Young Lives
An International Study of Childhood Poverty

Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide

Round Three (2010/2011)

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

Contents

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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 third of four planned rounds of data collection in 2010–11 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.

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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. Background and preparatory work

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 in 2010 between Young Lives staff in Oxford and in the four study countries. This packet of information will inform and form the basis of country-level research design and field manuals for data collection in Spring 2011.

1.1. Key contribution to the wider Young Lives study

Young Lives is conducting a third round of data collection in 2010–11 as part of its on-going longitudinal qualitative research focused on 200+ case-study children across our study countries: Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh), 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 the 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.

The broad question guiding our longitudinal research is this:

> *How does poverty interact with other factors at individual, household, community and inter-generational levels to shape children's life trajectories over time?*

The qualitative research focuses on factors and processes explaining the diverging trajectories of Young Lives children, rather than measuring aspects of their lives at a particular point in time. 'Trajectory' describes a pathway from one time point to another, also implying 'direction' over time.

Most analyses of demographic differences in paths into/out of poverty have been based on cross-sectional findings or differences between two points in time. Because there are many different paths between two (or more) points, trajectories will reveal differences determined by gender, race/ethnicity, and family resources, including attention to those factors that reduce risk impact and vulnerability, and open up opportunities in young people's lives.

Our assumption is that children's trajectories are punctuated and shaped by key events and processes, or what we call 'transitions', and that these transition points present children and families with critical choices. Like 'trajectory', 'transition' is a broad concept, referring to processes of change across the life course. Here, we are keen to capture both what we as researchers assume to be relevant and important (e.g. the move from one school to a different school, or death of a parent) and what our research participants view as important (e.g. a child describing as a 'turning point' the day when he was given his own small plot of land to cultivate on the family farm). The qualitative data that we collect on key events complement other Young Lives data such as household-level information on shocks and community-level information on disasters or new sources of social protection.

The strength of the broader qualitative research is its longitudinal case-study design. But there is a complementary role for one-off qualitative sub-studies to carry out more focused research (e.g. to assess a particular social protection programme, or to strengthen analysis of a specific set of survey findings); these would be planned separately from the longitudinal qualitative case-level research that is described in this document.

1.2.   Background to Qual-3

Qual-1 and Qual-2 were designed to generate a variety of information about/with individual children participating in the wider Young Lives study. A 'mosaic' of methods was used to bring together different stakeholders' perspectives on childhood transitions and well-being: for example, children's caregivers, teachers, health professionals and community authorities. Qual-1 provided baseline information on the everyday lives, households and community and service environments of case-study children, and one year later Qual-2 documented changes in these areas of children's lives.

It has been three years since the first round of qualitative research took place (2007), making Qual-3 a key opportunity to continue documenting *changes* in children's lives, families and communities, but this time with a stronger emphasis on collecting information that will strengthen our understanding of community changes, households cycles and the factors that contribute to children's diverging life trajectories. In Qual-3 we also want to learn more about the extent to which children are involved in the decision-making that affects their lives (e.g. to stay in or leave school, to marry now or later, to stay in or leave the community). This kind of information aims to capture processes, 'mechanisms', and children's and adults' explanations; this will complement analysis of survey data identifying correlations and associations between different variables and outcomes over time.

At the time of Qual-3, the Younger Cohort children will be 9 to 10 years old and the Older Cohort will be aged 16 to 17, thus requiring us to anticipate the experiences relevant for these particular age groups.

Younger Cohort (9 to 10 years old)

The Younger Cohort may be half-way through their primary education, so we can collect information on their school progress, to include repetition, those who have left school, and their school experiences, looking at differences between those who were in pre-school and those who were not; and whether they are benefiting from new programmes. Also, in many of our contexts, boys and girls of this age assume greater roles and responsibilities within/outside the family home; for this reason, we will pay attention to their skills/knowledge formation (social, spiritual, technical, cultural, etc.) and changes in their time-use and relationships. We will also elicit their perceptions of well-being and aspirations that we did not probe in previous rounds.

Older Cohort (16 to 17 years old)

It is also an opportune moment to elicit from the Older Cohort information on their acquisition of skills and knowledge within and outside formal schooling. Children from this cohort may be finishing or leaving school, possibly increasing their involvement in the labour market, and we know that some of them may already have married, given birth to their first children, or experienced other changes in social status related to migration or membership of a faith community. We are asking older children to reflect on the extent to which they were involved in decisions affecting their life trajectories and their well-being, including any critical events and challenges that they have had to manage, as well as notable sources of support upon

which they have drawn. We explore which children have more choices over their life course and which children have decisions taken for them by parents or other influential persons in their lives.

Qual-3 design aims to reflect learning from Qual-1 and Qual-2 and also important patterns emerging from early analysis of the Round 3 household and child survey, as well as other Young Lives data sources. Preliminary survey analysis (Round 3, 2009) provides important contextual information for Qual-3 research design, including the following broad findings:

- Although relative head-count poverty appears to be declining, the relative poverty gap and severity may have remained the same or increased (in some cases), indicating that it is difficult to lift the extremely poor out of poverty.

- Major challenges in all countries are existing inequalities and social exclusion. Preliminary R3 survey analysis indicates improvement in some outcomes for children (e.g. school enrolment, malnutrition, mortality rates); however, it is clear that not all children are benefiting equally: there are differences, for example, between the poor and the least poor, urban and rural communities, boys and girls, etc.).

- Shocks have long-term consequences for children's physical development, education outcomes, etc. (in Ethiopia, for example).

- Despite improvements in wealth indicators and increased access to services (electricity, sanitation facilities and safe water), subjective poverty – as in the case of Ethiopia – does not reflect these improvements.

- More children are in school, but are they learning the right combination of social, cultural, cognitive and non-cognitive skills to deal with a modern world?

These preliminary findings emphasise the need to understand children's individual circumstances within key contextual and structural factors, including the political, economic, social and cultural contexts operating within our communities.

1.3. Research focus for Qual-3

For the above reasons, our third round of qualitative research is guided by the following broad questions:

1. What shape have children's life trajectories taken and what are the processes explaining these patterns, including factors related to poverty? In what ways do children's trajectories reflect intergenerational change or continuity? Are there differences between groups of children – for example, according to sex, caste, ethnicity, religion, household, location, community types?

2. What have been the major transitions influencing changes in children's life trajectories? How have these been experienced by children and families, including children's own roles in decision-making?

3. What have been the main sources of support and risk to children's transitions, including their interpersonal relationships and their resources at individual, household and community levels?

4. How have different transitions shaped children's life trajectories? Have these opened up or constrained opportunities for children's present and future lives?

1.4. Themes to explore in Qual-3

We can prioritise the broad dimensions of children's life trajectories that we want to capture at Qual-3 so that we respond to wider policy and research priorities within the project. At the level of individual case-study children, these are changes and continuities in the following trajectories:

- **School trajectories:** transitions through grades, classrooms, institutions, schooling types and locations, including transitioning out of school.

- **Work trajectories:** capturing the variety of paid and unpaid contributions that young people make to their families and to themselves through work, and how this supports or interferes with their schooling and with their evolving social identities.

- **Social trajectories:** young people's integration into households and communities through their changing roles, responsibilities and identities.

The case-level information is used to identify broader social and environmental factors and processes affecting young people's lives. Thus, crucial contextual information will be gathered in Qual-3, as in previous rounds, including information about the following:

- **Households:** significant events/shocks and changes to membership, location, livelihoods, sources of support and children's roles; whether household circumstances have improved or worsened since 2008.

- **School environments:** observations on the quality of children's schooling and information collected with teachers and other school-based informants. (Note: the need for this, as well as the complexity of data collected, can be discussed with each country team, as school-based components may be used instead.)

- **Work environments:** where young people in the community, including Young Lives children, work; what they do at different times of the day and year; the conditions of their work; and whether or not certain groups of children work more or less than others or in certain sectors.

- **Residential areas:** the material and social conditions of children's neighbourhoods or villages; the sources of risk and support; the factors that determine whether it is considered a good or bad place for growing up or for raising children.

- **Wider environments:** the key events in the history of Young Lives communities that make them distinct from others; aspects of the climate/environment that affect communities; notable shocks; the services, programmes and other sources of support available to children and families, and whether or not any are considered more (or less) important for supporting Young Lives children and families; how the community is faring in relation to other communities in the area.

1.5. Mapping Qual-3 research to wider Young Lives themes

In 2010 the wider Young Lives study identified three core themes to guide its research and policy work over the next few years and Qual-3 was designed to contribute to these priorities. These are 'Learning, work and transitions', 'Children's experiences of poverty', and 'Dynamics of childhood poverty'. Below, under each theme, we summarise the core information that we plan to collect in Qual-3, and we propose key methods and respondents.

Learning, work and transitions

> *Information on the daily lives of children and young people, their everyday contexts of learning, their daily time-use, and how these change as children grow older or their circumstances or communities change.*

One of our main areas of questioning will be the major transitions experienced by children in our sample since Qual-2. We will gather children's and adults' accounts of what they consider 'successful' transitions for boys and girls aged 9 to 10 and 16 to 17, and what is needed to achieve them (e.g. knowledge, skills, resources). We will strengthen our data on how different spheres of children's learning environments interact (formal and informal, inside and outside school), and how the knowledge/skills acquired within them is differentially valued by different groups of children and adults.

Young people balance multiple expectations and responsibilities, and we will collect information on how children balance the demands of school, work and home. We want to know what the factors are, including poverty, that shape the choices available to children in relation to how they spend their time, what they are able to learn, and the impacts of these choices on their life trajectories. Analysis of the data collected should indicate the structural factors that are producing inequalities in children's learning, time-use and transitions, and the factors that reduce inequalities.

Learning, work and transitions: proposed methods

a) Individual interviews with Younger and Older Cohort children, to cover:
- how they spend their time (time-use), and changes since 2008;
- roles and responsibilities, and how they manage different demands on their lives (e.g. school/work/home);
- relationships, especially social support;
- things they have learned; where they have learned them; how they feel about what they have learned.

b) Group activities with the Younger Cohort:
- daily time-use activity: the way they spend their time (time-use); their roles and responsibilities; and how they feel about the things they do;
- story completion – transitions: key choices facing children of this age group, and the factors constraining and supporting their decisions. Country-specific stories will be developed and shared across the team.

c) Group activities with the Older Cohort:
- story completion – transitions: key choices facing children of this age group and the factors constraining and supporting their decisions. Country-specific stories will be developed and shared across the team.

d) Individual interviews with caregivers of Younger and Older Cohort children:
- how their child spends his or her time (time-use), and changes since 2008;
- the child's roles and responsibilities, and how they manage different demands on their lives (e.g. school/work/home);
- the child's relationships, especially social support;
- things that the child has learned; where he or she has learned them; how the caregiver feels about what the child has learned.

e) Collective interviews:
- With teachers: key challenges faced by students in their schools and communities; group differences; and sources of support available.

Children's experiences of poverty

The major sources of risk, vulnerability, resilience and protection in the lives of boys and girls aged 9 to 10 and 16 to 17, and how these have changed for different groups of children (boys/girls, rural/urban, and minority/majority children) over time.

Have young people's perceptions and experiences of 'well-being' and 'ill-being' changed since Qual-2? What are the factors contributing to changes and continuities in children's expectations and aspirations in relation to work, education, family and community, and how do these relate to what others want or expect for them? We also want to understand the relationship between children's actions and their outcomes. Earlier rounds of qualitative research provided strong evidence that children are active in managing the difficulties associated with poverty and other adversities. Thus we will continue to collect information on young people's efforts to improve their own well-being and the well-being of others, and their roles in key decisions affecting their life trajectories.

Children's experiences of poverty: proposed methods

a) Individual interviews with Younger and Older Cohort children:

- how they feel about their current lives; changes in their aspirations and the direction in which their lives are going;
- the extent to which poverty limits their choices, affects their daily lives, or influences their aspirations;
- what they consider to be the main risks facing them, and the efforts that they make to improve their own well-being and the well-being of others.

  Suggested tool to use during individual interview: children's Social Networks exercise (Older Cohort; for consideration with Younger Cohort) to understand the individuals, organisations and institutions that children can rely on for support in different aspects of their lives, including friends, siblings, parents, wider kin and community members.

b) Collective interviews with the Younger Cohort:

- well-being exercise OR poverty tree: what it means to be 'doing well in life' for children of their age in their community, including what they need to do well, and what threatens their well-being and aspirations.

c) Collective interviews with Older Cohort:

- well-being exercise: this was already done with this group in 2007, so by repeating the exercise in 2011 we can capture changes in understandings of well-being: what it means to be 'doing well in life' for children of their age, in their community, including what they need to do well, and what threatens their well-being and aspirations.

Dynamics of childhood poverty

Major changes within households and communities and between the generations that affect children's well-being and trajectories and have an impact on the social inclusion/exclusion of young people.

A key line of enquiry will be on household-level and community-level shocks and their impact on children. We will strengthen our understanding of the contextual opportunities, sources of support (including social protection), and constraints affecting households' ability to mitigate risk and reduce their vulnerability, including informal and formal institutions and networks. There are three broad areas to cover:

- **Households:** significant events or shocks and changes to membership, location, livelihoods, sources of support and children's roles; whether household circumstances have improved or worsened since 2008.

- **Residential areas:** the material and social conditions of children's neighbourhoods or villages; the sources of risk and support; factors that determine whether it is considered a good or bad place for growing up or for raising children.

- **Wider environments:** the key events in the history of Young Lives communities that make them distinct from others; aspects of the climate/environment that affect communities; notable shocks; the services, programmes, and other sources of support available to children and families, and whether or not any are considered more (or less) important for supporting Young Lives children and families; how the community is faring in relation to other communities in the area.

Dynamics of childhood poverty: proposed methods

a) Individual interviews with caregivers of Older and Younger Cohort children:
- household circumstances, reasons for change since 2008;
- household experiences of shocks and impacts on Young Lives child;
- household's relationship to wider community, positive and negative, including networks and sources of formal and informal support;
- caregivers' reflections on their own childhoods, how their experience compares with that of their children, and reasons for change and continuity (intergenerational poverty).

b) Collective or individual interviews with community representatives (or group of caregivers):
- use a 'community timeline' to build a picture of key events (in the past 20 years) shaping the community; key challenges within the community; major sources of support or of intervention; and views on the community's needs.

c) Collective interviews with Older Cohort children:
- community timelines: group activity to capture young people's views on their community environments and their role within the community, including social divisions and solidarity.

1.6.   Preparing for Qual-3 field work

Before field work begins, review all evidence available about the study community from previous key data sources, reviewing sub-study participation (for example in the school survey or other sub-studies) where relevant. This will alert the field team to probable changes in the community and in children's 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-2 (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-2: 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). It is extremely useful to maintain updated child profiles for each case study, adding key information from recent data sources as it become available. Plenty of time should be factored in to field-work preparation for this activity.

Review *Memorandum of Understanding: Young Lives Qualitative Researchers: Respecting Children in Research* from Qual-2 (see Appendix 1).

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 was not possible, so some information has 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 the child refuses, the child cannot be included. Please record in your data-gathering report any reasons for or speculations about parents' or children's refusal.

Here are some difficult questions you might be asked, and it would be useful to have a response in your mind. Please add any that you have encountered in Qual-2, 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 and 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?

1.7. 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.

2. Interview guides

2.1. Younger Cohort interview

This guide has been adapted from the Older Cohort Interview and it may be further simplified. Two optional tools are included, but these should be considered in light of children's skills, capacities and interests.

Aims

1. To explore what children perceive as important events and changes in their daily lives, such as their health, relationships and responsibilities, and how they feel about these changes.

2. To examine children's experiences of different transitions (educational, work-related, and other responsibilities), and their thoughts and views regarding those transitions, including their role in decision-making.

3. To find out about children's social resources and networks, as well as the kinds of support that they offer to others.

4. To record children's aspirations for the future, and explanations for changes.

Analytic aims

Information collected through this interview will contribute to the wider longitudinal qualitative dataset and enable analysis of the roles of gender, poverty, social exclusion, and intergenerational processes in shaping young people's life trajectories.

The interview may develop as a standard semi-structured 'talk-based' interview. Alternatively, you may decide to use a visual aid or hands-on tool to guide the conversation. Optional tools include a daily diary and a life-course draw-and-tell (see below).

Interview guide: 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.

Interview questions: These may be integrated with any of the potential tools mentioned above. Major question areas, with potential for in-depth questioning, as appropriate, include the following.

Home and household relationships	*'What are the major changes that happened at home since we last saw you (2008)?* • Changes in their home environment, including (re)location and changes in household membership (including deaths, births, migration).
Self-perception	*'Do you think you have changed much since we last saw you?* • Views on whether or not s/he has changed (since 2008). What are these changes and how does the child feel about them? (You may decide to review the daily diary here as an entry point for discussing time-use.)
Time-use and transitions	*'What are the major changes in how you spend your time these days and where you go, since we last saw you (2008)?* • New expectations and responsibilities at home (or on the farm), including any new tasks and skills (for example, caring for others). Who else does these things in the household? (Capture differences related to gender and age.) Who taught them how to do these things? Are these things useful to know? How so? • Changes in time spent in paid and unpaid domestic work, other work for family and employers, schooling, recreation, etc. • Changes in the locations of these activities. • Do all boys/girls of this age in the community do these things/have these responsibilities? • Involvement in community life/organisations. • *'Who do you spend most of your time with nowadays?'*
Schooling	*For children who are not now attending school: Tell me about when you stopped attending school.* • Why did they stop going to school, and how do they feel about it? • 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 leaving school has affected their future, for better or worse? *For children who are still attending bschool: Tell me about what you like most and what you like least about school these days.*

	• What the child views as positive changes (since 2008) (e.g. new classroom or school, friendships).
	• What the child views as negative or challenging changes. How does the child manage these difficulties? Who has helped?
	• Their views on how they are faring at school (academically, socially).
	• What do you expect to do when you leave school, and do you already know someone doing this kind of thing? If yes, who?
Other activities	*'What do you do when you are not in school?*
	• Homework, extra tuition, etc.
	• Involvement in clubs, religious groups, etc.
	'Do you do anything to earn money for yourself or your family?
	• Nature of the work that the child does: frequency, where, for whom, with whom, type and amount of payment, perceived level of difficulty.
	• When did s/he start working? How did the child get the job? Who helped him/her? What role did the child play in deciding to start working for pay?
	• How the child feels about the work that s/he does: harmful, enjoyable; reasons for working; what is s/he learning from the work? Is this useful to know? Is this the kind of thing s/he would like to do in the long term?
	• How does s/he use the money?
	(You may decide to do the life-course timeline here, to pick up on key events/memories, and as an entry point for discussing social support and expectations/aspirations.)
Social support	*'What do you do when you have a problem or you are worrying about something?*
	You may want to ask this question for different domains of children's lives: for example, to identify an instance at SCHOOL, then at HOME, among FRIENDS; when you needed MONEY, etc. Try to obtain examples of actual experiences, rather than broad generalisations.
	• What happened?
	• Who helped?
	• How did they help?
	• Is this a problem that most boys/girls face in this community?
	Whom do you help/support? What kind of thing do you do for other people?'
Expectations and aspirations	*'When we return to see you in a few years' time (~age 13 to 14), what will we find you doing, and where will you be?*
	• Changes that they expect in their life between now and your next visit, and how these relate to their own and their parents' expectations for their future
Closing conversation	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.

Optional tools which may be used to explore the interview questions in further detail include the Daily diary and Life-course draw and tell (see Methods section below).

2.2.   Older Cohort interview

Aims

1. To explore what children perceive as important events and changes in their daily lives, such as their health, relationships and responsibilities, and how they feel about these changes.

2. To discuss the effect on children's lives of major events and changes in their household, community, region, or nation.

3. To examine children's experiences of different transitions (educational, work-related, and other responsibilities) and their thoughts and views regarding those transitions, including their role in decision-making.

4. To find out about children's social resources and networks, as well as the kinds of support that they offer to others.

5. To record children's aspirations for the future, and explanations if these have changed.

Analytic aims

Information collected through this interview will contribute to the wider longitudinal qualitative dataset and enable analysis of the roles of gender, poverty, social exclusion, and intergenerational processes in shaping young people's life trajectories.

Interview guide: Older Cohort

Make sure the young person 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.

Interview questions: These may be integrated with any of the potential tools mentioned above. Major question areas, with potential for in-depth questioning, as appropriate, include the following.

Home and household relationships	What are the major changes that happened at home since we last saw you (2008)? • Changes in their home environment, including (re)location and changes in household membership (including deaths, births, migration). • Household's experience of difficulties or crises. What were these and how did the household manage them? What was the child's role? Did other households in the community experience a similar crisis? How have they managed?
Schooling	For children who are not now attending school: Tell me about when you stopped attending school. • Why did they stop going to school, and how do they feel about it? • 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 leaving school has affected their future, for better or worse? • Have any of your brothers or sisters dropped out/left school? Probe for information about the reasons. Are they are attending the same school or a different one? etc. • Do you know other boys or girls who have also stopped attending school? Do you know why they stopped? For children who are still attending school: Tell me about what you like most and what you like least about school these days. • What the child views as positive changes (since 2008) (e.g. new classroom or school, friendships). • What the child views as negative or challenging changes. How does the child manage these difficulties? Who has helped? • Their views on how they are faring at school (academically, socially). • How far they feel that they have any influence on their schooling, on which school they attend, on the subjects that they study, and on who they have as school friends. • Their views on the reasons and usefulness of staying in school; when they think they will leave school, and what they plan to do after they leave school. If they identify a job that they would like to do after school, ask if they already know someone doing this kind of thing? If yes, who? • What do you expect to do when you leave school, and do you already know someone doing this kind of thing? If yes, who?

Time-use and transitions	What are the major changes in how you spend your time these days and where you go, since we last saw you (2008)
	• New expectations and responsibilities at home, including any new tasks and skills (for example, caring for others). Who else does these things in the household? (Probe for gender-related and age-related differences.) Who taught them how to do these things? Are these things useful to know? Why?
	• Changes in time spent in paid and unpaid domestic work, other work for family and employers, schooling, recreation, etc.
	• Changes in the locations of these activities.
	• Do all boys/girls of this age in the community do these things/have these responsibilities?
	• What do you think your parents were doing at your age (school, work, etc.)?
	Who do you spend most of your time with nowadays?
Activities outside school	What do you do when you are not at school?
	• Involvement in clubs, religious groups, etc.
	Do you work? Do you do anything to earn money for yourself or your family?
	• The nature of the work that the child does: frequency, where, for whom, who they work with (including with family members), type and amount of payment, perceived level of difficulty.
	• When did they start working? How did the child get the job? Who helped them? What role did the child play in deciding to start working for pay?
	• How children feel about the work they do: harmful/enjoyable? Reasons for working; what are they learning from the work? Is this useful to know? Is this the kind of thing they would like to do in the long term?
	• How do they use the money?
	• Views on the opportunities available to young people of their age for work in their community.
Self-perception	'Do you think you have changed much since we last saw you?
	• Views on whether or not s/he has changed (since 2008). What are these changes, and how does the child feel about them?
	• Views on whether they see themselves as 'children', as 'adults', or as something else.
Social support	Note: instead of simply asking these questions, you may choose to create a social network map to capture this information, or refer to a life-course timeline.
	'Now I want to ask you about what you do when you face difficulties in your life.
	You may want to ask this question for different domains of children's lives: for example, to identify an instance at SCHOOL, then at HOME, among FRIENDS; when they needed MONEY, etc. Try to get examples of actual experiences, rather than broad generalisations.
	Ask children to think back over the past year or so and to identify an instance where they have sought help, or where they have managed to overcome challenges, in their family, or in their community:
	• What happened?
	• Who helped?
	• How did they help?
	• Is this a problem that most boys/girls face in this community?
	Who do you help/support? What kind of thing do you do for other people?
Expectations and aspirations	The following questions may vary depending on child's experiences.
	You might experience other changes in the future. When would you like to…
	• finish school?
	• start work?
	• move out of your house (if relevant)?
	• get married?
	• have children?
	• etc.
	Do you think you will be able to do these things as planned? Why/why not? What support will you need, and who can you count on?

	What kind of person do you hope to be?' 'How would you like other people to describe you when you are grown up?
	When we return to see you in a few years' time (~age 18), what do you imagine we will find you doing, and where will you be?
	• Changes that they expect in their life between now and your next visit, and how these relate to their own and their parents' expectations for their future.
Closing conversation	Ask if the young person 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.

Optional tools for guiding the conversation

The interview may develop as a standard semi-structured 'talk-based' interview. Alternatively, you may decide to use a visual aid or hands-on tool to guide the conversation. To reduce the time required for conducting the interview, it is advisable to select only one or two of the tools for use: the daily diary, for example, is recorded prior to the interview, so you might combine discussion of the diary with one of the other tools. If the interview is planned to take place over the course of two sessions, you may choose to use more. Each of the tools provides a slightly different focus for conversation; for example, the social network tool applies to children's relationships, while the life-course draw-and-tell is ideal for capturing transitions across childhood. Example protocols for each tool are included in the Methods section below. The three tools are:

    a) **daily diary**

    b) **life-course draw-and-tell**

    c) **social network**

2.3.   Caregiver interview

The Caregiver interview in Qual-3 will continue to focus on the caregiver's views on their child's major transitions and time-use, but at the same time will explore the caregiver's own life-course history, including their accounts of what they consider to be the most important events in their lives, and representations of their own childhoods, among other things, in an attempt to get a sense of intergenerational experiences of poverty and well-being.

Aims

1. To explore intergenerational aspects of poverty by analysing the life-history narratives of caregivers, including reflections on their own childhoods, and how these compare with their children's experiences, and reasons for change and continuity.

2. To analyse what caregivers perceive as significant events and changes in their household, community, or nation since 2008 (Qual-2), and the effect of these on their children's lives.

3. To identify both formal and informal sources of support used by families, children and young people at key points in time: e.g. transitions to/through/out of school or to work/family life, etc.

Interview guide: Younger/Older Cohort caregiver

Before the interview	Please allow more time before the interview for analysing information from complementary data sources. For example, review quantitative data (i.e. the section on household shocks and household roster from the Round 2 and Round 3 household survey) and qualitative data on each household (caregiver's interview), so that you already know about any key events that have happened and can explore them further if they are not mentioned during the interview.
Exploring recent changes	Start exploring changes in the child's life since our last visit (2008), including: • 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 the last visit, and their child's involvement in these. • Changes in the individuals with whom the child spends time (e.g. friends, relatives, boyfriends/girlfriends, etc.).
Views on child's time-use, roles and responsibilities	• New expectations and responsibilities at home, including new 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. (e.g. refer to Qual-1 and Qual-2 time-use diary). • Decision-making process concerning children's time-use (e.g. who decides how the child spends his/her time?). • What **benefits to the household/family** are obtained from these activities – in terms of income, in-kind payments, distribution of chores and responsibilities, etc.? • What **benefits to the child** are obtained from these activities – in terms of roles and responsibilities learned, skills and knowledge acquired, etc.? • Any marked differences in expectations for Young Lives case-study children, compared with siblings or peers (e.g. 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*: • When did they stop attending school, and how do they feel about it? • What were the main reasons for leaving/dropping out of school: poor quality, low achievement, high costs, risks of abuse, need to work, support family, etc.? • Who made the decision: was it the child's decision, the caregiver's decision, or the teacher's decision, or some combination? • How has not attending or quitting school affected the child/household (both positively and negatively)? • What is the child doing now? How does the child spend his/her time? • What are his/her plans for the future (next five years)? How do you see those plans working out? For caregivers with case-study children who are *still attending school*: • Changes in the child's schooling, such as a new school, different classroom, new or repeated grade, new teacher(s)/ 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 and practicality versus quality, educational methods/curriculum, use of discipline, selective entry, single-sex versus mixed, cultural/religious/caste identity, child's abilities/aptitudes, etc. • Parents' understanding of and involvement with their child's school. • Views on child's school transitions and progress, new skills or responsibilities at school, levels of academic achievement, etc. • 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 that they would like their child to receive. • Apart from numeracy and literacy, what skills/knowledge would they like their children to acquire in school? What do they think will be useful for them as they enter adulthood?

Views and expectations regarding the kind of person they would like their child to be	• Caregiver's expectations on what sort of person they would like their child to become. • What attributes/skills do they value? Does their child have them? How did he/she learn/acquire them? What else do they think their child should learn in order to become the kind of person that they value?
Exploring caregiver's life-course history	Begin by setting up a chronological framework of major life events experienced by the caregiver. Start by working out with the respondent concrete details related to their own and their household members' ages, marriages, births and deaths. If it is difficult for the caregiver to give exact dates, try to estimate them in relation to major historical events, such as famine, specific political party in power, etc. START by exploring: • The caregiver's childhood, including his/her educational and work history and any major sicknesses. • The caregiver's adulthood, following marriage or leaving home, including any further education, their work history, and major sicknesses. • Birth of children. • Children's education and work histories, and any major sicknesses. • Children's marriages and the birth of their own children. • Deaths of caregivers, partners, children, or other significant household members. It may be helpful to draw a line, as you have done with the children's life-course timeline in Qual-1, and mark the key events that they mention on this line (and their age, if they are able to estimate it reliably). This may help you to keep track of what they are telling you, but the main product of the exercise will be the audio-recorded account of their life history. The most important thing is to maintain the flow of the interview and encourage the caregiver to provide all relevant details.

Exploring key events of the person's life	Once you have established the basic chronology of the person's life, then you can discuss other key events in his/her life history, focusing particularly on events that occurred in the past 15–16 years, i.e. since the birth of the Older Cohort child. We are also interested in earlier events, e.g. when the caregivers married or set up their own household, or even while they were still in their own caregivers' household, if these had a significant effect on their later life.
	
	If this has not been covered already, please probe for:
	• Major sicknesses, including costs of care; who looked after the sick person; division of assets on death, etc.
	• Problems such as conflict, separation, or divorce.
	• Detailed descriptions of experiences of 'shocks' and how these affected the household in general and the child in particular. These may include:
	  – economic events/shocks (changes in income, loss of job, increase in food prices, inability to repay loans, death of animals or crop failure, etc.)
	  – environmental shocks (droughts, floods, hailstorms, etc.)
	  – socio-political shocks/events (new government, policies, conflicts, etc.).
	• Problems relating to land ownership, theft, political violence, or other conflict.

Selecting two/three worst crises	Ask respondents to describe two or three of the worst crises mentioned on the timeline. Ask them to focus on the following: • their causes • the impacts in the short term and long term, both positive and negative • their impacts on the index child. Coping strategies during these crises should be explored in detail. Please focus on: • how this affected the division of labour and resources within the household; • the index child's role, if any, in alleviating these crises (for example, by undertaking paid work, or by doing more chores).

Please investigate the external resources that the household was able to draw upon, primarily:

- formal sources of support: e.g. basic services, social protection programmes like Juntos, NREGS, PSNP, etc.
- informal social protection mechanisms: e.g. family, friends, neighbours, elderly groups, community mechanisms, etc.

Items needed (**optional**): writing materials (large sheet of paper and coloured marker pens)

2.4.   Interview guide for other adults in the community

Note: this could be done as an individual interview or as part of a group discussion with teachers and also key informants, using methods such as a 'community timeline' to strengthen understanding of the community context and its history.

Interview guide: Teachers	
Aims	To better understand school-transition and school-quality issues from an institutional/professional perspective, including how educational policy changes or other significant events may have shaped children's school experience: specifically, • their views on readiness for schooling; • how factors in home, school and community affect children's transitions; • views of different types of school, when more than one type exists in the community; • major perceived reasons for children doing well or doing badly (non-attendance, drop-out, low achievement, etc.).
Teacher's professional background	• How long have you been teaching (in general)? • How long have you been teaching at this 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 or subjects taught? • What do you like most about working in LOCALITY? What do you like least?
Progress and problems	• What are some of the reasons why children make good progress in school? • Do you think any particular groups of children do better than others at primary school? – Probe for beliefs based on gender, minority status, etc. • 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? (e.g. girls versus boys; minority-language groups) – What could help them do better in school or stay longer? • Are there any groups of children who are not in primary school? What are the reasons? • What do you think are the main challenges that children in your classroom face? • What about the children in your classroom? What do you expect will happen to them over the next few years, through to secondary school? • What would they need in order to do well in secondary school? • What could be done to improve children's readiness for secondary school? • Do parents have a role? If so, what? Do teachers have a role? If so, what? Who else?

Expectations for post-secondary education (Older Cohort only)	• What do you think will happen to your students in the next two years (i.e. post-secondary education, migration, marriage, parenthood, entry to labour market, etc.)? • Are there groups of children who are more likely to continue post-secondary education? Who are they? Why? • What kinds of knowledge/skills do children need in order to do well after school? Where do they learn them?
Expectations for children's entry to labour market (Older Cohort only)	• What kinds of job do/will most young people in LOCALITY get? • How ready are children in LOCALITY for the demands of the labour market? • What skills do they already have? What else would they need to learn in order to do well after school? Where would they learn these skills? • How would you compare them with previous generations (their parents, grandparents)? What are the main similarities across generations? Main differences? Explore reasons for this.
Closing the conversation	At the end, thank the teacher(s) for their participation and ask them if they have any comments or questions that they would like to add.

Interview guide: Other professionals

Aims	1. To understand and explore community norms affecting children's transitions, education and well-being. 2. To identify the major risks faced by children in the community, and to explore the sources of support available to cope with them. 3. To seek the response and views of different community members about the implementation of services in the community
Professional background	**Note:** prompt for differences between girls and boys and between expectations and experiences of children aged 9 and 16 years. Try to probe for other locally significant determinants of expectations and experiences, e.g. ethnicity and religion. Do expectations differ for boys or girls from particular social groups, such as a caste or ethnic group? • Educational qualifications and working experience of the respondent. • How long have you been working as a PROFESSION in this community? • As a PROFESSION, do you have regular contact with children and young people? Who are these children? What is the nature of your interaction with them? Is this different for different groups of children? • What are the things that a girl of 9 (then 16) will be experiencing in this community? A boy of 9 (then 16)? Probe for education, migration, marriage, work, type of work engaged in, etc. How do the children manage these situations/processes? What is the role of the family and the community in this process? • What do you think are the major risks/challenges faced by children of these ages (9 and 16) in your community? Probe for physical, social, psychological, natural factors, etc. How do they vary according to age, sex, caste and class, etc.? • What are the major opportunities for children in your community (according to age, sex, caste, etc.)? • What are the main ideas about what children should be doing, and do they differ for girls and boys, by caste, age, etc.? • Are there programmes or services in LOCALITY that provide support to children (formal sources of support)? • What other sources of support do they get? Probe for role of family, community, associations, community members, etc. (informal sources of support). • What is the future of the children in this community (boys and girls separately)? If you compare them with older generations (their parents, grandparents), what do you think remains the same, and what has changed?
Closing the conversation	At the end, thank everyone for their participation and ask them if they have any comments or questions that they would like to add.

3. Methods

3.1.   Some suggestions for group-based activities

Well-being exercise

This exercise is based on the Older Cohort protocol used during Qual-1. It may be used during Qual-3 with the Younger Cohort, and adapted for use with Older Cohort children if drawing is no longer appropriate.

Question for discussion

If this activity is used again with the Older Cohort, it may be repeated as it was done in Qual-1 (described here); this would capture changes in understandings of well-being, or differences for different age groups. Or we can adapt the protocol to capture understandings of what it means to be a young man or woman (say 25 years old) doing well in the community in question – to capture ideas about the transition to adulthood.

Well-being exercise	
Version: Younger and Older Cohort (group activity, with individual follow-up)	
What kind of information do we want to gather through the Well-being exercise?	What children consider to be a good or bad life for children of the same age and sex, living in their community; sources of risk and protective processes.
	Explain to the children why we are doing this activity, what it involves, and roughly how long it will take. The children will do two drawings, one representing 'ill-being' (a child for whom life is not going well) and ending with 'well-being' (a child for whom life is going well).
Step 1: imagine a child not doing well…	Note: It is important to build in some 'thinking time' before asking the children to start drawing. You can say:
	Close your eyes and imagine a girl/boy [same sex as the group] who is about your age, of whom if you were asked 'Are they basically doing well?' you could say 'No, they're not doing very well at all.'
	Tell them not to say the name of the child they have thought of, but to keep it to themselves.
Step 2: drawing a child who is not doing well	Provide each child with a large piece of paper folded in two (with a left side and a right side) – or two separate sheets of paper. Have the children write their names on the back in pencil; the researcher can replace the name with the CHILD-ID. Ask the children to draw on the left side of the paper a scene/picture of the child for whom life is not going well.
	Tip: use a sand-timer to give the children 10 minutes to draw. Warn them after 5 minutes.
Step 3: discussion of a child who is not doing well	In turn, ask each child to show their drawing to the group and explain what is going on in the picture.
	Tip: In order to encourage the others to pay attention, make sure that the child lifts up the drawing from the table and shows it to the group; or the facilitator may choose to hold up the drawing while the child explains.
	Tip: If they are shy and do not volunteer to present, you can put pieces of numbered paper in your hand and have them choose (determining the order in which they will present).
	Ask each child to describe his/her picture.
	ASK: In what ways is this child not doing well? Or How do you know that they are not doing well? Where is s/he? What is s/he doing? Who is s/he with? etc.
	Optional: tell them to write down *up to* four things on their paper. Alternatively, this can be done as a group towards the end of the exercise (see Step 7).

Step 4: think about a child doing well…	Return to the circle and have the children close their eyes again. Then ask them: *Think about a girl/boy [same sex as the group] who is about your age, of whom if you were asked 'Are they basically doing well?' you could say 'Yes, they're doing well.'* Tell them not to say the name of the child that they have thought of, but to keep it a secret in their head.
Step 5: drawing a child who is doing well	Have each child draw on the right half of the paper a picture of the child they were thinking of who is doing well in life. Tip: use a sand-timer to give the children 10 minutes to draw. Warn them after 5 minutes.
Step 6: discussion of a child who is doing well	In turn, ask each child to present their drawing and explain what is going on in the picture. Tip: If they are shy and do not volunteer to present, you can have them present in the reverse order in which they presented their well-being drawings. ASK: *'In what ways is this child doing well?' Or 'How do you know that they are doing well?'* Questions have to be carefully phrased to avoid obtaining causal reasons *why* the child might be doing well. Optional: tell them to write down *up to* four things on their paper. Alternatively, this can be done as a group towards the end of the exercise (see Step 7). [You may choose to carry on with either Step 7 *or* Step 8.]
Step 7 (optional): ranking individual indicators	If you had the children write well-being/ill-being indicators on their drawings, write each of their answers on separate index cards (pieces of paper), perhaps with well-being and ill-being indicators written in two different colours. or If you did not ask the children to individually write down their well-being/ill-being indicators, you may choose to do this now as a group. As children volunteer their answers, write each on separate index cards (pieces of paper), perhaps with well-being and ill-being indicators written in two different colours. As a group, have the children **rank** the most important indicators of well-being and **explain** their reasoning. Have them do the same for the ill-being indicators, explaining their reasons for the order. Ask them what could **improve** the life of the child (who has the worst life). Discuss.
Step 8 (optional): ranking the well-being and ill-being images	Have scissors on hand to cut the paper in two, separating the well-being and ill-being images. On the floor (or table), use a string, chalk, or tape to create a vertical line. As a group, have the children **rank** their well-being images on the left (*'Who has the best life? Why?'*) and their ill-being images on the right (*'Who has the worst life? Why?'*). Ask them to **explain** why they ranked the images in the way they did. Ask them what could **improve** the life of the child (who has the worst life). Discuss. The note-taker should record rankings and take digital photos of ranking results, as well as individual drawings.
Closing conversation	At the end, thank the children for their participation and ask them if they would like to add any comments or ask any questions.
Items needed: large sheets of individual paper, coloured pens; optional: scissors; tape/chalk/string.	

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, to 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	Ask the children: _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._ When they have all thought of a family, ask them: _What is it about this family that tells you that they are rich/well-off?_ 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 notetaker should take note of the order and if possible take photographs.]
The poverty tree	Then say: _Imagine a family with a boy/girl (same sex) of your age (in your community) who are poor/struggling. Again, do not say out loud who you are thinking of. Keep it to yourself._ Remove the 'rich' cards. When they have all thought of a poor family, ask them: _What is it about this family that tells you that they are poor/struggling?_ Gather ideas on post-it notes. Write single summary words or pictures (e.g. 'holes in their clothes'), not every single thing mentioned – so that the tree becomes a reminder, not a distraction from the discussion. _What do you think makes families like this one poor?_ Explain that you want to know what makes families like this one poor, how people become poor, etc. Gather these ideas on post-it notes of one colour and arrange them to the left of the poverty cards. _What are the results of poverty for families like this one?_ Write these suggestions on post-it notes of a second colour. Also ask children: _What are the results of poverty for children of your age in families like these? Is it the same for boys and girls?_ And write these on cards of a third colour. Ask children to draw links between the causes and impacts. Draw arrows, if feasible (if on a large piece of paper). _Solutions_ Then explain that you want to know how people can stop being poor/become richer. Ask them: _What could children's parents do to stop being poor?_ _What could children of your age do to stop being poor?_ What could the government do to help children your age to stop being poor?
Material needed	large sheets of paper and pens; post-it notes; index cards and blu-tack

Vignettes and story completion/exploring news headlines

Specific vignettes will be developed to reflect locally relevant experiences related to key research themes. For example, early marriage might be relevant for Ethiopian girls, but perhaps less so for Peruvian girls – although early pregnancy might be relevant for both. Below are some examples of 'stories' that have been used in previous rounds of data collection.

An alternative to this exercise might be a group discussion of news headlines; this will be presented as a separate protocol. These will necessarily vary by country, and possibly community, but some general suggestions for conducting the exercise are provided below.

Vignettes and story completion 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 rounds, it has gathered information from children about the following topics: • 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 to add 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 reaches 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 cover 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.

These examples on 'school transitions' are from Peru:

• Juliana is a girl who is in sixth grade of primary school. She likes to study, but her parents have told her that she would 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 is in a new school with new teachers, new classmates and more courses. Sometimes she feels good because… Sometimes she feels bad because…

These examples covering 'balancing school and work' were used in India:

• *In a village named Voba there was a girl aged 12 named Sarada who used to work for daily wages along with her parents and also attended the school. What type of family did she belong to? ... What kind of work would there be in the fields in the month of September? … What would be going on in the schools? … How did Sarada manage her work, studies and exams in such a situation?*

• *Harsha is a 14-year-old boy in 8th grade from a village named Valagadda. He is from a lower-middle-class family and his (uneducated) parents are paying for his education by working very hard in the fields. The boy travels by bus to school, using a bus pass. His parents are unaware that Harsha is skipping school some days. What happens?*

• *Rahul is in 9th grade and lives in an extremely poor household. He has one older sister and one younger brother. His father has gone into debt to pay for his sister's wedding dowry. His sister used to do all the household work, but now it falls to Rahul. He really wants to continue with his studies. Rahul should…*

In this example from India, the children composed their own story to complete:

	• *It's a story of a woman 30 years old, Sarojani, married with three children. Her husband abandoned her suddenly and went on his way. Later she went into hospital and died, leaving the three children orphaned. What happens to the children?* *Below are some ideas proposed for use in Vietnam:* School transition and children's role in making decisions (Younger Cohort) • *Lien is in her last year of primary school. She and her best friend Tam often talk about how they would go together to the secondary school in the next village. Lien was so surprised when she heard her mom saying one day that her parents want her to learn at District boarding school next year. What would Lien do?* School drop-out (ethnic-minority children, Younger Cohort) • *Giang Seo is a girl from Cham ethnic group. He is in grade 4 now. Seo is a good pupil and he loves to go to school. But one day his father tells him that he has to stay at home to help the family take care of four buffalos. What do you think Seo would say to his father?* Balancing study time and family responsibilities (Older Cohort) • *Tien is in grade 11. He is a good and a hard-working student because he wants to go to college. Unfortunately last month Tien's father fell ill and is still in a critical condition. Tien's father is the main breadwinner of the family of six persons and Tien is the oldest son. Tien decides...* Leaving school to get married (girls from ethnic-minority groups, Older Cohort) • *San Mui is a 14-year-old Hmong girl. She is in grade 4 now and she loves going to school very much, because there she can learn many new things. One day her mom tells her that a marriage is arranged for her and soon she will have to move to her husband's house in the next village. How does San Mui feel? What do you think she will tell her mom?* Note: Two or three vignettes seem an appropriate number to focus on in any one session; presenting more than three may become burdensome and does not necessarily yield more information. You might use two vignettes and have the children choose their favourite for a role-play exercise.
Closing conversation	At the end, thank the children for their participation and ask them if they have any comments or questions 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. Optional: a 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).

Exploring news headlines
Version: Older Cohort

What kind of information do we want to gather by discussing news headlines with young people?	As with the story-completion technique, this method can be used to explore a variety of topics relevant for young people. Some examples might include youth unemployment, a new government policy on early marriage, children's health, crop failure, plans for a new major road near the community, or violence in schools. Ideally, a selection of two or three headlines can be offered for the children to choose from; where possible, these should include positive as well as negative items.
	Prepare a selection of recent news cuttings, preferably with a visual image/photo and bold headline. Whether the source is a local, regional, or national newspaper, the topic should be relevant for 16 to 17 year olds in the community in question.
	Lay the headlines out on a table or tack them to the wall so that everyone can see them. Read the headlines aloud. Then ask the group to select one for discussion. Follow-up questions will depend on the nature of the headline and the issue to be explored, but some examples of general prompts might include the following:
	Why did you choose this topic? [Have someone in the group describe or summarise the issue if possible.]
	Did you already know that X was a problem/happening?
	How did you know about it?
	Is it very common (e.g. in your school – if about school violence)?
	How does it make you feel to know X?
	Do you agree that X is a good/bad thing?
	How are young people your age affected by this?
	Is everyone (boys/girls, young/old, etc.) affected in the same way?
	What will result from X (for the community, for young people, for the group)?
	[if it is a problem] Should anything be done about this? What? Is this likely?
	How important is this for you – would you say it is extremely important, somewhat important, or not really important?
	Can you think of other topics that should be news headlines because they are very important for young people in your community? What are these?
	[You may also refer to the other news items that have been pre-selected.]
Items needed:	Original news headlines (or photocopies), stuck to the wall.

'Typical day' time-use bucket activity (optional)

'Typical day' time-use bucket activity **Version: Younger Cohort**	
This could form part of a group discussion, but it could also be used in individual interviews to prompt individual responses.	
Information to gather	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 with whom they spend time while doing these activities; whether they feel happy/unhappy with these activities; if they find them useful at present or potentially useful for the future; and what sort of thing they gain/learn from them, etc.
Step 1: drawing a typical day	Ask the children to 'draw the various things that you did yesterday' or 'draw the things that you do in a typical day'.
Step 2: recording activities	Ask the children to describe the activities that they have drawn and then write the children's responses on separate index cards, including the things they mention doing when they are not in school. As a group, ask the children to put the activities that they have listed in chronological order – from the time they wake up in the morning until the time they go to sleep – giving them the opportunity to add any activities that they may have forgotten. (Note: not all children do the same things, so some cards might be placed side by side – or you could ask the group to agree on a general order.) When all the obvious areas of life have been covered, ask children to put these cards into different buckets, relating to the categories of Sleep; Taking care of ourselves; School; Homework/study; Work for household, including caring for others (unpaid); Work for household to generate income; Play/leisure activities; and Other. Alternatively, work with the children to generate the activity categories that they find most useful.
Step 3: bucket activity	Children then use counters (beads, beans, or marbles) to indicate how much time (in hours) they spend on each of the activity categories.
Step 4: discussion	Discuss how they feel about their daily activities. Examples of suggested lines of questioning: *Are there any things that you do only some times of the year? Or only at weekends?* *Of all the things that you do, which activities do you most enjoy most/enjoy least? Why?* *Which are the most useful? Why?* For specific activities, you may ask: *Who else does this activity? (Explore differences determined by gender and age.)* *Who never has to do this?* *When did you learn how to do this?* *Who taught you how to do this?* *What kinds of things do you learn from these activities?* *Do you do them with anyone else?* *Do you get paid?* *What happens if you decide not do this activity?* *When your mum/dad was your age, did they do the same kinds of things? (Explore children's views on generational changes.)* Note: when the exercise is completed, record the number of counters in each bucket. Ensure that the drawings contain the child's unique ID number. Record conversations where possible.
Material needed	Index cards, marker pens, paper for drawing, coloured pencils, buckets, small objects for counting (beans, beads, etc.)

Community mapping/tour

You may want to combine this with a child-led tour which allows a child or a small group of children to show the researcher the places that they like/dislike and consider safe/unsafe. The tour can be done before or after drawing. You may also want to use a digital camera to take photographs of the key places that the child points out during the tour, which may be later incorporated into the community map or a book about 'my/our community'.

Community mapping/tour Version: Younger Cohort	
What kind of information do we want to gather through community mapping?	• Children's views on the surrounding area, including the places/things that they like/dislike, and the places/things that make them feel safe/unsafe (i.e. places that feel protective or risky). Why? • The map can also be used to ask questions about how children spend their time (what they do and where they go); how much choice they have in this; who they do these activities with/ for; how they combine different activities; how activities differ at different times of year (e.g. harvest, holidays); and how they feel about these activities.
Opening conversation	Explain to the children why we are doing this activity, what it involves, and roughly how long it will take.
Step 1: talking about the community	Start an open discussion about the community, asking the children, for example, if they were all born there. If they all live in the same area, you can ask: *Do you think it's a big or small community? How many schools are there? Is there a church/mosque? And a hospital? Where do children play?* If they do not live in the same area, ask about their different communities, and later have them draw individually or in small groups with co-residents.
Step 2: drawing the map	After the children have spent a few minutes thinking and talking about the community, lay out a large sheet of paper for the whole group to gather around. Ask the group to fill this in to represent places/things in their community that they like and places/things that they don't like. This can be done either as one huge collective map (which requires some co-ordination in order to decide who draws what) or with each child drawing his/her own version of the community in his/her space on the paper. Individual children should be encouraged to add roads, rivers, and key places such as the school, their house, etc. Tip: if children are struggling to begin drawing, ask them to start by drawing their house. Then ask them if they have neighbours, and if so to draw their neighbours' houses, and so on. After several images have been drawn (for no more than 10 minutes), begin discussion, encouraging the children to continue drawing while discussing throughout the session.
Step 3: discussing the environment	ASK each child in turn: *What do you like about the area? What don't you like about the area?* Ask them to add this to the drawing, if it is not already represented. When each child has responded, ASK: *What places are you afraid of, and what places worry you?* (NB: fears and worries may relate to the person who lives there, rather than the place itself.) Have the children locate these on the map, and make a note of where they were. ASK: *Where do you find help when you are afraid or worried?* Have the children locate these on the map, and make a note of where they were.
Step 4: describing activities that take place in this environment	Note: if you are not planning to do the 'Daily Lives' activity with this group, you may use the map to discuss children's daily activities by having the children indicate the places they go, the things they do, and the people they see throughout the day. ASK a volunteer to take the researcher through a typical day, referring to different places on the map where these activities take place. ASK all of the children to talk about the activities they like to do during a typical day, and to explain why. Also ask questions such as: *At what times of year is this done? Who else does this? Who never has to do this? When did you learn how to do this? Who taught you how to do this? Do you do it with anyone else?*

	Do you get paid? Can you choose not to do this? etc .
	ASK all the children to talk about what they like doing and where they go at weekends/holidays, and to explain why.
Closing conversation	At the end, thank the children for their participation and ask them if they have any questions or comments to add.
Items needed:	Large piece of paper, assorted marker pens (optional: digital camera for child-led tour; photograph album if creating a book about 'my community')

Community timeline

Community timeline	
Version: Community representatives and Older Cohort (to be adapted)	
Aims	• To identify major events in the community's history. • To gain insight into community members' perspectives on their community's history and current identity.
Opening conversation	Explain that the objective is to discuss the history of the community by recalling events in the past that they consider had an impact (positive or negative) upon the lives of families and children in the community.
Step 1: setting a timeline	• Draw a line on the floor, on a chalkboard, or on several pieces of paper joined together. • Set a timeline for the last 20 years so as to cover the period when Older Cohort children were born. It could be divided into four periods (time markers): 1990 to 1995, 1996 to 2000, 2001 to 2005, and 2006 to 2010–11.
Step 2: discussing and representing 'key events'	• Give participants flipcharts, notecards and marker pens and ask them to note and illustrate the key events in their community's history during the period assigned to them. • Events may be represented in words, pictures, or symbols, with approximate dates where possible. These may include the building of infrastructure (roads, schools, canals, railroads); introduction of new crops or new livelihood activities; shocks like epidemics, droughts, flood, or famine; changes in land tenure, administration and organisation; major political events (new president, internal conflict, etc.).
Step 3: plenary discussion	• When the group has finished, ask participants to step back and take a look at the timeline. • The facilitator asks if anything is missing. If a participant notices something missing, they can add a notecard about it.
Step 4: choosing three major events	At the end of the exercise we could ask participants to choose three events that they consider had a major impact on the lives of people in the community (children in particular). These can be discussed in more detail, using some of the prompts below. • *How did this event affect people in the community?* • *Did it have an impact on children's lives? How?* • *Did people get any support? What kind? From whom?*
Further prompts for discussion	• *What were the major government policies introduced in these years, and how did they affect the community?* • *What major programmes in the community have affected children's well-being? (e.g. social protection programmes, child-protection initiatives, road construction)* • *What government programmes available in the community affect the well-being of families and children? Any change since 2008?* • *How do they affect your community?* • *How can these be improved?* The timeline should be documented (photographed).
Items needed	Writing surface and writing materials and cards (if desired/appropriate)

Note: a shorter and adapted version of the community timeline could also be used with the Older Cohort. This could be part of a group session on 'children in communities/neighbourhoods'.

3.2. Some suggestions for group-based activities

Optional tool: daily diary

This may be collected as a week-long diary capturing children's time-use and how they feel about the things that they do. The diary can then be discussed during the interview.

Alternatively, the fieldworker may decide not to use the daily diary, but instead to come prepared with information collected in the Round 3 survey with the child in 2009, and ask the child if his/her daily time-use has changed and, if so, how. See Methods section below for further details.

Round 3 Survey SECTION 1A – TIME-USE

'I want to know how you spent your time on a typical day in the last week' (using 24 stones). Enumerator: please ask the child to talk about a typical weekday, not weekends or holidays.

01	Sleep Write the numbers of hours. 77=NK **Say:** Now, think about the rest of your day. I want you to tell me how much time you spent on the following activities during a typical day. (i.e. not a weekend or holiday). **FIELDWORKER:** RECORD IN HOURS 77=NK	[__ __] (SLEEPR3)
02	Care for others (younger children, sick household members)	[__ __] (CROTHR3)
03	Domestic tasks (fetching water, firewood, cleaning, cooking, washing, shopping)	[__ __] (DMTSKR3)
04	Tasks on family farm, cattle herding (household and/or community), other family business, shepherding, piecework or handicrafts done at home (not just farming)	[__ __] (TSFARMR3)
05	Activities for pay or for money outside the household or for someone not in the household	[__ __] (ACTPAYR3)
06	At school (including play time)	[__ __] (ATSCHR3)
07	Studying at home/extra tuition outside the home	[__ __] (STUDYGR3)
08	Leisure: playing, seeing friends, using the internet, etc.	[__ __] (LSURER3)

Daily Diary: Version for Younger and Older Cohorts	
Information to gather	• 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 they do; whether they find them useful at present or for the future; and what sort of thing they gain/learn from them, etc.
Step 1: introducing the child to the Daily Activity Record Form	• Child is be given a diary form (as below) or a notebook where s/he can use a separate sheet for each day of the week. • The diary should cover seven consecutive days, each day for 24 hours, and divided by 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 may demonstrate how to record the daily activities.

Step 2: recording daily activities	• Ask the child to record his/her daily activities and chores from waking up in the morning until going 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 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 him/her. If the method was used in Qual-1 and Qual-2, it will also be possible to discuss any changes in the 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 that 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?*
	• Thank the child for his/her time.

Identification: file name, child ID, age, sex, date (e.g. 101008–171008)	Period	Estimated time spent (if known)	Activities (include where and with whom)
	Day 1 [insert date]		
	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
	Day 2 [insert date]		
	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 |

Optional tool: life-course draw-and-tell (LCDT)

Life-course Draw-and-tell (LCDT): Version for Younger and Older Cohorts

- Some children will have completed this exercise in Qual-1 and Qual-2. Where appropriate, their answers may used as a reference for discussions. For younger children, this may be a new exercise.
- This is suggested to form part of the individual interview to encourage in-depth exploration of personal biographies, past, present and future.
- The timeline can be used to elicit children's views on specific events that may have affected them; how much choice they feel they have in their lives; their experiences of and the support they received for specific transitions; the age at which they acquired certain skills/knowledge; things that they look forward to in the future.
- You may simplify this version for use with the Younger Cohort.

Information to gather	What children remember as the important moments of their past (both happy and sad), and why these were memorable; past experiences of risk and the resources that they drew on in order to manage difficulties; how they feel about their current situation (i.e. subjective well-being); and their future expectations (the extent to which these are shared by their parents; what support/ resources they would need to achieve them; and what could prevent them).
Step 1: drawing the timeline	Provide the child with a pen or marker pen and a piece of paper for drawing. The paper should be folded in half. There are many ways to construct the timeline; here are some options. • *Option 1*: provide a blank piece of paper and have the child build up the timeline (i.e. draw a line representing the life course, draw in a baby (for birth) and age increments. • *Option 2*: provide a pre-drawn timeline with a baby drawn on the left end and an old person on the far right. Indicate five-year age increments up until around 30 years old. Once the basic structure of the timeline is explained and/or drawn, **ask the child to indicate his/her current age** (and to write in the age and draw a quick representation of him/herself now). • Explain that everything before that point is the past and everything after it is the future. • Ask the child to **think about the past**, when they were very young. • Then **ask them to fill in the first half of their personal timeline** with important and memorable events. • Optional: you can suggest that they draw good experiences above the line and bad experiences below the line (or Older Cohort children may prefer to write something, as well as draw). • Next, ask the child to **think about the future.** • Ask the child to **fill in the major changes that s/he thinks will happen in the future.**
Step 2: discussion	Use the timeline to generate discussion, adding to the timeline as necessary. By the end of the activity, aim to have a series of changes/transitions/events identified along the timeline. **Focus on the past** • What is a really happy thing that happened in the past? How old were you? What made it special? • What is a really sad or challenging thing that happened in the past? How old were you? What made it sad or challenging? Who or what helped you to make it better? • Did you experience other difficulties? How did you deal with them? Did anyone help (an individual or organisation)? **Focus on the present** Ask the child to indicate where they are now on the timeline (i.e. his/her current age). • What is the best thing that happened to you this year? • What has been the most challenging thing for you this year? • Who can you go to for support (individual or organisation)? • What do girls/boys of your age in this community worry about most? • Who do you spend most of your time with these days? **Focus on the future** The next set of questions is designed to explore children's views of their wishes for the future, the opportunities and constraints they face, the influence of family, etc. Then finally, explore their realistic expectations compared with other children of their age, sex, etc . • What do you want to be doing during the next five years? (Why?) • What will you need to make this happen? Who can help you? Do other girls/boys whom you know want to do this too? Has anyone else in your family done something like this? • What do your family members want you to do? Do you agree with their expectations of you? • When we come back to visit you in a few years' time, what will you be doing and where will you be? • At the end, thank the child for participating and ask if s/he has any comments or questions to add.

Material needed: large sheets of paper and pens; optional: pre-drawn timelines for child's use

Note: where drawings are produced, please ensure that these are digitally photographed with accurate identification (Child ID and not child's name).

Optional tool: social network map

Aim

To collect information about children's social networks and where they turn for help and advice, or when seeking out an opportunity.

Social network map	
Aim	To collect information about children's social networks and where they turn for help and advice, or when seeking out an opportunity.
Drawing a map	Using a big sheet of paper with a circle on it (this represents a network map), ask the child to divide the circle into segments, (the segments do not have to be all the same size), and to note on it various categories of people who are important in their lives and people on whom they can count for support (the child might mention 'neighbours', 'friends', 'clubs', or s/he might mention individual names, etc.).
	Then ask the child to explain what kinds of support each category of person has offered to the child in the past. Questions should probe the quality of the relationships: not merely listing people who help, but exploring how they actually helped*,* and why that person was asked to help. Also this should include questions about individuals to whom the children themselves have given support.

Have a discussion about the map	How did the different groups/individuals in the map support the child?
	• In relation to specific instances:
	  – What happened?
	  – Who helped?
	  – How did they help?
	• In general, who would be available to help you out in practical ways? For example, who would be available to give you emotional support, to comfort you if you were upset, to help you in a difficult situation?
	• To whom do you turn for advice – for example, who has given you information on how to do something, helped you make a decision, or taught you how to do something?
	• Finally: help and support goes both ways. Whom do you help? What kinds of thing do you do for other people?

	Note: If you do this a group activity, avoid asking intrusive personal questions, and try to keep the focus very general. Ask children themselves to identify the kinds of difficulty/scenario that children face in general in the community. Ask them to define what is meant by 'support', to make it contextually specific and relevant to their experiences; then ask: *'Where would a child in your community who was facing x or y type of difficulty turn to for support?' 'What kinds of support do children in your community provide to other people?'*
	Where drawings are produced, please ensure that they are digitally photographed with accurate identification (Child ID and not the child's name).

4. Observation

We have collected useful information on children's feelings, perceptions and understandings: for example, how they understand 'child well-being', and their views on children's work. We want to obtain more information on what children actually do (their 'practices'). One way to do this is by asking them to tell us what they do – in interviews, or in daily diaries. This interview method is crucial, given the short length of time that we spend in the field. Observation and participant observation are additional tools that we use to document children's everyday lives, and to gather contextual information on their environments.

In **Qual-3** we want to build on the observations and participant observation that we have already conducted in previous rounds, and strengthen key areas of interest. For example, a key contribution of Qual-3 will be to provide more community-level information and observations of children's interactions within their communities. For example:

- main sources of employment for young people

- main social groups living in the community

- informal sources of support for children

- programmes and services operating in the community and accessed by children

- community histories.

Some of this information may be obtained through scheduled interviews with Young Lives children, caregivers, or other community members. However, spending time in the community, outside of scheduled interviews, may yield valuable information.

4.1. **Levels of observation**

Some observation and participant observation will be **child-focused**. For example, we have observed the classrooms and homes of Young Lives case-study children. We have also done participant observation with them by spending a day shadowing and participating with case-study children during their normal daily routines (e.g. going to work, running errands, spending time with friends). Some possible topics for participant observation 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, including time spent in youth clubs or associations

- children's journeys to and from school or work.

Other observations may take place without children and focus on the wider **community environment** (e.g. attending a local festival, visiting a health centre, observing interactions of community members, including non-Young Lives children, engaging in street life, etc.). These are not random research experiences; they should produce notes that add to the wider picture of children's lives and circumstances in that community at that time. Some possible topics for participant observation include the following:

- important community spaces (e.g. religious institutions, main plazas, market place, health centres)

- community events or household celebrations (where invitations are issued).

4.2. Participant observation

A note on participant observation was included in the Qual-2 protocol, so this note reiterates the main points.

Participant observation is when a researcher shares in everyday activities in the community, while keeping a detailed record of his/her impressions. It is 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. It is important to compare what people say they do with what they actually do – although both sources of information are useful. The method is called 'participant observation' because the researcher does not pretend to be an invisible observer but instead actively seeks out opportunities to interact with local people. The degree to which the researcher emphasises either participation or observation at any given moment will vary.

Given the time constraints and heavy workloads for fieldworkers at Qual-3, we cannot expect to do the kind of extensive participant observation associated with long-term ethnographic studies. Nonetheless, a selection of team members with keen observation skills may take a greater role in conducting targeted participant observation (of specific children, or specific spaces or events, or at the community level).

Fieldworkers are encouraged to seize opportunities for spending time with children in the activities and in the places that are important to the children, and to produce notes to complement data reports from interviews and group activities. In Qual-3 we also want to encourage opportunistic data-gathering: for example, using a digital camera to photograph interesting public posters, propaganda, or key documents, such as examples of school syllabuses/curricula, classroom rules, current news items within the community, and so on.

Writing up notes on participant observation may be difficult and time-consuming. It is important to be disciplined and to write up notes as soon as possible, perhaps with nightly 'field note making' written into the daily schedule. It will generally be inappropriate to write your notes during participant observation; notes should be discreetly written up as soon as possible thereafter.

4.3. Sample forms for recording structured observation

Note: these are adapted from earlier rounds of research.

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

2. Exterior

Comments

3. Interior

Comments

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.

7. Other comments on home observation:

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 service)?
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 (in metres, feet, 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?

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?

Play materials

Describe evidence of play items in classroom, such as …

Are play materials age-appropriate?

Note key visual displays

(i) produced by the children;

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

(iii) other displays.

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.

Overall assessment of classroom (this should be completed at the end of the observation period)

State 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:

4. 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?

5. Schoolyard

External condition of school and surrounding space

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?

Community Observation

1. General information

Community ID:

Fieldworker ID:

Date:

Start time:

End time:

Location where observation took place:

Theme/topic:

Briefly describe where the observed event took place.

What kinds of activity happened during the observation? Who participated in them (age, sex, kinship)? What is happening? Note: describe in detail all observed interactions and dialogues with and between participants that may enhance understanding of the event.

5. Further reading

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Morrow, Virginia (2009) *The Ethics of Social Research with Children and Families in Young Lives*, Working Paper 53, Oxford: Young Lives.

Morrow, Virginia (2012) 'The Ethics of Social Research with Children and Families in Young Lives: Practical Experiences', in Jo Boyden and Michael Bourdillon (eds) *Childhood Poverty: Multidisciplinary Approaches*.

Camfield, Laura, Workneh Abebe and Asham Assazenew (2009) *Young Lives Qualitative Research: Round 1 – Ethiopia*, Technical Note 19, Oxford: Young Lives.

van der Gaag, Nikki and Caroline Knowles (2009) *"Nothing is impossible for me": Stories from Young Lives Children*, Oxford: Young Lives.

van der Gaag, Nikki, Caroline Knowles and Kirrily Pells(2012) *Changing Lives in a Changing World: Young Lives Children Growing Up*, Oxford: Young Lives.

Vennam, Uma, and Anuradha Komanduri (2009) *Young Lives Qualitative Research: Round 1 – India*, Technical Note 21, Oxford: Young Lives.

Vogler, Pia, Virginia Morrow and Martin Woodhead (2009) *Conceptualising and Measuring Children's Time Use: A Technical Review for Young Lives*, Technical Note 14, Oxford: Young Lives.

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.

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.
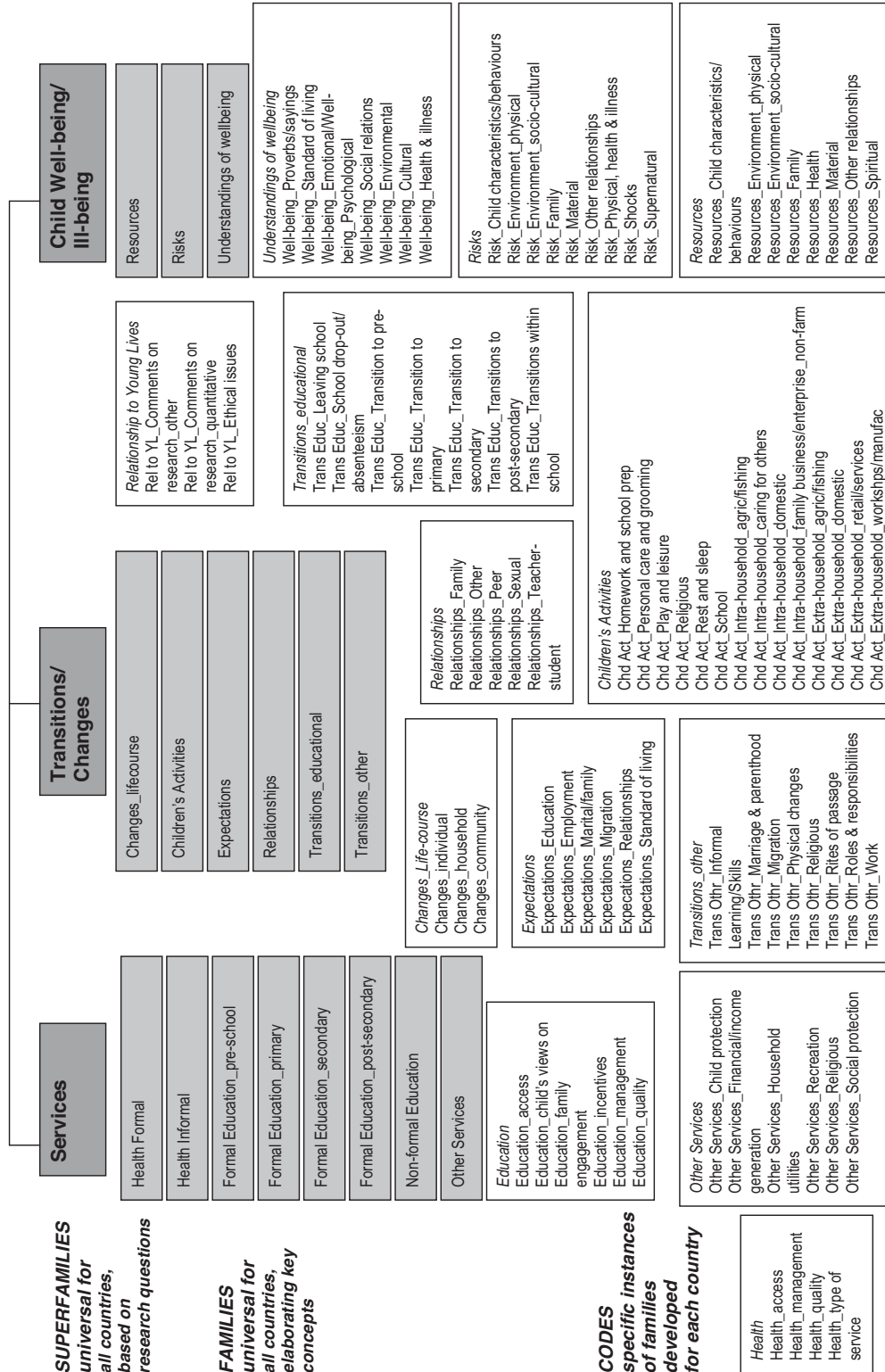
I have read the instructions above and agree to them.

I have read the instructions above and agree to them.
Signed:
Name:
Date:

Appendix 2.
Young Lives Qual-3 Coding Frame (revised Feb 2011)

SUPERFAMILIES universal for all countries, based on research questions

FAMILIES universal for all countries, elaborating key concepts

CODES specific instances of families developed for each country

Services

- Health Formal
- Health Informal
- Formal Education_pre-school
- Formal Education_primary
- Formal Education_secondary
- Formal Education_post-secondary
- Non-formal Education
- Other Services

Health
Health_access
Health_management
Health_quality
Health_type of service

Education
Education_access
Education_child's views on
Education_family engagement
Education_incentives
Education_management
Education_quality

Other Services
Other Services_Child protection
Other Services_Financial/income generation
Other Services_Household utilities
Other Services_Recreation
Other Services_Religious
Other Services_Social protection

Transitions/ Changes

- Changes_lifecourse
- Children's Activities
- Expectations
- Relationships
- Transitions_educational
- Transitions_other

Changes_Life-course
Changes_individual
Changes_household
Changes_community

Expectations
Expectations_Education
Expectations_Employment
Expectations_Marital/family
Expectations_Migration
Expectations_Relationships
Expectations_Standard of living

Transitions_other
Trans Othr_Informal Learning/Skills
Trans Othr_Marriage & parenthood
Trans Othr_Migration
Trans Othr_Physical changes
Trans Othr_Religious
Trans Othr_Rites of passage
Trans Othr_Roles & responsibilities
Trans Othr_Work

Relationships
Relationships_Family
Relationships_Other
Relationships_Peer
Relationships_Sexual
Relationships_Teacher-student

Children's Activities
Chd Act_Homework and school prep
Chd Act_Personal care and grooming
Chd Act_Play and leisure
Chd Act_Religious
Chd Act_Rest and sleep
Chd Act_School
Chd Act_Intra-household_agric/fishing
Chd Act_Intra-household_caring for others
Chd Act_Intra-household_domestic
Chd Act_Intra-household_family business/enterprise_non-farm
Chd Act_Extra-household_agric/fishing
Chd Act_Extra-household_domestic
Chd Act_Extra-household_retail/services
Chd Act_Extra-household_workshps/manufac

Relationship to Young Lives
Rel to YL_Comments on research_other
Rel to YL_Comments on research_quantitative
Rel to YL_Ethical issues

Transitions_educational
Trans Educ_Leaving school
Trans Educ_School drop-out/absenteeism
Trans Educ_Transition to pre-school
Trans Educ_Transition to primary
Trans Educ_Transition to secondary
Trans Educ_Transitions to post-secondary
Trans Educ_Transitions within school

Child Well-being/ Ill-being

- Resources
- Risks
- Understandings of wellbeing

Understandings of wellbeing
Well-being_Proverbs/sayings
Well-being_Standard of living
Well-being_Emotional/Well-being_Psychological
Well-being_Social relations
Well-being_Environmental
Well-being_Cultural
Well-being_Health & illness

Risks
Risk_Child characteristics/behaviours
Risk_Environment_physical
Risk_Environment_socio-cultural
Risk_Family
Risk_Material
Risk_Other relationships
Risk_Physical, health & illness
Risk_Shocks
Risk_Supernatural

Resources
Resources_Child characteristics/behaviours
Resources_Environment_physical
Resources_Environment_socio-cultural
Resources_Family
Resources_Health
Resources_Material
Resources_Other relationships
Resources_Spiritual

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Young Lives Qualitative Fieldwork Guide: Round Three (2010/2011)

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 third of four planned rounds of data collection in 2010–11 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.

Young Lives
An International Study of Childhood Poverty

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 Desarollo (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*

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