

I kept on sewing and I advanced a little. When I stopped, I went to do book work. I was working at V.T.C. I sold cloth. I sold the cloth like that. Then life became difficult; it could not help me very well. Then I kept to it like that and I came to stop it and came to sell yams. Now, yams at all, at first, they were buying maybe hundred at all for two hundred Cedis. At times, maybe hundred for six hundred Cedis. ~~Maybe they were buying some~~ at all for thousand Cedis, the whole hundred. Right now, life has become very very hard. Now, one hundred yams are about hundred thousand Cedis. Some at all are one hundred and fifty thousand Cedis. Now, the life, the life in Ghana has become very very difficult. Now, if you have two children, if you don't use force really, you cannot look after them in school at all. (And as for you, how many children are you holding?) My children are four, three boys, one girl. As for me, that is all I brought forth; I brought forth four; three boys, one girl. Now, my daughter, too, she is the youngest that I didn't have any after her at all. Now; she; when she had never had a child, she brought forth twins, a female and a male. (Is that so? Ei!) Right now, she has brought forth a girl and a boy, twins again. (Has she brought forth twins again?) O, they are eight months old. (Ei!) She has brought forth a girl and a boy like that again. (Ei! where is she bringing them up?) The one who the girl is the second child

child after him too, the man, he too has twins, two males. As for now, I am there with my grandchildren. As for my children themselves, they are grown. Everyone is making his or her own living. Now, I am at home with my grand children. This, when I get up, an old woman, I go for a walk a little in order that we may get what we will eat. In Ghana, if you don't make an effort, eating at all has become very very difficult. So, do you see that everyday, at times, when you come, you want me to come home with you. When you come, I don't have time. (True) All of it is due to the little food which we will eat. (True) Water bill, we will pay; light bill, we will pay. All of it, if you don't make an effort to come to the market, it will not be possible. Because, now, in Ghana, things are going up. Life has become very very hard. At first, when we began life, when you have, at first we were spending two shillings and one shilling. When you had even two shillings, you knew that you would buy things and even have some left which the next day at all, these children would take it to school. Today, as I am there now, if I don't get four thousand Cedis, I cannot cook in my home. I can never cook. Now, everything has become difficult (Yes) Life in Ghana, when you say it, they say that people have become too many. It is true but people have become too many in the world. Did you see that yesterday they came to make a show)

and teachings about it. Yesterday, you didn't come to town, do you see? (It was Akua who attended) Yes. (Was it not the family planning?) Family Planning and AIDS and others and the bearing of many children and — and I said and I said, as for me, as for me, myself, God gave me only four so it is not necessary for me to come back to sit down to listen to it again at all because I have finished having children. And so, we are just staying here. Now, we are not yet dead. So when you get up, you have to make an effort to walk up and down in search of what you will eat. (Yes) At this time, as I am there, I am an old woman; my waist. If it is not Ghanaian life which has become difficult, when I get up, I should be at home like that; and I would be resting. But, you, your child, the work she went to do, his/her money is not enough to spend it. How would you sit down that he/she brings some to add to it for you? So, little by little and when we get up, then we walk about. When we go to the market and we are coming, it is like that. And at times, I think about it that when I stay at home, I will be locked up; I cannot get up again. So, at times, as for me, when I get up, I walk little by little. What young women are doing, and I too, I do some little by little like that. As for Ghana, even you, when you came, you have seen how Ghana is like. (Yes) Have you seen it? (Yes, and at first too, it was —) When you came for the first time.)

at all, it was not like that (Mr, it was —) When you came first and you were going to the North, (yes) it was not like that (And at that time, but when you ask someone, he/she will tell you that life has become difficult.) Yes. That is so. As for life — (If you were there at that time, too, somebody would tell you that life had become difficult) now, it has become difficult. Now; as for now, it has become more difficult than the first. (True. And when you were sewing, how was life?) When I was sewing? (Yes) At that time, life, it was very good. (Is that so?) Yes, it was good. Living had not gone high, high, high like now in which we are. (Yes. It was during whose time?) At that time? As for the Pound, it was during Kwame Nkrumah's time. I was there, the day I got, we had Independence, the very first day, the Wednesday; that very day, my senior child was born. (Is that so?) Yes. So the beginning of my life was during Kwame Nkrumah's time. (And that life, how it was like, explain it a bit for us to have an idea.) As for that time, do you see, something like tinapa and milk, they were all cheap. At that time, tinapa (i.e. canned glisha in tomato source) was six pence and two pennies. Today, how much is tinapa? \$550.00 (Is that so?) Today one tin of tinapa is \$550.00. At first, when you are cooking ampesie at all, when you get a visitor, you run to buy tinapa, sardine. Expensive sardine at all, you have seen that when you came to find that we were spending nine pence. We were spending one

shilling, we were ~~spending~~ six pence and we were using ~~three~~ pence; even farthing, we were using it. (Yes) Before all these monies came into being, it is said that we were spending something called Cedi, ~~eight~~ shillings and four pence. (Aa, that of Kwame Nkrumah?) Yes. That started to replace the Ghanaian money.

Yes. (And at that time, were you yourself making ^{all} your own stores?) As for that time, and I was saying that at that time, if you had as at first, we were saying twenty pounds, (or, \$40,000.00. About \$40,000.00) Today, it has come to be \$40,000.00. Twenty pounds. If you had that much, you could do any business with it to your satisfaction. (Yes. So at that time, you were holding an amount about that?) Yes. (And who gave it to you?) My father gave me that.

(Yes) My father was ~~keeping~~ a store. He was doing business with V.P.C. He was also making cocoa farm. So when I was a young woman, you know that formerly, when we reached puberty age, puberty rites was performed for us. So when the puberty rites was over, for me, my father bought a sewing machine for me. That machine too, he bought it for twenty pounds. That twenty pounds, today, how much money is it?

(It is about, twenty pounds, it is about \$40,000.00) No. (Twenty pounds?) Twenty pounds. (Forty Cedis) Forty Cedis. (Aa, forty Cedis. Yes. It has confused me) It was forty Cedis.

(True) No. Forty Cedis at all is too much. Forty Cedis, when you count, how much is it?
 (Twenty pounds. It is pounds or forty Cedis)
 It is Cedis. It is — Do you see? Formerly, look, the twenty pound, it is — formerly one pound, the one pound, which we were using, one pound, one pound which we were using, (That one pound, is today two Cedis) Yes. (Yes, One pound is today two Cedis) Yes, one pound, one pound which we were using, twenty. That is how ^{much} my father bought the machine for me. Singer sewing machine. (Yes, Singer machine.) Yes, and I used it, ^{to} learn sewing. (And before you were going to learn sewing, had you done some business before?) I had not done any business. I was a child. I was a child. a girl. Also I had reached puberty age, and I went to study sewing. So when I finished learning sewing, and began life, someone came to ask to marry me. (Who came to ask you for marriage?) — My husband. (Your husband?) Yes. He came to ask me for marriage (Yes) So, when I got married, the day that we had this thing, Independence. The very day we had Independence, 6th of March. The very day, ~~was~~ ^{was} my senior child, ^{was} born. Wednesday. He is a male. That very day; the day we had self government. It was the very day that I had my first child. (Then it is very good. And when you had a child, were you still working?) I was sewing. I went on sewing; even I had three children.)

At that time, when I was sewing, I had a passbook at V.T.C. (Ah, in your father's work place.) I was also collecting cloths bit by bit. So after that, I came to have my fourth child and I stopped the sewing and came to sell yams. (Ah, and why did you stop sewing?) Mm, I saw that the work was not going on well for me.

(Is that so?) Yes. It was not going well for me.

Also, I had children. The children, they will go to school. When they get up, they will eat. At all that time, life was difficult. So you could not put all the burden on your husband alone,

(Is that so?) unless you too, you will do a little work to help him, before all, of you will be able to care for the children. (So at that time too, life was beginning to be difficult.)

Life was beginning to be difficult. (It was during whole time?) As for when life began to be difficult, it was during Kwame Nkrumah's time (Is that so?) It was during Kwame

Nkrumah's time that things began to go down little by little. And when Kwame Nkrumah left, Busia came. So when Busia came, all that time, tinapa (i.e. canned Geisha) was eight pence as I was saying. So when Busia left, it came to Akyeampong and his group and then life began to go up. ~~Since~~ military government came, life has gone up till today.

(And at that time you began to sell yams, were they selling yams like today? Which place were you going to buy yams?) Mm. As for the way we used to go and buy yams.

from the Northern Ghana, in the first place at all, you see, formerly, there was honesty in the world. So when you go and your money is very small at all, when you buy, the farmer will give you some on credit for you to bring it. When you finish selling, you will go and pay his/her money to him/her. Now, there may be someone, the farmer can give her a full load in a lorry. He/she will not take money at all. He/she has worked with her for a long time. So, as he/she has worked with her for a long time, she buys on credit like that all the time. There may be someone, when she buys on credit like that, she will not send the money at all. She will not go and pay it. So, today, a farmer, when you go and you are short of one Cedi at all, he/she (i.e. the farmer) will not let you go with it. That is how they do it. At first, the farmers had faith in people. We spoiled them.

(Is that so?) Yes. (So at that time, what were the problems in the business?) What do you say? (What problems were in the work?) In the business? (At first) Mm. As for the work, do you see? At first, when you go to buy the ~~goods~~ at all, to bring them to this place; to get a lorry to go to take the goods to this place, some would have been rotten. (Yes) When some rot like that, then it brings debt to you. Yes. Someone too can come and buy some. You trade with her like that.

Maybe, she comes to buy and pays you, she comes to buy and pays you; she comes to buy and then she pays you; she comes to buy and then she pays you. Then, when she comes, she says, "Give me some to add to it." When she goes away with it, she will not bring the money; you will not see her again at all. (Is that so?) And it means that that too has become a debt. So it means that it makes the person goes into a big problem. (Yes) (And you say, you stopped sewing and you came to sell yams. Was your mother selling yams or your relative selling it?) A sister of mine, my sister was selling it. A sister of mine. My sister was selling it. I went to tell my sister that now, how my work was going, it was not going well for me. So I wanted to go with her. And she told me that we should go and as for the work, by all means it is a job for a female parent. By all means, when you sell and you don't make profit at all, you will get one to go home with it to cook for the children to eat. And I attached myself to my sister. It means that I was on the road; I went to sell some. (And at that time, was it better than sewing?) Yes; it was better than sewing. That I was saying that as for it, by all means, when you sell and you don't make any profit at all, two will be left for you to go home with it and

cook it. When you put salt on it, your children will eat it. (And who gave you money to start the yam business?) As for the one who gave me money to start the yam, that at the beginning, I had first worked a little already. I was holding a little money myself, and I began with it gradually. I was saying that at the beginning, my father gave me a little amount of money at first and I went to open a passbook with it. So it was that very money that I was keeping it little by little. (So now you have stopped the passbook?) Long time ago. (And did you withdraw your commission?) Yes. I had a little commission and I withdrew it and added it to my money which I was holding. (Yes. And at that time, what helped you very much in the business, that selling yam would be better than sewing?) Mm, at that time, for the yam, that was what I was saying that at first, when you had a little amount of money at all, when you went, when your money was not enough, the farmer would give you some to add to it. When you come back and you earn a little on it, you send his money to him. Hmm, now many people, they do not let the farmers give us goods again. There may be someone when she comes to finish selling it, she will not go and give the money to the farmer. She will not go there at all again. So now, when you go to buy a farmer's thing, when

it is short by even one Cedi, he will not let you^{go} with the goods. All these are among the things which have let life become very very difficult. (Tone) (So now, you said that you will not go on the road again.) Like at first, — No, as for me, I will not go again. (Why?) Now, even my waist, I cannot walk, because in the Northern Ghana, in some place, you travel for about fifteen miles before you go to a village to buy goods and come back home to sleep. In some place, you will walk for about twenty miles. (Is that so?) Yes. In some case too, a bicycle will come and pick you. The bicycle, you sit at the back and someone is riding it. He will travel the distance with you like that. You know that it will shake you gan! gan! gan! gan! all the way like that. Now too, I have waist pain. I cannot. Now, my strength has become small. I cannot walk a long distance to go and buy and return home to look for a lorry. You will kneel too, to make your selection. When you bargain for it, when you are coming to bargain for it, you will make selection to pick different sizes before. As for her, she has gone there so she has gone to see it. As for Atua Konadu, she has gone to the Northern Ghana so she has gone to see how they select the yards. In all, the children do get tired. Now, as for me at all, everyday, I say, I say, Ghanaian.)

~~women~~ work harder than the men. (Is that so?)

Yes. We do get tired. Mainly, our Ashanti men at all, there may be someone, when you have children with him, he leaves all the children to you. If you, the woman, you don't make an effort, what are the children going to do?

They are going to be useless. (Is that so?) Yes.

(And your husband too, does he behave like that?)

O, no. As for him, he doesn't behave like that.

(Then, you are lucky) He doesn't do that.

(What work does he do?) Formerly, he too, he was working at the City Council. As for now, he is in his farm. For, while he was working all the time, he used to send money to his mother and she was working gradually for him.

(What farm?) Cocoa farm. Now he is in Sefwi. (So as for you, don't you look after him again? He is in Sefwi and you have stopped marriage.) No. I and the children are here, so after sometime, he comes. And

when he is going to withdraw money, he will come. (And as for you, don't you go there?)

No. (Why? Won't you go and help your husband a bit?) At times, I go. (Do you go at times?)

I, I will not go and stay there. If I go to stay there, you see that in Kumasi, if you have boys and they don't have a good caretaker, then the children grow up to be bad children. Do you see? And they don't get good training. If all of us say that we will leave the children like that and go to stay in the farm, the money we are

going to look for, will be useless. (So, when you stopped going on the road, do some of your children go on the road?) Yes, my sister's child is going. (Yes; does she go for you or —) As for her, she is doing her own business, but when she comes, I unload them. (Aa. When she goes, she brings them to you and you sell them.) Yes, and I sell them for her. (And some of your children don't follow you? That one of your child who is there —) Yes, this year, yes, this year, my daughter who was unloading yams there, (true) she will go. (Will she go on the road?) Yes, when new yams come. (Yes) By the grace of God, if the year meets us, she will go. Yes. (Does she want to learn some business?) Yes. (Has she completed school?) Yes. (And you too, did you attend a little? Did you attend school?) As for me, I did not attend school at all. (Why?) My father and mother did not send me to school. (So, if they had sent you, you would have gone?) I would have gone really. If I, if they had sent me to school too, I would have done very well. I, myself, had hope to accept that if my father and mother had sent me to school, I would have been a learned person very very much. Because when I let someone write down my money at all for me, at times, when I look at it, I am able to know it. (Did you go to this thing, some of the adult education classes?) Aa, I could not go. My child, Mensah, at all.)

he works at the Dept. of Social Welfare. At times, Asawasi Catholic, he teaches them. By the time I leave here to go home, talking, take this and go and put it here, take this and stand it here; I would be tired; I will be unable to go. When he teaches me some at home, how he teaches me, he doesn't exercise patience. I too, I don't have patience to listen. (Is that so?) (If you listen, it would be good, It would help you. If you listen, it would help you and you too, could have use it to do your account. Do you see? So formerly that you yourself were going on the road, and now your child goes on the road for you, which one is more profitable?)

Ei! Then when I myself was going was more profitable. But now, I am not strong. I cannot go. So this year, when God gives me grace, my child will take my place and go. Now, I have no strength.

This groundnuts which I have taken a little to eat, I will not feel comfortable. Groundnuts and waist pains, they are not good at all. (Groundnuts, when you chew it, then your waist pains you.) Yes. But this, as all of us are having conversation and we are putting them in our mouths one by one. (But when Rawlings first came, were you going on the road?) When Rawlings first came? When Rawlings first came, I was not going on the road. I had stopped.)

(Had you stopped?) (Then, it is a long time since you stopped.) Yes. I had stopped. At that time, I had a child who was going for me. (Were your goods sold at the control price at the market?) Our goods were sold at the control price. As for our goods, they were sold. (Explain it well to us) These soldiers, when they put on their uniform, there may be someone at all, when he picks up the yam, any amount of money that he likes, he puts it there and goes away. (Is that so?) Yes. They also used ^{to} come to buy some of the yams to soldier line. When they come, they can buy about four hundred yams to soldier line. (Is it that of one person or a bit of everyone's?) No; that of one person. You, whom they will set their eyes on you, they buy about four hundred. At any price that they like, then they pay it. (Repeat there again that you and these people open. Explain a bit to us that at that time they bought ^{many} things at control) Then, there were many many things. As for him, when he puts on his uniform and takes his gun and puts it by his neck; as for him, he has made his mind that he is coming to buy things for his wife. So, the money, when he takes your thing and whether he will put there six pence or three pence, if you like it, take it; if you don't like it, as for him, he is gone. And they took some of these women to go and beat them.

Do they put you together, to go and beat you?) Yes, at Keptia. (They had done what? What have they done?) They were doing what? How? When he comes and your thing, when he asks for the price, and you won't let him buy it, then they set their eyes on you. As you are there, then, they come to take you away. To the play ground over there. There were they beating these women. They used this thing, cane (Ou!)

One madam at all, an elderly woman; she was at the yam section. And that madam, they beat her; they went to put her face down and caned her like that. The madam did not get well, until she died. (Ou! What did she do?)

She did nothing. An old woman whom those going to beat her at all, some were her grandchildren. Then, if we would come to the market, very early in the morning at six o'clock, we had finished removing our goods and you run away. You are running away and you go home like that (Ei! at that time, it was difficult. And Rawling came back and did ~~he~~ that again?) They used his name to do it but maybe he did not know anything about it at all. So from that time to today, life has become very difficult. (So it has been a long time a bit when you started selling yams.) It has been a very long time. (Those with whom you began selling it;

could somebody sell to acquire some property?) O, at the very beginning, our mothers who came before us, few people, some were able to put up houses.

(In the selling of yams?) Yes. Those who were going on the road at the very first; those whom the farmers ^{were} selling to them on credit. Some were able to build houses. Those who were able to build houses at all, also most of them are dead. Most of them are not still alive. (And what did they do that ^{they} get property?) In this business? (Yes) Mm, as for me, in this business, as for me, I haven't got any property from it. I have not got any property from it. But rather, by the grace of the Lord, bit by bit with which I will use to feed myself. (And why does somebody get property and someone too doesn't get some?) Yes, at first, there may be someone, at the beginning ~~when~~ price of the goods was low, there may be someone who was holding a big amount of money. So when she goes to sell the goods at all, she can leave her money there to go and return to buy another to come before she comes to collect the old one. Do you see? That allows the business to go on quickly a bit for her. Now these goods, when you unload the goods, like what someone unloaded her goods at all three weeks today, one month today; they

They have not finished paying her. They have not finished paying her yet; now the price of goods has become expensive, so the little amount of money she is holding, she cannot leave some behind to go unless she sits down to collect all the money. And as you came, you got about forty thousand at all as profit on it, you have stayed in this town, you have spent it, it is gone before you are about to go. What will you do to be able to make property? (Yes, yes I have understood it.) (So the present people too, does someone has money which is heavy as the former people that when she comes she will be able to leave behind and return to go and bring some? Are there some there now like that?) As for now, what I see really is that, if there is someone at all, when she goes to buy and puts there, her money with which she went, it will not be enough unless she comes back to raise a loan before she can go to take them. When she comes to unload, then she gives the person's share to her. Maybe the person is collecting her money and she has not yet gone. So if you are her sister and she sees that you have collected a little to the house and her sister is in difficulty, she will help her with it and she goes to bring hers. By the time that she will come, they will pay (e.)

a little to her, maybe, she too here is finished and she may add to it and she goes with it. (Yes) So now, as I am there, I was going to demand money from those who owe me at the market (You are coming to demand debt from those who owe you.) Yes. The goods which that day when you came, I was unloading, that I was standing by them. (At Bode, long ago? They have not finished paying you?) No. (Is that so? Then, it is long ago; about a week.) Yes. It is getting to two weeks even. (Is that so? El! And they have not paid you.) They have not paid; it is now that I am going to get the money. What they first paid, we have paid the driver with it. So it has now left the actual money with which we will go, and I am going to collect it. (So, the driver too, when you come, does he wait for you to finish selling before you pay him or as soon as he comes, then he gets the money?) O, no; maybe, when we unload them today, as this Tuesday, you can promise him like Friday. As for the Friday, you go round them like that and they give you a little bit and you put them together and pay the driver with it; or somebody can even say, give money for "lise" (i.e. diesel) (What money?) What he will use to buy "lise" (Ah, diesel) to go and take, yes, to go and bring another person's goods, (all right, money for petrol, diesel)

so he goes away. By the time, he comes back, you have collected his money for him. As soon as he comes back, he comes to collect it. (Yes) Maybe, somebody has placed an order for him. As for that, when he leaves today, as today is Tuesday, maybe by Friday or Saturday, he will be back. By the time he comes, then by the grace of God, you might have got his money. As soon as he comes, he comes to collect it. What you gave to him, the balance, when he comes, then he comes to collect it. At times too, he will not understand at all unless he sits down for you to collect all his money for him before he goes. (As for these drivers too, everyone has her driver or can you take anybody?) You can take anyone. Then, when you make an order for him, and he has no order there, he will take you. Nobody has her driver, like ~~that~~ this lorry; (Are they all at Bode?)

Don't you take a driver who is passing by to some where? No, no, no. (So, are they all working at Bode?) Yes. A driver who is passing by to some where, like a cargo truck, maybe he has gone to unload goods at say, Bawku or Bolga, and if you are there and maybe he is going back empty, when you get him, he too can go to load your goods and bring them. (As for them, they do not charge much as the station lorry) As soon as he reaches there, the bookmen, it is the bookmen that go to

load for him; they will take their Commission so as soon as he reaches there, they will tell him the charge which is there. (Yes, and it means that —) If it is ¹⁰one hundred, if it is fifteen, it is fifteen, that he will take. if it is twenty, (fifteen thousand) Yes; if it is twenty, twenty like that, he will take; if it is ¹⁰eighteen, eighteen like that, he will charge. If there is a place, a place far away than some place (True. So there is a bookman there, in the North there, and he will tell him?) Yes. They will board the lorry to go and load it. They will go and load the lorry and they will collect their commission. So the price which is there, as soon as he reaches there, they will tell him. (Yes) (Will they collect the commission from you or the driver?) They will collect it from the driver (So won't the driver can put all the yards in the lorry?) No, no, no. (So are those at the station gather them and put them in the lorry?) They will load it; their children will go and load it. They will load it and cover them. They load this and cover it; they load that and cover it like that until the lorry will be full (Yes) (And the driver pays them with his own money.) Yes. If the yards are four thousand, then they check the amount of money for four thousand and they collect it. (It is too much work; there is plenty of work in it) Yes. As for

Yam business, there is plenty of work in it. When you set out on the way, they will take this money from you; this money that money. They will charge you council fee, (Yes); they will charge you income tax; many things. So by the time you will arrive at this place, when you check all these things and add it to the lorry expenses at all, it may even be one hundred thousand Cedis. it may be going to about twenty ~~two~~ thousand. (That has gone from it) No, for the lorry charge. (And the income tax, do they collect it from the village like that?) In the village, they say, there is something called the youth council or what. They collect something like that. And as for the income tax, as for that, we pay it over here; we pay that to the government. (I know that those of you who sell food, you don't pay income tax.) They collect from us. Even today, as for today, they collect it everyday at the market. (Everyday?) Everyday. You see that, ^{all} those who carry goods, everyday they charge them. The goods, they have different charges for them. Those who arrange goods and carry them around hawking, they also charge them like that. There are some who pay fifty everyday as income tax (50.00) You buy ticket for hundred (100.00) (Aa, ticket is different?) Ticket is different. (And income tax is different) Income tax is different.)

(Ei!) As for the yam section, those who retail the yams, when they first introduced it, (ie the income tax) we said that we would not pay. So we were not paying it except those who go on the road, they were paying it. (So now, do you pay income tax? —) We pay; we pay daily ticket and we renew the stall fee.

So now, I will go. (All right, I have heard) I will go, I am going to demand a debt owed to me. (That is good, That is good. All right, then, thank you.)
When I get time again, —