

0.0 – 1.0	<p><b>Those are our life stories. Our normal life stories are collected from the village level and we are saving them for the next generation. That is the purpose of this project. So... is it okay if this is recorded? Is it okay if any photos are taken? Ah, then we do that. Ok. Ok. Sometimes this is published in the website too. Apart from that it will be there in the Department of National Archives.... These photos and the recording. Is it ok? Ah, ok. Then you said that it is alright.</b></p> <p>It is alright since it is mine.</p> <p><b>It is yours. That's right.</b></p> <p>It is not of anyone else.</p> <p><b>That is correct. Your life story. So do you tell your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Somawathi.</p> <p><b>Is it no issues if the name is recorded? It is alright. So... Somawathi...</b></p> <p>Will there be any problem?</p> <p><b>No problem. There is nothing like that.</b></p> <p>Ah because of that.....</p> <p><b>It is ok...?</b></p> <p>Ok</p> <p><b>Ok. Some people don't like to tell the name. Then.... mmm.... Ok. So where were you born?</b></p> <p>I was born in Viharahena.</p>
1.0 – 2.0	<p><b>Where is that?</b></p> <p>It is here.</p> <p><b>Is it also in Matara? Ah No.... Ah..... This....</b></p> <p>Yes. It is in the Matara district itself.</p> <p><b>So, are your mother and father also from this village or from somewhere else?</b></p> <p>My mother and the father had died when I was little.</p> <p><b>Really....?</b></p> <p>Yes</p> <p><b>What happened to them?</b></p> <p>I don't know what happened to them. Later I... was adopted by another person.</p>

	<p><b>How did they adopt you?</b></p> <p>They have taken me somehow when I was little. I was adopted. Then, I called them as mother and father. I called the brothers and sisters there as brother and sister. So there were seven brothers and sisters. Now I am living with them. Out of them only two are alive now. The others died.</p> <p><b>Those elder sisters and younger brothers? Were you the youngest then?</b></p> <p>Yes. Then I was the youngest in the family.</p>
<b>2.0 – 3.0</b>	<p><b>Where did you grow up?</b></p> <p>I grew up here in this house itself.</p> <p><b>In this house itself?</b></p> <p>Yes</p> <p><b>In this place where we have come.</b></p> <p>Yes. That is the ancestral home (<i>Mahagedara</i>). Now that is my home.</p> <p><b>Really?</b></p> <p>Yes</p> <p><b>All the others have gone?</b></p> <p>Yes. Among the others, the elder brothers and sisters are living separately. I grew up in this house. I looked after the mother who raised me. So that mother wished me saying that I should see the Lord Buddha and attain the Nirvana. It is like that.... That mother told the others not to discriminate me. She further said; “I raised her like my own child..... So all have to live affectionately”. That is why I am living at the ancestral home.</p> <p><b>Oh really....?</b></p> <p>Yes. I have not seen my mother and father during my childhood. When I was little.... at that time, I am telling the truth, that my own mother had kept me to be run over by a bus, when the bus was coming. Ok. That mother.</p>
<b>3.0 – 4.0</b>	<p>Unless that would be told everywhere in the village. Then when it was like that, this mother had brought me. Nobody told me. Later I got to know that little by little.</p> <p><b>You were about to be run over by a bus?</b></p> <p>I was kept to be run over. This.... my biological mother.... I... who have birth...</p> <p><b>During childhood?</b></p>

	<p>The mother who gave birth to me.... had kept me to be run over by a bus. So that I would die. Then a friend of my adoptive mother had given a message and I was brought to this house. During my childhood and at the age when I was crawling. Then, now.... That mother in the morning or don't know the exact time.... had prepared roti. A hot burning roti was placed on my back. The scar is there in my back.</p>
<b>4.0 – 5.0</b>	<p>So I am not sad about them. The reason for what I don't get sad is that I grew up well. Grew up well. I suffered from an illness.... suffered from an illness. Now that illness has also recovered. Now I am living well.</p> <p><b>So there is no reason to be sad about that....</b></p> <p>The people around, I got a good family. They are from this Kolonna area. In the Embilipitiya district. So the people of that family love me a lot.</p> <p><b>The family into which you are married?</b></p> <p>Yes. Those people, those brothers, the parents. That father-in-law and mother-in-law are not alive at present. Those two loved me a lot. So all are like that. Love me a lot. Love me a lot. Likewise, the people that I am associating also love me a lot. Nobody sees any mistake in me.</p> <p><b>A meritorious life?</b></p> <p>So still now... I got even a cancer.</p>
<b>5.0 – 6.0</b>	<p>But. still I am living. I was there for a week.</p> <p><b>How did you get a cancer? How much time has passed since you got the cancer? When was that?</b></p> <p>2003</p> <p><b>2003. So you didn't have any issue in the hospital?</b></p> <p>No.... No... Those doctors loved me a lot. There was a doctor called as Lalith Perera. He was an expert in diseases relating to tumors. He treated me from the beginning. He treated me very lovingly and affectionately. I did not know any details about this. I had every one and my relatives around me.</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>Then there is a doctor, the son of the youngest daughter of my elder sister. A doctor in the Karapitiya hospital..... They helped me a lot. I was there in Galle more than five years. Most of the time went to take medicine from there. Then they looked after me very lovingly and affectionately. still now they call me and asking; "Aunt, why are you not coming.....?"</p>
<b>6.0 – 7.0</b>	<p>I said that now I cannot come alone. However, I will come.</p>

	<p><b>Are you living alone here? Or with the husband?</b></p> <p>I am living at this home..... one of my son also living at this home.... His wife, son and daughter are here now with me. They are two little ones.</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>The wife and the two children of my son are at this home. Those two also went to their village today.</p> <p><b>So you have only one son?</b></p> <p>I have one son.</p> <p><b>Where is he?</b></p> <p>He works in Galle.</p> <p><b>Ah.... He doesn't come...?</b></p> <p>He comes once a month.</p> <p><b>He comes once a month.....?</b></p> <p>He works in their company.</p> <p><b>Ah.... Ok. So in this area some other.... Is your husband alive?</b></p> <p>Of whom? Mine?</p> <p>Yes. Look at there... He is in the shop. He went home.</p> <p><b>Ah the preson who went now. Ah. he is the husband..... I don't know that. Ok... Ok... Ok.... How did you meet your husband?</b></p> <p>I don't know about that. I met him accidentally.</p>
7.0 – 8.0	<p>It was not as arranged.</p> <p><b>Ah. You met accidentally and started an affair?</b></p> <p>Yes. We fell in love and then we married.</p> <p><b>How did you fall in love? Cannot you remember the story?</b></p> <p>We fell in love.... It means.... A mason came to a workplace here. In that workplace.... then.... there was a marriage proposal with another person. I started the affair with much difficulty.</p> <p><b>Why?</b></p> <p>My mother scolded me. She scolded me a lot and asked me not to come home.</p> <p><b>Why was that?</b></p> <p>Yes. I did not like.</p>

	<p><b>Did not you like to marry? Or.... Did not you like him?</b></p> <p>I didn't agree to marry at first. Then I agreed when everyone was saying certain things. Then it happened like this. That is all.</p> <p><b>When was your son born?</b></p> <p>Two thousand..... Not two thousand.... On the 15<sup>th</sup> of august in 1974. He turns fourty two years to this month.</p> <p><b>A big son...?</b></p> <p>Yes. He is a big man now and there are a grown up daughter and a son at home.</p>
8.0 – 9.0	<p><b>Yes. So, why did you start the shop here?</b></p> <p>To start the shop.... We thought like that. This.... There was an office.... The office of those who built the bridge. Then they were there by making some rooms here in the office. Then it was given here. The house of our elder brother is here. At the front. That house was given to them so that a shop can be started here. Then they did not start it. Then I asked for that from him. I give him about 500 rupees or 600 rupees monthly. Likewise, I asked for that to begin the shop.</p> <p><b>If that so, earlier, what was there in this area? Now..... this... before the hydro power plant was built, what was here, in this area, before?</b></p> <p>There was nothing before. It was bare. There were no shops.</p>
9.0 – 10.0	<p>There were tea cultivations in this area.</p> <p><b>Has the number of tea cultivations decreased in this area?</b></p> <p>No.... No.... There are more tea cultivations now.</p> <p><b>There are more tea cultivations? Then, after the hydro power plant was built, is that benefit for this area? Does that bring anything good to this area? or unless....</b></p> <p>Yes. Yes.</p> <p><b>To you?</b></p> <p>So when we..... did not have electricity, we were told that the electricity would be given. Still we did not get..... From this..... then it will be vested in the government in about five years..... It is a private one at present. Then it will be given to the government. In five years..... They..... have spent crores. They said that when they get them back in to their hands, it will be vested to the government.</p> <p><b>So.... the people here, when did the people in this area start to grow tea here?</b></p>

	<p>We were not even born when they started to grow tea here.</p>
10.0 – 11.0	<p><b>Then... the people, who are working here, were they here from that period on wards?</b></p> <p>Ah..... the ancestors of the working people are dead. Then the people who were here when we were small are also dead. Their next generation is here now.</p> <p><b>So, they are usually..... usually together? That means... do they participate together for the Sinhala new year and the Tamil new year?</b></p> <p>All are working together. There is no difference as to Sinhala or Tamil. Isn't it brother? All are staying together.</p> <p><b>Then they..... this....</b></p> <p>At the time of work all are staying together. The only difference is at homes.</p> <p><b>Difference means what is the difference?</b></p> <p>Difference means.... after working together, they go to their homes in the evening. We go to our homes. It is like that.</p> <p><b>So, they don't have any right to those houses in which they are living?</b></p> <p>Yes. Yes. They don't have a personal right on it. They live in those belonging to the government....</p>
11.0 – 12.0	<p>They have been given seven perches land and a house by the government. These are private ones. There are CEDA houses. They have been given with seven perches being surveyed.</p> <p><b>Ok. These are private...?</b></p> <p>They do not have any right for them. They have to leave when they are asked to leave. They have to leave when they are asked to leave.</p> <p><b>Very poor.... Now... they are to living continuously in this whole area.... a piece of land...?</b></p> <p>It is not like that here. They are available in the Rakwana side.</p> <p>Yes. To get land from here....</p> <p>There are no lands here.</p> <p>Lands are taken from here too. Near Udathanna there is a land called Hathwel which has been bought by a person called Muthukuda. One piece of land or two.</p> <p>Yes. Yes.</p> <p>With an acre of tea.</p> <p><b>But all are staying together?</b></p>

	<p>Yes</p> <p><b>No problem?</b></p> <p>All he people are living together. All humanbeings are equal no?</p> <p><b>Yes. But during the period of war did anything happen to them....?</b></p> <p>No.... No.... The riots were not here in Eighty-Three.</p> <p>They were not here.</p> <p>(<i>not clear</i>) there was some.</p> <p>There were not any here.</p> <p><b>The riots in Eighty-Three?</b></p> <p>No.... No... even it was not here.</p> <p><b>Were there any problems here during the JVP riots period in the years of Eighty-Eight and Eighty-Nine?</b></p> <p>It wasn't here.</p> <p>No. Not in this area. There was nothing like that.</p>
12.0 – 13.0	<p>We were there without any problem....</p> <p>That Anil Kandawatta Hase (<i>not clear</i>)</p> <p>They were there in the estates.</p> <p><b>Why? What do you mean by they were in the estates? This is also an estate?</b></p> <p>That estate... it is not there. That is private tea estate. Isnt it? They were there in the estates owned by the government.</p> <p><b>What was there?</b></p> <p>It was there in the private estates and small estates here and there. So, here (<i>not clear</i>) nobody comes to the estate of <i>Mahattaya</i> to attack.</p> <p>No. Nobody comes to this estate. These people are the heads of this estate.</p> <p><b>What do you mean.... Does that mean that there were attacks away from the estates belonging to the government? In Eighty-Three?</b></p> <p>Were not attacked?</p> <p>No. No. they attacked the line rooms too. The line rooms were also destroyed. The goats and the poultry were stolen. We can't refuse.... There were small, small cases.</p> <p>Those were happening in faraway places. Doesn't it?</p>

	<p>They were there in the Beveraliya Hase and Anil Kanda.</p> <p><b>Then what happened to those people?</b></p> <p>No.... No.... there were no definite riots. That (<i>not clear</i>) were taken. That is all. Nothing happened to us.</p> <p><b>Does that mean that the Sinhala people who were around helped them?</b></p>
13.0 – 14.0	<p><b>Did outsiders come or unless?</b></p> <p>Outsiders.</p> <p>Not outsiders. There were some persons.... Part of them was JVP cadres.</p> <p>There were few JVP persons in the village.</p> <p>Although riots did not occur here, Mr. Jayewardene's neck was cut and he was tied to that tree because he was the one who casted his vote, firstly.</p> <p>Yes. A person was killed here by cutting the neck.</p> <p><b>Who was that?</b></p> <p>There is that as Muthukuda Watta. The Muthukuda Watta bus conductor went as the first person to vote. They came in the evening and.... he was taken away and tied to the banyan tree. He was killed by cutting his neck.</p> <p>He was hung.</p> <p><b>Why was that done?</b></p> <p>As he voted first. For that offence. There was such a thing in the JVP at that time saying not to go to vote.</p> <p><b>Ah.... Yes. Yes. Yes.</b></p> <p>That happened to those who had casted vote as first in most of the places. A person was taken and killed here.</p> <p><b>Why was that done? To others....</b></p> <p>He was not from this village.</p> <p>No</p> <p>He was a person who had come to work in an estate. It was Mr. Jayawardena.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p><b>Nearby? Any such incidents.....?</b></p>
14.0 – 15.0	<p>There is a place called as Muthukuda Watta there.</p> <p>It is there.</p>



	<p>A place called as Muthukuda Division. Did these people go to the Adeldeniya Division yesterday? Did they go?</p> <p>What?</p> <p>Did not you go to the area called as Adeldeniya? To the lines rooms of Ramasamy?</p> <p>Did not go there still? Are you going there today? To up....</p> <p>You have to go there.</p> <p><b>Where.... where....?</b></p> <p>It is over from here. That means.....</p> <p>You have to turn downwards from there.</p> <p>There are people belonging to three generations in that estate. That means about 120 or 130 years.</p> <p>Straight like this... without turning, there is a road which goes straight.</p> <p>The third generation is also there. But they are in private estates. Cases have also been filed to drive away these people. They go to the court too to appear for the cases.</p> <p>Yes. Many problems have happened there.</p> <p><b>Really?</b></p> <p>Those people.... They are living there from a long time ago.</p> <p>All the three generations have not been allowed. There are about thirteen families.</p> <p>A lot of people are there. They are living that place from a long time ago. Now they don't have a place to live.</p> <p>They have been asked to file cases against Mr. Ranjith. Mr. Mendis has filed a case. They are safe from both sides.</p> <p><b>Are the cases being filed on behalf of them?</b></p> <p>Yes. Yes. These people took the tea estate from them. They have filed the case pleading to drive them away. They cannot be driven away. There are living as three generations.... for about 120 or 130 years.</p>
15.0 – 16.0	<p><b>Those who took their estate are trying to drive them away?</b></p> <p>Yes. Yes.</p> <p><b>Then who has filed the case?</b></p>

	<p>The previous owner of the estate has filed the case.</p> <p><b>The previous owner filed a case on behalf of new owner, doesn't it?</b></p> <p>The new owner has asked to drive away those people. So the previous owner has filed the case.</p> <p><b>To drive them away?</b></p> <p>Hm hm</p> <p><b>It means.... to drive them away from there?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>But, however.....?</b></p> <p>They don't go away. Three of their generations have lived there in the estate. On the date of the case their unions gather and they appear for the cases with the support of Mr. Shri Ranga and Mr. Mano Ganeshan.</p> <p><b>They appear for the cases...?</b></p> <p>Now they went for three or four case rounds.</p> <p><b>Why are they asking to remove the persons who were living previously in the estate? They can continue to work there...?</b></p> <p>It is not like that. They want to evacuate them and to construct a building of about two storeys or whatever here. They have such an expectation.</p> <p>They are their own lands. That is why. They are private lands. But see there! Those people are living in lands belonging to the government.</p> <p><b>Right. Right. But that plot of land is not very big.</b></p>
16.0 – 17.0	<p><b>That means.... a lot....?</b></p> <p>A room is about four or five perches.</p> <p>More than that....</p> <p>Ah..... It is bigger than this.</p> <p>It is not like this. One person's room is bigger than your house.</p> <p>Yes. It is bigger than this. The room is situated from front to the back up to here. The road that leads to the <i>Kovil</i> is there like this. On the other side of the road, they have built their kitchens separately.</p> <p>They have built them a little by little lengthily, to show that a room has been given to them.</p>

	<p>In the size of the line room, they have built a kitchen separately within that boundary. The kitchen belongs to that house is not use as a kitchen. If it is used as a kitchen, the space is not sufficient for them.</p> <p><b>Ok. Ok. Ok.</b></p> <p>The chimney in that kitchen has also been broken and it is used as a room. There are two families in one room. It means.... the chimney also situated in the line room.... The fathers are living in such place.</p> <p><b>Hmm. What is your name?</b></p> <p>Me?</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p> <p><b>I am called as Premathilaka.</b></p> <p><b>Ah. Ok. Ok. Are you also from this area?</b></p> <p>No. I am in the other side, near the house of our <i>Grama Niladhari</i>.</p> <p>Near the house of our <i>Grama Niladhari</i>.</p>
17.0 – 18.0	<p><b>Right right. So what are your expectations about the life and your children?</b></p> <p>About the children... the children have already finished their studies. Now the daughter has been selected to learn nursing. She likes that. Now she is going for the training in this month. The son is going to face the exam in this year. He is in grade eleven. It is good if he is also gets a good one. I need to see both of my children living happily. They are the only ones that I have.</p> <p><b>Yes. They are your grandson and the grand daughter?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Ok... then....?</b></p> <p>Ok that is all.</p> <p><b>Is there any other thing to be said? Is there anything to say about the country?</b></p> <p>Ah.... Other things... ah?</p> <p><b>To say about the country.... or about the area?</b></p> <p>This area is very beautiful. Good.</p>
18.0 – 19.0	<p>When we go to other areas, we feel very lazy. We have cool water here. We cannot live anywhere in the way we want.</p> <p><b>Is there any water problem here?</b></p>

	<p>No... No.... No problem. Water is there. We are getting water from this stream and its water is coming from the Sinharaja forest from far away. This tap water has been released to us. We buy water for money to drink now. The water that is in the house is bought with money. Now we have to pay about 220 rupees for a month. Isn't it so Premathilaka?</p> <p>120 rupees.</p> <p>Is that 120 rupees? We have to pay 120 rupees per month. For water.... Even though we have much water, we have to take water to the houses for money. If it not there, we would have much difficulty in going here and there to get water. Yes.</p> <p>So we got water by working for 32 shifts. But we pay for the water.</p> <p>Yes. We have worked for 32 shifts for water.</p> <p>Then we are paying 120 rupees continuously.</p> <p>Yes.</p>
19.0 – 20.0	<p><b>What are the other difficulties in these areas? Are there health facilities?</b></p> <p>In these areas there were no roads in the past. Now it is fairly very good. There are roads from here and there. There are also three-wheelers...</p> <p><b>Are there buses?</b></p> <p>There is a bus upward. There is a bend downwards up there... a bus comes there from the town. The bus is there to that place. Then... now... in future... roads for buses are constructed. To the Ratnapura road. They are being built. Cannot say exactly.</p> <p><b>Is this area good?</b></p> <p>What?</p> <p><b>Good?</b></p> <p>This area is good.</p> <p><b>Very beautiful. A lot?</b></p> <p>This area is good means.... here... he also likes very much. He bathed in the early morning. Now did you bring lunch?</p> <p><b>No.... No.... We have to go now. We have to go and find a place.</b></p> <p>What?</p> <p><b>A place has to be found. There are people. Is there any place down there?</b></p>
20.0 – 21.0	To have food?

**Yes. No... we will find.**

To find means.... in that place.... this....

**Is there any place that you know?**

Are you are going from here...?

**Yes**

There is food available in the village. The place with pots placed nicely....

**Ah. Ok .**

That place is called as *Gammane*. The food is available there. Isn't it brother?

Yes. Yes.

**Ah. Ok. ok**

When you are going from here, you will find a junction.

**I know the place that you are talking of**

It is there.

**We came here by passing that place.**

Near the junction which leads to Beveraliya.

That is junction which leads to the Beveraliya Estate. There are good places away from that too.

**Ok. So thank you very much for telling us your story. And for all the things that you told us, Mister.**

There is another place near the Samurdhi bank. Their other hotel is at the junction near the Samurdhi bank.

Yes. The food there is better than that, isn't it?

Yes.