**Life History checklists**

**Introduction:**

Life History checklists are for the use of PDRAs and other researchers on the *Citizenship futures* project as they research the social, economic, political and cultural practices of socially excluded people in the neighbourhoods under study. The purpose of these checklists is to develop a detailed understanding of the life trajectories of **25 individuals** in the context of the hopes they harbour for their future, and to examine the ways in which they navigate the social, economic and political changes around them. At least 60% of all life histories are likely to be conducted with residents of the neighbourhood [Are we looking at a single neighbourhood or multiple neighbourhoods in each city?] under study. Please take care to ensure that interview participants are drawn from a mix of gender, age and ethnic & religious backgrounds.

\*\*Please note: Life Histories are to be conducted with a sub-set of in-depth interviewees\*\*

This Life History Checklist has been adapted from Kate Bird (2011) Life history interviewing: A practical exercise. Briefing Note 4. Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

**Purpose:**

***[Excerpt from proposal]***

“WP 1.2 will assemble life histories of a sub-set of the interview respondents with the purpose of examining the temporal and spatial dimensions of people’s lives in the context of the hopes they harbour for their future. Life histories are of particular interest to this project because they “reveal juxtapositions of social contexts through a succession of narrated individual experiences that may be obscured in the structural study of processes as such” (Marcus, 1995: 110). Through a fine-grained presentation of continuities and changes in our interviewees’ lives, the project will elucidate the ‘ethics of possibility’ that have informed their lives.

“An appreciation of the ‘ethics of possibility’ will entail a detailed discussion of the personal dilemmas and social circumstances that shaped individual decisions. The decisions taken by individuals and/ or taken on their behalf will be documented, as will their evaluations of the outcomes of those decisions. **As such, the life histories assembled for this project will provide a granular understanding of people’s life trajectories, and the ways in which these trajectories have been shaped by the relationships into which they are embedded**. These understandings will be situated alongside interviewees’ own ‘interpretations’ of their trajectories as well as the ‘feelings’ evoked by these trajectories. It is likely that while the project will be particularly interested in the ‘hopes’ harboured by interviewees, it will not ignore the range of emotions expressed by them while they evaluate and interpret their life trajectories.”

**Interview logistics:**

It is unlikely that the life history will be completed in one sitting. Please record the different dates, times and places where the interview has been conducted and record the settings as appropriate.

This is a life history interview checklist, not a survey form. Please feel free to change the order of the questions, ask different questions or add questions as you think apt.

**Prior to commencing the life history, please make a note of key national/ regional and municipal events in the city/ neighbourhood.**

The life history is not merely “drilling down” into an individual’s life trajectory but also exploring their trajectory in the context of broader political events that might have shaped their perspectives. Making a note of key political events in advance will help you to ask your interviewees questions about whether and how such events affected their lives.

The life history should list the key external events in the respondent’s lifetime and help the reader understand what was happening in their lives during:

* + Events in the UK/ especially London

*Please list. How did this affect you?*

* + Events in France/ especially Paris

*Please list. How did this affect you?*

* + Events in India/ Maharashtra/ especially Mumbai

*Please list. How did this affect you?*

The life history should tell readers the changes your respondents have observed around them. The life history should also tell readers the continuities in your respondents’ lives.

Please agree on a payment in advance of the interview, as below.

London:

Paris:

Mumbai:

**File label and header:**

Please label each file thus:

Initials of interviewer.LH.Number of interview.Year-month-date;

For example, if interviewer name is Carole Gayet, then label as:

CG.LH.03.2019-12-09

Please use as running header the following:

Initials of interviewer.LH.Year-month-date.Name of interviewee

For example, if interviewee name is Simon Parker, then label as:

CG.LH.2019-12-09. Simon Parker

**Family background**

* When and where were you born?
* Parents: Where were your parents from? (Origins of the family - in the case of migration from another place, when did they move and why?)
* What level of education did your parents have?
* Are you married? Living in? What does your spouse/ partner do? [If more than one listed, ask for each]
* Siblings (same mother same father) - How many? Birth order? (step-siblings?)
* Education level of all?
* Describe house and compound when you were a small child (e.g. at age 8) (building materials, size - number of rooms; layout and use of different rooms; furnishings; decorations; home garden/ yard; pit latrine/ other;size of compound, productive and household assets at compound, any other assets owned – or accessed - by household)
* How did it compare with other compounds in your neighbourhood? How did it compare with the house that you live in now (much better, better, the same, worse, much worse)?

**Early childhood**

* Home Life: relationship with parents and siblings
* Responsibilities/ chores at home
* Work
* Food
* Leisure activities
* Health of interviewee and family
* Looking back over this early part of your life do any difficult events or periods stand out? (use this question to probe shocks, coping strategies, channels of support [relatives, friends, charities, church, moneylender, government, politician, political broker], changes in asset levels, changes in work)
* Looking back over this early part of your life are there any positive events or periods that stand out? (use this question to probe opportunities, investment, acquisition of assets)
* What did you hope for, as a child? Your parents? Your siblings?

**Adolescence/ Before Marriage**

* How did things change as you became a teenager/ before marriage?
* Looking back over your teenage years are there any difficult events or periods that stand out? (use this question to probe shocks, coping strategies, channels of support [relatives, friends, charities, church, moneylender, government, politician, political broker], changes in asset levels, changes in work)
* Looking back over your teenage years are there any positive events or periods that stand out? (use this question to probe opportunities, investment, acquisition of assets). At what age did you start earning a wage?
* What did you hope for, as an adolescent? Your parents? Your siblings?

**Adulthood**

* Marriage: Are you married/ in a relationship? How did you meet your spouse/ partnership? Tell us about your decision to get married. What were your parent’s/ family’s views of the match? Were there any problems? How did you go about setting your home? What were your relationships like with your in-laws/ extended family/ community? What is your relationship like with spouse?
* Ask about previous relationships (if any)
* Ask about other relationships if appropriate
* Children: list children (year of birth, gender, education level) Describe issues around the birth of first child. Were there any issues around birth of other children? Were there issues around bringing up children?
* Health: How is your health and that of your family? If ill-health, what has been the impact on household well-being?
* Tell us about your first job/ enterprise/ livelihood activity? How did you get this job/ start this enterprise/ move into this livelihood activity? Did you get help from anyone? If so, who and how did this work? Describe working conditions/ constraints/ profitability/ shocks/ risks/ coping strategies, channels of support [relatives, friends, charities, church, moneylender, government, politician, political broker].
* What do you hope for, as an adult? Your spouse/ partner? Your children?

**Assets and work (and changes over time)**

* Assets owned (or accessed) by respondent’s household now
* Work in which family members are involved now
* Earnings now (individual and household)
* Relative value of earnings now? What do your earnings buy?
* Assets owned - at marriage (*or* point of inheritance *or* point of setting up their own household)
* Work activities of self and spouse - at marriage (*or* point of inheritance *or* point of setting up their own household)
* Earnings at marriage (individual and household)
* Relative value of earnings at marriage? What did your earnings buy?
* Looking back over your early adulthood are there any difficult events or periods that stand out? (use this question to probe shocks, coping strategies, channels of support [relatives, friends, charities, church, moneylender, government, politician, political broker], changes in asset levels, changes in work)
* Looking back over your early adulthood are there any positive events or periods that stand out? (use this question to probe opportunities, investment, acquisition of assets)

**Income and expenditure in the present time**

* Please develop a *detailed* account of the income and expenditure incurred by your interlocutors over the one-week period prior to your interview.

**Relationships with other people**

* Relationships with friends – how did these develop? how have these affected you?
* Relationships with employers/ clients – how did these develop? how have these affected you?
* Relationships with neighbours- richer and poorer people- how did these develop? how have these affected you?
* Associational networks– how did these develop? how have these affected you?
  + School management committees
  + Trade union or other workers’ union
  + Savings or microcredit group
  + Youth club or students’ group
  + Political party
  + NGO-formed or government-formed organisation
  + Devotional committees or churches
* Kinship networks (family/ extended family) – how did these develop? how have these affected you?
* Relationships with politicians and/ or political brokers- how did these develop? how have these affected you?
* Relationships with welfare bureaucrats- how did these develop? how have these affected you?
* Other relationships? With strangers?

**Children (if applicable)**

* What have been among the most important decisions you have taken for your children?
* Do/ did your children ever go to school? What school(s) did/ do they go to? How much fees did/ do you have to pay? Do/did you incur any further expenses?
* How did you/ they find the experience of schooling? What did they/ you like about the school? What did you/ they dislike about the school?
* What sorts of compromises did you make for your children, especially their education?
* What ambitions do you have for your children?
* What ambitions do your children have for themselves?

**Older age (if applicable)**

* At what age did you stop being able to work? What changes in your circumstance? How did it affect your health?
* Widowhood (If applicable): At what age did your spouse die? How did this impact you?
* How have your relationships with others changed? [refer to list above]
* Have you more or less responsibilities now?
* Do your children support you? Do your neighbours support you? Does the community support you? Does the state support you?
* Has your role in the community/ neighbourhood changed?
* Do you discern a change in your status as you have aged?
* Looking back over your older age are there any difficult events or periods that stand out? (use this question to probe shocks, coping strategies, channels of support [relatives, friends, charities, church, moneylender, government, politician, political broker], changes in asset levels, changes in work strategies)
* Looking back over your older age are there any positive events or periods that stand out? (use this question to probe opportunities, investment, acquisition of assets)

**Structural changes in the political economy**

* Key external events in the respondent’s lifetime: what was happening in their lives during:
  + Events in the UK/ especially London

*Please list. How did this affect you?*

* + Events in France/ especially Paris

*Please list. How did this affect you?*

* + Events in India/ Maharashtra/ especially Mumbai

*Please list. How did this affect you?*

* What changes have you observed around you? In relation to each event above, what changes have you seen?
* What things have remained the same as before?