives

Young Lives is an international study of childhood poverty, involving 12,000 children in 4 countries over 15 years. It is led by a team in the Department of International Development at the University of Oxford in association with research and policy partners in the 4 study countries: Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam.

Through researching different aspects of children's lives, we seek to improve policies and programmes for children.

Young Lives Partners

Young Lives is coordinated by a small team based at the University of Oxford, led by Professor Jo Boyden.

- *Ethiopian Development Research Institute, Ethiopia*
- *Centre for Economic and Social Sciences, Andhra Pradesh, India*
- *Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visvavidyalayam (Women's University), Andhra Pradesh, India*
- *Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo (Group for the Analysis of Development), Peru*
- *Instituto de Investigación Nutricional (Institute for Nutrition Research), Peru*
- *Center for Analysis and Forecasting, Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam*
- *General Statistics Office, Vietnam*
- *Child and Youth Studies Group (CREET), The Open University, UK*
- *Oxford Department of International Development (ODID), University of Oxford, UK*
- *Save the Children*

Contact:

Young Lives

Oxford Department of International Development (ODID), University of Oxford, Queen Elizabeth House, 3 Mansfield Road, Oxford OX1 3TB, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1865 281751
Email: younglives@younglives.org.uk
Website: www.younglives.org.uk