Before the interview

Steps for the interviewer

Tick each step as you go. The interview works best when your relative knows what to expect and you have tried the recorder before the day.

1. TALK FIRST A WEEK OR MORE BEFORE

- [ ] Visit or call, without recording. Tell your relative why you want to record their stories and who will hear them: only the family, a library or archive, or anyone online.
- [ ] Ask which language they would like to speak. If your Khmer is not strong, ask a relative who speaks it well to come with you.
- [ ] Give them the question sheet (page 3 or 4). Ask which topics they would rather leave out, and cross them off.
- [ ] Tell them they can skip any question, take a break or stop at any time, and that talking about the past can bring strong feelings, during the talk or in the days after, and that this is normal.

"I would like to record your life stories, so the family can remember them."
ខ្ញុំចង់ថតរឿងរ៉ាវជីវិតរបស់លោក ទុកឱ្យគ្រួសារចងចាំ។
"You can skip any question, take a break or stop at any time. You decide who may hear it."
លោកអាចរំលងសំណួរណាមួយ សម្រាក ឬឈប់នៅពេលណាក៏បាន។ លោកជាអ្នកសម្រេចថា អ្នកណាខ្លះអាចស្តាប់វាបាន។

2. PLAN THE VISIT AFTER THE TALK

- [ ] Let your relative choose the day, the time of day when they feel best, and the place. Pick a quiet room.
- [ ] Plan for less than an hour. Expect to come back for more on another day.
- [ ] Ask them to bring out photos, letters or objects they treasure.
- [ ] Decide who else will be in the room, and ask your relative if that is all right.

3. GET YOURSELF READY THE DAYS BEFORE

- [ ] Choose 5 to 10 questions for this visit. Leave the hard years for your relative to raise.
- [ ] Learn the names you expect to hear: family members, villages, provinces. Ask how they are written in Khmer.
- [ ] Find someone your relative can talk to afterwards, and where to find a doctor, counselor or trusted monk if old memories stay painful.
- [ ] Think about how you feel. These stories can weigh on the listener too. Have someone to talk to yourself, and put the visit off if you are not in a good place.

4. TRY THE EQUIPMENT THE DAY BEFORE

- [ ] Record two minutes of talking with the phone's own recorder and play it back.
- [ ] Check that the phone has space for an hour or more of recording.
- [ ] Charge the phone. Pack the charger.
- [ ] Print the question sheet, two copies of the permission note, and the topics list.
- [ ] Pack a pen, water, tissues, and a small stand or soft cloth for the phone.

Next: page 2, on the day.

On the day

Steps for the interviewer

1. SET UP THE ROOM BEFORE YOU START

- [ ] Turn off the television, radio, fans and anything that hums. Put your own phone on silent.
- [ ] Put the recording phone in airplane mode, so calls do not interrupt.
- [ ] Place it close to your relative, on a cloth or stand, not in your hand.
- [ ] Record a short test and play it back.

2. START THE RECORDING AND SAY WHO YOU ARE

- [ ] Press record once and leave it running until the end. Do not stop and start.
- [ ] Say the date, your name, your relative's name and the city. Do not say the home address.
- [ ] Ask for permission on the recording, and wait for the answer.

"Today is _____. My name is _____. I am here with _____ in _____."
ថ្ងៃនេះជាថ្ងៃ _____ ។ ខ្ញុំឈ្មោះ _____ ។ ខ្ញុំនៅជាមួយ _____ នៅ _____ ។
"Is it all right if I record this? You can skip any question or stop at any time."
តើខ្ញុំអាចថតការសន្ទនានេះបានទេ? លោកអាចរំលងសំណួរណាមួយ ឬឈប់នៅពេលណាក៏បាន។

3. DURING THE INTERVIEW

- [ ] Follow the order of a life: roots, growing up, the hard years only if they choose, starting over, what lasts.
- [ ] Ask one question at a time. Follow up with "Can you tell me more about that?" Let silences sit.
- [ ] Hold up a photo or object and ask who or what it is. Say the names of people in photos on the recording.
- [ ] Do not correct a date or a detail. Write it down and check it gently later.
- [ ] Watch for tiredness, and offer breaks. Stop when they are tired; finish another day.

4. IF YOUR RELATIVE BECOMES UPSET

- [ ] Pause. Offer water and a few slow breaths. Ask whether they would like a break or to stop. Do not push for more.
- [ ] Help them back to the present: ask where they are and what they can see and hear around them.

5. FINISH ON LIGHTER GROUND

- [ ] End with what lasts: a song, a recipe, advice for the grandchildren. After the hard years, ask what helped them get through.
- [ ] Ask if there is anything you did not ask. Thank them, then stop the recording.
- [ ] Fill in the permission note together (page 5). Make two copies: one for them, one for you.
- [ ] Stay a while and talk about something light before you leave.

"Is there anything I did not ask that you would like to tell? Thank you."
តើមានអ្វីដែលខ្ញុំមិនបានសួរ ហើយលោកចង់ប្រាប់ទេ? អរគុណច្រើន។

Record a family oral history

Question sheet

Choose 5 to 10 questions for one visit. Give this sheet to your relative before the day (page 1). Cross off any topic they would rather leave out. Offer breaks; stop when they are tired.

ROOTS

1. What is your full name, and how is it written in Khmer? Did people call you anything else as a child?
2. When and where were you born? Which province, district and village?
3. What do you remember about your parents and grandparents?

GROWING UP

4. Describe the house you grew up in. Who lived there?
5. What did your family cook on a special day? Who taught you to cook it?
6. What music did you hear when you were young? Was there a singer you loved?
7. What did you do at the Wat and at festivals?

THE HARD YEARS (ONLY IF YOU WANT TO)

8. Is there anything about the years after 1975 you would like the family to know?
9. Who or what helped you survive?

STARTING OVER

10. How did you come to the place where you live now? What was the first year like?
11. How did you meet your husband or wife?
12. Which traditions did you work hardest to keep for the children?

WHAT LASTS

13. If your grandchildren could know one song, which would it be, and why?
14. What would you like the family to remember about you?

ការថតប្រវត្តិផ្ទាល់មាត់របស់គ្រួសារ

Question sheet, Khmer

មុនពេលចាប់ផ្តើមថត៖ និយាយឈ្មោះអ្នក ឈ្មោះគាត់ កាលបរិច្ឆេទ និងទីក្រុង។ សួរ៖ «តើខ្ញុំអាចថតការសន្ទនានេះបានទេ? លោកអាចរំលងសំណួរណាមួយក៏បាន។»

ឫសគល់

១. តើឈ្មោះពេញរបស់លោកជាអ្វី ហើយសរសេរជាអក្សរខ្មែរយ៉ាងដូចម្តេច? កាលនៅតូច តើគេហៅលោកដោយឈ្មោះផ្សេងទេ?

២. តើលោកកើតនៅពេលណា និងនៅទីណា? ខេត្ត ស្រុក និងភូមិណា?

៣. តើលោកចាំអ្វីខ្លះអំពីឪពុកម្តាយ និងជីដូនជីតារបស់លោក?

ពេលនៅក្មេង

៤. សូមរៀបរាប់អំពីផ្ទះដែលលោករស់នៅកាលពីក្មេង។ តើមានអ្នកណាខ្លះរស់នៅទីនោះ?

៥. តើគ្រួសារលោកធ្វើម្ហូបអ្វីនៅថ្ងៃពិសេស? តើអ្នកណាបង្រៀនលោកធ្វើម្ហូបទាំងនោះ?

៦. កាលនៅក្មេង តើលោកស្តាប់ចម្រៀងអ្វីខ្លះ? តើមានអ្នកចម្រៀងណាដែលលោកចូលចិត្តទេ?

៧. តើលោកធ្វើអ្វីខ្លះនៅវត្ត និងនៅពេលបុណ្យ?

ឆ្នាំដ៏លំបាក (បើលោកចង់និយាយ)

៨. តើមានរឿងអ្វីអំពីក្រោយឆ្នាំ ១៩៧៥ ដែលលោកចង់ឱ្យគ្រួសារដឹងទេ?

៩. តើអ្នកណា ឬអ្វី បានជួយឱ្យលោករស់រានមានជីវិត?

ការចាប់ផ្តើមជីវិតថ្មី

១០. តើលោកមករស់នៅកន្លែងបច្ចុប្បន្នយ៉ាងដូចម្តេច? តើឆ្នាំដំបូងនោះយ៉ាងដូចម្តេចដែរ?

១១. តើលោកបានជួបប្តី ឬប្រពន្ធរបស់លោកយ៉ាងដូចម្តេច?

១២. តើទំនៀមទម្លាប់ណាខ្លះដែលលោកខិតខំថែរក្សាទុកសម្រាប់កូនៗ?

អ្វីដែលនៅជាប់

១៣. បើចៅៗអាចស្គាល់ចម្រៀងតែមួយបទ តើលោកចង់ឱ្យជាបទអ្វី ហើយហេតុអ្វី?

១៤. តើលោកចង់ឱ្យគ្រួសារចងចាំអ្វីខ្លះអំពីលោក?

Permission to keep and share a recording

ការអនុញ្ញាតឱ្យរក្សាទុក និងចែករំលែកការថត

Speaker
អ្នកនិយាយ _____

Interviewer
អ្នកសួរ _____

Date
កាលបរិច្ឆេទ _____

City
ទីក្រុង _____

What we talked about
ប្រធានបទដែលបាននិយាយ _____

WHO MAY HEAR THIS RECORDING អ្នកណាខ្លះអាចស្តាប់ការថតនេះ

- ☐ Only our family
  តែគ្រួសាររបស់យើងប៉ុណ្ណោះ
- ☐ A library or archive, for research and teaching
  បណ្ណាល័យ ឬបណ្ណសារ សម្រាប់ការស្រាវជ្រាវ និងការបង្រៀន
- ☐ Anyone, online
  មនុស្សទូទៅ តាមអ៊ីនធឺណិត

MY NAME ឈ្មោះរបស់ខ្ញុំ

- ☐ Use my name
  ប្រើឈ្មោះខ្ញុំ
- ☐ Use this name instead _____
  ប្រើឈ្មោះនេះជំនួស
- ☐ Use no name
  មិនប្រើឈ្មោះ

KEEP PRIVATE រក្សាទុកជាឯកជន

Parts I want kept within the family
ផ្នែកដែលខ្ញុំចង់ឱ្យនៅតែក្នុងគ្រួសារ

_____

I may change my mind before the recording is shared outside the family. I will receive a copy of the recording and of this note.
ខ្ញុំអាចប្តូរចិត្តបាន មុនពេលការថតនេះត្រូវបានចែករំលែកទៅក្រៅគ្រួសារ។ ខ្ញុំនឹងទទួលបានច្បាប់ចម្លងនៃការថត និងនៃលិខិតនេះ។

Speaker's signature
ហត្ថលេខាអ្នកនិយាយ _____

Interviewer's signature
ហត្ថលេខាអ្នកសួរ _____

For a child: parent or guardian
សម្រាប់កុមារ៖ ឪពុកម្តាយ ឬអាណាព្យាបាល _____

Topics and times
ប្រធានបទ និងពេលវេលា

Listen back and note when each topic starts. This list makes a long recording easy to use, and shows which parts are worth typing out or translating.

Speaker
អ្នកនិយាយ _____

File name
ឈ្មោះឯកសារ _____

TIME ពេលវេលា	TOPIC, NAMES AND PLACES ប្រធានបទ ឈ្មោះ និងទីកន្លែង	TYPE OUT? ចម្លងជាអក្សរ?

After the interview

Steps for the interviewer

1. KEEP THE FILE SAFE — THE SAME DAY

- [ ] Copy the recording off the phone without changing it.
- [ ] Rename it with your relative's name, the date and a few words on the topic, for example **Name_2026-11-14_growing-up**. Remove any home address from the name.
- [ ] Keep at least two copies in two different places, such as a computer and a cloud account, or a drive kept at another relative's home.
- [ ] Keep the signed permission note with the recording.
- [ ] Write a few notes while the visit is fresh: names you heard, places, anything to ask about next time.
- [ ] Check in with your relative the next day.

2. LISTEN BACK — WITHIN A WEEK

- [ ] Fill in the topics and times list (page 6) as you listen. Write Khmer names in Khmer script too.
- [ ] Mark the parts worth typing out or translating. You may not need to type out the whole recording.
- [ ] For parts in Khmer, ask a Khmer reader to type them out or check them. Automatic tools are not reliable for Khmer yet.
- [ ] Do not upload a recording with private or painful memories to a free online service without asking your relative first.
- [ ] Give your relative a copy of the recording, with a thank-you.

3. CHECK IN — ABOUT TWO WEEKS LATER

- [ ] Call or visit to ask how they are. Strong feelings can come back in the days after.
- [ ] Ask whether they would like to add anything or change their mind about anything on the permission note.
- [ ] Plan the next visit if they would like one.

4. BEFORE SHARING OUTSIDE THE FAMILY — ANY TIME LATER

- [ ] Play or read back the parts you want to share, and ask again. Follow the permission note: who may hear it, which name to use, and what stays in the family.
- [ ] Before sending a recording to a library or archive, ask them first what they accept and in what format.

5. LOOK AFTER THE RECORDING — ONCE A YEAR

- [ ] Open each copy to check it still plays. Copy it to a new drive or account when an old one wears out.