

Interview Guide for Qualitative Interviews on Inter-generational Transfers

May 4, 1999

We would like to talk to you about how life has changed – how it is different today from the time when you were young. We are very interested in hearing your opinions about what things are good and what things are bad in the ways that life has changed. We are collecting this information so that we can understand how the world has changed from the time when you were young up to today. We are going to write down the things that we have learned and leave the information at Chancellor College in Malawi so that other people in Malawi can learn about the stories you have told us. We will also take it back to our country so that people in the United States can learn about your life in Malawi.

1a. When were you born? (probe if exact date not known, see if he or she can remember events such as the second world war or drought)

b. When did you marry? (probe if exact date is not known – as above)

2a. Have you got any sons who are married?

b. When did they marry?

3a. So you have got daughters-in-law who have joined your family, who are the young wives and mothers of today. Tell me about your daughters in law. Are they different from you when you were a daughter in law? (if necessary, probe: in their health, in their child-rearing, in their behavior, in their relations with others)

b. Are your daughters in law similar to other young women of their age in these ways?

4a. Do you give advice to your children's family and your grandchildren?

b. What things do you advise them about? (if necessary, probe: child spacing, taking care of children, cooking, manners, schooling, marital relations, what to spend money on)

c. Do they follow your advice on these issues?

d. Why do they follow/not follow your advice?

5a. Now let us talk about the community in general. Are people today healthy as compared to the people when you were young? (if necessary, specify “young” as being childhood through adolescence, around the time of getting married)

b. What do you think is causing people of today to be healthier/not as healthy?

c. Are there sicknesses which people are suffering nowadays which were not there when you were young?

d. Why have these sicknesses come?

e. Are there sicknesses which people were suffering when you were young which are not there today?

f. Why do you think these sicknesses have decreased?

6a. In your life time, you have probably seen many new goods coming to your community, maybe in the shops or maybe being brought by other people or by visitors. What are some of the new things you have seen? (if necessary, probe: food, clothing, tools, radios, magazines, cosmetics)

b. Are there any of these new things which have helped you very much?

c. How have these things helped you?

c. Are there any of these new things you have seen other people liking very much?

e. Why do others like them?

f. Are there any of these new things which you dislike very much?

g. Why do you dislike them?

7a. Now we would like to talk about getting and giving help to other people. When you were just married, did you receive help from other people when you faced difficulties ? (if necessary, probe: health/medical fees, school fees for children, travel expenses, assistance with buying household goods, assistance in case of poor harvest)

b. Who were those people who helped you when you were just married?

c. How did you thank them?

d. Do they still help you today? In the past year, have those people helped you with anything?

d. Are there people who help you now who did not help you when you were younger?

8a. How about you yourself helping people? In the past year has anyone come to request your help with some problem in life? (if necessary, probe: health/medical fees, school fees for children, travel expenses, assistance with buying household goods, assistance in case of poor harvest)

b. Who are those people who want your help?

c. In the past year, have you offered your assistance to anyone else without them coming to you to ask for it?

d. Who are those people to whom you have offered your help?

e. Why did you offer to help them?

f. How have they thanked you?

8a. Finally, let me ask about your grandchildren. Do you think that your grandchildren will have be successful in life?

b. Why do you think they will be successful/unsuccessful?

c. Do you think your grandchildren will have a life that is better than yours? Worse than yours?

d. Why do you think your life is better/worse than your grandchildren?

9. Is there anything else you would like to say about anything we have talked about?

Thank you very much for talking to us today. We have learned a lot from your stories.